PUBLIC HEARING MINUTES
MONDAY, JULY 27, 2020, 6:00 P.M.
VIA WEBEX SOFTWARE

COUNCIL MEMBERS: Rennie Brantz-Mayor, Loretta Clawson-Mayor Pro Tem, Connie Ulmer, Dustin Hicks, and Nancy LaPlaca

PLANNING COMMISSION MEMBERS: Elizabeth Shay-Chair, Eric Plaag-Vice Chair, Frank Veno, Chris Behrend, John Tippett, and Adam Zebzda

PLANNING STAFF PRESENT: Jane Shook-Director of Planning and Inspections, Brian Johnson-Urban Design Specialist, and Brenda Henson-Board Secretary

OTHERS PRESENT: John Ward-Town Manager and Allison Meade-Town Attorney

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Call to Order

Mayor Brantz called the Town Council to order at 6:03 p.m.

Chair Shay called the Planning Commission to order at 6:03 p.m.

Approval of Meeting Minutes

Mayor Pro Tem Clawson made a motion to approve the June 22, 2020 Public Hearing minutes as written. The motion was seconded by Council Member LaPlaca.

Vote: Aye – All
Nay – None
The motion passed.

Commission Member Tippett made a motion to approve the June 22, 2020 Public Hearing minutes as written. The motion was seconded by Commission Member Behrend.

Vote: Aye – All
Nay – None
The motion passed.

General Guidelines for Each Case Presented at Public Hearing

Ms. Shook read the guidelines that are to be followed during public hearing cases.

Ms. Meade added that, due to COVID 19, the public could offer written public comment up to 24 hours after the public hearing concluded.

Case PL03943-060520 & PL03944-060520 Clawson – General Use Zoning Map Amendments

Case PL03943-060520 Information: Wayne Clawson has requested a General Use Zoning Map Amendment for property located at 146 Clawson Street (Watauga County PIN: 2910-69-1946-000) to rezone the property from R1 Single Family Residential to R3 Multiple-Family Residential.

Case PL03944-060520 Information: Wayne Clawson, Trustee for the Christopher Clawson Trust Boone has requested a General Use Zoning Map Amendment for property located at 170 Clawson Street (Watauga County PIN: 291160-2149-000) to rezone the portion of the property zoned MH Manufactured Home Park to R3 Multiple-Family Residential.

Ms. Shook reviewed the request as it was outlined in the meeting packet. She introduced Ham Wilson, attorney for the applicant.

Mr. Wilson noted that he represented Wayne Clawson and the Christopher Clawson Trust. He explained that 170 Clawson Street was currently zoned MH Manufactured Housing and 146 Clawson Street was zoned R1 Single Family Residential and they were requesting that both properties be rezoned to R3 Multiple Family Residential. Mr. Wilson noted that the properties were surrounded by apartments and commercial uses. He stated the properties were located within a Primary Growth Area and the request was in keeping with the goals of the Comprehensive Plan.

Ms. Shook noted that Mr. Wayne Clawson had joined the meeting.

Vice Chair Plaag referred to page 29 of the meeting packet and pointed out that the staff report indicated the requested rezoning was to E1 Educational. Ms. Shook apologized for the mistake, noting the report should have shown the requested rezoning to be to R3 Multiple Family Residential. Vice Chair Plaag mentioned the 2012 rezoning of adjacent property and asked if 170 Clawson Street contained a single family home. Ms. Shook replied that the property was zoned MH but had a single family home on it. Vice Chair Plaag noted that R3 parcels were required to have a minimum land area of 20,000 sq. ft. and 146 Clawson Street had only 15,800 sq. ft. Ms. Shook stated that was correct, noting the property would have to be combined with another R3 lot in order to develop it. Vice Chair Plaag asked if the applicant was offered the opportunity to seek a Conditional District. Ms. Shook replied that the different rezoning options were always discussed with applicants.

