

**TOWN OF BOONE
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
JANUARY 2, 2024, 3:00 p.m.
Planning & Inspections Department & WebEx Video Conferencing**

Historic Preservation Commission Members in Attendance:

Vice-Chair Bettie Bond, Krystal Carter, and Vardell Smyth

Council Liaison: Virginia Roseman

Town Staff in Attendance:

Jessica Mitchell-Advanced Planning Specialist, Mike James-Commercial Zoning Administrator, and Marlene Crosby-Board Secretary

Others in Attendance: Eric Plaag-Carolina Historical Consulting, LLC, Paul Pessina-SPA Properties Group, Mr. Mark Freed-Director of Cultural Resources, Jodie Feimster, and Luke Barber-Watauga Democrat

CALL TO ORDER

Vice-Chair Bond called the Boone Historic Preservation Commission meeting via WebEx to order at 3:02 p.m.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Commission Member Smyth made a motion, seconded by Commission Member Carter, to adopt the agenda as presented.

Vote: Aye – All

Nay – None

The motion passed.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commission Member Smyth made a motion, seconded by Commission Member Carter, to approve December 5, 2023, meeting minutes as written.

Vote: Aye – All

Nay – None

The motion passed.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No individuals requested the opportunity to speak during public comment.

H.W. HORTON BUILDING LOCAL HISTORIC LANDMARK DESIGNATION

Dr. Eric Plaag from Carolina Historical Consulting, LLC, explained the history of this topic as outlined in the meeting packet and with a presentation shared during the meeting. Dr. Plaag's presentation included the history of Henry Walter Horton, the period of significance being the year 1929, architectural elements of the building, and Horton's impact on the area. After the presentation detailing the history as included in the local landmark designation report, he asked the HPC if they had any questions regarding the proposed designation. The HPC members agreed that the designation report was well-written and found the content interesting and informative.

Dr. Plaag opened the floor for questions from the HPC. Vice-Chair Bond asked Dr. Plaag if the canning factory he mentioned in the report referred to the kraut factory. Dr. Plaag replied that the North State Canning Company came into Boone in 1923, and Commission Member Smyth noted that it was the kraut factory. Vice-Chair Bond pointed out that this factory gave Kraut Creek its name, and Dr. Plaag said yes.

Vice-Chair Bond asked Dr. Plaag if the house Mr. Horton had built on Orchard Street was Ala McGuire's house, and Dr. Plaag replied yes. Dr. Plaag noted that Ms. McGuire had lived much longer than Mr. Horton had lived at that location. He stated that the surveys from the 1980's called that house the Ala McGuire house. He pointed out that because the house was not known as the H.W. Horton house, it speaks to how local people saw it as Ada McGuire's house and how she was significant to Boone's history. Vice-Chair Bond said this information adds to the historical survey of the Grand Boulevard area.

Chair Plaag pointed out three minor changes that he needed to make to the designation report, and they are as follows:

- 1. Based on the discontent expressed by an appraiser in the community regarding the words "appraised value" in the table on packet page 21, these words are used by the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). He explained it is the "assessed value," a footnote would be added that indicates this is the SHPO language with no objection from the Commission. It is the assessed value," according to the tax card.
- 2. On packet page 22, in the opening statement, clarification to the sentence that the period of significance is the single-year 1929.
- 3. On packet page 23 and the third line modify that begins with "Census records that might document Horton's residence in 1890 and 1900..." to include reference of finding information in the 1900 Census under Walter Horton in North Wilkesboro.

In reference to the third suggested change, Dr. Plaag explained that generally, 1890 Census records are not available for some states because there was a fire that destroyed those records, and there would not be Census records on Henry Walter Horton for that year.

Ms. Mitchell explained to the HPC that if they agreed with this proposal for an application for a local landmark designation, they would need to make a recommendation, including a motion and vote, to start the designation process for Staff to present it to Town Council. She added that subsequently, Town Council would consider giving Staff the ability to send the designation report to SHPO to begin the 30-day review.

Motion and Vote:

Commission Member Smyth made a motion, seconded by Commission Member Carter, to approve the H.W. Horton Building Local Historic Designation report and recommend that it be presented to the Town Council for approval and further processing of the report.

Vote: Aye – All
Nay – None
The motion passed.

