

**Boone Historic Preservation Commission
Meeting Minutes
February 12, 2019
3:00 p.m.**

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

Town Staff in Attendance: Jane Shook-Director of Planning and Inspections and Marlene Crosby-Board Secretary

Others Present: Lane Weiss-Downtown Boone Development Coordinator, Deron Geouque-Watauga County Manager and Dave Spliceland from Appalachian State University

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 3:00 p.m.

Adoption of Agenda

Member Clawson made a motion, seconded by Member Brantz to approve the agenda as amended with Chairperson Plaag requesting to add two agenda items after the approval of minutes which were a Downtown Boone Development Association Update and an Update on the Fire Station. Chairperson Plaag suggested moving agenda item number seven Discussion of Turner House and Hardin House to agenda item number four on the agenda and moving agenda item six Linville River Railway 100th Anniversary Celebration Task Update to agenda item five.

Vote:

Aye – All
Nay – None

The motion passed.

Approval of Minutes

Member Pearman made a motion, seconded by Member Brantz to accept the January 8, 2019 minutes as written with the following corrections. Chairperson Plaag pointed out the following corrections: on page three in the third full paragraph in the second sentence remove the word “it” after research, in the fourth paragraph in the first line change the name of the church from “A & E” to “AME”, on page four in the first paragraph and second sentence remove the word “the” after It was, and on page four under Historic Context on Phase One Survey Report Review in the second paragraph in the last line change “Jay Hemprich” to “J Hampton Rich”.

Vote:

Aye – (Bond, Brantz, Clawson, Plaag, Pollitt, Watkins)
Nay – None
Abstain – 1 (Pearman)

The motion passed.

Downtown Boone Development Association Update

Ms. Lane Weiss, Downtown Boone Development Coordinator explained that the DBDA has been working on a new brand, logo and tagline for Downtown Boone and their work on this topic was completed this week. Ms. Weiss showed the Historic Preservation Commission members the photos of the logo that will be placed on the mural (permanently attached). She said the Town of Boone has received approval from the property owner to place a logo-type panel on the side of the building where Anna Bananas is located on the corner of W. King Street and South Depot Street. She said an anonymous person has offered to underwrite the cost of the placement of the logo as a donation to the Town of Boone. She said the logo would not be placed on wood because the building is located in the central fire district.

Ms. Weiss asked the HPC members if they had any concerns regarding the placement of the said mural. Chairperson Plaag strongly suggested having the logo trademarked. Member Watkins suggested putting an anti-graffiti coating over the mural, when it is put on the building.

Discussion ensued on the words “Live it Up” found in the logo for the mural. Ms. Weiss explained that the DBDA decided to keep the comma after the 3,333 and remove the apostrophe in the logo.

Fire Station Update

Chairperson Plaag said that Mr. John Ward, Boone Town Manager asked that Chairperson Plaag ask the HPC members to discuss a maintenance issue at the Downtown Boone Fire Station at this HPC meeting. Chairperson Plaag informed the HPC members that the arcade was not installed properly at the covered walkway between the Fire Station and the Eggers, Eggers, Eggers, and Eggers Law Firm building on W. King Street. Chairperson Plaag noted that it is very expensive to repair it in its current configuration. Chairperson Plaag said that Mr. Ward wanted to know the opinion of the HPC members on completely removing the arcade and expanding the streetscaping to this area. Chairperson Plaag said there would need to be discussion with the Eggers, Eggers, Eggers and Eggers Law Firm owners on putting an appropriate awning on the front of their building. Chairperson Plaag noted that this topic can be added to the next HPC meeting agenda as an action item. Chairperson Plaag said he would locate the old Newton Department Store historical images so the HPC can review the original look of this building. He said this would be helpful in making a possible recommendation at the next meeting on this topic.

Discussion of Turner and Hardin House

Chairperson Plaag introduced Mr. Deron Geouque, Watauga County Manager to the HPC members. Chairperson Plaag noted that Mr. Geouque was at the HPC meeting representing the Watauga County Commissioners for this agenda item.

Chairperson Plaag said at a previous meeting he had responded to an email that he had received as a private citizen and an email from Mr. Ward regarding this agenda item. Chairperson Plaag said that he shared the description that was in the survey update from 2002, WT0056 Oscar and Suma Hardin House (1926) located at 136 North Water Street. Chairperson Plaag explained that he had prepared a more-lengthy description of the said property and handed out a copy of said description (permanently attached). For the record, Chairperson Plaag read aloud the said description of property.

Chairperson Plaag noted that the application of aluminum or vinyl siding is not historically appropriate to be used on a property. He also noted that this type of siding is usually reversible.

Chairperson Plaag pointed out that Judge Ginn had tried to pursue a National Register illegibility, if not a National Register listing to make the property eligibility for tax credits.

Discussion ensued on the cost of restoring this property back to its original historic state. Member Brantz asked how much it might cost to restore this property back to its original historic state. Chairperson Plaag said the defining architectural features could be restored and he pointed out that the aluminum siding could be removed from a building. Chairperson Plaag declined to quote a range on the costs.

Member Watkins asked who currently owns the building. Mr. Deron Geouque, Watauga County Manager explained that the County purchased the property from Mr. Phil Ginn. Mr. Geouque said after the County purchased the property, they sold it to Mr. John Turner. Mr. Geouque noted that Watauga County has since purchased the property back from Mr. Turner. Mr. Geouque further explained that the reason the County purchased the property from Mr. Ginn was to try to build a parking deck to create more parking, when the County's plan to build a parking deck fell through on the property behind the courthouse. Mr. Geouque explained that currently the County does not have enough parking and if they cannot locate more parking, they may have to relocate the courthouse.

Member Brantz asked Mr. Geouque, why they are not able to build a parking deck. Mr. Geouque explained that they do not want to spend the county funds to build a parking deck that would not be large enough to give the amount of parking for the money they would need to spend on it.

Member Bond asked Mr. Geouque what measures are in place to keep the additional parking from becoming a student parking area. Mr. Geouque said that there would be enforcement and County parking signage in place. Member Bond said that she did not understand how this type of enforcement would stop student parking from re-occurring like it has happened in other areas of the Town.

Member Watkins confirmed with Mr. Geouque that the County wants to demolish a historic structure to create a County parking lot. Mr. Geouque said yes for all practical purposes. Member Brantz asked if it was possible to sell the property to the Town or another person to preserve the historic structure and the County locate parking elsewhere. Mr. Geouque said as long as the parking is fairly close to the courthouse. Mr. Geouque explained that the long-term plans of the County are to move all county operations offices over to the Watauga County

Human Services Department property located off the Poplar Grove Connector. He said this would allow for the Courthouse and Administration buildings to become a judicial complex.

Discussion ensued on the Queen Street Parking Lot. Chairperson Plaag asked Ms. Shook and Mr. Geouque about the Queen Street parking lot and how many parking spaces it holds. Mr. Geouque answered this question.

Discussion ensued on a possible land swap between the County and the Town. Chairperson Plaag suggested that the County could give to the Town the Turner house in exchange for a plot of land where the Queen Street lot is currently located along with an agreement to free up the parking spaces along Queen Street so the Town can use them again. He said the County could gain possibly 150 parking spaces by excavating to the Queen Street level. He said the County would be giving up approximately 30 parking spaces along Queen Street. Chairperson Plaag pointed out that in a land swap as he described it could create parking for the County and preserve the historic Turner house for the Town. Chairperson Plaag emphasized a lot of ideas, not a negotiation.

Discussion ensued on multiple level parking structures. Member Watkins asked about the restrictions to building this type of deck. Mr. Geouque explained that when the County was proposing a parking structure at the old Jailhouse location there was one neighbor in opposition of it which was the reason for not being able to build it.

Mr. Geouque voiced the County's frustration from the past in trying to work with the Town to gain more parking spaces for the County and being denied. He further voiced his frustration of the Town working with Appalachian State University to build a parking structure after the County had in the past tried to work with the Town on locating more parking.

Discussion ensued on a possible parking structure being built on Queen Street. Mr. Geouque talked about the neighbors possibly not liking this type of structure being built there. Chairperson Plaag noted that the construction of the parking structure would most likely begin at the Queen Street level and be built into the hillside. Chairperson Plaag explained that at this time most of Queen Street is commercial or student rentals.