Council Member Ulmer asked if there was a mobile home on the 170 Clawson Street property. Ms. Shook explained that 170 Clawson Street contained a house that she thought the person who ran the Clawson Mobile Home Park may have lived in before the park property was sold and rezoned to CDR3 in 2012.

Council Member LaPlaca asked how long ago it had been since the mobile homes were located in the park. Ms. Shook thought the mobile homes were relocated in 2011 or 2012.

Mayor Brantz asked if a traffic study had been done for this request. Ms. Shook replied that there had not been and reminded everyone that this was a general use rezoning, not a site specific approval.

Council Member Hicks asked what the current use of the property was and Ms. Shook replied that both properties contained single family homes. Ms. Shook went on to explain that, after the properties were rezoned, any development would have to apply for permits through the Town.

Commission Member Veno asked if it was the plan for these properties to dove-tail into the Watauga Green project. Ms. Shook replied that the current request was for a general use rezoning and any plans beyond that would have to come to the Town at a later date.

Vice Chair Plaag noted that churches, event venues, and recreational facilities were some uses that would be allowed in an R3 zoning district and expressed concern for the R1 zoned parcel to the right of 146 Clawson Street. Ms. Shook explained that the parcel to the right of 146 Clawson Street was split zoned R1 and R3 and contained two single family homes on the property.

Mayor Brantz asked if there were mostly multi-family uses in the area. Ms. Shook replied that Watauga Green and Meadow Hill were both multi-family uses in the area and noted there were also some single family homes on Perkinsville Drive and Perkins Street.

At 6:35 p.m. Mayor Brantz invited public comment.

Wayne Clawson, applicant and property owner, stated that 170 Clawson Street contained his mother's house. He stated that the house was there when the mobile home park started in 1964 and he felt that 170 Clawson Street was zoned MH Manufactured Home in error. Mr. Clawson explained that no one was living in the home at this time. He went on to say that 146 Clawson Street was his residence and he currently rented the house because he had moved into the county.

Commission Member Veno asked if neighboring properties were notified of the rezoning request. Ms. Shook responded that property owners located within 150’ of the subject properties were notified by letter and a sign was posted on both properties.

Mayor Brantz asked what the timeframe was for construction on the properties. Ms. Shook replied that no site specific plans had been received for these properties. Ms. Meade reminded everyone that this was a request for a general use rezoning so they would need to consider all possible uses in an R3 instead of any type of perceived plans for the property.

Vice Chair Plaag expressed concern about removing the R1 designation from 146 Clawson Street and leaving the property to the right as an R1 island to itself.

Council Member Ulmer agreed with Vice Chair Plaag’s concern.

Mr. Clawson stated that both his home and his mother’s home had been used as rentals and so had the homes located next door. Council Member LaPlaca asked if the homes next door had been rented as multi-family use instead of single family use. Mr. Clawson was unsure and noted that the homes had been being used as rentals for at least 10 years. Ms. Shook explained that single family homes could be rented and still be single family uses. Vice Chairman Plaag added that more than two unrelated people would be non-conforming in the R1.

Council Member LaPlaca stated the request seemed acceptable to her and thanked Mr. Clawson for his input.

With no further questions or comments, Mayor Brantz closed the public hearing for this case at 6:47 p.m.

<u>Case PL03979-061620 Watauga Medical Center – Conditional District Zoning Map Amendment</u>

Maran Sigmon with Watauga Medical Center Inc. has requested a Conditional District Zoning Map Amendment to rezone the Watauga Medical Center campus (Watauga County PINs: 2910-71-6688-000, 2910-71-7264-000, 2910-70-6917-000, and a portion of 2910-70-7453-000) from O/I Office Institutional/B3 General Business to Conditional District O/I Office Institutional with a phased site specific development plan for Use 11.26 Hospital. The applicant has requested 5 year vesting.

