

Think Quality - Think Future

Blount County Planning Department

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TO: Members of the Blount County Planning Commission

FROM: John Lamb

DATE: December 15, 2008

SUBJECT: Items for Long Range Planning for the December 23, 2008 regular meeting (rescheduled to Tuesday due to Holidays)

1. Discussion on possible campground regulations.

The Planning Commission expressed interest in developing specific design regulations for campgrounds at past meetings. This item was last on the agenda at the July 24, 2008 meeting, but was deferred to a later date. This item comes again for discussion. The following are particular items that the Commission may wish to discuss:

Types of “campgrounds” – particularly to distinguish between tent camping and RV park.

Appropriate zones – particularly how the use would fit into the more residential R-1 and R-2 zones (permitted use or special exception), and inclusion in the RAC zone.

Access requirements – particularly any limitation of location based on status of road, width of road, and any requirements for intersecting driveways to accommodate expected large RV and camper vehicles.

Buffering – particularly buffering from surrounding residential uses.

Set-backs – particularly from surrounding properties and possibly from water ways.

Internal design guidelines – such as number of units per area of development, internal driveway standards, design of accessory structures such as office, community or recreation center, and bath houses.

Appropriate accessory uses – such as any integral office space, bath houses, community service center (including laundry), and retail commercial use (e.g., convenience store).

Septic disposal – options may include common tank and fields or on-site sewer system, may also need to consider specific guidelines for RV dumping stations.

Limitation on permanent placement of RV/campers (to limit establishment of substandard permanent residential development).

The following is offered as a suggestion by Roger Fields for discussion based on regulations from Townsend, that the zoning regulations be amended to add a new Section 7.15 as follows:

Section 7.15 - Commercial Campground and Recreational Vehicle Parks

The purpose of this section is to provide opportunities for quality designed commercial campgrounds and recreational vehicle parks that are properly located in the community where street access and capacity and other infrastructure are favorable for higher density development. In order to create a desirable recreational environment and protect the public health, safety, and welfare, site plans are required for all new commercial campgrounds and recreational vehicle parks. A commercial campground and recreational vehicle park shall meet the following regulations:

1. Minimum lot size requirement: The minimum development site for a commercial campground and recreational vehicle park shall be three (3) acres.
2. Permitted uses and activities: The following uses, vehicles and activities shall be permitted in all commercial campgrounds and recreational vehicle parks.
 - A. Recreational vehicles, travel trailers, pick-up coaches, motor homes, camping trailers, and tents suitable for temporary habitation and used for travel, vacation and recreation purposes provided:
 - 1) Recreational vehicles must be certified by manufacturer as complying with RVIA standards, being plumbed and wired to meet utility codes.

- 2) Underpinning or the removal of wheels, except for the temporary purpose of repair or stabilizing is prohibited.
 - 3) No permanent external appearances such as carports, cabanas, or patios may be attached to any recreational vehicle in a recreational vehicle park.
 - B. A recreational vehicle shall not remain in a recreational vehicle park for more than thirty (30) days in any ninety (90) day period, except:
 - 1) Vehicles owned and operated by seasonal camp workers shall be exempt from this requirement.
 - 2) Storage of unoccupied recreational vehicles may be allowed in designated recreational vehicle campsites. The number of vehicles shall be limited to the number of recreational vehicle campsites available in the campground.
 - C. Camp Workers: Each commercial campground or recreational vehicle park may have campsites available for camp workers.
3. Accessory Uses: Management headquarters, toilets, dumping stations, showers, coin-operated laundry facilities, commercial uses exclusive to the park that cater to camp patrons only, and structures which are customarily incidental and subordinate to the operation of a commercial campground or recreational vehicle park are permitted as accessory uses to the park, subject to the following restrictions:
 - A. Such establishments and parking areas primarily related to their operations shall not occupy more than five (5) percent of the gross area of the park.
4. Prohibited uses and structures:
 - A. RV Park Mobile Homes.
 - B. Mobile homes and mobile home parks.
 - C. Permanent residences, excluding the accessory use of a resident management structure.
5. Design standards for recreational vehicle parks and campgrounds. All commercial campgrounds and recreational vehicle parks shall meet the following requirements in addition to the requirements set forth in Section 9.3B (at this time this is the only permissible area for commercial campgrounds).
 - A. Density. The maximum number of campsites shall be controlled through this section and environmental health department approval.
 - B. Access:
 - 1) Vehicular access to these campgrounds shall be limited to streets classified as a collector or a major arterial road.

