

Quarterly Public Hearing
SUMMER
August 11, 2005
Meeting Minutes

Town Council in attendance: Mayor Burnley, Graydon Eggers, Loretta Clawson, Lynne Mason, Bunk Spann and Dempsey Wilcox

Planning Commission in attendance: Mary Ruth McRae-Chairperson, Charlie Walker, Stephen Phillips, Matthew Robinson and Stacy Yates

Staff in attendance: John Spear-Development Services Director and Brenda Henson-Board Secretary

Other: Greg Young-Town Manager

Mayor Burnley welcomed everyone to the Summer Quarter Public Hearing. She called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m. and invited John Spear to present the first case.

CASE NO. RZ2005-11 The Town of Boone has initiated a zoning text amendment to UDO Article XVIII *Signs*. The proposed amendment would provide for Agricultural Event signage, increase the sizes of Awning signs, and revise the requirements for Community Event signs. Mr. Spear requested that each sign section be heard separately.

Section A – Agricultural Event signs

Mr. Spear reviewed the request noting that the language requiring uniformity in size of the signs had been stricken.

Council Member Spann questioned how many signs would be allowed with each approved permit. Council Member Wilcox replied that fifteen (15) signs would be allowed and that this number was chosen based on the possible number of intersections in town.

Mayor Burnley then invited public comment.

Doug Clawson, a representative of the Watauga County Nurserymen's Association, spoke about the importance of the Choose and Cut Christmas tree business in this area and expressed the need for directional signs to the approximately thirty participating farms. Mr. Clawson presented board members with the layout of a proposed sign to contain six or seven farm names that might be placed at appropriate intersections for direction.

Section B – Awning Signs

Mr. Spear reviewed the request for the proposed measurement changes for awning signs. There were no questions or comments from the board members or the public.

Section C – Community Event Signs

Mr. Spear reviewed the request and stated that a permit would be required for Community Event Signs; however, he stated that there would not be a permit fee.

Mayor Burnley then invited public comment.

Tony Greene, a member of the Singing Greenes, spoke on behalf of the Gospel Singing Jubilee, an annual event held at the High Country Fairgrounds. Mr. Greene relayed the many difficulties that attendees of the Jubilee have encountered in trying to locate the Fairgrounds due to lack of directional signs. He stated that much revenue is brought to the area by such functions and that there is a great need for signs to direct people to the events.

Steve Brock of Mountaintop Promotions expressed the need for directional signs to art shows.

Rocky Nelson, Watauga County Manager, spoke on behalf of the Gospel Singing Jubilee and the Choose and Cut Christmas tree events, reiterating the need for directional signs.

Mac Forehand spoke in favor of any change that would allow better directions to events to help visitors and tourists.

Jeff Fancher spoke in favor of directional signs for the Gospel Singing Jubilee.

Council Member Mason pointed out that some of the issues with signage fall under NCDOT regulations.

Council Member Spann suggested erecting a permanent sign for the High Country Fairgrounds. Additionally, he felt there is an urgent need for directional signs for the Gospel Singing Jubilee that is currently underway and having difficulty directing people to their location.

Planning Commission Chairperson McRae suggested that written directions and maps be placed at local motels and restaurants.

Council Member Mason questioned why the Gospel Singing Jubilee does not fall under the current Unified Development Ordinance regulations. Mr. Spear replied that the group is not an established non-profit organization.

Mayor Burnley felt that a call of explanation and permission to NCDOT regarding the Gospel Singing Jubilee would be in order and Council Members agreed.

Rocky Nelson stated that he had spoken with Kevin Whittington from NCDOT and was told that DOT would allow a sign to be placed at Food Lion.

After some discussion of proper procedure, Council Member Eggers made a motion to allow the community event directional signs on a one-time basis to alleviate the current situation of the Gospel Singing Jubilee. Council Member Mason wished to clarify that this procedure would be under the current ordinance regulations, not the proposed. Council Member Clawson seconded the motion.

Town Council members voted unanimously to allow the placement of directional signs for the event on a one-time basis.

With no further questions, Mayor Burnley moved to the next case.

CASE NO. RZ2005-12 The Town of Boone attorney has initiated a zoning text amendment to UDO Article II, Part IV *Board of Adjustment*. The proposed amendment would increase the number of alternate members appointed to serve on the Board of Adjustment in order to ensure that a full quorum of (8) members is available. Mr. Spear presented the staff report and invited any questions.

Hearing no questions or comments, Mayor Burnley moved to the next case.

CASE NO. RZ2005-13 Rita Franklin has filed a general use district map amendment request for two lots located on Gilbert Barnes Road. The request is to reclassify .78 acre from R-1, Single Family Residential to R/A, Residential Agriculture. The property is further identified as Watauga County PINs 2901-02-2778-000 and 2901-02-4808-000. Mr. Spear presented the staff report and invited any questions.

With no questions or comments, Mayor Burnley invited Mr. Spear to present the next case.

CASE RZ2005-14 The Town of Boone has initiated map amendment proceedings to rezone the old Glenstone Healthcare property from the current Conditional Use Office/Institutional (CUO/I) zoning district to its previous Single-Family Residential (R-1) zoning district classification. The property is further identified as Watauga County PIN 2910-74-2219-000. Mr. Spear presented the staff report and invited any questions.

Commissioner Phillips asked if an R-1 zoning district would allow a park. Mr. Spear replied that it would. He further stated that R-1, Single-Family Residential was the property's original zoning classification and was compatible with the zoning classifications of the surrounding properties.

With no further questions or comments, Mayor Burnley then moved to the last case.

CASE RZ2005-15 The Town of Boone has initiated a zoning text amendment to UDO Article XX

Landscape Standards. The proposed amendment would reduce tree survey requirements for residential subdivision development. Mr. Spear presented the staff report and invited any questions.

Council Member Eggers felt that the same logic considered in this request should be applied to detention requirements for subdivisions. He further stated that subdivisions are considered commercial construction when the end product is really single-family residences.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further comments, questions or items to come before the Council and Commission, Council Member Clawson made a motion to adjourn the meeting. With all board members in agreement, the meeting ended at 8:21 p.m.

Velma Burnley, Mayor

Brenda Henson, Board Secretary