

Bland County Planning Commission Minutes of the Regular Meeting on March 15, 2005.

Members Present:

Elmer Chewning, Allen Newberry, Henry Blessing, Stephen Kelley, Robert Trobaugh, R.B. Anderson, John Dodson, Jerry Mercer and Jim Baker

Members Absent:

Deborah Looney and Guy Boone

Others Present:

Jonathan D. Sweet, Planning Commission Secretary, Dale Hill and Associates, Franklin Ready Mix, Randy Moler, Economic Development Authority, Harold Andrews – Applicant, Economic Development Authority

CALL TO ORDER

At 6:30 PM, Planning Commission Chairman, Jerry Mercer called the meeting of the Bland County Planning commission to order at the Bland County School Board Office, Bastian, Virginia.

ROLL CALL

Planning Commission Secretary Jonathan D. Sweet took the roll call and announced that there was indeed a quorum present.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chairman Mercer requested a motion to approve the minutes of the February 7, 2005 meeting with a typographical correction from Mercer to Chewning as Vice Chairman, Commission Member Kelly made the motion to approve the minutes of the February 7, 2005 meeting as amended, Commission Member Trobaugh provided a second to the motion, and it passed by acclamation.

ITEMS TABLED FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

None

PUBLIC HEARING ON CUP APPLICATION

Larry Taylor CUP Application – Franklin Ready Mix

Chairman Mercer officially opened the public hearing and presented the floor to Mr. Dale Hill of Franklin Ready Mix to brief the Commission on the application for a Conditional Use Permit locate and operate a ready-mix concrete operation in an existing 2.5-acre industrial designated site in Rocky Gap, Virginia, Tax Map Parcel # 12-1-1.

Mr. Hill addressed the Commission and presented a power point presentation for the Commission and the public that articulated Franklin Ready Mix's intended operation, their product, their raw materials, proposed facility, site plan, traffic pattern, lighting, dust collection and suppression, environmental precautions, regulatory governance, hours of operation, community impact, reasons for choosing Bland County and benefits the operation will bring to Bland County. (Please request print out of power point presentation for further detail.)

Commission Member Dodson asked Mr. Hill about the existing drainage that traverses the property and the possibility of paving the industrial access road up to the site entrance. Mr. Hill responded that the drainage channel and grates will be closed off and will no longer capture the water from the site; rather a retention pond at a collection point will capture all effluents and run off of their operation. Additionally, he confirmed that Franklin Ready Mix intends to pave the industrial access drive up to their entrance and is currently working with their industrial neighbors to possibly continue the road improvements (capping) up to United Central.

Chairman Mercer then opened the floor to the public for public comment to the CUP application.

Mr. Tommy Dunn spoke to the application as both a tax payer and business community member. He commented that this opportunity is a win-win for the citizens and the County. It will provide considerable opportunities and much needed revenues.

Mr. Randy Moler and Mr. Harold Andrews both approached the Commission on behalf of the Bland County Economic Development Authority to lend their support for CUP application and what it means to the County. Both concurred that Franklin Ready Mix would be a good fit in Rocky Gap and a significant boost to the Rocky Gap and local economy.

Secretary Sweet read aloud a letter he had received in support of the CUP application from C. M. Hunter of Hunter Paving, Inc., an existing business owner within the County. The letter provided a clear conveyance of support and he encouraged serious consideration as it would be very positive from an employment and income basis.

The Commission had some questions regarding the school zone in Rocky Gap as it relates to safety along that stretch. Mr. Hill stated that he had met with Mr. Don Hodock, Superintendent of Bland County Public Schools regarding the Commission concerns that were derived from the application review process at the preceding meeting. Mr. Hill reported that the only concerns from the school system were the potential for disruption due to noise. Their meeting produced a proffer that would have Franklin Ready Mix not to use their Engine (Jacob break) break in the school zone or in Rocky Gap Proper. The Commission felt comfortable with proffer and agreed that if this was satisfiable with the school system then it would be satisfiable with the Commission.

Chairman Mercer thanked the Commission, Mr. Hill (Franklin Ready Mix) and the public for participating and officially closed the public hearing.

