

# Think Quality - Think Future

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## Blount County Planning Department

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**TO:** Blount County Planning Commission

**FROM:** John Lamb

**DATE:** April 15, 2009

**SUBJECT:** Items for Long Range Planning for May 28, 2009 regular meeting.

### **1. Discussion and possible action on regulations for airstrips.**

At the March 12 work session, the County Commission directed Roger Fields to develop a proposed amendment to the zoning regulations to address private airstrips. At the March 26 regular meeting, the Planning Commission briefly considered the request of the County Commission and directed Roger Fields to research provisions in other counties. At the April 23 regular meeting Mr. Fields presented a report and suggested regulations, and the Planning Commission requested Roger Fields to look further into provisions for requiring all state permits such as erosion control permit, requiring consideration of topography at the ends of runways, and requiring a specific distance to residential structures at the ends of the runway. This item is open for discussion and direction to staff or possible action. The following is report from Mr. Fields along with revisions of suggested regulations.

This is a follow up on developing regulations for small private non-commercial airstrips in the county. Last month I presented an amendment that would simply add these airstrips to the list of uses that can be approved as a special exception in the R-1 zone of the county. That would require approval from the BZA as a special exception, but would not establish any specific requirements for the airstrips. At last months meeting I was given direction to research possible regulations for these airstrips and bring the planning commission that information and possible regulations that can be adopted.

A local pilot presented me with an FAA Airport Design Advisory Circular. It is a very technical document that goes very deep into the design standards for airports. It seems that it leans more toward the commercial type airports, but it does establish safety standards for smaller strips as well. In chapters two and three you can find standards for separation, obstacle free zones, runway object free areas, clear way standards and stop way standards. All of these help create safe distances from all types of obstructions including structures. The standards differ for different types of plans that will be using a particular airstrip. I have included this document for your review (in previous month).

I have also reviewed a document put together by the Texas Department of Transportation Aviation Division that is a guide to help individuals that want to install their own private landing strip. It is not written from a regulatory standpoint, but it does give a good amount of insight on safely developing an airstrip. Once again this gets more into how to construct an airstrip than how to regulate one. I have included this document for your review (in previous month).

I have searched for examples of regulations for this type of use but at this point have only come up with the two example that were presented to you at last months meeting. I have noticed that the regulations adopted by Covington, Tennessee and Tipton County Tennessee would go right along with the design standards mentioned above. The regulations put the responsibility of design on the individual by requiring the landing strip to be appropriate for the size and type of aircraft involved and requiring it to be constructed according to the manufacture's specifications. We could require those specifications as part of the site plan process. The setbacks from the center of the runway and any dwelling do seem to be in compliance with the design standards as well.

In conclusion I believe that we need to clearly define Private Non-Commercial Airstrips in our zoning regulations. They would then need to be added to the list of uses that can be permitted as a special exception. We would need to decide which zones would be appropriate for this use and prohibit them in the zones, if any, that are not. They would need to meet the site plan requirements in section 7.2 and the design standards that could look like the ones below.

*Below you will notice the changes and additions that were suggested from the April planning commission meeting.*

**7.17 Design Standards for Private Non-Commercial Airstrips.** In addition to requirements for special exceptions, the following shall be requirements for family commercial enterprises:

- A. A site plan of the proposed landing strip shall be presented at the time of the proposal. See section 7.2 for site plan requirements.
- B. The landing strip shall be appropriate for small single or double engine aircraft, and shall be constructed according to the manufacture's specifications for the type of aircraft involved. Documentation of manufacture's specifications shall be submitted with the site plan.
- C. Airstrip runways are to be located no closer than one thousand (1000) feet from the centerline of the runway to the closest dwelling unit, excluding the owner of the property, and that said centerline be located no less than two thousand (2000) feet from any church, school or places of public assembly.
- D. All landing strips shall be situated in such a manner that under no circumstances shall an approach or departure be over a residence, excluding the owners, provided that the residence be located a minimum of 2,000 (two thousand) feet beyond the end or side of the required landing strip length.
- E. The site plan shall show all roads bordering the subject property, and the location and type of all adjacent utility lines.
- F. If the airstrip is to be lit, a lighting plan meeting the requirements of section 7.14 D must be submitted as part of the site plan.
- G. A state erosion control permit must be submitted prior to approval.
- H. A slope analysis must be submitted to confirm that no topographical obstructions exist at the ends of the runway.