Chairperson Plaag asked the HPC members if they wanted to forward to Council a recommendation to preserve the historic Turner house. Member Brantz suggested the County and the Town forming a possible sub-committee to discuss working out a possible solution to parking. Chairperson Plaag supported this suggestion because of the need for parking in the Downtown area and felt it would be a great idea for a member of the HPC be part of the discussion.

Chairperson Plaag showed a digital photo of hidden parking garages. Mr. Geouque liked this idea of building parking garages.

First Motion and Vote:

Chairperson Plaag made a motion, seconded by Vice-Chairperson Pollitt that the Historic Preservation Commission recommend to the County and Town Governments to think of the

Turner house as a potential asset and recognize its potential as a historic property that could be local landmark listed and to work together cooperatively to find a solution that would essentially involve preserving the Turner house and also to open up parking spaces for the County. And to include solutions such as a possible land-swap between the County and the Town involving the Turner house property and the Queen Street parking lot.

Vote:

Aye – All

Nay – None

The motion passed.

Discussion ensued on how to present the HPC's recommendation to Council on the Turner house. Chairperson Plaag asked the HPC members if they wanted him to create a memo to the Council and Mr. John Ward, Town Manager as Chairperson of the HPC or should the HPC make it a Council agenda item and Chairperson Plaag present the recommendation to Council in a formal setting at a Council meeting. Chairperson Plaag voiced his concern that if he conveys the recommendation as a memo; there is no opportunity for public discussion unless the Council decides to make it a topic for public discussion. Member Bond encouraged Mr. Geouque be present at the Council meeting. Chairperson Plaag suggested a second motion for the HPC to ask the HPC Chairperson or Vice-Chairperson to present this recommendation to Council at their March 2019 meeting. Mr. Geouque noted that the County is having their Planning Retreat on February 18 and 19 of 2019 and the Turner house is on their agenda for discussion.

Second Motion and Vote:

Member Watkins made a motion, seconded by Member Pearman for the HPC to authorize either Chairperson Plaag or Vice-Chairperson Pollitt to formally present said recommendation to Council at their March 2019 Council meeting.

Vote:

Aye – All

Nay – None

The motion passed.

Linville River Railway 100th Anniversary Celebration Task List

Chairperson Plaag began discussion on this agenda item by informing the HPC members that the Council approved the first Friday on May 3, 2019 date for said event. Chairperson Plaag also pointed out that the HPC members would need to go back to Council for any funding requests which would come from the HPC budget line for said event. He also encouraged everyone to be creative in finding ways to reduce the costs for said event.

Chairperson Plaag explained that he wanted to correct some information that he had stated at a previous meeting regarding the May, 1919 date (permanently attached). He said the May depot association is because of the May 22, 1919 information in the Watauga Democrat. He read the Watauga Democrat articles from May 22, 1919 and July 24, 1919 regarding the depot. He said

that technically the depot was not finished until July of 1919 and he felt that the HPC members could proceed with a May 3, 2019 date for the event.

Discussion ensued on creating a task list for the May 3, 2019 event. Chairperson Plaag talked about the possibility of closing Depot Street. Ms. Jane Shook, Planning Director explained that she had heard from the Downtown Boone Development Association that there were concerns from the merchant owners about losing sales during the multiple street closures in the Downtown area. Chairperson Plaag said that he thought that one of the HPC members should inform the DBDA about the May 3, 2019 celebration event and ask for their feedback on street closures for said event.

Motion and Vote:

Member Clawson made a motion, seconded by Vice-Chairperson Pollitt to ask Member Bond to go to the next Downtown Boone Development Association meeting on March 12, 2019 at 8:30 a.m. to discuss and receive feedback on the possible activities during the Linville River Railway 100th Anniversary Celebration.

Vote:

Aye – All

Nay – None

The motion passed.

Chairperson Plaag asked the HPC members if in addition to using Jimmy Smith Park would they need to ask Appalachian State University about using their courtyard at the intersection of River Street and S. Depot Street for the possibility of a staging area. Ms. Shook suggesting describing what the courtyard would be used for to the University. Chairperson Plaag suggested using the courtyard to set-up the food that would catered to the event.

Discussion ensued on the music for the Linville River Railway 100th Anniversary Celebration event. Vice-Chairperson Pollitt said she would check on a barber shop quartet and she will ask Mr. Mark Freed from the Cultural Resources Department about it. Chairperson Plaag said there is a band called Depot Street and they do older standard type songs, if needed we could check with this band.

Discussion ensued on the food for the Linville River Railway 100th Anniversary Celebration event. Chairperson Plaag suggested seeing the owner of Proper Restaurant to see what they could prepare or check with other restaurants that might provide southern or mountain-fare type foods.

Chairperson Plaag noted that there was no menu on the train because there was no food served on the train but there were box lunches that could be carried onto the train. Chairperson Plaag asked if the Town needed to bid the process for the food. Ms. Shook said she would check with the Finance Department on the procurement rules and process.

Discussion ensued on the time of the railway celebration event on May 3, 2019. Chairperson Plaag suggested 5:30 p.m. for the event to follow along with the timing of the other first Friday events.

Ms. Shook noted that the Town Sustainability event would be held on Friday, April 5, 2019 in Downtown Boone.

Guest speaker, Mr. Dave Spiceland from Appalachian State University informed the HPC members that he is a member of the Eastern Tennessee and Western Railroad Society. He said their annual convention is held in the first week of June 2019 on Friday, Saturday and Sunday. He said he received a phone from Mr. Jerry Turbyfill who knows a gentleman who wants to do something for the railroad coming to Boone during their convention. Mr. Spiceland talked about the possibility of having an audio type event where the old engine train whistle is blown at a certain time.

Discussion ensued on speakers for the Boone railway celebration. Chairperson Plaag said he is happy to speak at the event. He mentioned asking other people from the railroad to speak at the event but noted that there is no budget to pay hired speakers for this event. He said he is open to suggestions to make the event more interesting.

Chairperson Plaag said at the next HPC meeting we will discuss the feedback from the DBDA and the food options based off the procurement rules.

Discussion ensued on having videos played at the Jones House for said event. Chairperson Plaag noted that there is a You Tube video showing the train leaving the station that could be shown at the event.

Junaluska Community Marker Application Review

Chairperson Plaag suggested tabling this agenda item to the next meeting because there has been no significant progress made on it. Upon a motion from Member Clawson, seconded by Vice-Chairperson Pollitt this agenda item was tabled.

Vote:

Aye – All

Nay – None

The motion passed.

Historic Context on Phase One Survey Report Review

Chairperson Plaag read from page 20 and 81 of the “Trailing Daniel Boone” book and addressed Member Clawson’s question where she felt like Daniel Boone was being dismissed from the area. In the text that Chairperson Plaag read, it stated that Dan’l Boone had traveled on the Buffalo Trail and in the Meat Camp area in Watauga County.

Chairperson Plaag addressed another issue regarding a quote of how Boone was perceived by outsiders.

Chairperson Plaag handed out a 13-page document and read pages one through 13 and made the following changes (permanently attached). Chairperson Plaag added the word “displaced” on page four in the first sentence of the first paragraph between the words building and the, on page four in the first paragraph in the second sentence remove the word “with” between topped and by, on page five in the first paragraph in the in the second sentence beginning with the words “Consisting of four distinct and on page nine in the first paragraph at the end of the first sentence after the word depot add “after 1925” and on page 13 in the second paragraph in the third sentence remove the word “of” between gable and the.

Discussion ensued on the taverns in Boone. Chairperson Plaag said there was a building on the southwest corner of King Street and Depot Street. He said there was another one behind the old A & P building. He said these were the two taverns in Boone in the nineteenth century.

Chairperson Plaag noted that there are three more sections of the Historic Text to review and he said he hoped to have more than one section for the HPC to review at the next meeting.

Member Watkins asked if we are to assume that the building boom was tied in with the rise of banking. Chairperson Plaag said he had considered this idea but the only stable bank in Boone in the 1920’s was the Watauga County Bank. Member Watkins said that an infusion of cash is needed when building a business rather than depending on the selling of tobacco.

Other Matters by Commission Members or Staff

Chairperson Plaag suggested the following agenda items for the next meeting: Downtown Boone Fire Station Update, Junaluska Marker Update, Linville River Railway 100th Anniversary Celebration Task List Update and Historic Context on Phase One Survey Report Review.

