



**TOWN OF BOONE
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
MEETING AGENDA**

The Town of Boone Historic Preservation Commission will meet on **Tuesday, February 12, 2019 at 3:00 p.m.** in the Planning & Inspections - Upstairs Conference room located at 680 West King Street. The following items will be on the agenda:

- 1. Call to Order**
- 2. Adoption of Agenda**
- 3. Approval of Minutes**
 - January 8, 2019
- 4. Junaluska Community Marker Application Review Update**
- 5. Historic Context on Phase One Survey Report Review**
- 6. Linville River Railway 100th Anniversary Celebration Task Update**
- 7. Discussion of Turner House and Hardin House**
- 8. Other Matters by Commission Members or Staff**
 - Set Agenda for next meeting
 -
- 9. Adjournment**

**Boone Historic Preservation Commission
Meeting Minutes
January 8, 2019
3:00 p.m.**

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

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

Others Present: Ms. Roberta Jackson, Junaluska Heritage Association

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 3:02 p.m.

Adoption of Agenda

Member Pollitt made a motion, seconded by Member Brantz to accept the agenda as amended by adding a brief discussion on the Oscar and Suma Hardin house located on Water Street after the Linville River Railway agenda item as requested by Chairperson Plaag.

Discussion ensued on the houses that the hospital bought. Ms. Christy Turner, Senior Planner mentioned to the Historic Preservation Commission about the houses that the hospital bought, and there has been Bobcat-type machinery seen at these houses. She noted that a demolition permit application has not been applied for at this location. Chairperson Plaag noted that he had received a call from someone who was seriously wanting to obtain the house and move it. It was the consensus of the HPC that this topic did not need to be added to this meeting agenda.

Vote:

Aye – All
Nay – None

The motion passed.

Approval of Minutes

Member Brantz made a motion, seconded by Member Clawson to approve the December 11, 2018 meeting minutes with the following changes: On page three in the second paragraph in the second sentence change “1924” to “1918 or 1919”, on page three in the sixth paragraph at the end of the paragraph add “Mr. Eric Olson’s widow, on page five move the second paragraph which has the Motion and Vote to the end of the Linville River Railway 100th Anniversary Celebration Task Lists agenda item.

Vote:

Aye – (Bond, Brantz, Clawson, Plaag, Pollitt, Watkins)

Nay – None

Abstain – 1 (Pearman)

The motion passed.

Election of Officers

Chairperson Plaag opened the floor for nominations for Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson for 2019. He noted that self-nominations for these positions are permitted.

Member Brantz nominated Chairperson Plaag for the position of Chairperson. Chairperson Plaag accepted the nomination. Chairperson Plaag and Member Bond nominated Member Pollitt for the position of Vice-Chairperson. Member Pollitt accepted the nominations.

With no other nominations for Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson for 2019, Chairperson Plaag closed the floor for nominations.

Motion and Vote:

Member Brantz made a motion, seconded by Member Clawson to close the floor for nominations.

Vote:

Aye – All

Nay – None

The motion passed.

Motion and Vote:

Member Brantz made a motion, seconded by Member Bond to accept the nominees by acclamation.

Vote:

Aye – All

Nay – None

The motion passed.

Junaluska Community Marker Application Review

Chairperson Plaag began discussion on the draft marker application. He welcomed Ms. Roberta Jackson, member of the Junaluska Heritage Association to the meeting. She was present to answer questions on behalf of the JHA. He explained that at the last meeting the HPC reviewed the email conversation that he had with Dr. Susan Keefe regarding this agenda item. He said at the end of the previous discussion there were some details that needed more research. He said there was also discussion on individuals revising the draft marker application, but he realized

that answers were still needed and that there would not be a completed revised draft document ready for review at this meeting.

Discussion ensued on proposed changes to the draft marker application. Chairperson Plaag outlined the boundaries of the Junaluska area which he said came in three clusters. He said since that period of time there has been in-fill into that area.

Chairperson Plaag asked Ms. Roberta Jackson, Junaluska Heritage Association member what specifically should this marker commemorate. He asked Ms. Jackson if it would be received well by the JHA, if the marker described things in terms of the clusters rather than the Junaluska Community from North Street to Howards Knob. She said she did not think this would be a problem, but she would ask about it.

Discussion ensued on the origin of the Junaluska name. Ms. Jackson said she has been trying to research it this topic in the old newspapers. Member Plaag said the turnpike that was built around 1905 was called the Junaluska Turnpike. He said that he suspects that the masterminds behind the turnpike decided that Junaluska Turnpike sounded like a good name. He said the Junaluska Turnpike started at the intersection of North and Water Streets and used an existing cart path which went straight up the mountain to Wyn Way and the geography forced them to put in switchbacks. He said the turnpike was built to make a more direct route to Boone by the Junaluska Turnpike Company. He said he could not find an actual dissolution of the Junaluska Turnpike Company; but it was not around long. He said around 1915 or 1916 it was written in the newspaper that there were boulders in the road too large to get over in a car. He further explained that the new Junaluska Road was located above Summit Street and the old Junaluska Road was referred to as the mountain road.

Discussion ensued on the old A & E Church located by the water tank. Chairperson Plaag noted that Dr. Keefe does not mention said church in the draft. He said it remained fairly active during the 1940's. He asked Ms. Jackson about the relationship between the churches. Ms. Jackson said she attended Sunday school at that church in the 1940's and special programs in the 1950's.

Discussion ensued on the establishing of the Methodist and Mennonite Church. Ms. Jackson said she went to the Methodist church and eventually to the Mennonite church. She said the people always got along well. She said the white Methodist people built the church for the black Methodist people.

Discussion ensued on the Little Rock Zion Church. Chairperson Plaag asked Ms. Jackson about the denomination of this church. Ms. Jackson said she would have to check on the denomination, but she thought the denomination was Baptist. She said she thought Reverend Macatan ran this church. She said the church was located on the corner of Tremont Street and Church Street.