Dr. Plaag asked Mr. Pessina if he had any questions regarding the process. Mr. Pessina confirmed that the HPC's recommendation would send the report to the Town Council for approval. He continued then the designation report would go to the SHPO to begin their review process and then to the Town Council again for a final vote of approval.

Dr. Plaag stated that because he is a Town Council member, he would recuse himself from the Town Council review of this proposal, which might occur at the February 2023 Town Council meeting. He said this would include the initial vote and any other subsequent votes that might arise regarding this designation report. He told Mr. Pessina that he would present the proposal for the designation report to the Town Council on his behalf.

Commission Member Smyth asked Mr. Pessina if he had planned to pursue a state or federal designation. Mr. Pessina said his company had not yet considered other designations as they were thinking of this first step of the local landmark designation process.

Ms. Mitchell pointed out that she and Mr. Mike James, the Commercial Zoning Administrator, would be the Staff members to forward this project to Town Council.

Mr. Paul Pessina left the meeting at approximately 3:25 p.m.

HPC RECOMMENDATION FOR CHAIR POSITION

Ms. Mitchell referred to packet pages 87 and 88. She explained to the HPC that they would need to make a recommendation, including a motion and vote, on the application for the Historic Preservation Commission Chair application to be presented to the Town Council by Staff at their February 2024 meeting.

Motion and Vote:

Vice-Chair Bond made a motion, seconded by Commission Member Carter, to recommend to the Town Council that Commission Member Vardell Smyth be appointed to the Historic Preservation Commission Chair position.

Vote:

Aye – (Bond, Carter)

Nay – None

Abstain – (Smyth)

The motion passed.

HPC WORKPLAN

Ms. Mitchell referred to packet pages 89 through 94. She reviewed the HPC Annual Work Plan Report for 2023, stating that it had been revised from the last Advisory meeting. She told the HPC that the work plan and budget information would be presented next week at the 2024 Planning Retreat as outlined in the meeting packet. She explained to the HPC that the Commission would not be required to attend the Planning Retreat; the Town Council and Planning Staff would be attending it. She reviewed and explained

the document as presented in the meeting packet. She reviewed the request for funding for FY 2023-2024 and FY2024-2025 based on estimates given to the Planning Staff.

Ms. Mitchell pointed out that the Staff note previously relayed to the HPC that the Staff's primary responsibility this year would be the work associated with the Comprehensive Plan update. She pointed out that the Staff has requested that the HPC be allowed to focus on completing the current in-progress tasks before engaging in any additional tasks with the idea that the work plan be revisited when the in-progress tasks are completed.

Ms. Mitchell also reviewed the tasks listed in the categories of In-Progress Tasks, In-Progress to be Completed (Delayed to Other Ongoing Work), Future HPC Requested Tasks, the Completed Tasks, and the Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) Cases. Commission Member Smyth referred to the Future HPC Requested Task of New Historic District Consideration for Cherry Park, which Member Smyth shared that he lives on Cherrybrook Drive. He stated that at some point, when the HPC would work on his street, he would have to disclose that he lives there. Ms. Mitchell agreed with Commission Member Smyth that he might, in the future, need to state that information. She added for this topic under Future HPC Requested Tasks, the Town Council would need to be involved during the discussions regarding the work and other considerations for future designations. Vice-Chair Bond noted that she lives on Grand Boulevard.

Commission Member Smyth referenced the meeting packet for the Quasi-Judicial meeting on January 9, 2024, and asked for clarification on the original and revised Portofino Hotel COA case submissions. He wanted to know why there was a revised submittal, and what the HPC was supposed to be reviewing with the revised submittal. Ms. Mitchell explained that the applicant submitted a new COA, and it was modifying the previous COA request. Commission Member Smyth asked if the revised submittal was from a request from the HPC, and Mr. Mike James, Commercial Zoning Administrator, replied no. Mr. James added that the applicant is requesting changes to the second-floor windows. Ms. Mitchell explained that if the HPC is interested, there are previous quasi-judicial meeting packets with cases of modifications of COA's, and this meeting packet follows what has been given previous including the initial and revised submittals.

JONES HOUSE LOCAL HISTORIC LANDMARK DESIGNATION REPORT

Ms. Mitchell referred to packet page 94 and explained that she would present this draft designation report update on behalf of Ms. Riley Ziegler.

