

TOWN OF BOONE
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
January 4, 2022, 6:00 p.m.

Historic Preservation Commission Members in Attendance:

Chair Eric Plaag, Vice-Chair Bettie Bond, and Chuck Watkins

Student Member:

Council Liaisons: Virginia Roseman

Town Staff in Attendance:

Jane Shook-Director of Planning & Inspections, Jessica Mitchell-Long-Range/Special Projects Planner, Christy Turner-Senior Planner, and Marlene Crosby-Board Secretary

Others in Attendance: Mark Freed-Director of Cultural Resources and Lane Moody-Downtown Boone Development Coordinator

Call to Order

Chair Eric Plaag called the meeting of the Boone Historic Preservation Commission, held via WebEx, a video conferencing software, to order on Tuesday, January 4, 2022, at 6:00 p.m.

Adoption of Agenda

Discussion ensued on a possible second HPC meeting in January of 2022. Chair Plaag explained that the primary reason for a second meeting is because the HPC Quasi-Judicial Rules of Procedure need to be in place before the February 2022 HPC meeting. He confirmed with Staff that five COA cases would be held in a quasi-judicial setting at the February HPC meeting. Ms. Shook pointed out that the Council has to approve the said proposed Rules of Procedure. She noted that Staff provided Council with a copy for their consideration at the January 12, 2022, Council meeting. She suggested tabling the agenda topic for the HPC Quasi-Judicial Rules of Procedure to another meeting date. Chair Plaag agreed to table this agenda item because he had just received the said Rules of Procedure and had not had time to review them. Vice-Chair Bettie Bond noted that she had not reviewed the said Rules of Procedure and Member Watkins noted that he had reviewed them.

Chair Plaag proposed having a second HPC Special meeting in January to review the said Rules of Procedure and suggested either January 11 or January 12 for the said meeting. The HPC, by consensus, decided to have the Special HPC meeting on January 11 at 3 p.m. He explained that having the meeting during the day would help save on staff costs incurred in an evening meeting.

Ms. Shook informed the HPC that the Staff is currently trying to coordinate some additional quasi-judicial training for the new members of the HPC and Board of Adjustment. She noted that Vice-Chair Bond would be attending the training as a refresher course.

Discussion ensued on the Councill Store Historical Marker. Chair Plaag said that he had not completed the Councill Store Historical Marker report, and the Depot Street report was not completed for the Town Streets Project. He said he hoped to have both reports completed by Monday, January 10, and send them to the HPC for their review and discussion at the Tuesday, January 11 meeting.

Chair Plaag suggested tabling the following agenda items to the Tuesday, January 11, 2022 HPC meeting at 3 p.m., the HPC Quasi-Judicial Rules of Procedure, Councill Store Historical Marker, and Town Street Projects Depot Street report.

Chair Plaag explained that he had not completed the Watauga County Jail Designation Report. He suggested tabling that agenda item until the February 1, 2022 HPC meeting.

Chair Plaag asked if there were any other changes to the agenda. Ms. Shook noted that she would like to review some additional proposed changes to the HPC Quasi-Judicial Rules of Procedure from her meeting with Ms. Allison Meade, Town Attorney. Chair Plaag explained that the said Rules of Procedure topic could be reviewed by Ms. Shook as scheduled on the agenda, but further discussion would occur at the Special HPC meeting on January 11, 2022, at 3 p.m.

With no other proposed changes to the agenda, Member Watkins made a motion, seconded by Vice-Chair Bond, to approve the agenda as amended.

Vote: Aye – All

Nay – None

The motion passed.

Approval of Meeting Minutes

Vice-Chair Bond made a motion, seconded by Member Watkins, to approve the December 7, 2021 meeting minutes as amended with the following changes: On packet page eight in the fifth paragraph, the fourth line change the word "would" to "could"; on packet page ten in the second paragraph, first sentence, change it to read, "Member Watkins said that, generally speaking, it is common to drill into a mortar joint to affix signage, even on historic buildings"; and in the second paragraph, the second sentence, change it to read, "He said this frequently occurs in Charleston, South Carolina, so it might be useful to check with the Charleston Board of Architectural Review, to see what they would recommend for this type of work."

