

TOWN OF BOONE
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
ADVISORY MEETING MINUTES
May 5, 2026, 3:00 pm
Planning & Inspections Department & WebEx Video Conferencing

Historic Preservation Commission Members Present: Vardell Smyth-Chair, Bettie Bond-Vice-Chair, Krystal Carter, Bennie Gaetano, and Melody Oxendine

Town Staff Present: Jessica Mitchell-Advanced Planning Specialist, Virginia Roseman-Council Member Liaison (via WebEx), Lane Moody-Downtown Development Director, and David Pedersen-Board Clerk

Call to Order

Chair Smyth called the Boone Historic Preservation Commission meeting, held in the Planning & Inspections Conference Room at 680 West King Street, Suite C, and via WebEx to order at 3:01 pm.

Adoption of Agenda

Commission Member Carter made a motion, seconded by Commission Member Gaetano, to adopt the agenda as presented.

Vote: Aye – 5
Nay – 0

The motion passed.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Approval of Minutes

Commission Member Carter made a motion, seconded by Commission Member Gaetano, to approve the April 7, 2026, Historic Preservation Commission Advisory meeting minutes.

Vote: Aye – 5
Nay – 0

The motion passed.

Ceremony Updates and Discussion of Press Release Quote for Stoneman's Raid Interpretative Panel

Ms. Mitchell opened the discussion by stating that the goal for this meeting topic was to solidify a quote for the upcoming press release and review speaking remarks. She also noted the attendance of Adelia Daly from the Watauga County Historical Society, who will be speaking at the ceremony. Ms. Mitchell stated that she was working with the Town's communication specialist for social media announcements, and she provided a reminder of the decorations and handouts that she would have for the ceremony.

Vice-Chair Bond confirmed that the date of the ceremony was still Thursday, May 21, 2026 at 3pm, and Ms. Mitchell confirmed, adding that the ceremony location would be on the sidewalk near the panel. Chair Smyth noted that the panel was already installed, and Ms. Mitchell said the HPC could view it at their convenience.

Ms. Mitchell stated that Civil War Trails' (CWT) regional director for Western North Carolina and our area's representative, Peter Koch, would be available to attend the ceremony and provide remarks on behalf of CWT. She reiterated the order of speakers, suggesting that Peter speaks after Chair Smyth and before Mayor George. Chair Smyth suggested Peter instead speaks after Council Member Liaison Roseman, to which Adelia agreed. Chair Smyth inquired about addressing other stakeholders in the remarks. Vice Chair Bond suggested that Mayor George doing that would be appropriate. Ms. Mitchell noted that she thought Chair Smyth may cover that in his remarks. Chair Smyth stated he was willing to do so and would have that language prepared, but

thought that a Town representative addressing the stakeholders may be appropriate. Vice-Chair Bond reiterated the she thought Mayor George addressing the other stakeholders would be appropriate.

Chair Smyth noted that in prior review, he thought that Adelia's remarks tied in well with his own. Adelia stated that she agreed, and had attempted to keep her remarks neutral and fact-based. Ms. Mitchell displayed Adelia's remarks on the meeting room screen and the HPC read them. The HPC was favorable to the remarks, noting small grammatical changes, and Adelia noted that it would be edited. Ms. Mitchell then displayed Chair Smyth's remarks on screen for the HPC to read.

Council Member Liaison Roseman joined via WebEx at 3:18pm, and Ms. Mitchell provided her a short update on the discussion so far. Ms. Mitchell then inquired what Council Member Liaison Roseman's remarks would entail. Council Member Liaison Roseman answered that she intended to deliver a welcome speech that focused on the evolution of the local area to the town of Boone through various historical influences. Chair Smyth was favorable to this, noting that it flows into the theme of Adelia's remarks.

