

MINUTES
BURKE COUNTY PLANNING BOARD
September 26, 2019

The Burke County Planning Board met on Thursday, September 26, 2019 at 5:30 PM in the Commissioners Meeting Room, located at 110 N. Green Street, Morganton, North Carolina.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Alan Scholl
Richard Evey
Gary Kling
William Tunstill
Michael Cultrera

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Bobby Costner
Robert Love

STAFF PRESENT:

Peter Minter, Sr. Planner; Jennifer Forney, Planner

CALL TO ORDER:

Chairman Scholl officially called the Burke County Planning Board to order at 5:34 PM.

SWEARING IN OF NEW MEMBER:

Michael Cultrera was sworn into membership

ELECTION OF NEW CHAIRMAN:

Richard Evey was nominated for Chairman. There were no other nominations. Gary Kling made a motion to nominate Richard Evey for Chairman. He was seconded by Alan Scholl. The motion passed unanimously with a 5/0 vote.

ELECTION OF NEW VICE-CHAIRMAN:

William Tunstill was nominated for Vice-Chairman. There were no other nominations. Gary Kling made a motion to nominate William Tunstill for Vice-Chairman. He was seconded by Michael Cultrera. The motion passed unanimously with a 5/0 vote.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES:

A motion for approval of the August 29, 2019 minutes, as presented, was made by Gary Kling and was supported by William Tunstill. The Board granted approval by a 5/0 vote.

PUBLIC MEETING

ZMA 2019-08 - APPLICANT: LAKE JAMES CAMPING RESORT, LLC – A REQUEST TO REZONE ONE (1) PARCEL OF LAND CONSISTING OF 41.03 ACRES FROM THE RESIDENTIAL ONE (R-1) ZONING DISTRICT TO THE LOW-DENSITY CONSERVATION (CD-L) ZONING DISTRICT, LAKE JAMES CAMPING RESORT, LLC, APPLICANT.

Report by Planning Department

The Board was provided with a staff report prior to the meeting. Peter Minter gave an overview of the report at the meeting.

Public Meeting

Dan Huffenus, Attorney for the Applicant:

Mr. Huffenus stated that the applicant recently purchased the campground and want to expand and upgrade the property. Mr. Huffenus noted that they were not here to discuss the plans in detail as they are not yet formulated. According to Mr. Huffenus the applicants were there to take the first step in their plans which involved rezoning the property.

Public Comment**Paul Mason:**

Mr. Mason stated that he grew up in McDowell County on the other side of the lake. He became a member of the campground seven years ago. Mr. Mason says that since that time there have been many improvements to the campground. Mr. Mason noted that there were things that should not have been going on when he first moved in the campground, but that with the help of the County and the owner improvements were made. According to Mr. Mason the campground now has a good sewer, water, and septic system. Mr. Mason estimated that the campground provides 200 campsites for local people to enjoy the beauty of the lake. He stressed that everyone does not have a million dollars to buy a house on Lake James and the campground provides a way for them to enjoy the lake. Mr. Mason said he did not see why anyone would want to do anything other than add to the zoning that would allow other people to come and enjoy the beauty of the lake.

Jenny Smith:

Ms. Smith lives in Mallard Pointe. Ms. Smith stated that she is not opposed to the campground. She said that she does not have a million dollars and has a big mortgage like everyone else. Ms. Smith's biggest concern is the traffic that is getting heavier on the road. Her biggest concern is Benfield Landing Road and the traffic coming in and out. Ms. Smith has a lot of building restrictions and setbacks on her property, but she noticed that the campground has buildings and decks down to the shoreline and she does not understand why its okay for the campground but not the residents. She is not worried about the property across the road from the campground but says that we all know that everyone wants to be lake front. Ms. Smith said she does not know if upgrades will be made to the road. There is no shoulder on Benfield Landing Road and Ms. Smith has five children that drive and have been run off the road on occasion by large vehicles. According to Ms. Smith she is thinking about the safety aspect.

