

BANNER ELK PLANNING BOARD MEETING
MONDAY, 07 JANUARY 2019
MINUTES

Members Present: Aaron Barlow, Allen Bolick, Jacki Lecka, Meredith Olan, Joel Owen, Penny VonCanon

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

Chairman Joel Owen called the meeting to order at 6:03 pm. Mr. Owen opened with the pledge of allegiance to the flag.

Consideration of the November 2018 Minutes

Penny VonCanon motioned to approve the minutes for the November 2018 meeting as submitted. Allen Bolick seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous and the motion carried.

New Business

Site Plan – Landsdowne Village, LLC

Zoning Administrator Cheryl Buchanan introduced a site plan for a planned commercial development at what is best known as the old Cannon Hospital site. The name the developer is using is Landsdowne Village, LLC. Ms. Buchanan noted that there are a few factors that will need to be addressed before this can come to the Town for consideration. The first is that this plan represents two (2) parcels, and a recombination plat will need to be signed off on and recorded. Second, Mr. W.C. Gentry has two easements on the property. The concern about the easements is that they are a meets and bounds description, a definitive location on the map and cannot be arbitrarily moved. A legal understanding between Mr. Gentry and Mr. Cuff will have to come about before the current plan can be implemented. And lastly, NCDOT will play an important role in the design and the use of the entrances and exits. The plan shows the shifting of the entrance on the eastern side and this will have to be approved by NCDOT.

Present was Paul Pennell and Maggie Watts of Urban Design Partners in Charlotte. Steve Cuff who represents Landsdowne Village, LLC was absent notably from the meeting. The site plan depicts the different uses that are being proposed on the site. Two professional office buildings, a 120 – 150 room hotel, a restaurant and 19 rental cabins are what is currently proposed for that site. The proposed professional office buildings are located near the entrance to the property along Highway 184 and are shown as 2-story buildings. The proposed hotel will be built where the old hospital stands. The restaurant is located off to the right side of the hotel and the 19 cabins are scattered behind the hotel.

Penny asked about the third parking lot located just behind the office buildings. Mr. Pennell told her it is an additional parking lot and will be where the helipad is located. Joel Owen referenced the flooding that transpires on the property from time to time as a consideration that perhaps the commercial office buildings could be moved back and the parking lot could be located in that flood area. Chairman Owen also suggested that the office spaces could be built so that the upper levels could have a separate entrance for handicapped people. Mr. Pennell said that they would be taking

the flood zone into consideration and had planned to build in such a way as to be able to amend the flood zone maps. Mr. Pennell also told the board that the office buildings would have elevators for the handicapped. When asked, Mr. Pennell said there were plans for medical offices, dental, lawyers, and perhaps an urgent care center for these spaces. Aaron Barlow said he did not want to see office spaces built that were going to sit empty and was concerned there might not be enough business to support two (2) 16,000sf office buildings.

Penny VonCanon asked what a table top crossing was. Paul Pennell said it is a raised area that is used as a traffic calming device, to slow traffic down. Aaron Barlow stated that he had been counting the parking and was concerned that there wasn't enough spaces for what is needed. Mr. Pennell said that he didn't want to create a sea of vehicles and that some of the uses would allow for a rotation of parking. Such as the office spaces may be busy during the day but the hotel parking would pick up in the evenings and at night when people were sleeping and the office spaces were closed. Mr. Pennell was asked how many rooms was the hotel looking to provide and he answered from 120 to 150, but most likely 120. The brand of the hotel hasn't been decided, but there are a couple that are interested and are in negotiations with Mr. Cuff.

Solid waste sites were mentioned as well as the welfare of the wildlife that are present in the area. Mr. Pennell said this had been taken into consideration. Maggie Watts offered that the placement of the rental units could change, that they weren't set in stone. Aaron Barlow mentioned that traffic on Woolly Worm weekend is intimidating and could cause problems for those staying at the hotel. Ms. Buchanan mentioned that the hotel will most likely be within walking distance of the festival and that could work in the hotel's occupants favor. Mr. Pennell said that he had also considered overflow parking could be utilized by making parallel parking along the entrance and exit roads.

Mr. Barlow asked if there were any size restrictions to the rental units. Ms. Buchanan answered not as long as they meet building code requirements and that they could vary in size from one to two bedroom without any trouble. Mr. Barlow asked about the basement and what the plans for that were. Mr. Pennell mentioned a few uses but said the full extent was to be determined. The attendants were asked about exterior materials. Mr. Pennell said that Mr. Cuff is looking for a mountain feel to the exterior of the buildings. Joel Owen asked if Town Manager Rick Owen had any comments on the project. Mr. Rick Owen said that NCDOT and Mr. Gentry's easements will play a bigger part in this project than we think.

Penny VonCanon motioned to approve the site plan for Landsdowne Village, LLC for a Planned Commercial Development with a second by Allen Bolick. The vote was unanimous and the motion carried.

Old Business

Ms. Buchanan told the Board that she was working on having a planning session for the February meeting. More specifically, she is looking at working on exploring where the Streetscape plan goes from the 1999 approved version, the majority of which has been built out

With no further business, Meredith Olan moved to adjourn with a second by Allen Bolick. The vote was unanimous and the meeting came to an end at 7:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Cheryl Buchanan, Zoning Administrator, Town of Banner Elk