

**MINUTES OF A
PUBLIC HEARING
OF THE JACKSON COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
HELD ON AUGUST 18, 2014**

The Jackson County Board of Commissioners held a Public Hearing on August 18, 2014, 5:45 pm, Smokey Mountain Elementary School, 884 US Highway 441 North, Whittier, North Carolina.

Present: Jack Debnam, Chairman
Doug Cody, Vice Chair
Charles Elders, Commissioner
Mark Jones, Commissioner
Vicki Greene, Commissioner

Chuck Wooten, County Manager
Angela M. Winchester, Clerk to Board
J. K. Coward, Jr., County Attorney

Chairman Debnam called the public hearing to order and stated the purpose is to receive public input concerning proposed amendments to the US 441 Corridor Development Ordinance.

Gerald Green, Planning Director, presented proposed amendments to the US 441 Corridor Development Ordinance:

- Revision of the Village Center standards to permit the development of larger shopping areas that provide opportunities for regional stores;
- Revision of the landscape and sign standards to preserve the natural aesthetics of the corridor while providing for adequate signage for businesses;
- Revision of the sign standards to reflect the auto-oriented nature of the corridor;
- Revision of the residential standards to reduce the 5 acre minimum lot size to a 1 acre minimum lot size;
- Elimination of the requirement that homes in the Rural Living district comply with design standards that prohibit vinyl siding, require cornices to be constructed of stone, masonry, or similar material, and similar requirements;
- Identification of cellular telecommunications towers as a conditional use, subject to the standards of the county's cell tower ordinance, in the Rural Living district.
- Revision of the Gateway Corridor standards to better reflect the context of the area by permitting new development in character with existing development patterns (limited parking in front, reasonable setbacks);

Landscaping and sign standards have been revised to maintain the aesthetics of the corridor while allowing for visible signage to advertise the businesses along the corridor. The requirement for street trees and parking lot landscaping has been enhanced slightly. The size of signs permitted has been increased to provide for ease of visibility by motorists traveling along the corridor.

The proposed revisions will permit development along the corridor while preserving the character of the community. The Council realizes there are provisions in the ordinance addressing residential development that should be reviewed to assure the standards permit residential development that reflects the goals and needs of the community.

Public Comments:

(a) Carolyn Gutierrez stated that she owns a piece of property on 441 that is 1.25 acre. In all this process her property was zoned commercial with the possibility of putting a daycare or nursing home. She has been trying to sell it since February of 2012 with two lost contracts because of the restrictions that are in place. She asked where she stood with her property at the time.

(b) Linda Huskinson stated that her family owns the Cherokee Trading Company Store. She does not understand why 441 is the only road that she knows of, in the County that has rules and regulations. She does not like that she is locked into that sign company for the rest of her life. Since they own the pole and the sign she could never go up on the rent because if they take their sign down she is not allowed to put another sign up that is equal to that one. She has been told that she is supposed to plant trees along the road front. When she purchased the property, she bought it as commercial property and wanted the traffic to see the place. That is why she didn't plant trees on the road front.

(c) Martin Dehart stated that he has lived here pretty much the majority of his life. He wonders about the aspects of the restrictions, as far as building in the future. He wants to know if this will affect his children's ability to build a house on the property. He asked if these restrictions are just affecting Shoal Creek because it seems to be the only thing listed in the planned residential area on the whole corridor.

There being no further comments, Commissioner Elders moved to adjourn the Public Hearing. Commissioner Jones seconded the Motion. Motion carried and the public hearing adjourned.

Attest:

Approved:

Angela M. Winchester, Clerk to Board

W. J. Debnam, Chairman