Ms. Mitchell referenced the note Ms. Ziegler included with the draft report and explained that Ms. Ziegler had found other resources she wanted to research. Ms. Mitchell continued that Ms. Ziegler stated one of the resources might pinpoint dates between 1918 and 1930. Ms. Ziegler's note included that she wanted feedback from the HPC on this information as she continued to complete her work on the designation report. Ms. Mitchell stated that she would take any suggestions from the HPC and forward them to Ms. Ziegler after this meeting. Ms. Ziegler said in her notes that she would submit the final draft to the HPC for their review by February or March 2024. Ms. Mitchell noted that Ms. Ziegler would be present for the February 2024 HPC advisory meeting. Vice-Chair Bond noted some chronological issues with the draft

report and gave Ms. Mitchell a copy of her proposed suggestions. Ms. Mitchell said she would forward those to Ms. Ziegler. Commission Members Smyth and Carter had no feedback on the draft report. Ms. Mitchell stated that Commission members could communicate changes to her via email to share with Ms. Ziegler.

STONEMAN'S RAID INTERPRETATIVE PANEL UPDATE

Ms. Mitchell referred to packet pages 149 and 150. She pointed out that this is the latest draft of the interpretative panel from Dr. Plaag. She referenced packet page 151 as a reminder of the image and credit information for the Captain Myles Keogh image. She added that the credit information would be required to be included when the panel is designed. She said that the image of the map on packet page 152 corresponds to the citation information included in the latest draft report.

Ms. Mitchell referred to packet page 153 and pointed out that, as a reminder, these are the requirements for the Civil War Trails program. She pointed out that the proposed draft text can be no more than 275 words, and the current draft is close to that word limit. She would do the application paperwork for the program at the appropriate time. She provided program guidance for the Civil War Trails marker program in the meeting packet to see how the HPC would like to proceed. She stated that in collaboration with Public Works, they received a response from the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) regarding the bulb out area at the corner of W. King Street and Linney Street, and that area is not in the NCDOT right-of-way. She said we may be able to use it for the Stoneman's Raid Interpretative panel. She was working on contacting the director of the Civil War Trails program to inform him that this area is not in the DOT right of way, and she would ask about the process of moving forward with the panel at this location.

Vice-Chair Bond asked Ms. Mitchell about possibly removing the Stoneman's Raid marker near the Watauga County Courthouse. Ms. Mitchell responded that the interpretative marker was with the State Highway program and would not be removed.

Commission Member Smyth handed out a draft copy of the proposed text with changes he had made to the Stoneman's Raid Interpretative Panel draft (permanently on file). Discussion ensued on the draft text presented by Commission Member Smyth. Commission Member Smyth explained that on the original read of the draft text for the interpretative panel, he had no idea what Stoneman's Raid was doing, why they were there at that location, or why it happened. Vice-Chair Bond and Commission Member Smyth agreed that they needed to become more familiar with this area of Boone's history.

Commission Member Smyth read the title from his handout, "Stoneman's Raid: Skirmish and Occupation of Boone. He read the first paragraph of the draft text of his handout. He said the text that reads, "with orders to 'dismantle the country,'" he said there is not a footnote to support these words, but they were orders that were given. He said these words paint why the raid occurred at that location.

Commission Member Smyth read the second paragraph, and in the second line, he changed the word from "gathered" to "assembled" because, in one of the footnotes, it said the troops had been mustered

and there were 75 people there. He noted that the names of the commanders were listed for the other units, but questioned if we know who was in charge of the Watauga County Home Guard. He said we need to determine the size of the detachment sent to Boone, with some from Tennessee. He said the cavalry in the Civil War was about 100 people. He said he wanted to know more about the people who were sent to Boone for Stoneman's Raid. He stated that we do not know the number of additional troops that were sent, and when and where they came from to Boone, but they may have been the troops from the Twelfth Kentucky Union Volunteer Cavalry.

Commission Member Smyth read the third paragraph and stated that more information is needed about how close this timeframe is to the end of the Civil War.

Commission Member Smyth read the fourth paragraph and stated that it was interesting, but he needed to figure out how it tied in with the occupation. He added that he did not understand what was happening in this text or why it needed to be in the proposed text. He noted that there needs to be more information about the occupation. Vice-Chair Bond agreed with Commission Smyth about the lack of information on the occupation, and she suggested that the title needed to be changed from Stoneman's Raid. Commission Member Smyth stated that the Stoneman's Raid was the whole operation across North Carolina to Virginia. He said that the Stoneman's Raid that came through Boone was just one small part of the whole raid and happened in many other places.