Maureen Jobs:

Ms. Jobs lives in Lake Forest Cove in Nebo. Ms. Jobs was curious if the parcel has access from any road other than Benfield Landing. In Ms. Jobs opinion Benfield Landing has become overused for the type of road that it is. Ms. Jobs also wanted to know if the septic system was large enough to support a new campground addition in the new area. Ms. Jobs felt it was difficult to understand if the rezoning should be done without knowing the intent of the use of the property.

Wendell Sugg:

Mr. Sugg lives on Lake Ridge Court. Mr. Sugg wanted to know if the density requirement in CD-L was the same for a camp site as it is for a residential structure.

Mitchell Setzer Jr.:

Mr. Setzer is 36 years old and his father has owned a houseboat at the lake since he was a child. Mr. Setzer has grown up there and now he has two children and a spot in the campground. Mr. Setzer stated that he can't explain how much it means to him to be able to use the lake. He feels that the campground has respected the rules and regulations that apply to it. He also feels that the

new owners will make the area prettier than it is now and will allow other people to enjoy the area. Mr. Setzer stated that Lake James is a gem that should be kept that way and the campground will allow people to use it in the proper fashion.

Tony Michael:

Mr. Michael lives at 5942 Benfield Landing and owns the cove on the water side before you get to the campground and 33 acres on the other side of the road adjoining the subject parcel. Mr. Michael has questions that would apply later if the rezoning is approved about setbacks and the campground boundaries. He felt his questions were premature, but he wanted to let the new owners know that he would be glad to talk to them in private.

Devin Henson:

Mr. Henson has been a Burke county resident his entire life and he has been trying to find a place to have access to the lake for 5 years. He stated that he personally would like to see the property rezoned and give more options to the people.

Chuck Russell:

Mr. Russell just moved here recently and has not been a resident very long. Mr. Russell referred to the campground as a trailer park. He assumed the campground operated on a long-term lease. Mr. Russell feels that a vacation-oriented campground across the street will bring more traffic and introduce a lot more congestion to the road that is not being considered.

Carol Mason:

Ms. Mason stated that the population is growing so of course traffic is going to increase just as it has everywhere. She feels we do need to look at the road. Ms. Mason does not understand why tractor trailer trucks are coming down Benfield Landing Road. She admits that the roads need to be widened and that people do not know how to stay in their own lanes. But she states that at the same time we want to bring people into the community for it to grow. She says we do not want our town to die. We want people to come and spend money.

Steve Russell:

Mr. Russell has lived in the area for 4 years. Mr. Russell says he noticed a lot of new guard rails that have been erected that leave the driver no where to go when larger vehicles approach. Mr. Russell also feels that turning right coming out of Bridgewater Road is subject to a fatality. The road needs to be widened and the visibility cleared according to Mr. Russell.

Board Discussion

Following the public meeting the Board had no discussion pertaining to the case

Board Decision

Following the discussion, the Board reached the following decision:

- ✎ Gary Kling made a motion to approve a request to rezone one (1) parcel of land consisting of 41.03 acres from the Residential One (R-1) Zoning District to the Low-Density Conservation (CD-L) Zoning District, Lake James Camping Resort, LLC, Applicant. He was seconded by William Tunstill. The motion passed unanimously with a 5/0 vote.

OTHER BUSINESS:

Staff gave the Board a brief overview of the upcoming ordinance update.

Chairman Evey: The next meeting will be October 24, 2019. At this time, I will adjourn this meeting of the Burke County Planning Board.


Note: *Verbatim minutes of this meeting are available upon request via recording in the Burke County Planning Office.*

Submitted by:

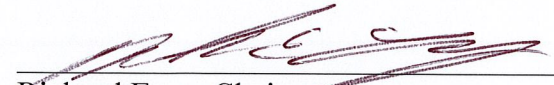
Jennifer Forney

Jennifer Forney
Planner

Approved this 24th day of October 2019



Jennifer H. Forney
Secretary to the Board



Richard Evey, Chairman
Burke County Planning Board