

Draft

Planning and Zoning Board

Minutes

Thursday, May 19, 2016

5:30 p.m.

The Blowing Rock Planning and Zoning Board met on Thursday, May, 2016 for their regularly scheduled meeting. Vice-Chairman Carter called the meeting to order at 5:40 pm. Members present were Kim Hartley, Natalie Bovino, Lisa Stripling, Genie Starnes, Mike Page and George Ellis. Members David Harwood and Joe Papa were absent. Staff members present were Planning Director Kevin Rothrock and Planning & Zoning Support Specialist Tammy Bentley.

Vice-Chairman Carter asked if there were changes to the agenda. *Ms. Starnes made a motion to accept the agenda as presented, seconded by Mr. Ellis.* **All members were in favor of the motion.**

Vice-Chairman Carter asked if there were any changes to the April 21, 2016 meeting minutes. There were none. *Ms. Hartley made a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Mr. Page.* **All members were in favor of the motion.**

CUP 2015-02 Moody Building Renovation - Amendment

Mr. Rothrock gave the staff report and PowerPoint presentation. RWL 1, LLC is requesting an amendment to the conditional use permit that was approved in 2015. The Applicant, Mr. Bob Lovern, is planning to scale down the size of the project and preserve more of the existing front of the building. Mr. Rothrock highlighted the changes on the site plans and elevations, including one-way entrance from Sunset Drive, and changes in the parking layout. Mr. Rothrock added that the west side landscaping buffer requirement waived in the 2015 CUP is duplicated to fit into the new plan and that there is the potential of a mural being installed on the west wall.

Mr. Page asked if the variance is on the approved plan. Mr. Rothrock confirmed. Mr. Page asked if the setback on the proposed deck is more or less in line with existing properties. Mr. Rothrock confirmed. Mr. Page asked if the west side screening is the same as was approved in 2015. Mr. Rothrock confirmed.

Vice-Chairman Carter asked if the building addition will be farther off Sunset than before. Mr. Rothrock said yes. Vice-Chairman Carter also asked if the drainage on the left side and storm water retention were discussed before. Mr. Rothrock replied yes and that the Town Engineer and the Town have no problem with the storm water drainage collection as there is adequate infrastructure.

Jason Gaston, Engineer for the project addressed the Board. He said that the new plan has more landscaping, green and open space, and livability space than the approved plan. He added that the parking design improvements include 2 golf cart spaces. Mr. Gaston reiterated that this plan has less building addition than the approved plan, the building additions are further from the road and that the building mural is in keeping with the character of the building. Mr. Gaston added that Mr. Lovern is foregoing profit to keep the historic nature of the building and plans to retain many of the original elements and materials in the building.

Vice-Chairman Carter asked if the porches will be used for dining. Mr. Gaston said that there is no tenant identified, but if the building is a restaurant that he anticipates that this area will be used for dining. Vice-Chairman Carter asked the original and current square footage of the building. Mr. Rothrock said the current square footage is 3,035. Mr. Lovern said the west side deck was 20' and it is now 12' and that the east side deck was planned for the back of the building previously. He added that there is not much difference in the total square footage. Mr. Lovern said that this plan is much more in keeping with the preservation of the building.

Mr. Ellis applauded Mr. Lovern for trying to maintain the historical value of the building. He asked the elevation of the east deck. Mr. Lovern said the east deck is about 2 to 2 ½ feet above grade and that the west deck is several feet above grade.

Vice-Chairman Carter asked if the future expansion of the building is being considered in this request. Mr. Rothrock said that we are not considering any future increase in square footage in this request. Mr. Rothrock added that the back portion of the original building had been removed.

Vice-Chairman Carter asked Mr. Lovern if he understood that future building expansion is not part of this conditional use permit and that it would have to be brought before the Board again. Mr. Lovern confirmed that this is his understanding.

