



PHOTO AND FLOWERS BY ROYNAN JONES

# The Settings SUN Summer 2019 Newsletter

EDITORS – LINDA AND JIM BARBER

## President's Report

Michael Arones, Outgoing President

As we move into summer, we have a newly formed Board of Directors, and a new President.

In the year that I acted as President, the community has seen exciting developments, and of course, we have all enjoyed another year in paradise.

Looking back on our achievements, it is clear to me that everything good came from a community of volunteers who joined together in maintaining and improving the Settings, as members of various boards, committees, and task forces.

It was volunteers who helped guide many home construction projects and assisted prospective lot buyers to envision their dream home. The same volunteers completed a major revision of the DRB Guidelines.

It was volunteers that managed the evaluation & switch to a new landscaping firm and continue to provide the oversight which ensures beautiful common grounds. They also completed a major cleaning for the sidewalks, repaired playground drainage issues, replaced the pond fountain, and repaired the pond trail bridge.

It was volunteers who worked with the contractors to fix broken water system components and then obtain insurance reimbursement. The water system is effectively transferred to the Town and our volunteers are involved in working out details in this new relationship.

It was volunteers who joined together in reducing our risks from forest fires, through their brush clearing efforts (chipper days) as part of the Firewise program.

It was volunteers who worked with a web design firm to create the new community web site and ensured that the public had correct up to date information about The Settings.



I was often told what a great job I was doing as President, but the truth is that it is all of the volunteers who deserve the real credit. Thanks to all of you.

I will continue to participate as a Director of the Association and am excited to be part of the new team. I especially give my best wishes and support to the new President – Roynan Jones.

### Roynan Jones, Incoming President

It is obvious when you look at the amazing natural surroundings that we are fortunate to live in The Settings. What makes OUR community *special* are the people. As Michael shared, it is all about the volunteers that make The Settings of Black Mountain a desirable place to live. I've been told on multiple occasions that we have an active HOA Board; that we go over and beyond expectations when tackling a project, and they wish they had the camaraderie that we have here with all our social activities. So I want to first say a big THANK YOU to Michael, Leesa, Ed, George, Kip and Glenn for all their hard work this past year as Directors of the Board. A *special* thanks to Kip Pritchard and Glenn Rehtine for their service over the past three years. I know they are taking a well-deserved vacation from Board type activity.

As I start my presidency, I'm so fortunate to be working with a highly talented and motivated A-team. The new Board of Directors is:

- Roynan Jones, President
- Ed Kmiec, Vice President
- Leesa Hattori, Treasurer
- Elizabeth Green, Secretary
- David Gramley, Director
- Michael Arones, Director
- George Ackerman, Director

Please feel free to reach out to any of us with questions, suggestions or areas in which you would like to help. We just finished a half day workshop to determine how we operate as a team and our key focus areas for the coming years. If I had to pick two words related to how we operate, I would say transparency and teamwork. Some of our key focus areas include completing the transfer of our water system to the town of Black Mountain, creating a policy and process for road and parking lot maintenance (ie, cracks in roads, curbs separating from the blacktop and sink holes), developing a storm water management plan for addressing various drainage issues and repairing our playground equipment. So as you can see, we have some major initiatives that are above and beyond our day to day activity. As always, our success is dependent on our community and I thank you for all your contributions to making The Settings of Black Mountain a desirable place to live.

I wish you and your family a wonderful summer and a very happy 4<sup>th</sup> of July!

All the Best,

Roynan

## Be BearWise!

Recently the Asheville Citizen Times had an article on being BearWise which we thought would be interesting to share some of it with you all.

"Justin McVey, mountain region wildlife biologist for the N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission, spends the better part of his spring chasing bear calls. He said North Carolina has a healthy black bear population, with roughly 7,000-9,000 in the WNC Mountains, and another 11,000-13,000 on the coast, for a total of some 18,000-21,000. He said people should only call the wildlife commission if a bear is injured or orphaned or is causing harm.

"Even though it seems odd, bears are a part of our urban and suburban landscape, so it's not uncommon to see bears," McVey said. "But if a bear is repeatedly breaking into something, acting strangely, looks sickly, that would be the time to call. We don't want bears under porches, but that doesn't happen all the time."

"Asheville is a good place to be a bear. You have a lot of natural landscape, but also lots of human sources of food, so it's like a buffet," McVey said.

He said following the six BearWise principles will go a long way toward human-bear harmony:

- Never feed or approach bears.
- Secure food, garbage and recycling.
- Remove bird feeders when bears are active.
- Never leave pet food outdoors.
- Clean and store grills.
- Alert neighbors to bear activity.



