

**REPORT OF MONTREAT BRIDGE COMMITTEE
TO
MONTREAT TOWN COUNCIL
REGARDING THE TEXAS ROAD BRIDGE
May 31, 2016**

BACKGROUND

The Texas Road Bridge was declared unsafe and taken out of use in 2008 as a result of an inspection which revealed serious deterioration of the bridge with the passage of time. Since 2008, the issue of the replacement of the bridge has occupied much time and deliberations of the Town Council, has cost the town considerable funds in professional fees, and has also been the subject of much discussion in the town.

The previous Town Council approved plans for a new, much larger and higher bridge to be constructed at the site of the current bridge using a mix of federal, state and local funds under the provisions of the Municipal Bridge Program, with state and federal funds paying 80% of the cost, and Montreat being responsible for 20% of the cost. Many local citizens objected to the size or location or total cost of the bridge, or all three.

Following the elections in November, 2015, the newly constituted Town Council, in March, 2016, passed a resolution suspending indefinitely the Texas Road Bridge Project and appointing a citizen advisory committee to make a recommendation by June, 2016 regarding what should be done, or not, regarding the bridge.

Committee Creation:

Specifically, on March 10, 2016, at its regular monthly meeting, the Montreat Town Council passed two resolutions as follows (quotes are from Council minutes):

1. "Commissioner Otto then moved to suspend the Texas Road Bridge Project indefinitely. Mayor Pro Tem Fouche seconded the motion. The motion carried 3/2."
2. "Commissioner Otto then made a motion requesting Mayor Helms to appoint a committee to investigate the need for a bridge, the type of bridge, whether vehicular or walking and report back to Council by June. Commissioner Gilliland seconded the motion. The motion carried 3/2." (emphasis added)

Pursuant to said Motion #2 above, Mayor Tim Helms subsequently appointed a committee, known as the Montreat Bridge Committee (referred to hereafter as the "Committee" or "MBC"), comprised of the following members:

Alice Lentz
Dan Dean
Kent Otto – Town Commissioner
Bob Cunningham
Lee Lancaster
Jan McRae
Tyler Smith

ACTIVITIES OF THE COMMITTEE

In order to begin to accomplish its assigned task, Alice Lentz convened the first meeting of the committee for April 19, 2016. A summary of that meeting and every subsequent committee meeting, as well as actions taken by the Committee, are as follows:

1. April 19, 2016 Meeting (Organizational Meeting).

Persons Present. At this first meeting, the following were present:

- Five (5) committee members (Lentz, Dean, Otto, Lancaster and McRae).
- Two (2) Town Staff persons (Ron Nalley, Town Administrator, and Angie Murphy, Town Clerk).
- Thirteen (13) citizens.

Actions Taken and Matters Discussed.

- Committee Organized.

The committee was organized as follows: Chair, Alice Lentz, and Vice Chair, Dan Dean, were elected and a set of procedural rules were adopted.

- Meeting Dates Set.

In order to gather as many facts, and as much technical and other helpful information as possible, and in order to discern the feelings and opinions of Montreat institutions, residents and property owners, the committee scheduled three (3) meetings to be held on May 3, May 17 and May 31, 2016. It was agreed that the May 3rd meeting would be primarily devoted to hearing from the public, the May 17th meeting would be to hear from technical experts, institutional representatives, residents of Texas Road and others to be specifically invited, and the May 31st meeting would be for committee discussions and decisions about a recommendation to the Town Council. It was emphasized that there would be a public comment period at all meetings at which time anyone would be welcomed to make any comment and ask any question.

- Aspirations and Goals Stated.

The aspirations and goals of the committee were stated by the Chair and Vice-Chair and other members as follows:

- a. The committee and its activities will at all times be open, transparent, welcoming and respectful to anyone and everyone who wishes to voice an opinion.
- b. Public comments, thoughts, recommendation and opinions will be sought and welcomed in every way possible – Public hearings, public comment periods at every meeting, broad publication of committee meetings and activities, requests for email communications and other submission of comments, publication of committee members' email addresses, and other activities to publicize the welcoming and open nature of the committee's activities.
- c. During the public comment period at each meeting, time limits for comments will be suggested but not enforced. The committee will be willing to listen as long as any person wishes to talk and express an opinion, suggestion or idea. The committee will respond as able to questions presented and will interact as appropriate with persons attending committee meetings.

- d. The committee will be open-minded to all possibilities, and will listen and give serious consideration to any and all opinions and ideas voiced.
 - e. The committee, after listening to all opinion and voices expressed, and after considering all facts and technical information available, will render recommendations to the Town Council which the Committee feels are in the best interest of the Town and expresses the will and desires of a majority of the Town stakeholders.
- **Public Comments.** During the public comment period at this first meeting, seven (7) of the thirteen (13) citizens present made comments to the Committee. (A spreadsheet summarizing all comments made to the MBC at all meetings, as well as comments made by email, is attached to this Report as Attachment B.)
 - **Minutes.** Official minutes of this and all committee meetings can be found on the Town of Montreat website.

2. Invitations to Public for Comments.

On April 26 and 27, 2016, the Committee issued invitations to the public for them to attend the 3 subsequent meetings of the committee, and/or submit email messages, for the purpose of making any and all suggestions, recommendations or comments regarding the task assigned to the Committee. Such invitations were distributed by the Town office to its Sunshine List and through all other available methods for contacting the public. (Attached to this Report as Attachments C and D are copies of the invitations which were distributed.)

3. May 3, 2016 Meeting (Public Comment Meeting).

Persons Present. At this second meeting, the following were present:

- All seven (7) committee members (Chair Lentz, Vice-Chair Dean, Commissioner Otto, Cunningham, Lancaster, McRae and Smith).
- Three (3) Town Staff persons (Ron Nalley, Town Administrator, Angie Murphy, Town Clerk and Steve Freeman, Public Works Director).
- Twenty-two (22) citizens.

Actions Taken and Matters Discussed.