Ms. Shook explained the request as it was outlined in the meeting packet. She noted there would be three phases permitted under the Conditional District approval, to include:

1. New Central Energy Plant for the campus
2. Sitework for future hospital expansion
3. Hospital expansion (new wing)

Ms. Shook stated the property was located in a WS-IV Watershed Area and appeared to meet the requirements for built-upon area. She explained that the scope of this project would trigger Tier 4, meaning the site would have to come into full compliance with UDO requirements, unless impossible. Ms. Shook noted that a photometric plan was submitted and appeared to be compliant, however the applicant still had to demonstrate compliance with lighting requirements for the parking deck. Sidewalks were shown on the plans, as well as a conceptual greenway along Deerfield Road and a Traffic Impact Analysis was provided.

Ms. Shook mentioned the Wellness District Small Area Plan. She stated it was adopted but after the College of Health Sciences was zoned Wellness District and standards adopted there was some concern from property owners in the area that the standards needed some revisions and those revisions have not yet taken place.

Jim Deal, attorney representing Watauga Medical Center, stated the hospital moved to this location and opened in 1967. He noted that the Comprehensive Plan cited Watauga Medical Center as being an integral part of the Town's assets.

Mr. Deal stated that the current Central Energy Plant was extremely outdated and could not handle a catastrophic failure. He noted the improvements to Johnson Street would provide better access to the homes there. Mr. Deal explained, when complete, there would likely be the same number of patient rooms but there would be a better, more state of the art facility. He stated they had conducted two neighborhood meetings, one in the fall and one on July 15, and had made some changes to their plans as a result. Mr. Deal stated the laydown area would be moved farther away from the homes and would be located closer to Deerfield Road. He explained that they were requesting a 5 year vesting period due to uncertain times but felt they would likely only take two years.

Mr. Deal introduced Christie Adams with McMillan, Pazdan, Smith Architecture. Ms. Adams stated that the expansion to the hospital would be approximately 93,000 sq. ft. and 60' tall and the Central Energy Plant would be approximately 10,000 sq. ft. and 39' tall. She noted the project would replace existing facilities, making them larger and more up to date. EIFS, brick, and stucco will be used on the exterior and the main and emergency department entrances will be relocated.

Council Member LaPlaca asked for the existing square footage of the hospital. Ms. Adams replied the hospital was currently 233,000 sq. ft. and they would be adding approximately 93,000 sq. ft. more with this project. Council Member LaPlaca asked if the Cancer Center would remain separate and Ms. Adams stated that it would.

Mayor Brantz asked if ICU units would be added. Ms. Adams explained that they would not be adding any beds but would be replacing the existing 10 ICU units. She noted that work would be done by right and was not part of the Conditional District request.

Vice Chair Plaag referred to a letter from Deron Geouque that indicated there had been an oil leak at the hospital. Greg Turner with Charlotte Engineers replied that above ground fuel tanks were being proposed. Vice Chair Plaag asked if there had been consideration for the use of solar arrays. Mr. Turner replied that the State had certain regulations that had to be met for energy use and they would be meeting those standards.

Vice Chair Plaag asked about the 10' multi-modal path along Johnson Street. Jeff Mangas with EMH&T replied that neighbors had concerns about the alignment of the path along Johnson Street so they were now proposing a 5' sidewalk on each side.

Vice Chair Plaag referred to the Traffic Impact Analysis that indicated there would be 3,288 trips and asked if that was one trip in and one trip out or if it was round trip. Frank Amenya with Davenport Engineering replied that the trip count reflected the number of trips in and the number of trips out so the number would need to be divided in order to get the round trip number. Vice Chair Plaag noted a loss of 34 parking spaces was shown while there was a projected increase in traffic. Mr. Mangas replied that some areas of the hospital would be decommissioned so there should be no significant impact on parking.

Mr. Mangas noted that Johnson Street would be relocated and would be available for residents to use before the signal was installed. He stated that the neighbors were concerned about the location of the laydown yard and they also did not want a 10' path going by their houses.