Council Liaison Roseman talked about the Stoneman's Raid interpretative panel at the Watauga County Courthouse. She asked if it would be appropriate to say that the interpretative panel is not at the proper location and acknowledge it for the proposed text since it cannot be removed. Commission Member Smyth suggested putting a QR sticker on the interpretative marker at the Watauga County Courthouse that says that Stoneman's Raid did not happen at that location. He said he hesitated to put a sticker on it because it might be removed at some point, and then they would be referencing something that did not exist. Council Liaison Roseman supported the QR stickers, and Commission Member Smyth said that could be done.

Ms. Mitchell added that as the HPC works on the proposed text, there will be times that she would have to send it to the Civil Wars Trail program representatives, who will have to do their reworking of it. She said she could ask, in these early phases, if the program had previously dealt with this type of thing and learned how they dealt with it. She explained that part of the \$200.00 fee is to update or change the sign as needed to ensure it is accurate.

Commission Member Smyth asked Ms. Mitchell if the HPC would continue to work on the Stoneman's Raid interpretative panel at the next HPC advisory meeting. Ms. Mitchell explained there is no timeframe set to complete this project; it is just when the HPC feels comfortable meeting the requirements of the Civil War Trails program. She offered for the HPC to rework the proposed text again. Vice-Chair Bond suggested that Commission Member Smyth meet with Commission Member Williamson to discuss the proposed text. Commission Member Smyth asked if the draft text could be emailed back and forth to the HPC members. Discussion ensued on proper communication among members with open meetings law.

Ms. Mitchell explained that discussing agenda topics in an HPC meeting is acceptable, and that in the past the HPC has made recommendations for HPC members to work together on a project. Commission Member Smyth said he did not want to wait until another HPC meeting was posted to work on the proposed text. Council Liaison Roseman explained that one person to another without a third person could discuss a topic as long as it does not conclude with a definitive answer. She said if the HPC agreed to allow Commission Members Smyth and Williamson to work on this topic and they would present that information to the HPC, that would be fine. Commission Member Smyth stated that Commission Member Williamson would need to agree to work with him on this topic. Ms. Mitchell noted that Commission Member Williamson would be back in Town next week, and the HPC could ask him at the next meeting under an agenda item for Other Discussion.

Motion and Vote:

Commission Member Smyth made a motion, seconded by Commission Member Carter to table the discussion for the draft Stoneman's Raid Interpretative Panel text at the next HPC Advisory meeting on February 6, 2024.

Discussion ensued on discussing at the HPC Quasi-Judicial meeting on January 9, 2024 under Other Discussion regarding Commission Member Smyth and Williamson to work together on the draft Stoneman's Raid Interpretative Panel text.

Vote: Aye – All
 Nay – None
 The motion passed.

Council Liaison Roseman requested that the draft text prepared and submitted by Commission Member Smyth be included in the next meeting packet.

STAFF UPDATES

Ms. Mitchell updated the HPC on the Boone Cemetery Interpretative Panels; she said the Town Council approved Staff to work on the ordering the interpretative panels. She informed the HPC that she had encountered an issue with the Vacker Sign company regarding the panel design. She requested a full-size image from Digital Watauga because she was not able to locate the image online through Digital Watauga. She told the Vacker Sign company that she needed to work with those images because they were approved. She further explained that she may have to reduce the sign size from 24" x 36" to 18" x 24", which could cost less. She noted that if that needed to happen, she would present it to the HPC before she made that decision.

Ms. Mitchell informed the HPC of the R.L. Clay (Rivers) House Local Landmark Designation Update. She said she should receive a response from SHPO tomorrow because that would be the end of the 30-day review period. She would have SHPO comments available for the HPC to review at the February Advisory meeting. She pointed out that the next steps would be a joint meeting with the Planning Commission and Town Council, and the HPC would also need to attend that meeting. She said the March 25, 2024, at 6 p.m. Public Hearing/Planning Commission meeting tentatively could be where this topic is presented.