- **Public Comments.** This meeting had been publicized as a meeting primarily devoted to hearing any and all comments, thoughts and recommendations from any citizen who wished to speak. 22 citizens attended the meeting and 19 persons spoke regarding the bridge. (A spreadsheet summarizing all comments made to the MBC in all meetings, as well as comments made by email, is attached to this Report as Attachment B.)
- **Minutes.** Official minutes of this and all committee meetings can be found on the Town of Montreat website.

4. May 17, 2016 Meeting (Institutional/Technical/Resident Comment Meeting).

Persons Present. At this third meeting, the following were present:

- Six (6) committee members (Chair Lentz, Vice-Chair Dean, Commissioner Otto, Cunningham, Lancaster and Smith).
- Six (6) Town Staff persons (Ron Nalley - Town Administrator; Angie Murphy - Town

- Clerk; Jack Staggs – Police Chief; Steve Freeman – Public Works Director; David Currie – Code Enforcement Officer; Barry Creaseman – Senior Water Operator).
- Five (5) invited institutional representatives and technical experts.
 - Twenty-five (25) citizens.

Actions Taken and Matters Discussed.

- This meeting was primarily devoted to hearing from various institutional representatives, technical experts and specific persons who were specifically and personally invited to speak. In addition, as with all of the Committee's meetings, public comments from anyone were welcomed and allowed.
- Those who were specifically invited to attend and who made comments, either in person or, in the sole case of Michael Caulfield, in writing, were as follows:

Richard Dubose – President, Montreat Conference Center

Joe Kirkman – Counsel to the President, Montreat College

Representatives from the Town of Montreat:

Ron Nalley – Town Administrator

Jack Staggs – Chief of Police

David Currie – Code Enforcement Officer

Dewayne L. Sykes, P.E. - Professional Engineer, KCI Engineering, Raleigh, NC

Jack McCaskill – Engineer and former Montreat Town Commissioner

Lee Lancaster – Texas Road Resident and Committee Member (See spreadsheet prepared by Lee showing the opinions of those Texas Road residents whom she personally contacted, which spreadsheet is attached to this Report as Attachment E. These residents also submitted comments in person at Committee meetings or by email, and their comments are reflected in the spreadsheet as either meeting comments or email comments.)

Gregory D. Styles, P.E. - Professional Engineer, Black Mountain, NC

Michael Caulfield, P.E. - Retired Professional Engineer, Greenville, MS

(Written statement of Mr. Caulfield was read at the meeting and is attached to this Report as Attachment F)

- Public Comments. At this meeting, there were twenty-five (25) citizens present. Nineteen (19) of these persons spoke during the public comment period regarding the bridge. (A spreadsheet summarizing all comments made to the MBC in all meetings, as well as comments made by email, is attached to this Report as Attachment B.)
- Minutes. Official minutes of this and all committee meetings can be found on the Town of Montreat website.

5. May 31, 2016 Meeting (Discussion and Decision Meeting).

Persons Present. At this fourth meeting, the following were present:

1. All Seven (7) committee members (Chair Lentz, Vice-Chair Dean, Commissioner Otto, Cunningham, Lancaster, McRae and Smith).
2. Four (4) staff persons (Ron Nalley - Town Administrator; Angie Murphy - Town Clerk; Steve Freeman – Public Works Director; David Currie – Code Enforcement Officer).
3. Thirty-three (33) citizens.

Actions Taken and Matters Discussed.

- This meeting was primarily devoted to discussions among committee members regarding their positions, thoughts and opinions regarding the Texas Road Bridge, with the goal of developing specific recommendations to be presented to the Town Council. In addition, as with all of the Committee's meetings, public comments from anyone were welcomed and allowed.
- Public Comments. At this meeting, there were thirty-three (33) citizens present. Two (2) of them make comments to the Committee during the public comment period. (A spreadsheet summarizing all comments made to the MBC in all meetings, as well as comments made by email, is attached to this Report as Attachment B.)
- Actions Taken. Following discussion by the members, the committee adopted certain recommendations to Town Council and also approved this Report to Council. The Recommendations adopted are attached to this Report as Attachment A.

The Committee also approved the submission of this Report to the Town Council as the final act of the Committee, in response to the task assigned to the Committee by the Council's action of March 10, 2016.

- Minutes. Official minutes of this and all committee meetings can be found on the Town of Montreat website.

Respectfully Submitted,

As requested by the Town Council pursuant to its resolution of March 10, 2016,

Montreat Bridge Committee:

Alice Lentz – Chair

Dan Dean – Vice Chair

Kent Otto – Town Commissioner

Bob Cunningham

Lee Lancaster

Jan McRae

Tyler Smith

ATTACHMENT A

RECOMMENDATIONS OF BRIDGE COMMITTEE TO TOWN COUNCIL

Preliminary Statement.

The Texas Road Bridge has been out of use since 2008. For the past eight (8) years, many Town Councils have spent much time, effort and money planning for the replacement for such bridge. More recently a previously constituted Town Council, after considering several options at different locations, adopted a plan for the construction of a new bridge at the same location on Texas Road as the location of the old bridge. The cost, size and location of the bridge created some opposition to such new bridge from citizens and other stakeholders in Montreat.

As a consequence of the elections in November, 2015, a new Mayor and new majority of the Town Council were installed. The new Town Council, in March, 2016, passed two resolutions (quoted in the Report to which this is attached) suspending indefinitely the Texas Road Bridge Project and appointing this committee to make a recommendation by June regarding such project.

It is common knowledge, which is confirmed by the many comments received by the Committee, that the citizens and other stakeholders of Montreat are divided over what should be done about the Texas Road Bridge. Furthermore, as noted by the votes of the Town Council regarding the bridge, the Town Council is also divided over what should be done about the bridge. Therefore, it should be no surprise to anyone that this Bridge Committee is also divided over what should be done about the bridge. Nonetheless, the Committee has attempted to determine the will of the majority of the citizens and stakeholders of the Town, and has also attempted to determine what it considers to be in the best interest of the entire community and all of its many varied constituents and peoples, and is prepared to make certain recommendations, to which at least a majority of the Committee agrees.