Vice Chair Plaag asked if the Edmisten house and barn would be demolished with this project. Mr. Mangas replied that the barn would be demolished but the house would not be demolished with this project. Vice Chair Plaag asked about the possibility of moving one or both of the structures off-site. Mr. Deal stated that there had been some inquiries about that but no specific proposals had been received. He felt the hospital would welcome the idea of someone moving the barn.

Mr. Deal addressed transitional zone mitigations as outlined on page 119 of the meeting packet. He noted noise from the Central Energy Plant would be mitigated by a super low sound fan on the cooling towers and the relocation of the laydown area. Lighting would be mitigated by the use of full cut-off fixtures and a vegetative buffer. Traffic impacts would be mitigated by the re-routing of Johnson Street and installation of a traffic signal. Visual impacts would be mitigated by additional plantings and the location of the expansion. Health impacts would be mitigated with stormwater management and providing greater access to quality care.

Mr. Deal stated that the hospital had been working on this design for at least two years and he felt this would be an enhanced medical facility with improved flow into the area. He added that the project met the Wellness District guidelines and would not be out of character with the area. Mr. Deal noted that opinions of the neighborhood residents were taken into consideration before presenting the plan to Town Council and Planning Commission.

Council Member LaPlaca asked if the noise level from the new Central Energy Plant would be more or less than the current noise level. Mr. Turner replied that the noise would be less. Council Member LaPlaca asked if they would be adding megawatts. Mr. Turner stated that they would, noting they planned to remove two generators and add four.

Council Member LaPlaca referenced stormwater management and asked what would happen to the water. Mr. Mangas responded that there would be a dry basin to detain the water for slow release.

Commission Member Zebzda stated he appreciated what the hospital did for the community.

Council Member LaPlaca stated she had used the Cancer Center and felt it was a great facility with wonderful people.

Mayor Pro Tem Clawson asked if the hospital would be able to offer more services with the expansion so that people wouldn't have to travel to other areas for care. Mr. Deal replied that they would.

Mayor Brantz asked if helicopter service would continue and Mr. Deal stated that it would.

Vice Chair Plaag thanked everyone for a thorough presentation and asked if they would consider committing to a 10' easement along Deerfield Road for a greenway. Mr. Deal replied that they had already committed to providing a 10' easement in the Conditional District request.

Ms. Shook noted that during the public hearing was a good time to discuss any possible conditions so they could be discussed with the applicant. Ms. Shook referred to page 130 of the meeting packet where it stated "The permit issuing authority may allow or require the installation of a public greenway instead of sidewalk."

Vice Chair Plaag hoped the hospital would consider an adaptive reuse of the Edmisten house and suggested using it as a Hospice house.

Commission Member Zebzda asked if the hospital could submit documentation outlining how it could better invest in community health, noting there needed to be more availability of free care or care for low income people. Ms. Meade explained that conditions of approval should be limited to impacts of the actual development and felt Commission Member Zebzda's request would not be an appropriate condition.

Chuck Mantooth, President and CEO of Appalachian Regional Healthcare, noted that the hospital started High Country Community Health and supported free clinic. He indicated there were several other programs offered and stated he would be happy to share those with Commission Member Zebzda at some other time.

Ms. Meade asked if a 10' greenway along Deerfield Road was shown on the site specific plan. Ms. Shook explained that conceptual greenway was shown on the plan but there did not appear to be a commitment to construct a greenway. Ms. Meade reiterated that the Town could require the installation of a greenway. Ms. Shook replied that the hospital was proposing to install a 5' sidewalk and reserve an easement for a greenway. Mr. Mangas indicated there was some significant terrain and felt the hospital would prefer to just provide an easement at this time. Mr. Ward asked if the easement would be parallel to the 5' sidewalk and Mr. Mangas replied that it would.

Ms. Shook suggested that the applicant could install a 5' sidewalk and work with the Town to come up with a solution regarding the greenway or the applicant could install a 10' greenway in lieu of a sidewalk. Ms. Shook asked for Public Works' opinion. Justin Stines, Facilities Maintenance Superintendent, stated he was not sure it made sense to have a 5' sidewalk with a greenway beside it.

