

TOWN OF BOONE
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
AUGUST 2, 2022, 3:00 p.m.

Historic Preservation Commission Members in Attendance:

Chair Eric Plaag, Vice-Chair Bettie Bond, and Chuck Watkins

Council Liaisons: Virginia Roseman

Town Staff in Attendance:

Jane Shook-Director of Planning & Inspections, Jessica Mitchell-Long-Range/Special Projects Planner, Mark Freed-Director of Cultural Resources, Rick Miller-Director of Public Works Department, and Marlene Crosby-Board Secretary

Others in Attendance: Tim Futrelle-Mayor, Amy Davis-Interim Town Manager, Josh Eller-Public Works Deputy Director, and Jody Feimster

Call to Order

Chair Eric Plaag called the Boone Historic Preservation Commission meeting, held via WebEx, to order at 3:00 p.m.

Adoption of Agenda

Ms. Shook explained that she had a request from Town staff to amend the agenda by moving the Cemetery/Flagpole Discussion to between items four and five.

Vice-Chair Bond made a motion, seconded by Member Watkins, to adopt the agenda as amended.

Vote: Aye – All

Nay – None

The motion passed.

Approval of Minutes

Chair Plaag proposed the following changes to July 5, 2022, meeting minutes:

On page two, in the fourth paragraph and last line, change “Troy” to “Coy.”

On page three, in the fourth paragraph in line three, place quotation marks around “scaled.”

On page three, in the fourth paragraph in line four, add a closing quotation mark after “side walls.”

On page four, in the second paragraph in line three, change “whom” to “who”

On page four, in the fifth paragraph in the last line, remove “know to.”

On page five, in the first paragraph in the second sentence, remove “told” to “said.”

Public Comment

No individuals requested the opportunity to speak during public comment.

Cemetery Flagpole Discussion

Chair Plaag gave a brief history of why this topic has come before the HPC. He said he had been working with Mr. Mark Freed, the Cultural Resource Director, and Mr. Trent Margrif from Appalachian State University on planning cemetery tours in the fall. He said he received emails from Mr. Margrif about activity in the cemetery. He explained that Mr. Margrif showed concern for the recently erected flagpole near the crest of the hill within the historically white section of the Boone cemetery. Mr. Margrif told Chair Plaag that the new flag pole was close to the Hardin family gravestones. Chair Plaag said he did not know about the flagpole being erected in the cemetery. He noted that Mr. Margrif had tried to pinpoint when the flagpole had been erected, and after doing some research, he determined that it might have been erected between Flag Day and Memorial Day. He said that Mr. Margrif also noted that several stones that he was familiar with had been removed from the cemetery, and at least one had reappeared. Mr. Margrif also stated in his email that some of the other stones in the cemetery appeared to have

been cleaned. Chair Plaag said that once he learned this information, he informed Ms. Jane Shook, Director of Planning and Inspections, Ms. Jessica Mitchell, Long Range/Special Projects Planner, Ms. Allison Meade, Town Attorney, and later Ms. Amy Davis, Interim Town Manager. Chair Plaag said he had not seen the topics of the flagpole or the cleaning of the headstones on a Council Agenda.

Chair Plaag voiced his concern about the cleaning of the headstones. He said that people with good intentions would try to clean headstones, and they can do irreversible damage to a headstone by not following the preferred methodologies for cleaning headstones.

Chair Plaag pointed out that the HPC has been asked in the past about the possibility of making the cemetery a local historic landmark. He stated that it seemed odd to him that a very large flagpole with no historical basis was being installed in the cemetery, given that it changes the historic landscape of the cemetery. He said this is the reason for his inquiry to the Town staff. He noted that Ms. Shook and Ms. Mitchell had researched the flagpole and the cleaning of the stones.

Ms. Shook noted that Mr. Rick Miller, the Director of the Public Works Department, was available to answer questions at the meeting. Ms. Shook explained that Mr. Miller's department had contacted the Planning and Inspections Department this past fall to verify that the cemetery was not a historical landmark, confirmed the requirement for whether or not it was in the historic district, and they asked if there were regulations for the erection of a flag pole. Ms. Shook explained that the Public Works department is charged with facilities maintenance, including the cemetery. She said the Public Works department used its discretionary funds to purchase and erect the flagpole. She said they also used those funds to hire a company to clean the headstones, which they thought was part of the requirements of maintaining the cemetery.

