

Macon County Planning Board Minutes

July 21, 2011

Call to Order: Chairman Lewis Penland called the meeting to order at 5:03 pm. in the Macon County Health Department

Members: Lewis Penland, Mike Grubermann, Kevin Corbin, Mark West, Alan Marsh, Karl Gillespie, Jimmy Tate, Larry Stenger, Al Slagle, Bobby Koppers, Jimmy Goodman, Susan Ervin, Lamar Sprinkle

Staff: Derek Roland, Jack Morgan, Matt Mason

Media: Franklin Press

Approval of Minutes: Alan Marsh made motion to approve minutes from June 30, 2011 meeting, Susan Ervin seconded this motion. Motion carried unanimously

Liaison Reports: Neither MCWC nor the Transportation Steering Committee has met since the June 30th meeting. Roland commented that the Rough Draft of the Macon County Comprehensive Transportation Plan was submitted to the Commission at their July meeting. Commissioner Koppers then informed the board that the Public Hearing on this document is set for August 9, 2011.

New Business:

Unfinished Business: Discussion of Recommendations for Slope Ordinance:

Explanation of Slope Movement Hazard Maps by Rick Wooten of the NCGS
Rick Wooten made a presentation to the Macon County Planning Board, explaining the process taken by the North Carolina Geological Survey to create the Slope Movement Hazard maps for Macon County. Wooten addressed all questions from board members that were asked during his presentation.

Following the presentation by Wooten and a short public question period, Chairman Penland suggested that each member of the Planning Board and Planning Department share their thoughts regarding the proposed slope regulations as they are written at this time. The following is a summary of each person's response:

Jimmy Tate: While Tate felt something needs to happen with regards to development on slopes, he felt the current proposal is “overkill” and needs to be simplified.

Mike Grubermann: Grubermann stated the biggest problem he has is the LiDAR maps. Grubermann alluded to the Flood Maps that the Town of Franklin is currently disputing, which were also developed using the LiDAR system.

Mark West: West was concerned about the LiDAR mapping system. West felt that the board is making the process of regulating slope development more difficult than it needs to be.

Jimmy Goodman: Felt the document could be simplified. Goodman felt the maps should be totally removed from the ordinance, as they are the product of “subjective reasoning”.

Al Slagle: Slagle reminded the board that LiDAR was only being used as a screening tool to place sites into slope categories. There will also be an appeals process, for those who wish to dispute the maps. Slagle felt that the proposal which has been presented to the board is a “minimum of what needs to be done”.

Susan Ervin: Ervin reiterated the point made by Slagle that the maps are being used as a screening mechanism. Ervin stated that the maps are used as a screening tool, allowing those who feel like they have a problem to get the expert advice they need.

Alan Marsh: Agreed with Al Slagle

Lamar Sprinkle: Did not feel the Slope Movement Hazard Maps were created to tie an ordinance to. Sprinkle felt an ordinance could be created that did not contain the Slope Movement Hazard Maps. Sprinkle also felt that no slopes under 40% should be regulated. In closing, Sprinkle stated that he was “totally against” the proposed regulations.

Larry Stenger: Felt that the Slope Movement Hazard Maps should be used as an educational component rather than a regulatory component. This could come in the form of a brochure which could be reviewed by homeowners prior to beginning construction on a slope. Stenger did not feel comfortable however, using the Slope Movement Hazard Maps as a regulatory device.

Jack Morgan: Felt we do need “something”. Morgan felt the maps should only be used as a planning tool. Morgan felt the maps should only be referenced in the ordinance if “you have a property that will need design”.

Derek Roland: Reminded the board that “we are on a deadline and it is time to start making some decisions on things such as the Slope Movement Hazard Maps”.

Matt Mason: Mason felt that the things such as the influence zone contained within the proposed regulations should be simplified so that people can better understand it. Mason was also concerned that the new document proposes regulations on slopes less than 30% when he had told people in presentations earlier that these slopes would remain unregulated by a Slope Development Ordinance. Mason is also concerned that the proposed regulations contain no provisions for “fixing slides once they occur”. In closing Mason also felt that the maps are “a good tool but not the only tool”.

Lewis Penland: Penland felt that the maps are one tool that we have to use. Penland went on to say that we are very limited on available property in Macon County and need to be sure that we get the “highest and best use from all of it”. In close, Penland asked the board to imagine the maps as a marketing tool that could be advertised to prospective homebuyers outside of Macon County. It would show the citizens, according to Penland, that Macon County is concerned about the safety of our citizens.

Jimmy Goodman made a motion that the Slope Document be sent to the county commission at this time, as it is. Lamar Sprinkle seconded this motion. Motion failed 8-2. The board will continue reviewing the proposed document.

Public Comment: Vic Drummond passed out a document that shows his responses to slope development FAQ’s as posted on the Macon County Website. Drummond also commented that the picture on the slope website was taken in Marble North Carolina. Drummond then passed out what he referred to as a “Freedom of Choice Proposal”. Slagle suggested that Mike Boggan’s house be placed on the site instead.

Next Meeting Date: July 26, 2011 at 5:00 pm. Meeting will be held in Meeting Room(s) A&B of the Macon County Health Department located at 1834 Lakeside Drive.

Meeting Adjourned: Alan Marsh made motion to adjourn meeting at 7:05 pm. Al Slagle Second