Caswell County Planning Board Meeting

August 23, 2022

**Members Present***:*

Chairman Russell Johnston, Antonio Foster, Scott Oakley, Steven Harris, Michael Poteat, Stephen Thompson, Commissioner Steve Oestreicher, Planning Director Matthew Hoagland, Development Services Coordinator Amy Lyle

**Members Absent**: Jason Daniel, Ron Richmond

**Called to Order**

Chairman Johnston called the August 23, 2022 Planning Board to order at 1:02 p.m.

**Approval of the Agenda**

Mr. Harris made a motion to approve the August 23rd, 2022 Planning Board agenda. The motion carried unanimously.

**Approval of June 2022 Meeting Minutes**

Mr. Thompson made a motion to approve the July 2022 Planning Board minutes. The motion carried unanimously.

**Public Comments**

Mr. Hoagland stated that there were no public comments.

**Unfinished Business**

**A) Watershed Review Board pending appeals**

Mr. Hoagland stated that one of the parties involved in the lawsuit has withdrew their complaint from superior court. He stated that means that it only leaves the permitting appeals for the Watershed Review Board to hear. He also stated that it could be possibly October when the Watershed Review Board has its hearing. Mr. Johnston stated that he thought it would be a good idea to have attorney Mr. Bob Hornik meet with the board one more time to give them a schedule and go over what to expect. Mr. Hoagland stated that he could reach out to Mr. Hornik to try and schedule him to meet remotely at the September Planning Board meeting.

Mr. Johnston read aloud the following motion: “I move to adopt the resolution from the July 26, 2022 Planning Board meeting as written with the following amendment: Now therefore, be it resolved by the Caswell County Watershed Review Board as follows: 1. The WRB hearing with respect to the Sunrock appeals now scheduled on August 23, 2022 shall be and hereby is continued until the next WRB meeting scheduled for 1pm on Tuesday, September 27, 2022.” Mr. Johnston made a motion to continue the watershed appeal to the September 27th, 2022 meeting. The motion carried.

**New Business**

1. **County Commission joint meeting scheduling**

Mr. Hoagland stated that at the last Commissioners meeting, he presented the recommended Comprehensive Plan changes from the Planning Board. He stated that the commissioners agreed to a joint meeting between the commissioners and the Planning Board and that the word he received was for a weekday morning work session for the two boards. Mr. Oakley stated that since there would be some changes with commissioners with the upcoming election, he would recommend having the annual review with the commissioners in January. He also asked who generated the original information in Section Two of the Comprehensive Plan. Mr. Hoagland stated that it was the Piedmont Triad Regional Council. Mr. Oakley asked if they could possibly update that section and would the county have to fund it. Mr. Hoagland stated that he thought that would be a substantial expenditure. He stated that he did reach out to the Triad Regional Council to ask about an estimate for a rewrite of the Comprehensive Plan, and the cost would be quite a bit of money. He also stated that if he recalled correctly, when the commissioners debated this issue back in February-March, they talked about wanting to make minor modifications that could be handled on the county level. Mr. Oakley asked if there were funds for original community meetings. Mr. Hoagland stated that if he recalled correctly, the community meetings were held at schools and different public locations, and he assumed the costs involved were maybe refreshments or putting together a slideshow presentation. Mr. Oakley made a motion to propose having a meeting in January, to get an estimate to update Section Two of the Comprehensive Plan if the county would provide funding, and to ask the commissioners if they would like a revised section of community input added to Section Three and funding to publish it. Mr. Hoagland said he would like to reiterate that the desire of the commissioners is to meet sooner than later for a workshop style meeting though the Planning Board is certainly free to vote however they wish. Mr. Johnston also mentioned that with the pending Watershed Review Board appeals coming back on the table then it may be best to postpone the meeting until after the new commissioners are seated. Mr. Oakley read his motion once again. The motion carried unanimously.

**Planning Department Updates**

1. **Cell towers**

Mr. Hoagland shared pictures of the cell tower project on Highway 158 West in Casville. He stated that the tower has a Verizon Wireless antenna and stated that the tower was ready to go but the company is having trouble of getting a line of fiber to the tower. He stated that there were no updates on the tower in Prospect Hill. He stated that the structure was build, but had no towers. He also asked Mr. Doug Barker if the cell towers had 5G capabilities, and he stated that Mr. Barker responded every tower has capabilities, but the problem they are running into is the FAA (Federal Aviation Administration) will not review anything with 5G frequencies. Mr. Barker stated that they are having to file a FFA request with everything included except the 5G capability, and once they get their approval and build the tower, they refile for a 5G frequency and wait for the approval to get the 5G capability.

Mr. Hoagland stated that the state of emergency has expired for North Carolina, and as a result, a lot of the remote meeting protections that went along with that have gone away. He stated that elected boards no longer have the freedom to meet remotely. He stated that he did read a blog from the UNC School of Government that seems to indicate that there is a gray area for appointed boards, so he plans to have a conversation with the county attorney to have him review the writing from the UNC School of Government to see if the Planning Board has the flexibility for remote meetings.

1. **Broadband**

Mr. Hoagland stated that he did not have any updates for broadband other than he has seen a lot of work trucks out installing lines within the right of way of major roads around the county. Mr. Oakley informed the board about the new internet service he is receiving from Charter Spectrum and that it is working great.

**C. Remote Meeting Status**

Mr. Hoagland informed the board that since the governor’s COVID executive order had finally expired then some of the rules on remote participation had changed. He noted that since they bylaws allow for meeting by electronic means, then he wants to get clarification form the county attorney whether or not he thinks the board could continue to meet remotely if needed.

**Final Comments:**

Mr. Johnston asked if Mr. Hoagland if he could convey to the commissioners that if they wanted, he or Vice-Chair Mr. Oakley to attend one of their meetings to serve as a conduit try to address any concerns about the Comprehensive Plan, they definitely want to keep an open dialog and stay in communication. Mr. Hoagland stated that he would let the commissioners know.

**Adjournment**

Mr. Harris made a motion to adjourn the August 23, 2022 Planning Board Meeting. The motion carried unanimously.