Photo by David Gramley

### Update on Our Social Media Efforts

Our new website continues to be very active. As you know that is where you can now access the official Community Calendar as well as link to your FSR account. In the Homes section there is a lot of helpful information about how to go about building a home in The Settings. Since we registered on Google we are getting many more first time visitors through searches. Our closed Facebook group (just for owners) is also having more posts about what's happening in our community and the local area. To join, just search Facebook for The Settings of Black Mountain HOA and ask to join. Please answer the question about what your address or lot number is so we can confirm you are an owner.

# Design Review Board (DRB) - Friend or Foe

by DRB Members

Let's be honest, some cringe when the letters "DRB" are mentioned. But first and foremost we are a volunteer group of home and lot owners who work diligently to serve our community. Serve how, you might ask?

Many of us in the community bought here with a vision of serenity, natural splendor, and refined elegance. And when many of us faced a decision, should we live in Asheville with all of its funkiness and closeness, or live in a more peaceful surrounding with easy access to the city, of course, we chose here.

But that also means we want to keep it that way. While keeping an eye toward the basic tenets of the DRB Guidelines we can land on mutual compromises that stay true to the vision and still deliver on the promise of a dream house in the mountains.

So we believe the DRB is your friend, not a foe, in helping maintain that mountain vision that so many of us have. Your current hard working "friends" include Rod Allan, Linda Barber, Bill Hattori, Jan Lupnacca, and Cathy Nichols - with Elizabeth Green as the HOA Board member sponsor to the DRB. Another recent change has been to incorporate First Service Residential (FSR) for management of much of the process, especially submittals of design materials and fees.

By the way, you may not have known that the Association Board oversees the DRB, including all major decisions such as building design variances and revisions to the guidelines. The DRB is not an independent committee making subjective decisions on their own but are mainly here to help you navigate the process. You may also not know that an independent, non-biased, outside architect reviews all design plans relative to the DRB guidelines and makes comments and recommendations to the DRB. Since we are not architects, we rely on the professionals to render an opinion. And sometimes their opinion may include suggesting a future change to the guidelines to allow certain elements which were not included before.

And one last by-the-way - did you know there has recently been a revision to the guidelines? It can be found on our new *The*

*Settings of Black Mountain* website - see below.

- Go to [tsobm.com](http://tsobm.com)
- Click on "Homes" at the top of the page
- Scroll down and click on the "Design Review Board" button
- The current guidelines and approved builders list will be under "The Settings Design Review Board Documents"

## Major Takeaways:

- **COME TO US EARLY**
  - New buyers and current owners desiring existing home modifications - we are here to help
- **FSR HELPS MANAGE THE FORMS AND FLOW**
  - Please utilize them and pay attention to correspondence from them
- **THE DRB IS YOUR FRIEND**
  - But your "special" friends include: [drb.chairman@tsobm.com](mailto:drb.chairman@tsobm.com) and [pamela.paul@fsresidential.com](mailto:pamela.paul@fsresidential.com)

## Major changes in 2019 Revision to the DRB Design Standards and Construction Guidelines

A revision of the DRB Guidelines from 2017 was undertaken. A special thanks goes to those who spent many hours working on the revisions. The team included Rod Allan, Cathy Nichols, Bill Hattori and Jo Rectine along with review by the Board for approval. These new guidelines have already elicited positive comments from an architect and potential buyers, including that the guidelines are reasonable and make The Settings even more attractive to some of them.

The following is a list of the major changes in the 2019 revision.

1. Design Process
  - Design and construction process clarified and time estimates for design review noted
  - Removal of highly flammable trees allowed, with provisions for replacement
  - Exterior lighting criteria clarified
  - Builder affidavit along with non-compliance penalties clarified and expanded
2. Design Standards
  - Eliminated requirement for main floor to be 18" above grade (aging-in-place is more important)
  - Horizontal stainless-steel cable balusters allowed (recognizing modern elements in mountain architecture trends)
  - Paved "tire tracks" driveway can be considered as an option to increase use of pervious surfaces (helps with stormwater management and erosion control)
  - Restrictions on exterior wood burning fireplaces and fire pits (due to Firewise considerations)
3. Construction Guidelines
  - Road Use Impact fee increase (due to wear and tear on our roads, and timeframe of project)
  - Construction area expanded from 10' to 15' beyond structure
  - No DRB approval needed to remove trees 2" or less that are beyond the construction perimeter (provides more flexibility to clear lot)
  - Protection of remaining trees clarified
  - Firewise recommendations incorporated for construction and landscaping recommendations
  - Builder to provide approximate project milestone targets (trying to avoid excessively long projects, long gaps between stages, and stoppages)