Mr. Lovern said that he wants the mural approved in this conditional use permit. Mr. Rothrock said that is a separate process and that he does not know if the Planning Board will be involved in that process.

Vice-Chairman Carter asked if the mural will be painted on the building. Mr. Lovern said yes unless he finds an antique sign or similar item. Mr. Lovern added that he wants the location of the mural approved in this permit and that the content could be approved later.

Vice-Chairman Carter said that the mural is not a sign, but artwork, and what is the approval process for that. Mr. Rothrock said he would have to check on the process. Mr. Rothrock said that he thinks it can be part of the permit, but it would have to be vague.

Ms. Bovino said that if it is approved, but left vague, would the Planning Board have input later. She added that she thinks not. Mr. Rothrock said that he is not sure; that he could not recall the approval process of the mural on the former Capel Rug building.

Mr. Page said that the mural would be a very visible, identifiable part of the building and other people may not think it should be there. He asked if a public meeting on the mural would be appropriate. Mr. Rothrock replied yes, absolutely.

Ms. Bovino said she was cautious about approving a 'vague mural'.

Mr. Lovern asked the Board what they are comfortable with.

Ms. Bovino said she loves the new plan and wants to approve it without the mural. She added that she doesn't know how to include it. Mr. Rothrock said the mural complicates this issue. Ms. Bovino agreed.

Vice-Chairman Carter said the he does not think anything is being gained by approving the mural.

Mr. Lovern said that the space will not be blank wall if there is no mural. Ms. Starnes asked him if it would change his vision. Mr. Lovern said that this changes the character of the building and that he wants to keep a 'Mast Store' type character.

Ms. Starnes asked if the location of the mural is approved, could a public hearing on the content be held later.

Mr. Ellis said that the mural is a procedural issue and agrees with the other Board members that it should not be included. Mr. Lovern said he is ok with taking the mural approval out of the permit. Mr. Ellis said that he thinks the mural will be a sticking point. Mr. Lovern asked if the Board could indicate that they like the mural. Ms. Bovino said that could be included in the minutes that the Board likes the mural idea.

Mr. Page made a motion to approve as presented. Vice-Chairman Carter asked Mr. Rothrock to confirm the adequacy of the parking before a motion is considered. Mr. Rothrock said there is more than enough parking.

Vice-Chairman Carter asked if there were any letters from neighbors. Mr. Rothrock shared a letter of support for the plan from Jim and Iris Thirtle of 110 Sunset Drive.

Vice-Chairman Carter asked what type of metal roofing will be used. Mr. Lovern said that he found a supplier in Arizona that offers an 'aged' metal roof and that he has requested a sample. Vice-Chairman Carter asked if the metal roofing that is on the building now will remain. Mr. Lovern said yes and added that he wants to match the existing roof as closely as possible.

Ms. Lynn Hill of 1966 Main Street, Blowing Rock told the Board that she recalled that the mural by Robert Johnson, on the Capel Rug building, was a contest sponsored by BRAHM and perhaps they could partner with Mr. Lovern for the mural on the Moody Building. She added that the 100th anniversary of the building in 3 years would be the perfect time to have the contest.

Mr. Dean Eisenberg of 153 Sunset Drive said that he is very excited about this plan and he thinks it will be a great draw for Sunset Drive. He added that he appreciates that Mr. Lovern is sacrificing profit in order to maintain the historical significance of this building.

With no further public comment *Ms. Bovino made a motion to close the public comment, seconded by Ms. Stripling. All members were in favor of the motion.*

Mr. Ellis made a motion to approve and forward the request to Town Council as presented, but not to include approval of the placement of a mural. Seconded by Ms. Starnes. All members were in favor of the motion.

Other Business

With no further business, *Ms. Starnes made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Ms. Stripling. All members were in favor of the motion.*

Vice-Chairman Carter adjourned the meeting at 6:45 pm.

Vice-Chairman Wes Carter

Tammy Bentley
Planning & Zoning Support Specialist