Boone Historic Preservation Commission
Meeting Minutes
October 10, 2017
3 p.m.

Historic Preservation Commission Members in Attendance: Eric Plaag-Chairman, Teresa Pearman-Vice-Chairperson, Chuck Watkins, Loretta Clawson, Bill Dixon and Rennie Brantz

Town Staff in Attendance: Jane Shook-Director of Planning and Inspections, Christy Turner-Senior Planner, John Ward-Town Manager, Thomas Studnicky-Town Hall Intern

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Call to Order

Chairman Plaag called to order the meeting of the Boone Historic Preservation Commission, held in the Planning & Inspections - Upstairs Conference Room located at 680 West King Street, at 3:01 p.m.

Adoption of Agenda

Chairman Plaag asked for the following items to be added to the agenda under Other Matters: the Daniel Boone Scavenger Hunt and the Boone Ghost Tour. Ms. Jane Shook asked that the following items to be added to the agenda: Joint HPC and CAC meeting and the Town of Boone Comprehensive Plan/2030 Plan merger.

Member Clawson made a motion, seconded by Member Pearman to accept the agenda as amended.

VOTE:

Aye – All
Nay – None

The motion was passed.

Official Public Hearing-The Linney House and Former Linney Law Office Local Landmark Designations

Chairman Plaag officially called the Public Hearing to order at 3:06 p.m. and asked if anyone from the public was there to speak about the local designation of the Linney House and the former Linney Law Office. There was no one present to speak about the local designations. Chairman Plaag read the Local Landmark Designation for the Linney House and former Linney Law Office (permanently on file).

Motion:

Vice Chair Pearman made a motion, seconded by Member Brantz that as part of the hearing, the Town of Boone Historic Preservation Commission recommend adoption of Local Designation Ordinance for the Linney House and former Linney Law Office.

Vote:

Aye – All
Nay – None

The motion passed.

Chairman Plaag has agreed to write the National Landmark Designation, gratis for Mr. Frank Coffey, owner of the Linney House and former Linney Law Office as a courtesy to Mr. Frank Coffey. Discussion ensued concerning whether Article 8 of the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) called out the Secretary of Interior's Standards to review a major or minor Certificate of Appropriateness. It was concluded that the HPC did adopt the Secretary of Interior's Standards and the reference to the adopted standards in the UDO is sufficient.

Chair Plaag closed the Public Hearing at 3:16 p.m.

Approval of Meeting Minutes

Member Brantz made a motion, seconded by Member Clawson to approve the September 12, 2017 meeting minutes as amended with the following changes:

● on page 4 of the September minutes, the 6th paragraph should read, Chairman Plaag stated that the buildings historically known as the Goodnight Brothers buildings which are on the south side of Howard St., and east of Depot St., the garage type building beside Griff Gilbert's building in that complex, would be a contributing structure to the downtown district, but the rest of the complex would not qualify as contributing structures.

● on page 3 of the September minutes, the 7th paragraph should state that Chairman Plaag said he believes that the façade is still there at the Past Time Theatre.

● on page 7 of the September minutes, the last paragraph should state that Chair Plaag said he would send Ms. Shook the draft process on obtaining a Certificate of Appropriateness for her review.

Vote:

Aye – Plaag, Pearman, Watkins, Clawson, Brantz
Nay – None
Abstain- Dixon

The motion passed.

Boone Cemetery

Chair Plaag thanked everyone who was able to attend the Junaluska Marker unveiling on October 1, 2017. The Commission thought that the event was special, well-attended and a wonderful occasion for the Town of Boone as a whole. The event was also a moment of healing for the community and members of the Junaluska Community were ecstatic about the experience. The event could also not have happened without the Town and the Historic Preservation Commission and the cooperation of all.

There are some ownership issues involving the River's House and a stone mason, Mr. Simpson who has always been credited with laying the block there and Chair Plaag can't find any evidence of this. The house was built for Arnold Clay who also owned the little white house that once stood on the property. Chair Plaag learned that John L. Hickerson, a black stone mason actually did the work and his obituary listed that he was responsible for laying the brick and rock for most buildings in Boone at the time. He passed away in 1938 and his name could not be found on the Junaluska marker. The Junaluska Foundation thanked Chair Plaag for finding this information.

Chair Plaag also found evidence that Jordan Councill did not donate the land for the cemetery which seems to have started as a family cemetery for the Councill's around 1863. Instead, Benjamin Councill, Jr. and Jordan Councill, Jr. actually started the cemetery around 1863 for Jacob Mast Councill and his daughter a couple of years earlier. There are four stones that pre-date 1863, but evidence shows that these stones were erected well after 1863. Monroe Grimes is listed as the caretaker of the historically black section of the Boone cemetery in the paper, but Chair Plaag chose not to discuss this at the marker unveiling on October 1, 2017 because of the reason Mr. Grime's name was listed in the paper. Mr. Grimes made a horrific discovery of a baby in the cemetery who had been killed to which the crime has never been solved.

Chair Plaag also discovered a deed to the driveway of the cemetery from 1917 where the land was transferred to the trustees of the cemetery.

The cemetery surveying is more than halfway done and there is another date in October to work on the survey effort again.