Chair Plaag opened the floor for the HPC members to ask questions of Mr. Miller. Vice-Chair Bond said she was interested in knowing who made the initial request to erect the flagpole. Mr. Miller said the Public Works department staff determined the initial request. He explained that the staff thought erecting a flagpole in the cemetery was appropriate because veterans are buried there. He added that most Town properties have a flagpole erected on them.

Chair Plaag noted that he understood that the flagpole funds came from a discretionary budget. Chair Plaag asked Mr. Miller if it is common for the public works staff to make decisions about features on Town-owned property without input from the Council. Mr. Miller explained that once his department receives the funds, they use them to make improvements and do not go to Council to see if they have a certain design for their projects. Chair Plaag asked Mr. Miller if the Public Works department provides a list of projects to Council each year for their approval. Mr. Miller said that as long as the Public Works department stays at a \$15,000.00 threshold on their projects, they do not have to go back to Council for project approval. Mr. Miller said if the project cost exceeds the \$15,000.00 threshold, the Public Works department goes to Council to make them aware of it.

Chair Plaag asked Mr. Miller to tell the HPC about the company that cleaned the headstones. Mr. Miller said that the Public Works staff contracted with the East Tennessee Monuments to clean the headstones. Mr. Miller said the Public Works staff removed the missing headstone to try to repair it. Chair Plaag asked Mr. Miller about the specific cleaning methods that were used to clean the headstones. Mr. Miller said the Public Works department did not know the monument company's process for cleaning the headstones, and trusted the monument company to clean the stones since they were familiar with monuments.

Chair Plaag asked Mr. Miller if an estimate was provided in advance for the work in terms of how they would be doing the work or what was involved in the process. Mr. Miller said the Public Works department received a price quote, requested a purchase order, then the work took place, and the monument company was paid for the work they performed.

Member Watkins asked Chair Plaag if the HPC had heard about the cleaning of the stones before this meeting. Chair Plaag said no, he did not know about cleaning the stones before this meeting. Mr. Miller told the HPC that the Public Works department did not think they had to come to the HPC for feedback because there was no historic district or registered landmark at this town property. Mr. Miller further explained that when the Public Works department erected the flagpole and cleaned the headstones, he did not see the cemetery as any different from the other town properties where they work.

Chair Plaag voiced his frustration when the Bolick property was used for fire department practice; he said the HPC was not consulted about it. He said that after that time, the HPC invited Mr. John Ward, the former Town Manager, to attend an HPC meeting to talk about the importance of keeping the HPC in the loop when potentially historic properties are going to be modified in a particular way. Chair Plaag explained that the HPC had a promise from Mr. Ward that moving forward, after the Bolick house was burned down, that the Town staff would keep the HPC in the loop. Chair Plaag said he felt that we are back at that situation again, especially since the staff knows how much time the HPC has spent documenting that cemetery and securing funds to improve the appearance of it. Chair Plaag said the HPC had been in discussions to figure out what type of fencing would look best there and how to deal with the fence dividing the two sections in the cemetery. Chair Plaag said he was surprised that the Public Works department staff did not consider the possibility of coming to the HPC to get their input on the best way to approach the erection of the flag pole and the cleaning of the headstones.

Mr. Miller reiterated that the Public Works staff did consult with the Planning department, and their response is what he based his decision on regarding the said topics. Mr. Miller said he didn't think the HPC wanted the Public Works department to come to the HPC with everything his department was doing to older buildings around town. Ms. Shook confirmed that the Public Works department staff proceeded with erecting the flagpole based on their response from the Planning department. She said that the Public Works department has not historically been in the business of caring for cemeteries, which is something new to them. She said that the Planning department staff person that Mr. Miller's staff person spoke with may not have been aware that the cemetery may be on a list for a potential historic landmark. She said the concern should not lay fully with the Public Works department because the Planning department had a hand in the actions that led to the erection of the flagpole itself. She said if Council would like to give a different direction on moving forward, she and Mr. Miller would be happy to accept that direction and make the necessary adjustments.

