

**TOWN OF BOONE
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
JANUARY 14, 2020
3:00 PM**

Historic Preservation Commission Members in Attendance: Chairperson Eric Plaag, Vice-Chairperson Phoebe Pollitt, Teresa Pearman, Bettie Bond, Chuck Watkins, Rennie Brantz and Loretta Clawson

Town Staff in Attendance: Christy Turner-Senior Planner and Marlene Crosby-Board Secretary

Others Present: John Ward-Boone Town Manager

Call to Order

Chairperson Eric 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 3:01 p.m.

Adoption of Agenda

Member Bond suggested moving the Turner House agenda item to before the Election of Officers.

Member Brantz made a motion, seconded by Member Clawson to adopt the agenda as amended by moving the Turner House agenda item to before the Election of Officers.

Vote:

Aye – All

Nay – None

The motion passed.

Approval of Minutes

Chairperson Plaag suggested tabling the approval of the January 7, 2020 meeting minutes until the next Historic Preservation Commission meeting.

Member Brantz made a motion, seconded by Vice-Chairperson Pollitt to table the approval of the January 7, 2020 meeting minutes until the next Historic Preservation Commission meeting.

Vote:

Aye - All

Nay - None

The motion passed.

Turner House

Chairperson Plaag explained that he attended the Watauga County Commissioners meeting on Tuesday, December 17, 2019 as a local citizen. He noted one of their agenda items was the surplusing of the Turner House which is one of the multiple names that the County calls this property. He said that he read the Watauga County Commissioners meeting minutes for the last two years trying to track down information on the Turner House. He read aloud the comments that he read during the public comment session of the Watauga County Commissioners meeting.

Chairperson Plaag also read aloud the email that he had sent to the Council and Town Manager on December 18, 2019 which was after the Watauga County Commissioners meeting regarding his concerns as a local citizen for the Turner House. He explained what occurred at the County meeting. He noted that he relayed the same comments to the Council at their December 2019 meeting.

Discussion ensued on the possible options for the Turner House. Mr. John Ward, Boone Town Manager noted the options for the County to give the Town the Turner House and the moving of it were not disclosed in the meetings that the Town Staff had with the County. Mr. Ward said the County had offered for the Town to purchase the Turner House for \$750,000.00 as well as the Town looking into building a parking deck. Member Brantz noted that there was discussion with the County of a joint parking deck on Depot Street but the owner did not want to sell the property.

Discussion ensued on possible parking decks. Mr. Ward talked about the potential concerns that have been discussed about possible locations for parking decks in the Downtown area. Member Watkins asked if a parking expert had been contacted and Mr. Ward noted that he believes that parking studies have been done for the Downtown area. Mr. Ward said he would research the parking studies information the Town may have to see what has already been done on parking decks. Member Brantz suggested possibly contacting a parking expert again to get new information. Mr. Ward suggested including another parking study for the Downtown area in the upcoming budget discussions.

Discussion ensued about a possible parking deck behind the Watauga County Library. Mr. Ward said that some possible issues with this proposed location might be the narrow shape of the lot and the water drainage at the back of the lot.

Chairperson Plaag noted that he does not want to see the County move forward and tear down the Turner House and then the county does their feasibility studies on a parking garage and realize the parking garage cannot be built at that location.

Mr. Ward left the meeting at approximately 3:37 p.m.

Chairperson Plaag noted that he would report back to the HPC regarding the Turner House after he attends tonight's Council meeting.

Election of Officers

Chairperson Plaag opened the floor for nominations for Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson of the Historic Preservation Commission for 2020.

Member Brantz and Vice-Chairperson Pollitt nominated Chairperson Plaag for the position of Chairperson of the Historic Preservation Commission for 2020. Chairperson Plaag accepted this nomination. There were no other nominations for the position of Chairperson.

Member Bond made a motion by acclamation, seconded by Member Brantz to approve Chairperson Plaag to continue to serve as the Chairperson of the Historic Preservation Commission for 2020.

Vote:

Aye – All

Nay – None

The motion passed.

Member Watkins nominated Vice-Chairperson Pollitt for the position of Vice-Chairperson of the Historic Preservation Commission for 2020. Vice-Chairperson Pollitt accepted this nomination. There were no other nominations for the position of Vice-Chairperson.

