Written by Gary Childers
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With the endorsement of Council member Lynne Mason, the zoning requests necessary for United Developers to build 'Watauga Green,' became a reality, "It really does address the housing need for our workforce. And we've been talking about this for years and this is the first serious proposal," she said of the multifamily, affordable housing project. The Council voted unanimously to approve the project which will be located where Clawson Trailer Park was previously located in the Perkinsville area. The Council is frequently approached, and regularly denies, requests to build multi-family housing complexes that are actually designed to accommodate students. These projects exceed the Town's density regulations and have potential negative impacts on residential areas. The keys to approval of United Developers request were the clear plans showing a variety of structures containing one, two, and three bedroom apartments, the layout of the apartments showing clear designs for family living, an application process that eliminates full time students, and a successful track record of providing good and attractive affordable multifamily housing in other areas.

In a related topic, Lynnwood Brown, chair of the Town's Affordable Housing Task Force presented the work their group had completed to date on developing ordinances for Council to consider that provides further incentives for development of multifamily affordable housing for the workforce within Boone. In summing up the affordable workforce housing goals of the Council Ms. Mason stated that there was no magic bullet that met all the affordable housing needs, but these are important pieces of the big puzzle that must be put together to create affordable workforce housing in the community.