## **2. Discussion and possible action on campground regulations.**

At the regular meeting in April, the Planning Commission requested Roger Fields to prepare wording to address provisions for temporary queuing at the check-in area and deletion of provisions concerning RVIA standards in the cumulative draft proposed zoning regulations amendment. The following incorporates the requested additions in bold underlined italics with grey highlight, along with changes discussed at the previous meetings.

That the zoning regulations be amended to add a new Section 7.16 as follows:

## Section 7.16 - 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, **camping cabins**, 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 two hundred seventy (270) days in any three hundred sixty five (365) 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.  
**Possible change; Storage of unoccupied recreational vehicles may be allowed in a desinated storage area not to exceed one half of the over all camp ground density, and will not encroach on the primary subsurface sewage disposal system.**
  - 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. Mobile homes and mobile home parks.
- B. Permanent residences, excluding the accessory use of a resident management structure.

**C. ~~RV Park Model homes. (to be removed)~~**

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 **roads with 18 foot wide pavement with 2 foot shoulders.**
- 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 **have a fifty (50) feet turning radius** 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 ten (10) percent for gravel roads and thirteen (13) percent for paved roads.

3) An erosion control plan shall also be required.

4) All internal roadways shall have a minimum width of no less than (12) feet for one way traffic and no less than (16) feet for two way traffic.

D. Check-in Facility. Designate on the site plan a central vehicle check-in facility with the queuing 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.

**C. Camping Cabin sites.**

- 1) **All camping cabin sites shall have a minimum area of 1,400 square feet.**
- 2) **A camping cabin site must be designed so there is a minimum of twenty (20) feet between camping cabins.**
- 3) **No storage sheds are permitted on an individual camping cabin site.**
- 4) **Camping cabin sites shall include a minimum of one automobile vehicle parking space with minimum dimensions of ten (10) feet by twenty (20) feet.**
- 5) **Each camping cabin site shall abut at least one internal roadway within the boundaries of the Recreational Vehicle Park and Campground. Ingress and egress to the camping cabin site shall be limited to an internal roadway.**

We would also need to add a definition to **section 13** of our zoning regulations.

**Camping Cabin; small cabins located within a campground that are intended for temporary shelter, and includes sleeping quarters, in some cases a bathroom, but no kitchens.**

**3. Discussion on junk and junk cars.**

At the April regular meeting, the Planning Commission discussed regulations adopted by the City of Alcoa, and requested Roger Fields and John Lamb to research incentives for owners to dispose of junked vehicles voluntarily, particularly the program being promoted by Keep Blount Beautiful.

The Keep Blount Beautiful (KBB <http://www.keepblountbeautiful.org/>) web site advertises a junk car incentive program. Charlene DeSha, Coordinator, reports that the incentive program operates in cooperation with New Era Enterprise in Sevierville. New Era Enterprise operates as a towing and recycled auto parts business. Upon contact with KBB, Charlene visits the site of the junk vehicle, takes a picture to document the vehicle, and fills out needed paperwork to transfer the vehicle. The documentation is then passed to New Era Enterprise which takes possession of the vehicle and transfers it to their lot. The vehicle is either

disassembled for parts and recyclables, or restored to running condition for sale. KBB receives 25% of the return after towing cost, and pays the original owner of the vehicle \$35 as incentive. Thus the owner of a junk vehicle has incentive of free removal of the vehicle plus \$35 payment. Charlene states that the price of junk metal is down, and that return above towing expense is low and variable. Nonetheless, the incentive program has potential to break even, or even make money, and can be self supporting. Charlene reports that only three vehicles have been disposed of through the program to date, even after several attempts to get the word out in the press.