Therefore, after many hours of meetings and listening to comments, suggestions and opinions about the Bridge and what should be done about it, and after reading many documents as well as many emails sent to the committee by interested parties, and after much deliberation, the **Montreat Bridge Committee makes the following recommendations to the Montreat Town Council:**

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. That the Town Council **take the following action immediately**, preferably beginning during the 2016 Summer Season, and certainly **before the Town Council takes any further action** regarding the Texas Road Bridge Project:
 - a) Obtain a **professional traffic study, with recommendations**, regarding the Texas Road area between Welch Field and Lookout Road, and preferably of the entire town, which study should include and give consideration to the following factors, at a minimum:
 - i. Traffic volume and patterns at various times of the year, since traffic in Montreat can vary considerably depending on the time of year;
 - ii. Safety of children and pedestrians year-round, but especially during the summer season;
 - iii. Safety and convenience of residents in the immediate vicinity of Texas Road;
 - iv. Convenient and expeditious access to the Texas Road area by first responders and other emergency vehicles and persons;
 - v. Convenient access to the college and other areas on the east side of Flat Creek, including by large buses and vehicles; and
 - vi. Evacuation routes of town residents in the event of a major, large-scale crisis or emergency.
 - b) Develop an **evacuation plan** for the entire Town, in coordination with the other town institutions, to be publicized and used in the event of a major, large-scale crisis or emergency.
2. That the Town Council **NOT proceed** any further with the **current plans** for the replacement of the Texas Road Bridge at its current site, which plans are known as Option B in the previously considered plans, and which plans were approved by the previous Town Council.
3. That the Town Council **NOT build any vehicular bridge** at the site of the previous vehicular bridge on Texas Road.
4. That the Town Council take all necessary steps to **avoid repayment of funds** previously provided for the bridge project by the federal government through the Municipal Bridge Program, in the approximate amount of \$250,000.
5. That the Town Council refurbish and maintain the current **Texas Road Bridge as a pedestrian bridge**, and that it also enhance and beautify the area surrounding the bridge. If keeping the current bridge as a pedestrian bridge should prove impractical or undesirable, then it is recommended that a new, smaller, attractive pedestrian bridge over the creek be constructed at that site.
6. That the Town Council seriously **consider and address the many concerns** expressed by citizens regarding **safety issues** on Texas Road as they concern children and pedestrians using the various recreational, Club and child care facilities located on and around Texas Road. For example, suggestions received from citizens include the following:
 - a) Make Texas Road in this area a pedestrian-only road during the busy summer season (except for residents living on Texas Road);
 - b) Create designated drop-off/pick-up points for children – either on Texas Road or at alternate non-Texas Road sites (this would require coordination with the Conference Center);

- c) Make Texas Road in this area safer by installing speed bumps or other traffic calming features;
 - d) Construct a cul-de-sac in the vicinity of the old, closed bridge so that cars have an easy way to turn around on the now dead-end Texas Road;
 - e) Limit or prohibit parking on Texas Road in this area;
 - f) Prohibit trucks from using Texas Road Spur;
 - g) Limit Texas Road Spur to emergency use only.
7. That the Town Council construct a **new vehicular bridge at Tennessee Road** across Flat Creek to intersect with Texas Road, which bridge and location are described as Option D in the previously considered plans. It is **strongly recommended** that such bridge be designed and built **primarily as a pedestrian-friendly bridge**, in a pedestrian-friendly environment, with **vehicular traffic complementing rather than controlling** the design and construction. As part of this project, it is further recommended that significant modifications and improvements be made to Texas Road between Assembly Drive and the Walkup Building to enhance calming features, in order to **significantly reduce the speed of vehicles and enhance the safety of all pedestrians** using Texas Road, young and old. Such features could include, at a minimum – speed bumps, warning signs and one-way traffic.
8. That the Town Council **strongly consider and seriously explore** the possibility of constructing the new bridge at Tennessee Road **with local funds only** and without the use of Municipal Bridge Program Funds, or any other federal funds.
9. If the Town Council determines that it is not feasible or fiscally responsible to build a new vehicular bridge at Tennessee Road with local funds only, then the Montreat Bridge Committee recommends that it build such a bridge as a participant in the **Municipal Bridge Program**.
10. That the Town Council, following the construction of a new bridge at Tennessee Road, designate Texas Road from Assembly Drive to the Walkup Building as a **one-way street** – at least during the summer season, and perhaps year-round.
11. The Montreat Bridge Committee approves, without endorsement or recommendation, the submission of the following documents to the Town Council for its reading and consideration:
- a) Statement of Alice Lentz dated May 30, 2016 (attached to the Committee's Report to Town Council as Attachment G)
 - b) Statement of Jan McRae dated May 10, 2016 (attached to the Report as Attachment H)
 - c) Statement of Bob Cunningham dated April 13, 2016 (attached to the Report as Attachment I)
 - d) Statement of Bob Cunningham dated May 20, 2016 (attached to the Report as Attachment J)
 - e) Statement of Lee Lancaster dated May 24, 2016 (attached to the Report as Attachment K)