Chair Plaag pointed out that his general impression and feeling as an HPC member is that the Town employees do not consider the work of the HPC and their ability to advise the Town on how to take care of its resources as important. Ms. Shook stated that she does not feel that there was any ill intent with the circumstances at the cemetery; she told Chair Plaag that she regrets that he feels that way. Ms. Shook said she was unsure that Mr. Ward's promise was communicated clearly to the other Town departments. She and Mr. Miller assured Chair Plaag that their actions were not intentional. Mr. Miller reiterated that the Public Works department thought they had gone through all the steps before working in the cemetery. Chair Plaag told Mr. Miller that he hoped we all see this as a learning opportunity regarding this property and other properties and not get in a situation that could be misinterpreted in the future.

Chair Plaag asked Mr. Miller why they erected the flagpole in this specific location versus on the line between the two historically white and black sections. Mr. Miller said the location was based on the topography of the cemetery. Mr. Miller said the Public Works department followed the HPC recommendations and rules approved by Council to erect the flagpole (Boone Cemetery Rules and Regulations, effective March 17, 2016 on file via Council minutes). Mr. Miller added that the flagpole was put in by hand and no equipment was used to install it.

Chair Plaag asked Mr. Miller if Mr. Ward or Ms. Amy Davis, Interim Town Manager, had an opportunity to sign off on the part of the protocols for the cemetery. Chair Plaag said that the Town Manager is supposed to review these protocols. Mr. Miller said no because this language interpretation was for burials, headstones, and signage. He said he did not interpret the language to include flagpoles. Member Watkins asked Chair Plaag if the Town

Manager was supposed to approve headstone changes. Chair Plaag noted that the protocols approved in 2016 call for any new internment to be approved, as well as modification of grave sites and the erection of new headstones.

Member Watkins requested from Mr. Miller the kind of treatment used on the headstones. Mr. Miller said the Public Works department would provide the HPC with information on the cleaning the headstones. He said the headstones were cleaned two years ago. Chair Plaag asked if the headstones on the historically black and white sections were cleaned. Mr. Miller clarified that the headstones in both sections of the cemetery were cleaned, as well as the Junaluska marker.

Ms. Shook said that if the HPC wants regular information regarding the job tasks of the Public Works department for things like the cleaning of headstones, we need to discuss the job tasks. Chair Plaag said the HPC could create a list of maintenance items that could potentially be done on Town properties that the HPC would like to review. She explained that she would ask Council for direction on this and bring that information back to the HPC. Mr. Miller told Chair Plaag that he read through the HPC recommendations and Boone Cemetery rules, and there was nothing about cleaning the headstones. Mr. Miller said the Austin and Barnes Funeral Home had recommended the stone cleaning company to the Public Works department staff.

Chair Plaag followed up with Mr. Miller regarding the headstone the public works department had taken to repair. He asked Mr. Miller if he had a long-term work plan for maintaining headstones. Mr. Miller said no, but he is currently investigating the best way to make a plan to maintain the headstones. Chair Plaag suggested that Mr. Miller prioritize the headstone cleaning; he said the HPC might be able to advise on the damaged stones.

Chair Plaag said that some concern had been expressed about the cemetery tours being considered to occur in the fall because there have been headstones stolen from the cemetery in the past. He said that we might need to think about the cemetery's security and other issues that can help us maintain it better than what is currently being done.

Ms. Davis said that she agreed with Ms. Shook and Mr. Miller that there was no intention from the Town staff not to consider the HPC. She said she would work with Ms. Shook and Mr. Miller to put something together for the Council to review in the future. Ms. Davis apologized to the HPC and noted that she was unaware of the work done in the cemetery.

Chair Plaag noted that about three years ago, the HPC had to stop work in the cemetery shortly after the pandemic because of other more pressing issues involving the downtown district. He said that the HPC still has work in the cemetery, and it is on the HPC's work plan for later this year or early next year.

Discussion of Existing Café Portofino Building – Town Council Request for Consensus by the HPC on Historic Value/Additional Facts of Building

Ms. Mitchell reminded the HPC that a decision still needs to be made on this item regarding the additional requested materials.