Discussion ensued on Junaluska being a community or neighborhood. Member Bond asked Ms. Jackson, if she was comfortable with calling Junaluska a community. Ms. Jackson, she did not think that the JHA does not mind what it is called. Member Bond said she felt the word community should be used because the word neighborhood is not large enough for this area.

Discussion ensued on removing the Elk Park information out of the revised draft. It was the agreed upon by Ms. Jackson and the HPC to remove Elk Park while revising the draft.

Discussion ensued on the Mennonite Church. Vice-Chairperson Pollitt noted that she had contacted the Mennonite Conference and they referred her to the “Go Tell It on the Mountain” book to help research information on this church.

Discussion ensued on the opening of the Chocolate Bar. Chairperson Plaag said it originally opened by the 1950s.

Discussion ensued on information on Mr. Eric Olsen. Member Bond asked Ms. Kit Olsen about this information and she told Member Bond that she turned his information over to the Appalachian State University, “special collections” department.

Discussion ensued on various businesses in the Junaluska Community. Vice-Chairperson Pollitt asked Ms. Jackson about what types of businesses there were in the Community. Ms. Jackson said that they sold groceries and cut hair in their homes. Chairperson Plaag added that there was a television repair business there.

Chairperson Plaag said he would keep Ms. Jackson and JHA members posted on the revising of the draft application and he will send them the revised draft application for their review, when it is completed.

Historic Context on Phase One Survey Report Review

Chairperson Plaag read the whole 13-page Historic Context draft survey report and the HPC made changes as outlined below (permanently attached).

Discussion ensued on page one in the second paragraph regarding the commemoration of the Daniel Boone Trail. Member Watkins asked Chairperson Plaag if the document should read that Mr. W.L. Bryan created the Daniel Boone Trail. Chairperson Plaag said that Mr. Bryan provided all of the research for the section from Yadkin River to the Tennessee line to the DAR. Chairperson Plaag confirmed that the DAR established the route. Member Watkins noted that the Daniel Boone Trail is the creation of Mr. Jay Hemprich.

Chairperson Plaag pointed out a change on page six in the next to the last sentence. He said his intent was for the draft language to read that, the high school students would need to focus on being disciplined in seeking specialized training to become teachers.

Chairperson Plaag on page seven in the second paragraph clarified that the Blair Hotel was wood framed.

Chairperson Plaag on page seven in the second paragraph in the first sentence changed the words “at the Critcher Hotel” to “as the Critcher Hotel”.

Chairperson Plaag noted that on page seven in the second paragraph, he needed to verify the 1870 date for the small wood-frame structure moved to the south side of King.

Discussion ensued on page 11 in the first paragraph regarding architectural styles. Chairperson Plaag asked Member Watkins if “colonial revival details” should be capitalized. Member Watkins noted that the trend is to not capitalize it.

Discussion ensued on page 11 in the second paragraph regarding the dramatically changed Linney house. Member Bond suggested making a change to this language to include the change to the house that made the front of the house that was on Queen Street the front of the house that was on King Street. Chairperson Plaag said he would include this change.

Chairperson Plaag said on page 11 in the last paragraph, he said he would remove the word “Indeed”.

Chairperson Plaag on page 12 in the second paragraph in the fourth sentence, he added the word “outliers” between significant and were.

Chairperson Plaag on page 13 in the last sentence of the second paragraph, he said he needed to change “Appalachian State Teachers College” to “Appalachian Training School”.

Chairperson Plaag said he would email to the HPC the copies of the 1905 and 1915 postcards.

It was the consensus of the HPC that the draft survey report is correct for this time period.

Chairperson Plaag said it would be interesting to know, when the Appalachian Elementary School shifted to the University campus. Ms. Turner said it could have been around 1931 because her grandmother walked to school around that time period.

Chairperson Plaag explained that at the next HPC meeting scheduled for February 12, 2019, the HPC can review the last section of the draft historic context survey report and vote on sending the draft survey report to Council for their review.

Linville River Railway 100th Anniversary Celebration Task List

Chairperson Plaag explained that Ms. Turner will send the action request for the January 2019 Council meeting for the approval of the date of the celebration. It was the consensus of the HPC to wait upon Council’s approval before they further discuss this agenda item.

Oscar and Suma Hardin House Update

Chairperson Plaag informed the HPC that Watauga County has purchased this building located on Water Street and is wanting to tear it down to build a parking lot. Member Brantz said that he wrote a letter to the County to ask them to reconsider not tearing down the said building.

Chairperson Plaag explained to the HPC that Mr. John Ward, Boone Town Manager asked him if he thought said building was historically significant. He said he shared with Mr. Ward information from the survey on whether the said house is historically significant.

Chairperson Plaag said he was also contacted by Ms. Pam Williamson as part of an email from Mr. Deron Geouque, Watauga County Town Manager and the Watauga County Commissioners. Chairperson Plaag read the email to the HPC.

Chairperson Plaag noted that he would create a draft for discussion at the next HPC meeting on the Oscar and Suma Hardin house to be passed on to the Watauga County Commissioners.

Other Matters by Commission Members or Staff

Chairperson Plaag suggested putting the following items on the next meeting agenda: Junaluska Community Marker Application Review Update, Historic Context on Phase One Survey Report Review, Linville River Railway 100th Anniversary Celebration Update and Discussion of Turner House and Hardin House.

Adjournment

Member Clawson made a motion, seconded by Member Brantz to adjourn the meeting at 5:08 p.m.

Vote:

Aye – All

Nay – None

The motion passed.