Member Brantz made a motion by acclamation, seconded by Member Watkins to approve Vice-Chairperson Pollitt to continue to serve as the Vice-Chairperson of the Historic Preservation Commission for 2020.

Vote:

Aye – All

Nay – None

The motion passed.

District Designation Report

Chairperson Plaag explained that he has been working on the draft District Designation Report and that he has six-pages of the draft report ready for review at this meeting (permanently on file). Chairperson Plaag read aloud the proposed text in the draft report and the proposed revised changes were included in the attached draft document outlined in red.

Chairperson Plaag suggested getting input and possibly including the input into the draft Guidelines and the draft District Designation Report before sending to the State of North Carolina for the 30-day review period. He explained that after the State gives their input the Council is permitted to proceed with designating the district. He said that part of the discussion at the Planning Retreat on this topic will be the timeline for completing the process. He explained that the draft District Designation Report will be completed by the February 2020 HPC meeting; and draft Guidelines are completed. He said that it could be possible that the Council might be able to vote on the district by April or May of 2020.

Burrell Monument

Chairperson Plaag referred to page 179 of the meeting packet that talked about the August 15, 2019 Council Minutes regarding the proposed location of the monument. He stated that Ms. Mary Moretz had requested that the Burrell monument be placed by Daniel Boone's statute on the Appalachian State University campus or near the Rivers Street house in Burrell's honor.

Discussion ensued on identifying the character of Burrell. Chairperson Plaag said the first step is to identify Burrell. He suggested asking Ms. Moretz for any records she may have on Burrell, then research could also be done on the families where Burrell lived, he said that the University of North Carolina may be a place to search on this topic as well as the US Census listing of slaves by 1840 or 1850. It was the consensus of the HPC to identify the character of Burrell. He noted that the Council has directed the HPC to do the research on Burrell.

Discussion ensued on the research of Burrell. Chairperson Plaag explained that based on his workload, he would not be able to work on the research on Burrell for at least the next six months. Vice-Chairperson Pollitt suggested asking the Junaluska Historical Association members what they know about Burrell.

Chairperson Plaag talked about the Town naming a street after Burrell without having historical documentation to back it up. He said that he feels like we should recognize the importance of Burrell as a part of the early history of Boone with the proper research. Member Bond noted that she is personally against the Burrell statue. She noted that there are other ways to honor Burrell other than the statue and she suggested a historical marker. Chairperson Plaag noted concern of creating a statue, when we may not know what Burrell looked like, if Burrell was his name.

Discussion ensued on a plan to research information on Burrell. Chairperson Plaag read the motion from the Council meeting minutes that directed the Boone Town Manager to work with Ms. Moretz to formulate a plan for a historical marker on one of the appropriate places in the Town listed earlier in this meeting. Chairperson Plaag talked about some of the things that have been done in the past on research. He suggested possibility hiring a graduate student that will need to go to the State archives, Chapel Hill and Duke University. He suggested hiring a graduate student and the Town pay for the student's lodging and meals to do the out of town research. Member Clawson asked if Ms. Moretz could add more information. Member Bond thinks Ms. Moretz has presented all of the information that she has on Burrell. Chairperson Plaag noted that there is money still available in the HPC budget, if the HPC wanted to use this money for research, the Council would need to approve it. Chairperson Plaag talked about possibly doing an exploratory stage using local resources.

Chairperson Plaag talked about beginning the research by taking the approach of asking Ms. Moretz and Ms. Brenda Council what they know about documentation such as wills and land records and other information from the Howard families, Isbel families and Daniel Boone regarding Burrell. He suggested taking the said approach and then figure out what the next

steps should be regarding the research on Burrell. Chairperson Plaag said he would report back to the HPC once he has tangible information on Burrell.

Motion and Vote:

Member Brantz made a motion, seconded by Member Clawson for the Historic Preservation Commission to allow Chairperson Plaag to write to Ms. Mary Moretz and Ms. Brenda Council and any other people that might have information on wills, land records and other documentation that might be available on Burrell.

Vote:

Aye – All

Nay – None

The motion passed.

