Board members present by Zoom: None

Board members: Wade Burns

Bill Scheu

Dan Dean

Liz Johnson

Julie Schell

Board members absent: John Hinkle, Regular Member

Jean David, Alternate Representative

Sally Stansill, Alternate Representative

Town staff present: Scott Adams, Zoning Administrator

Ben Blackburn, Interim Town Administrator

Angie Murphy, Town Clerk

Special Guests: None

There was one member of the public in person and several members of the public were watching via Zoom. Mr. Scheu called the meeting to order at 10:30 a.m., and led the group in a moment of silence after a brief welcome. Town Clerk Angie Murphy administered the Oath of Office for new and returning members of the Commission.

**Agenda Approval**

Julie Schell moved to adopt the agenda as presented. Wade Burns seconded and the motion carried 5/0.

**Meeting Minutes Adoption**

Dan Dean moved to approve the January 13, 2022 minutes as presented. Wade Burns seconded and the motion carried 5/0.

**Organization of P&Z Commission**

Wade Burns moved to confirm the previous month’s election of P&Z officers. Liz Johnson seconded and the motion carried 5/0. The officers are: Bill Scheu, Chair; John Hinkle, Vice-Chair; Angie Murphy, Secretary. Zoning Administrator Scott Adams advised that we still have not heard from Buncombe County Commissioners regarding the reappointment of Allen Crawford as ETJ Representative but they do have 90 days to make the decision, which expires on April 18, 2022.

**Topics/Priorities for 2022**

Zoning Administrator Scott Adams reviewed activities surrounding the Montreat Stormwater Ordinance. On 11/11/21 a Special Committee, outside of the P&Z Commission, was proposed by the P&Z Commission. This Committee would be comprised of 6-8 members, with 1-2 P&Z members and the remainder being assigned by the Board of Commissioners. Also, P&Z Commission voted unanimously to ask Town Council, by appropriate procurement methods, to engage a consultant to perform an audit of the Stormwater Ordinance. Mary Roderick of Land-of-Sky Regional Council is currently working with NCDEQ to get Montreat’s MS4 permits compliant.

Mr. Adams advised that on 01/13/2022 the P&Z Commission created a Zoning Ordinance Research Sub-Committee to consider possible Zoning Ordinance amendments. This Sub-Committee consists of Dan Dean as chair, Wade Burns, Allen Crawford (subject to approval as ETJ member) and Mason Blake as Board of Commissioner liaison. Liz Johnson moved to add John Hinkle and Julie Schell to this Sub-Committee. Wade Burns seconded and the motion carried 5/0. Mr. Dean advised that this Committee is currently in a holding pattern to allow the MRA Lodge discussion to be finalized before they make any updates to the Zoning Ordinance. The topics to be researched by the Zoning Ordinance Research Sub-Committee include Zoning Setbacks/Non-Conformities and the Hillside Development Ordinance. There will also be periodic updates from the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee to the Planning & Zoning Commission as needed.

The Zoning Administrator has proposed revisions to Setback and Non-Conformities sections of Zoning Ordinance since 02/04/2021. These revisions should include simplifying language of Section 609, Special Front Yard Requirements in Developed Areas; also needed is Context-Responsive Setbacks for lots subject to well and septic-siting spatial requirements. Another revision should include updating ordinance sections related to setbacks for clarity on Allowable Encroachments with setbacks such as steps, porches, desks, etc. A revision related to Non-Conformities for clarity on Allowable Encroachments and a definition and clarification of “expansion” language (vertical expansion versus horizontal expansion in relation to setbacks). Most of these proposed topics can be found in Article X of the Montreat Zoning Ordinance.

Mr. Adams reviewed the current standards of the Montreat Ordinance – Fence standards (Section 618). Mr. Adams briefly touched on a request that the Montreat Board of Adjustment recently heard involving a fence in Montreat. This request was ultimately denied by the Board of Adjustment.

Mr. Adams stated there was no current action proposed for the Montreat Hillside Development Ordinance but advised that current setback dimensions require more land disturbance, creating potential conflict with standards in the Erosion and Sediment Control (ESC) and Stormwater Ordinances. It was suggested that this topic should be included in the Zoning Ordinance Research Sub-Committee’s assignments. However, Mr. Burns’ opinion is that the Hillside Development Ordinance has nothing to do with the MRA Lodge issue and could be addressed sooner rather than later. Mr. Dean stated that he would give this some thought.

Mr. Adams advised that a Montreat Sign Ordinance Sub-Committee of the Planning & Zoning Commission, established on 12/9/2021 includes John Hinkle as Chair, Dan Dean and Sally Stansill, with assistance from Town Attorney Susan Taylor Rash. Its focus includes content neutrality and sign-type definitions such as political signs versus yard signs. Currently this Sub-Committee is awaiting U.S. Supreme Court decisions in City of Austin, TX vs. Reagan National Outdoor Advertising.

Mr. Adams advised that the 2022 Montreat Comprehensive Plan Update Committee has begun its work. The P&Z Commission can expect to see reports in the Summer of 2022. Under State law, a “reasonably updated” (within the past 5-10 years) must exist by July 1, 2022 in order for the Town to legally continue having zoning regulations. The Planning & Zoning Commission has suggested that the Town Council at its June 2022 meeting, readopt the current Comprehensive Plan noting that an amendment process is underway. Mr. Scheu has asked Mr. Adams to confirm that process, if he can, with the NC School of Government.

The next meeting of the Planning & Zoning Commission will be held on April 14th at 10:30 a.m.

**Public Comment**

Interim Town Administrator Ben Blackburn took a moment to introduce himself to the Commission. Mr. Blackburn stated that he looks forward to working with the Commission and thanked them for their service.

Ms. Priscilla Hayner of 319 Assembly Drive asked if there is a way to extend the Comprehensive Plan Update beyond the indicated date of July 1, 2022. Mr. Adams stated this is a hard deadline from the State per Chapter 160d. Mr. Adams briefly reviewed the steps that the Town of Canton were approaching with their Comprehensive Plan. Mr. Adams then noted the suggestions of the Commission concerning re-adoption of the current Comprehensive Plan, as noted above.

**Adjournment**

Dan Dean moved to adjourn the meeting. Liz Johnson seconded and the meeting was adjourned at 11:15 a.m.

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Bill Scheu, Chair Angie Murphy, Town Clerk