Eric Plaag, Chairperson

Marlene Crosby, Board Secretary

Historic Context

Colonial Settlement to 1918

While a complete settlement history of Watauga County is outside the scope of this narrative, it is helpful to understand the connections between the settlement of Watauga County and the decision to locate its first and only county seat at Boone. The first colonial settler in Watauga County—a man named Lewis—likely arrived about 1730. Additional settlers arrived during the Revolutionary War, including Thomas Hodges (who settled near Hodges Gap, southwest of Boone), Samuel Hix and James D. Holtsclaw (who settled near Valle Crucis), and members of the Norris family, some of whom were almost certainly Loyalists seeking to escape conflict.¹ Perhaps the Boone area's most famous early "settler" was Benjamin Howard, another Loyalist who actually lived near the Yadkin River, east of the Blue Ridge, but kept cattle in the Boone vicinity for decades and may have hid there during the Revolutionary War. Nearby Howard's Knob was named for him, with a cave located just north of the summit, where he is alleged to have lived during his time hiding out in the vicinity. A cabin once located near Boone Creek on the present-day Appalachian State University campus may have also been Howard's. This is the cabin in which Daniel Boone allegedly stayed when hunting in the area, although there is no direct evidence whatsoever to support this claim.²

Local residents have long claimed a direct association between Daniel Boone, the legendary frontiersman, and the area where a town was later incorporated in his honor in 1872. In actuality, the connection between Boone the man and Boone the town is tenuous at best. While it's likely that Boone passed through what would become Watauga County on his journey to Kentucky in 1769, and he may have hunted in the Boone vicinity in the years prior to this trip, no clear, direct evidence of his presence at what is now the Town of Boone survives.³ Instead, the connections between Daniel Boone and the town named for him appear to be the creation of a savvy marketer, Colonel William Lewis Bryan, Boone's first mayor who also played a central role in the establishment of the Daniel Boone Monument in 1912 on the site of the cabin attributed to Benjamin Howard.⁴ The following year, the commemoration of the Daniel Boone Trail with a series of historical markers

¹ Comprehensive histories of early Watauga County are scarce. Perhaps the best history remains John Preston Arthur's *History of Watauga County, North Carolina*. See Arthur, *Watauga County*, 18-19, regarding early settlers.

² Arthur, *Watauga County*, 19. Howard's daughter, Sally, would later marry Jordan Council, Sr., one of the early settlers within what are today the town limits of Boone.

³ For reference to material associated with this note, see John Preston Arthur, *History of Watauga County, North Carolina*, (Richmond: Everett Waddey Co., 1915), 38-42.

⁴ Arthur, *Watauga County*, 33-34. Bryan erected the Daniel Boone Monument in part from chimney stones of an old cabin that once stood on the original monument site, located near the "Daniel Boone with Hunting Dogs" sculpture presently located on the Appalachian State University campus. This was allegedly the Benjamin Howard cabin in which Daniel Boone may have stayed while hunting in the area. As Arthur—another booster for local "history"—noted, "Tradition has identified this spot with both Boone and Howard as fully as tradition can identify any fact or place."

encouraged travelers to pass on a route from the vicinity of the Yadkin River, east of the Blue Ridge, directly through the Town of Boone on their way to Tennessee via Trade. This, too, was a clever W. L. Bryan creation that surely helped promote tourism at Boone.⁵ In reality, evidence for the route of Daniel Boone's path through what is now Watauga County is scant, based largely on supposition and romantic sentiment.

Watauga County, for which Boone serves as the county seat, was first formed from portions of Ashe, Wilkes, Caldwell, and Yancey Counties by the state legislature in January 1849, with the first court session to be held at the home of Jordan Councill, Jr.⁶ As part of the instructions provided by the legislature, the county seat was to occupy not less than 50 acres near Howard's Knob—a gesture apparently to Councill's profound influence in the vicinity, as Councill had run a post office and general store there since at least 1823.⁷ By January 1851, there was indeed a courthouse at the village by then known as Boone, located on the site of the present Frank A. Linney House on Queen Street between Linney Street and Water Street.⁸ A map laid out circa 1850 shows the courthouse location as a much smaller “public square” in the midst of a cluster of lots apparently intended to represent the core of town and possibly the division of the original 50-acre county seat plot.⁹

This early map of Boone shows two parallel main roads—Queen Street and King Street—running roughly east-west through the concentration of lots bounded on the east by Lower Branch running under the present path of Depot Street, although no such road was planned at that time. Queen and King streets then angled toward one another, merging near the intersection with the old Yonahlossee Turnpike—present-day Appalachian Street—that ran to the southeast toward Lenoir. Local tradition frequently repeats the myth that Queen Street rather than King Street was intended to be the main street of the Boone, but this is betrayed by the north-south-oriented street on the west side of the circa 1850 map, which is divided into North

⁵ Arthur, *Watauga County*, 32-38. While technically a project sponsored by the Daughters of the American Revolution, the Daniel Boone Trail information originated with Bryan. Even Arthur's history of Watauga County was in part a Bryan creation. In a footnote on page 142 regarding the chapter on Boone, Arthur adds, “Most of the facts for this chapter were furnished by Col. And Mrs. Wm. Lewis Bryan, the oldest residents of this place.... Colonel Bryan, indeed, is almost as much the author of the work as I am myself.” Bryan, it should be noted, was also a “direct lineal descendant of a brother of Rebecca Bryan, the wife of Daniel Boone.” See Arthur, *Watauga County*, 34.