Vote: Aye – All

Nay – None

The motion passed.

Public Comment

No individuals requested the opportunity to speak during public comment.

Cultural Resources Loom Discussion

Chair Plaag noted that the HPC requested more information on the loom at their last meeting. He said there is a memo in the meeting packet by Member Watkins in which he summarized the information. He said the loom in the Town's possession is the type that would have been ordered and used by Penland School. He said he did not include in the memo that the loom probably did not belong to Penland School. He explained that in 2006, when the Appalachian Cultural Museum closed, Appalachian State University returned several extensive collections to various organizations. He said one of those organizations was the Appalachian School of Handicrafts. The university borrowed many objects, including a cabin for the exhibit. He noted that the loom was still in possession of Appalachian State University and did not go back to Penland School. The loom came from somewhere other than Penland School. He said local weavers used the loom in the mountains as a part of various weaving programs.

Chair Plaag asked Mr. Mark Freed, Director of Cultural Resources, if he had found information on the loom's history or origin, providing the time the cultural museum owned the loom. Mr. Freed said he did not have further details on the loom. He noted that the loom was likely not one that came directly from the Penland

School museum's collection. He said the Council wanted to know if the HPC was comfortable with the loom being given and used by Watauga County Schools. The caveat was that the Town would have the right to reclaim the loom back in the future. Mr. Freed explained there is no place to display the loom at the Jones House and does not foresee a place to display it in the near future.

Discussion ensued on making a recommendation regarding the loom. Chair Plaag explained that Council specifically asked the HPC to make a recommendation on the loom to Town Council. Since no conclusive information ties the loom specifically to a Boone resource, like the Watauga Handicrafts building or the weaving shop once located on South Depot Street, he believed the HPC would agree to share the loom with Watauga County Schools. He agreed with Mr. Freed that it would be helpful to attach a condition to the recommendation if Watauga County Schools do not have a use for it, that Town Council would have the right to reclaim the loom to the Town's possession, the Cultural Resource Department, or another department as Council sees fit. Chair Plaag welcomed putting the loom to educational use and sharing with Watauga County Schools.

Motion:

Chair Plaag made a motion, seconded by Vice-Chair Bond to recommend to Council to let the loom, that is in possession of the Town of Boone Cultural Resources Department, be shared with the Watauga County Schools for educational purposes with the caveat that the Town of Boone, specifically Council, would have the first right to reclaim the loom in the event the Watauga County Schools no longer wish to have it, and thus return it to the Cultural Resources Department or some other department as they see fit.

Vote: Aye – All

Nay – None

The motion passed.

Mr. Freed explained that the discussion on the loom began with a contact named Ms. Janelle West, who has been applying for grants to mentor local weavers. He said an art teacher is also interested in using the loom for educational purposes. He mentioned that it is exciting to move forward and have the loom up and running again. Vice-Chair Bond noted that it is great to have a teacher interested in the loom, and she agreed with the previously stated caveat. She also mentioned how the loom could be beneficial to other community organizations if the school system no longer wanted the loom. Member Watkins agreed with what was proposed for the loom.

Update on Boone 150 Plans

Discussion ensued on the January 23, 2022 Event. Chair Plaag asked Mr. Freed to give an update on the said event. Mr. Freed explained that the Town plans to host the event from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. at the Appalachian Theater on January 23. He said the Appalachian Theatre requires proof of vaccination or a negative test result within 48 hours of entering the theater. He said he is creating an invitation that will be sent to specific people. He said that all of Boone's living Mayors had been invited to the event. He noted that Mr. Rufus Edmisten and Chair Plaag had been invited to speak. He said that the Town has partnered with Digital Watauga to give handouts of digital photos of Boone, along with Boone 150 themed cupcakes.

Chair Plaag pointed out that he confirmed in the records of the state legislature that January 23, 2022, is the official 150th anniversary of the incorporation of the Town of Boone. He asked Mr. Freed if this was an invitation type of event, in which Mr. Freed explained that there are a limited number of people allowed inside the theater. Mr. Freed said that Ms. Lane Moody, Downtown Boone Development Coordinator, through the Downtown Boone Development Newsletter invited people to stop by between 2:30 p.m. and 4 p.m. He believed some people would not likely stay for the whole two-hour event. He said they are looking for volunteers to help with the said event.