Chair Plaag talked about the parts of the building that are historical and not historical to the building. He said that the applicant submitted a supplemental report based on the survey. He said the bar area on the southwest corner is not historic to the building. He referred to aerial images from the 1950 Palmer Blair Collection that show this building without the bar area. He said the apartments are not original nor historic to the building, and the plywood cladding is not original. The underlying horizontal boards are original to the building, and the two staircases that go to the apartments are not original. He said the front shed roof porch on the Rivers Street side was a later addition. He said in terms of deciding what to save of the building, if there is a desire to move the historic parts somewhere else, those other elements, as discussed earlier, could be discarded without there being a loss to the integrity of the building, provided that discarding them doesn't damage the historical elements. He said the

potential mover of the building would need to comment on whether they can demo the apartments without destroying the building itself.

Council Liaison Roseman asked how beneficial it would be for the apartments to be moved to another place like the Farmers Market to provide office space. Chair Plaag noted in his opinion that the value of this building is its historical significance, not its architectural significance. The historical significance is in the building's association with the tobacco trade, and the last remaining building in Boone as a marker of this trade. He recommended moving the exterior plywood paneling because it harms the architectural and historical integrity of the building. He noted that the original construction is not visible. He stated that if the Town wants to invest in moving the building, the goal would be to point to this building and say that it is a relic of Boone's tobacco past.

Member Watkins said that the property without the building is worth more than the property with the building. He said if you move the building from that lot, it no longer contributes to it. He said you could build a building with the duplicate square footage elsewhere for less money than it would cost to move that building and rehab it. He said he did not see moving any part of this building being a good decision for the Town.

Vice-Chair Bond said she did not think the building was worth moving. She suggested that the new Portofino Hotel name its bar area the "Prize Room" and incorporate the history of the Austin Tobacco Company Prize Room in it.

Chair Plaag said it is generally easier to move a house than to move giant warehouse buildings that were not built with long-term structural integrity in mind.

Chair Plaag asked how important it is to the Town of Boone to have the building elsewhere in Town and maybe repurposed as an agricultural building at the Farmer's Market and whether it is worth the expenditure for the wood. He expressed that building new construction with a section devoted to Boone's architectural history, including the tobacco trade, would be a more valuable use of the money.

Council Liaison Roseman asked if there were any memorabilia, carvings, or something similar within the structure that pays homage to its past. Chair Plaag said there was no reference to anything like that in this report. He said that the consultant that prepared the report might not have been looking for signatures of the tobacco workers there in 1940. He said the sign on the front of the building was the only thing that spoke to the history of the building. He said this sign inaccurately described it as a Tweetsie building, which he clarified was never a Tweetsie building or a part of the Tweetsie depot.

Mr. Freed added that he has possession of a Burley tobacco scale that could be refurbished and placed in Downtown and viewed by the community. Chair Plaag said he liked the idea of the community being able to view the Burley tobacco scale.

Discussion ensued on the removal of non-historic additions. Ms. Shook asked Chair Plaag about his experience and what has been the success of removing non-historic branches. Chair Plaag said he had seen many projects where non-historic additions are removed, but the building itself is not moved. He said those are almost always successful. He said there are some exceptions, but generally speaking, those are usually done well and can be inexpensive.

Chair Plaag talked about the harm done by removing the southwest addition of the building. He said that part of the original skin of that building is missing where that addition was attached, and it is now lost. He said that given the descriptions of the deferred maintenance we heard from testimonies about this case, there is a real possibility that this whole building will fall apart if someone tries to move it.

Council Liaison Roseman asked if it would be too much to ask before the building is demolished to see if there is something behind the exterior of the building that we might want to keep. Chair Plaag said that at this point, he

thought we were limited in what you can require of the applicant. He pointed out that they have their COA to demolish it. He asked Ms. Shook if she could check and see if there could be a condition placed on the approval to make Council Liaison Roseman's request permissible.

Chair Plaag said it is difficult to get a moved property on the National Register because moving the structure from the property often removes its historical context. He said this building does not have national or state-level significance. He said it is architecturally flawed and moving destroys its historical integrity and association. Chair Plaag said there was consensus by the HPC that the only value to moving the structure was the commercial value of the structure.

Ms. Shook explained that the Town hired Destination by Design to create a West Downtown Live Plan a few years ago. She said in the said plan they used the Burley Warehouse scale as a feature within the proposed walkway connecting the old Burley Warehouse to Howard Street.