The DRB Guidelines provide guidance in a number of areas. So please utilize them:

- If your home has been completed:
  - You may think you are done with the DRB, but you still need to submit a request to the DRB for changes to the exterior of your home (Appendix 5), or to remove some types of vegetation (Section III D, Appendix 7)
- If you are currently planning/designing/building your home:
  - Appendix 1 is your step-by-step guide through the approval and construction process
  - You will have a DRB liaison assigned to your project to answer any questions along the way
- Make sure that your architect and builder are familiar with the latest version of the guidelines
- If you intend to build in the future:
  - Read the latest version of the guidelines when you are ready to start – they may have changed since you last read them
  - Contact the DRB as soon as you start the planning phase so that they can help you through the approval and construction process
- If you intend to sell your lot:
  - Potential buyers need to see the guidelines
  - Encourage potential buyers to contact the DRB with questions they may have

### Building Activity in The Settings of Black Mountain

We know many of you have noticed the increased building activity going on in The Settings. We thought you might be interested in an update.

- 2 houses were recently completed
- 1 house is under construction
- 2 designs have been approved to commence construction
- 5 projects are in design review
- Multiple inquiries have been received by new and prospective property owners
- 5 existing homeowners have submitted plans for external modifications

### The Settings Annual Meeting

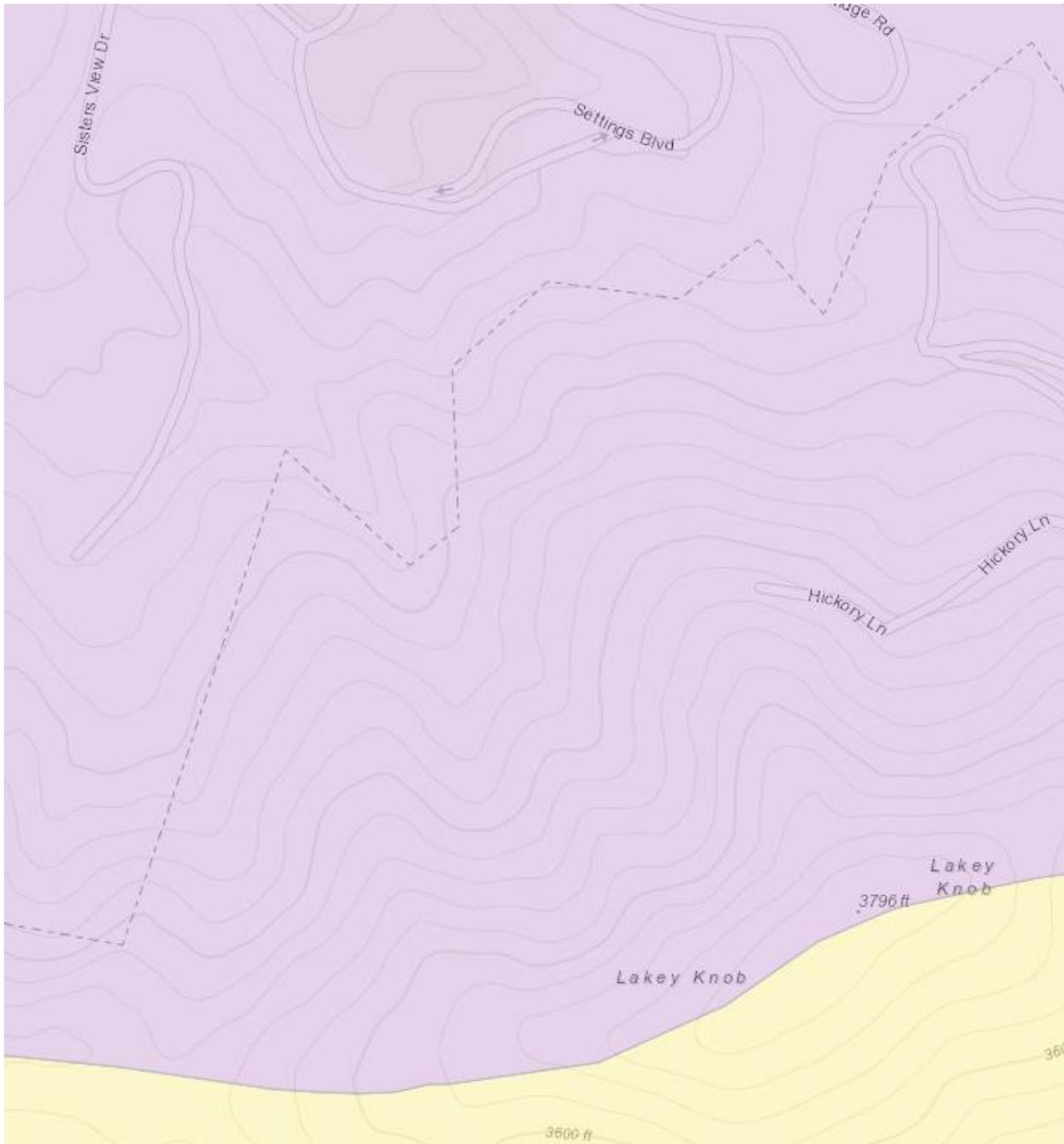


# The Settings on the Divide

by Michael Arones

You may have heard that not only do we live in a mountain forest environment, but also that our community has a special location bordering the Eastern Continental Divide. It highlights just how lucky we are to have such a wonderful place. But people have asked about the significance of the Continental Divide and how we truly know that we border it.

The Settings of Black Mountain property includes a large common area which has a North American Land Trust (NALT) easement. Our Upper Mountain trail climbs through this conservation area and ends up on the mountain rim along our southern border. If you hike southeast along that rim you will climb to the top of Lakey Knob peak. If you hike northwest along the rim you will climb up to High Top peak and continuing will reach High Windy peak (which connects to the Blue Ridge Assembly's trail system). That rim is part of the Eastern Continental Divide as can be seen in the below image from NC Dept of Environmental Quality's NC Surface Water Classifications map



Note how it shows Settings Blvd and Sisters View Dr at the top of the map image plus shows Lakey Knob at the bottom.

