

BANNER ELK PLANNING BOARD MEETING
MONDAY, 07 DECEMBER 2015
MINUTES

Members Present: Allen Bolick, BR Hoffman, Martha Laura Miller, Meredith Olan, Joel Owen, Penny VonCanon

Staff Present: Zoning Administrator Cheryl Buchanan, Town Manager Rick Owen

Others Present: Rebecca Bolick, Richard Carpenter, Andrew, Sean, Hannah, Corey, Elizabeth Shay, Fred Schmitt, Charles B. VonCanon, Jr.

Chairman Joel Owen called the meeting to order at 5:58 pm. The Chairman opened with the pledge of allegiance to the flag and noted that there was a quorum present.

Consideration of the November 2, 2015 Minutes

Chairman Owen asked if anyone had changes to the minutes from November 2015. Penny VonCanon noted that the Crosby's spell their first names as "Edi and Ric". Mrs. VonCanon also asked if JoAnn McMurray was the President of the Banner Elk Chamber and not the Avery Chamber. Zoning Administrator Cheryl Buchanan confirmed this was correct and she noted this change as well. Meredith Olan moved to approve the minutes with the noted changes mentioned by Penny VonCanon. BR Hoffman seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous and the motion carried.

Presentation by ASU Planning Students – Content Based Signage

Ms. Buchanan introduced the students from ASU's Planning class. Richard Carpenter was the spokesman for the group and stated that they had taken a look at the Town of Boone's UDO and had addressed some ways to make Boone's sign ordinance more user friendly while looking at violations of content based signs. Mr. Carpenter said that the format that the Town of Banner Elk uses was better and had suggested that the Town of Boone put in some better definitions and use a table format for classifying their signs by zoning districts. Mr. Carpenter commented that Banner Elk's sign ordinance was very easy to follow and was fairly comprehensive. When asked, Mr. Carpenter said that he could not really find any signs that were in violation of the Supreme Court Ruling in Banner Elk's ordinance. The Planning class offered to take a look at Banner Elk's sign ordinance to see if there were any areas it could use some help. The Planning Board and Professor Shay were amenable to this. The Planning Board looks back to hearing from them.

Demolition Request – Mark Minor – Carmen Guy House

Mark Minor was not present at the meeting but Zoning Administrator Cheryl Buchanan stated that she would be able to speak to this request. Mr. Minor has under contract the property at 155

Banner Road; which is also known as Carmen Guy's property. Mrs. Guy is ill and needs to sell the property in order to pay for her care. Mr. Minor owns property adjoining this parcel and has desired to purchase it and build a commercial development. Mr. Minor appeared before the Preserve America Committee (PAC) and explained that he would like to demolish the old house on the property as it would require too much attention to bring it up to code. The house was built in the 1920's and has some asbestos issues as well. The PAC made a recommendation to the Planning Board to allow Mr. Minor to demolish the house as long as he agreed to salvage as much of the materials as he could.

The biggest concern expressed by the members of the Planning Board was how the property would be left once the house is torn down. Ms. Buchanan suggested that it be put back as a grassed lot and then mown during the good weather months. Ms. Buchanan stated that she felt this was reasonable until Mr. Minor is actually ready to build and she would check with the Town's Attorney before making any stipulations. Ms. Buchanan said she would check with the Town's Attorney as to the ability to do this.

Martha Laura Miller moved to approve with the following restrictions:

1. All efforts are to be made that all architecturally significant materials are to be salvaged and reused;
2. All debris is to be removed;
3. Add soil and reseed lot; and
4. Retain and maintain the split rail fence.

Meredith Olan seconded. The vote was unanimous and the motion carried.

Banner Elk Chamber of Commerce – Kiosks in Town

Allen Bolick was present to represent the Banner Elk Chamber of Commerce. Mr. Bolick told the Board that the Chamber would like to erect two (2) kiosks in Town to help tourists find their way around town and to promote Banner Elk at the same time. One kiosk would be located at the Chamber of Commerce on Main Street. The reason for this is that the Chamber is manned by volunteers and is not always open. This would help tourists find their way around Banner Elk during the times the Chamber is closed. This kiosk would be larger than the second and would house a map of Banner Elk and its ETJ area and have additional space for Chamber Businesses to advertise events for themselves. The second kiosk would be located at Town Hall and would only have the map. The kiosks would be made from cedar and Plexiglas.

Since these are intended for informational purposes only, the Board's census was that the one located at the Chamber could include a calendar of events but the Board did not want to see it used for advertising for businesses. The Board did not feel this fit the informational category and was concerned that a lot of other businesses in town would want the same thing.

Meredith Olan moved to approve the two (2) informational kiosks as per Section 607 (9) Informational signs to be located at the Banner Elk Chamber and Town Hall. The kiosk at the Chamber may also display a calendar of events as well as the map. Penny VonCanon seconded. The vote was unanimous and the motion carried.

Other Business

Cheryl Buchanan informed the Board that she had been approached by a couple of projects requesting that the Planning Board review the use of vinyl siding again. Buchanan was approached by the owner of Highland Rugs out of Hillsville, Virginia and he is looking at the property formerly known as Apple Hill. Ms. Buchanan met with the owner and his architect on Wednesday, December 2nd and they had left some samples for the Board to look over. This building is proposed to be 4,800sf and will be strictly for commercial use. Ms. Buchanan did advise them that they would need to include some architectural relief on a building this size, especially knowing that the longest side would be facing the main road. Ms. Buchanan passed the samples and a letter from the Architect around for the members to review.

The second request is coming from Allen Bolick and the Historic Banner Elk School. Mr. Bolick then talked to the Board about why he believes the use of this product would be better than any of the alternatives for repairing the section that houses the cafeteria and Mayland Community College (MCC) spaces.

The Planning Board discussed many different scenarios and decided that they needed more time to think about the use of vinyl siding and would be willing to meet in January 2016. The Chairman asked if the representatives from Highland Rug would be willing to attend and Ms. Buchanan said she would contact them to make sure they would be willing.

With no further business, Penny VonCanon moved to adjourn. BR Hoffman seconded. All were in agreement and the meeting came to a close at 8:46 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Cheryl Buchanan, Zoning Administrator