

**BLAND COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION**  
**Meeting Minutes for August 5, 2019**

**Members Present:**

Jerry Mercer, Randy Johnson, John Dodson, Elmer Chewning, Wade Hall, Guy Boone, Steve Hermansen, Jim Baker, Meagan Bradshaw

**Members Absent:**

**Others Present:**

Eric Workman, Bland County Administrator  
Joel K. Cagle, Planning Commission Secretary

**CALL TO ORDER**

At 6:00 PM, Chairman Mercer called the meeting of the Bland County Planning Commission to order at the Bland County School Board Office; Bastian, Virginia. The Invocation was given and allegiance was pledged to the flag of our country by everyone present.

**ROLL CALL**

Planning Commission Secretary Cagle took the roll call and announced that a quorum was present.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Chairman Mercer invited a motion to approve the meeting minutes of July 1, 2019. Commissioner Bradshaw made the motion to approve the meeting minutes of July 1, 2019; Commissioner Baker provided the second, and the motion passed unanimously.

**PUBLIC HEARING**

-CUP Application from Todd Akers to operate a Mini-Warehouse Storage Facility on Tax Map No. 13A1-A-39 was discussed. Mr. Akers approached the Commission and explained his proposed use. Mr. Akers provided the Commission with three options for landscaping. He stated that he was not in favor of the earth berm, however could work with the fencing and shrubs. A question was asked on the distance from Eagles Drive, Mr. Akers stated it would be approximately 26'-28'. Commissioner Hermansen stated that he has been observing storage in other locations and noted that most are well landscaped to cover the site. A question was asked about the fence, Mr. Akers stated that the fence would be on all four sides of the lot and would be installed after both buildings are constructed, it would also have a 16'-20' gate. The Commission asked what his operating hours would be, Mr. Akers stated he was thinking 5-6AM to 10-

**BLAND COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION**  
**Meeting Minutes for August 5, 2019**

11PM. Mr. Akers stated the area inside of the fence would be gravel. He plans to have 63 units, unless he takes 10 off, then 53. There is to be no outside storage, with his prices being between \$40-\$130 per unit; depending on unit size. He plans to allow parking on the existing pavement. There is an existing dusk to dawn light, he plans to install another dusk to dawn and well as solar powered motion lights at each unit, he will work to prevent obtrusive lighting. Some units may have interior lights. The Commission asked Mr. Akers what he would allow to be stored and how he will enforce, he stated that he would have a contract with the individual with "terms and conditions". There would be a dumpster on site, within the fenced area. Chairman Mercer opened the public hearing:

-David Akers: stated he is for the project. He remembers when Rocky Gap was an economic boom town. He feels there has been some misinformation going around, referring to a petition that has been started, stating that a storage lot would not benefit the county/community. It would benefit the county in taxes. It would not be an eye sore, it would be neat, clean and well maintained; look good for the community. He thinks this would also benefit the store next door. People need storage.

-Doug Rainey: presented the Commission with a petition signed by 75 people to "stop storage unit in Rock Gap". Stating he was the owner of Woody's. He stated that he felt Items 1 and 3 from Section 62-132 of the Bland County Zoning Ordinance applied here. (1- the proposed use shall not be prejudicial to the character of the neighborhood; 3- The proposed use shall not be detrimental to the use or development of adjacent properties or the general neighborhood nor impair the value of buildings or property in surrounding areas.) He stated that Rocky Gap has a small town country charm; these units would not be conducive to community. Mr. Rainey stated that a fence would not be very aesthetic. Mr. Rainey quoted a retail developer stating from a residential standpoint, this use does not draw people in. Stated that another business would be better suited for this location.

-Cecil Sink: spoke in favor of this project. Stated all his talking points had been stated. He feels that when there is growth, from an environment stand point, you want it to be clean growth. He feels this fits from an environmental stand point and that there is a need for this business.

-John Zelaski: Stated that the reason he bought property in Rocky Gap was that he liked what he saw.

-Steve Moses: Stated he was a trustee to an adjoining lot. He stated he did not want tall trees on the Post Office side as it needed to remain visible to the public.

-Cathy Akers: Stated an alternative plan for this lot was to have her private mental health practice at this location, however felt that the proposed use was a better fit. She also stated that with other options out there, the storage units would not be a competing

**BLAND COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION**  
**Meeting Minutes for August 5, 2019**

business.

There being no further speakers, Chairman Mercer closed the public hearing.

The Commission discussed the application. Chairman Mercer stated that there was a need for this business in the County, but was concerned with the location. How would this business effect traffic, neighbors, and the Greenway Project. He asked what else could go in this location. Commissioner Hermansen stated he felt that 60 units would not generate much traffic. Commissioner Boone questioned the real estate tax that would be generated. Dr. Workman explained that the business taxation was based on the type of business operated. Commissioner Hall stated that there would be no cost to county for water/sewer for this type of business, stating that without those infrastructures in place, other development would be difficult. Chairman Mercer stated that if this project does not succeed, the design of the building could not be changed to another use. Conditions were discussed, Commissioner Bradshaw made a motion to recommend the Board of Supervisors approve the Conditional Use Permit with the following conditions:

- 1) Hours of operation be limited to 6Am to 10PM; 7 days a week
- 2) No obtrusive lighting
- 3) A 6' tall fence to encompass buildings, with evergreen shrubby to be maintained on the south boundary and along Green Way.
- 4) Project shall be started within 6 months of approval, with completion of project within 18 months of project start.
- 5) There shall be no open trash containers and no trash shall be permitted to accumulate on the subject property.
- 6) Stored material shall be restricted so that there shall be no welding or flammable explosive materials or any other inherently dangerous materials, and that any vehicle that may be stored shall be drained of all fuel, and that no other substance that would be in violation of any health ordinance shall be kept in the units.

A second was provided by Commissioner Baker. A voice vote was taken:

Jim Baker:	Yes
Meagan Bradshaw:	Yes
Guy Boone:	Yes
Elmer Chewning:	Yes
John Dodson:	Yes
Wade Hall:	Yes
Steve Hermansen:	Yes
Randy Johnson:	Yes
Jerry Mercer:	No

**BLAND COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION**  
**Meeting Minutes for August 5, 2019**

The motion passed eight to one.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

-An application from Lee Hagan to operate a Public Garage on Tax Map 13A1-A-32. Mr. Hagan spoke on his Application. He plans to house 8-10 trucks at a time, doing "turn over" jobs, meaning fix them and get them out the door. He plans for his hours of operation to be 8AM to 6PM. He is willing to work with the Greenway easements. Commissioner Chewning made a motion to hold a public hearing at the next stated Planning Commission meeting, Commissioner Hermansen provided a second and the vote was unanime.

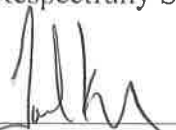
**ITEMS TABLED FROM PREVIOUS MEETING**

None

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to come before the Planning Commission at this time, Commissioner Johnson made a motion to adjourn; Commissioner Baker provided the second, the motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Joel K. Cagle- Secretary  
Planning Commission  
County of Bland