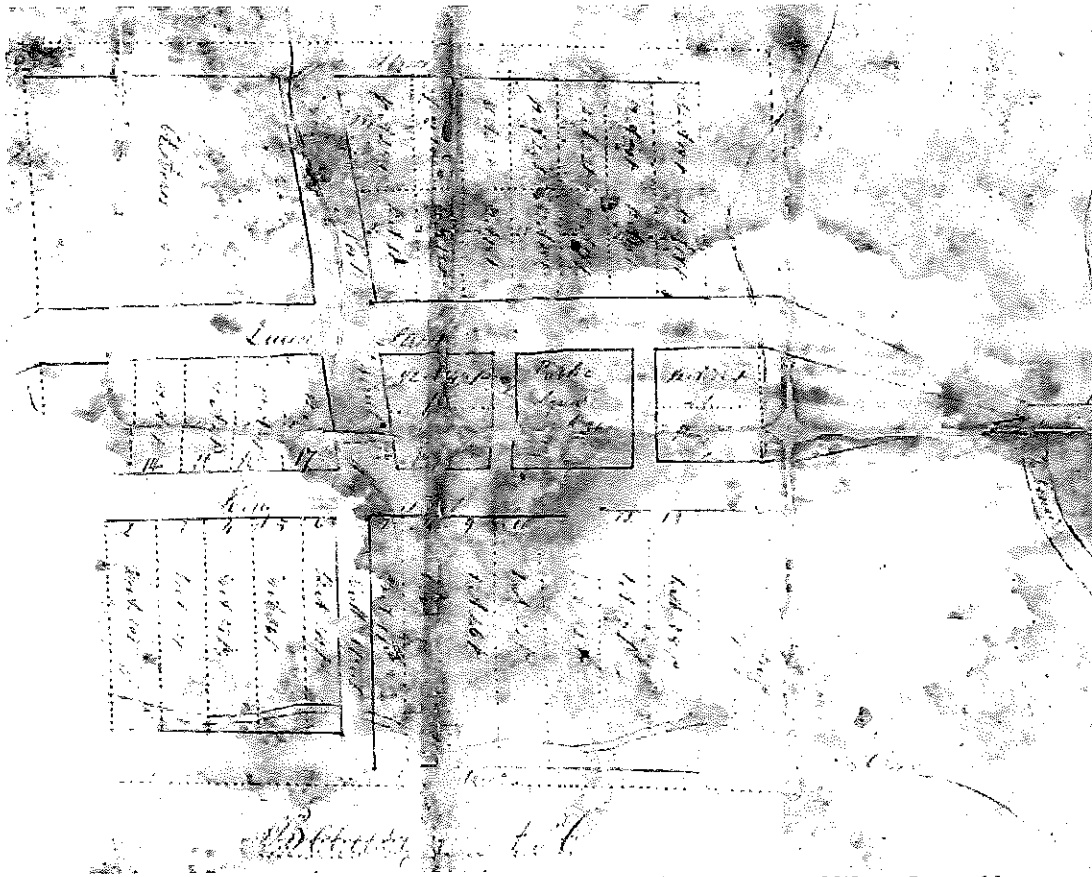
⁶ *Laws of the State of North Carolina, Passed by the General Assembly, at the Session of 1848-'49*, (Raleigh: Thomas J. Lemay, Star Office), Chapters 25 and 26, 66-72.

⁷ For an early published reference to Councill's Store as a new post office, see *Western Carolinian* (Salisbury, NC), April 27, 1824: 2. See also Post-Master General, *List of Post-Offices in the United States with the Names of the Post-Masters*, (Washington: Way and Gideon, 1923), 25.

⁸ *Laws of the State of North Carolina, Passed by the General Assembly, at the Session of 1850-'51*, (Raleigh: T. J. Lemay, State Printer), Chapter 51, 119-21. For the name change to Boone, see *United States Postal Guide and Official Advertiser*, 1:2, August 1850: 47. The exact date is frequently given as June 20, 1850, although typically without sourcing.

⁹ This map appears to be a different map from the “old map of the Town of Boone” mentioned in Arthur, *Watauga County*, 146-47, as the displayed street names are different from those reported by Arthur.

and South Streets at King Street. The southern boundary of the town lots in Boone, as shown on this map, is portrayed as a street roughly aligning with present-day Rivers Street and sometimes called "Back Street" in later records. Boone Creek is shown just north of this. The southwest portion of the map is missing, but the northwest portion suggests that the understood west boundary of Boone's town lots was near the intersection with present-day Straight Street (although no such street is shown). The north boundary of the town lots, meanwhile, was a street labeled simply as "Street" that roughly aligns with present-day North Street. Notably absent are Howard Street and Depot Street, which would not be laid out until well into the twentieth century.



Circa 1850 map of Boone with King Street running horizontally at center and Water Street (then known as North and South Streets) running vertically at left center. The Courthouse was located on the "Public Square" block located at nearly dead center of the map. Once part of the Historic Boone Collection, this rare and critically important map was removed from the collection by an unknown individual in the early 2010s and is presumed lost. Image courtesy of Historic Boone Collection, Digital Watauga Project.

From the verifiable facts on the vicinity of downtown Boone we can sketch a rough picture of its early settlement. Arthur attributes early ownership of the land between present-day Church Street and the Green Street vicinity to John and Jerry Green, with respective homes on the north side of Green Street and near the present

intersection of Grand Boulevard and Queen Street. At about the same time, Jordan Councill, Sr., had a home known as the Buck Horn Tree place, located just east of downtown Boone almost exactly opposite the present Earth Fare location on King Street (just west of the intersection with Coffey Street). The Greens later sold the west and east portions of their land to Jordan Councill, Jr., and Ransom Hayes, respectively. Probably about 1823, Jordan Councill, Jr., erected a storehouse—known as Councill's Store—on the east side of the present intersection of Grand Boulevard and King Street and a large home on the hill just above King Street, the latter a spot that would be occupied by the Daniel Boone Hotel for much of the twentieth century. Other early residents of the vicinity were Ben Munday and later Ellington Cousins, who occupied a small house in the low area south of West King Street opposite the present-day intersection with Straight Street. Additional stores and homes came in the 1850s near the intersection of Queen and Water Streets (B. J. Crawley) and in a house built by Jordan Councill, Jr., on the southeast corner of Water and West King Streets. The latter building would be the home to several early Boone residents, including Jesse McCoin, Colonel J. B. Todd, Captain J. L. Phillips, and Dr. J. G. Rivers. Additional, smaller homes—also built by Councill—were located to the rear of this house.¹⁰

One of the most significant early homes was the wood-frame James W. Councill House, which had a storeroom incorporated into the structure. Built just before the Civil War on the site of the present U. S. Post Office on King Street, this home played a prominent role as the skirmish flash point when Union troops under the command of George Stoneman entered the town in late March 1865. After firing from this house, members of the Boone Home Guard eventually vacated the property under heavy Union fire and fled toward Howard's Knob. Union troops then converted the house to a field hospital. Following the war, this house and its storeroom (occupied by future Boone mayor W. L. Bryan at the time of the skirmish) burned in 1878, at which time J. D. "Crack" Councill erected a new wood-frame home on the site.¹¹ This last home on the site stood until construction of the post office in 1938.

