

1 **COLUMBUS PLANNING BOARD**
2 **Minutes of Regular Meeting**
3 **Monday, May 8, 2017**
4

5 The Town of Columbus Planning Board met on Monday, May 8, 2017 at 4:00 p.m., at the
6 Columbus Town Hall, 95 Walker Street, Columbus, North Carolina.
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8 **Roll Call**

9 **Present:** Bevin Corbin
10 Jimmi Buell
11 Joan Scoggins
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13 **Absent:** Kathleen Nowakowski
14 Brent Jackson
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17 **Staff Present** Monica Greene, Town Clerk
18 Tim Barth, Town Manager
19 Lora Baker, Town Attorney
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21 The meeting was called to order at 4:00 p.m. A roll call was taken and the Vice-Chairman
22 acknowledged all present with exception of Brent Jackson and Chairman Nowakowski.
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24 **Public Comment**

25 There were no public comments
26

27 **Adoption of Minutes**

28 The following Minutes were presented for approval:

- 29 - April 10, 2017 Regular Meeting

30 Ms. Buell made a motion to table the adoption of minutes until the next regularly scheduled meeting due
31 to the absence of multiple board members. Ms. Scoggins seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.
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33 **Item #4. Consideration of Proposed Amendments to the Schedule of Fees**

34 Mr. Barth stated that Rick Flowe of N-Focus Planning had made some recommendations for an update
35 of fees related to planning and zoning, which had been reviewed and edited by himself and Clerk
36 Greene. Mr. Barth presented a proposed fee schedule amendment for review by the Planning Board to
37 make a recommendation to Council for the upcoming budget year.

38 Mr. Corbin asked if fees for applications were refunded if not approved. Mr. Barth stated that the fees
39 were application fees and were charged at the time requests are made for the requests to be considered
40 by the board.

41 Ms. Buell made a motion to approve the planning and zoning fees schedule as amended for
42 recommendation to Council. Ms. Scoggins seconded, motion carried unanimously.
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44 **Item #5. Consideration of Amending the Zoning Ordinance Regarding Adult Establishments**

45 Mr. Barth stated that adult establishments cannot be outlawed entirely, but the town can impose
46 additional restrictions on the establishments as they see fit. Mr. Barth stated that the businesses should
47 be restricted to the highway commercial zone, but with additional restrictions that would make it more
48 difficult to locate such a business in close proximity to downtown or residential areas.

49 Lora Baker noted that the town must provide an area available for potential use as a first amendment
50 right for adult establishments, but the town can assign distances as it sees fit.

51 Mr. Barth stated that the proposed definitions related to adult establishments were taken directly from
52 the state statutes, and would replace the lacking existing definitions in the current ordinance.

53 Mr. Corbin made a motion to approve the proposed amendments to the zoning ordinance related to adult
54 establishments, including definitions, as presented. Ms. Buell seconded, and the motion carried
55 unanimously.

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57 **Item #6. Discussion of Height Restrictions in Certain Zones**

58 Mr. Barth stated that the current ordinance has three overlay districts related to height; general,
59 courthouse, and mountain view shed. Mr. Barth stated that the General Overlay District height
60 restriction is 36 feet, and the Courthouse Overlay District and Mountain View Overlay District height
61 restriction is 29 feet. Mr. Barth noted that the Courthouse Overlay District height restriction makes sense
62 so as not to overshadow the courthouse, and the Mountain View Shed Overlay District makes sense as
63 well to preserve the natural environment and views by restricting building height to two stories.

64 Mr. Barth stated that the General District should be more lenient if the town wants to have some
65 commerce, especially the possibility off a hotel, and recommended that the height restriction be changed
66 from 36 feet to 50 feet to allow for economic development.

67 Ms. Scoggins stated that she had no issue with the changes as proposed, as it would encourage needed
68 development.

69 Mr. Corbin asked about the ability for the fire department to cover buildings of that height.

70 Mr. Barth stated that anything commercially built would have to be built with sprinkler systems
71 installed. Mr. Corbin noted that a ladder truck currently has the ability to go up three stories, which
72 would service a four-story hotel as needed since you would only need to access the bottoms of the doors
73 and windows.

74 Mr. Corbin stated that the town does need to bring in commercial developments to grow, and that this is
75 part of the planning process to manage that growth before it comes.

76 Mr. Barth stated that the height restriction in residential areas is currently 45 feet, noting that 5 extra feet
77 would not make a noticeable difference for those zones.

78 Mr. Corbin suggested redoing the entire zoning map and corresponding overlays so that they can all be
79 seen before recommending new height restrictions in certain areas. Mr. Corbin stated that the current
80 map and overlays do not make sense and fail to convey all information about the zones as clearly as they
81 should.

82
83 Mr. Barth stated that staff will work on updating maps, and having them larger and more accurate for
84 review by the planning board at a future meeting.

85 Mr. Corbin stated that there is a lot of public concern going on with potential development, and accurate
86 maps will be a good tool for the board to use.

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88 There being no further business to discuss, Ms. Buell made a motion to adjourn. Ms. Scoggins seconded,
89 and the meeting was unanimously adjourned at 5:00 PM.

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Kathleen Nowakowski, Chairman

Monica Greene, CMC, NCCMC, Town Clerk