Ms. Shook asked Chair Plaag if the Staff, moving forward, needed to work on a recommendation for a condition of approval on the COA that they offer the building to the Town to move. Chair Plaag believed this may be reviewed case by case in the future.

Historic District/Landmark Design Standards

Chair Plaag talked about Appendix D, Section 14 New Construction Standards. He said that he noticed in the quasi-judicial cases the HPC has heard this far, at least on two occasions, there has been a reference to the language in Section 14. He asked the Staff to try to make the language clear that we are referring to historically appropriate features on nearby or neighboring buildings. He said he would like to make sure that inappropriate treatments or inappropriate historic treatments on neighboring buildings aren't used as justification for an improper historical treatment on new construction.

Discussion ensued on the painting of structures. Ms. Shook said it is already allowed to re-paint of existing painted structures. She said she would like the HPC's feedback on this language that reads, "complementary to neighboring buildings" from Section 9. Paint and Paint Color of Appendix D. Chair Plaag asked Ms. Shook if she was talking about painted masonry surfaces. He said that it should generally feature colors congruous with the historic district. Ms. Shook said she thought this topic warrants further discussion.

Council Liaison Roseman noted that she is part of Ms. Amber Bateman's, Director of Watauga County Arts Council, committee to review public art. She said that the committee was concerned about the language regarding color palettes. Council Liaison Roseman said the language references color palettes but nothing neon. She said they suggested a more precise definition of the colors. Ms. Shook noted that in the recently approved public art standards, they left the colors wide open except to cut back on fluorescent, neon color.

Discussion ensued on a recommended color chart. Member Watkins asked Chair Plaag if a color chart was recommended for the Downtown. Chair Plaag said there used to be a reference to Sherwin Williams; Chair Plaag asked Ms. Shook if that color chart still existed. Ms. Shook said that was the town-wide color palette in the UDO. Ms. Shook explained that the staff uses the palette in the Planning and Inspections office. She explained it does not have to be Sherwin Williams; the staff will compare the paint sample that is submitted to the color chart as long as the LRV value doesn't exceed 60, it is permitted.

Project Updates by Planning Staff

Public Arts Standard in the Historic District – Text Amendment

Ms. Mitchell said that the Council approved these standards on July 27, 2022, and the revisions have already been incorporated into the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) and on the Town website.

Demolition Standards in the Historic District – Text Amendment

Ms. Mitchell said that the Council approved these standards on July 27, 2022, and the revisions have already been incorporated into the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) and on the Town website.

Certified Local Government (CLG) Application Status Update

Ms. Mitchell said she had included a detailed update memo in the meeting packet for the HPC to review. She said the activities list in the meeting packet consists of the ongoing projects from 2020 to the present. She asked the HPC if they had questions regarding the materials in the meeting packet. She noted that the final submission is planned for mid-to-late August with a slight delay to include the new HPC member that Council recently appointed.

Ms. Mitchell noted that Staff is coordinating an orientation date for the new HPC member. She said she wants to delay the final submission to ensure the new member gets incorporated into the CLG submission for the member's resumes. Chair Plaag voiced his concern with the new member; he said will the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) require that the new member have all of the quasi-judicial training and any other CLG elements before considering the HPC's CLG application. Ms. Mitchell explained that the new member would have to have at least one training session that will be included in their orientation. Ms. Mitchell said that the new member could include in their resume that they are open to additional training sessions. Ms. Shook added that the HPC and the Board of Adjustment members use the training modules from the School of Government. Chair Plaag asked Ms. Mitchell if the new member would cause a significant delay in the CLG process. Ms. Mitchell said the only delay would be trying to contact him. She said Staff is sending him an official letter and getting him scheduled for the orientation and training.

Watauga County Jail Local Landmark Designation Report – Update

Ms. Mitchell said this report was sent to SHPO in July and SHPO has started to review it. She said it had passed their technical review and is being passed along to the next step in the process. She said the 30-day comment period has begun, and the staff should receive an answer from SHPO by August 19. She said she would present those comments to the HPC at that time. She said the next steps would be to take the information through the public hearing process.

