

**Boone Historic Preservation Commission
Meeting Minutes
February 7, 2017**

Historic Preservation Commission Members in Attendance: Eric Plaag-Chairman, Teresa Pearman-Vice Chairperson, Loretta Clawson, Rennie Brantz, Bettie Bond, and Nicholas Williams

Town Staff in Attendance: Christy Turner-Planner, Brenda Henson-Board Secretary, John Ward-Town Manager, and Rick Miller-Director of Public Works

Call to Order

Chairman Plaag called the meeting of the Boone Historic Preservation Commission, held in the Planning & Inspections upstairs conference room located at 680 West King Street, to order at 3:02 p.m.

Adoption of Agenda

Commission Member Brantz made a motion to approve the agenda as written. The motion was seconded by Commission Member Clawson.

VOTE: Aye – All
 Nay – None

The motion passed.

Approval of Meeting Minutes

Commission Member Brantz made a motion to approve the January 10, 2017 meeting minutes as written. The motion was seconded by Commission Member Bond.

VOTE: Aye – 5
 Nay – None
 Abstain – 1 (Williams)

The motion passed.

Old Business

List of Possible Properties for Local Landmark Designation

Chairman Plaag referred members to the list of possible local landmark designation properties presented at the January 2017 meeting and asked each member for their top 5 properties that they would like to begin with.

Commission Member Bond chose the Rob Rivers House, the former Watauga County Jail, the Advent Christian Church, the former Watauga County Library, and the John W. Hodges, Sr. House.

Commission Member Clawson echoed Commission Member Bond's choices.

Commission Member Williams chose the former Watauga County Jail, the Daniel Boone Native Gardens, and the Rob Rivers House.

Commission Member Brantz chose the Rob Rivers House, the former Watauga County Jail, the Boone Cemetery, the former Watauga Hospital, and the Advent Christian Church.

Vice Chairperson Pearman chose the Rob Rivers House, the former Watauga County Jail, the Daniel Boone Native Gardens, the Advent Christian Church, and the former Watauga Hospital.

Chairman Plaag chose the Rob Rivers House, the former Watauga County Jail, the bungalow behind the bookstore and vapory on King Street, Rivers Printing/Watauga Democrat, and the Power House Ruins.

There was discussion regarding the barn on Deerfield Road. Mr. Ward stated that the hospital had gotten the barn evaluated. It was found to have some damage and it was indicated that the barn was not stable to move. Chairman Plaag noted that he had mentioned to Sarah Lynn the possibility of moving the barn to the Blair Farm but he felt if there were costs associated with that endeavor the owners of Blair Farm would not want the barn. Given the circumstances, Chairman Plaag did not think the barn was something that should be pursued for designation.

Mr. Ward asked about the Horn in the West. Chairman Plaag felt it could be possible to designate the Hickory Ridge Complex and the Daniel Boone Gardens but including the Horn in the West would force the Town to apply for a Certificate of Appropriateness and likely tie the hands of Town Council regarding future plans for the property.

Chairman Plaag asked if there would be fees to the property owner who requests a local designation or no fees if the HPC suggests the property be designated. Mr. Ward stated the HPC could either charge a fee to property owners or they could use the money appropriated to them from Town Council, but needed to be consistent in whichever one they chose to do. Commission Member Brantz asked how much it cost to do a designation. Chairman Plaag stated the cost for the Post Office designation was around \$2,500-\$3,000. Mr. Ward suggested having Planning Staff work on designation reports as a cheaper alternative because the Town would be utilizing resources already available.

The Rivers House was discussed. Chairman Plaag noted that the house was unoccupied. If designated, the Town would have to go through the COA process whenever any changes were made. Chairman Plaag stated that if the Rivers House was designated he would like to include the Rivers Printing/Watauga Democrat building as well. Vice Chairperson Pearman asked why the Rivers House was so important. Chairman Plaag explained that the house was owned by Rob

Rivers who was the owner of Rivers Printing Company. The house was built in the 1920's and the stonemasons were African-American and from this area. Chairman Plaag noted that there were no properties listed on the National Historic Registry with work done by these stonemasons.