- 2) Entrances and exits to the campgrounds shall be designed for safe and convenient movement of traffic into and out of the park and to minimize traffic conflict and facilitate free movement of traffic on adjacent streets. All traffic into and out of the park shall be through such entrances and exits. No entrance or exit shall require a turn at an acute angle for vehicles moving in the direction intended. Curb radii, driveway cut and placement at intersections shall be such as to facilitate easy turning movements for vehicles with trailers attached. Entrances and exits shall be designed to allow ingress and egress simultaneously.
- 3) A deceleration lane may be required to entrance of the campground. When a deceleration lane is proposed to be located off a state right-of-way, the deceleration lane is subject to review and approval by the Tennessee Department of Transportation. When a proposed deceleration lane is proposed to be located off a county maintained right-of-way, the deceleration lane is subject to review and approval by the Blount County Highway Department.

C. Internal Roadways. All internal roadways shall meet the following requirements:

- 1) Internal roadways shall be maintained so emergency vehicles can safely access all areas of the site.
- 2) All interior roadways shall be constructed with an adequate, well-drained base and be surfaced with a minimum four (4) inches of gravel. Roadway grades shall not exceed eight (8) percent and an erosion control plan shall also be required.
- 3) All internal roadways shall have a minimum width of 16 feet.

D. Check-in Facility. Designate on the site plan a central vehicle check-in facility with the capacity for parking for a minimum of three (3) recreational vehicles, to insure check-in does not become congested.

E. Parking for workers and quests. Parking spaces shall be provided for the manager and camp workers. A minimum of one quest parking space shall be provided for every five (5) campsites.

F. Sewage Disposal. All campgrounds will be required to be connected to a public sewer system or have a subsurface sewage disposal system approved by the Blount County Environmental Health Department.

G. Any site plan shall also address provision for fire service with fire hydrants, and adequate access for emergency vehicles within the development.

H. Any site plan shall also address garbage service, particularly if common receptacles are used in which case screening of receptacles shall be required.

I. Fire Pits. Campfires shall only be permitted in designated fire pits.

6. Design Requirements for Recreational Vehicle Campsites and Tent Campsites.

A. Recreational Vehicle Campsite.

- 1) All recreational vehicle campsites shall have a minimum of 1,400 square feet.
- 2) A recreational vehicle campsite shall be designed so there is a minimum of ten (10) feet between recreational vehicles.
- 3) Each campsite shall contain a stabilized vehicular parking pad.
- 4) No building or storage sheds are permitted on individual recreational vehicle campsites.
- 5) Recreational vehicle campsites shall include a minimum of one automobile vehicle parking space with minimum dimensions of ten (10) feet by twenty (20) feet.
- 6) Each campsite shall abut at least one internal roadway within the boundaries of the Recreational Vehicle Park and campground. Ingress and egress to the campsite shall be limited to an internal roadway.

B. Tent Campsite.

- 1) All tent campsites shall have a minimum area of 1,400 square feet.
- 2) Tent campsites shall include a minimum of one automobile parking space with minimum dimensions of ten (10) feet by twenty (20) feet.
- 3) Each campsite shall abut at least one internal roadway within the boundaries of the Recreational Vehicle Park and campground. Ingress and egress to the campsite shall be limited to an internal roadway.

This item is open for discussion and possible recommendation to the County Commission.

2. Proposed amendment to zoning regulations regarding time limit on reapplication for rezoning.

The following comes from Roger Fields for consideration.

As the regulations read at this time.

Section 12.3. Time limit on reapplication for a denied request to amend the Zoning Map.

If an application to amend the Zoning Map (rezoning) for a property is denied by the County Commission, then no other application for rezoning of the same property shall be considered for a period of two (2) years, provided that a new

application may be considered if there is a substantial change in the application constituting a different zone requested or different dimensions (area or depth) requested.

The regulations with proposed change.

Section 12.3. Time limit on reapplication for a denied request to amend the Zoning Map.

If an application to amend the Zoning Map (rezoning) for a property is denied by the County Commission, then no other application for rezoning of the same property shall be considered for a period of one (1) year, provided that a new application may be considered if there is a substantial change in the application constituting a different zone requested or different dimensions (area or depth) requested.

