

**QUARTERLY PUBLIC HEARING
MEETING MINUTES MONDAY,
May 2, 2011
7:00 P.M.**

Boone Town Council: Mayor Loretta Clawson, Mayor Pro-Tem Lynne Mason, Andy Ball, Rennie Brantz, Jamie Leigh, and Stephen Phillips

Boone Area Planning Commission: Chairperson Bunk Spann, Donald Dotson, Tom Purpur, Brett Scantlin, Greg Simmons, Kayla Malsbury, Kimberly Marland, and Jay Vincent

Planning Staff: Jane Shook-Planner and Brian Johnson-Urban Design Specialist and Marlene Crosby-Board Secretary

Others: Greg Young-Town Manager

Mayor Loretta Clawson called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

Case 20110133 WHS– Conditional District Modification

Ms. Shook presented the case as outlined in the meeting packet. Watauga County has filed a Zoning Map Amendment Petition for Conditional District Zoning for property located 300 Go Pioneers Drive. The request is to modify the existing site specific development plan for the Conditional District O/I Office Institutional zoning to the existing High School site to include the addition of an Alpine Tower (to be located to the south of the soccer field) and an Indoor Training Facility (located to the north of the softball field). In addition, the proposed modification triggers the requirements for Transitional Zones in accordance with Town of Boone Unified Development Ordinance Section 198. Ms. Shook pointed out on the enlarged copies of the site plan the location of the indoor training facility and the alpine tower. In addition, Ms. Shook indicated that the applicants had submitted information showing a change in the location of the sidewalk to the indoor training facility. The sidewalk will come to the western side of the building instead of the front.

Discussion ensued on the encroachment of the project into the Transitional Zone from page four of the packet. Planning Commission Chairperson Spann asked Ms. Shook if there were further comments than what was not in the meeting packet. Ms. Shook indicated that Staff could comment whether the proposed changes met code requirements but that it would be up to the permit issuing authority to determine any impacts had been mitigated in accordance with Section 198. Chair Spann asked about use of the service road. Ms. Shook indicated it is her understanding that the service road will be used for service vehicles to move equipment and will seldom be used. Council Member Phillips asked about the colors being used on these structures. Ms. Shook indicated that the walls would be a light sandstone color and the roof a light bronze.

Mr. John Turner, introduced himself and indicated he was representing the ad hoc group, Friends of Watauga County Pioneer Baseball and Softball. Mr. Turner confirmed that the colors will be light bronze for the roof and a taupe/light sandstone color for the walls. Mr. Turner said it was decided to use the earth tone colors to blend with the existing colors of the Watauga High School. Mr. Turner explained that the indoor training facility would be used by both the baseball and softball teams for Watauga High School. Mr. Turner indicated that the facility would be constructed through donations and the facility had been approved to be named “Will Dicus Indoor Training Facility”.

Mr. Michael Trew, Engineer with Municipal Engineering came to the podium to present his information for this case and to answer any questions by the Council Members or Planning Commissioners.

Council Member Leigh referenced a letter from Mr. John Turner that talked about slightly relocating the indoor training facility. Mr. Trew indicated that a batting cage was originally shown on the approved plans for the High School between the two existing fields but because of challenges in topography he indicated that the site for such a facility had been moved to north of the softball field. Mr. Trew also indicated that the High School had originally intended for an indoor facility but lacked the funds for the construction of such until now.

Mr. Trew indicated the access drive will be used during construction and after that it will be gated for service use. Mr. Trew also talked about the Alpine Tower; he said it will be used by an outdoor program that supports team building for students in Watauga County.

Mr. Turner talked about the parking for the indoor training facility and Alpine tower; he said that everyone would park in the existing parking lots. Mr. Turner said these structures would be used in starting in January of each year because the baseball and softball seasons began in February. Mr. Turner indicated that it may be used at other times during the year.

Discussion ensued on the landscaping around the access off of Cecil Miller Road Extension. Mr. Turner indicated that there would be a gate at the access drive and that the existing landscaping disturbed by the construction of the drive would be reestablished within the street yard to help further buffer any impact the drive would have.

Planning Commission Chairperson Spann asked how far the indoor training facility was from the nearest single family neighbor. Mr. Trew indicated a distance of 150 feet to the nearest neighbor's property line. Chairperson Spann asked if any of the neighbors had raised any questions. Mr. Turner said no. Planning Commission Member Simmons indicated he had also informed others in the area he knew personally and that he had not heard back from anyone. Discussion ensued the term "utility building" used in the letter from Mr. Turner. Mr. Turner indicated that the term was a building code issue. Mr. Turner said that under the building code there would have to be at least one handicap accessible bathroom which they had agreed to put in. Mr. Turner discussed the construction of the building including the need for sound dampening.

Council Member Leigh referred to the letter from Mr. Turner dated August of 2010. She asked since there has been an election of new Watauga County Commissioners and Board of Education since the original approval, if the new members were in support of this. Mr. Turner indicated that the funding for the project mainly came through donations and fund raising efforts but that the County had provided some start up money to cover initial costs. Mr. Turner indicated that as far as he knew they were in support of it.

Mr. Todd Nolt from Mountain Alliance indicated that Mountain Alliance will be responsible for the use the Alpine Tower. Discussion ensued on the location of the structures and Mr. Nolt said the alpine tower would be above the special flood hazard area. Mr. Nolt indicated that a variety of users would use the Alpine Tower, at this time however, the majority of users would be students in Watauga County.

Council Member Brantz asked about the security and fencing of this facility. Mr. Nolt said that Alpine Tower and security features itself which would restrict access but in addition would be fenced with the same fencing material used around the soccer field. Council Member Brantz questioned the training for those using the tower. Mr. Nolt said that the Mountain Alliance will control it. Planning Commission Chairperson Spann commented that he had heard good things about Mountain Alliance.

Ms. Jen Johnson from 197 W. Hilltop Drive had questions about the indoor training facility. She asked who would be maintaining the building after construction, what would the schedule be and what the height of the building will be. Mr. Dennis Rae from the Maintenance Department of Watauga County was present at this meeting. Mr. Rae said that his department will maintain the building and the maintenance costs will be deducted from his departmental budget. Mr. Turner said it will not be open year round. Mr. Turner indicated that the indoor training facility would be open mainly starting in January through spring of the year and would not be used any later than 8:00 pm at night and that it may be used other times for tournaments. Mr. Turner said the height is a little over 20 feet and that the building would be situated at an elevation below Hilltop Drive.

Council Member Brantz asked about the noise from the alpine tower and if would disturb any classes. Mr. Trew indicated the school is a little over 1,500 feet from the location of the alpine tower.

With no further questions, Mayor Clawson closed the public hearing for this case.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business, Mayor Clawson adjourned the public hearing at 7:37 p.m.

Loretta Clawson, Mayor

Marlene Crosby, Board Secretary