

**TOWN OF BOONE
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
JULY 9, 2019
3:00 PM**

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

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

Others Present:

Call to Order

Chairperson Eric Plaag called the meeting of the Boone Historic Preservation Commission, held in the Planning & Inspections Downstairs conference room located at 680 West King Street, to order at 3:11 p.m.

Adoption of Agenda

Member Brantz made a motion, seconded by Member Bond to adopt the agenda as written.

Vote:

Aye – All

Nay – None

The motion passed.

Approval of Minutes

Member Bond made a motion, seconded by Member Brantz to approve the June 11, 2019 meeting minutes as amended.

Vote:

Aye – All

Nay – None

Abstentions – (Pollitt and Pearman)

The motion passed.

Member Brantz made a motion, seconded by Vice-Chairperson Pollitt to approve the June 18, 2019 meeting minutes as amended.

Vote:

Aye – All

Nay – None

Abstentions – (Watkins and Pearman)
The motion passed.

Turner House

Chairperson Plaag gave a brief update of the meeting between the Town of Boone representatives and the Watauga County Commissioners regarding the Turner House. The Town representatives that were present at this meeting were: Mayor Rennie Brantz, Boone Town Manager Mr. John Ward and Historic Preservation Commission Chairperson Eric Plaag.

Chairperson Plaag talked about the potential traffic issue with having a parking garage on Queen Street or beside Town Hall on West King Street. He said the locations of these two proposed parking garages would bring traffic into the Downtown area and cause potential traffic congestion.

Chairperson Plaag said that at the meeting, the County Commissioners voiced their frustrations on parking. He suggested that the Boone Chamber of Commerce and the Tourism Development Association make the Turner house their new home. He also noted that Mr. Ward showed concern for taking on another residential property. He explained that the County noted that they cannot purchase the Deal, Moseley and Smith building. He said the County might have a chance to purchase with the Town the Mr. Ben Miller lot on the corner of River Street and South Water Street and work together to build a parking lot. He explained that the Town could contribute \$775,000.00 in exchange for the County giving the Town the Turner House.

Discussion ensued on ideas for the Turner House. Some of the ideas for the Turner house were to use it for a museum and have walking tours, use it for Digital Watauga or use it for Boone's Visitor Center and have a one-hour parking minimum or it could be rented for five years to create an endowment fund.

Chairperson Plaag suggested that the Turner House be saved because it is in the heart of Downtown Boone and it has historical significance.

Motion and Vote:

Member Brantz made a motion, seconded by Member Bond to ask Historic Preservation Commission Chairperson Eric Plaag to present the Turner House ideas to Mr. John Ward, Boone Town Manager. The Boone Historic Preservation Commission suggested the following ideas for the Turner House: use the house for Digital Watauga, Visitor's Center, Museum, Tourist Development Association, and Boone Chamber of Commerce and possibly rent the building for five years to create an endowment fund.

Vote:

Aye – All

Nay – None

The motion passed.

Discussion ensued on reasons to save the Turner House. The HPC members were in consensus that the Turner House is an anchor in the Historic District, and they did not want to see the Turner House demolished to build a parking lot.

Junaluska Marker Application

Chairperson Plaag read aloud the draft application found on page ten of the meeting packet. He explained that it is the goal of the HPC to complete the draft application by their August 2019 meeting and send it to the members of the Junaluska Heritage Association for their review and meet with them to get their feedback on it.

Chairperson Plaag talked about having the text for the marker ready by October of 2019 to discuss and partner with the JHA members to make sure they are comfortable with the marker text.

Chairperson Plaag talked about completing the draft application including the following topics: Brannock's history of land selling and purchases, emergence of the African Street history, photos of the hillside from 1905 through 1915 and photos of the church from 1918 through 1919, mysterious cemetery next to the church, Boone's modified form of segregation for Boone businesses and employment, World War I and II veterans, Pentecostal Baptist Church and black school integration.

Historic Design Guidelines

Chairperson Plaag suggested tabling this agenda item to the next HPC meeting on August 13, 2019.

Motion and Vote:

Member Bond made a motion, seconded by Member Brantz to table the Historic Design Guidelines agenda item to the next Historic Preservation Commission meeting on August 13, 2019.

Vote:

Aye-All

Nay – None

The motion passed.

Other Matters by Commission Members or Staff

Chairperson Plaag explained that he had spoken to Mr. John Cooper about restoring the mural on the Mast General Store building, when the brick veneer collapses. He also talked about saving the signage at the Newton and Vidalia's buildings, he said he would like to see the Town of Boone work with the property owners on said signage to restore the historic elements.

Member Bond informed the HPC members of the upcoming 2019 events in the Town:

- August 7, Vice-Chairperson Phoebe Pollitt will be speaking on the history of nursing at 5:30 p.m. at the Watauga County Library
- August 13, Historic Preservation Commission meeting in the Planning & Inspections Department at 3:00 p.m.
- September 4, Watauga County Historical Society annual meeting, Dr. Gary Boye will be speaking on Doc Watson in the Watauga County Library at 5:30 p.m.
- October 2019, Appalachian Theatre opening
- October 4, Appalachian Theatre photos on display at Jones House
- October 4, Rufus Edmisten's auto biography at the Jones House
- October 16, Chairperson Eric Plaag will be speaking at the Watauga County Library on the Appalachian photos
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Adjournment

Member Brantz made a motion, seconded by Vice-Chairperson Pollitt to adjourn the meeting at 4:56 p.m.

Vote:

Aye – All

Nay – None

The motion passed.

Eric Plaag, Chairperson

Marlene Crosby, Board Secretary