Mr. Ward added that the fence has been ordered for the cemetery and will be put in during the fall. Mr. Ward suggested that the Union Marker Ceremony be put off until the fence is put in. The Commission will discuss a date in January for the Union Marker Ceremony and the groups such as the JHA, and an ROTC group at ASU would like to be involved. There is an official protocol that should be followed that will also be discussed in January. Mr. Ward mentioned that Brad Harmon had suggested some reenactors from that era. Chair Plaag urges caution in suggesting speakers to speak at the ceremony.

Phase I Survey Report

Chair Plaag is still revising, but brought an example of what survey entries will look like including history, pictures, and an exacting architectural detail. He added that there are over 100 entries for the survey. Paul Fuller is the force behind referring to clipped gables as jerkinheads. Member Dixon said that the term used today is clipped gables. Pictures have emerged from the Digital Watauga Project that have answered questions that they had before the pictures were found. Discussion ensued regarding the homes on hippie hill. Chair Plaag said it was impossible to try and find all tenants of the buildings the team had surveyed. The survey team did try to note original ownership of the buildings and ownership at the time of any major changes. The remainder of the survey should be complete in the early part of November for the properties and that appears to be over 100 that were identified after the windshield survey.

Historic Preservation and Community Appearance Commission Joint Meeting

Chair Plaag reported that he and Brian Williams, Chair of the CAC appeared together at the September Town Council Meeting to get direction from Council concerning the committees working together on the interface area and the core area in relationship of the Historic District that might be created after the Phase I Survey. There was a wide interface and core area compared to what CAC had recommended. Both groups had different missions in relation to the core area.

Chair Plaag mentioned to Council that the HPC and CAC were frustrated at the last meeting they had because each committee had been given a goal and then the goals were contradicted. Multiple agendas were presented in contradiction to the goals that both groups had been given. Chair Plaag suggested that for the next meeting, it should be one with Council participation that is limited to Council members that already serve on the CAC and HPC realizing that it is a public meeting where anyone can participate. Manager, John Ward mentioned that in the end, it will be the decision of Council, but that the process needs to move forward due in large part to the Institute of Government's contract on developing Howard Street. Chair Plaag tried to communicate to Council that the groups have differing goals and boundaries. Chair Plaag discussed "Hippie Hill" and how that area should be Chappell Wilson Hill as an extremely historic part of Boone on the north side of King Street. There is pressure with that hillside as to the highest and best use of the property. Chair Plaag shared that HPC shouldn't give up on this portion of downtown. Member Watkins asked if areas like these could be their own districts. Chair Plaag suggested expanding such an area to include the old Orchard Street /Wallace Circle subdivision. Ms. Shook, reminded the HPC that the CAC goals were mostly aimed at building materials for the Downtown area. Ms. Shook also stated that she felt like she would have to invite the other members of Council as well as advertise the joint meeting as a Council meeting because at least four members would be in attendance. Dates were discussed for the joint meeting. Ms. Shook explained that a Doodle Poll would be sent out to get the best date possible for the joint meeting.

Linney House and Former Linney Law Office Update

Chair Plaag reminded the Commission that the designation of the Linney House and former Linney Law Office will be on Town Council's agenda on October 19, 2017 for the second Local Landmark Designation.

Boone Flood Marker

Town Council approved the money for a Boone Flood marker as a local marker program for the Town of Boone. Chair Plaag will reword the portion of marker that refers to the demise of the Tweetsie depot. Chair Plaag will contact the marker company and will need a high resolution of the Town of Boone logo.

Other Matters

Brittany Clark, who is the DBDA coordinator asked Eric about the "sketchy" ties Daniel Boone has to this area in a meeting earlier in the day. Chair Plaag stated that the details seem that way because in fact they are. Mr. Ward told the commission that the Daniel Boone scavenger hunt had been changed to a program that will promote the areas Christmas tree trade so there is no need to try and come up with ways to legitimatize Daniel Boone's ties to the area. Chair Plaag suggested pointing out other agricultural crops that were important to the area for this project such as sauerkraut and ginseng.

Another individual approached Chair Plaag on another matter which is the Boone Ghost Tours. Discussion ensued about different 'ghost stories" for the Town of Boone. The individual asked about the cemetery, and Chair Plaag explained that the cemetery was closed at night but tours could most likely go up to the gates of the cemetery. Chair Plaag cautioned the individual about Boone stories that he may or may not want to tell. Chair Plaag explained that this may be a missed opportunity for the Town. Chair Plaag hopes that historic walking tours will come up on the Town's agenda again soon. Member Brantz explained that the Cultural Resources Advisory Board is still working on the historic walking tours to take place in Boone.

Ms. Shook informed the HPC that Council had contracted with the High Country Council of Government to merge the Boone Comprehensive Plan and the Boone 2030 plan into one document. They are almost through the first draft. Being a group that uses the documents, HPC will need to review the documents as the rough and final drafts are completed.

Adjournment

Member Brantz made a motion, seconded by Vice-Chair Pearman to adjourn the meeting at 4:28 p.m.

VOTE:

Aye – All
Nay – None

The motion passed.

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Eric Plaag, Chairman **Christy Turner, Senior Planner**