Member Bond announced that on the first Friday, March 1, 2019 at the Jones House there will be a gallery of photos of “Lost Watauga” shown there. She handed out a copy of the 2019 Gallery Schedule for the Jones House (permanently attached).

Member Clawson informed the HPC members that the Town of Boone will have a St. Patrick’s Day parade and there will be \$11,000.00 in prizes.

Member Pearman said she is a member of the Dan’l Boone Native Gardens and she recently attended their last meeting. She said at this meeting, it was decided to turn the charter of the gardens over to the State of North Carolina because of the lack of funding for the gardens. She said there has been conversation with an ASU professor to try to take over the caring for the gardens. Member Clawson said the Town of Boone owns the property where the gardens are located and the Town of Boone had a 25 year lease with the gardens that just started a couple of years ago.

Adjournment

With no other matters to discuss, Member Clawson made a motion, seconded by Member Brantz to adjourn the meeting at 5:24 p.m.

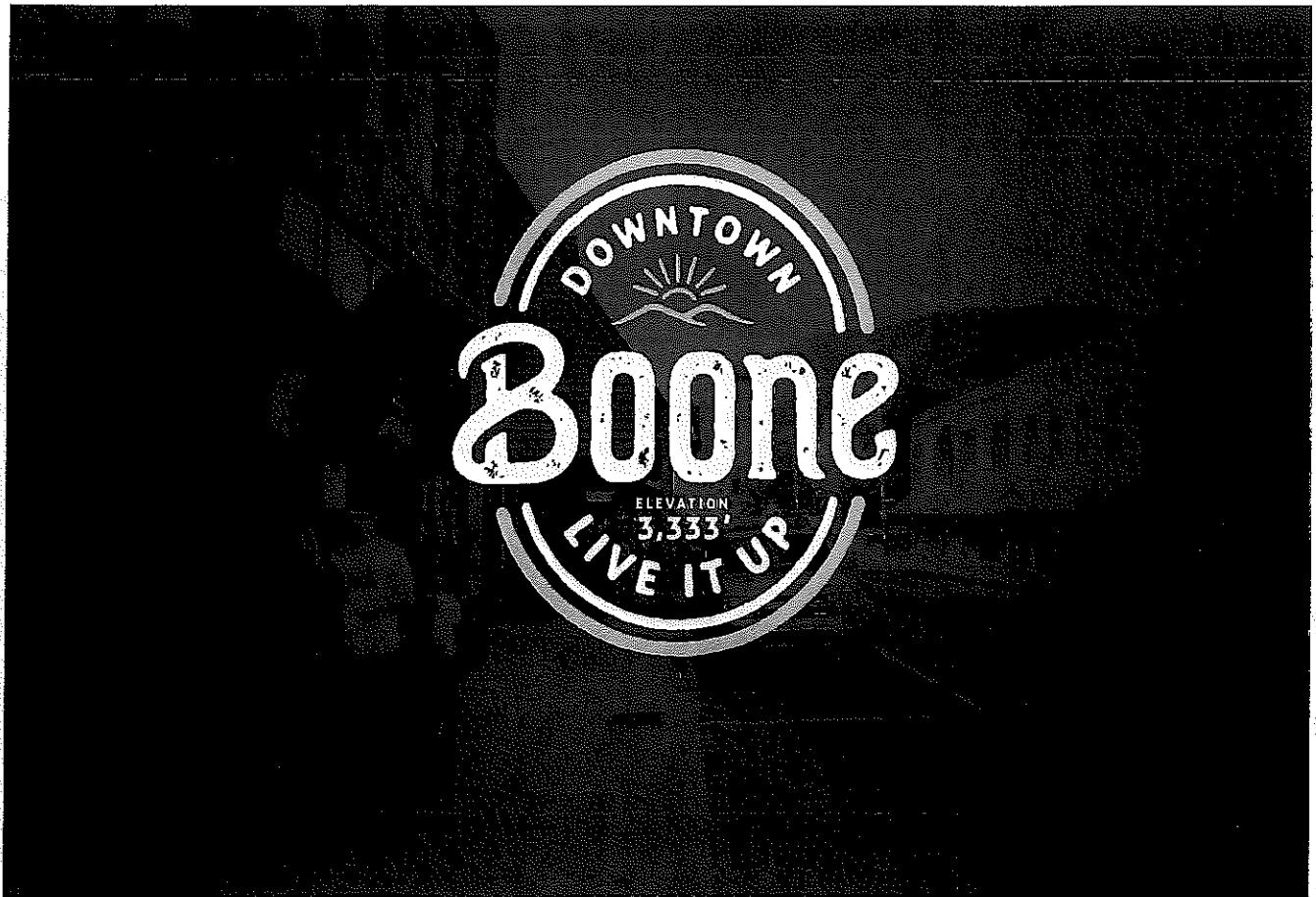
Vote:

Aye – All
Nay – None

The motion passed.

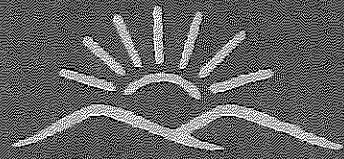
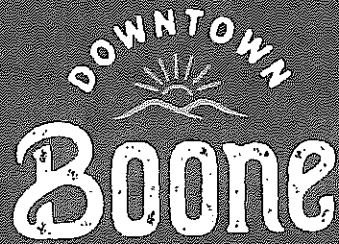
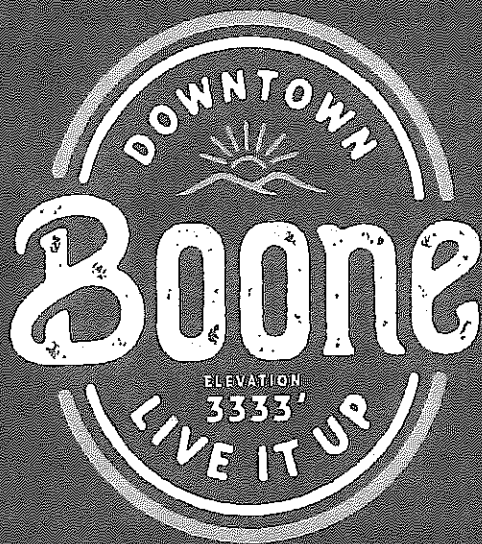
Eric Plaag, Chairperson

Marlene Crosby, Board Secretary





Primary Logo / Secondary Logo / Icon



WT0056 Oscar and Suma Hardin House (1926)

136 North Water Street

Originally built as a residence, this one and a half-story, Colonial Revival frame building was first surveyed in 1988 and again in 2002. The house has served in recent years as a law office, first for Judge Philip Ginn, then later as the Turner Law Office. Past surveys have reported that the house was built in 1927 in error. In fact, ground was broken for construction of the house in September 1925 (*Watauga Democrat*, September 17, 1925), with work completed on the house in June 1926 (*Watauga Democrat*, June 24, 1926). Defining features of this side-gabled house include a steeply pitched gable over the main (west) elevation entrance, an ornate, second-floor, Palladian window under this entrance gable, a front entrance that has a webbed transom window and is flanked by full-length sidelights with ornate tracery, and four Tuscan columns on the porch that support the semi-circular balcony above this entrance. All of these elements still survive. Indeed, the home displays an unusually high style of architecture among the homes located within Boone's historic downtown district, and with proper rehabilitation, the house would be historically significant for its architectural features.

Oscar Hardin (1883-1927) was the grandson of Henry Hardin, a prominent and significant early Boone citizen. Oscar Hardin was engaged in business for many years at Hickory and Johnson City before returning to Boone to serve as a partner in the Henry J. Hardin & Co. firm at Boone, which was located at the old Blackburn Store site opposite the courthouse. He was also a leader in the Boone Methodist Church, serving on the church's board of stewards. Suma Bogle Little Hardin (1888-1931) was the daughter of Dr. H. McDuffie Little, a prominent Boone physician and a wealthy and significant landowner of property along the Boone side of Rich Mountain. She played a lead role in numerous civic ventures, including the Friday Afternoon Club and the Entre Nous Club. Following their untimely deaths, the home changed hands a couple of times before Walter and Clara Brown eventually purchased the home and resided there from 1952 into the early 1990s. Walter Brown was the postmaster of Todd, North Carolina, and his wife Clara was a teacher in Ashe County.

