

MINUTES OF THE WHITSETT PLANNING BOARD
March 4, 2009
Whitsett Town Hall

The monthly meeting of the Whitsett Planning Board was held at 7:00 p.m., Wednesday, March 4, 2009 at the Whitsett Town Hall. In attendance: Board Chairman Bob Maccia, Board Vice Chairman Joe Wheeler, Board members Ella Efird, Lee Greeson, and Board alternate Homer Moser. Absent: Board member Patrick Hickey, Jr., Board alternate Paul Lewis, and Council member liaison Jerry Rice. Also present were Town Administrator/Enforcement Officer Gary Deal, Guilford County Planner Tiki Bigelow, and Rock Creek Record reporter Jamie Kennedy.

Planning Board Chairman Bob Maccia called the meeting to order, noting that a quorum was present; and then seated Board alternate Homer Moser to vote.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Adoption of Minutes

Planning Board Chairman Bob Maccia asked for any changes to the minutes from the Planning Board meeting on February 4, 2009. Motion made by Board member Ella Efird to accept the minutes of the February 4 meeting as presented; motion seconded by Board member Lee Greeson. Adoption of the minutes carried by unanimous vote.

2. Development of Future Land-Use Plan – Tiki Bigelow

Board Chairman Maccia officially welcomed Guilford County Planner Tiki Bigelow to the meeting, and remarked that although some discussion with questions answered had occurred before tonight's meeting had been called to order, some issues may still remain to be addressed. Briefly, Tiki Bigelow reiterated that the objective of a land-use plan is to depict the desired zoning and future development of the town over the next 5, 10, 15 years.

The plan is a theoretical document that serves as a guide for those who want to enter or develop within the Town conveying where their proposed use may be more likely favorable and approved by the Town. The Town's ultimate controlling means is still the application process, whereby the interested party shall submit an application, then be reviewed by the Planning Board, with action recommended to the Town Council, then scheduled for public hearing, with final action for approval/disapproval determined by the Council.

Further, the document is a continual evolving project where every update would be forwarded to the County for production of the latest land-use/zoning map for review by the Planning Board and further updates as deemed and approved.

3. Recommended Conditional Use Amendments, Articles 3 and 4

Board Chairman Maccia asked Town Administrator Gary Deal to preside over this portion of the meeting to explain recommended changes to ordinances on conditional-use zoning and special-use permitting. For months, Bob Maccia and Gary Deal had sought a clearer understanding of the terms—that is, differences and case applications—from Ginger Booker of PTCOG, who had laid the groundwork and assisted the Town with its original record book of development ordinances in the early 1990's.

Finally, amidst the confusion, deciphering of rules, the picture became focused with the result being that before the Board for discussion. Town Administrator Deal then walked those present through page-by-page of a marked-up packet of ordinance book Articles 3 and 4. [Copies of the numerous pages are part of the official file of these minutes.] Deal summarized by stating that only the language changes—additions, deletions, revisions—would be subject to public hearing; not the movement of existing text; and summoned the Board to accept the changes and recommend them to Town Council for public hearing scheduling.

Following that, a motion was made by Board member Lee Greeson to accept the changes proposed for Articles 3 and 4, and recommend those revisions to the Town Council for consideration. Motion seconded by Board member Ella Efird; and a unanimous vote carried the motion.

4. Proposed Ordinance on Prohibiting Sex Offenders from Entering Parks and Recreational Facilities

Board Chairman Maccia stated that following review, Town attorney Bill Trevorrow had provided the final version of the proposed ordinance on banning registered sex offenders from Town-owned and operated parks and recreational facilities, namely the ball field, walking track and playground area adjacent to the Town Hall building. Maccia recapped that the ordinance came to Whitsett by way of the Town of Summerfield who had modeled their adopted ordinance after the ordinance implemented by the City of Greensboro.

Chairman Maccia stated that the ordinance would be enforced by the Guilford County Sheriff's Office; and added that even though there are no known sex offenders in the Town of Whitsett, it would be a way of protecting and covering the Town against any such offenses on Town property. In comparison, Maccia likened the document to the recently-adopted ordinance on Whitsett's eligibility in the National Flood Insurance Program, whereby residents are entitled to purchase flood insurance even though no land in the Town lies in a flood-prone area.

Why, therefore, would the Town not want to adopt an ordinance towards safety? And, with that, Maccia encouraged the Board to act on recommending the ordinance to the Town Council for approval.

A motion was readily made by Board Vice Chairman Joe Wheeler to accept the ordinance as written and recommend Town Council action. The motion was seconded by Board member Ella Efird; and motion passed unanimously.

5. Any Other Old Business

Board Chairman Maccia asked for any other old business; and there was none.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Any New Business

Chairman Maccia asked for any other new business; and there was none.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business before the Board, Planning Board Chairman Bob Maccia invited a motion to adjourn. Motion made by Board member Ella Efird to adjourn; motion seconded by seated Board Vice Chairman Joe Wheeler. By unanimous vote, the March 4 meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

The next meeting of the Whitsett Planning Board is scheduled for 7:00 p.m., Wednesday, April 1 at the Town Hall.

/s/

/s/

Jo Hesson, Town Clerk

Bob Maccia, Planning Board Chairman

APPROVED: July 1, 2009

[**NOTE:** With no quorum present at the April 1 Planning Board meeting; and the subsequent May and June meetings cancelled, minutes could not be approved until July.]