

**Town of Mills River  
Minutes of the Planning Board  
Tuesday, October 6, 2020**

The Town of Mills River Planning Board met on Tuesday, October 6, 2020, at 7:00 PM in the Mills River Town Hall. Board members present were: Heath Wiggins, Sherri Hill, Ryan Perry, Jim Foster, and Matt Holloway. Cheryl Janoski attended via "Zoom". Wayne Carland (unexcused), James Cantrell (excused), and Mary Ann Osby (excused) were absent. Staff present were Town Manager Daniel Cobb and Tax Collector/Deputy Town Clerk Aurelie Taylor.

Chairman Matt Holloway called the meeting to order and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Town Manager Daniel Cobb requested an addition to the Agenda. He received a letter from High Vista Finance requesting an extension to Master Plan approval and would like to add that item to "New Business".

**Approval of the Minutes**

Jim Foster made a motion to accept the minutes of September 1, 2020 as presented. Heath Wiggins seconded the motion and the motion passed by unanimous verbal assent.

**Public Comment:** No Public Comment.

**Old Business:**

**A. Comprehensive Plan Update**

Town Manager Daniel Cobb gave an update on the progress of the Comprehensive Plan. He explained that the plan is a policy document, not law or ordinance. Its purpose to is be a guide for future decisions.

Four input sessions were held; some of the results of those sessions were presented. Future plans are presentation of the results to Boards and Committees in October, development of text and policies in November and December. In January, a first draft will be presented to Boards and Committees. By March any revisions and changes will have been made so that in April a final draft can come before Planning Board for possible recommendation to Town Council.

**New Business:**

**A. High Vista Finance Extension Request**

Town Manager Daniel Cobb explained that in October of 2018, Planning Board approved a master plan for further development of property in High Vista. The master plan was needed for a subdivision application, to be submitted to Planning Board within two years. The letter from David Surface, Member Manager of High Vista Finance, explains that the efforts to finish have been impacted by issues that have had to be worked through with the many interest groups within the community and the passing of the Member Manager, Frank Surface, earlier in the year.

The full text of the letter appears below:



**High Vista Finance**  
88 Country Club Road, Mills River, NC 28759  
828-891-1986

September 20, 2020

Mr. Daniel Cobb, Town Manager  
Town of Mills River  
124 Town Center Drive  
Mills River, NC 28759

Dear Mr. Cobb:

High Vista Finance requests an extension to complete required documentation for the Master Plan approved by the Planning Board on October 2, 2018. We have been working with the High Vista Community on the Master Plan since Planning Board approval. Our efforts to finish have been impacted by issues that we've had to work through with the many interest groups within the community that provided input to the final plan and the passing of our Member Manager, Frank Surface, in July of this year.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation and support.

Sincerely,

David Surface, Member Manager  
High Vista Finance

cc:  
Will Buie  
WGLA Engineering  
724 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue West  
Hendersonville, NC 28739

Craig Justus, Attorney  
The Van Winkle Law Firm  
11 North Market Street  
Asheville, NC 28802

Larry Rich  
88 Fairway Falls  
Mills River, NC 28759

Ryan Perry made a motion to grant High Vista Finance an additional year's extension; Jim Foster seconded the motion and the motion passed by unanimous verbal assent.

Sherri Hill asked Daniel about the recent variance request near the corner of Banner Farm Rd. and School House Rd. He couldn't give details because it would be heard at a quasi-judicial hearing, but it had to do with a variance of a setback.

Jim Foster asked whether Amazon was going to have an open house. Daniel had not heard anything about that.

Matt Holloway asked about the progress on filling the Town Planner position. Daniel explained that the 2020-2021 budget included funding for dependent care health insurance, but Town Council didn't approve that benefit; subsequently, two applicants were offered the position but both declined because that benefit wasn't available. The consultant for the Comprehensive Plan, Alan Steinbeck, has been retained as a part time planner for the immediate future. He is handling all zoning permit applications and will also be helping with the state mandated land use regulation consolidation that will have to be completed by July of 2021.

Jim Foster asked the Board if they would consider changing their meeting time to 6:30 pm, as Town Council has done. Those present had no objections.

Sherri Hill asked Daniel to clarify what quasi-judicial hearings were, why some decisions had to be made in those hearings, and how a wider group of citizens, rather than just abutting neighbors, might be better informed about those hearings. Daniel said the Town currently follows state law regarding public notice requirements and that he and the Town Clerk were discussing how to reach a wider range of property owners about upcoming quasi-judicial hearings.

Jim Foster made a motion to change the Planning Board's meeting time to 6:30pm; Ryan Perry seconded the motion and the motion passed by unanimous verbal assent.

Heath Wiggins asked if there was an orientation process for new Planning Board members. There has never been one developed. Staff will work on that process for the future.

As there was no further business to discuss, Jim Foster made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Sherri Hill seconded the motion and the motion passed by unanimous verbal assent.

Respectfully submitted,

Aurelie Taylor, CTC  
Tax Collector/Deputy Town Clerk