Judge Ginn made attempts in 1996 and 1997 to secure rehabilitation advice and Study List listing from the North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources, with a view toward obtaining rehabilitation tax credits and National Register listing. Unfortunately, North Carolina's National Register Advisory Council responded to Judge Ginn's Study List application by declining to Study List the property. The NRAC cited several areas of concern as the basis for their decision—the application of aluminum siding, enclosure of the porte cochere, shortening of a chimney stack, and “disturbance of the surrounding yard.” Of these four areas, three are essentially reversible, meaning that a committed property owner could easily address these areas of concern with historically appropriate rehabilitation, then ask the NRAC again for the property to be Study Listed.

Unfortunately, additional alterations have occurred since 2002. The north porch described in a 1997 Study List Application has since been filled in and dramatically altered to a one-story addition with a flat roof, prominent cornice treatment, rows of six-over-six, double-hung sash windows on the west, north, and east elevations, and board and batten siding that is not appropriate to the Colonial Revival style. In addition, the two large Norwegian pines have been removed from the property for reasons that are unclear. Perhaps most distressing, the ornate, pressed tin shingles have been removed entirely from the house since 2002 and replaced with asphalt shingles. While these additional areas of concern are problematic, most could be historically rehabilitated by a property owner working with a preservation professional. Following such work, the property would likely be eligible for NRAC re-consideration and possible Local Historic Landmark designation.

Watauga Democrat., May 22, 1919, Image 3

About [Watauga Democrat. \(Boone, Watauga County, N.C.\) 1888-current](#)

Image provided by: [University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill Library, Chapel Hill, NC](#)



Image: 3 of 4.



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I:

A waiting room for the colored people will be one of the features of the new **depot**, thanks to the persistence of our popular agent, Mr. R. R. Johnson.

A wet May, it is said, insures a heavy yield of hay, and if it be true, we may expect a bumper crop this year, as May, so far, has had abundant rain.

Work on the new **depot** began Tuesday morning, Messrs Hodges & Wyke having the contract. Several carpenters are on the job and the building will soon be completed.

From the Landmark we learn that Mrs. Burke, mother of Mr.

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Watauga Democrat., July 24, 1919, Image 3

About [Watauga Democrat. \(Boone, Watauga County, N.C.\) 1888-current](#)

Image provided by: University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill Library, Chapel Hill, NC

Image: 3 of 4.

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Issues

Miss McEwen will remain for several weeks.

Mr. B. A. Foster is engaged in two jobs of painting in Boone. the pretty residence of Clerk of the Court O. L. Coffey, and the new **depor**, which is nearing completion; the former to be finished in light gray, the latter in dark green, with red trimmings.

Rev. W. R. Savage is now in

"Watch Boone Grow": The 1920s Construction Boom

Beginning as early as 1907, B. B. Dougherty of Watauga Academy fame began advocating to politicians and the media alike for a rail line to Boone.¹ After at least two failed attempts at railroads from the south and east, the Linville River Railway finally agreed to extend service along its line from Shull's Mills to Boone. Tracks reached the wayside at Winkler's Meadow (near Wilson Drive and NC 105, southeast of Boone) on October 9, 1918, when the first "Boone" shipment of freight—a Red Cross relief box bound for Belgium—went out over the line. Two weeks later, the rails had reached downtown Boone, with the first real shipments from Boone proper—potatoes and cabbage—heading out on October 25. Passenger traffic on the line began on January 1, 1919.² The Boone Depot building, located at the base of Depot Street at its intersection with present-day Rivers Street, began construction in May 1919 and opened in late July 1919.³

The influence of rail service on Boone was nearly immediate. Rail service meant easy access to and transport of ample supplies of sand, masonry, lumber, and steel—all essential construction components. Rail service meant builders no longer had to kiln their own bricks or harvest, mill, and cure their own lumber locally, thus vastly accelerating the construction process. Rail service meant an extended transportation network for a region so notoriously cut off from the rest of the state that it was known widely as the "Lost Province," and extended transportation meant expanded markets and supply chains for businesses located in Boone.

Highlighting the phrase, the editor of the *Winston-Salem Journal* in December 1920 wrote,

All over North Carolina, leading men and newspapers are taking a sympathetic interest in the movement to 'reclaim the lost province' in the Northwest.... Ashe, Alleghany, and Watauga are veritable empires of potential wealth and sturdy citizenship that are questioned by the laws of geography against profitable contact with the other sections of North Carolina. Trapped in by the mountains, the residents of these counties must now against their own will and to the mortification of their own State pride turn their faces toward Tennessee and Virginia."⁴

The term stuck, and the "Lost Province" moniker became a rallying cry for improved state roads into the region under the auspices of the North Carolina Good Roads

¹ See, for example, *Watauga Democrat*, September 19, 1907: 3.

² *Watauga Democrat*, October 10, 1918: 3; *Watauga Democrat*, October 24, 1918: 1; *Watauga Democrat*, January 2, 1919: 3.

³ *Watauga Democrat*, May 22, 1919: 3, and *Watauga Democrat*, July 24, 1919: 3.

⁴ Reprinted in *Watauga Democrat*, December 9, 1920: 2.

Association. Until those roads were eventually built over the next two decades, however, Boone relied on the train for construction materials and trade.⁵

Boone's first railroad-assisted construction project proved to be underwhelming in retrospect. In April 1919, a shipment of brick arrived for work to begin Ed Shipley's new Watauga Motor Company garage (WT0605).⁶ A two-story building located on the site of several of Boone's old jails, the project was off Boone's main artery along what is now Depot Street, took nearly two years to complete, and struggled to keep its tenants thereafter. Function certainly superseded form in this case, as the building featured little in the way of architectural flourish, aside from the stepped parapet and floating pilasters of the east elevation, a spanning, soldier course lintel between the first and second floors of the east elevation, the jerkinhead gable at the west end, and common bond brick arranged in a 6:1 ratio of stretchers to headers. Even after 1932, when the building became Town Hall, the availability of a garage bay on the east elevation was directly tied to the needs of its tenant.

That year also marked the beginning of a robust building campaign in Boone, which was spurred by the rallying cry of "Watch Boone Grow" in the local paper. The first occasion of the slogan appeared in September 1919 in an article describing the construction of several new homes just outside downtown and plans for a warehouse on Depot Street.⁷ In November 1919, Dr. L. R. Bingham, a local dentist, announced plans for a new, two-story, brick, drug store building; this news was also accompanied by the slogan.⁸ Completed in December 1921, the new building on King Street, located just east of the Critcher Hotel, was home to the Boone Drug Company (WT0849) in its east storefront, while the west portion of the building housed Davidson's Department Store. Built by Triplett and Poe (sometimes rendered as Poe and Triplett) of Lenoir, North Carolina, the building was a fairly standard brick, commercial block building with a flat roof and a low parapet, but it featured a design element that became standard in other buildings designed by Triplett and Poe at Boone in the early 1920s.⁹ Centered between two first-floor shop entrances was a pair of pilasters framing an entrance to the second floor offices.

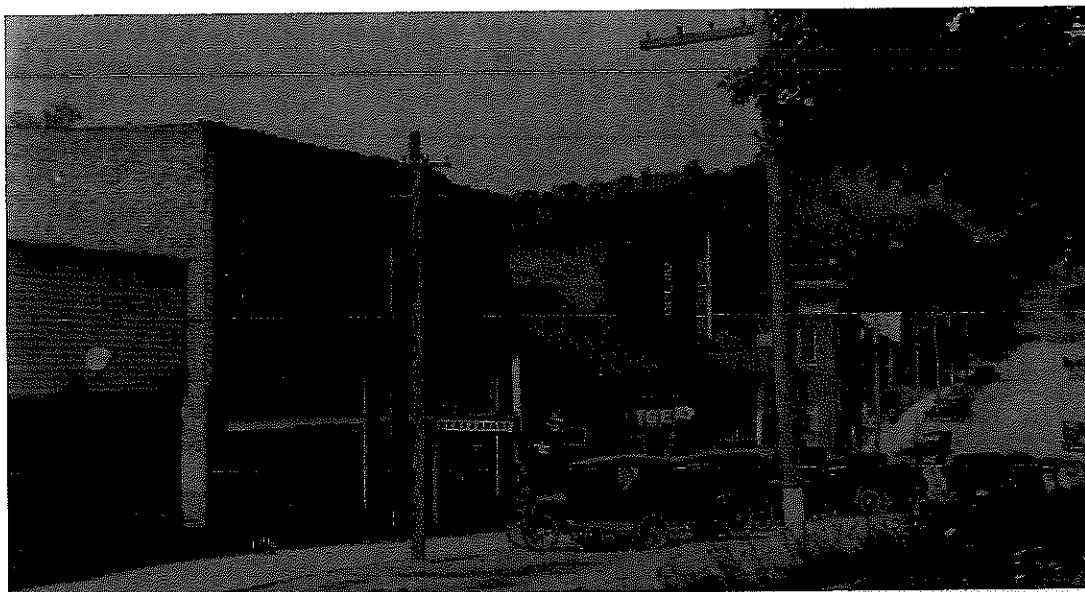
⁵ For a local editorial with an early reference to the North Carolina Good Roads Association in association with the term "Lost Province," see *Watauga Democrat*, January 20, 1921: 2. The North Carolina Good Roads Association had its origins in the Good Roads Campaign of 1899 in the Buncombe County area, leading to the formation of the statewide organization in February 1902. See "The Good Roads Movement," *North Carolina in the Early 20th Century*, LearnNC.org. Web archived at <http://web.archive.org/web/20180205043304/http://www.learnnc.org/lp/editions/nchist-newcentury/4971>, accessed February 9, 2019. Local efforts in 1915 resulted in the NC General Assembly establishing a Good Roads Commission for Watauga County. See *Watauga Democrat*, February 11, 1915: 1.

