

**TOWN OF BOONE
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
MAY 2, 2023, 3:00 p.m.
WebEx Video Conferencing**

Historic Preservation Commission Members in Attendance:

Vice-Chair Bettie Bond, Chuck Watkins, and James Sharp

Student Member: Riley Ziegler

Council Liaison: Virginia Roseman

Town Staff in Attendance:

Jessica Mitchell-Long-Range/Special Projects Planner, Christy Turner-Senior Planner, and Marlene Crosby-Board Secretary,

Others in Attendance: Mark Freed, Director of Cultural Resources, and Ellie McCorkle-HPC Intern

CALL TO ORDER

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

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Ms. Jessica Mitchell, Long-Range/Special Projects Planner, asked to add the Hayes-Bryan-Greene Cemetery Historical Marker Ceremony under Staff Updates.

Member Sharp made a motion, seconded by Member Watkins, to adopt the agenda as amended.

Vote: Aye – All

Nay – None

The motion passed.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Vice-Chair Bond outlined the following suggested changes to April 4, 2023, meeting minutes:

- Page 2, paragraph five, sentence two, remove “Ms. McCorkle explained that this draft is in the final stages”
- Page 2, paragraph seven, sentence two, change “liked” to “appreciated”
- Page 3, first paragraph, sentence one, change it to read “Vice-Chair Bond asked if there was any indication of when aluminum storm doors and storm windows began to appear.”
- Page 3, first paragraph, sentence three, change it to read “Chair Plaag said he didn’t think we knew when the aluminum storm windows and doors were installed.”
- Page 3, first paragraph, sentence four, change to read “He said it was very common in the 1970s during the Carter Presidency when there was a lot of weatherizing of homes being done because of the energy crisis.”
- Page 3, first paragraph, sentence seven, change “vinyl storm windows” to “vinyl windows”
- Page 3, paragraph four, sentence three, change it to read “He said the design standards for this property would have to be created.”
- Page 5, paragraph two, sentence three, delete “He said that the house had been altered and lacked the integrity to what it would have had during the Rivers’ family ownership.”

- Page 7, paragraph seven, sentence three, remove the comma between “students” and “that would be volunteering”
- Page 10, paragraph five, sentences one and two, rewrite to “Following Staff’s discussion of recent Statement of Conformity applications, Chair Plaag explained that before this meeting, he had noticed the poor appearance of the garage doors and steps at the Old Miller Salvage building located at 260 Howard Street. He added to this discussion of the recent projects because of his concern regarding the garage door and concrete stoop elements of the building.”

Motion and Vote:

Member Sharp made a motion, seconded by Student Member Ziegler, to approve the amended April 4, 2023, meeting minutes.

Vote: Aye – All

Nay – None

The motion passed.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No individuals requested the opportunity to speak during public comment.

BOONE CEMETERY INTERPRETATIVE PANEL DRAFT PANEL TEXT AND DESIGN

Ms. Mitchell informed the HPC that Chair Plaag had emailed to Staff this afternoon the draft text for Panels 1 and 4 and three images (permanently attached). She screen-shared the draft text document and images during the meeting. She said that Chair Plaag wanted the HPC to review them and give their feedback, that will be further discussed at the June advisory meeting.

Ms. Mitchell also pointed out that Chair Plaag told her he was still working on Boone Cemetery Interpretative Panels 3 and 4 and the Stoneman’s Raid Interpretative Panel draft text.

Vice-Chair Bond asked Ms. Ellie McCorkle about the Boone walking tour and if there was information about the cemetery from the walking tour. She also pointed out that since it is the Year of the Trail for North Carolina, she hoped some informational ties could be incorporated into the draft text for the Civil War Trail and Stoneman’s Raid. Ms. McCorkle stated that those links could be incorporated into the draft text for the Boone walking tour, Civil War Trail, and Stoneman’s Raid. Member Sharp stated that he did not find any issues with the draft text for the Boone Cemetery Interpretative panels, and he thought the text was well-written.

Discussion ensued on the three images. Ms. Mitchell screen-shared the three images that Chair Plaag had emailed Staff. Ms. Mitchell pointed out that the first image was a headstone for Jordon Mast Council image for Panel 1. Vice-Chair Bond noted that this headstone in the image was placed in the cemetery and is missing from the cemetery. Vice-Chair Bond asked Ms. McCorkle if she knew a date for the headstone, and Ms. McCorkle replied that known images were from around the mid-1930s. Ms. Mitchell pointed out that the aerial photo of the Boone Cemetery, circa 1950, was also meant for Panel 1. Ms. Mitchell believed the third image was for the Union soldier panel.

