

PLANNING BOARD MEETING

Town of Sylva Planning Board

August 24, 2023

The Town of Sylva Planning Board held a regular meeting on August 24, 2023, at 5:00 p.m. hosted in the Board Room of Municipal Hall, 83 Allen Street, Sylva, N.C. and streamed electronically by Zoom meeting.

PRESENT: Russ Harris
Geoffrey Hirsch
Alison Joseph
Melissa Madrona, Chair
Larry Tyson
Kendall Waldrop

Amanda Murajda, Town Clerk
Paige Dowling, Town Manager

ABSENT: Rose Bauguess

Melissa Madrona called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

STAFF PRESENT: None.

VISITORS: Robert Hoekstra

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Larry Tyson made a motion to approve the April 27, 2023, minutes. Geoffrey Hirsch seconded the motion and the motion carried with a unanimous vote.

NEW BUSINESS

LIGHTING STANDARDS:

Manager Dowling explained to the board that the Town completed a zoning ordinance rewrite in February 2022. As part of that process, lighting changes and requirements were updated. Those were in compliance with the 2040 Land Use Plan for the Town of Sylva. Light poles in the downtown business district have been in place for thirty (30) years. These poles are rented from Duke Energy. A few weeks ago, an automobile accident knocked two poles down which cannot be replaced. The current ordinance restricts lights to downcast lighting, but Duke Energy does not offer poles to meet such standards within the Town's budget. Dowling is requesting that the ordinance be amended to exempt the downtown business district from the ordinance. New lighting would be LED, rented per month from Duke Energy.

Geoffrey Hirsch explained that he did not want upcast lighting because of 2nd floor residences. Larry Tyson added that the lights would not be conducive to environmental, ecological, animal, fowl or other matters. The idea of ever getting to the place where they are ecologically friendly is going to be a while. Melissa Madron is also concerned with these issues.

Dowling showed the board options available through Duke Energy that meet measurement standards and budget constraints of the Town. The board discussed the lights in terms of light pollution and characteristics. They also discussed what to call the downtown lighting if the ordinance were to be changed. Municipal Street Lighting would be added as item number 9.

Russ Harris made a motion to recommend adding item number 9 to section 7.9 Lighting Standards of the ordinance to state Municipal Street Lighting in the downtown business district is exempt from ordinance restrictions regarding street lighting. Kendall Waldrop seconded the motion, and the motion tied with a 3-3 vote. Voting in the affirmative were Russ Harris, Kendall Waldrop, and Alison Joseph. Voting against the motion were Geoffrey Hirsch, Melissa Madrona, and Larry Tyson.

ADJOURNMENT: Alison Joseph made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 5:48 p.m. Geoffrey Hirsch seconded the motion and the motion carried with a unanimous vote.

Melissa Madrona
Chair

Amanda W. Murajda
Town Clerk