ATTACHMENT B

MONTREAT BRIDGE COMMITTEE

CITIZEN COMMENTS & EMAILS

MAY 31, 2016

Citizen #	New Bridge?	Pedestrian or Vehicular?	Bridge Location?	Traffic Flow?	Misc. Comments
Meeting #1 04/19/16					
1					
2	YES	Vehicular	No preference stated		No comments relating specifically to bridge
3	YES	Vehicular	NOT on Texas Rd.	ONE-WAY	NO TO CURRENT PLANS.
4	YES	Vehicular	No preference stated		SAFETY!
5					No comments relating specifically to bridge
6	YES	Vehicular	No preference stated		
7					
Meeting #2 05/03/16					
8	YES	Vehicular	TEXAS RD. (Veh)		Current bridge & location served well
9	NO	Pedestrian	TEXAS RD. (Ped)	1-way if at all	SAFETY! PEDESTRIANS
10					FINANCES!
11					No comments relating specifically to bridge
12			NOT TEXAS RD.		NO TO CURRENT PLANS.
13	YES	Vehicular		ONE-WAY	SAFETY!
14	YES	Vehicular	TEXAS RD. (Veh)		SAFETY!
15	YES	Vehicular	No preference stated	ONE-WAY	SAFETY! PEDESTRIANS
16	YES	Vehicular	No preference stated	One-way summer	
17					No comments relating specifically to bridge
18	NO	Pedestrian	TEXAS RD. (Ped)	1-Way if at all	NO TO CURRENT PLANS.
19	NO	Pedestrian	TEXAS RD. (Ped)		NO TO CURRENT PLANS.
Meeting #3 05/17/16					
20	YES	Vehicular	ANYWHERE IS OK		NO TO CURRENT PLANS.
21	YES	Vehicular	ANYWHERE IS OK		NO to current plans. Safety/Emerg. Sm Bridge.
22	YES	Vehicular	NO Agmt among staff		PUBLIC SAFETY
23	YES	Vehicular	No preference stated		PUBLIC SAFETY
24					No comments relating specifically to bridge
25					No comments relating specifically to bridge
26	YES	Vehicular	NOT TEXAS RD	TWO-WAY	NO TO CURRENT PLANS. Prefer 3 rd site
27	NO	Pedestrian	TEXAS RD. (Ped)		Pedestrian bridge at Texas Rd.
28					No comments relating specifically to bridge
29	YES	Vehicular	TENN. RD.		NO TO CURRENT PLANS. (NO Fed Funds

68	YES	Vehicular	Texas Rd. (Veh)			SAFETY! Pedestrians, emergencies NO TO CURRENT PLANS. Traffic study!
69	NO	Pedestrian	Texas (Ped). IF Veh. Bridge, then TN Rd.			NO TO CURRENT PLANS. Traffic study!
70	NO	Pedestrian	Texas (Ped). IF Veh. Bridge, small at TN.			NO TO CURRENT PLANS.
71	YES	Vehicular	No preference stated	TWO-WAY		Location of bridge based upon cost NO TO CURRENT PLANS.
72	NO	Pedestrian	Texas (Ped). IF Veh. Bridge, then TN Rd.			NO TO CURRENT PLANS.
73	YES	Vehicular	No preference stated			SAFETY! Emergencies Leave "as is". NO TO CURRENT PLANS.
74	NO	Pedestrian	Texas Rd. (Ped)			Leave "as is". NO TO CURRENT PLANS.
75	YES	Vehicular	No preference stated			NO TO CURRENT PLANS.
76	NO	Pedestrian	Texas Rd. (Ped)			NO TO CURRENT PLANS.
77	YES	Pedestrian	Texas Rd. (Ped)	1-Way, if at all		NO TO CURRENT PLANS
78	NO	Pedestrian	Texas Rd. (Ped)			NO TO CURRENT PLANS
TOTALS: New Bridge?						
	YES - 37	Pedestrian or Vehicular?	Bridge Location?	1-way or 2-way?	Comments	
	NO - 23	Vehicular - 34 New Pedestrian Br. - 3 Old Br. as Ped. Br. - 23	Texas Rd (Veh) - 9 Texas Rd (Ped) -22 NOT Texas Rd. - 6 "Anywhere" - 3 No Pref. Stated-20	1-way - 10 2-way - 3 1-way, if any - 7	NO TO CURRENT PLANS - 28 YES TO CURRENT PLANS - 9 "SAFETY - Pedestrians" - 17 "SAFETY - Emergency" - 11 "SAFETY" (Non-specific) - 5 TOTAL "SAFETY" mentions - 26	

ATTACHMENT C**Dan Dean**

From: "Alice Lentz" <alentszbridge@gmail.com>
Date: Tuesday, April 26, 2016 3:27 PM
To: <malley@townofmontreat.org>
Cc: "Dan Dean" <dandean.bridge@gmail.com>; "Angela Murphy" <amurphy@townofmontreat.org>
Subject: News, Invitations from the Montreat Bridge Committee, April 26, 2016

Greetings, community colleagues,

On behalf of the Montreat Bridge Committee (MBC), I share with you news of the MBC's work and extend an invitation to you to attend the meetings of the MBC. What a privilege it is to communicate with you on this topic and through this channel!

The MBC met for its initial and organizational meeting on April 19. The MBC is honored that 13 members of the community were able to attend the session, and many of our community colleagues spoke during the public comment portion of the meeting.

Your MBC will hold its remaining meetings at the Wayout Building on May 3, 17, and 31, and each meeting will begin at 5 pm. At these meetings, the MBC will dedicate as much time as possible to public comment, such that the community's aspirations, needs, and concerns on the topic at hand are articulated and aired.

In addition, at the May 17 meeting of the MBC, we expect to hear on the topic at hand from several technical and institutional representatives and will be extending invitations to these folks shortly. Please know that, as at all meetings of the MBC, we also will welcome public comments from individuals in the community, and we will accommodate as many of your views as possible.

We appreciate very much the fine work of the Town of Montreat staff on behalf of our town and with regard to the Montreat Bridge Committee. From our Town staff, you will hear official announcements of the MBC meetings.

As you consider how you would like to respond to the MBC's invitation, I ask that you familiarize yourself with the information that is available on the Town of Montreat website and through the links noted below.

With MBC Vice Chair Dan Dean and all MBC members, I reiterate this invitation to join the conversation. We hope to see you on May 3, 17, and/or May 31 at 5 pm.

Best wishes,

Alice Lentz, Chair
Montreat Bridge Committee
alentszbridge@gmail.com

For background information on the bridge conversations that have given rise to the Montreat Bridge Committee, please visit this link on the Town of Montreat website: http://www.townofmontreat.org/Texas_Bridge.htm and the Final Categorical Exclusion Document, a more detailed study for the Texas Road Bridge Project, can be found at this link: http://townofmontreat.org/documents/B_5196_CE_Final_signed_01072015.pdf.