Member Watkins thought the images were good and hoped they would be well designed on the panels. Vice-Chair Bond asked why this image was chosen for the Union Soldier panel. Ms. Mitchell thought one part of the answer to Vice-Chair Bond’s question might be from Chair Plaag’s text for Panel 4. She read the following text, “Boone as it appeared in 1885, shortly after the Civil War.” Vice-Chair Bond responded

that was 20 years after the Civil War. Discussion ensued on identifying the church shown in the third image.

Student Member Riley noted that in the text Chair Plaag referred to a barn in the image. She asked if this could be part of the answer to Vice-Chair Bond's question. It was the consensus of the HPC and Council Liaison Roseman they were not sure why this photo was chosen for the Boone Cemetery Interpretative Panel. Vice-Chair Bond added that if the image is confusing to them, it would be confusing to someone reading the panel for the first time.

Member Watkins complimented Chair Plaag for reducing the draft text for the panels. He referred to Panel 4, and in the last line of the first paragraph, he suggested for this sentence to read, "the man who owned this land and where the cemetery sits."

Member Watkins referred to Panel 4 and the text in the second paragraph and sentences three and four and read, "It is impossible to know why they fought for the North, but many who did hold Unionist views despite being Southerners." He pointed out in the next paragraph, "If we accept the tradition that this eastern part of the Boone Cemetery was already in use in 1865 as a burying ground for those enslaved by the Council family, then the decision to locate these White soldiers here may have been the Council family's commentary on those who were fighting to end slavery." He added that we do not know if they were fighting to end slavery. He pointed out that in the second paragraph, the text implies that we don't know if they were fighting to end slavery, and in the third paragraph, the text says we do know they were fighting to end slavery. He suggested that the HPC needed to pick one or the other of these two statements regarding slavery. Vice-Chair Bond suggested removing the first statement from the text because it is impossible to know about slavery. Member Watkins told Vice-Chair Bond that her suggestion would invalidate the whole purpose of the first part of the paragraph, stating that they were Southerners.

Student Member Ziegler pointed out that the aerial image was taken from page 16 of Appendix D. She read the description, "... present-day Burrell and Rivers Streets. In the center foreground is the first Boone Baptist Church, with the Critcher Barn and the Coffey Hotel, and Old Brick Row directly beyond. The pathway between the Critcher Barn and the Coffey Hotel would later become Depot Street," and the image is part of the Digital Watauga Project.

Vice-Chair Bond agreed with Member Watkins that the text in paragraphs two and three of Panel 4 were contradictory statements regarding slavery. She stated it was important that the family allowed them to be buried there, and then to be buried in the black section is certainly the family's commentary. She asked the HPC if they were alright if Chair Plaag was informed about this situation and asked him to make the proposed changes to the draft text.

Ms. Mitchell noted that the sign company has a design service to help with the creation of the images on the panels. Member Watkins showed concern for how the images might look like on the panels, he said he did not want them to look like they were made in the 1960s. Vice-Chair Bond added that a QR code might help this picture selection as well.

Council Liaison Roseman thought it was better to have one section of an image that is blown up, and you can see what you are supposed to be focusing on rather than a larger image that is grainy and unclear.

Ms. Mitchell told the HPC that if they had other questions on this agenda item, they could email them to her at Jessica.Mitchell@townofboone.net, and she would send them to Chair Plaag to try to incorporate them into the draft text prior to the next advisory meeting.

STONEMAN'S RAID INTERPRETATIVE PANEL DRAFT PANEL TEXT AND DESIGN

Ms. Mitchell suggested that this topic can be tabled since there was no draft text to be reviewed.

Student Member Ziegler made a motion, seconded by Member Sharp, to table this agenda item until the next HPC advisory meeting on Tuesday, June 6, 2023.

Motion and Vote:

Vote: Aye – Nay
Nay – None

The motion passed.

HPC INTERN LANDMARK REPORT UPDATE

Vice-Chair Bond said she had some proposed changes to the draft report, but she would be seeing Ms. McCorkle the next day and would address them with her at that time. She asked the HPC if they had any proposed changes to discuss at this meeting.

