



**MINUTES OF THE
TOWN COUNCIL WORK SESSION OF
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 2019 · 6:00 P.M.
118 COLLEGE ST., PINEVILLE, NC**

The Town Council of the Town of Pineville, NC, met in a Work Session on Monday, February 26, 2019 at 6:00 p.m. at the Pineville Telephone Co. located at 118 College St. in Pineville.

ATTENDANCE

Mayor: Jack Edwards
Mayor Pro-Tem: David Phillips
Council Members: Melissa Davis and Joe Maxim
Council Member Debbie Fowler was absent
Town Manager: Ryan Spitzer
Town Clerk: Barbara Monticello
Planning Director, Travis Morgan

Attendees: Susan Barwick, representing Carolina Place Mall and Jeffrey Cropp, representing Mills Automotive Group.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Edwards called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. A motion was made by Council Member Joe Maxim and seconded by Council Member Melissa Davis to accept the agenda as is. There were ayes by all and the meeting was opened.

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

- A. Request for Signage (Travis Morgan)** – Planning and Zoning Director, Travis Morgan, stated that Susan Barwick of the Carolina Place Mall, was in attendance to request new and more signage than what zoning or their conditional plan allows. The request is for a new, 38-foot tall sign along NC51 and the proposed signage along 485 is substantially bigger than what is allowed at 7'3" tall and approximately 416.76 sq. ft. wide. Mr. Morgan added that the wayfinding signs within the property were also being revised. He stated to Council that there were two choices on how to handle the request: it could be done as a text amendment or Council could conditionally approve a sign package but if they did that, they could possibly get pushback from other businesses. The town would need to have clear, well-defined reasons for approving the mall and no one else.

Ms. Barwick was given the floor to speak. She stated that the Carolina Place Mall was looking to have better signage, better exposure from NC51 and some exposure on the 485 side of the property. They have very little exposure from 485 and they wanted people to know where they are. They want to be competitive and entice people in and having fresh, updated signage would help. Malls are struggling right now and they need all the help they can get.

Council Member Melissa Davis' biggest concern was that if they allowed the mall to have more signage, then Council would have to allow others to have it as well and the goal of the town was to reduce signage as much as possible. She continued stating that visibility was not their biggest issue; it was safety. She then asked Ms. Barwick if there were two different colored signs or if the one sign was going to change colors. Ms. Barwick responded that the monument sign would change colors. Council Member Joe Maxim agreed that if they allowed the signage for one, they would have to allow it for all.

Mr. Morgan advised that the safer way to go would be a text amendment. It would be more equitable doing it that way. Something could be crafted specifically for the BP district but he would have to take a look at how many properties would be affected. Originally, the BP district was for properties over 20 acres so something would need to be crafted very specific so that it could be defended if challenged. Council Member Joe Maxim thought it would be tricky to do that unless square footage was attached to it in some way. Mayor Edwards asked if the 485 sign was the biggest issue. Mr. Morgan acknowledged that it was. Council Member Davis wanted to know why a sign wasn't erected when the mall was built and added that she didn't want to see sign after sign after sign.

Ms. Barwick explained that she respected Pineville's sign ordinance but malls were struggling these days and they just want to do whatever they can to help the stores stay in business. Signage is just one piece of what needs to be done. Mr. Morgan fully understood and stated that malls were on the minds of a lot of planners these days because of the uncertainty of what the future holds for them with online shopping being so popular today. Council Member Davis could not understand how the mall could be built without any sidewalks in place. Once again she cited safety as the number one issue with the Carolina Place Mall. Mr. Spitzer stated that with the greenway coming through that area, there will be connectivity and there should be crosswalks with that project from Leitner over to the mall.

Mr. Morgan stated that he would work to tailor the text amendment very narrowly so as not to saturate the area with sign after sign. Mayor Pro Tem Phillips would like to see something worked out to help the mall as well as Centrum Plaza. Ms. Barwick asked if a decision could be made that night. Mr. Morgan stated that if the sign was below 50 sq. ft., they were fine, but anything above what is allowed has to first be presented to the Planning Board and then hold a Joint Public Hearing on the matter before it could be considered for approval. Both Mayor Edwards and Town Manager, Ryan Spitzer, acknowledged that there wasn't enough time to get them approved and constructed by the time Dicks Sporting Goods had their grand opening. Mr. Morgan added that their sign was 10 feet over what was allowed but if they could fit it all in 50 sq. ft. they wouldn't need approval. Ms. Barwick was not sure if they could reduce it that much; the font on the sign could not be less than 4" tall or people would not be able to read it. Mayor Edwards suggested Ms. Barwick get with Mr. Morgan and the sign company to see if there was something that could be worked out to get directional signage approved quicker.