ATTACHMENT D

Dan Dean

From: "Alice Lentz" <ablentzbridge@gmail.com>
Date: Tuesday, April 26, 2016 3:33 PM
To: <rnalley@townofmontreat.org>
Cc: "Dan Dean" <dandean.bridge@gmail.com>; "Angela Murphy" <amurphy@townofmontreat.org>
Subject: Montreat Bridge Committee Welcomes Email Messages

Greetings, community colleagues,

On behalf of the Montreat Bridge Committee (MBC) and in addition to the invitation from the MBC to participate in its meetings on May 3, 17, and 31, I note that the MBC welcomes email messages from the Montreat community regarding the topic at hand -- "to investigate the need for a bridge, the type of bridge, whether vehicular or walking and report back to Council by June."

Recognizing that there may well be Montreat community colleagues who cannot attend any of the meetings scheduled for May 3, 17, and 31, the MBC would like to make specific its welcome for hearing your views via email messages.

Email addresses for the members of the Montreat Bridge Committee are noted below, and they are noted on the Town of Montreat website at this link:

http://www.townofmontreat.org/Texas_Bridge.htm

Montreat Bridge Committee Members:

Alice Lentz ablentzbridge@gmail.com
Bob Cunningham wastaguy@gmail.com
Jan McRae bridgejanmcr@gmail.com
Tyler Smith tylerdevils@gmail.com
Lee Lancaster bridgecommlee@gmail.com
Dan Dean dandean.bridge@gmail.com
Commissioner Kent Otto kotto@townofmontreat.org

On behalf of the Montreat Bridge Committee, I send best wishes.

Alice Lentz, Chair
Montreat Bridge Committee
ablentzbridge@email.com

Name	Address	Texas Rd bridge	TN Bridge	Safety concern	Paving	Traffic concern	No big bridge
Carlen Maddux	332 Texas Road	pedestrian		yes		yes	*
James and Eva Moore	328 Texas Road			yes			*
Dick and Louise Wolfe	324 Texas Road	pedestrian		yes		yes	
William and Margaret Bauer	320 Texas Road						
Tom and Laura Spangler	312 and 316 Texas Road	vehicular				two way	
Sean and Army Barclay	310 Texas Road	pedestrian		yes			*
Tom and Boyd Dimmock	304 Texas Road	vehicular			*		
Martha Campbell	304 Texas Road	vehicular					
Bill and Susanne McCaskill	302 Texas Road	pedestrian	no				
Hugh and Jane Alexander	300 Texas Road	vehicular					
Collin Choate Grubb	296 Texas Road						
Robin and Brinkley Melvin	246 Texas Road Spur	pedestrian					
Annie Laurie Preston	242 Texas Road Spur						
Bruce and Patsy Burdett	238 Texas Road Spur	pedestrian	maybe	yes			*
Andrew and Catherine Wolfe	340 Texas Road	pedestrian		yes			
Laurie Nappier	??? Texas Road	vehicular					

ATTACHMENT E

ATTACHMENT F

Michael Caulfield
1130 Arnold Avenue
Greenville, Mississippi 38701

May 13, 2016

Ms. Alice Lentz, Chair
Montreat Bridge Committee
Montreat, North Carolina

Re: Texas Road Bridge over Flat Creek
Montreat, North Carolina

Dear Ms Lentz,

I hope the following provides some value to the work of the Montreat Bridge Committee.

To begin, regarding the development of the Texas Road bridge project to its current status, the Town of Montreat was surely pleased to successfully procure 80/20 federal funding to replace the bridge on Texas Road. That was good work by someone.

I am also confident the design consultant hired by Montreat (KCI) did their work in accordance with best practices for such work. I expect they met with and listened to their Town of Montreat contact and then endeavored to provide a product that conformed to their client's directions and expectations.

I believe KCI performed a planning study where they investigated at least two alternative bridge locations. At this point it is not clear to me what factors persuaded the Town to select the alternative with a new structure at the location of the existing one on Texas Road. The variable considerations involved in alternative selection are many and having had no involvement in the process it is impossible for me to say one alternative is right and one is wrong. I simply don't know what constraints KCI was working under during the planning process. However, once the location was selected and KCI applied design criteria that protected federal funding the project naturally developed into a wide bridge on high embankment, etc.

I can't help wondering if communication broke down between the Town and KCI or at least the Town failed to grasp how the final facility would impact the area aesthetically OR desperate to use federal funding decided to bite the bullet regarding aesthetic appeal and proceeded. They may have reached a point in their design spending from which they thought there was no turning around. Regardless, this pondering leads nowhere except to give the benefit of the doubt to those who've gone before and who may simply have been trying to add value to their community.

Regarding future engineering work, unless there is reason to doubt KCI as an engineering firm I would consider them an asset/friend moving forward given their knowledge of this project. Their plans for the monster bridge project appear well done. If they have been paid for their work to date they should be happy to meet with the MBC to discuss moving forward, especially if they can expect to provide further engineering services to the Town of Montreat.

Moving forward-

The Town of Montreat must decide what they want/need. The study process to determine what is needed should consider input from the municipality (fire department, law enforcement, garbage collection, emergency vehicle routing, etc.) and from the public. The selected alternative should provide the greatest benefit to the community with the least harmful impacts. I believe this study was performed to some degree in this regard by KCI. It may simply be a matter of reopening that study and have KCI restate their findings.

Obvious Alternatives

Vehicular Bridge

- Located at Texas Road
- Located at Tennessee Road

Pedestrian Bridge

- Using the current structure, but closed to vehicular traffic
- Remove the current structure and install a pedestrian crossing

Vehicular Bridge at Texas Rd. -

Consider the cost of the project if federal funding was not used. Features required by federal and NCDOT specifications, which must be followed if federal funds are used, are responsible for a much higher price tag for the bridge as currently designed by KCI.

The cost of replacing the Texas Road Bridge at its existing size and location may be equivalent to the 20% that Montreat would spend if federal funding is used. To go this route a design criteria with less severe flood constraints and a lower design speed would have to be developed by the Town. The design engineer could help develop the criteria and discuss any liability issues the Town would have to accept. I imagine the liability would be equivalent to what has existed at this bridge site for decades. A couple of liability issues as I see them -

1. Will the bridge wash out? Answer: Has it ever washed out before?

2. Will accidents occur because the bridge is narrow and in a curve?
Answer: Has this site been the scene of accidents in the past.

