

**Boone Historic Preservation Commission
Meeting Minutes
August 14, 2018
3:00 p.m.**

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

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

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 3:06 p.m.

Adoption of Agenda

Chairperson Plaag stated that he wanted to add the following items to the agenda: Power House Update after the Approval of Minutes, after the 1940 Flood Marker Event Ceremony Recap he wanted to discuss what the next marker project should be, as part of the Phase I Survey Update he wanted to discuss the possible revision to the historic boundary.

Member Brantz stated that he has spoken to the Town Manager regarding the Boone Cemetery. He said the next step to be taken at the cemetery is the setting of the stones that divide the two cemetery sides inside the cemetery and the addition of interpretative panels.

Chairperson Plaag added that he had spoken to Town Manager about the interpretative panels and the Town Manager is looking to the HPC to create a design for the panels.

Chairperson Plaag encouraged the HPC members to help him by taking on the role of completing the background work for such things as the next marker project and the interpretative panels such as writing the text and selecting the images to be put in the panels.

Member Chuck Watkins joined the meeting at 3:10 p.m.

Ms. Christy Turner, Senior Planner wanted to add Overlay Zoning for the Landmarks to the agenda after the Phase I Survey Update.

Vice-Chairperson Pearman made a motion, seconded by Member Bond to accept the agenda as amended.

Vote:

Aye – All
Nay – None

The motion passed.

Chairperson Plaag welcomed Ms. Lane Weiss, the new Downtown Boone Development Coordinator to the meeting. She introduced herself and stated that prior to her new position with the Town, she had been an employee of the Town of Boone for 9 years in the Public Works Department as their Water Conservation Coordinator.

Approval of Minutes

Chairperson Plaag pointed out that on page two of the July 10, 2018 meeting minutes under the Discussion of the HPC's Role at the Sustainability Event in the second paragraph that it was Ms. Turner who would be coordinating the setup of the banner panels. Chairperson Plaag added that he would be providing the informational cards and creating the text for the proposed tri-fold panel banner for this event. Chairperson Plaag also pointed out a word change on page four under Phase I Survey Report Entries Update in the first sentence, change "rating" to "submission".

Member Brantz made a motion, seconded by Member Bond to approve the July 10, 2018 meeting minutes with the changes listed above.

Vote:

Aye –
Nay – None

The motion passed.

Power House Update

Ms. Turner explained that the Council has authorized Mayor Brantz to send the approved letter to Mr. Ed Miller at New River Light and Power Company and someone at Appalachian State University. Chairperson Plaag said the 80-page report was also sent to Council along with the letter for their review.

Discussion ensued on who to send the letter to at ASU. Chairperson Plaag and Member Bond agreed that the letter should not go directly to the Chancellor's office but could be sent to the Vice-Chancellors office.

Chairperson Plaag suggested that Member Brantz forward the discussion of today's meeting to the Council with the HPC's recommendation regarding where the letter should be sent to at ASU. Member Brantz agreed with this suggestion from Chairperson Plaag.

Member Bond suggested recommending a deadline for the potential repairs of the power house.

Sustainability Tri-Fold Panel Review

Chairperson Plaag reviewed the following three panels: Creative Solutions, Lost Boone and Successful Preservation. He asked for feedback on suggested changes to the three panels (permanently attached).

Chairperson Plaag began discussion on the Creative Solutions panel. He said that he thinks that last year the façade grant amount was raised from \$2,000.00 to \$5,000.00. He asked Ms. Weiss to confirm the amount of the façade grant and email that information to him.

Member Watkins pointed out a possible change on the first line under Local Legislation and Planning. Chairperson Plaag said he would change part of the first line to read: "Recognizing the potential threat of some redevelopment projects proposed for Boone.

Chairperson Plaag began discussion on the Lost Boone panel. He said that he received an email from new Member Phoebe Pollitt. She stated in the email that the wording showed more of an episodic threat than a constant threat. He said she did not support that there was discussion of changes in the 1920's, the 1960's through the 1990's and the 2000's and that all along there has been a constant threat. He said he agreed with her, but he also believes that the three areas that he highlighted is where the pressure was at its highest point.