He explained that weather dependent, there might be a table at Town Hall to give calendars and stickers for those unable to come inside to participate. He said that throughout 2022, there would be other open, outdoor events for the public to participate in.

Discussion ensued on the Boone 150 Public Art Proposal. Chair Plaag explained he requested to add the agenda item because, to his understanding, the next agenda item was for the historical markers on North Depot Street being discussed as public art. Mr. Freed explained that two different Depot Street topics would be coming before the HPC for their review. He said one of the topics is prepared, and it is on this meeting agenda item under Consultation of the North Depot Street Historical Marker – Boone 150. He said the other topic is not currently prepared to be presented to the HPC at this meeting, and it is the topic referred to as a public art piece. He said that the said public art piece is regarding a mural on the door of the Mast General Store located on North Depot Street. The Watauga Arts Council is also involved in the project. He said it had been discussed that the mural on these doors would be dedicated to the Junaluska Community. He said there would be more information forthcoming on the said mural. Chair Plaag confirmed that the HPC will need to consider the proposed mural from a design standard perspective in the future.

Discussion ensued on the Boone Cemetery Project. Chair Plaag said that he and Mr. Freed conversed with Mr. Trent Margrif from the Town of Boone Cultural Resources Board on the Boone Cemetery Project and Walking Tour Project topics. Chair Plaag pointed out that the HPC had previously discussed different approaches to increasing public awareness of Town cemeteries and some of the stories of those buried there. He noted that they had proposed possible lantern-guided tours in previous discussions. He said these tours would potentially have people dressed in costumes as individuals buried there. He said an alternative approach would be a docent-oriented tour, where people would still be led to particular gravesites. He said there could also be a scripted docent-guided tour, perhaps at night or during the day. He said that it could be arranged to talk about specific people chronologically. He said that the focus could be a particular period involving key people in this type of arrangement, such as the 1920s. He said Mr. Freed, Mr. Margrif, and himself previously discussed the costumed approach and identified some issues with it. Mr. Freed noted that he did not know of any theater groups that might want to take on this type of approach. Mr. Freed stated that a cemetery is considered hallowed ground, and organizing a theatrical presentation may not be considered appropriate by everybody in the community. He said that the latter approach is out of his wheelhouse and scope of knowledge for something he could organize for the Boone 150 events. He said we could potentially organize guided tours and docent-style tours like Chair Plaag referred to in this meeting.

Vice-Chair Bond said she thought the docent-type tours would be an easy approach and could lead to other special things. She discussed possibly having something more theatrical in the cemetery on Halloween night. She also talked about possibly having regular docent tours of the cemetery every other month on certain days. She noted that the said tours could be organized for each quarter of the year. She said she would like to see the theatrical group at the high school be involved in it.

Discussion ensued on walking tours. Chair Plaag voiced his concern that it previously took over an hour for tours up King Street to Water Street, down to Burrell Street, down to Howard Street, and back up Depot Street to the Watauga County Library. He said that because of the geography and the two-hour time frame for a walking tour, he did not think that many people were likely to do this type of tour.

Chair Plaag suggested doing what Mr. Freed suggested: having tours of the cemetery on First Fridays. He said in October that the tours could be done on all four Fridays. Chair Plaag said he thought that volunteers could easily cover five or six people at various places in the cemetery in about an hour. He said he thought that two docents would be needed to do shifts for the volunteer docents. Chair Plaag said he thought this suggestion was manageable.

Chair Plaag said he wants to provide the HPC members with a roster of buried people in the cemetery. He would indicate why that person might have been special where it is possible. He asked the HPC members to list whom they thought should be included on the roster, a list for the tours. He said he would begin research on the specified deceased individuals to be used in the tours following the roster. He and Vice-Chair Bond agreed that it would possibly be May or June through October that the tours would take place. Mr. Freed agreed on the timing for the tours. Mr. Freed suggested having some Downtown tours and some cemetery tours. Mr. Freed said he could help organize the tours as the HPC sees fit. Mr. Freed also suggested that the HPC invite Mr. Margrif's class to join the conversation of cemetery stories because his students have been researching the people buried there.

