

1 **COLUMBUS PLANNING BOARD**
2 **Minutes of Regular Meeting**
3 **Monday, July 8, 2019**
4

5 The Town of Columbus Planning Board met on Monday, July 8, 2019 at 4:00 p.m., at the
6 Columbus Town Hall, 95 Walker Street, Columbus, North Carolina.
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8 **Roll Call:** Kathleen Nowakowski
9 Jimmi Buell
10 Brent Jackson
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13 **Staff Present:** Timothy J. Barth, Town Manager
14 Shana Atkins, Assistant Town Clerk
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16 The meeting was called to order at 4:04 p.m. A roll call was taken, and the chairman acknowledged all
17 present except Joan Scoggins
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19 **Public Comment**

20 There were no public comments
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22 **Consideration of Minutes of the June 13, 2019 Regular Meeting**

23 Mrs. Nowakowski asked if there were any changes to the June 13, 2019 minutes. There were no changes
24 requested. Ms. Buell made a motion to approve the June 13, 2019 minutes as written, Mr. Jackson
25 seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.
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27 **Discussion Regarding the Town's Sign Ordinance**

28 Ms. Buell stated that she finds the sign ordinance quite confusing and that it may take several meetings
29 to come up with clarifying language. Ms. Buell stated O'Reilly Auto Parts had asked for a street sign
30 and the Planning Board denied the request because the sign on the building could be seen from the
31 street, but that the Sisters of Mercy Urgent Care had since put up a road sign which follows the sign
32 ordinance. Ms. Buell stated that the Planning Board suggested putting up a monument sign for the new
33 businesses located in that area, which was not done by the developer. Ms. Buell stated that the sign
34 ordinance needs to be reviewed because O'Reilly Auto Parts could come back to the Planning Board and
35 request a road sign. Mr. Barth explained to Ms. Buell that O'Reilly Auto Parts' sign was 100 square feet
36 which is the maximum square footage allowed under the ordinance. Mr. Barth stated that all businesses
37 must submit a sign permit application, which is reviewed by himself and either denied or approved
38 based on the ordinance. Ms. Buell stated that she is concerned about what could be developed on the
39 property behind Bojangles, and she hopes that the Planning Board will take measures to prevent
40 businesses from having excessive signage on Mills Street. Mr. Barth stated that any new businesses that
41 will be located behind Bojangles, will have to apply for a variance to have their signs near the street
42 because their sign would be considered an off-premise sign.

43 Councilman Phillips suggested that the Planning Board make a recommendation to Council requesting
44 ordinance changes that will protect the attractiveness of Mills Street from cluttered signage. Councilman
45 Phillips stated that he would prefer a monument sign for each development as opposed to individual
46 street signs. Ms. Buell stated that the Planning Board needs to be proactive.

47 Councilman Phillips explained that when any new business come in for a variance, the Planning Board
48 could suggest a monument sign instead of having multiple signs.

49 Mr. Jackson stated that the sign ordinance states that a master or common signage plan shall be a part of
50 any development plan. Mr. Jackson stated that Bojangles, O'Reilly Auto Parts, and Sisters of Mercy
51 Urgent Care are not in compliance with the sign ordinance because it was all done by one developer and
52 does not have a master or common sign.

53 Ms. Nowakowski stated that she would like all new businesses that are going to build in the Town of
54 Columbus to come before the Planning Board.

55 Ms. Buell stated that there is an O'Reilly Auto Parts in Fletcher which looks very similar to the one in
56 Columbus, with exception to a brick exterior, which would have fit in nicely with the surrounding
57 buildings in the Mills Street development. Councilman Williamson stated that there are architectural
58 requirements for new construction to match adjacent buildings. Councilman Williamson stated that the
59 Zoning Administrator and the Planning Board can deny any permits until the businesses comply with
60 architectural requirements. Ms. Buell stated that she doesn't want to discourage businesses, but she
61 would like the businesses to have similar features.

62 Councilman Williamson commented that the new building for Blue Water Pools and Spas isn't in
63 compliance with the zoning ordinance. Mr. Barth replied that the owner of the Blue Water Pools and
64 Spas has not finished the work on the exterior of the building.

65 Mrs. Nowakowski asked how to get all the new businesses to appear before the Planning Board before
66 the businesses make application for zoning compliance. Mr. Barth replied that he will have all new
67 businesses come before the Planning Board.

68 Ms. Buell stated that traffic is going to be an issue when more businesses build behind Bojangles.
69 Councilman Williamson commented that there is a requirement in the zoning ordinance for a traffic
70 impact analysis. Councilman Williamson stated that if traffic for a new development puts traffic on the
71 same corridor that is more than 25% than the existing traffic, then the Planning Board would be able to
72 deny the application.

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74 Mr. Barth stated that he will have all new businesses come before the Planning Board and review the
75 plans before an application is approved.

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78 There being no other business to discuss Mr. Jackson made a motion to adjourn. Ms. Buell seconded,
79 and the meeting was adjourned at 4:38p.m.

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Kathleen Nowakowski, Chairman

Shana Atkins, Assistant Town Clerk