Status of Historical Markers (Council's Store and Hayes-Bryan-Greene Cemetery)

Ms. Mitchell said she had contacted Sewah Studios and was told they were six months behind on the markers. She said the upside to that comment is that she did submit the marker text in the spring, and they hope to begin looking at these orders this week. She said this is quite a delay knowing that original plans were to install in this summer or early fall of this year. She said she intended to contact the company again and get a new status on the markers.

Intern: Local Landmark Designation Reports/Digital Watauga Project

Ms. Mitchell said Staff had worked it out to split up the work into two different projects. She said one project would be done through Digital Watauga, and the other would be considered a part-time employee as an intern working on the local landmark designation reports for the previously discussed properties.

Ms. Mitchell explained Staff had worked it out to where the photography project would be invoiced in one lump sum for the intern as a part-time, temporary employee of the Watauga County Public Library supervised by Digital Watauga. For the landmark report, she said the intern would coordinate with Ms. Shook or Planning Staff on the hours worked. Ms. Mitchell said there is an agreement that the intern does not have to work in the Planning and Inspections office, but can work in another location under guidelines provided by Staff. Ms. Shook clarified that the position is not like a traditional internship but a part-time, temporary position. Chair Plaag confirmed with Ms. Shook that this arrangement is to cover the two specific tasks.

Chair Plaag told Ms. Davis that he would provide the Town with an invoice from Digital Watauga for the intern's work on the photography project.

Project Updates by HPC Members

Downtown Boone Walking Tour – Revisions

Chair Plaag reminded the HPC members that there was a consensus at the last meeting that the Watauga Historical Society would take the lead in trying to figure a path forward in cooperation with the town on the Downtown Boone Walking Tour. He told Vice-Chair Bond that perhaps the Watauga Historical Society needs to meet and figure out a strategy before more public forum discussion. Vice-Chair Bond agreed with Chair Plaag to have a meeting to discuss a strategy for the walking tour.

Boone 150 Project Updates

Chair Plaag asked Mr. Mark Freed, Director of Cultural Resources, to give a brief update on the projects he has been working on for the Boone 150 Celebration. Mr. Freed said there had been some discussion on having guided docent cemetery tours at the Boone Cemetery on Fridays, starting with the first Friday in October, which would include Halloween. Additionally, there are plans to do a Boone Summit at the Appalachian Theatre, which will consist of having historians and people from academia come and talk about some different angles of Daniel Boone's travels and life and in particular his interactions with the High Country. He said he has been working with the Southern Appalachian Historical Association (SAHA) and some community members to present before the end of the year some sacred music celebrations. He said the sacred music celebrations were initially scheduled for later this month, but they are working on an indoor location to have a controlled environment. He said the Friday night concerts and Doc Watson Day are coming up as well as the Boone Boo. He also mentioned continuing to work on the "Boone Reads Together Program" at the Watauga County Library. He said the Junaluska Oral History Book community event would be held on September 10th at the Watauga County Library. He said a larger community celebration of the public read program would be at the Appalachian State University Schaefer Center on September 20, 2022. Vice-Chair Bond said the University has chosen the Junaluska book for their community read. Dr. Jim Hamilton, a local author, will discuss the ginseng project and his mystery novel. She suggested having a New Year's Eve party rather than a Christmas party to celebrate and thank everyone who worked on the Boone 150 events.

Boone Cemetery Interpretative Panels

Chair Plaag said he plans to have the interpretative panel draft ready for the HPC to review at their September 6, 2022, advisory meeting.

Stoneman's Raid Interpretative Panels

Chair Plaag said that he plans to have the interpretative panel draft ready for the HPC to review by the October 4, 2022, advisory meeting.

Electric Vehicle Charging Station at the Downtown Boone Post Office

Ms. Shook explained that the Town recently updated its electric vehicle charging stations ordinance. She said the Town granted an exception for the installation of charging stations in public locations that are in the public right-of-way. She noted that charging station installations are not required to get a zoning permit. She said this was facilitated to encourage the installation of charging stations. Ms. Shook pointed out that the Planning department is already converting its fleet; they have two hybrids, and the next new vehicle will be fully electric.

Ms. Shook presented to the HPC the plans shown in the meeting packet for the EV charging station planned to be installed behind the post office and planning department.