Surprisingly, Watauga County's courthouse somehow survived Stoneman and Kirk's occupation, but in 1873, the building burned under a cloud of suspicion regarding arson, and in the process, many of the county's early deed records that had survived Union occupation were then destroyed. Rather than rebuild on the old courthouse site, county officials instead paid Thomas J. Coffey and W. C. Coffey to erect a brick courthouse on the northwest corner of the Water Street and King Street intersection. There is some dispute about the date of this courthouse; Arthur reports 1873, with a post-construction deed transaction to clear up land ownership confusion, while Gary Boye reports 1875 (the year of the deed transfer).¹² In any

¹⁰ Arthur, *Watauga County*, 147-48.

¹¹ Arthur, *Watauga County*, 152-53.

¹² See Arthur, *Watauga County*, 126-27, and Gary Boye, "The Second (1875) Watauga County Courthouse: A Preliminary Study," Library Digital Collections, Appalachian State University, October 7, 2014, Online, <https://omeka.library.appstate.edu/collections/show/53>.

case, this move shifted county government facilities toward the west end of town, where they remain concentrated today. New courthouses would follow in 1905 and 1968 on a site on the north side of King Street, just west of the 1875 Courthouse site. W. R. Winkler later purchased the 1875 Courthouse and demolished it in October 1962.¹³

Another early Watauga County governmental building survives in Boone, however. Built in 1889 by William Stephens of Mayfield, Kentucky, using bricks kilned nearby, the Watauga County Jail (WT0067) was actually a mixed-use facility, with the jailer's family residing in the front of the building and the cells located at the rear of the building and on the second floor. This jail was actually the county's fourth, with its predecessors standing on what is currently the northwest corner of Howard and Depot Streets. The first, built of soft brick, was poorly constructed and ineffective. Elisha Green quickly replaced it with a new building of pine logs. Either Stoneman's or Kirk's men burned the first and second jails in 1865, and Jack Horton built a two-story version, also of logs. This third version can be seen in a circa 1905 image of Boone taken from the northwest. It was demolished in 1908.¹⁴

The fourth jail, located on the west side of Water Street, is easily the most interesting architecturally, reflecting prevailing domestic architectural trends in Appalachia at the time. Often described as Folk Victorian in style, the T-shaped, two-story building features a hipped roof resting on brick, common bond walls arranged in a 6 to 1 ratio of stretchers to headers. A quadruple, English bond, corbelled cornice along the east elevation adds some architectural flair, as do the brick pilasters dividing the east elevation into three bays and terminating in stunted brackets. Additional, elongated brackets frame the window openings of the second floor. While the building has seen some changes during the twentieth century—mostly involving the east elevation porch—the building retains a surprising degree of integrity and is one of the most significant buildings in the Downtown Boone area. It is the only surviving, nineteenth-century, governmental building in Watauga County.

Despite Boone's role as an unincorporated county seat in the 1850s and 1860s, little in the way of commercial development, aside from some storerooms incorporated into or built adjacent to private homes, appears to have taken place prior to the 1870s. The construction of two new hotels in 1870, however, began a pattern of integrating more formally designed commercial architecture with the scattering of homes along King Street. Boone's incorporation on January 23, 1872, certainly must have triggered some additional business interest, as well.¹⁵

¹³ *Watauga Democrat*, October 4, 1962: B1.

¹⁴ *Watauga Democrat*, June 11, 1908: 3.

¹⁵ *Private Laws of the State of North Carolina, Passed by the General Assembly at Its Session 1871-'72*, Chapter L, (Raleigh: Theo. N. Ramsay, State Printer and Binder, 1872), 81-82. The boundaries of the town limits were reduced substantially the following year. See *Public Laws and Resolutions, Together with the Private Laws, of the State of North Carolina, Passed by the General Assembly at Its Session 1872-'73*, Chapter XXXI, (Raleigh: Stone & Uzzelli, State Printers and Binders, 1873), 411-12.

In some ways, the dual-purpose nature of the Watauga County Jail is indicative of the architectural schizophrenia of the settlement patterns in Downtown Boone dating back to the nineteenth century. While Boone's early development was somewhat scattershot—not an unusual thing in small, rural communities in western North Carolina during the nineteenth century—even by 1905, Boone's downtown still showed few signs of an organized, intentional system of development. Instead, Boone featured a haphazard mix of residential and commercial construction, mostly of wood-frame construction, with many such buildings grouped together as a reflection of the ownership of the individual parcels.



Boone as it appeared circa 1905, as seen from a position to the northwest of town. Image courtesy of the Historic Boone Collection, Digital Watauga Project.

To the southeast of town, the Watauga Academy—founded in 1899 by brothers Blanford Barnard (“B. B.”) Dougherty and Dauphin Disco (“D. D.”) Dougherty with great encouragement from their father Daniel Baker (“D. B.”) Dougherty, the former postmaster, justice of the peace, and editor of the *Watauga Democrat*—remained something of an island to itself. School officials kept tight rein on the 300 or so students enrolled there in 1903, when its name officially changed to the Appalachian Training School. In these early years, Appalachian’s students were essentially high school students seeking specialized training to become teachers. It would not be until the 1920s that Appalachian shifted its focus to postsecondary teacher training, and restrictive discipline was dispensed liberally.¹⁶ As a result, the young students at Appalachian had little economic influence on activities in Downtown Boone until after 1920.

¹⁶ Pamela Price Mitchem, *Appalachian State University*, (Charleston: Arcadia Press, 2014), 8-9.