Bryan-Hayes Cemetery

Chairperson Plaag explained that he is continuing to work on tracing the deed record back into the 1960's for the adjoining properties that make reference to the cemetery as a separate parcel. He said once we learn who owns the cemetery property, the HPC can formulate a plan to move forward on it. He suggested adding the Bryan-Hayes Cemetery as an agenda item to the February HPC meeting agenda.

Discussion ensued on the Town of Boone taking over the cemetery. Chairperson Plaag noted that a quick claim deed could be done with Council approval. Ms. Turner noted that she would locate the Council meeting minutes that talked about the Council's direction regarding the cemetery.

Other Matters by Board Members of Staff

Chairperson Plaag suggested adding the following items to the next meeting agenda: District Designation Report, Junaluska Application Marker, Burrell Monument, Bryan-Hayes Cemetery and the Turner House.

Adjournment

With no other topics to discuss, Vice-Chairperson Pollitt made a motion, seconded by Member Clawson to adjourn the meeting at 4:50 p.m.

Vote:

Aye – All

Nay – None

The motion passed.

Eric Plaag, Chairperson

Marlene Crosby, Board Secretary

REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION
FOR THE
DESIGNATION OF THE
DOWNTOWN BOONE LOCAL HISTORIC DISTRICT
BOONE, NORTH CAROLINA

DRAFT VERSION, JANUARY 14, 2020

Prepared by Dr. Eric W. Plaag

Adopted by the Boone Historic Preservation Commission

[Date]

BOONE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

Eric Plaag, Chairperson

Phoebe Pollitt, Vice Chairperson

Elizabeth B. Bond

Teresa Pearman

Charles Watkins

Rennie Brantz, Town Council Liaison

Loretta Clawson, Town Council Liaison

TOWN OF BOONE PLANNING AND INSPECTIONS DEPARTMENT

Jane Shook, Director

Christy Turner, Senior Planner

Marlene Crosby, Administrative Support Specialist

BACKGROUND

Article 2, Section 2.04.06(A)(2) of the Town of Boone Uniform Development Ordinance establishes the Boone Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) and authorizes the HPC to “recommend to the Town Council areas to be designated by Ordinance as ‘Historic Districts.’” Article 8, Sections 8.01.01(A) and (B) of the Town of Boone Uniform Development Ordinance authorize Town Council, “upon recommendation by the Historic Preservation Commission or on its own initiative” to “designate Historic Districts as overlay districts in the Town’s planning jurisdiction,” provided that “an investigation and report describing the significance of the buildings, structures, features, sites, or surroundings included in any such proposed district, and a description of the boundaries of such district, has been prepared,” and that “the North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources, acting through the State Historic Preservation Officer or his or her designee, shall have made an analysis of and recommendations concerning such report and description of proposed boundaries...within thirty calendar days after a written request for such analysis has been received by the Department of Cultural Resources.” These local procedures are enabled by the North Carolina General Statutes, Chapter 160A-400.1 through 160A-400.14.

In its 2006 Comprehensive Plan Update (Section 2.3.2 Community Character), the Boone Town Council prioritized the protection of historic and architecturally significant properties within the Town of Boone, highlighting that “the identification, restoration, and active use of structures, buildings, monuments, and neighborhoods of historic or architectural significance shall be encouraged as a means of enhancing their economic and cultural value to the planning area,” with a goal of “seek[ing] out locations of historical merit in the community, and prepar[ing] an action plan for their enhancement, rehabilitation, or relocation as may be necessary.” This plan update also noted that “the destruction of significant architectural, historic, scenic, natural, and archeological resources in the planning area shall be discouraged,” and that “new development, redevelopment, and rehabilitation of structures and sites shall occur in a manner which is consistent with the neighborhood and architectural context in the immediate area, and supportive, whenever possible, of Boone’s original community character as a High Country small town.” The Town Council also particularly noted the importance of “the preservation and improvement of downtown’s prevailing character, building setbacks, street yard environs, and landscape standards” (Section 2.1.5 Downtown), noting that “the town should create and reinforce an architectural style consistent with the original high country, small town flavor of Boone...as it existed before the growth boom of the 1970s and 1980s,” as well as underscoring that “building architecture should be consistent with Boone’s regional context in using indigenous materials whenever possible...includ[ing]...stone, brick, and wood, as opposed to glass, plastic, or other highly reflective finishes.”