A Continental Divide defines a line that identifies the eventual destination of water flows. Water on one side of the Eastern Continental Divide (shown in **yellow**) flows to the Atlantic Ocean on the eastern seaboard of the US. Water on the other side of the divide (shown in **purple**) flows into the Gulf of Mexico.

Thus the streams in The Settings (be sure to enjoy the Stream Trail with multiple creek crossings and small waterfalls) are headwaters to river systems that eventual flow into the Gulf of Mexico.

More precisely, our streams feed Britten Creek. If you drive down route 9, you can see Britten Creek running along the left hand side of the road. Britten Creek (along with the nearby Lynch Creek) feeds Camp Branch. The main headwaters of Camp Branch is Miami Mountain. Camp Branch feeds into the Swannanoa River which flows parallel to US 40, first crossing to the south of the interstate near the I-40 West on-ramp and then crosses back to the north of the interstate near Veteran's Park (forming the eastern border of the park). The Swannanoa River eventually flows into the following rivers (in sequence): French Broad River, Tennessee River, Ohio River, and finally the Mississippi River (which flows into the Gulf of Mexico).

The water on the opposite side of our rim flows into Tom's Creek, which flows into (in sequence): Broad River (of which Lake Lure is a part), Congaree River, and finally the Santee River (which flows into the Atlantic Ocean).

### Social Committee Update

Cathy Nichols, Helen Kraus, Carol Milton, Rhonda Gramley, Maryellen Kmiec, Linda Barber

The Social Committee is looking forward to the summer and to making some changes in activities. In place of Drinks On the Porch in June, Rhonda Gramley has organized an outing to an Asheville Tourists baseball game on [Friday, June 21](#). The [Friday](#) games always have a great fireworks show at the end of the game. It will be a fun time for all. There are more than 20 people scheduled to attend.

The Annual Fourth of July Potluck will be held again this year. Festivities will begin at 6:30 PM at the Clubhouse with dinner at 7:00 PM. Games will be set up outside on the lawn. And we are happy to have Danger Hatt provide entertainment beginning around 8:00 PM. They will set up downstairs in the exercise room. After that, everyone can enjoy the fireworks in the area at dark.

Drinks on the Porch will then be the [first Friday](#) of the month for August and September. In October, we will have a Fall gathering. The Potlucks will resume on the [first Thursday](#) of the month for December, February, and April. Watch for more information throughout the year for all of these activities.

Helen Kraus has been busy organizing an outing for The Ladies of The Settings (LOTS). The next outing will be [June 26](#) to tour the Reynolds Mansion in North Asheville preceded by lunch at the new 3rd location of Early Girl Eatery. Watch for more outings throughout the year.



*Wildflowers by Al Milton*