Member Watkins recommended a word change in the first sentence of the third paragraph to change threats to pressures.

Chairperson Plaag began discussion on the Successful Preservation panel. He said that he created this panel with the topics that the HPC could review and make recommendations on.

Ms. Turner stated that there have been recent changes to the map on the Warehouse District on the map shown on this panel. Chairperson Plaag asked if the Town Planning Staff could update this map, he could incorporate it in this panel. Member Bond suggested having a larger map to be displayed at the event. Ms. Turner said the Town Planning Staff would check on having a larger map printed.

Discussion ensued on the removing of the Warehouse District from the proposed map. Member Brantz said the reason this was done is because there was no evidence of any warehouses in this area today and it would be hard to convince it as historical.

Member Brantz made a motion, seconded by Vice-Chairperson Pearman to authorize Chairperson Plaag to have the three tri-fold panels to be printed with the word change from "threats" to "pressures" on the Lost Boone panel and the revision of words in the first sentence of the second paragraph on the Creative Solutions panel under Local Legislation and Planning: "Recognizing the potential threat of some redevelopment projects proposed for Boone".

Vote:

Aye – All
Nay – None

The motion passed.

Chairperson Plaag said the approximate cost of the printing of the tri-fold panels is \$130.00. He explained that the panels will be on foam core and suggested using L brackets to hold the panels up.

Ms. Turner said the setup for the event will begin at 3 p.m. on Friday, September 7, 2018. She suggested setting up a schedule for the HPC members to work at the table during the event as well as help with the setup. Chairperson Plaag can work from 3 p.m. until 6 p.m., Member Bond can work from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. and Member Brantz can work from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Ms. Turner said she was able to get the Synergy Vehicle during this event. She also noted that the King Bees will be the entertainment for this event.

Chairperson Plaag talked about having informational cards from Digital Watauga printed for the event. He said that Digital Watauga will pay the approximate cost of \$50.00 because the Digital Watauga name is on the photos.

1940 Flood Marker Dedication Recap

Chairperson Plaag noted that this flood marker is the second marker installed in the Town of Boone but the first marker that is a part of the marker initiative.

Discussion of Next Marker Project

Discussion ensued on the next marker to be installed. Chairperson Plaag said that he personally would like to see a marker installed that in some way acknowledges the Junaluska Community. The HPC also discussed possibly acknowledging the Watauga Democrat Office with a marker and reference the Rivers Street House.

Chairperson Plaag explained that markers work best, when they are located in places that they can be seen. He said the markers should go on property that the Town owns so landscape can be added. He said one area to place a marker would be on the sidewalk between the parking spaces on Queen Street. It was also noted that a marker could be placed near the public library or near Lost Province Brewing Company.

Chairperson Plaag suggested that at the next HPC meeting that they create a list of the next five markers that they would like to work on that would warrant some urgent attention.

Chairperson Plaag told the HPC that he would like to ask their permission for him to tell Ms. Roberta Jackson from the Junaluska Heritage Association that the HPC is looking in to putting up a marker. He said he would like to ask for feedback from her on what they would like to see on a marker, if a marker would be done for them. He said the marker would most likely be posted on the edge of the Junaluska Community on Town property.

Discussion ensued on the text on the markers. Chairperson Plaag said that Selma, Alabama is a great example of markers. He explained the various types of markers that could be used.

Member Brantz made a motion, seconded by Member Bond for Chairperson Plaag to speak with Ms. Roberta Jackson regarding what the JHA would like to see on a marker for their community.

Vote:

Aye – All

Nay – None

The motion passed.

Phase I Survey Update & Discussion of Possible Revision to the Historic Boundary

Chairperson Plaag said that no more work has been completed on this topic. He will be able to work on it some more in the near future.

Ms. Turner explained about the change in the proposed Warehouse District. She noted that the proposed Warehouse District will be absorbed into the Historic Core. Member Brantz explained that it was discussed that there are no warehouse type buildings in the proposed Warehouse District. Member Brantz explained how it could be justified in the historical terms of a description of a Warehouse District.