Discussion ensued on the HPC members getting paid a stipend for doing the tours. Chair Plaag asked the Planning Staff if he, Vice-Chair Bond, and Member Watkins decided to be docents for the tours, if there is an issue with the HPC members being paid a stipend by the Town, even though they are HPC members. Vice-Chair Bond said being a docent is a volunteer-type of activity, not paid. Chair Plaag said if he were paid, he would give the money to Digital Watauga. Council Liaison Roseman approved of the idea of Chair Plaag, Vice-Chair Bond, and Member Watkins being the docents for the tours.

Discussion ensued on the Downtown Walking Tour Programming and Marketing. Mr. Freed said he envisioned walking tours to the cemetery and Downtown Boone. He suggested having an online registration process for both tours unless the HPC wants to do something different. He noted that Mr. Trent Margrif and Mr. Ross Cooper had expressed an interest in the tours. He asked the HPC to give him other ideas for the tours, and he hoped that all of the HPC would participate in the tours if they were interested. Chair Plaag said that the Cultural Resources Department already has, in effect, an active walking tour; it is currently a self-guided tour with a script already in place. Mr. Freed said a printed version of the Historic Downtown Walking Tour has a fold-out map included. He hoped to have these tour maps to include with the calendars at the January 23rd event.

Consultation – North Depot Street Historical Marker – Boone 150

Chair Plaag pointed out to the HPC that they would not be functioning in a quasi-judicial manner for the purposes of the following conversation for this agenda item. Mr. Freed gave a presentation on the information in the memo found on packet page 19. He noted that as part of the Boone 150 Celebration, the Cultural Resources Department has talked with the Downtown Boone Development Association about installing a set of three to five informational markers focused on the history of the Town of Boone. He said he was seeking assistance from the HPC on appropriate materials, design, or other aspects that the HPC might review for the Downtown Historic District. He referred to packet pages 20 and 21 for alternate options for the markers. Mr. Freed said he was coming for consultation during the early stages of proposing signs. He said he wanted to give the HPC an idea of what he envisioned for signs.

Mr. Freed talked about the size and layout of the proposed signs, further discussing an angled-styled sign. He talked about possibly putting a sign beside the sidewalk on Depot Street across the street from Lost Providence. He said the Town is trying to beautify this bare area, and it is challenging to plant things in this specific area due to the conduit there.

Mr. Freed asked the HPC about sign materials. Chair Plaag asked Ms. Shook if there were any Unified Development Ordinance requirements that Mr. Freed needed to know regarding materials. Ms. Shook said the Town is exempt from Town requirements, except for the design guidelines, which is why Mr. Freed is making this presentation to the HPC. She clarified that the markers are historical informational markers. Chair Plaag said it was his understanding that the images presented are not the same as the Boone Historical Marker Program that the HPC makes marker recommendations for, such as the Junaluska Historical Marker. Ms. Shook said that she did not see

there being UDO issues. She said that the HPC just giving Mr. Freed guidance on the markers presented would be appropriate.

Chair Plaag referred to page 100 of the Downtown Boone Design Standards, the section titled Design Standards for Historic Streetscapes, Landscapes, Monuments, and Other Resources in the District. He said his interpretation of this section falls more in line with signage. Ms. Shook agreed with Chair Plaag, and she added that interpretative signage is mentioned in Section 11.5. Chair Plaag said it might be helpful if the Council declared this area a pocket park within the Town of Boone. He said this way; there is no question that the proposed signage falls under Section 11 instead of under Section 8.

Chair Plaag expressed concern about the statement in Section 8, which states any freestanding signs have to be 40 feet apart from each other. He said he did not think there was enough area to have five signs with that distance between them. She said it could be considered a public space. It is already being utilized for the Town's demonstration of its solar project. She said there is consistent pedestrian traffic walking through this area, and the Town is deciding what to do with that space. She said the Town eventually wants to include additional signage for the solar project and landscaping. She asked the HPC if they would be comfortable considering this area as a public space. Chair Plaag and Vice-Chair Bond said they were comfortable with this area as a public space. Since this is a new process for the HPC, Chair Plaag asked Ms. Shook to ask the Town Attorney to define public space, since it is not included in the document.