Mr. Deal stated they would accept a condition to work with the town for the best plan regarding the sidewalk and greenway. Ms. Meade felt that a more specific condition was needed, especially if there would be cost sharing between the hospital and the Town. Mr. Ward stated he would prefer a 10' path instead of a 5' sidewalk.

Ms. Shook referred to the staff recommended conditions located on page 144 of the meeting packet which are as follows:

1. Where there is a conflict between the application information and the plans (dated July 20, 2020) the plans shall control. Insignificant deviations may be permitted to comply with the requirements of the UDO.
2. Any commitments and representations concerning the proposed project made by the applicant or its (his or her) representatives at the public hearing shall also become a condition of the permit, and a basis for a stop work order and/or permit revocation if violated.
3. The applicant shall submit the necessary applications, plans, details and specifications which meet the requirements of the Town Code, UDO, Building Code and any other applicable plans for review and approval necessary to issue Zoning and Building Permits.
4. __ Year Vesting for the project be granted
5. The applicant shall ensure that the "routine optimization of the traffic signal timings" occurs as noted in the Traffic Impact Analysis.
6. Any other conditions agreed upon …

Mr. Deal stated that Condition 5 was in DOT's control. Mr. Amenya added that DOT had agreed to take Condition 5 into consideration. Ms. Shook noted that she had received verification from DOT this afternoon and felt Condition 5 could be removed.

Mr. Mantooth stated this was a $105,000,000 - $110,000,000 project, money would be tight, and a greenway was not part of their overall plan. He asked that the hospital not have to bear the entire cost of a greenway trail.

Mr. Deal felt they could agree to grant a 10' easement and pay what a 5' sidewalk would cost to go toward a 10' greenway with the Town covering the remaining cost.

Mayor Brantz suggesting polling Council members to see where they stood on the greenway situation. Vice Chair Plaag expressed concern about polling in the middle of a public hearing. Mayor Pro Tem Clawson echoed Vice Chair Plaag's concern.

Council Member Hicks asked if the expansion of services would affect patient costs. Mr. Mantooth replied that the cost would not be passed on to the public.

At 8:30 p.m. Mayor Brantz invited public comment. There was no public comment.

Ms. Shook reminded everyone that public comment could be taken for 24 hours after the hearing.

With no further questions or comments, Mayor Brantz closed the public hearing for this case at 8:31 p.m.

Other Matters

There were no other matters discussed at this hearing.

Adjournment of Town Council

Mayor Pro Tem Clawson made a motion for Town Council to adjourn at 8:32 p.m. The motion was seconded by Council Member LaPlaca.

Vote: Aye – All
Nay – None
The motion passed.

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Rennie Brantz, Mayor **Brenda Henson, Board Secretary**

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Elizabeth Shay, Planning Commission Chair

Continuation of Planning Commission Meeting

Chairperson Shay called a break in the Planning Commission meeting from 8:33 p.m. until 8:42 p.m.

Board Training

Ms. Shook stated she would send everyone a copy of the gift policy to read and Ms. Meade would attend a future meeting to discuss the policy with the Commission.

Approval of Meeting Minutes

Vice Chair Plaag noted a correction to the June 22, 2020 Planning Commission meeting minutes to remove the word *it* from the last sentence in the 3rd paragraph from the bottom of page 12 of the minutes.

Commission Member Behrend made a motion to approve the June 22, 2020 meeting minutes as amended. The motion was seconded by Commission Member Tippett.

Vote: Aye – All
Nay – None
The motion passed.

<u>Case PL03943-060520 & PL03944-060520 Clawson – General Use Zoning Map Amendments</u>

Case PL03943-060520 Information: Wayne Clawson has requested a General Use Zoning Map Amendment for property located at 146 Clawson Street (Watauga County PIN: 2910-69-1946-000) to rezone the property from R1 Single Family Residential to R3 Multiple-Family Residential.