Chair Smyth inquired with Council Member Liaison Roseman about the addressing of stakeholders during the ceremony. She stated that the Mayor could be given a list to read, but that she was also willing to do so prior to her remarks. Vice Chair Bond noted that it might interrupt the flow, and thought it should fall to the Mayor at the end, with which the HPC agreed. Ms. Mitchell stated that she would provide Mayor George with a list of acknowledgements and general outline of the ceremony and order of remarks.

Adelia inquired whether the CWT representative would be sending planned remarks for review. Ms. Mitchell answered that he did not state whether he would or not, so she would notify the HPC if things changed. Vice Chair Bond suggested sending copies of their planned remarks to the CWT representative, but Chair Smyth stated he'd rather not, noting that might imply that the HPC were requesting edits/changes. Ms. Mitchell stated that she will provide Peter a brief synopsis, but will only send draft remarks if he requests them. The HPC briefly discussed Peter's order in speaking, deciding to have him speak second to last, before Mayor George. Ms. Mitchell stated that was the speaking position she originally told him, and he was favorable to it. In the discussion, the speaking order for the remarks was Council Member Liaison Roseman, Adelia Daly, Chair Smyth, Peter Koch, and closing with Mayor George.

Ms. Mitchell inquired if Lane Moody had any input so far. Ms. Moody stated that she liked the order and that the remarks had good flow and were informative. She also noted that links to parking information on the Town's website had recently been fixed, and that those could be useful to send out for this event.

Council Member Liaison Roseman inquired whether refreshments would be provided. Ms. Mitchell stated that there wasn't a plan in place yet, but it could be an option. Chair Smyth noted that though it may be hard to gauge attendance, it could be useful for socialization. Commission Member Carter noted that it could be a good opportunity to encourage attending downtown restaurants, with the date of the ceremony coinciding with Boone Restaurant Week. Ms. Mitchell stated that drinks could likely be provided. The HPC was favorable to this and briefly discussed event logistics.

Vice Chair Bond inquired whether parking in front of the post office would be blocked off for the event. Ms. Mitchell replied that she was unsure and would have to inquire with Public Works about a couple of parking spots blocked.

Ms. Mitchell informed the HPC that CWT had installed the panel and an additional street sign marker on April 27. She welcomed HPC members to look at it at their convenience.

Ms. Mitchell transitioned to discussing the press release quote, revisiting acknowledgement of additional stakeholders. She shared the draft press release on the screen with the HPC Members, noting that the draft had a space for their comments. Chair Smyth pointed out the verbiage of the area being occupied twice, being unsure of the accuracy of that statement. Council Member Liaison Roseman also suggested consistency of naming by using "Town of Boone" rather than "City of Boone," both of which were in the draft. The HPC and Adelia continued to discuss the "twice occupied" verbiage, with Chair Smyth deciding that "twice" should be removed.

Ms. Mitchell stated that she sent the CWT representative the two quotes from DBDA and Historical Society, so they would be included in the press release. She reiterated that the HPC's quote should communicate local excitement and a short description of the project's coming to fruition, in addition to a summary of local historical context. Council Member Liaison Roseman inquired if Eric Plaag, as a previous Town Council and HPC member, would be an appropriate choice for providing a quote as a Town Representative. Ms. Mitchell stated that her understanding was that the quote should instead come from the HPC, adding that it needed to be sent back to CWT today, the day of the meeting. She continued to discuss a framework for the quote and press release logistics with the HPC, displaying a draft on the screen for Commission members to review and edit.

Adelia left the meeting at 3:45pm.

Ms. Mitchell and the HPC continued to review and make small grammar changes to the draft press release, finalizing a draft that all were favorable of. Ms. Mitchell stated she would send the draft to CWT. She also noted that with the panel installation, CWT had also updated their website to display the location with a map pin and summary of the marker in Boone.

Review Final Draft of the Watauga Kraut Factory (Boone/Kraut Creek) Historic Marker Report

Ms. Mitchell opened discussion on the Kraut Creek marker by reiterating that the HPC needed to have a final draft approved before she approached Town Council. She continued to note that per Sewah Studios (the marker company previously used), there is an approximate 6-month turnaround time for fabrication of markers. She also stated that she would still have to obtain approval for the marker's location from Watauga County.