A carrot and stick approach may be most effective, with the carrot being the free towing and \$35 incentive, and the stick being some sort of local regulation with ability to cite for non-compliance. Upon citing for non-compliance, the information about the incentive program could be given to the offender as alternative to regulatory measures.

This item is open for discussion and direction to staff.

#### **4. Discussion on possible erosion control standards in the subdivision regulations and the zoning regulations.**

At the April 7 work session, the County Commission referred to the Planning Commission the matter of possible incorporation of erosion control standards in the subdivision regulations and the zoning regulations. The timeline given by direction from the County Commission is to provide recommendations by the July County Commission meeting. To meet the timeline, the Planning Commission will need to make recommendations by the time that agenda for July County Commission work session is set, essentially by July 1. This item was deferred from last meeting.

Staff suggests that the State required Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) also be required as part of preliminary plat approval for any subdivision meeting the threshold of a SWPPP, and for any site plan under zoning meeting the threshold of a SWPPP. A SWPPP is required for any development disturbing one acre or more of land. Staff further suggests that the Storm Water Program Administrator (Justin Teague) be designated as inspection and enforcement agent for inspecting and monitoring the SWPPP locally as part of subdivision plat or site plan requirements, in cooperation with any State enforcement agent.

Note that this would limit applicability of storm water and erosion control regulation to major plats under subdivision regulations, and developments requiring site plans under zoning. Under subdivision regulations, this would not apply to minor plats of four lots or less with no construction of common driveway or road. Under zoning, this would apply to special exceptions, including multi-family and commercial developments, and would also apply to permitted commercial development, but would not apply to other permits such as individual houses on individual lots.

Staff suggests that consideration may be given to requiring that all storm water erosion be taken care of on site for any plat or building permit, and allowing the Storm Water Program Administrator (Justin Teague) to have authority to enforce corrective measures upon finding of active erosion control problems. This would not require any formal plan at time of permit for small projects, such as a house permit, but would authorize intervention to require corrective measures when a problem occurs. This could be accomplished by a simple statement on the building permit specifying erosion control responsibility as condition of the permit.

This item is open for discussion and direction to staff. Staff can provide a formal proposal for the June meeting.

## **5. Discussion and possible action on proposed zoning regulation of ridge-top and hillside development.**

This item was subject of a workshop on April 14. See separate workshop memo. Staff was directed at the April 14 meeting to bring back information or suggestions on three issues: a) a simplified site plan process; b) distance variation of visibility in relation to SLRS; and c) other examples of jurisdictions that regulate hillside and ridge-top development. This item is open for continued discussion and possible action.

### **a) Simplified site plan process.**

At the April 14 workshop, the Planning Commission indicated concern that the proposed site plan requirements would be cost prohibitive due to requirements that would necessitate use of specialized professional services. The following reproduces the site plan requirement section of the proposed regulations with possible areas of change to simplify the requirements.

Generally, the following changes are indicated: delete the requirement of a licensed architect or landscape architect for production of the site plan; substitute existing USGS quad topo information for more detailed topo information that would have required survey or specialized interpretation; delete requirement for slope analysis that would have required specialized analysis; delete requirement of proposed buildings in perspective views that would have required artist or architectural rendering; delete requirement of road and driveway cross sections and center line profiles that would have required survey or engineering information; delete requirement of survey of existing trees in the area of any major design elements; and delete requirement for a landscape plan that would have required professional services. The resultant site plan requirements could probably be met by use of a surveyor, but even that is not specifically required.

If the change involves deletion, the deletion is indicated in double strike-out. If the change involves new wording, the new wording is highlighted as bold italics.