Case PL03944-060520 Information: Wayne Clawson, Trustee for the Christopher Clawson Trust Boone has requested a General Use Zoning Map Amendment for property located at 170 Clawson Street (Watauga County PIN: 291160-2149-000) to rezone the portion of the property zoned MH Manufactured Home Park to R3 Multiple-Family Residential.

Vice Chair Plaag expressed concern with the rapid changes in this area. He felt like it was a neighborhood that got away from itself. Vice Chair Plaag stated, while he was concerned about the neighboring R1 property, he felt, under the circumstances, that the two subject properties were no longer appropriately zoned.

Chair Shay stated she was not seeing a lot of reasons not to approve the rezoning requests.

Commission Member Veno agreed and noted that no one came forward to oppose the requests.

Commission Member Behrend felt it did not make sense to reject the requests.

Commission Member Tippett stated the area was in transition and seemed a little messy but he supported the rezoning requests.

Commission Member Zebzda stated he was inclined to support the requests.

Commission Member Tippett suggested making joint motions for both rezoning requests. Chair Shay and Vice Chair Plaag agreed.

First Motion and Vote: Commission Member Veno made a motion that the proposed amendments to the Town's zoning map is consistent with the Town's comprehensive plan and any other adopted plan(s) of the Town that are applicable because it complies with:

1.1 Overall Objectives for the Boone Comprehensive Plan

Community Appearance and Community Character: Blend the built environment with the natural, scenic, and historic character of a High Country small town. Especially discourage commercial strip development, cluttered signage, and "cheap" apartment buildings.

Economic Development: Acknowledge the area's natural beauty, university, and medical center presence as the Town's greatest assets for economic development and jobs creation. Treat them accordingly.

Comprehensive Plan Policy 2.1.1 Economic Development

E.1 Continue to look for ways to make development regulations and permit procedures more predictable and timely. Evaluate opportunities for administrative review and permit issuance for development projects which, due to their small size or relatively minor impacts, may not require review by a formal public commission or board.

Comprehensive Plan Policy 2.3.2 Community Character

B. Multiple and appropriate adaptive reuse of historic resources shall be encouraged.

Comprehensive Plan Policy 2.3.3 Housing & Neighborhoods

A. The protection and rehabilitation of viable neighborhoods shall be encouraged to insure their continued existence as a major housing source and as a reflection of the area's image as an attractive, highly livable community.

The motion was seconded by Commission Member Behrend.

Vice Chair Plaag wished to amend the motion to remove reference to Comprehensive Plan Policy 2.3.3.A. and add:

Comprehensive Plan Policy 2.1.1 Economic Development

D.1. Evaluate development regulations for amendments providing flexibility in the renovation and redevelopment of existing structures and sites.

Comprehensive Plan Policy 2.3.2 Community Character

E. New development, redevelopment and rehabilitation of structures and sites shall occur in a manner which is consistent with the neighborhood and architectural context of the immediate area, and supportive, whenever possible, of Boone's original community character as a High Country small town.

Comprehensive Plan Policy 2.3.3 Housing & Neighborhoods

H. The overall housing unit density for proposed infill residential development or redevelopment should be compatible with the average density of existing areas.

Commission Members Veno and Behrend accepted the amendment.

Vote: Aye – All
Nay – None
The motion passed.

Second Motion and Vote: Commission Member Veno made a motion that the Planning Commission recommends approval of the proposed amendments to the Town's Zoning map and believes approval is reasonable and in the public interest because the area is such a mish mash and this will streamline an area that is developing. The motion was seconded by Commission Member Behrend. Chair Shay suggested the motion be amended to something like the amendment to the map would reflect the reality of an area in transition. Commission Member Veno then amended his motion as follows: The Planning Commission recommends approval of the proposed amendment to the Town's Zoning map and believes approval is reasonable and in the public interest because the rezoning will conform the overall complexion of the properties to what currently exists and compliment the surrounding area. Commission Member Behrend accepted the amended motion.

