



## Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Buena Vista Planning and Zoning Commission February 17, 2016

### CALL TO ORDER

A regular meeting of the Planning and Zoning Commission was called to order at 6:00pm, Wednesday, February 17, 2016 at the Buena Vista Community Center, Pinon Room, 715 E Main Street, Buena Vista, Colorado by Chair Trey Shelton. Also present were Commissioners Mark Jenkins, Estes Banks, Annie Davis, Preston Larimer, and Tim Bliss. Staff Present: Principal Planner Mark Doering and Deputy Town Clerk Melanie Jacobs.

### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chair Shelton led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

### ROLL CALL

Jacobs proceeded with the roll call and declared a quorum.

### AGENDA ADOPTION

Shelton called for approval of the agenda. **Motion #1** by Davis seconded by Jenkins to adopt the agenda as presented. Motion carried.

### APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Davis motioned for approval of the February 3, 2016 minutes. **Motion #2** was seconded by Jenkins. Motion carried.

### PUBLIC COMMENT

Shelton opened the public comment portion of the hearing at 6:03pm. With no comments received, the public comment portion of the hearing was closed at 6:03pm.

### NEW BUSINESS

#### **108 E Main St Comprehensive Sign Plan**

Doering explained that the applicant was requesting permission to install two wooden wall signs on the building of 32sf each. (The current Code specifies a size limit of 24sf for each sign.) The building is located in the B-2 zone (highway commercial), and the applicant plans to use existing lighting to illuminate the signs. One sign would be located on the south side of the building (facing Main Street) and the other on the west side (facing Highway 24). Doering went briefly through the criteria for Comprehensive Sign Plan approval, noting that the plan is compliant with all of them. He closed by stating that staff had originally recommended approval with the condition that the remaining Re/Max sign be removed from the building, but as this sign was evidently taken down over the weekend, staff now recommends approval with no conditions.

Applicant Kathy Ridlon of Rustic Woods was present in the audience. She said that the new signs had been made by Mark Arnold of Sonshine Signs. She also stated that she had removed the Re/Max sign

from the building, but had no intention of doing anything with the two sets of freestanding sign supports located on the property at the corner of Main Street and Hwy 24 until after CDOT finished its work on the highway. One of those sets currently holds a 'Downtown Buena Vista' sign that is probably owned by the town or the Chamber of Commerce.

Shelton closed the public hearing after Ridlon concluded her remarks. None of the Commissioners had any objection to the sign plan.

Jenkins motioned to approve the Comprehensive Sign Plan for 108 E Main St as presented. Larimer seconded **Motion #3** and it passed unanimously.

### **STAFF / COMMISSION INTERACTION**

Doering opined that applications such as this CSP should not have to come before the Commission for approval, as the entire process was necessitated by a mere 8sf deviation from the size limit on signs. He would like the Unified Development Code rewrite to allow for larger signs and administrative approvals of slight deviations from the standards. Banks explained that the low size limit on this type of sign (24sf) had originally been instituted in order to impose some uniformity on signs permitted in the town. Jenkins asked how big a requested sign would have to be to trigger a hearing before the Commission in the UDC rewrite, and Doering replied that this had yet to be determined. Issues such as internal illumination and brightness would also be addressed in the new Code. The Module 2 draft which staff received a short time ago from the consultants does not yet include a section on signage. When the module is complete, staff will seek input from the public, the Steering Committee, the Planning Commission, and the Board of Trustees regarding its content. Doering hopes to incentivize people to use the kind of signage the town wants by allowing larger signs of the desired types, and only permitting smaller signs of non-preferred types. The same strategy could be used to encourage business owners to upgrade their current signage.

Doering then informed the Commission that the Trustees had discussed the issue of Planning Department processes at their February 9 meeting. The Board has indicated it would like to see fewer applications that deal with minor issues and day-to-day items, which will mean more final decisions will be made administratively or by the Planning Commission. This will require political support from the Trustees, so that denials are not routinely taken to and overturned by the Board of Appeals.

Commissioners then discussed the issue of the town's image, noting that it is difficult to tell from the Comprehensive Plan exactly what the citizens want in this regard. Larimer remarked that there seems to be a split in town between those who promote and those who resist change. Banks suggested utilizing the services of an architect to help shape the future appearance of the town, and Doering stated that design standards may be implemented to regulate new construction. The Trustees will schedule a walking tour in the near future for the purpose of discussing this issue, and Planning Commissioners will be invited to participate.

Doering went on to say that some of the town's existing appearance could be improved when/if property owners come to the town seeking approval for a project: in order to get that approval, applicants would be required to make certain upgrades. He noted that this approach has historically been regarded as 'business-unfriendly,' but that he does not perceive it that way. Doering stated that he would like to see more housing built in town, particularly affordable housing, as only about 16 – 17 homes are being erected each year. Banks stated that developers will need to be offered incentives before they will agree to build affordable housing.

In response to a question from Larimer, Doering informed the Commission that Scott Reynolds had been promoted to Planner I, and the 'help wanted' ad running in the newspaper pertained to his replacement as Planning Technician. Doering believes that increasing Planning Department staff will allow for a more efficient, streamlined process for applicants/developers.

**ADJOURNMENT**

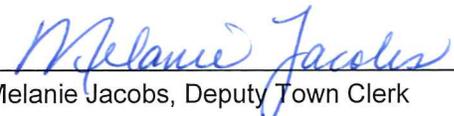
There being no further business to come before the Commission, Commissioner Davis motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:25pm. Commissioner Banks seconded. **Motion #4** was unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted:



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Trey Shelton, Chair



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Melanie Jacobs, Deputy Town Clerk