⁶ *Watauga Democrat*, April 3, 1919.

⁷ *Watauga Democrat*, September 4, 1919: 3.

⁸ *Watauga Democrat*, November 20, 1919: 3.

⁹ *Watauga Democrat*, July 21, 1921: 2.



Seen here is the south side of King Street east of Depot Street as it appeared in 1923, with a mix of old construction and the new brick buildings going up as part of the Watch Boone Grow campaign. Left to right are the old Watauga Drug Store, the J. L. Qualls Block, Winkler's Garage in the remnant of the Old Brick Row, the Boone Drug Company Building, and the Critcher Hotel. The Watauga County Bank is also visible on the west side of Depot Street, just right of the telephone pole in the right foreground. Image courtesy of the Historic Boone Collection, Digital Watauga Project.

The following year, 1922, proved to be the zenith of the Watch Boone Grow campaign. Work began in March on the J. L. Qualls Block (WT0595), which was another two-story, brick, commercial block that was somewhat wider than the Boone Drug Company Building along King Street but otherwise bore a striking similarity in design.¹⁰ Once Triplett and Poe's workers completed the masonry on the Qualls Block in July, they shifted across the street to begin construction of the J. Walter Jones Building (WT0591), which also featured two storefronts flanking a center entrance set off by pilasters.¹¹ Meanwhile, the same contractor began work on the Boone Garage (part of which survives at the east end of WT0819).¹² Both buildings were finished by the end of 1922.

Also underway that summer was the Watauga County Bank Building (WT0590) at the southwest corner of King and Depot. Designed by Clarence B. Kearfott of Bristol, Tennessee, and erected by the local McGhee Brothers and W. B. Hodges, this Neoclassical, two-story, brick, commercial vault building with basement was actually part of a larger project involving the Boone Hardware/Farmer's Hardware Block (WT0589), which wrapped the bank building on the west and south sides. The bank opened in June 1923, with other stores following in the adjacent commercial

¹⁰ *Watauga Democrat*, March 2, 1922.

¹¹ *Watauga Democrat*, July 20, 1922.

¹² *Watauga Democrat*, June 8, 1922. Just a month later, Triplett and Poe broke ground on the new administration building at Appalachian Training School. See *Carter's Weekly*, July 20, 1922: 2, and *Watauga Democrat*, July 27, 1922: 3.

block.¹³ Together, the commercial block and the vault building^{Displaced} the Levi Hartley House which dated back to before the Civil War. The commercial block presented its own unusually decorative façade for Boone, with attractive, leaded glass, clerestory windows over the three storefronts facing King Street, a soldier course lintel band dividing the first and second floors, a limestone band just above this as a sill for the second floor windows, and a complex cornice treatment composed of alternating stacks of rowlocks and stretchers in relief, all of which was surmounted by a sawtooth, drip, corbel band topped with by a limestone cornice cap. The east portion of this King Street elevation survives (although storefronts have been altered), and a recent reconstruction project on the west half of the elevation has replicated many of these original details in the new construction.



Watt Gragg stands outside the Watauga County Bank following a large snowfall sometime between 1932 and 1937, based on the presence of the Boone Department Store in the Farmer's Hardware Block. Image courtesy of the Historic Boone Collection, Digital Watauga Project.

In May 1923 Frank Linney began construction on his new law office (WT0587) on the north side of King Street, at the southwest corner of the lot on which his home (WT0582) also sat. A two-story, square-shaped building of stacked stone with hidden mortar, Linney's law office building initially held a garage on the first floor (converted to shop space in the 1940s), while his offices were on the upper level. Heralded as the "Little Rock House" and "a thing of beauty" in the local press, the building remains largely unchanged today.¹⁴ It was listed as a Local Historic Landmark in 2017.

¹³ *Watauga Democrat*, June 21, 1923: 1.

¹⁴ *Watauga Democrat*, May 17, 1923.

The following year, Linney also led construction efforts on a new commercial block directly across the way on the south side of King Street, generally known as the Frank A. Linney Block (WT0588). While never advertised as part of the Watch Boone Grow initiative, the project nevertheless was a continuation of the building boom that had gripped Boone since 1920, and it led to the demolition of the Blair Hotel, which had stood at this location since 1870.¹⁵ Consisting of four distinct, separately deeded storefronts on the first floor and apartments and offices on the second floor. Between the first and second, as well as the third and fourth storefronts, jointly owned staircases provided access from the street to the second floor. Otherwise, the Linney Block lacked the ornamentation of the Farmer's Hardware Block, but it nevertheless incorporated some unusual features. Masonry along the north elevation, for example, features a rare (for Boone) Flemish cross bond in a 7:1 ratio of stretchers to Flemish bond courses. In addition, a basketweave course of three stretchers to three soldiers divides the second floor windows from the quadruple-tier corbel band just below the roof. Several clerestory windows above shop entrances also survive, although all but one are covered by modern treatments. The project was completed in 1925. While the storefronts have seen various changes over the years, the commercial block as a whole remains largely intact in its original configuration.



Seen here are workers constructing the US Post Office in 1938. Left to right across King Street are the Farmer's Hardware Block, the Frank A. Linney Block, and part of the Pastime Theatre. Image courtesy of the Historic Boone Collection, Digital Watauga Project.

Also built in 1924 was the Pastime Theatre (WT0858), located at the west end of the Linney Block but technically built as a distinct property. The brainchild of W. R. Winkler (1900-1997) and A. E. Hamby (1889-1945), the Pastime occupied Boone's first purpose-dedicated theater building and operated until 1959. Its brick, King Street exterior offered an architectural element not otherwise found in Boone's

¹⁵ *Watauga Democrat*, May 31, 1923: 5.

boom-period buildings—rounded arches. These three arched openings, framed by triple-tier, rowlock arches set on corbel-collared, brick impost columns, were positioned at the two-story building's street level and led to what was essentially a deep, open-air arcade. Sadly, the building was dramatically transformed in 1960 and covered with concrete panels, but recent investigations have determined that the brickwork and the arches themselves still survive beneath the current façade.



