Committee members present: Mayor Tim Helms – Chair

Maggie Elliott

John Casper

Richard DuBose

Daniel Hewitt

Mari Gramling

Dr. Paul Maurer

Committee members absent: Dr. Bill Seaman

Town staff present: Angie Murphy, Town Clerk

Kayla DiCristina, Zoning Administrator

Special Guest:

The Chair called the meeting to order at 10:30 a.m. welcomed everyone and held a moment of silence. There were three members of the public present with several more watching via Zoom Meeting Software.

**Agenda Approval**

Dr. Paul Maurer moved to approve the agenda as presented. Mr. Richard DuBose seconded and the motion carried 7/0.

**Minute Approval**

Dr. Paul Maurer moved to approve the January 13, 2023 minutes as presented. Richard DuBose seconded and the motion carried 7/0.

**Comprehensive Plan Overview**

Zoning Administrator Kayla DiCristina stated that a Comprehensive Plan is not a regulatory document and is not legally binding nor does it regulate land use. Comprehensive Plans are meant to be aspirational in nature. The Comprehensive Plan is used to guide development towards an established vision. Comprehensive Plans also identifies needs and desires and establishes priorities and plans for growth and change. The objectives of Comprehensive Plans must be flexible because the life span is 10 to 20 years. The vision of the Comprehensive Plan is broad and aspirational. Ms. DiCristina asked the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee to keep referring back to the vision as this process continues. Ms. DiCristina also advised that the Comprehensive Plan should be a snapshot of where the Town is today and the dream of where the Town wants to be in the future. The Comprehensive Plan has a massive impact on decisions for the Town.

**Review Outstanding 2008 Plan Recommendations and Strategies**

Ms. DiCristina went through the existing recommendations and strategies of the 2008 Comprehensive Plan and determined which ones were not carried over and which ones were directly/indirectly carried over into the new objectives. Ms. DiCristina directed the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee to page 32 of the 2008 Town of Montreat Comprehensive Plan and page 4 of the Draft Vision Statement Objective.

Ms. DiCristina reviewed the Recommendation & Implementation Strategies that were directly/indirectly carried over in the new objectives. For a quick review of the discussion please review the YouTube video at the following link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M-c1dDoW0fU&t=757s>.

Ms. DiCristina then directed the conversation toward the strategies that were not carried over to see if there was any interest in the topics. The following chart was completed by the Members.

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| **LAND USE** | | |
| **Recommendation** | **Strategy** | **Yes or No** |
| *Character & Design* | | |
| Ensure areas outside town limits but within ETJ are preserved. | Update zoning map to clearly delineate each district. | No |
| Guide design of new and renovated struc­tures to foster consistency. | Create "Montreat Manual" for land development standards. | No |
| Preserve the character of Assembly Drive. | Create an Overlay District that allows for a variety of uses. | No |
| Preserve the character of Assembly Drive. | Set standards for the Overlay District. | No |
| *Housing* | | |
| Allow variety of residential dwelling types to increase housing diversity. | Modify ordinance to allow townhomes in Town Center 3 for higher density. | Yes |
| Allow variety of residential dwelling types to increase housing diversity. | Allow for student housing in Town Center 2 area. | Yes |
| *Traffic & Mobility (Vehicular)* | | |
| Evaluate platted but non-built streets for abandonment if not needed. | Inventory all platted but non-built streets. | Yes |
| Evaluate platted but non-built streets for abandonment if not needed. | Rank order all platted but non-built streets by usage. | No |
| Evaluate placing weight limits on streets to minimize damage impact. | Conduct geotechnical study to evaluate acceptable weight. | No |

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| **FUNDING RESOURCES** | | |
| **Recommendation** | **Strategy** | **Yes or No** |
| *Tax Base & Revenue Sources* | | |
| Investigate/consider alternative sources of revenue. | Adopt user fees, special assessments, facility fees, etc. | No |
| Consider new taxes: RE transfer taxes, occu­pancy tax. | Request ability to levy RE transfer tax. | No |
| Consider new taxes: RE transfer taxes, occu­pancy tax. | Request ability to levy occupancy tax. | No |
| Retain grants specialist to seek public and private grants. | Coordinate with LOS Council to seek help in grant writing. | No |
| Expand tax base by increasing amount of taxable property. | Encourage public/private partnerships for student housing, parking, etc. | No |
| Seek legislation to mitigate impact of conser­vation easements. | Coordinate with League of Municipalities & collaborate with other similar entities. | No |

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| **WATER RESOURCES** | | |
| **Recommendation** | **Strategy** | **Yes or No** |
| *Infrastructure* | | |
| Identify and pursue additional well & storage sites to meet future demand. | Investigate locations within conservation easement. | No |
| Identify additional water sources for future fire emergencies. | Determine additional peak time capacity to handle future fire emergen­cies. | No |
| Identify additional water sources for future fire emergencies. | Study "build-out" scenario and limit future building to limit future demand. | No |
| Require users driving peak demand to offset costs of an expanded system. | Collaborate with MRA and MC to study and identify means to offset costs to expand. | No |

Ms. DiCristina advised again that this Comprehensive Plan is a guiding document which should direct the objectives of the Town.

It was decided that the next meeting will be held Tuesday, February 7th from 12:00 p.m. until 2:00 p.m.

Ms. DiCristina reminded those in attendance to continue to refer to the Vision Statements (which can be found below) and to insure that each draft objective supports the vision.

MONTREAT TOMORROW VISION STATEMENTS

Environment: Montreat values and protects its tree canopy, streams, land, and natural beauty. Development: Montreat will be a community that respects buildings with historic value and encourages new development to be polite to the surrounding architecture.

Community Character: Montreat’s community will honor the rich historic character of its built environment and preserve the beauty of its mountain surroundings, taking into account the need for resilience in the face of a changing climate.

Transportation: Montreat will be accessible for people as they age, safe for children and families, and calm for those driving, biking, and walking.

The following objectives were drafted for the Montreat Tomorrow Plan based on public participation comments and Steering Committee feedback. These objectives contain “do not support” and “strongly do not support” votes. The Town of Montreat must decide whether to include or not include these objectives in the new Comprehensive Plan.

The first objective discussed was Environment 6: As part of a greater Town-wide Climate Resiliency plan, work with local and regional partners to conduct an energy audit of privately owned buildings and major institutions to assess options for energy savings and reduction. Ms. DiCristina advised that the Town of Montreat is part of a regional plan that addresses climate resiliency. It was decided it was not consistent with the objectives. Environment 7: Support private property owners in the creation of conservation easements on private land within the areas this plan identifies as having high-risk environmental assets. Ms. DiCristina advised that in order for this objective to stay a definition would be needed for “high-risk environmental assets”. Ms. DiCristina advised this would further efforts for the creation of conservation easements. It was decided to explore conservation easements as a tool for land preservation/protection.

**Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

**Adjournment**

Dr. Paul Maurer moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Richard DuBose seconded and the motion carried 7/0. The meeting was adjourned at 12:06 p.m.

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Tim Helms, Chair Angie Murphy, Town Clerk