Chairperson Plaag explained that previous Council Members had suggested that Howard Street be freed up for new development and redevelopment. He further explained that discussions by the HPC began to propose a change to this area and the proposed Warehouse District was discussed and proposed.

Member Bond suggested that the Town Planning Staff revise the proposed Downtown area map and have it available for the Earth Day Awareness Event. Ms. Turner said she would check on having this done.

Ms. Turner also told the HPC that the Council adopted a Stop-Gap Measure in the Town of Boone until the Community Appearance Commission can complete the proposed Downtown Design Guidelines. Chairperson Plaag clarified that the adopted Stop-Gap Measure is a slightly modified version of the Secretary of Interior Standards Guidelines.

Discussion of the Overlay Zoning for the Landmarks

Ms. Turner said that the State requires overlay zoning for historic landmarks. She explained that the overlay zoning goes through a public hearing process. She said that the overlay zoning will go over the top of the maps to show the historic landmarks which can be seen when reviewed online.

Chairperson Plaag informed the HPC that he met with Mr. Paul Coffey and his wife Joyce. He said they are in favor of the landmark designation for the Linney property and they asked him to move forward with the national register process. Ms. Turner said the Town Staff would work on the applications and Staff Reports. Chairperson Plaag offered to update the Designation reports to help Ms. Turner, when she is creating the Staff Reports.

Vice-Chairperson Pearman made a motion, seconded by Member Brantz to recommend to Council the Overlay Zoning for the local landmark Designation for the Linney Law Office, Linney House and Post Office.

Vote:

Aye – All

Nay – None

The motion passed.

Chairperson Plaag talked about the need to allow people to have the option of obtaining a plaque. He noted that Mr. Paul Coffey is interested in getting a plaque. Chairperson Plaag asked for this topic to be an agenda item for discussion and vote at the next HPC meeting.

Ms. Weiss left the meeting at 4:36 p.m.

Chairperson Plaag noted that Hendersonville, North Carolina has a plaque program that the HPC can review at the next meeting. It was suggested to have different plaque sizes for residential and commercial buildings.

Continued Review of Historic Design Guidelines

Chairperson Plaag suggested scheduling a separate future HPC meeting dedicated to continuing the review of the draft Historic Design Guidelines.

Other Matters by Commission Members or Staff

Member Bond said on September 9, 2018 from 2 p.m. until 4 p.m. at the Jones House the Watauga County Historical Society is hosting a celebration of a new biography of Joe Miller. The biography was written by Noyes Long who will be present at the event. Member Bond will let Chairperson Plaag know the title of the biography and he will post this event on the Watauga Digital website. Member Bond noted that Town of Boone Mayor Brantz will also attend this event.

Adjournment

Member Brantz made a motion, seconded by Member Watkins to adjourn the meeting at 4:43 p.m.

Vote:

Aye – All
Nay – None

The motion passed.

Eric Plaag, Chairperson

Marlene Crosby, Board Secretary

CREATIVE SOLUTIONS

Historic Facade Improvement Grants

Coordinated by the Downtown Boone Development Association, the Facade Improvement Grant Program offers a 50% match (up to \$5,000 maximum) to encourage Downtown Boone property owners to rehabilitate their facades in an historically appropriate manner that helps preserve the unique character of Boone's downtown buildings. Facade grant recipients have included the Did Someone Say Party? store in the Linney Block and the Appalachian Theatre.



The Appalachian Theatre (1938) was completely stripped of its original facade in 2007, but the ATHC completed an historically faithful reconstruction of the facade and marquee in 2017.



Rehabilitation of the facade of Did Someone Say Party? in the Frank A. Linney Block (1925) earned a Facade Improvement Grant from the Downtown Boone Development Association.