Pursue KCI's opinion about the cost of the federally funded bridge vs. one they would design without federal/state DOT criteria and about the issues of simply replacing the bridge on the existing profile.

Consider calling a supplier of prefabricated bridges to visit the site and provide a prefabricated bridge solution. These bridges can be attractive and come at a low cost. A good supplier is Contech Engineering Solutions. The contact they provide for the Montreat area is JCampbell@conteches.com

Vehicular Bridge at Tennessee Rd. -

It seems this location is a more natural location for a new vehicular bridge. Because of the existing topography this location may allow a solution that qualifies for the 80/20 federal funding and not have to contort to meet a tightly curved horizontal alignment or have the profile raised to stay above the low flood plain of the Texas Road site. This site also removes the Texas Rd. (and traffic) away from the ball field.

At this site the resulting bridge will be straight and it can be much narrower than the Texas Rd. alternative, but because the creek banks are further apart at this location the bridge will likely be longer than the one at Texas Road. Given these offsetting factors, the bottom line cost between the project currently designed by KCI and a crossing at Tennessee Road may be similar. The difference would be that the crossing at Tennessee Road will make visual sense and improve things around the ball field by removing Texas Road traffic.

This alternative will align the Tennessee Rd. and Texas Rd. intersections at Assembly Drive forming a single intersection and removing one intersection (former Texas Road intersection).

Important down sides to the Tennessee Road location are that several mature trees along the creek are in the path of this alignment and the creek itself is pristine and beautiful at this location. A construction project will of course impact all of that. Also, being as close to Assembly Drive as this bridge would be, construction will impact traffic along Assembly Drive - probably similar to the impact when the bridge at Lookout and Assembly was constructed.

Pedestrian Bridge at Texas Road-

If the old bridge is able to support pedestrian traffic and the Town decides to maintain it as a pedestrian crossing, an arrangement of

bollards or other low-stated barricades would be erected at each end of the bridge to block vehicular traffic and signs with appropriate information about vehicular routing placed at appropriate locations.

If it is decided to replace the old bridge with a new pedestrian bridge the Town should contact suppliers of prefabricated pedestrian bridges to quote the installation of their product.

Please feel free to contact me by phone or by email if anyone on your committee cares to discuss these points further.

Very Truly Yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M. Caulfield". The signature is fluid and cursive, written over a white background.

Michael Caulfield, PE
Mississippi PE # 15333
662-347-6500

ATTACHMENT G

May 30, 2016

TO: Montreat Bridge Committee (MBC)

FROM: Alice Lentz

RE: A Further Thought on an "Evacuation Plan" – Immediate, Stop-Gap Option to Address This Real Concern

As a consequence of our community colleagues' expressions of concern about safety and evacuation in the event of emergencies, our MBC proposed report calls on Town Council to develop an evacuation plan.

Over the weeks of the MBC's work and through conversations with many people, I have heard comments pertaining to the elements of an evacuation from Montreat that would be activated in the event of an emergency. Some of these comments have been first-hand; others, second- or third-hand. To the degree that these comments are accurate, they should be collected by Town staff in a **one-page document and communicated widely**, such that all in Montreat have access to this information in one spot and such that Montreaters' minds can be eased by knowing that there are elements of a draft evacuation plan already in place.

By "communicated widely," I mean posted at the Post Office, at Town Offices, on the Town website, at Town buildings; posted, to the degree that MRA and Montreat College are in accord, in those institutions' facilities; and mailed to Town residents and property owners, such that the one-page document could be posted in their homes.

In Attachment J, Bob Cunningham speaks in detail to some of these elements, based on his conversation with Ron Nalley on May 3.

If there is accurate information already available about how an evacuation would take place, then all in Montreat should have this information in an easy and handy format. By posting a one-page document widely in the community, visitors and residents alike would have ready access to this information.

ATTACHMENT H

Tuesday, May 10, 2016

To my fellow MBC members,

I'm sorry I cannot be with you today to hear the continuing input from others on the bridge issue. I'm celebrating my younger son, Wyatt's, graduation from Rhodes College currently. Here are some thoughts and questions that I have at this point on our bridge issue:

Safety is my biggest concern. I think the safety of the kids in clubs, the Montreat College and other community members in the event of an emergency evacuation, and also those trying to provide aide in medical or other emergencies presents an urgent need for better traffic flow.

I've personally seen large SUV's doing 10 point turns to reverse their direction while little clubbies are running around loosely supervised. It is a horrible accident waiting to happen.

I think a simple solution is to build a small one-lane bridge tying into Tennessee road that would fit aesthetically with the environment. In the summer, the direction for traffic should be for cars to enter via Community Center Circle onto Texas Road with a small pull off area on the park/club side of the road to load our little clubbies into their respective vehicles. Then the cars should exit via the bridge on TN Rd. There should also be a cross walk of some sort tying in with Elizabeth's path allowing safe access to Welch field. Hopefully a small, wooden pedestrian bridge (like the ones on Elizabeth's path) could replace the existing TX Rd bridge.

During the school year, the traffic flow could be reversed allowing the college easier access to their facilities. And the flow could be reversed again in the event of an evacuation order.

My remaining questions are as follows:

- 1- How much money is provided by the government for this project?
- 2- Would the money still be available if the location is changed to TN Rd?
- 3- Is there a time limit on the availability of this money?
- 4- If the government is involved what is the total cost of the bridge and what are the requirements about height, length, etc?
- 5- If the government is NOT involved, do the cost and building requirements of building a bridge change?
- 6- What would be the cost of removing the TX Rd bridge and replacing it with a pedestrian bridge?

Thanks for allowing me to voice my humble opinion in spite of my absence.