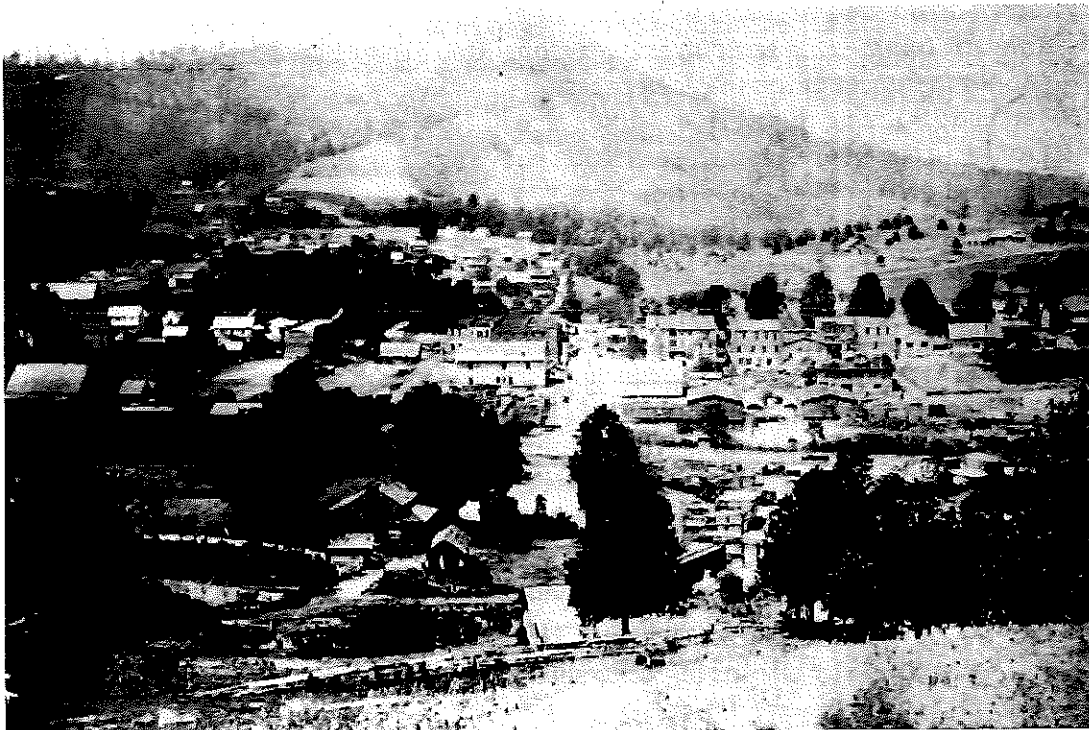
The Pastime Theatre at left, as seen in 1952, added a marquee sometime after 1940. The Boone Electric Company Building and the W. S. Goodnight Building are visible to the right of the Pastime. Image courtesy of the Palmer Blair Collection, Digital Watauga Project.

While work proceeded on the Linney Block and the Pastime Theatre, construction also began on the Daniel Boone Hotel, based on another design by Clarence B. Kearfott.¹⁶ Located on the former site of the Jordan Councill, Jr., home, which was demolished to make way for the hotel, the Daniel Boone Hotel was a formidable, two-story, U-shaped, brick building with a wide and deep wooden porch at its center. The hotel opened to great fanfare in May 1925.¹⁷ Perched on a hill overlooking King Street and long considered Boone's more upscale "tourist hotel" of the early twentieth century, the hotel was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in November 1982 and demolished shortly thereafter for a condominium complex.¹⁸

¹⁶ *Watauga Democrat*, May 15, 1924: 1.

¹⁷ *Watauga Democrat*, May 7, 1925: 1.

¹⁸ Michael T. Southern and Jim Sumner, "Daniel Boone Hotel," National Register of Historic Places nomination, April 9, 1981, online, <http://www.hpo.ncdcr.gov/nr/WT0006.pdf>.



This view of Boone taken from the south likely dates to early May 1924, given the presence of the Pastime Theatre under construction, the lack of any sign of the Linney Block, and the continued presence of what is believed to be the old Council Home at far right, which would be demolished later that month. Depot Street can be seen at center, with the railroad wye visible just below that. Image courtesy of the John Waite Stemwinder Collection, Digital Watauga Project.

Other 1925 buildings included two one-story, commercial block, brick buildings located immediately west of the Pastime Theatre: the Boone Electric Company Building (WT0859) and the W. S. Goodnight Building (WT0860). In a five-year period dominated by construction of large-scale commercial blocks, these buildings introduced some refreshing variety to the streetscape of Boone's building boom. The two buildings, constructed on the site of the old Bryan Cottage, were essentially built in tandem, despite having separate owners.¹⁹ Both featured nearly identical, recessed entrance storefronts with gorgeous, leaded glass, clerestory windows, triple corbel bands, and a dentil-like band in a pattern of three soldiers to three stretchers in relief. Sadly, the Boone Electric Company Building's original fabric was largely obliterated with the application of crab orchard stone apparently in place of the original brick. In addition, the original clerestory window framing has been replaced by the current aluminum, window wall treatment. There is slightly greater hope that original elements survive underneath the current façade treatment of the W. S. Goodnight Building, which is presently made to appear like something resembling a western saloon.

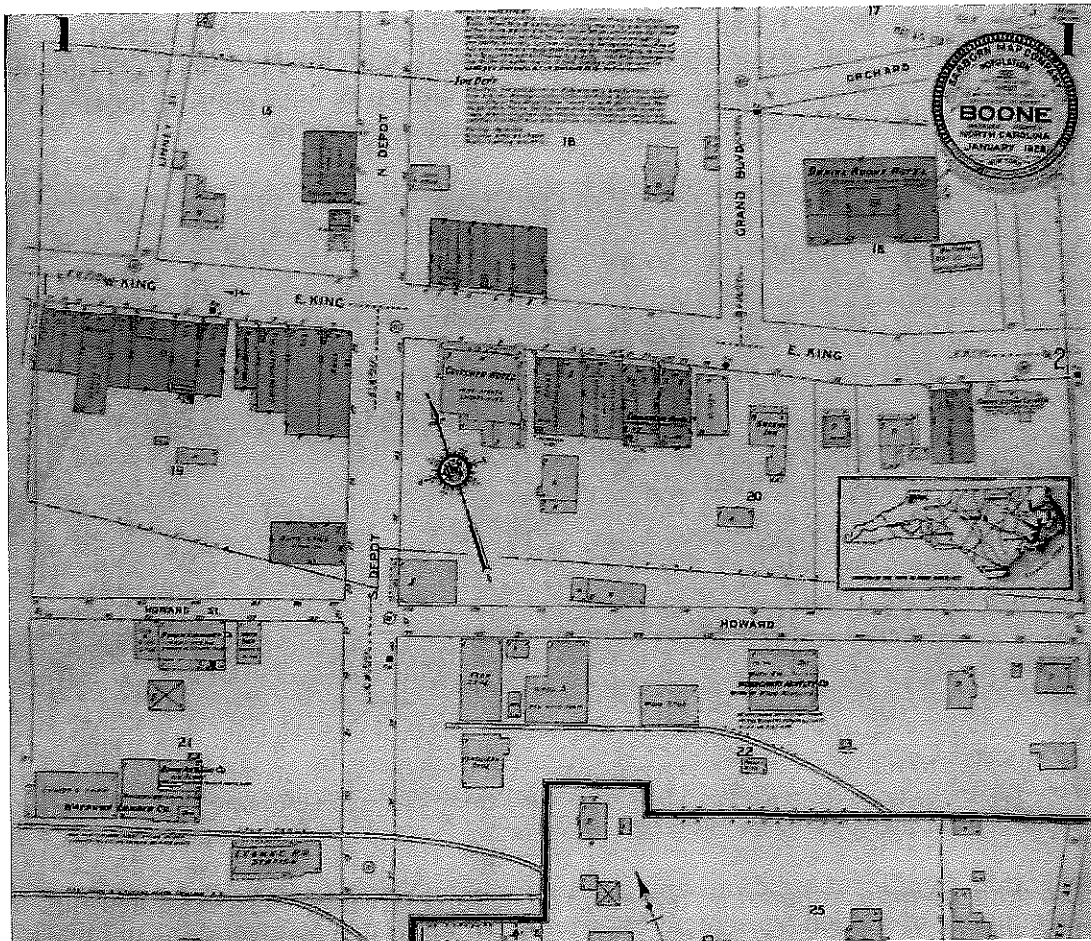
¹⁹ *Watauga Democrat*, August 27, 1925.

After 1925, Boone's first building boom began to wane, with only a handful of significant commercial structures built along King Street between 1926 and 1935. No doubt the onset of the Great Depression in 1929 played a role in limiting construction during this period, but it's also likely that the financial pressures that led to the Great Depression were already showing up in Boone's agrarian economy by the mid-1920s. Overproduction of tobacco was already creating market gluts by the mid-1920s, prompting price crashes and limited available cash for those dependent on tobacco markets. As early as October 1927, Boone's own Frank A. Linney was rallying a group of tobacco farmers at Winston-Salem to protest the low price being paid for tobacco.²⁰ Nevertheless, some commercial construction projects continued at Boone along the town's main artery. Significant among these was the Edwin N. Hahn Building (WT0597), constructed by W. G. Hartzog and W. B. "Will" Hodges in late 1927. Located on the old home site of J. C. Fletcher on the south side of King Street at downtown's east end, the two-story with basement, brick, commercial block Hahn Building was intended to offer two storefronts on the first floor and spacious apartments on the second floor.²¹ Like many of the other two-story, commercial block buildings designed during this time, the Hahn Building featured a central entrance between the storefronts that led to the second floor apartments. Both storefronts featured spanning, leaded glass, clerestory windows.