- B. Mills Automotive (Travis Morgan)** – Mr. Morgan stated that the Mills Automotive Group (new Dodge dealership) was requesting additional parking in the back of their lot where Coastal Carolina Concrete Pumping used to be. They simply want to use this area for vehicle storage; no customers would be brought back in that area. Since this was a conditionally approved, any such changes need to go before Council. They are looking to improve the narrow lot between Cadillac Street and the railroad tracks. The standard sidewalks, trees, and screening will still be required but they are also requesting a 3-year waiver on installation of those items. The Mills Automotive Group is also interested in the triangular wedge of land by the old road stub which the town has also been interested in acquiring from the NCDOT. Additionally, Electricities is interested in the building vacated by the concrete company to store electric poles and other equipment in.

The floor was turned over to Jeffrey Cropp, representing the Mills Automotive Group. Mr. Cropp stated that the company had done all sorts of forecasts and studies before acquiring the property that they currently occupy but they still didn't know what they would be up against once they opened the business. The feedback they were getting from customers and their vendors is that the lot is very tight and the trucks were having a hard time making the deliveries. They currently have 403 parking spaces but because of all the brands represented at the dealership, there just isn't enough room to maneuver. Half of their current inventory is being stored at their Fort Mill property and the time it is taking a car to be brought up from Fort Mill is taking too long for customers.

Mayor Edwards asked how many cars they think could fit in the additional space and if they planned on screening it. Mr. Cropp replied that he didn't know but thought about 250-275 vehicles could fit in the space and they would screen the area if they had to. There was concern about what might go in that area in the future. Mr. Cropp stated that was one of the reasons he spoke to Travis so much was to find out what could go in that area. Council Member Melissa Davis just wanted to be kept in the loop as to what goes in that space. Town Manager, Ryan Spitzer, stated that the town's electric department was interested in the property to store telecommunications and electrical transformers, etc. in behind a fenced area.


Mayor Edwards asked if a conditional use be set up for the parking lot to come back later to council for approval use afterwards. Mr. Morgan replied that council could put conditions on one lot or the other lot or both. Council indicated that they wanted to have the screening done as soon as possible but they could wait on the sidewalks being installed. Council Member Davis asked Mr. Cropp to approach the owner of the builder to let him them know they may have a use for the building. Mr. Spitzer added that they needed to consider the rail dust that would accumulate on the cars stored there.

A brief discussion regarding the fence took place with Mr. Morgan advising council that they could approve whatever type of fencing they wanted. He will work on the terminology for the main parcel, what the screening will be and also how the landscaping should be. He will work with the Mills Group to work out a resolution.

C. Staff Update: Mr. Spitzer provided an update on the following items:

1. Splash Pad – concrete sidewalk was poured; Vortex will begin once the mud dries. The number of rain days and delays needs to be calculated since there has been so much rain.
2. Reviewed concept drawings for new gym floor to determine the which one Council liked most; decided on logo without the North Carolina underneath.
3. Census Committee – Mr. Spitzer asked if any Council Members were interested in participating on the committee. Mecklenburg County requested a council member be on the committee but would accept a resident if no council member volunteered. Council wanted to know more about the meetings and their obligations before agreeing to participate on it. The clerk agreed to find out more information from the county on how much time would be involved in being on the committee. Council Member Maxim stated that if no council member wanted to be on the committee, he had a resident in mind that would volunteer to be on it.
4. The Arts and Science Council's Culture Block program will be installing are work around the park.
5. Sales and Use Tax - Mayor Edwards reported that he was successful in getting a bill drafted to approve a ¼ cent sales and use tax for Pineville which will be on the ballot in November. A resolution of support will be presented to Council at the next Council Meeting in March. The estimated revenue that will be generated is expected to be about \$2.6 million and can be used for sidewalks and street improvements.

ADJOURNMENT: There being no further business to discuss, a motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Phillips and seconded by Council Member Melissa Davis to adjourn the meeting at 8:33 p.m. There were ayes bay all and the meeting adjourned.



Jack Edwards, Mayor

ATTEST:



Barbara Monticello, Town Clerk