Chairman Mercer then requested of the Commission recommendations for conditions to impose. The Commission collectively derived three conditions based on the areas of concern that were revealed in both Planning Commission Meetings, along with the proffers provided by Franklin Ready Mix. The proposed conditions were as follows:

1. Vehicles owned or operated by Franklin Ready Mix are not to use their engine (Jacob) break within the Rocky Gap school zone or within Rocky Gap Proper.
2. Franklin Ready Mix is to pave the industrial access road from US Route 52 up to the entrance of their site, for the purpose of public safety and dust prevention.
3. The entire site is to be contained and kept in an aesthetically pleasing manner using indigenous vegetation, shrubbery and trees.

Chairman Mercer then asked of the Commission if there was any further discussion of this matter. The Commission acknowledged that they had no further discussion concerning Larry Taylor's CUP application.

Chairman Mercer requested a motion to recommend to the Bland County Board of Supervisors the approval of Mr. Taylor's Conditional Use Permit with the above denoted conditions for the operation of a ready-mix concrete operation on an existing 5-acre industrial site in Rocky Gap, Virginia.

Vice Chairman Chewning made the motion to recommend to the Bland County Board of Supervisors the approval of Mr. Taylor's Conditional Use Permit with the above denoted conditions for the operation of a ready-mix concrete operation on an existing 5-acre industrial site in Rocky Gap, Virginia. Commission Member Baker provided the 2nd. The motion passed unanimously.

Bland County Economic Development Authority (EDA) Application to Rezone

Chairman Mercer officially opened the public hearing and presented the floor to Mr. Harold Andrews, Bland County EDA, to brief the Commission on their application to rezone a 5-acre tract in Bastian Virginia, Tax Map Parcel # 49-1-1, from agriculture to industrial for the purpose of inducing economic development.

Mr. Andrews addressed the commission and explained the purpose of such an action. He stated that the EDA is looking to rezone this property along with a variety of other associated actions to increase the latitude and efficiency in working with business and industry to locate to Bland County. He further explained that this preemptive due diligence will expedite our ability to negotiate and locate new companies to Bland County. It is for this reason the EDA approaches the Commission.

Commission Member Dodson questioned what industrial prospect would be occupying this site. Secretary Sweet stated that the EDA and the County are both currently working with a company that would create 20-25 new jobs, construct a 20-25,000 sqft. facility and invest a \$1million in the County. Mr. Moler further provided that a proposal has already been submitted to the prospect and that it is essential to prepare the property to close the deal. Mr. Dodson stated that he trusted the judgment of both the EDA the Board of Supervisors to be good stewards of the resources and the interests of the County.

Mr. Moler further alluded to the principles of the EDA and the focus of attracting new business to the County. He stated that the job is difficult due to the lack of product, i.e. industrial property. He

concluded by thanking the commission for their consideration of this application to rezone.

Chairman Mercer then asked of the Commission if there was any further discussion of this matter. The Commission acknowledged that they had no further discussion concerning EDA's rezoning application.

Chairman Mercer requested a motion to recommend to the Bland County Board of Supervisors the approval of the EDA's request to rezone a 5-acre tract in Bastian Virginia, Tax Map Parcel # 49-1-1, from agriculture to industrial for the purpose of inducing economic development.

Commission Member Anderson made the motion to recommend to the Bland County Board of Supervisors to the approval of the application to rezone a 5-acre tract in Bastian Virginia, Tax Map Parcel # 49-1-1, from agriculture to industrial for the purpose of inducing economic development.

Commission Member Newberry provided the 2nd and the motion passed unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS

Follow-ups

Secretary Sweet provided the Commission with following follow-up letters:

Letter of Zoning Compliance to Jesse & Anita Loving – Automobile Graveyard

Letter of Confirmation to John B. & Geraldine Johnston - Rezone and Conditional Use Permit

Letter of Confirmation to Charles Starks – Rezone

Cooperative Zoning Initiative

Secretary Sweet informed the Commission that the Bland County Sheriff's Department would not be aiding the County in our efforts to combat zoning violations around the County. Secretary Sweet however, provide some insight into a suggestion from a Board of Supervisor (Karen Hodock) to utilize the Animal Control Officer as a reconnaissance tool in identifying zoning violations while on patrol around the County. The Commission was enthusiastic about the possibilities and would await the results. Secretary Sweet concluded that he would keep the Commission apprised of the results of this approach.

NEW BUSINESS

None

ADJOURNMENT

Commission Member Newberry made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Commission Member Baker obliged – the meeting was adjourned.