Regards,
Jan McRae

ATTACHMENT I

Letter to Bridge Committee. 4-13-16

We in Montreat, through the misfortune of a worn-out bridge, have received a rare gift: the opportunity to think about our future as a town and a community. Having been without the use of this bridge for nearly a decade, some have come to view Texas Road as not an artery through Montreat, but as a primary destination for recreation and child care.

Let's use this challenge of a broken bridge for forward thinking to consider long term our vision about what we want Montreat to become. Let us view this situation as an opportunity for creative thought, a blank slate, using positive thinking and language on what Montreat might become. Not negative, naïve, or pessimistic. Let us be optimistic, yet realistic, seeking consensus on a direction to move forward in that direction.

Let us put forth our dreams and hopes, and through positive dialogue seek consensus of the community, listening positively and optimistically as we come to understand the community's perspective and goals for Montreat. Let us build on the ideas of others as we move toward a vision for Montreat.

In the deadline handed our committee—June 3—our community is unlikely to achieve consensus on a future direction. I think the best we can hope for is to recommend a process which can be adopted in order to generate ideas and achieve consensus.

A process might include a large group session, such as was held on the Town Hall issue in the summer(?) of 2014. Those attending could number off into assigned groups to share their diverse opinions within the groups. Ideas generated could be written on poster paper – accompanied by reasoning, and attached to the wall, to be viewed by everyone and then summarized and shared with all those present. The committee could receive other written e-mail comments. A second Texas Bridge committee could then summarize all comments and look for threads upon which a consensus might be constructed.

By consensus, I mean agreement to a substantial degree on the main lines of the direction. In the absence of a consensus, the default option should be the alternative with the lowest opportunity cost.

After receiving feedback, the committee could outline specific suggestions for moving forward. My sense of the Town Council majority at the March TC meeting was that action on this issue would be slow and deliberate. Questions of evacuation time can be addressed, along with questions of bridge – no bridge, walking bridge vs auto bridge, various definitions of safety and cost benefit calculations that are brought to bear. These micro issues cannot be addressed within the allotted April 14-June 2 time frame.

Notes:
During the citizen comment session at the end of the March Town Council meeting, Mary Bruggeman challenged us to consider how Montreat might respond to an increasingly elder population, with lessened mobility, seeking to navigate the narrow, winding roadways of Montreat. Is there a way of accommodating people with varying mobility capability to enjoy life in Montreat? Can we afford to consider the passenger car to be the only vehicle of possibility inside the Montreat gate, and the relation that shift might make in the changing demand for feeder, auto, and pedestrian transportation?

Look at Texas Road from Anderson Auditorium to Assembly Drive: Eleven or so single family dwellings. The entire Northwest side of the street is geared to recreation or child care use.

Bob Cunningham

ATTACHMENT J

5-20-16-2
Bob Gunning?

TBC TC Report June 2016

Institutional stakeholders -- MRA and Montreat College

Richard Dubose: people don't like the design, a new bridge would be handy when other bridge is decommissioned, but a new bridge is not necessary

Joe Kirkland- Montreat College supports a modest bridge, but it is not absolutely necessary; it would help ingress and egress at time of an emergency

This is modest support for a bridge, but their words, tone, and demeanor indicate no firm support

Many of the speakers at the May 3 meeting touched on "safety." The issue of safety is both vague and complex.

It is vague because safety may be defined in terms of speed: speed in coming or going—number of minutes necessary to receive an emergency vehicle at one's home, or minutes from Montreat to Black Mountain. However, there is little data about differences between the "bridge" options on this matter. We don't know in real situations what bridge option would speed traffic. And, we assume that speed equals safety.

The issue is also complex because two important fears—fire and water—may have listeners locked on to "speed" as an appropriate synonym for "safety." However, "speed" may reduce "safety," particularly as related to Texas Road. Karen Boyd pointed out the risk to children walking to the playground or to clubs along Texas Road. The children may not be accompanied by adults, or may not be paying attention to them—or to cars. Montreat recreational activities, particularly for young people, are located primarily along Texas Road—tennis courts, volley ball, Wilde Center, Robert Lake Park, the multiple-use Welch Field, plus adjacent locations of Lake Susan, the swimming pool, and the area between Lake Susan and Anderson Auditorium—and spill-over into the parking lot. A clash between vehicles and pedestrians may be the most dangerous safety issue in Montreat. Along Texas Road, the desire for "speedy" route may work to reduce "safety." A vehicle bridge, wherever it is placed, may **increase**, not decrease, the safety risk in the Texas Road area.

Fire and Water Risks Note: On May 3 I had an hour-long conversation with Ron Nalley on the risk factors of fire and water. According to Ron, the emergency of water is not rain, but the dam. If the dam breaks, there could be immediate emergency flood conditions, and the way to prepare for that is by dam inspections. Normal rainfall leading to flood conditions would occur over a period of days, allowing plenty of time for residents to evacuate in a leisurely manner. There is no need to rush.

Fire is different. Fires start small, and also allow time for people not immediately adjacent to the fire sufficient time to leave in an orderly manner. Fires can change direction, so one cannot predict direction (north, south, east, west), but vertical direction can be predicted. Fires will move uphill rather than downhill. If you are downhill from a fire, you are at less risk; if you are uphill you are at greater

risk. Best protection for one's house and property is to avoid flammable materials near one's home. Town Council had a special session on this issue, with excellent presentations, about 18 months ago. Perhaps Ron Nalley could direct interested people to those sources. Fire risk is unlikely to be alleviated by a Texas Road bridge, except perhaps for those 10 houses between the present bridge and Robert Lake Park facing a fire occurring immediately to their north and adjacent to Texas Road. Of course, they could escape personal injury by walking across the present bridge or down Texas Road extension. None of the Texas Road residents who have written or spoken indicated fire as a primary concern.

Ron Nalley said that the town has multiple emergency exits from Montreat West of Assembly Drive. East of Assembly Drive the emergency exit from Montreat would be up Lookout to the connection to the "Old Mitchell Road" to Black Mountain. The way out would be cleared by a "lift loader" bulldozer leading the way, and cars/people could be evacuated at 4 MPH. That would be sufficient speed for fire and water emergencies, with the contingencies noted above.