Commission Member Oxendine stated that she had refined the report with the HPC's suggestions. Ms. Mitchell displayed the report on screen for the HPC to review together. The HPC read and discussed the report, making grammatical and content edits.

Ms. Mitchell revisited the marker text options with the HPC, inquiring whether they preferred Option 1 or Option 4. After some discussion of content, verbiage, and grammar, the HPC decided on an edited combination of Options 1 and 4, a draft of which Ms. Mitchell typed out. Ms. Mitchell suggested that the HPC may now recommend the report be forwarded to Town Council alongside a request for funding, noting that any significant change in marker placement location could be addressed later. Ms. Mitchell confirmed the HPC's desired location for the marker and discussed logistics of placement, including signs that already were in place near the site, noting that it would ultimately require approval from Watauga County.

Commission Member Carter made a motion, seconded by Commission Member Gaetano, to recommend that the report be forwarded to Town Council alongside a request for funding of manufacturing and installation of the marker.

Vote: Aye – 5
Nay – 0

The motion passed.

Ms. Mitchell stated that she would ensure the completeness of this item, report and location consideration, prior to presenting it to Town Council. She also updated the HPC that she had put in an action item regarding this for the Town Council meeting on May 27, 2026.

Update on Text Amendment for Public Art (Murals) in the Historic District

Ms. Mitchell opened this discussion by mentioning the staff report, noting that the version of the staff report (shared on the screen) was presented at the Public Hearing held on April 27, 2026. She noted changes included in this staff report that were different from the HPC's last version, including added language about ghost signs (avoiding "false sense of history" with their restorations) and paint material guidelines. Additionally, language was also added in the General Standards section, proposed Section 11.03, to specify paint materials guidelines to be vapor permeable. She stated there would also be an addition the murals table in proposed Section 11.03.04, where there would language added to address murals on panels on unpainted or painted secondary and tertiary elevations, following the guidance in proposed Section 11.03 regarding installations through the mortar joints. She informed Chair Smyth that language to include vacant lots under "non-contributing" had

been added the property types for the mural chart in proposed Section 11.03.04 as well, addressing his question from the previous HPC meeting.

Commission Member Oxendine left the meeting at 4:33 pm.

Chair Smyth inquired if there were any further changes to the text amendment from the last HPC meeting. Ms. Mitchell pointed out a small clarifying change that was made referencing materials in proposed Section 11.03, and offered to send a revised staff report to the HPC members.

Other Matters

Ms. Mitchell transitioned to the Statement of Conformity Report as of April 27, 2026. She briefly highlighted the two items, the first being the HVAC work for the Town of Boone Planning & Inspections office at 680 W King St. She mentioned that part of the conduit on the back of the building would be painted to better blend in to the existing façade materials. The other item on the report was a rooftop HVAC installation for 713 W King St, which Ms. Mitchell stated had been reviewed by Town Staff and was also in progress.

Ms. Mitchell briefly noted that she, along with Amy Snider (Town of Boone Commercial Zoning Administrator), Chair Smyth, and Commission Member Gaetano attended an HPC Certified Local Government training in Hickory on Friday, May 1, 2026, and could share relevant details and ideas at a later date.

Vice Chair Bond inquired if there would be an HPC meeting on Tuesday, May 12, to which Ms. Mitchell reminded the HPC that the Quasi-Judicial (QJ) meeting had been canceled for lack of items. She noted that some QJ meetings may be expected in July based on timelines of current projects.

Adjournment

Commission Member Carter made a motion, seconded by Commission Member Gaetano, to adjourn the meeting at 4:38 pm.

Vote: Aye – 4
Nay – 0

The motion passed.

Vardell Smyth-Chair

David Pedersen, Board Clerk