Vote: Aye – All
Nay – None
The motion passed.

<u>Case PL03979-061620 Watauga Medical Center – Conditional District Zoning Map Amendment</u>

Maran Sigmon with Watauga Medical Center Inc. has requested a Conditional District Zoning Map Amendment to rezone the Watauga Medical Center campus (Watauga County PINs: 2910-71-6688-000, 2910-71-7264-000, 2910-70-6917-000, and a portion of 2910-70-7453-000) from O/I Office Institutional/B3 General Business to Conditional District O/I Office Institutional with a phased site specific development plan for Use 11.26 Hospital. The applicant has requested 5 year vesting.

Ms. Shook reminded Commission members that they would need to include any conditions of approval and consideration of the 5 year vesting request.

Chair Shay asked Ms. Shook to explain vesting. Ms. Shook stated it gave extra time above the allowed 2 year vesting for an applicant to file for permits.

Vice Chair Plaag asked if there were negative consequences to granting a 5 year vesting. Ms. Shook replied that any ordinance changes during the vested time would not apply to the project and that could be negative.

Commission Member Zebzda felt that the hospital should include plans to provide affordable healthcare. Ms. Shook replied that Ms. Meade had, in past advice, stated that operational issues were outside the Planning Commission's purview.

Vice Chair Plaag stated he would rather have Town Council impose a 10' greenway. He expressed concern with Mr. Mantooth's comment that a greenway was not part of their overall plan, noting that greenways encouraged health and well-being.

Commission Members Veno, Zebzda, and Shay agreed with Vice Chair Plaag.

Chair Plaag noted that the Edmisten house and barn dated back to the 1920's and he was acquainted with someone who was interested in moving the structures. Chair Plaag stated the barn had some significant issues but the house was in fairly good condition. He felt the house should be used as a Hospice house and would like a 6-month moratorium from whenever the hospital would like to demolish the house to try and work out an alternative solution.

Mr. Ward stated that the hospital was not licensed as a Hospice provider. He also noted that there was property that was recently annexed into Town that was planned to be for Hospice.

Ms. Shook stated that the property containing the Edmisten farm was located in a Watershed and that would severely limit development. She added that the house and barn were not part of the area requested to be a Conditional District and felt conditions should not be placed on the Conditional District approval for structures outside the request.

Ms. Shook added that extended vesting was oftentimes helpful in difficult economic times.

Commission Member Behrend agreed and thought it was reasonable for the hospital to pay the cost for a 5' sidewalk and have that money go toward the installation of a 10' greenway with the remainder being paid for out of Town funds.

Mr. Ward replied that there were no funds for greenways but there were some funds for sidewalks. He stated that Town Council would have to approve the transfer and augmentation of funds to install a greenway. Mr. Ward suggested, if recommended and approved, that the greenway be an asphalt path.

Commission Member Behrend felt the greenway should be a shared cost between the hospital and the Town.

Vice Chair Plaag suggested polling members to see where they stood on the issues of vesting and greenway.

Chair Shay stated she would support a 5 year vesting and requiring Watauga Medical Center to install and pay for a 10' greenway.

Commission Member Behrend stated she would support a 5 year vesting and the installation of a greenway with a shared cost between the Town and the hospital.

Chair Plaag stated he would support a 4 year vesting and requiring Watauga Medical Center to install and pay for a 10' greenway.

Commission Member Tippett stated he would support a 4 year vesting and requiring Watauga Medical Center to install and pay for a 10’ greenway.

Commission Member Veno stated he would defer to the Town recommendation or support a 4 year vesting. He also supported requiring Watauga Medical Center to install and pay for a 10’ greenway because it promoted wellness.

Commission Member Zebzda stated he would support either a 4 or 5 year vesting and requiring Watauga Medical Center to install and pay for a 10’ greenway.

Chair Shay stated she would also be okay with a 4 year vesting.

