

**TOWN OF BLACK MOUNTAIN
HOUSING COMMISSION
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
November 17, 2009**

The **Black Mountain Housing Commission** held its regular monthly meeting on **Tuesday, November 17, 2009 at 10:00am** in the Town Hall at 160 Midland Avenue, Black Mountain, N.C.

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order with the follow members present:

Joanne Brannon, Chair
Connie Pruitt, Vice Chair
Jeff Hunter
Dot Jones
Jessie Sherrill
Dawn Wilson
Peter Vazquez

Absent:

Ellen Farrior, Secretary

Other(s)

Alderman Joan Brown
Alderman Elect Tim Rayburn

Staff:

Elizabeth Teague, AICP, Planning Director
Darlene Whisenant, Administrative Assistant

Chair Brannon declared a quorum present and the meeting was duly constituted and opened for business. She introduced and welcomed Alderman Elect Tim Rayburn.

II. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Dot Jones made a motion to adopt the agenda. Connie Pruitt seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

III. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

Connie Pruitt made a motion to approve the amended minutes of September 15, 2009 with the corrections noted on the first page; Connie Pruitt, Vice Chair, Ellen Farrior, Secretary; correction to add Sharon Came's name as presenting information from Grey Beard Realty; page two, grammar correction. Dawn Wilson seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

1. Newly Elected Officials Outreach

Chair Brannon previously introduced Tim Rayburn, Alderman Elect. Ms. Teague said that Carlos Showers, Alderman Elect, was invited to the meeting; however, he was unable to attend and the invitation has been extended to the December meeting. She recommended that a tour of

the affordable housing projects in Black Mountain sponsored by Mountain Housing would give a better opportunity to see the progress. The Board came to a consensus to tentatively schedule a Mountain Housing Tour for the December 15th meeting.

V. OLD BUSINESS

1. Robert's Farm Master Plan and Development Agreement Update

Elizabeth Teague said that John Isrig and Rod Hubbard, representatives for the Robert's Farm project spoke to the Commission several years ago about some of their projects in other parts of Asheville. RJH Development markets its housing to the average median income price point and has completed two successful projects in Buncombe County. They are interested in locating projects in and around Black Mountain. She said that they purchased the Robert's Farm property (approximately 34 acres) in Black Mountain, presented sketch plans to the Planning Board, made some changes and obtained approval for a Development Agreement. The Development Agreement is specifically geared to the development of property over 25 acres. It is similar to a Planned Unit Development in that a master plan is submitted and the master plan becomes the zoning rules under which that property is developed. Ms. Teague reviewed the process after the recommended master plan was presented to the Board of Aldermen and said it was approved at last month's meeting. The project will begin when all the permits are obtained.

2. Water Department Report on Manufactured Housing Water Bills

Elizabeth Teague said this topic was brought up by a Commission member out of concern that perhaps some Mobile Home Park owners who billed renters for water usage included with the rent were unfairly increasing the water rate for the tenants. Ms. Teague said that the list of Mobile Home Parks in Black Mountain from the Town Water Department shows that there are separate meters for all individual units. The MHP's that are outside the Town limits may not have separate meters for each unit but the Town cannot determine what they charge their residents on a monthly basis. The Commission discussed various ways the Town could intervene in order to influence more affordable rates. Ms. Teague will speak with the Town Manager about the level of involvement from the Town.

3. Update on Land Use Code Process

Elizabeth Teague reported that the Board of Aldermen had a fourth public hearing and it has been continued to next month because people were concerned about the proposed Mixed-Use Zoning adjacent to the roadway. Mixed-Use is the C-2 zoning where the old County Food Store is located. Ms. Teague said that Mixed Use Zoning was drafted and adopted but never mapped anywhere in the Town. The new Land Use Code has combined C-3 and the Mixed-Use Zoning into one. The proposed areas for the zoning was along Sunset and as a buffer along some areas currently zoned C-2, which is the General Business District but it is close to neighborhoods. She said the intent is to have a more restrictive commercial zoning that would be more acceptable to a residential area. Residents along Montreat Road expressed to the Board of Aldermen that they did not want any commercial allowance along Montreat Road because of traffic concerns.

Ms. Teague said that the recommendations from the Housing Commission were acceptable particularly the automatic allowance for duplexes to be treated the same as single family; UR8 Zoning District which is a 5,000 SF minimum lot size to be consistent with the way a large number of lots in the Town were originally platted out. She said that this provision will allow more property owners to subdivide property or use existing lots. She said that the housing density bonus incentive was well received which required documentation from the developer to sell some of the units at what the average median income price point is currently.

4. Home-owner Assistance Program

Ms. Teague said that the project with Asheville Christian Academy students went slow because of the weather. Dot Jones said there are still homeowners on the list that are in need of assistance. She said that normally they can get volunteers but obtaining monetary donations and materials to do the work is sometimes problematic. The Commission discussed various ways to connect homeowners in need with the appropriate and available resources in Black Mountain.

VI. STAFF AND MEMBER REPORTS AND COMMUNICATIONS

Ms. Teague gave an update on the Monte Vista conditional use permit request. According to the owners, the facility has been struggling for about 5 years. Apparently none of the hotel firms they contacted were interested in coming in to oversee the business. The owners found a potential partner with the CRC Health Group which is a national health and wellness firm. Their operations include services for drug rehabilitation, group homes, mental health clinics, etc. One division of the corporation called the Aspen Group operates a special school thru Talisman, Inc targeting students with Aspergers Syndrome, which is a form of Autism. The students are typically characterized with having difficulty with mainstream social skills. The CRC Health Group was willing to enter into a long term lease with the Monte Vista Hotel ownership to convert the hotel into a boarding school for Aspergers children.

Ms. Teague said the use of an educational facility is allowed in the C-2 Zoning District as a Conditional Use. The change of use request had to go through the Planning Board and the Zoning Board of Adjustment. The proposed use of the property was approved by the Planning Board; however, it faced a great deal of resistance at the Zoning Board of Adjustment level.

Ms. Teague said that the request was granted with a vote of 4 to 1; an order of approval has been presented and there is a 30-days time period in which the decision can be appealed through the state court.

Ms. Teague said the Commission inquired about a workshop for landlords on the Section 8 Program at last month's meeting. She will contact the local HUD (Housing Urban Development) office in Asheville to see if they would be willing to present a seminar. Chair Brannon said that she was familiar with the program and Section 8 property is always based on 30% of your income. Ms. Teague went on to explain that for a tenant to use the rental subsidy, it has to be a pre-approved property and there is an inspection process similar to our Minimum Housing Code. Property owners who are approved for the Section 8 Program have access to a wider variety of tenants to rent their homes or apartments. The Commission recommended that

the Black Mountain News write an article about the Section 8 (subsidized housing) Program to encourage landlords to participate.

VII. PUBLIC COMMENT – none

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Dawn Wilson made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Connie Pruitt seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Joanne Brannon, Chair

Ellen Farris, Secretary

Darlene Whisenant
Administrative Assistant

Rosa B. Hilbert
Senior Administrative Assistant