Instead, Boone remained a small county seat with few connections to the outside world in 1905, and its settlement patterns reflected that. Running west to east along King Street, the south side of the street in 1905 featured the wood-frame Manley B. Blackburn Hotel and General Store, followed just to the east by the wood-frame second Boone Methodist Church, then the wood-frame Lovill Law Office, located at the southwest corner of Water Street and King Street. A large, public fountain stood in the center of this intersection, apparently built around the same time as the 1875 Courthouse on the opposite corner. Resuming at the southeast corner of Water and King, buildings on the south side of King included the wood-frame Rivers Old Home Place (the aforementioned house built by Jordan Council, Jr., in the 1850s), the brick (first) *Watauga Democrat* office (built before the Civil War by Joseph C. Council), the wood-frame W. L. Bryan Home, the wood-log W. L. Bryan Cottage, the Blair Hotel (built by Bryan about 1870), and a small, wood-frame cottage, known variously as the Levi Hartley House or the "Yellow House," that stood near the southwest corner of Depot and King and was originally built about 1860 as a whiskey saloon.¹⁷

change?

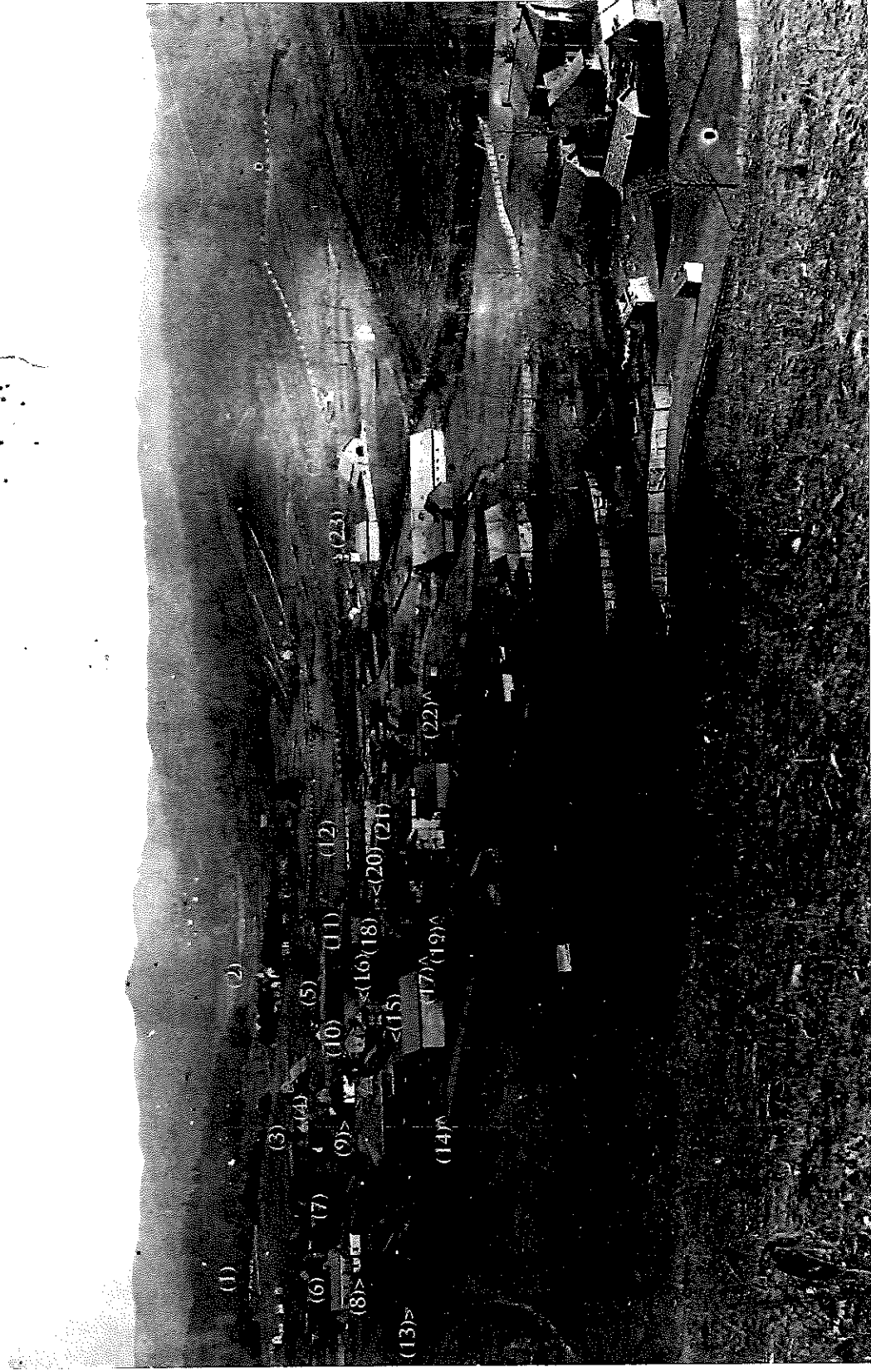
Continuing on the southeast corner of King and Depot, the wood-frame Coffey Hotel (built 1870) occupied the corner ^{AS} at the Critcher Hotel in 1905, followed by the hotel's two-story "Brick Row," which originally operated after the Civil War as a saddle and harness operation for Thomas J. Coffey and his brother, W. C. Coffey. Just east of this, D. J. Cottrell operated a store in a small, wood-frame house built by D. B. Dougherty for use as a post office and later expanded by Cottrell. Just east of this post office building was another structure with deep roots to Boone's origins. Originally located just to the southwest of the Jordan Council, Jr., House on the north side of King, probably just east of the present intersection Grand Boulevard and King Street, this building was an early version (although likely not the first) of Council's Store, the mercantile operation that served as Boone's namesake between the 1820s and 1850. The small, wood-frame structure moved to the south side of King probably in the 1870s, when D. B. Dougherty purchased the building from the Council family for use as a residence. R. M. Greene later acquired the building from Dougherty, greatly expanding the structure into the twentieth-century landmark known as the Greene Inn.¹⁸ To the east of the smaller version of the Greene residence in 1905 were the wood-frame J. C. Fletcher residence (built by L. C. Reeves) and the wood-frame St. Luke's Episcopal Church (built circa 1882), which was located near the southwest corner of King and present-day Appalachian Street.¹⁹

Verify
Date ←

¹⁷ On the Levi Hartley House, see Rob Rivers, "King Street," *Watauga Democrat*, October 12, 1961: 2, and Arthur, *Watauga County*, 149. On the Blair Hotel and the first *Watauga Democrat* building, see Arthur, *Watauga County*, 150.

