

MACON COUNTY PLANNING BOARD MINUTES

September 21, 2005

A meeting of the Macon County Planning Board was held on September 21, 2005 at the Macon County Environmental Resource Center. The meeting was called to order at 3:05 pm.

CALL TO ORDER:

Planning Board members present were Ronnie Beale, Lamar Sprinkle, Susan Ervin, Mark West, Evelyn Southard, Larry Stenger, County Planner Stacy Guffey and Planning Assistant Gregory Hunt. Sarah Kucharski from Smoky Mountain News was also present.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Quorum was not present; therefore Chairman Ronnie Beale convened this as an informal meeting to discuss future projects for the Planning Board.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Ronnie Beale updated those present on the adoption of the High Impact Land Use Ordinance that was recently passed by the Board of County Commissioners. Ronnie Beale relayed that Commission Chairman Allan Bryson instructed the Planning Board to present 5 items at the next Board of Commissioners meeting for the Planning Board to work on as their next project.

PUBLIC SESSION:

No one chose to speak.

NEW BUSINESS:

Ronnie Beale started several discussions, first of which dealt with the lack of having a quorum to conduct an official meeting. He talked about maybe the need to change the meeting time, location or dates to help members to be able to attend Planning Board meetings. The discussion continued on how the Planning Board had set a precedent on work they've done and the need to go forward. Ronnie Beale asked if the Planning Board wanted to make a list and go down it one item at a time or should they set an overall long term goal and work points within that goal. Susan Ervin agreed with the thought to present an overall plan to start talks and then go into the overall plan and work on individual pieces of it. Stacy Guffey, County Planner reminded the Planning Board of the top 10 concerns from Macon County citizens during the "Macon Voices" presentation and the need to listen to the public and what they're saying.

Ronnie Beale requested that the Macon County Planning Department get a copy of Buncombe County Subdivision Ordinance for the Planning Board to study and consider as their next project.

Discussion on slope erosion and slope development and what you can and/or can't regulate began. Stacy Guffey highlighted a statistic showing that 61% of landslides in Western North Carolina happened due to development issues.

Discussion then ensued regarding what can be built, where and how you regulate what and where. Mark West brought up the issued of Macon County working with the Town of Franklin and Highlands on utility issues to help with development initiatives.

Ronnie Beale asked the Board members present if the Planning Board should bring out the old Subdivision Ordinance and work on it with amendments and revisions or should they start with a fresh new approach from scratch on a Subdivision Ordinance. Larry Stenger pointed out that problems could arise if the Planning Board addressed a Subdivision Ordinance as their next project.

Ronnie Beale then mentioned the High Impact Land Use Ordinance and items of concern that were left out of it, such as junkyards, mobile home graveyards, animal control and other land use issues. He opened the discussion on if the Planning Board wanted to address these issues or if the Planning Board wanted to just have pile ordinances on everything. Stacy Guffey restated the need to do long term goals of projects and then go back and work on individual line items as previously discussed. Mark West agreed the need is there for long term planning. Ronnie Beale then asked to hear everyone's 5 items they felt should be priority Planning Board projects. All Board members present shared their list. It was agreed by all, after the readings, that Stacy Guffey, County Planner would put together a concise presentation to the Board of Commissioners at their October meeting. The items to be presented are: (1) Ridge Top & Slope Development, (2) Corridor Protection, (3) Junkyard, Mobile Home Graveyards, (4) Water and Sewer, (5) Subdivisions.

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting adjourned at 4:50 p.m.