First Motion and Vote: Commission Member Tippett made a motion that the proposed amendment to the Town’s zoning map is consistent with the Town’s Comprehensive Plan, the Wellness District Small Area Plan, the Walk/Bike Boone Plan, the Middle Fork Greenway Master Plan, and any other adopted plan(s) of the Town that is applicable because it complies with:

Comprehensive Plan Policy 2.1.1 Economic Development

B. New and expanding industries and businesses shall be encouraged which: 1) diversify the local economy, 2) train and use a skilled labor force and 3) increase area residents’ incomes.

K. Boone shall identify and provide services consistent with the needs of the area’s growing retiree population.

Comprehensive Plan Policy 2.2.1 Transportation

A. Street patterns shall be designed so as to define the limits of the neighborhood, accentuate focal points and interesting vistas, allow convenient circulation within the neighborhood and provide multiple, alternative outlets from the area to adjoining neighborhoods and /or major streets. Particular attention shall be given to avoid designs that provide convenient “cut-through” traffic opportunities.

B.B.2. Continue to implement sidewalk construction throughout Boone in accordance with the Boone Walkways Long Range Plan (1995 Boone – Blowing Rock Alternative Transportation Plan). Actively pursue available funding opportunities.

B.B.4. Explore funding options for alternative transportation projects throughout Town. Options could include a city-wide vehicle registration fee, earmarking property taxes for alternative transportation improvements, and seeking grant funding opportunities from federal, state and private organizations.

D.D.1. Construct additional turning lanes at intersections where traffic is backed-up during peak traffic times.

G.G.1. Evaluate and amend site plan standards to include provisions for transit stops, sidewalks and pedestrian ways, bikeways and secure bicycle storage.

G.G.2. Construct transit stops with covered passenger shelters to encourage ridership.

G.G.3. Construct, where possible, bus stop pull-out areas or lanes to avoid holding up traffic along traffic corridors.

Commission Member Tippett suggested the following conditions:

1. Where there is a conflict between the application information and the plans (dated July 20, 2020) the plans shall control. Insignificant deviations may be permitted to comply with the requirements of the UDO.

2. Any commitments and representations concerning the proposed project made by the applicant or its (his or her) representatives at the public hearing shall also become a condition of the permit, and a basis for a stop work order and/or permit revocation if violated.
3. The applicant shall submit the necessary applications, plans, details and specifications which meet the requirements of the Town Code, UDO, Building Code and any other applicable plans for review and approval necessary to issue Zoning and Building Permits.
4. 4 Year Vesting for the project be granted
5. Watauga Medical Center shall provide a 10’ easement along Deerfield Road, install a 10’ wide greenway on the easement, and incur the full cost of installation.

The motion was seconded by Commission Member Zebzda.

Vote: Aye – 5
Nay – 1 (Behrend)
The motion passed.

Commission Member Behrend stated she voted against the motion because she felt there should be a cost share for the installation of the greenway.

Second Motion and Vote: Commission Member Tippett made a motion that the Planning Commission recommends approval of the proposed amendment, with conditions, to the Town’s Zoning map and believes approval is reasonable and in the public interest because Watauga Medical Center is facing growing pains, the area is growing, and the project is needed in order to make infrastructure improvements. The motion was seconded by Commission Member Zebzda.

Vote: Aye – All
Nay – None
The motion passed.

Other Matters

Vice Chair Plaag stated, after the July 15, 2020 Town Council meeting, he was concerned by one Council member’s repeated behavior and sent an email to Mr. Ward and Ms. Meade regarding the need for additional Board training, specifically regarding appropriate consideration of General Use Zoning Map Amendments. Vice Chair Plaag read the email to Commission members.

Adjournment of Planning Commission

Vice Chair Plaag made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:32 p.m. The motion was seconded by Commission Member Veno.

Vote: Aye – All
Nay – None
The motion passed.

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Elizabeth Shay, Planning Commission Chair **Brenda Henson, Board Secretary**