Written by Steve Frank
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Boone Planning Commission member Jeff Templeton spoke out Monday at the town for what he views as preferential construction of sidewalks in some areas while other areas—areas where there is a lot of foot traffic—have none. Templeton registered his observations in a letter and photo sent out this morning to the local press, saying his sighting of an older woman pushing her grocery cart on the broken side of a street with no sidewalk near Wal-Mart while new sidewalks were being constructed in an area that he noted led toward the Mayor's home. He encouraged contact with council member Lynn Mason who campaigned on the issue of making Boone a 'walk able' community. It is notable that Templeton has been at odds with the town over several issues of late, including new standards adopted from the Affordable Housing Task force and the old Watauga High property. His letter:
"Have you ever seen something wrong and thought, "somebody should do something about that?" Well, I have reached that point with regards to sidewalks in Boone. For years I have seen college students and other pedestrians walking in the streets on Meadowview Drive, and wondered, "Why are there no sidewalks?" More recently, I noticed that the Town of Boone is working to install sidewalks from the intersection of Shadowline Drive up State Farm Road towards the Mayor's House. I drive this road daily and have yet to see anyone, much less the Mayor, walking up the steep grade. Then, this past Saturday, while driving on Leola Street (the road in front on Wal-Mart), I came across a lady pulling a grocery cart and dodging traffic. She had to pull her cart into the mud on the side of the road to avoid being hit by the passing cars. I stopped to speak with her and found out that she was Mrs. Eunice Buchberger, a retired employee of ASU who currently lives in Bavarian Village. Her daughter was ill and unable to take her to the grocery store, so she decided to walk the ¼ mile from her apartment on Meadowview Drive. This was my breaking point. I can no longer quietly stand by and watch sidewalks being built in locations where they are not needed. I tried speaking with Boone Town Council Member Lynne Mason about this issue since she is on the committee that makes the decisions about where the town builds new sidewalks. But I do not believe that she shares my concerns. Ironically, Mrs. Mason campaigned on the theme of a "walk able community" in Boone. So I am asking for help from the hundreds of citizens who live in the following apartment complexes along Leola Street, Greenway Road, and Meadowview Drive; Cedar Creek, Sommerset, College Place, Bavarian Village, Meadowview, Lloyds Manor, Tamarack, Boone Docks, Ivy Drive, Amerleigh Way, and the Greenway Trailer Park. Please contact Mrs. Lynne Mason directly at Lynne.Mason@townofboone.net and let her know that sidewalks need to be built along the well-worn mud paths that line the roads around town, especially along Leola Street, Meadowview Drive and Greenway Road."

Photo: Jeff Templeton