¹⁸ Arthur, *Watauga County*, 151, and *Watauga Democrat*, March 18, 1954: 1.

¹⁹ See Arthur, *Watauga County*, 155-156.



Plaa—Historic Context Section, Part I, Draft, Jan 2019--8

Boone, circa 1905, labeled. Image courtesy of the Historic Boone Collection, Digital Watauga Project. Except where an arrow is indicated, numbers correspond to the structure directly beneath. Today's West King Street, then known as Main Street, runs from lower right to upper left. 1) Boone Cemetery; 2) Watauga Academy at the Appalachian Training School for Teachers; 3) E. S. Coffey House; 4) Old Episcopal Church, SW corner of Appalachian and West King (obscured behind other buildings); 5) Old Blowing Rock Highway winding through the valley (began at Appalachian Street); 6) Frank A. Linney Home before renovations; 7) J. D. "Crack" Council Home on site of present Boone Post Office; 8) J. M. and Ida Moretz House; 9) Coffey Hotel, later the Critcher Hotel, on the SE corner of present-day West King and Depot, with "Brick Row" rooms located to the east on West King; 10) Blair Hotel; 11) third Watauga County Jail, known as the "log jail," near the NW corner of today's Depot and Howard Streets; 12) Critcher Barn; 13) Sheriff Jack Horton Home, one of the first houses built in Boone; 14) 1905 Watauga County Courthouse; 15) west face of the 1874 Watauga County Courthouse, located on the NW corner of today's Water and West King Streets; 16) W. L. Bryan Home, with the old *Watauga Democrat* office obscured behind the trees to the west; 17) public well in the middle of Main Street and in front of the 1874 Courthouse; 18) Rivers Old Home Place, SE corner of today's Water and West King Streets; 19) Lovill Law Office, SW corner of today's Water and West King Streets; 20) Old Methodist Church; 21) Manley B. Blackburn Hotel and General Store; 22) fourth Watauga County Jail, today home to the Proper Restaurant; 23) Old Baptist Church, near today's River Street Ale House; 24) Old Greer Log House. Only four of these sites still stand today: Boone Cemetery, the Frank A. Linney Home (altered in 1915), the J. M. and Ida Moretz House (much altered on several occasions), and the fourth Watauga County Jail.

The north side of King Street, working west to east, offered a similarly diverse mix of buildings. Beginning just west of the 1905 Courthouse (site of the present 1968 Courthouse) was the Jack Horton home, set well back from King Street, with a storeroom located near the road. To the east was the 1905 Courthouse, followed by the 1875 Courthouse at the northwest corner of King and Water Streets, which the Watauga County Bank occupied from 1905 until 1923. Resuming across Water Street at the northeast corner of Water and King was a two-story, frame house—possibly the Spainhour and Coffey law firm building built in 1895—owned solely by E. S. Coffey in 1905.²⁰ A bit further to the east was the Nathan Horton House, built about 1895 and known for much of the twentieth century as the Farthing House. Just to the east of the Horton house was the Moretz and Farthing Store, completed in 1899. Jennie Coffey purchased the building in 1915 and ran a hat shop, school supply, and variety store there for decades, despite her advanced age.²¹



Downtown Boone from the south, as it appeared in 1905. The intersection of Water and King Streets is at center. Image courtesy of the Bobby Brendell Postcard Collection, Digital Watauga Project.

J. M. Moretz, one of the owners of the Moretz and Farthing Store, also owned the J. M. and Ida Moretz House located just above the store (WT0810). Built in 1897, the

²⁰ *Watauga Democrat*, November 21, 1895: 3.

²¹ Rob Rivers, "King Street," *Watauga Democrat*, August 25, 1955: 4, and "Thirty-Nine Years Ago," *Watauga Democrat*, April 1, 1954: 4. Rivers incorrectly asserts that the store was built in 1896. For coverage of the construction of the Moretz and Farthing Store see *Watauga Democrat*, September 22, 1898: 3; *Watauga Democrat*, March 23, 1899: 3; and *Watauga Democrat*, July 6, 1899: 3.

house is visible in a 1905 postcard as a T-shaped dwelling with a front gable facing King Street and a side gable facing east and exhibits some colonial revival details. Sometime between 1905 and 1915, Moretz dramatically altered the house, creating a one and a half-story home on the current footprint that featured a wide dormer along the second floor of its south elevation. The house was dramatically altered again in 1955 in order to convert the house into apartments—its current use. Despite these changes, the bones of the house represent one of the oldest surviving domestic buildings in Downtown Boone.

Just east of the Moretz house is an even older residential structure, the Frank A. Linney House (WT0582). Like the Moretz House, the Linney House started out as a substantially smaller, one and a half-story, four-bay, front-gabled wood-frame residence facing Queen Street and a one and a half-story L, perhaps with a south-facing dormer. It was built by R. L. Council in 1894. Linney purchased the house in 1902 and substantially altered the house in 1915, adding two rooms to the front of the house as well as a center hall and a dramatically expanded second floor. At this time, contractors E. G. Farthing and Joe C. Hodges also incorporated numerous Craftsman and Queen Anne elements into the house, creating its current appearance. The house was designated as a Local Historic Landmark in 2017.

change

In 1905, this Linney House parcel also included an oddity—an outparcel at the southeast corner of the property that may have still contained the old Spainhour Law Office building, a small frame structure erected about 1891. J. C. Fletcher briefly kept his law office here after the new Spainhour and Coffey building was constructed to the west in 1895.²² This outparcel became a source of legal intrigue in 1905, but Linney eventually acquired the parcel in early 1906 and presumably removed the law building at that time.²³

Moving further to the east in 1905, the block between Linney Street and what would later become Depot Street was the grounds for the J. D. “Crack” Council House, previously described. A rough cart path occupied the area where North Depot Street now passes, with vacant land owned by W. B. and Elizabeth Council located just to the east of this cart path. Dr. J. W. Jones would not acquire this land for the construction of his home (WT0008) until 1906, and Jones didn’t complete the house until 1908.²⁴ Several years later, in 1914, Jones also built a one-story frame building on the present site of the Mast General Store (WT0591), which he used as his doctor’s offices until 1922.