2. The site plan required under this section shall be drawn ~~by a licensed architect or landscape architect~~ at a scale of no less than 1 inch equals 50 feet. The site plan shall include at least the following elements:
  - a. applicant's name and address (including owner of land and owners representative if applicable), and signatures by owners or authorized representative certifying plan for review;
  - b. property boundary (survey boundary recommended), north arrow and map scale;
  - c. location map in relation to surrounding lands and roads;
  - d. written description of the proposed building and use;
  - e. list of SLRS visible from the site and direction of visibility shown by arrows;
  - f. topographic contours ***from USGS Quad sheet scaled and located to the property boundary*** ~~at no less than five foot intervals~~;
  - ~~g. location of areas with average slopes greater than 30 percent and area greater than 5000 square feet;~~
  - h. location of existing buildings or structures on the property;
  - i. location to scale of proposed building(s) in plan view;
  - j. ~~proposed building(s) in perspective views (elevation drawings), of those building surfaces potentially visible from an SLRS, and including~~ proposed building exterior color schemes and building materials;

- k. required and proposed building setbacks from property lines;
- l. present and proposed access roads or driveways ~~with cross sections and centerline profiles;~~
- m. present and proposed utility service lines;
- n. plan for preservation or establishment of trees to meet requirements for screening under 3.a below, and plans for any tree removal; ~~location of existing trees on the building site by species of diameter 6" or greater at breast height, within 200 feet of the proposed building(s) and within 100 feet of any other planned design element of the site such as roads, drives, septic fields, retaining walls, constructed drainage ways, terracing, and landscaping;~~
- o. proposed grading plan for the site;
- ~~p. proposed landscaping plan for the site, including specific trees under n. above to be removed for any purpose;~~
- q. areas managed specifically for fire risk reduction;
- r. plan for exterior lighting;
- s. other substantial landscape features such as prominent rock outcroppings greater than 1000 square feet in area, water bodies, perennial streams, and springs.

Note that deleting the items above from site plan requirements will probably result in a much weaker analysis and review for design compliance, and may be harder to monitor and enforce in the field.

b) Visibility as criteria in use of Scenic Landscape Resources of Significance.

This issue was discussed previously in relation to a staff presentation identifying several prospective SLRS to the north of Chilhowee Mountain range. Staff will present the analysis again (short PowerPoint presentation) to highlight the variable of distance in visibility of prospective development sites. In summary, if the distance is greater than about five miles, the immediate visibility of a development site is substantially reduced if not massively disturbed.

c) Other examples of jurisdictions addressing hillside and ridge-top development.

The Planning Commission was supplied previously with regulations (now adopted) from Gatlinburg. Attached are hillside and ridge-top regulations from Asheville, North Carolina, also found at [http://www.ashevollenc.gov/ordinances/steep\\_slope\\_071007.pdf](http://www.ashevollenc.gov/ordinances/steep_slope_071007.pdf).

**6. Recommendation on amendment to Section 7.2.I to add correct reference to Section 7.15 as renumbered.**

At the April meeting, the Planning Commission recommended several corrective amendments to the Zoning Regulations, including renumbering the section on Design Requirements for Commercial and Industrial Developments from Section 14 to Section 15. The old numbering was used in Section 7.2.I and needs to be changed for consistency. Staff proposes the following amendment:

That Section 7.2.I be amended to read as follows: I. Any commercial or industrial use permit requiring a site plan provided in this Section shall also require conformity with Section 7.15 Design Requirements for Commercial and Industrial Developments.

This item is open for action to recommend to the County Commission.

**7. Setting of public hearing for the Green Infrastructure Plan.**

The Draft Green Infrastructure Plan was subject of a workshop on May 26. Any action to adopt the plan will require 30 days notice be published in the newspaper. This item is open to set date of public hearing. To meet required 30 day notice, the next available regular meeting would be July 23, or alternatively, a special meeting could be called any time after July 4.

**8. Referral from the County Commission concerning application for traffic calming measures.**

The County Commission heard petition from a resident on Turkey Pen Road for traffic calming measures, and referred the issues involved to the Planning Commission for recommendation. This item is open for report from the Highway Department and discussion and possible recommendation from the Planning Commission.

**9. Staff reports.**

Proposal on amending the regulation of common driveways discussed at the last meeting will be presented at the June meeting. Staff may report on other miscellaneous matters at the meeting.