

FRANKLIN COUNTY PLANNING BOARD

August 9, 2011

The Franklin County Planning Board held its regular monthly meeting on Tuesday, August 9, 2011 in the Franklin County Administration Building, Commissioners Meeting Room, 113 Market Street, Louisburg, North Carolina.

Present: Henry Nelms, Steve Mitchell, William Holden, William Wallace, Mary Solomon, Richard Hoyle, Steve Beuscher and Fannie Brown.

Absent: Mark McArn, Phillip Jeffreys, Robert Mann, Ricky May and Ronnie Pearce.

Staff: Scott Hammerbacher and Tammy Davis

Chairman Henry Nelms called the meeting to order at 7:06 P.M.; and welcomed everyone in attendance. William Wallace gave the invocation.

- #1. Text Amendment: Article 2 (Definitions), Article 6 (Table of Permitted Uses) and Article 15 (Telecommunication Towers) to allow Public Safety Telecommunication Towers as a permitted use by right.

Scott Hammerbacher stated staff is proposing the text amendment in order to allow public safety telecommunication towers as a permitted use rather than requiring applicants to seek a conditional use permit. He stated public safety telecommunication towers host the County's communications infrastructure, providing vital services such as E-911 dispatching. He stated the proposed would allow other state and federal entities to seek approval for emergency communication facility at an administrative level. He stated the current ordinance is intended more for wireless telecommunication rather than meeting the needs for emergency facilities which are crucial to the public health and safety. He stated the proposed would allow for guyed towers, which are more cost effective.

Mr. Hammerbacher stated the recommended changes include the allowance of taller towers, decreased setbacks, tower types and requirements for location. He stated the proposed would also allow all public safety telecommunication towers to be located in any zoning district as a permitted use. He stated the Franklin County Board of Adjustment recently approved two towers intended to provide emergency communications. He stated legal challenges are currently jeopardizing Franklin County's ability to provide emergency services in the most effective manner for the citizens. He stated the proposed would allow for administrative review and approval, which would provide a reasonable assurance that emergency communication services are not compromised and provide for the utmost safety for Franklin County citizens.

William Wallace questioned that by approved the proposed it would remove public review of any tower being proposed. Mr. Hammerbacher stated that was correct and they would be approved at staff level. Mr. Wallace stated he feels by removing public review, it wouldn't stop legal challenges, but delay them because people could still sue the County. David Guin (Attorney) emphasized people would sue for anything. He stated they would challenge a proposed tower but couldn't delay a project just because they don't like it being placed in their

neighborhood. Mr. Wallace expressed concern regarding the people who would be affected by these towers. He stated he doesn't feel its right that they aren't being notified.

Chairman Nelms stated he would like for people to look at the good these towers would do. He stated he has served on fire/rescue and feels it would be a necessity for Franklin County. Richard Hoyle stated he has served on a fire department and agrees this is a necessity if it saves one life. David Guin stated he doesn't feel people would see rows of towers but the emergency personnel need to be able to communicate with everyone in a time of an emergency. He stated the proposed would make it a simpler process in placing these where they are needed. He stated the majority of citizens are in favor of these towers unless they can look out their front door and see a tower, and then they are against it. He stated there would be a public hearing before the County Commissioners where the public would be able to express their concerns.

William Wallace questioned staff on how other counties handle this type of situation. Mr. Hammerbacher stated based on staff's research, few have any type of ordinance in place for this which means they are exempt.

Richard Hoyle made a motion, seconded by Fannie Brown to recommend approval of the proposed text amendment. The motion passed by majority vote with William Wallace voting against the motion.

#2. Other Business/Reports/Discussion

A.) Other Business/Reports/Open Forum

Mr. Hammerbacher stated funding has been approved from CAMPO to conduct a study to analyze and to ensure there aren't traffic problems on Capital Boulevard in Franklin County.

With there being no further business before the Planning Board, Chairman Nelms adjourned the meeting at 7:23 P.M.

Henry Nelms – Chairman
Franklin County Planning Board

Tammy Davis – Clerk
Franklin County Planning Board