Toward these ends, the Boone Town Council tasked the HPC in 2015 with undertaking a comprehensive survey of the downtown Boone area, which roughly

aligns with the present boundaries of the Boone Municipal Service District (sometimes referred to as the “MSD” or “B-1”). The Boone Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) in turn solicited the assistance of Dr. Eric Plaag of Carolina Historical Consulting, LLC, who also serves as the HPC’s chairperson, to direct the survey and supervise a team of interns who would complete the survey fieldwork. Dr. Plaag agreed to undertake this work gratis, as a courtesy to the Town of Boone. In Fall 2015, the HPC held a public information session about the forthcoming survey work, shortly after which the survey fieldwork began. In the three years that followed, comprehensive research on each of the survey-eligible properties in the MSD resulted in updated survey files for 32 properties and new survey files on another 95 resources. In addition, survey files for four other properties lying just outside the MSD were updated for the survey report, bringing the total to 131 resources evaluated by the survey team. These resources represent a diverse group of building styles and forms from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries that illustrate the many factors that have influenced the development of Boone’s historic downtown area between 1890 and 1970.

The final survey report, which was completed in December 2019 and submitted to the North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office (NC SHPO), provides a detailed analysis of these resources and those factors that shaped the development of downtown Boone. Organized around historic contexts, the report divides the period from colonial settlement to 1964 into a series of developmental stages that tell the story of how Boone’s downtown core changed over time. In addition, the final survey report made a number of long-term planning and preservation recommendations for the Town of Boone regarding the downtown area. Among them was the designation of a Local Historic District for the area roughly bounded by Queen Street to the north, Appalachian Street to the east, Rivers Street to the south, and Water/Burrell Street to the west, with an expanded area along the King Street corridor to the west as far as the former Smithey’s Department Store Building. The period of significance for the recommended district ranges from 1918 to 1964. This designation report accepts and incorporates the district-related recommendations found in the survey report.

RECOMMENDATION

The HPC reviewed this Downtown Boone Local Historic District Designation Report at its meeting on **DATE**, following public meetings held by the Boone Town Council on **DATES**. The HPC makes the following recommendations to the Boone Town Council:

1. That the Downtown Boone Local Historic District area, as outlined in the map below, be designated as a historic overlay district according to the boundary indicated in the map and described elsewhere in this report; and
2. That the Downtown Boone Local Historic District Design Guidelines, which are outlined in a separate document and are to be applied by the Boone

Historic Preservation Commission in consideration of applications for Certificates of Appropriateness, be approved as described in this report.



Map showing the boundaries of the proposed Downtown Boone Local Historic District shaded in yellow. Map by Chris Miller, 2019.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE 2006 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

As noted above, several sections of the 2006 Comprehensive Plan Update for the Town of Boone provide guidance to preserve and promote the historical significance and architecture of Boone through actions and policies of the Town. These policies are outlined in particular in the following sections, which provide justification for the creation of this historic overlay district in an effort to achieve the goals contemplated by the 2006 Comprehensive Plan Update:

2.1.5-A: A compatible design character for the downtown area, drawing upon the locality's original High Country small town features, shall be identified, reinforced, and supported to put forth a quality image and sense of place.

2.1.5-A.4: Establish specific architectural and design standards for downtown consistent with its location, setting, and various functions.

2.3.2-A: The identification, restoration, and active use of structures, buildings, monuments, and neighborhoods of historic or architectural significance shall be encouraged as a means of enhancing their economic and cultural value to the planning area.

2.3.2-A.2: Seek out locations of historical merit in the community, and prepare and action plan for their enhancement, rehabilitation, and relocation as may be necessary.

2.3.2-B: Multiple and appropriate adaptive reuse of historic resources shall be encouraged.

2.3.2-B.1 Amend development regulations to offer flexibility for restoration and active use of historic structures and other resources.

2.3.2-C: Wise development of the tourism potential of the area's architectural, historic, scenic, and natural resources shall be encouraged.

2.3.2-D: The destruction of significant architectural, historic, scenic, natural, and archaeological resources in the planning area shall be discouraged.

2.3.2-E: New development, redevelopment, and rehabilitation of structures and sites shall occur in a manner which is consistent with the neighborhood and architectural context of the immediate area, and supportive, whenever possible, of Boone's original community character as a High Country small town.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE