Board members present: Bill Roberts

Mason Blake

David Holcomb (acted as Chair)

Allen Crawford

Wade Burns

Sally Stansill

Board members absent: Chairman Bill Scheu (via telephone)

Dan Dean

Town staff present: Adrienne Isenhower, Zoning Administrator

Angie Murphy, Town Clerk

Five members of the public were present. Mr. Holcomb called the meeting to order at 5:05 p.m., and led the group in a moment of silence.

**Agenda Approval**

Mr. Burns would like to make the first item of Old Business “setback discussion continued” and the second item of business “review of draft ordinance revisions”. Mr. Holcomb suggested postponing items under New Business until the whole Board is present. Mr. Holcomb suggested that this evening the Board review the redline changes from last month and be ready to adopt next month. Mr. Blake moved to adopt the agenda as amended. Mr. Burns seconded and the motion carried 6/0.

**Meeting Minutes Adoption**

Mr. Blake passed out three revisions to the May 16th Meeting Minutes and reviewed them for the Board. Mr. Burns asked for a comment that he made be struck from the minutes as well. Mr. Burns moved to approve the minutes as amended. Mr. Crawford seconded and the motion carried 6/0.

**Presentation – Former Mayor Letta Jean Taylor**

Former Mayor Letta Jean Taylor stated that ordinances were adopted in 1985 and prior to that Mountain Retreat Association was in charge of the ordinances. Several documents guided the Council at that time: 160a General Statutes, the Montreat Tomorrow Report, the Comprehensive Plan which was adopted in 2008, the General Ordinances which were adopted in 1990, the Zoning Ordinances which were adopted in 1999, the Capital Improvement Plan and the Greenspace Agreement. The General Statutes stated that the ordinances must be reasonable and of public interest and consistent with the Comprehensive Plan that was adopted by the Town. Mrs. Taylor served on the Board of Adjustment for many years and she heard numerous variances. The Council asked for help from Land of Sky Regional Council in drafting the ordinances. Early homes were placed wherever on lots so front yard setbacks became an issue for the Town. Mrs. Taylor stressed that the Council was creating ordinances that were fair but consistent.

Mrs. Taylor briefly mentioned the reason why private septic and water in the ETJ is not allowed. The Health Department came and spoke to the Council and stated that if you were the first to build you could prevent your neighbors from building based on the placement of your septic and water.

Steep slopes have also been a controversial issue. Montreat has experienced a lot of slides against homes and on roads. Most of the lots left to build on are very steep so that is why Council addressed steep slopes in the ordinances.

Mrs. Taylor stated that the Council had decided they would not make changes to the ordinances unless there were a lot of cases before the Board of Adjustment. There have been only 20 changes to the Zoning Ordinance since it was adopted.

General Statute 160a-383 speaks to the zoning regulations purposes: public health, safety and general welfare. These statues helped in developing the ordinances in 1999. Mrs. Taylor stated that she believes the current Planning and Zoning Commission should think about their vision for Montreat and also what Montreat will look like in 20 years. She stated that while rewriting the Zoning Ordinance the Council kept the Mission Statement at the forefront of their minds. Mrs. Taylor read the Mission Statement for those in attendance.

Mr. Holcomb asked Mrs. Taylor what she would tweak if she were on this current Planning and Zoning Commission. Mrs. Taylor stated that as people retire here the conditional use needs should be looked at more in depth. The subdivision ordinance should also be reviewed.

**Old Business**

A. Setback Discussion (continued): At that last meeting Mrs. Isenhower and Mr. Scheu felt there was a consensus towards not changing the setbacks but they wanted to revisit that situation. Mr. Blake stated that it was not a reluctance to change setbacks but more a feeling that he did not have enough information to make a decision at that time. Mrs. Isenhower put together a comparison sheet of nearby Towns/Communities with respect to their setback limits with the Town of Montreat. Mr. Scheu stated that Montreat’s setback limits appear to be a little lengthier than other communities.

Mr. Burns reviewed his documents about simplified setback and zoning ordinances that he provided at the last meeting. He felt that the documents needed a little extra clarification. Mr. Burns stated that it is important to look at the shape of the lot before considering setbacks. There was a lengthy discussion about new properties and assigning setbacks based on lot size and whether that would be conducive. Mrs. Isenhower suggested that she and Mr. Scheu would work on draft language for the next meeting.

Mr. Crawford exited the meeting at 6:28 p.m.

B. Review Draft Ordinance Revisions: It was decided to postpone this discussion until the next meeting.

**New Business**

1. Discussion of General Provisions Sections: It was decided to postpone this discussion until the next meeting.

1. Discussion of Next Topics: It was decided to postpone this discussion until the next meeting.

The next meeting will be held on Thursday June 20th at 5:00 p.m. at a location to be determined.

**Public Comment**

Mrs. Letta Jean Taylor reminded the Planning and Zoning Commission that the function of Board of Adjustment would be to hear variances and the decisions must be made by standards written by state statute.

Commissioner Tom Widmer of 218 Tennessee Road thanked the Commission for their service. Commissioner Widmer cautioned the Commission about creating a situation that sets a precedence.

Mr. Richard DuBose of Mountain Retreat Association stated that the MRA is not in the state of mind to develop properties at this time. There are various levels of hardship: not being able to extend your kitchen is a hardship but then again not being able to build on property you bought in the 80s is another hardship all together. Mr. DuBose feels that the Commission should reflect on where some of that relief may be found.

**Adjournment**

Mr. Blake moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Burns seconded and the motion carried 6/0. The meeting was adjourned at 6:38 p.m.

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Bill Scheu, Chair Angie Murphy, Town Clerk