**Town of Beech Mountain**

Planning Board Meeting Minutes

August 3rd, 2010

***Call to Order:***

Chairman Paul O’Connell called the meeting to order at approximately 9:00 A.M. Other board members present in attendance were Brian Barnes, Andy Porter and John Hoffman. Town Councilmember Cindy Keller was also present, as well as Town Manager Randy Feierabend.

***Adoption of Agenda:***

A motion was made that the agenda be adopted. The motion was seconded and carried with no opposition.

***Approval of Minutes:***

Brian Barnes made a motion that the minutes of the July meeting be approved with the amendment that he was not listed as present. The motion was seconded by Andy Porter and carried with no opposition.

***Discussion of Streetscape Plan:***

Town Planner James Scott reported that he had received responses to the “concept intent agreements” from all of the private landowners involved with the streetscape. These agreements were informal agreements prior to a final lease of the property that gave the Town assurance that the landowners agreed to the general concept of the streetscape and would permit the Town to hold public meetings regarding the design and form of such a project. While some of the properties involved declined to participate, Mr. Scott explained that there was still connectivity throughout the entire range of the planned project, but it would now alternate from one side of the road to the other. He suggested that the project proceed with just the properties who had agreed, and speculated that some of the other properties may want to be involved once they saw the project take shape.

Given the property owners who wished to participate, Mr. Scott asked the Board for input on a proposed timeline for the project. He suggested that a Public Design Workshop be held on August 12 to gather public input on some of the design choices in the project. Following this meeting, he would seek final approval from the NCDOT regarding the proposed crosswalk, and then submit the plan to Town Council for final approval at their meeting in September. He also intended to seek the Town Council’s approval to solicit private donations through a mass mailing. Finally, he would like to ideally start work on the project in late September pending Town Council’s approval of the plan.

He then showed the Board a questionnaire that he intended to use to guide the discussion and gather tangible public input from the public workshop. Regarding this questionnaire, Mr. Porter reiterated his position that a walkway should be the priority for the plan. Mr. Barnes asked what time this meeting would be held. After some discussion, the Board agreed that the meeting would be held at 9:00 AM on August 12. Mr. Porter and Mr. O’Connell questioned how the word would be spread regarding this meeting. Mr. Scott replied that he would put a notice on the Town website and the Town public access TV station, and that he would also place a call on the Town’s reverse 911 system.

***Other Business***

Paul O’Connell raised the issue that the Town may soon be faced with difficulties regarding fuel tanks. The Beech Mountain Propane Buyers Cooperative selected Ferrell Gas Company as the preferred provider for the services of members of the cooperative, which include a substantial portion of the private citizens in the Town. Ferrell Gas has a policy that they do not bury their fuel tanks. This is likely to conflict with the Town’s requirement that above ground fuel tanks be adequately fenced and screened from view. He also commented that the Town has no ordinance that prohibits these tanks from being visible from the golf course.

James Scott discussed Zoning Permits. Andy Porter commented that he didn’t think it was a good idea to give people certificates of zoning and allow people to begin cutting trees on the premise of building a house before they obtain a building permit. James Scott commented that the ordinance requires that once a zoning permit is obtained, a building permit must be obtained also. Cindy Keller questioned whether both the building permit and the zoning permit must be obtained at the same time. James Scott replied that in practice the Planning and Inspections Department tried to obtain both the building and zoning permit at the same time, but that was not necessarily mandated by the ordinance.

Andy Porter raised the issue that he felt the Sign Ordinance was not being enforced. He provided examples of several signs that were in violation. Paul O’Connell noted several signs that were in violation also. Randy Feierabend noted that addressing this issue should be done all at once, rather than one violation at a time. Andy Porter also noted various maintenance violations.

Cindy Keller mentioned that removing some of the detached commercial signs in Town would help with the beautification that the streetscape project was trying to achieve. She recommended that we encourage business owners to only focus on nice signs attached to their buildings, but realized that this could only be a recommendation, as it is not required by the ordinance.

***Adjournment***

 Having no further business, Andy Porter moved that the meeting be adjourned. Said motion was seconded by Paul O’Connell and carried with no opposition.

**Respectfully Submitted,**

**James Scott Secretary to the Board**