Another significant commercial addition to downtown Boone that same year was the first of several buildings known at various times as the W. R. Winkler Building (WT0891). Located immediately east of the Jones Block, Winkler's two-story building was intended as a new garage site, presumably to replace his garage in the old Brick Row across the street. McGhee Brothers completed the construction during the summer of 1927, but when it was complete, Winkler instead leased the first-floor space to the first in a long line of five and dime stores to occupy the site. From the beginning, the first floor actually had two storefront entrances, and the south (main) elevation featured decorative, running bond, yellow brick in contrast to the red brick found elsewhere. Rowlock corbelling was present near the roofline, as well as a more prominent, quadruple-tier corbel just below that. A basketweave band of two soldiers to three stacked headers was present just below this. Today, all of these masonry details survive, although the building has seen significant changes to its windows and its first floor storefront configuration.

²⁰ *Watauga Democrat*, October 20, 1927: 4.

²¹ *Watauga Democrat*, July 7, 1927, and *Watauga Democrat*, September 22, 1927).



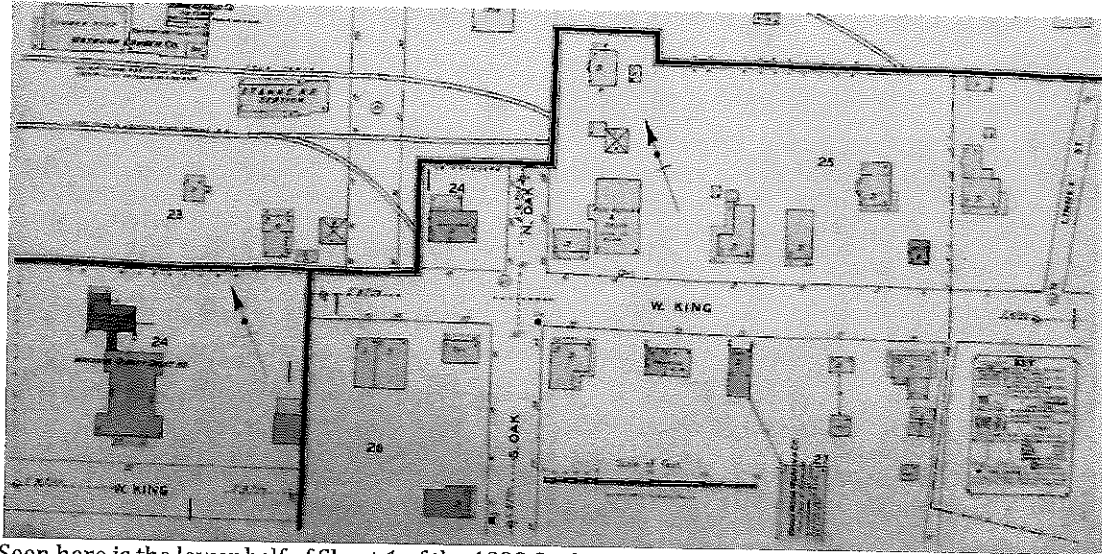
Seen here is the top half of Sheet 1 of the 1928 Sanborn Fire Insurance Company map of Boone, as photographed by the author at the Library of Congress in Washington, DC, showing the east portion of the downtown area. The thick, black boundary at lower right indicates the border of the western portion of town, portrayed on the lower part of the sheet.

Instead of a focus on additional brick construction along the main commercial corridor, Boone saw a necessary proliferation of wood-frame warehouse buildings constructed along Boone Creek and the area south of King Street near the railroad tracks and depot. To facilitate this development, the Globe Realty and Auction Company established a new road running parallel to and south of King Street, known as Howard Street, with lots along the street to be offered for sale.²² Running from Water Street (then known as Oak Street) east to Appalachian Street (then known as the Yonahlossee Turnpike), Howard Street saw a feed storage building, a wholesale operation, a fertilizer storage building, and the Woodcraft Novelty Company go up between Depot Street and the turnpike. What was later known as Critcher's Store also went up at the northeast corner of Howard and Depot. To the west of Depot along Howard were a machine shop, the Boone Laundry Company, the Boone Woodworking Company, the Watauga Lumber Company (located along the

after
1925

²² Watauga Democrat, June 5, 1924: 1.

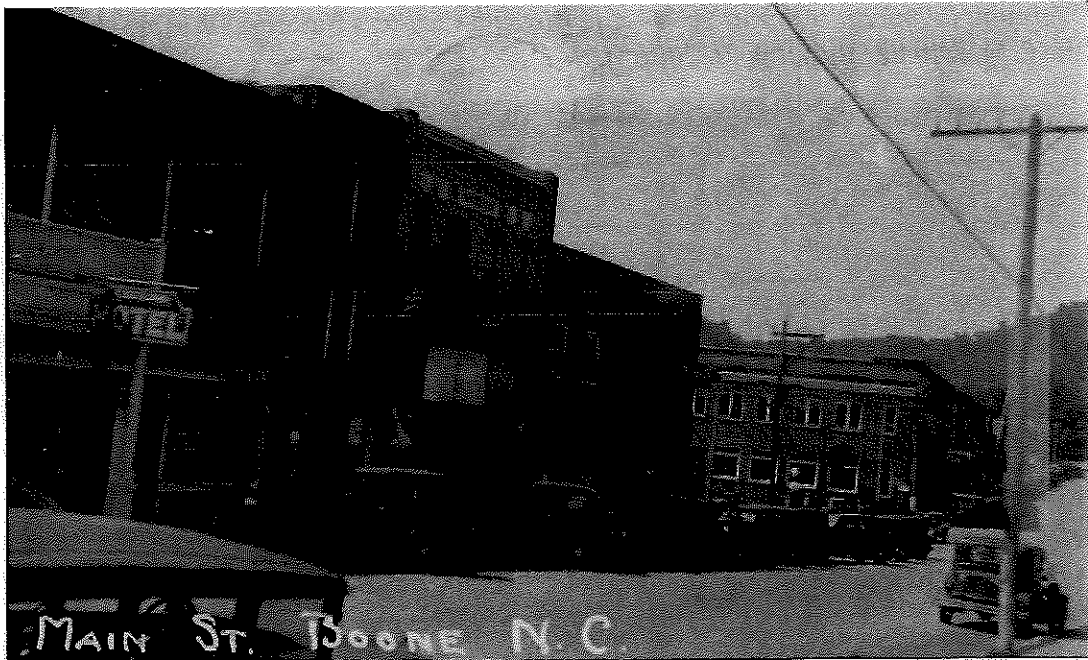
tracks), and the Boone Ice and Fuel Company ice plant tucked into the back of Watauga Lumber. All of these warehouse operations, with the possible exception of the Watauga Lumber Company and the ice plant, appear to have gone up between 1924 and 1928, often with railroad sidetracks extending nearby.



Seen here is the lower half of Sheet 1 of the 1928 Sanborn Fire Insurance Company map of Boone, as photographed by the author at the Library of Congress in Washington, DC, showing the west portion of the downtown area. The thick, black boundary at lower right indicates the border of the western portion of town, portrayed on the lower part of the sheet.

Two other significant buildings appeared along King Street in 1929, the apparent consequence of a failed agreement between H. W. Horton, who owned the old Brick Row, and W. R. Winkler, who originally hoped to build a new garage on that site. When negotiations with Winkler collapsed, Horton demolished the old Brick Row and built a massive, multi-toned, yellow brick, two-story-with-mezzanine building on the west portion of the site. The H. W. Horton Building's (WT0593) façade was certainly one of the most imposing in Boone to that date (save only for the Watauga County Bank), as it featured a quadruple-tier border of stepped, outer bands of brick and stunted battlements at its upper corners. A truncated shed roof of terracotta tiles sat between the battlements, covering the stepped-back, brick parapet at the top of the elevation. Horton also introduced a prominent limestone frieze plate with his name on it, as well as a large, decorative cartouche just below this. In addition, a large, iron fire escape supported by giant, limestone brackets ran along the front of the building. Most notably, Horton punctuated his design with limestone medallions in the shape of wagon wheels—a trope that appeared frequently in later Boone buildings and was always associated with W. R. Winkler thereafter. The spacious showroom and mezzanine—18 feet in total height—were a draw for numerous department stores, five and dimes, and furniture stores in the years that followed. Horton, however, lost the building almost immediately after it was built, as he was

unable to pay his contractors.²³ The building's current owners have recently renovated the Horton Building into a boutique hotel and added a rooftop bar structure in 2018.