Ms. Mitchell stated that she would let the HPC know when she hears about a resolution or planned ceremonies to recognize Dr. Rennie Brantz.

Ms. Mitchell stated that on a Staff level, they are in the preliminary stages of the signs and panels for Dana Folk Way. She asked the HPC to consider how they would like to proceed with the interpretative panel's plaque. She added that these signs and panels would honor and recognize Dana Folk and Ice House Alley. She noted that this topic is on the HPC's pending task list.

Commission Member Smyth asked if there had been a discussion about using the brick walls in the Dana Folk Way alley for interpretative panels for other things in the Town. Ms. Mitchell responded that the interpretative plaques we have in mind would be attached to the building. She said the property owner would need to approve something attached to their building. She added that Staff and the Downtown Boone Development Association (DBDA) are working together on the Dana Folk Way. She noted that the DBDA has talked about making the alleyway a part of public art programming. She said it would be a functional space, but she did not necessarily know if the space would be for interpreting other things in the Town.

Vice-Chair Bond supported using the alleyway from King Street into Howard Street to see public art. Commission Member Smyth suggested the use of murals in the alleyway, and he asked how the murals would possibly affect the HPC. Ms. Mitchell explained that if a mural is added to the alleyway and privately funded on private property, it would trigger a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) process that the HPC would review in a quasi-judicial setting. She said if the mural is Town-funded or on a Town-owned building, it would be reviewed in an advisory capacity by the HPC. She referred to the Appendix D standard regarding the portion for Town-funded or on a Town-owned building:

11. Public Art Standards in the Downtown Boone Local Historic District

11.4 Historical markers, interpretive signage, and public art that is either (i) located on property owned, controlled or maintained for public use by the Town within a historic district or within the boundaries of a publicly-owned landmark or (ii) funded in whole or in part by the Town must be approved by Town Council and shall be exempt from the COA process.

- However, at least 30 days prior to consideration for approval by the Town Council, the proposed historical marker, interpretive signage, and/or public art shall have been considered by the HPC in its advisory capacity with respect to (i) applicable district or landmark standards regarding size, form, massing, materials, and placement, (ii) historical accuracy and appropriateness of the content, and (iii) any other factors, including but not limited to aesthetic considerations, that the HPC deems relevant. The HPC shall forward the results of its review to the Town Council. Town Council may consider approval of such historical marker, interpretive signage, or public art within 45 days of consideration by the HPC, regardless of whether or not HPC has submitted the results of its review by that date.

- By way of clarification, public art on public property owned or controlled by public authorities other than the Town is not intended to come within the exemption of this subsection 11.4.

Ms. Mitchell provided the example for the HPC of the last public art installation being the Doc and Merle Watson mural, which was Town-funded and HPC conducted an advisory review in February of 2022.

Ms. Mitchell added that Ms. Lane Moody, Downtown Boone Development Coordinator, is contacting the Downtown Boone property owners and managers to inform them about the Dana Folk Way project that was Town Council directed and that the HPC is working on it. She added that she and Ms. Moody would keep the HPC informed on the project's progress.

HPC MEMBER UPDATES

Vice-Chair Bond informed the HPC that the scheduled Watauga County Historical Society presentation of the Boone Cemetery that was to be presented by Dr. Eric Plaag at the Watauga County Public Library in December was rescheduled to January 25, 2024, at 5:30 p.m.

FEBRUARY ADVISORY SESSION MATERIAL

Ms. Mitchell confirmed with the HPC members that the following items would be on the February advisory meeting agenda: Staff Update on the HPC Chair Position, Staff Update on the H.W. Horton Building Local Landmark Designation Report, Jones House Local Landmark Designation Report Update by Ms. Riley Ziegler, continued discussion on Stoneman's Raid, Staff Update on R.L. Clay (Rivers) House Local Landmark Designation update, and possible Staff Updates on the Boone Cemetery Interpretative Panels and Dana Folkway Update.

She further confirmed a brief discussion of the Stoneman's Raid topic under Other Discussion at the Quasi-Judicial meeting on January 9, 2024.

ADJOURNMENT

Commission Member Carter made a motion, seconded by Commission Member Smyth, to adjourn the meeting at 4:22 p.m.

Vote: Aye – All

Nay – None

The motion passed.

Bettie Bond, Vice-Chair

Marlene Crosby, Board Secretary