Ms. Shook said that from previous conversations, she believed the Town Attorney would say that this area in question is public space. Chair Plaag noted that in preparation for a review of a Certificate of Appropriateness Application, he would like to have something from the Town Attorney and Town Staff that says it meets the definition of public space, as mentioned in Section 11. Ms. Shook said Mr. Freed would need to prepare his plan with additional guidance on the material. Chair Plaag said Mr. Freed could include that the public space currently consists of a parking lot in his COA application. There are no contributing historical resources related to the Downtown district identified in the report. Further, Chair Plaag explained that Mr. Freed could include that the signage installation does not impede or block historical elements or historic design features associated with the lot. Such signage utilizes a currently underutilized landscape area that would be beneficial to the public.

Member Watkins talked about the style of the markers. He described two major issues with the style of the signs: durability and maintenance. He mentioned that the US Park Service is more familiar with the manufacturing of these kinds of markers. He said another is the fading of the marker. He said that in the two marker examples presented to the HPC, the examples appear to be framed and unframed. He explained the markers with the external frame around them, and at a 90-degree angle, the bottom of the frame tends to accumulate debris and wet leaves. He described that the markers without the frame do not accumulate debris, and leaves wash off of them easier. He further explained that it would be worth it to seal the markers appropriately.

Chair Plaag said no specific guidelines say what the sign material should be. From his experience, he said that steel material works best for framing and supporting these types of markers. He explained his belief that the sign material should be very weather durable and have an anti-vandalism coating. He suggested contacting the US Park Service and Mr. Drew Gruber from the Civil War Trails to ask them the process for their signs. Chair Plaag indicated that he and Mr. Freed should order all of the materials for the North Depot and the Boone Cemetery markers at the same time for possible cost savings for the Town. Chair Plaag mentioned, independent of the question on the design standards that he hoped when it comes to determining the content included on the markers, that Mr. Freed would let the HPC review the historical material that is included on the markers. Mr. Freed agreed and said he hoped that the HPC would lend their expertise at that time.

Chair Plaag asked Ms. Shook if she saw any issues with the proposed marker materials. She said that she did not notice issues with the direction that the HPC has given Mr. Freed.

Update on Civil War Trails Markers/Boone Cemetery Interpretation

Chair Plaag said Mr. Gruber told him the Civil War Trails Marker program would probably not place a marker in the Boone Cemetery because people do not visit the Civil War Markers in cemeteries. Mr. Gruber further mentioned to Chair Plaag that these markers are designed to catch the eye of the public. Mr. Gruber said, on occasion, when they have placed these markers in cemeteries, it requires searching to locate the Civil War Marker.

Chair Plaag further explained that Mr. Gruber was interested in a marker on the Downtown Boone Post Office lawn to commemorate Stoneman's Raid. Chair Plaag said the James Councill House was located at the same place. He explained that the Confederate Home Guard opened fire on the Union troops coming west down King Street into Boone. He said this location is where the skirmish started and would be an excellent place to put such an interpretive marker. He believed people would stop and read the marker when they were going through Downtown Boone. He explained that the Civil War Trails Marker program often includes a highway sign indicating a Civil War Trails marker at a major crossroads. He said this could be an opportunity to direct traffic into the downtown area for those doing the Civil War Trails tour.

Additionally, he said the Civil War Trails program requires a member representative to install the marker. The current member is the Boone Tourist Development Association (TDA). Chair Plaag mentioned if it is appropriate to include additional memberships in Watauga County to facilitate this interpretive programming through the TDA.

Chair Plaag concluded that in regard to the Boone Cemetery, if any interpretative markers are done, it will be up to the HPC, and there are a few other HPC projects ahead of the Boone Cemetery marker.

Discussion ensued on placing a Civil War Trails marker on a historic landmark. Since Downtown Boone and the Downtown Post Office are in the historic district, Ms. Shook asked if a COA was needed to put a marker on a historical landmark. Chair Plaag agreed that this situation would definitely require a COA. Since the post office is a public space, he thought it would correspond to Section 11. He asked that since there is a historic resource there, could a marker be placed that does not block historical views or disrupt the sense of historicity with the post office. Ms. Shook wondered if the marker would get lost in the historic nature of the post office. Chair Plaag suggested putting the Civil War Trails marker on Queen Street rather than King Street and possibly placing it on the island on Queen Street, a public space. He suggested the marker facing the back of the post office, which is the location of the former James Councill House at the back of the post office lot. Ms. Shook said a new sidewalk would be installed, which could be another option for the marker placement.

