

Cashiers Area Community Planning Council Minutes

February 22, 2021

9:00 a.m.

Village Green (Common Hall) & Virtual

Members	Present	Absent	Members	Present	Absent	Members	Present	Absent
David Bond	X		Robin Ashmore	X		Michael Cox	X	
Bob Dews		X	Mark Letson	X		Deborah Townsend Stewart	X	
Glenn Ubertino	X							

Staff Present

Michael Poston- Planning Director
John Jeleniewski- Senior Planner
Heather Baker- County Attorney
Allison Kelley- Administrative Assistant

Others Present

John Noor, Attorney

Call to Order

Chairman Michael Cox called the meeting to order at 9:15 a.m. and a quorum was present.

Additions to Agenda

Robin Ashmore made a motion to approve the agenda as written. Mark Letson seconded the motion, and it carried unanimously.

New Business

a) Special Use Permit: Cashiers Village

Chairman Cox re-opened the Public Hearing at 9:16 a.m.

Mr. Poston presented to the Council a letter received by the County from Craig Justus that is the acting council for the applicant. The letter is a formal withdraw of the Cashiers Village application. In addition, he asked the Chairman to admit the letter into evidence for the record. Mr. Cox admitted the letter into evidence, and the letter was allowed into the record.

David Bond made a motion to close the Public Hearing at 9:17 a.m. Deborah Stewart seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

b) Call for Public Hearing for text amendment to the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) Article IX Section 9.3 Cashiers commercial area Figure 9.1 & 9.2

Mr. Poston stated at the last Council meeting they called for a public hearing regarding the above text amendment. Staff could not meet the deadline as the dated graphic made it difficult to amend the figures in the required time for this meeting. He stated staff had determined how to amend the figures, and are prepared to move forward with the text amendment. Mr. Poston stated the figures have an error of a "maximum building size," and the text did not intend to have a "maximum building size". In addition, the error in the graphic occurred during the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) adoption process. Staff would like to fix this error in the ordinance, and clarify that the standard does not exist. The Cashiers Area Commercial District's only applied standard is to address what building square footage would trigger the special use application requirement, and Quasi-Judicial Hearing before the Council. The error was not intended to occur as the Council has not approved a maximum building size, and staff would like to move forward and correct this technical error. In addition, Mr. Poston stated that this correction is a legislative process and the Council is making a recommendation, and could have community conversations, respond to emails, and answer questions regarding the text amendment.

Mr. Poston asked the Council to consider holding the public hearing virtually due to the restrictions of number of people allowed in venues during the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic. Holding the meeting virtually will allow more community members to participate from the safety of their homes. Heather Baker stated under the legislation that the general assembly passed during the Covid-19 pandemic for remote meetings if one member is remote for a public hearing it is required to allow 24 hours of additional public comment before the Council can make a decision. Mr. Cox inquired and clarified that the Council would have to hold a second meeting to make a decision. Mr. Poston stated that was correct, the Council would hold a second meeting regarding the text amendment and it could be held virtually. Ms. Baker stated in these types of meetings the Board of Commissioners would recess the meeting for a few days, then meet again to discuss and address the issue and officially close the meeting. The Council scheduled a virtual public hearing for March 22, 2021 at 5:00 p.m.

In addition, Mr. Poston informed the Council that staff would also present at the next meeting feedback received from the community regarding the Quasi-Judicial process for large-scale projects. This process does not allow for much community input, and staff would present potential thoughts on how the Council could address these issues to allow for more community involvement.

Ms. Baker informed the Council they had a member from the community that would like to make a public comment if the Council would allow. The Council unanimously agreed to allow for public comment.

Public Comment

- Craig Pendergrast stated he had emailed the Council to suggest that instead of simply deleting the text that is contended to be a mistake, there should be deliberation of what to substitute it with. He would like the Council to consider when holding the public hearing the broader but highly relevant subject. Mr. Pendergrast invited the Council to make a substitute motion for the County to retain a planning consultant, and conduct community meetings to review the Cashiers zoning ordinance including the question of building size. In addition, he stated the ordinance states that buildings are to be small in size and scale, and even if the building size limit is a mistake it is consistent with the ordinance. He stated he believes the text should be replaced with something more appropriate if the community, Council, Board, and Commissioners deems appropriate.

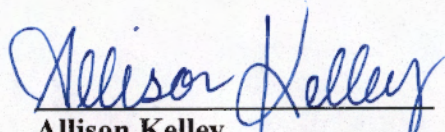
However, the considered changed should be done through a good planning process rather than just a wave of a wand.

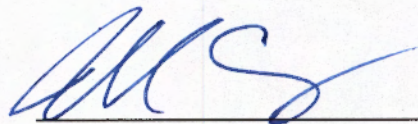
- Paul Anderson stated he emailed the Council the day before the meeting stating his position on the proposed text amendment, and he agrees with Mr. Pendergrast that they should not simply delete with no consideration of limiting building sizes in Cashiers. In addition, it is important to have a planning process that would address this topic, and determine specific guidance for future development.

Adjournment

With no further business to discuss, Deborah Stewart made a motion to adjourn. Robin Ashmore seconded the motion, and the meeting adjourned at 9:29 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,


Allison Kelley
Administrative Assistant


Michael Cox
Cashiers Planning Council Chairman