[Note: these are my notes and recollections from my conversation with Ron. Before quoting him in our report, I think we should confirm that these are his views.]

Therefore, it is my inference from the above information that no bridge on Texas Road would impact resident risk from fire or rain, but a dam break might be dangerous for those near Flat Creek.

Texas Road is the Central Hub of outdoor recreation in Montreat

Financial risk of rejecting the original Contract.

The issue is the risk of having to pay back the federal government seems to be off the table. Ron Nalley indicated in his statement of 5-17 that the main issue is the phrasing of the council action of (date). The wording change of a future TC decision will likely remove the mandate of the Montreat liability for \$250,000. The Town Council reopening the planning document would likely obviate paying back \$250k to feds. At the present time, it appears that the town remains obligated to pay back the state cost of \$30,000.

Aesthetics

Several speakers described the importance of aesthetics--the beauty of Welch Field and the surrounding area. It is a relatively large, flat, open space, relatively dry, available for multiple activities during daylight hours. Although designed and used originally for softball, it accommodates easily to a variety of sporting and outdoor activities—frisbee, pickle ball, soccer, kickball. It is the only such location in Montreat. When one drives into Montreat, the points of view drawn to the eye are first the gate, second Welch Field, third the dam and Lake Susan. The image conveyed by the design of the Texas Road version of the proposed bridge drew the ire of several people concerned about keeping the bridge design compatible with their image of Montreat.

Traffic flow

In his remarks of 5-17 Ron Nalley supported the bridge design (perhaps to be modified) proposed by the prior Town Council. Ron divided the town into East and West sides, stating that the East side needs to have Texas Road open to two-way traffic to regulate and balance the overall flow, and to allow traffic to move easily. Balanced flow is a useful concept, bringing flexibility to what might otherwise be a rigid system. In the Montreat case, the idea of balanced flow may have been envisioned by the original town planners, but over the past 100 years residential growth has been primarily north and west. The traffic activity also appears to be primarily north and west. A traffic study and interviews, both during summer and winter months, could clarify this issue and render a more complex model for traffic flow.

Community Spirit

The community is divided over this issue. No single dominant preference among 1-no bridge, 2-foot bridge, 3-Tenn Road bridge, 4-Texas Road bridge
Whether one-way or two-way?

RECOMMENDATION

The TRB committee affirms the spirit of the decision made by TC in January, with the suggestion that a reworded statement be passed TC that would meet the federal requirement in order to avoid Montreat liability for \$250,000 prior planning costs. Taking on heavy cost in the absence of clear community support or vital need is not recommended. It is the judgment of the TRB Committee that a decision on this issue does not rise to the level vital urgency.

Related citizen comments that we feel worth TC attention:

- 1-Different summer and winter rules for vehicle access to Texas Road between Community Center Circle and Texas road extension
- 2-Have the summer club program propose and test a plan for child pick-up and drop-off compatible with item 1.
- 3-Do something about the roadway between Texas Road Extension and Texas Road to reduce access—especially by trucks—so that it will perhaps be available in the event of needed emergency use.

The TRB Committee thanks the community for their interest, support, and comments on the TRB issue, and encourages interested Montreaters to talk with their neighbors and friends to generate ideas for dealing the bridge issue, and with issues like traffic and parking—not just creating wish lists, but actively addressing the obstacles and opposing comments that any wish-item will generate by making creative suggestions for dealing with opposing views.

road? Could we become a "fire safe" community with some education and community involvement?

Federal Money. My suggestion for the allotment of the federal money is to consider using the money for repair or an upgrade for either Community Center or Lookout bridge.

Aesthetics: In my conversations with community members, there is a large concern about the aesthetics of any bridge. Indeed, it is a large part of the objections to the proposed Texas Road bridge. If a bridge is built at the Tennessee Road site, my hope is that the bridge fits into the aesthetics of the area- using stone not stamped concrete, that the bridge is as small as possible, etc. A traffic study would help determine whether the bridge should be one-way, one or two lanes, and whether a bridge is really necessary.

ATTACHMENT K

Lee Lancaster

5.24.16

Dear Montreat Bridge Committee members,

Below are my conclusions for the Bridge Study. Some of my recommendations are beyond the scope of what I believe we were tasked with. In my conversations about the bridge, several issues were discussed and I think that the community needs for those issues to be raised in the appropriate arenas. Therefore, I have included these thoughts in my report. I hope that there are more conversations in our community and that the Town is able to move forward in a positive direction.

Texas Road site: I do not think that the Texas Road site is the appropriate site to replace the bridge. My hope is that the Texas Road bridge becomes a walking bridge for Elizabeth's Path. We have an opportunity to create a sweet park-like area similar to the area around the columbarium. Additionally, I envision Texas Road from the bridge to Assembly Drive closed and set up as a parking area. We need more parking around Montreat. In making the bridge into a pedestrian bridge, I suggest that we construct the bridge so that in an emergency the bridge could be used in an emergency. For instance, use plants in containers that could be removed in a fire or flood emergency. The bridge could be used temporarily in an emergency.

Tennessee Bridge: Currently, I still do not see a reason for a vehicular bridge. Furthermore, I do not think that I am qualified to determine the need for a vehicular bridge. I would recommend for the Town Council to do a traffic study for Texas Road and for the entirety of Montreat. In speaking to community members, it seems like there would be more traffic on Texas Road if a vehicular bridge were added. That being said, I am not opposed to the Tennessee site.

Traffic safety: Other than recommending the traffic study, I would recommend that there be a conversation with the MRA about the possibility of the clubs being picked up in a different location. Texas Road is in a unique position in Montreat. There are ten houses that are directly affected by traffic from clubs, the tennis courts, the Bill Wilde Youth Center, the childcare building and the park. There are no other streets in Montreat with this unique situation.

Fire safety: With the suggestion of a traffic study, I think that the Town needs to have a clearer evacuation plan and perhaps a conversation about the need for a road on the east section of Montreat. Do we need a road for the east side residents to evacuate? Are there available federal funds to help build an "escape"