Member Watkins said he is vigorously opposed to putting a said marker in front of the Downtown Boone Post Office. He expressed his concerns about maintaining the integrity of the post office. Vice-Chair Bond agreed with Member Watkins about the placement of the marker. Chair Plaag said there is consensus on the Downtown Boone Post Office lawn not being the best location for the marker.

Chair Plaag also suggested placing the Civil War Trails marker on Depot Street with the informational markers that Mr. Freed proposed.

Ms. Shook suggested having the Town of Boone GIS Department create a map indicating the current historic landmarks and historical markers. She said this information would illustrate if landmarks and markers are located

in close proximity to one another and assist the HPC in identifying future areas. Chair Plaag agreed the map would be helpful, and he noted that it could be updated.

HPC Quasi-Judicial Rules of Procedure Update

Ms. Shook explained that she had talked with Ms. Allison Meade, Town Attorney, and they reviewed the final draft of the proposed Quasi-Judicial Historic Preservation Commission Rules of Procedure. She said that Ms. Meade had three proposed changes that needed to be discussed with the HPC.

Ms. Shook said the first change was about how long the meetings last, so all participating know what to expect. Ms. Shook said that Ms. Meade suggested that since the HPC meetings start at 6 p.m., the HPC might consider saying three hours for their meetings, from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. Ms. Shook said the Board of Adjustment meetings starts at 5:30 p.m. They usually go for three and one-half hours.

Ms. Shook said the second change is the role of the Town Attorney at hearings. Ms. Meade suggested removing the second paragraph and adding something similar at the end of the first paragraph, which is taken from the last sentence of the second paragraph. The discussed sentence reads, "Alternatively, an independent Counsel may be retained to advise the HPC." She said Ms. Meade wanted it to be clear that the Town could retain independent counsel as necessary.

Ms. Shook said the third change is revising the public records request language. She explained changing the statement of "members of the public who wish to examine" the information since Staff does not make individuals go to the Town Clerk to examine the requested information. She said if people do not want copies of the documents, then Staff might decide to use a public records request; however, she explained that such requests are filled in the office. Ms. Shook said she revised this language to make it more clear.

Ms. Shook said that she would send the revised changes to the said Rules of Procedure to the HPC.

Chair Plaag said, as previously discussed, he would like to table this agenda item for further discussion at the January 11, 2022 HPC meeting.

Motion and Vote:

Vice-Chair Bond made a motion, seconded by Member Watkins, to table the Quasi-Judicial Historic Preservation Commission Rules of Procedure agenda item to the January 11, 2022, Special Historic Preservation Commission meeting via WebEx, a video conferencing software.

Vote: Aye - All

Nay – None

The motion passed.

Update on Cemetery Mapping Project

Chair Plaag said that the Town put the press release on the website. He mentioned the press release states the Town is engaged in an effort to inventory the cemeteries located in the Town of Boone. He asked the Planning Staff if they had received any additional feedback about the cemeteries. Ms. Jessica Mitchell, the Long-Range/Special Projects Planner, said she received one additional submission on December 15, 2021. She said it was for the Clarissa Hill Cemetery at 127 Wyn Way. Chair Plaag explained that the cemetery is not in the Town's jurisdiction because the location is near the Hwy 105 Bypass. Ms. Mitchell said she would research it. Chair Plaag noted that Ms. Roberta Jackson, who had submitted the information, may have misunderstood the address question, and the cemetery referred to in the submission is not located at 127 Wyn Way. Chair Plaag explained that the Clarissa Hill Cemetery location near the Westview Heights area is outside the Town's jurisdiction. Ms.

Mitchell stated additional information submitted included the Junaluska Community as the cemetery owner. Chair Plaag asked Ms. Mitchell to contact Ms. Jackson and thank her for submitting the information. He requested that Ms. Jackson also be told that the cemetery is not in the Town's jurisdiction and, unfortunately, the HPC cannot address it.

