

Macon County Planning Board Minutes

June 17, 2010

Call to Order: Chairman Lewis Penland called meeting to order at 5:35 pm.

Members: Lewis Penland, Mike Gruberman, Mark West, Alan Marsh, Larry Stenger, Al Slagle, Lamar Sprinkle, Jimmy Tate

Macon County Staff: Derek Roland, Jack Morgan, Matt Mason, Mike Breedlove

Media: Franklin Press

Approval of Minutes: Alan Marsh made motion to approve minutes, Mike Gruberman seconded this motion

Public Comment:

Liaison Reports:

MCWC- Did not meet for month of May

Transportation Steering- (Jack Morgan) Morgan informed the board that the Transportation Steering Committee met on June 17, 2010. At this meeting, presentations were given by Mike Reese of the NCDOT on Access Management Strategies, Kim Angel on Macon County Transit, Mike Gruberman on pedestrian mobility via sidewalks throughout the Towns of Franklin and Highlands, and lastly a presentation on Macon County Bike Routes was given by Pam Forshee. The Transportation Steering Committee continues to move forward as they work toward completing the Macon County Comprehensive Transportation Plan.

Comprehensive Plan- (Derek Roland)- Reported that 4 of 5 committees had submitted final recommendations at this point. Roland informed the board when all committees had submitted recommendations, he would bring all of them before the board. The board will then discuss the recommendations and decide on a format that each should be put in to provide uniformity throughout the plan.

Public Education Process: Matt Mason provided the audience in attendance with photos of well known, recognizable slopes within Macon County. The percentage slope of each photographed area was attached to each of the photos, in order to give citizens a better understanding of what slopes the proposed ordinance will regulate.

New Business:

- Jimmy Tate from the Goldmine area in Macon County was introduced as the newest addition to the Macon County Planning Board.
- Penland continued discussion on inviting young people/students to sit on the Planning Board as non-voting members. Penland reminded the committee that it will be these people who “clean up our mess.” Suggestions came from the board to consider candidates from the WCU construction management, political science or environmentally based programs. SCC will also be considered when choosing candidates to fill these positions. Mike Gruberman suggested Summer Woodard who is currently a graduate student at Western Carolina University interning with the town of Franklin to be considered to fill this position. Roland will begin contacting the University’s.

Unfinished Business: Slagle gave a report on the Slope Development Workgroup. The workgroup has met two times since the last board meeting. At one meeting, Dan Marks, a geotechnical engineer gave recommendations to the workgroup on the document they had produced. At the next meeting these recommendations were discussed and an information sheet was developed. Russ Stevenson, a Macon County developer also attended this meeting and discussed the cost of geo-technical engineering.

Slagle then introduced the members of the workgroup: Susan Ervin, Al Slagle, John Becker, Barry Clinton, Paul Shuler, Stacy Guffey and Paul Shuler.

Public Session:

Lamar Marshall- Safety and welfare of the public should come before private gain. Private property rights do not extend beyond ones property line. Somebody always lives downstream and that somebody has rights. Do the right thing to make the mountains safe and streams clean. The planning board should follow other progressive county’s who have developed successful slope ordinances.

Kathleen Marshall- If slope failure and loss of life is possible maybe we could put a number on the loss of life. I hope the board constructs these regulations as if the person you love the most lives below the development the decisions you make will regulate.

Wally Welch- Property owners are resistant to any new regulations that come along. We don’t tell people they can’t ride motorcycles because they are dangerous. We don’t regulate waterfalls and people die on those, why should slopes be any different? What is

the process for developing this ordinance? *Penland informed the citizen that we are still in an education process.* If regulation is a last resort, it should be site specific.

Trish Severign- We are here because of the natural beauty of the mountains. Steep Slope regulations should have screening and lighting provisions for homes built on ridge tops.

Norma Ivy- Realtors must inform people when they move in about Steep Slopes. Often times these people do not know about possible slide hazards. Aside from that there needs to be other rules and regs that address steep slope development.

Ron Cabe- Slope Regs should be aimed at developers. Roadways are continually put in that are unacceptable. There needs to be regulations an developers to do things right.

Paul Cowsen- We have a tremendous mess in Cowee Community resulting from the Wildflower development. Because we have no guidance developers are doing what they want. We need to be ahead of this issue when the economy picks back up.

Isley- Many places in the County that show up in red on the maps are solid granite. These maps put a lot of property unusable in Macon County. We must look at the cost this ordinance will put on the taxpayers.

Charlie- It is crucial to provide input throughout the Ordinance process. If this ordinance legislates land out of usage is the board going to tell the tax assessors to drop the value on these lands?

Ronnie Haven- You need to test the red areas and show the people what it is we are trying to regulate.

Next Meeting Date: July 15, 2010 @ Pine Grove Community

Meeting Adjourned: Allan Marsh made motion to adjourn, Lamar Sprinkle seconded this Motion. Meeting was adjourned at 6:30 pm by Chairman Lewis Penland.