

Town of Beech Mountain
Planning Board Meeting Minutes
May 29, 2012

Call to Order:

Vice-Chairman Andy Porter called the meeting to order at 9:07 AM. Other Board Members present in attendance were John Hoffman, Brian Barnes, James True and Planning Director James Scott.

Adoption of Agenda:

Vice-Chairman Andy Porter made a motion to adopt the agenda. Said motion was carried with no opposition.

Approval of Minutes:

Vice-Chairman Andy Porter made a motion to adopt the minutes from the previous Planning Board meeting. Director James Scott pointed out that he had made a copy of February and April minutes for everyone to have. James Scott explained there had been questions concerning the spelling in the February minutes and that they had been corrected. Vice-Chairman Andy Porter made a motion to adopt the February minutes from the previous Planning Board meeting. John Hoffman seconded and motion was carried with no other oppositions. Vice-Chairman Andy Porter asks if there was a question on the April minutes. John Hoffman asks if it has to be put in minutes to have James True sworn in or if it has already been done. James True states that he had already been to see Jennifer Broderick and sworn in. John Hoffman made motion to adopt April minutes. Vice-Chairman Andy Porter seconded and motion was carried with no opposition.

Discuss:

Vice-Chairman Andy points out the first thing is Telecommunications Towers and that at last meeting they had left it up to James Scott to working out the final details and rewriting some of the details that were decided at last meeting. James Scott states he had made the changes that had been discussed at the last Planning Board meeting and that it had gone to the Town Council and had passed.

Vice-Chairman Andy Porter states that the next issue is "Sign Ordinance" and points out that it had been discussed before and James Scott was making some minor changes. James Scott states that they have been moving forward the past couple of months in trying to tighten up, clean up and how to make it better on sign regulation. He also states he wants to continue doing this, however the most important thing discussed this meeting is that the Town Council recommended the Planning Board to discuss some regulations for use of "temporary off-site directional" signs for things like the Gnarnia Concert. This came up at the last Town Council meeting and was asked if this could be brought to them in time for public hearing so it can be adopted before the concert. He also stated that it would be better to go ahead and send all of 154.277 "Banners and Temporary Signs" at the same time so the whole section can be looked at.

James Scott began going through the proposed amendments to the ordinance that he had drafted. He discussed that he proposed to put "Temporary Directional Signs" as part (B) of the "Banner and Temporary Signs" section. His draft of proposed amendments included an intent statement to try to clarify objective of the regulations-- to provide for means by which off-site directional signs may be erected to direct people to large for-profit or commercial events that are of such magnitude that the community would be negatively impacted in their absence. It is not the intention of this subsection that these signs be used as a means for advertising.

James True questioned the number of temporary signs allowed by the proposed ordinance. Five signs would not be enough for certain events. James Scott stated that in his proposed draft, these signs would not be allowed to be located closer than 300 feet from one another. He had been looking at how far the major curves and turn-offs going off of Beech Mountain Parkway are from one another with the idea they may need a sign at each one of those areas to keep people on the right path to avoid traffic problems. He thought that 5 signs would be adequate to place a sign at each curve. James True asks that since the draft already regulates the number of signs, whether it is truly important to also regulate the distance that they must be separated. Brian Barnes suggested changing it to a maximum of up to 10 three square feet directional signs and 2 twelve square feet signs. After discussing, it was decided to change to no more than 10 small sign and 2 large signs. James Scott stated he would change the wording to (a) 2 of the signs under this section may be up to 12 square feet (b) a maximum of 10 no more than 3 square feet.

John Hoffman discussed he thinks if someone is going to put up these types of signs then they should be required not to obstruct visibility for traffic flow and if they are, then we should be able to take them down. James Scott stated that we could remove them if that was the case. Andy Porter pointed out that it already states that in 154.007 sections B (g) such sign must be located such that they in no way hinder driver visibility or otherwise create hazards to driver or pedestrian safety. James Scott states that if the signs are in the right-of-way Town of Beech Mountain, then we have the right to pull them up. He also stated that is a little different on private property but if they aren't in the right-of-way they would be back far enough anyway.

As the Board continued going over the draft amendments, the Board considered regulating the content of these directional signs. James True stated that he would suggest on making it to where only one color can be used. Andy Porter pointed out that if they started pin pointing everything, it would make the ordinance overly complicated. James True suggested that instead of limited to text only, can they say no corporate sponsorship logos can be used on the sign except with the exception of the name of the event itself. James Scott stated that he thought that they could do this. Andy Porter suggested saying adding no advertising other than the primary sponsor's logo. James True suggested on changing it to say that "signs are limited to a logo of the event and any text necessary to provide directional information. No corporate sponsorship can be mentioned on these signs." James Scott stated that because of these being directional signs that this could possibly be done. James Scott stated that he would change the wording and the Board agreed.

At approximately 10:50 Brian Barnes had to leave. James True asks if they still have a quorum, James Scott pointed out as long as there are three members then they did.

James Scott proceeded with discussing the penalties if these temporary directional signs are not removed within the time provided by the ordinance and stated that Brian Barnes input was to make sure on the application that we be sure to have a responsible party's name. James True suggested that he agreed with Paul Piquet that since there is no charge for the permit, what

if there was a refundable fee for the permit that would cover the removal of signs. Andy Porter stated he thought that was a good idea and to make the fee \$100.00 and it would be refunded if picked up. John Hoffman suggested on leaving the fee amount for the Town Council to decide. James True suggested to just put in the ordinance that a refundable fee would be added to the permit and not on the permit itself so if they ever decided to change the fee since they already have a list of the fees on the board. James Scott stated to change the wording to “a refundable deposit, determined by the Town Council, shall be required for said permits. After all signs are removed within 24 hours following an event, the deposit will be refunded.” James True stated that he did not like the \$100.00 fees due to some of the events are not money generated however will go along with what the board decides.

James Scott finished by covering the rest of the changes to section 154.277. These changes were mostly formatting changes including the removal of provisions that discussed signs that were already exempted by the ordinance. These changes also increased the allowable size for commercial banners to 15 square feet from 9 square feet. Also, he suggested changing the name of the section from “Temporary Signs” to “Banners and Temporary Signs.” James Scott suggests sending all of this section to the Town Council with the changes they have made.

Vice-Chairman Andy Porter made a motion to send this to Town Council with the changes noted. John Hoffman seconded. James True stated he was not ready to vote on this. Andy Porter suggested that the Board could continue this meeting on Wednesday 30th or Thursday 31st. No one could come to meeting if moved. James Scott stated that as long as the majority voted, then it would stand. Andy Porter asks if the other changes could wait until next month. James Scott stated the part they had just gone over was the important part and the rest could wait. Andy Porter and John Hoffman voted to send the draft amendments to the “Banners and Temporary Signs” provisions to Town Council. James True stated that he saw nothing that he had a question on however he just doesn’t like to vote on something that he hasn’t fully read but that he was ok with everything they had decided on section 154.277. Nevertheless, the motion passed.

Vice-Andy Porter suggests postponing the rest until next meeting due to he also had to leave at this time. All board members agreed.

Other Business:

None

Comprehensive Planning:

None

Call to Adjournment:

Vice-Chairman Andy Porter called for a motion to adjourn. John Hoffman so moved and James True seconded. Motion was carried with no objection.

Respectfully Submitted,

James Scott
Secretary to the Board