Chair Plaag said that since the press release was posted on the Town's website in November of 2021, he suggested waiting until the end of January for any other submissions. Then, Chair Plaag asked if, at that time, would Planning Staff make a list of known cemeteries based on the information that Mr. Chris Miller, GIS Specialist, provided and any other information available regarding the cemeteries. He proposed to have this list by the HPC meeting on February 1, 2022, and it was clarified that the press release was posted on December 3, 2021. Chair Plaag noted that the end of January would still be enough time to wait on other submissions.

Ms. Shook asked the HPC if the goal for the website is to include the current cemetery map, with an update for additional cemeteries submitted, and to leave available the option to submit information. Chair Plaag noted it would be helpful to provide Council with a listing of the properties with a thumbnail map that shows where each cemetery is located. He also suggested including on the list of cemetery properties those not in Town. He noted that the Clarissa Hill Cemetery would be good example for outside the Town Limits. He requested that the Planning Staff produce the list by the February 1, 2022 HPC meeting. He also said that the HPC would make a formal recommendation to Council on the cemetery information at the same meeting.

Update on Cemetery Designation/Interpretation Guidelines

Chair Plaag mentioned he presented the guidelines to Council at the December 2021 meeting, and Council adopted them. He noted that these guidelines are currently in effect as a guiding document.

Update on Hayes-Bryan-Greene Cemetery Marker

Ms. Mitchell mentioned that the action request had been sent to Council for the Hayes-Bryan-Greene Cemetery Marker on their January 12, 2022 meeting agenda. Chair Plaag asked Vice-Chair Bond and Member Watkins if they were going to attend the Council meeting. They both indicated that they were not attending said Council meeting.

Chair Plaag asked for a motion to authorize him to speak at the January 12, 2022, Council meeting on the Hayes-Bryan-Greene Cemetery Historical Marker Report. He said this authorization is for him to talk solely about the marker and no other issues.

Motion and Vote:

Member Watkins made a motion, seconded by Vice-Chair Bond, to authorize Chair Plaag to speak on behalf of the Historic Preservation Commission at January 12, 2022, Council meeting regarding the Hayes-Bryan-Greene Cemetery Historical Marker Report.

Vote: Aye - All

Nay – None

The motion passed.

Chair Plaag noted at the last HPC meeting that Ms. Shook had suggested the second location for the said marker near the corner of North Water Street and Queen Street. He further suggested the end of the parking island on the east side of that intersection, which is Town-owned property. He said this possible third location would not require permission from Watauga County. He said this might be a more visible area than the other corner and that the HPC did not vote on this suggested location. Vice-Chair Bond agreed with the possible third location for the said marker. He asked for a recommendation, motion, and vote for the HPC for this possible third location.

Motion and Vote:

Vice-Chair Bond made a motion, seconded by Member Watkins, to recommend the third location for the Hayes-Bryan-Greene Historical Marker placement. Chair Plaag suggested that it possibly be placed at the end of the parking island on the east side of the North Water Street and Queen Street intersection, owned by the Town of Boone.

Vote: Aye - All

Nay – None

The motion passed.

Direction from Council regarding Potential Designation of Hayes-Bryan-Greene Cemetery

Chair Plaag said he asked for direction from the Council regarding the potential designation of the Hayes-Bryan-Greene Cemetery. He also asked Council for guidance on whether they wanted the HPC to recommend the designation and/or the acquisition of the said cemetery. He believed that Council was not interested in acquiring the cemetery at this time. He further explained that Council was interested in the HPC making a recommendation for the cemetery's designation. He said he could work on a designation report for the cemetery.

Ms. Shook asked if the discussion is also regarding local historic landmark status for said cemetery, and Chair Plaag agreed. Ms. Shook said we need to ensure the landmark is included in the cemetery report. She talked about the possible confusion in the office when there is no property owner identified for a property. She asked how would landmark status be enforced on a property without the owner being identified. She said she does not know whom to hold responsible and who needs to get permits. Chair Plaag noted that this is an excellent question for Ms. Meade. Chair Plaag agreed that it is challenging for a Town to designate a local landmark with no known property owner for that parcel. He said his personal recommendation, as a preservationist, is you always want the property owner of the historic landmark to be cooperative throughout the process.