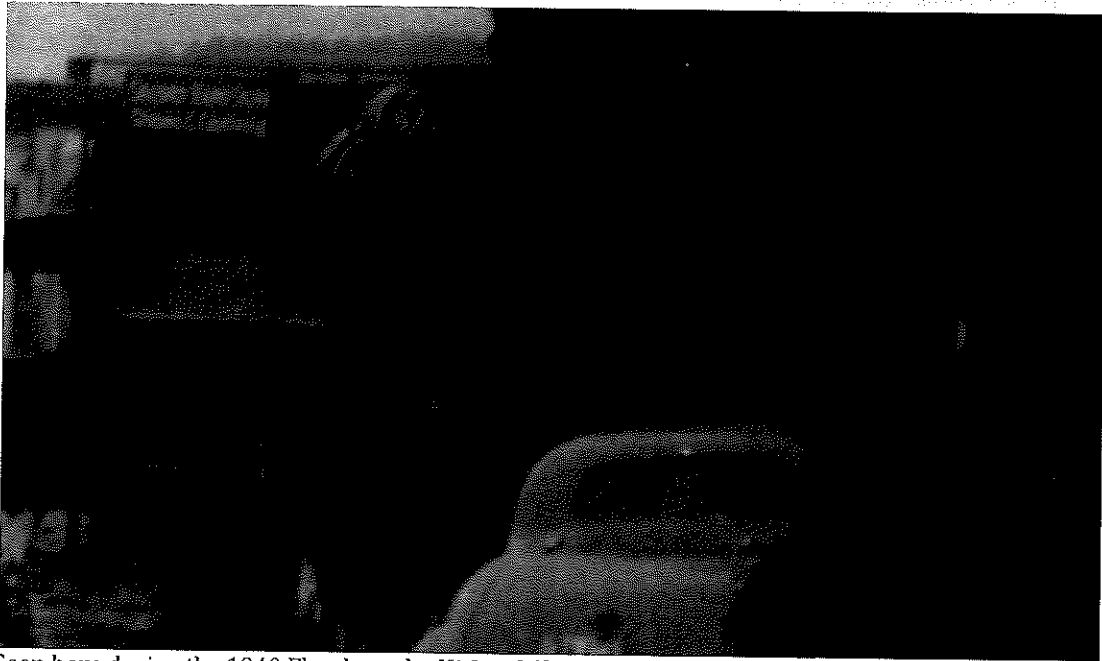
The south side of King Street as it appeared circa 1936-37. Left to right are part of the J. L. Qualls Block (with its porch overhang that stood from 1936 to sometime before 1949), the Perry and Winkler Building, the H. W. Horton Building, the Boone Drug Company Building, a slightly visible portion of the 1936 version of the Shell Service Station (later incorporated into the Crest Five and Ten Cent Store Building), and—across Depot Street—the Watauga County Bank Building.

The second building to be built in 1929 in this space between the Qualls Block and the Boone Drug Company Building was the exceedingly narrow, three-story, brick Perry and Winkler Building (WT0594), named for its owners, Gordon H. Winkler and Dr. H. B. Perry. At first glance, it may seem that this building was an afterthought to Horton's monstrosity next door, but in fact Horton had originally sold this parcel to W. R. Winkler and A. E. Hamby in 1927, apparently in contemplation of their failed agreement. This agreement had stipulated that access to the second floor of any building on this narrow site would actually be through a staircase located in any building that might be built on the parcel to the west. When W. R. Winkler's agreement with Horton fell through, W. R. Winkler promptly sold to Gordon H. Winkler, who then built this structure at about the same time that Horton was completing his building.

Other commercial additions in the core downtown area included a tin building located behind the Frank A. Linney Block that was home to Boone's first bowling alley, the Boone Recreation Parlor (WT0869, 1928); the W. R. Winkler Tire

²³ *Watauga Democrat*, December 12, 1929. Horton's economic failures almost certainly were connected to the stock market crash that had occurred several weeks earlier.

Company (WT0894, 1929), located immediately west of the Boone Garage; the one-story, brick Sebastian Building (WT0878, 1931, with additions in 1947 and 1967) at the southwest corner of Water and King, which supplanted the Lovill Law Office; and the twin, one-story, commercial block buildings constructed just east of the *Watauga Democrat* office in 1934—the Hi-Land Cleaners Building (WT0864) and the C. M. Critcher Building (WT0865).



Seen here during the 1940 Flood are the Hi-Land Cleaners Building (left) and the C. M. Critcher Building on King Street, built separately but designed to appear as one commercial block. Image courtesy of the David Wyke Collection, Digital Watauga Project.

In addition to this limited commercial construction activity in the downtown core, the period from 1926 to 1935 also saw new commercial properties going up on the fringes of downtown. The Boone Furniture and Lumber Company Building (WT0886, 1929, demolished 2018) was a frame lumber storage building constructed by W. H. Gragg on the extreme southwest end of the downtown area—a vicinity already teeming with similar, wooden warehouse buildings. Meanwhile, on the east end of the downtown area, Boone's old habit for combining domestic and commercial architecture continued with the John W. Hodges Garage and Office (WT0835, circa 1930). A two-story, hip-roofed building composed of stone, concrete block, and running bond brick, the Hodges Garage and Office sat directly down the hill from Hodges's home (WT0624). The building took on more defined commercial functions after 1935, when the building housed the Mayflower Beauty Shoppe.²⁴

Indeed, as commercial construction boomed in the downtown core, residential construction still took place on the fringes of the downtown area. In addition to new

²⁴ *Watauga Democrat*, December 12, 1935.

subdivisions being built just to the north and east of the downtown area, individual homes also sprung up on lots located along or just off of King Street. Among these were the one-story, wood-frame J. D. Rankin House (WT0836, 1923); the one and a half-story, Craftsman-style, multicolored brick Carter Cook House (WT0827, 1926); and the one and a half-story, brick and frame, Craftsman-style bungalow known as the Chapell Wilson House (WT0580, 1926). All three buildings were located in the east section of Boone, just outside the downtown core and in close proximity to Appalachian Training School/Appalachian State Normal School.

Two other significant residences went up on the west end of town during this same period. The Oscar and Suma Hardin House (WT0056, 1926) was somewhat high style for Boone in its design. Located on the east side of North Water Street a short distance from King Street, the one and a half-story, Colonial Revival frame building offered numerous luxurious, architectural flourishes, including a steeply pitched gable of the main (west) entrance; an ornate, second-floor, Palladian window under the entrance gable; a front entrance with a webbed transom window and full-length sidelights with ornate tracery; and four Tuscan columns supporting the semi-circular balcony porch over the entrance.²⁵ A similarly luxurious new home was the R. L. Clay House (WT0530, 1933), built on the opposite side of the railroad wye at the southwest end of town, near the intersection of Water Street and what is today known as Rivers Street. A one and a half-story, side-gabled, natural cut stone home with a detached, one and a half-story, natural cut stone garage, the R. L. Clay House is of particular significance because of its association with the workmanship of John L. Hickerson (circa 1889-1938), a local, black brick and stone mason renowned for his masonry work throughout Boone in the 1920s and 1930s. The Town of Boone currently owns the property, which is being considered for Local Historic Landmark designation.

Boone's Second Boom: 1936-1941

²⁵ In a sad turn of events, the Watauga County Commissioners have announced preliminary plans to demolish this building—which is now owned by the county—in favor of a surface parking lot in late 2019. See Anna Oakes, "Boone Asks County to Reconsider Building Removal," *Watauga Democrat*, online, January 7, 2019, available at https://www.wataugademocrat.com/news/boone-asks-county-to-reconsider-building-removal/article_14aac748-d039-55c8-9bb3-50f96847a57d.html.

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