Member Watkins read the proposed changes that he made to packet page 15 under, II. Abstract:

The R.L. Clay House is proposed for designation as a local historical landmark due to its association with several members of the Rivers family who were influential in the history of the town of Boone. Members of the Rivers family owned and resided in the home for more than 50 years, as they either operated or published the local newspaper, the *Watauga Democrat*. R.C. Rivers, Jr. operated the *Watauga Democrat* for 42 years, with 30 years of that while living in this home. Rachel Rivers-Coffey the granddaughter of R. C. Rivers, Sr., and daughter of R.C. Rivers, Jr., was raised in the house before she took over the *Watauga Democrat* after her father passed. She and her husband, Paul Armfield Coffey, donated the property to the Town of Boone in 1998. These factors create a high significance at a local level.

Member Watkins noted that he had made more proposed changes to the draft report and would send them to Ms. Mitchell to give to Ms. McCorkle. Student Member Ziegler and Member Sharp said they were still reviewing Chair Plaag's edits to the draft report, and if they found any proposed changes, they would forward them to Ms. Mitchell soon.

Vice-Chair Bond added that many of her changes were also within the same area as Member Watkins's with the tightening of that part. She stated that she appreciated including both Rachel Rivers-Coffey and Paul Armfield Coffey in the paragraph because it was a joint decision.

Ms. Mitchell asked Ms. McCorkle to describe the name used for the R.L. Clay House/Rivers House property. Ms. McCorkle explained that the colloquial name for the house is the Rivers House, but in the designation, it will be referred to as the R.L. Clay House because that is whom the structure was built for during its period of significance.

Ms. McCorkle explained through further research into the deeds, there are only three of the seven parcels included in the draft report that should be designated because of boundary issues, continuity of ownership, and original ownership. She said the next draft report will include parcel numbers ending in 3934 for the house, 9070 for the eight acres, and 0308 for the property with the one-and-one-half acres in the back behind the eight acres that includes "Rachel's Meadow" and "Baby," the Champion Sugar

Maple. She noted that “Baby” straddles two boundary lines. She further added that the fence that is around “Baby” is located where there are three boundary line intersections. She said that designation would be proposed for “Baby” in the fenced area where it is located. She said the Daniel Boone Monument would be included in the designation.

Ms. Mitchell pointed out that moving forward, she will reference the house as the R.L. Clay House with Rivers House in parentheses.

Vice-Chair Bond asked Ms. McCorkle when the HPC should expect to see the next final draft report. Ms. McCorkle said she would try to get all of the new edits incorporated into the said report in the next couple of weeks and send the report to Ms. Mitchell. She said she would also send a rough draft of the Jones House Local Landmark Designation report to Ms. Mitchell for the HPC to review at the next HPC advisory meeting.

R.L. CLAY/RIVERS HOUSE LOCAL LANDMARK DESIGNATION DRAFT DESIGN STANDARDS

Vice-Chair Bond referred to packet page 31. Ms. Mitchell explained that the HPC had previously discussed writing the design standards at the same time a designation report was written. She noted that Town Council could then review them at the same time for a proposed local landmark designation property. Ms. Mitchell said that Student Member Ziegler had said at the last meeting that she would try to create design standards for the R.L. Clay/Rivers House. She added that the design standards are something the HPC can continue to work on.

Student Member Ziegler said she began her work covering different aspects of the house using Appendix D, the Comprehensive Architectural Survey of Downtown Boone, and Ms. McCorkle’s drafts. She explained that the document gave descriptions and talked about what would be expected of homeowners if they were making any type of changes to the historical aspects. She noted that she had made some changes to the draft since she sent the first one to Ms. Mitchell. She added that she hoped to have the draft more complete before the next advisory meeting so the HPC could review it.

Vice-Chair Bond confirmed with Student Member Ziegler that she would be attending the June 2023 HPC meeting. Student Member Ziegler responded that she would be at the next meeting and that she had reapplied for the student position on the HPC.

UPDATE ON THE DOC AND MERLE WATSON MURAL

Ms. Mitchell referred to packet page 36 and a memo dated April 21, 2023. She said the memo described the updated text she had received regarding the informational plaque with the mural; she added that this memo was in reference to an email she sent to the HPC earlier in the month. She explained that the HPC had recommended that the text be revised about Doc and Merle Watson’s life, and the HPC suggested contacting Dr. Gary Boye at Appalachian State University to get more information.

Ms. Mitchell asked the HPC for their feedback on the memo. She said the artist and those involved were asked to send the updated plaque text to their contacts at the North Carolina Department of Cultural and Natural Resources.