3. Discussion of possibility to allow administrative approval of minor plats involving combination of lots.

At the last regular meeting, the Planning Commission requested that staff explore the possibility of allowing administrative approval in situations where there is a combination of previously approved lots, where the result is four lots or less (minor plat), and where each previously approved lot is being enlarged.

Presently, the only allowed administrative approval of a plat is for a “one lot subdivision” where an existing parcel is divided into two, thus resulting in a net increase of one lot (by extension also a modification of two existing lots). This is codified in Section 4.03.3 of the Subdivision Regulations, and is based on provisions in TCA 13-3-402(a)(1) as follows allowing exception to general requirement of planning commission approval:

... provided, that if the plat of subdivision divides the tract into no more than two (2) lots, the approval may be endorsed in writing on the plat by the secretary of the commission or by another designee of the regional planning commission without the approval of the regional planning commission, upon certification by the planning staff of the regional planning commission that the subdivision complies with such regulations governing a subdivision of land as have been adopted by the regional planning commission pursuant to § 13-3-403; provided further, that no request for variance from such regulations has been requested.

The general requirement preceding the above exception is as follows from TCA 13-3-402(a)(1), and is explicit in requiring planning commission approval for a plat:

... no plat of a subdivision of land within such region, other than land located within the boundaries of any municipal corporation, shall be filed for record or recorded until it has been approved by such regional planning commission, and such approval endorsed in writing on the plat by the secretary of the commission or by another designee of the regional planning commission; ...

The above two provisions seem to limit approval of plats, with more than two lots requiring approval by the planning commission. Staff thus finds that there is no basis for extending administrative approval to plats with more than two lots. If the Planning Commission wishes to explore this further, staff suggests that the Commission request legal guidance from the Attorney for the County Mayor.

4. Update on Green Infrastructure Planning Process and prospective dates for future activities.

Staff has completed the first draft report on citizen comments and results from workshop mapping activities held in October. A final report is expected to be available by the first week of January after review by the other municipal partners in the process and editing of maps into final form.

A total of 84 citizens participated at 18 workshop tables in eight workshop sites. The workshop tables resulted in 18 maps on which citizens identified priority sites for green infrastructure and also 18 table reports of top three priorities. Staff received and compiled 16 sets of comments from individual citizens.

Based on previous plans for the green infrastructure planning process, the results are to be presented to the community early January. Tentative schedule is Monday, January 12 with venue to be determined.

The combined County and City Planning Commissions agreed to hold two workshops, one in January and one in February. Both workshop meetings are assumed to be in the evening, and should last about two-and-one-half hours. The first workshop in January will review the citizen workshop results, and conduct a similar map based workshop with Planning Commissioners as participants. The February workshop will focus on priorities and implementation strategies.

After conferring with municipal partners and consultants, the tentative date for the January workshop is January 27 (4th Tuesday) and for the February workshop is February 24 (4th Tuesday). The above dates were identified to avoid regular County Commission, City Council and Planning Commission meeting dates of all partners concerned.

Staff requests discussion of the meeting schedule for January and February for continuing the Green Infrastructure Planning Process. The goal is to have a complete draft Green Infrastructure Plan for the County by end of March or April. Municipal partners will have a different schedule depending on their own planning processes.

5. Discussion of Comprehensive Planning schedule for 2009.

The Planning Commission adopted the revised Policies Plan in September 2008. Part of that plan was a commitment to expand the Policies Plan into a Comprehensive Plan, particularly integrating data analysis on population and economy, public infrastructure and services, and specific transportation and land use components. Green infrastructure will also be a component as result of the activities identified in item 3 above. The goal is to have an adopted Comprehensive Plan by end of August 2009. This will allow a four or five month intensive concentration on the extra components, generally from March to July, with draft by mid-July and public hearing and action in August. Staff would like to integrate some information sessions during regular meetings in January and February.

Staff requests discussion of a Comprehensive Planning Process for 2009.

6. Continued discussion on possible ridge-top and hillside development standards.

The Planning Commission will hold a workshop at 5:00 PM just prior to the December 23 regular meeting to continue discussions on possible ridge-top and hillside development standards. Refer to memo for the workshop for details. This item is open during the regular meeting to continue that discussion if the Commission so desires.

7. Staff reports.

Staff may present miscellaneous reports at the meeting.