Chair Plaag suggested the easiest fix to the said cemetery is the Town acquire the abandoned cemetery and then have it designated, as Council has already stated because it would be easier to designate then. He explained his understanding that the Town was not eager to take on another maintenance project, and the cemetery is a maintenance and a liability issue. Ms. Shook talked about the standards needed for cemeteries, and standards are needed before the designation report is written. She noted that she would discuss this topic with Ms. Meade immediately. Chair Plaag confirmed that the HPC would wait until they get direction before an assignment would be made to write the designation report. Ms. Shook agreed with Chair Plaag on said topic.

Council's Store Historical Marker

Chair Plaag suggested tabling this agenda item to the Tuesday, January 11, 2022 HPC meeting. It was the consensus of the HPC to table said agenda item.

Watauga County Jail Designation Report

Chair Plaag suggested moving this agenda item to the February 1, 2022 HPC meeting. It was the consensus of the HPC to move said agenda item.

Review of Town Streets Project

Chair Plaag presented the Howard Street Report and asked the HPC for their feedback on the said report. There were no proposed changes to the report. He asked the HPC for a recommendation to send the report to Council for their approval.

Motion and Vote:

Member Watkins made a motion, seconded by Vice-Chair Bond, to recommend that the Howard Street Report be sent to Council for their approval.

Vote: Aye - All

Nay – None

The motion passed.

Chair Plaag said that he would have the Depot Street report ready to be reviewed by the HPC at their January 11, 2021 HPC meeting.

Vice-Chair Bond left the meeting at approximately 8:27 p.m.

Update on CLG Application

Ms. Mitchell gave a brief update that she and Ms. Turner had contacted the SHPO regarding the activities list for past activities. She received information that the activities could be from the last year, and considering COVID-19's impacts possible lack of activities; it is recommended to include any reoccurring activities over the last few years.

She said that she has started editing the list of activities, and she will have them ready for the HPC to review in February or March.

Ms. Mitchell said the resume document is ready to be sent out to the HPC. Chair Plaag asked Ms. Mitchell to send the said document to the HPC members using the current roster, including former Council Liaison Rennie Brantz. He has applied for the open seat on the HPC pending Council review. Ms. Shook agreed with Chair Plaag's direction for Ms. Mitchell to send out the resume document. Chair Plaag asked the HPC to submit their completed resume document back to Planning Staff by their February 1, 2022 meeting. He explained that this deadline would allow Planning Staff to compile the information and finalize it by the March 2022 HPC meeting.

Ms. Mitchell reported that she and Ms. Turner have been compiling other information for landmark reports and the historic district design standards.

Other Discussion

Ms. Shook explained the new Council meeting schedule. She said the Council meetings are now on the second and fourth Wednesday of the month, with the first Council meeting of the month held in the morning and the second Council meeting held in the evening. She explained, based on previous HPC meetings with consultations, that there might be a need to have two HPC meetings a month. She said one of the meetings could be for talks and other quasi-judicial, COA agenda cases. She asked the HPC to consider having a second meeting. She believed the HPC would run out of time to cover every agenda item in one meeting. She confirmed five COA cases on the HPC's meeting agenda for February 1, 2022. Chair Plaag suggested adding this topic to the January 11, 2022 meeting agenda for discussion.

Chair Plaag suggested that the HPC talk about the following agenda items at their January 11, 2022 meeting: Quasi-Judicial Historic Preservation Commission Rules of Procedure, Discussion of Meeting Times, the Council Store Historical Marker, and Depot Street Town Streets Report.

Ms. Shook informed the HPC that in December of 2021 Town Council discussed whether to resume in-person meetings. She said they decided not to take action in December, and this topic is on the Council's agenda for January of 2022.

Chair Plaa said, for the record, he is somewhat concerned about in person-in meetings because he has several friends and colleagues who are double vaccinated with booster shots but who are, nevertheless, contracting Omicron. He expressed his concerns about this and asked if it would be helpful to postpone returning to in-person meetings after the winter season to increase ventilation of spaces.

Adjournment

Chair Plaa adjourned the meeting at 8:39 p.m.

Eric Plaa, Chair

Marlene Crosby, Board Secretary