Ms. Mitchell said the latest rendering was presented to Council, and the artist was to incorporate some of the white space around the mural because that was part of the recommendation. She said that the former Downtown Boone Development Association (DBDA) Coordinator, Ms. Paige Henderson, was handling the text on the plaque, but she is no longer working for the Town. She said now Ms. Amy Davis,

Town Manager, is handling it. Council Liaison Roseman said the way it was presented to Council did not include any of the recommendations the HPC had provided. She said it was approved by Council with acceptance of the HPC's guidance, such as raising the picture to show more of the guitar and having the faded-out edges. She added that what was in the newspaper, as Vice-Chair Bond mentioned, was not what Town Council approved, as Town Council approved based on the HPC's suggestions.

Member Watkins asked if the HPC could still make proposed changes to the mural text. Ms. Mitchell said she could receive any changes and pass them along to see if they could be incorporated. Vice-Chair Bond and Council Liaison Roseman suggested including Doc's birth and death dates (1923-2012) in the text. Council Liaison Roseman suggested that the plaque does not have to be changed, just a text change to the mural, and Ms. Mitchell and Vice-Chair Bond agreed that this could be an option.

Ms. Mitchell asked the HPC if this revised text addressed the HPC's concerns from the first time they saw it. Vice-Chair Bond and Member Watkins agreed the revised text was an improvement.

STAFF UPDATES

Ms. Mitchell talked about the Certified Local Government (CLG) orientation that the HPC held on April 12, 2023. She said after the orientation, she contacted all of the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) staff and thanked them for their time. She said she received an email of appreciation from Ms. Ramona Bartos, Director of the SHPO, and she read it to the HPC.

Ms. Mitchell said the HPC had met their CLG training requirements for their first year by attending the recent CLG Orientation. She also mentioned another training opportunity for the HPC if they were interested, which is a free webinar on "Aging Facades on Buildings" to be held on May 9, 2023. She said if any HPC member wanted to attend the webinar, they could email her, and she would send them the web link to watch it. She reiterated that it is not required. She added that while the HPC has met the requirements that she would continue to inform the HPC of any various training that comes up.

Ms. Mitchell reminded the HPC that the Hayes-Bryan-Greene Cemetery historical marker unveiling ceremony would be held on Friday, June 2, 2023, at 1 p.m. at the corner of Queen Street and Water Street. She noted that there would be a partial road closure for this event. She has begun working on the press releases for this event. She noted that she would email the HPC to see who will be in attendance when it gets closer to the date of the event.

Ms. Christy Turner, Senior Planner, updated the HPC on recent Statement of Conformity applications that the Planning Staff had received in the last month. She said one application was issued for 140 Appalachian Street, where "Pads for Grads" is located at, to remove the shutters. She noted that the applicant removed the board and batten shutters before contacting Staff. She stated that the applicant wanted to replace the shutters with vinyl shutters. She told the applicant that he had to replace the shutters with board and batten material with like-kind material. She added the applicant decided to leave the shutters off.

Ms. Turner said another application was issued for apartments above Highway Robbery, at 609 W King Street, for a roof replacement with like-for-like materials. She noted that she would make sure that the trim elements and the roof material stayed the same on the building.

HPC MEMBER UPDATES

Student Member Ziegler talked about a post she saw on Instagram on the DRABA account, and the post mentioned the HPC and that they were working on the Doc and Merle Watson mural.

Member Watkins pointed out that Southend Brewing Company had removed the existing building material, and the original façade material is visible. Ms. Mitchell informed the HPC that the Certificate for Appropriateness (COA) had been approved for the Southend Brewing Company, and it had been sent to them. She added the applicant from Southend Brewing Company had been in contact with the Planning Staff regarding the exposed facade.

Ms. McCorkle announced that on May 5, 2023, from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. at the Jones House Main Gallery, there would be the opening reception for an unusual and anticipated exhibit called, 'Animals of Digital Watauga.'

JUNE ADVISORY SESSION MATERIAL

Ms. Mitchell asked the HPC about the agenda items for their next meeting. The HPC decided on the following items for their next meeting: Boone Cemetery Interpretative Panel Draft Panel Text and Design, Stoneman's Raid Interpretative Panel Draft Panel Text and Design, HPC Intern Landmark Report Update on the R.L. Clay/R.C. Rivers House Local Landmark Report, R.L. Clay/Rivers House Local Landmark Designation Draft Design Standards.

ADJOURNMENT

Student Member Ziegler made a motion, seconded by Member Sharp, to adjourn the meeting at 4:12 p.m.

Vote: Aye – All
Nay – None

The motion passed.

Bettie Bond, Vice-Chair

Marlene Crosby, Board Secretary