~~Indeed,~~ the next building to the east of the J. D. Council House in 1905 was the old Jordan Council, Jr., House, originally built circa 1840. Occupied by W. B. Council and his wife Elizabeth in 1905, this house had long stood as a landmark to Boone’s

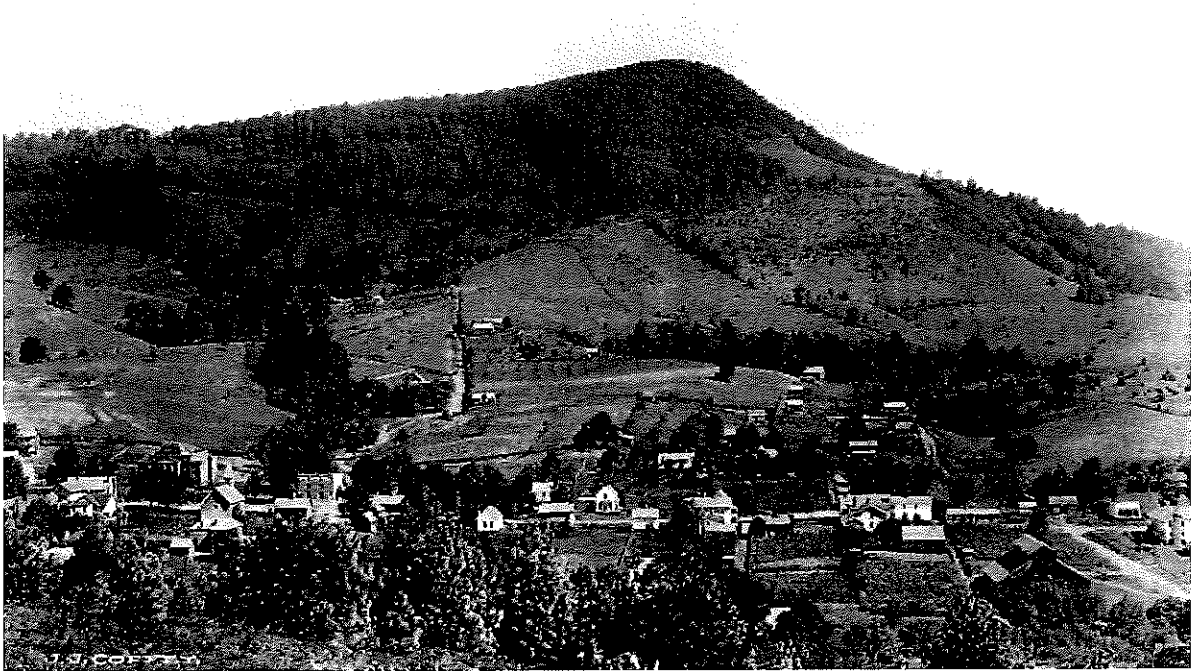
²² *Watauga Democrat*, April 18, 1895: 3.

²³ Eric Plaag and Paul Fuller, “Frank A. Linney House and Former Linney Law Office, Local Landmark Designation Report,” May 2017, 14-15.

²⁴ *Watauga Democrat*, January 11, 1906: 3; *Watauga Democrat*, October 22, 1908: 3.

origins. Local businessmen demolished this house in September 1924 to make way for the Daniel Boone Hotel.²⁵

Aside from these enumerated buildings, few other structures contributed to the “downtown” core of the community known as Boone in 1905. South of King Street, the primary, dominating structure was the Murray Critcher Barn, located just south of what would become Howard Street and just west of what would be Depot Street. It essentially served as a stable for the horses of guests at the Critcher Hotel. A few other, smaller barns and outbuildings dotted the landscape south of King Street, but most were in service to the buildings already described. Perhaps the most significant ^{outliers} were a large, county barn, located near the northwest corner of the present-day intersection of Water Street and Rivers Street, and the first iteration of the Boone Baptist Church, located on the south side of the present-day intersection of Rivers Street and Moretz Drive. North of Queen Street, just opposite the Linney House, was an old Masonic Lodge that was regarded as derelict and past its prime even then.



Downtown Boone as seen from the south in 1915. The intersection at far right is Depot and King, with Dr. Jones’s new offices on the northeast corner. Image courtesy of the Bobby Brendell Collection, Digital Watauga Project.

The period between 1905 and 1918 brought few dramatic changes to the landscape of Downtown Boone, most of which have already been mentioned (the Jones House, Dr. Jones’s new offices, the demolition of the third county jail). Perhaps the most significant was the construction of a one-story, front-gabled, wood-frame building

²⁵ *Watauga Democrat*, September 25, 1924: 1.

on the south side of King Street between the Middle Branch and the Rivers House about 1915. This building served until the early 1920s as Boone's Post Office.

As World War I came to an end, Boone remained a sleepy county seat often cut off from the rest of the state by poor roads and a general lack of transportation infrastructure. In the years to come, however, Boone would transform into a bustling commercial center with a new boom in construction. This transformation was possible primarily because of two factors: 1) rapid population growth spurred by the expansion of the Watauga Academy into the Appalachian State Teacher's Training School into the College, and 2) the arrival of the Linville River Railway. App State Teachers College