Ms. Shook mentioned that the EV charging station was installed on the right-to-way in front of the post office on King Street. She said that it has very minimal impact overall on the property. Chair Plaag asked if the EV charging station was installed before there was a district. Ms. Shook explained that the Town planned out the location for the charging station before the historic district was approved, but it was installed after the historic district was approved. She said the Town waited until the sidewalk work was completed before they installed the charging

station. She said the Town had installed the EV charging stations on other town properties within the district, just not on a landmark property.

Chair Plaag noted that this topic goes back to where the HPC had conversations about whether the Stoneman's Raid marker should go in front of the post office, on North Depot Street, or behind the post office. He said the HPC expressed concern that the marker might distract from the historic viewscape of the post office. He said maybe this was not the best location for the charger, given the proximity of the landmark. He said that moving forward, it would be helpful to have conversations about where the chargers are being placed in the historic district to minimize the potential impact on the historic district. Ms. Shook said that Chair Plaag made a fair point about having conversations regarding charging stations before their placement. She said that at the same time, she felt the idea behind the proposal for the language was that the Town could install them because they were seen as minimal type of infrastructure improvements. Chair Plaag said he felt the exemption gives the Town the latitude to do what they see fit without the input of the HPC. He suggested that the town ask the HPC for their input to help collectively meet its goals.

Ms. Shook pointed out that the Public Works department does many things daily, weekly, and monthly, and she does not know everything they do. She said she thought it would be helpful, now that we have a historic district, to review a list of expectations from the Public Works department to make sure the district standards are being followed.

Vice-Chair Bond left the meeting at approximately 4:58 p.m.

Chair Plaag added that the HPC would be interested in reviewing and giving feedback on charging stations and other elements, particularly within the historic district or near a landmark; Member Watkins agreed with Chair Plaag that the HPC should have an opportunity to give their feedback on the charging stations and other elements being placed in the historic district.

Ms. Shook added that it was not the Town's intent not to be cooperative with the EV charging station. She said the EV charging station in front of the post office was installed in the right-of-way. She apologized that the Town did not consider the placement of the electric charger in the right-of-way to be something that the HPC would want to review. Chair Plaag explained it is not a required review but simply a conversation about what the Town plans to do and to allow the HPC to give feedback if available. Ms. Shook said now we know that we always need to take this step.

Council Liaison Roseman asked Ms. Shook if there is another set of EV charging stations scheduled to be installed not near a landmark but on King Street near the courthouse. She said she felt that the HPC's input should be considered on these chargers. Ms. Shook explained that the Town has the chargers, and they are waiting on the sidewalks to be completed before they install them.

Chair Plaag concluded that he thought there is a way to go forward on these kinds of projects, where it is just a matter of telling the HPC what the Town is proposing to do. He said if the Town has some options on what they are doing, they could ask the HPC which option they think would be least intrusive to the historic district. He said this approach allows for a cooperative approach to the many goals of the town.

Member Watkins added that the appearance of the front elevation of the post office is particularly important; he said the HPC previously fought to maintain the original appearance of this building. He said they had to bring in consultants from Pennsylvania to discuss the appearance of the building. He noted that the community is protective of the appearance of it.

In summary, Ms. Shook added that she thought there might be processes that the Town can implement at the beginning of the planning period to discuss other projects as they come up. She suggested that we be more explicit

and intentional with what we think our experts say and what those expectations are so that everyone works together.

Chair Plaag said the proposed EV charging station installation behind the post office is on a landmark property. He said he thought the location that has been presented is the best location for it, and most importantly, it is in the tertiary elevation of the property.

Ms. Shook informed the HPC that the Town plans to put in a sidewalk on Queen Street that is proposed to connect Linney Street to Depot Street. Chair Plaag said he strongly supports the idea of sidewalks on the south side of Queen Street.

Other Discussion

Ms. Mitchell pointed out that Council approved for Member Watkins to continue to serve on the HPC until another HPC member is appointed to replace his position on the board. She thanked Member Watkins for continuing to serve until we can try to get new members and get them on the board. Council Liaison Roseman also thanked Member Watkins for his service on the board.

Recessed Meeting

At 5:15 p.m., Chair Plaag announced that he is continuing the meeting until Tuesday, August 9, 2022, at 3 p.m. via WebEx or until the next regularly scheduled quasi-judicial hearing date.

Eric Plaag, Chair

Marlene Crosby, Board Secretary