Mr. Ward noted that while Town property was easier to designate, choosing to designate those properties first, left private properties unprotected and available for uncontrolled change.

It was the general consensus that the following 5 properties should be pursued for designation:

- Former Watauga County Jail
- Rob Rivers House
- Advent Christian Church
- Daniel Boone Native Gardens
- Boone Cemetery

Chairman Plaag asked when a requested budget for 2017/2018 needed to be completed. Mr. Ward replied that budget requests needed to be in by next month.

Boone Cemetery

Mr. Ward stated that a local engineering firm has provided several options for the retaining wall, some costing up to \$150,000. He noted an option for a shorter wall (4') that could be done in-house. Mr. Ward stated that the fence in the middle has been removed and the sonar has been ordered. He noted there was some legal work to obtain proper easements to place the wall on ASU's property. Mr. Ward stated that ASU would like a sidewalk beside the wall and he thought that could be accommodated. He felt that the wall, fence, and tree work would be over \$100,000. Mr. Ward stated that the Town would likely not be able to do the separate gated entrance off of Brown Street into the black section of the Cemetery, citing grading, encroachment, and monetary issues. Chairman Plaag expressed concern that this would not be accepted well by the Junaluska community.

Mr. Miller stated that this was now one cemetery, the Boone Cemetery, and noted that cemeteries all over the county have only one entrance. Chairman Plaag asked about entrance for maintenance equipment. Mr. Miller replied that maintenance equipment would enter through the one gated entrance, even if the equipment had to be smaller.

Chairman Plaag suggested that he and John Ward meet with the JHA to explain this issue. HPC members were agreeable to this meeting.

Mr. Ward noted that the Union stones had arrived. Chairman Plaag asked about the dedication ceremony. Mr. Ward felt it would be better to wait until tree removal was complete. Mr. Miller stated that Public Works was planning to start with what could be done in-house in March. Chairman Plaag noted that the JHA ceremony was scheduled to take place on May 6. Mr. Miller stated they would try very hard to complete tree removal in time for the May 6 ceremony.

Mr. Ward stated he and Mr. Miller would check on fencing prices and try to get out a press release on the Cemetery sometime in late February if possible. Mr. Ward also felt using a Lunch and Learn for a Cemetery education session was a good idea.

Commission Member Bond noted that June 14 was Flag Day and thought that might be a good time to try to have the Union Soldier marker dedication.

Phase I Survey

Chairman Plaag stated he is still writing the survey reports.

Commission Member Bond noted the following meetings:

-March 2 at the Jones House – Palmer Blair Collection

-March 9 at the Library – 1940 Boone Flood

Boone Flood Marker Update

Chairman Plaag stated he had searched for regional impact information regarding the 1940 flood but was unable to locate a significant amount of research. Instead he was able to gather a fairly large amount of information on flood and debris flow that he felt would satisfy the state's requirements.

Linney House Update

Chairman Plaag provided members with a draft survey report (**see attached**) for the Linney House and Linney Law Office. Commission Member Brantz stated that the architectural description was very good. Commission Member Clawson and Vice Chairperson Pearman both thought the report was good.

Chairman Plaag stated he would meet with Paul and reformat the report. He will then bring the report back to the HPC for their recommendation to Town Council.

List of Possible Properties for Local Landmark Designation

Chairman Plaag asked members if they would rather use their leftover budgeted money for designations or lump it into the work on the Cemetery.

After some discussion, Commission Member Brantz made a motion that the HPC retain the budgeted survey money to do designations. The motion was seconded by Commission Member Clawson.

VOTE: Aye – All
 Nay – None

The motion passed.

Other Matters by Commission Members or Staff

Due to some conflicts, the March 14, 2017 meeting was rescheduled to March 7, 2017.

Set agenda for next meeting

- Boone Cemetery
- Phase I Survey Update
- Boone Flood Marker Update
- Linney House Update
- Power House
- 2017/2018 Budget

Adjournment

Commission Member Clawson made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Commission Member Brantz. With no opposition, the meeting adjourned at 5:01 p.m

Eric Plaag, Chairperson

Brenda Henson, Board Secretary