

**Town of Montreat
Board of Commissioners
Special Meeting
June 5, 2014 – 4:30 p.m.
Walkup Building**

Commissioners present: Mayor Letta Jean Taylor
Commissioner Martha Campbell
Commissioner Tim Helms
Commissioner Jack McCaskill
Commissioner Ann Vinson

Commissioners absent: Mayor Pro Tem Mary Standaert

Town staff present: Ron Nalley, Town Administrator
Misty R. Gedlinske, Town Clerk
Steve Freeman, Public Works Director
Jack Staggs, Chief of Police
Stefan Stackhouse, Finance Officer
David Currie, Building Inspector/Code Administrator

Approximately 25 members of the public were also present. Mayor Taylor called the meeting to order at 4:34 p.m. and held a moment of silence.

Town Hall Facility Preliminary Architectural Design Plan Discussion

Architectural Design Studios (ADS) representatives Mike Cox and Amy Dowty gave a preliminary conceptual design presentation to the Board and Town staff for the new Town Hall facility, which included the following information:

- An introduction to the design process and a timeline of future project steps;
- An overview of the Town government’s daily operations and provided services;
- A description of the current Town Services Office limitations and inadequacies;
- A listing of the goals and objectives to be achieved through the programming and design process;
- A graphic depiction of the location and topography of the Florida Terrace lots, including proposed strategies for reducing site disturbance, managing stormwater runoff, preserving existing vegetation, and maintain a perimeter buffer;
- A program of spaces review for Town Administration, Police, Public Works, and public meeting areas, including potential benefits and disadvantages of continuing all Public Works operations in the current Town Services Office;

- A brief overview of the two conceptual options provided in McGill Associates' September 2013 feasibility study;
- Visual depictions of possible two-and three-story conceptual layouts, including the location of proposed on-site parking areas and building access points;
- A comparison of the current meeting room size in the Walkup Building with the proposed square footage of the new Council chambers.

The September 2013 site plan assessment and feasibility study prepared by McGill Associates proposed a total building area of approximately 8,900 square feet, with a building footprint of 5,500 square feet. The three-story conceptual plans prepared by ADS proposed a total building area of 7,800 square feet, with a building footprint of between 3,100 and 3,300 square feet, depending on whether the administrative offices were located on the first or second floor. The three-story conceptual plans reduced the total building area by 12% from the McGill Associates study, and reduced the building footprint size by 40%. For the two-story conceptual plan, the proposed total building area would be 7,700 square feet, with a building footprint of 4,600 square feet. This represented a 13% reduction in building area and a 16% reduction in footprint size from the McGill Associates study. The gross square footage calculation, which includes the space needed for bathrooms, closets and interior wall dimensions, was also reduced from 32% to approximately 28%.

ADS staff then reviewed and compared each conceptual layout and noted that in all scenarios, the project size, site impact, and stormwater runoff were reduced from the original feasibility study, while the amount of on-site parking was increased. Based on meetings with Town department heads and input from individual Board members, it is proposed at this time that dedicated office and meeting space for the Public Works Department will not be included in the new Town Hall facility. All daily Public Works operations are proposed at this time to remain at the current Town Services Office, along with all departmental vehicle, equipment and supply storage.

During Board discussion, Commissioner McCaskill asked why a single-story conceptual layout had not been presented, and expressed his interest in avoiding the cost of installing a public elevator. Ms. Dowty explained that a single-story building would result in a greater amount of excavation, more extensive retaining walls, and that the Police Department would no longer be able to have a separate parking area and entrance from Arkansas Trail. She also mentioned that because the rear exterior wall would be partially below ground level, office spaces on the ground floor would be limited to the front of the building in order to provide for windows and natural light. Mr. Cox further advised that with a single-story building, the parking area could not be located at the same level as the entrance of the building, and that either an interior or exterior elevator would still likely be needed for this reason.

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Commissioner Helms then asked for input from Town staff. Mr. Nalley said that a multi-story building would be more consistent with the character of the surrounding neighborhood, and would better achieve the Board's desire for minimal site disturbance and stormwater runoff. He also suggested amending the proposed building layout to include a work station and file storage for the Public Works Director, in lieu of a dedicated office space. Other department heads confirmed that the proposed conceptual layout would meet their daily needs and would be consistent with all applicable state and Federal evidence storage and processing protocols and requirements. Some discussion was also heard concerning whether the Board members preferred to locate the Council chambers on the first or second floor, and methods for providing handicapped-accessible emergency egress on the second floor.

Adjournment

Mayor Taylor declared the meeting adjourned at 5:25 p.m.

Letta Jean Taylor, Mayor

Misty R. Gedlinske, Town Clerk