Local Legislation and Planning

Recognizing the pressing threat of redevelopment for Downtown Boone, the Boone Town Council authorized a Building Height Analysis for Downtown Boone. The result of this study prompted 2018 Council legislation altering the maximum heights of new construction and renovations to align with the heights of Boone's historic downtown buildings. In addition, Town Council has been working with the Community Appearance Commission to develop new appearance standards for the entirety of the Boone community. At the same time, the Town of Boone continues to move forward with plans to redesign the infrastructure of the Howard Street corridor to make it more friendly to pedestrians and encourage appropriate rehabilitation of properties.



At 37 feet in height on King Street, the Watauga County Bank Building is the tallest historic building in Downtown Boone.



Infrastructure improvements will make Howard St. one way from Appalachian St. to Water St. and more pedestrian friendly.

LOST BOONE

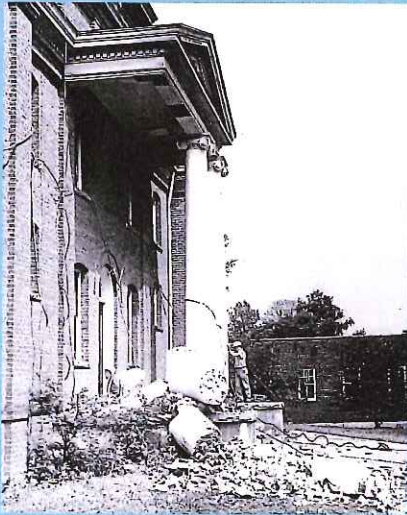
Boone has seen major development pressures in its history several times. For example, major changes occurred when the Linville River Railway freight train began running in 1918, allowing builders to ship in brick, stone, steel, and lumber. Boone transformed quickly, with many of its old frame buildings replaced by new brick structures. One casualty was Boone's first hotel, the Coffey (Cricher) Hotel and its Brick Row (1870), located on King and Depot Streets. They made way for several new brick buildings between 1921 and 1937, including Boone Drugs, Belk's, and Crest. Another landmark to fall was the home of Jordan Councill, Jr., a founder of Boone, which made way in 1923 for the Daniel Boone Hotel.



Cricher Hotel, built as the Coffey Hotel in 1870, shortly before its demolition in 1935, Watauga County Historical Society Collection, Digital Watauga Project



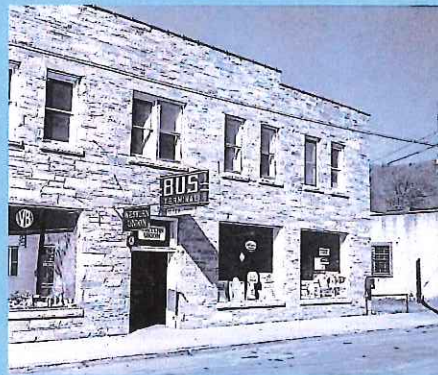
Daniel Boone Hotel, Bobby Brendell Postcard Collection, Digital Watauga Project



Demolition of the 1905 Watauga County Courthouse, 1967, Paul Armfield Coffey Collection, Digital Watauga Project

New pressures surfaced from the 1950s to the 1990s, as builders sought to transform existing buildings or tear down and start new. During this period, Boone lost several iconic landmarks, including the 1875 and 1905 Courthouses and the Daniel Boone Hotel (1925). Properties like the Boone Drug Company Building (1921), the Farmer's Hardware Block (1923), and the Pastime Theatre (1924), were "updated" with modern facade treatments that masked or obliterated original architectural details. Fire played a role, too, claiming the stone building on Depot Street known as the Earl Cook Motor Company, site of the Footsloggers tower today.

Today, Downtown Boone faces new threats. Redevelopment by ASU claimed the Boone Bus Depot (1946) in 2011, and despite ASU's promises to "preserve" the original stone, the curtain wall on the site today is not historic nor an accurate replica. Projects just in 2018 have seen the demolition of other buildings, including the Watauga Farmer's Cooperative Exchange (1955) and the adjacent Boone Furniture & Lumber Company shed (1929).



Boone Bus Depot, 1950s, Palmer Blair Collection, Digital Watauga Project

SUCCESSFUL PRESERVATION



The Linney House (top) and Linney Law Office are local historic landmarks.

Local Historic Landmark Designation

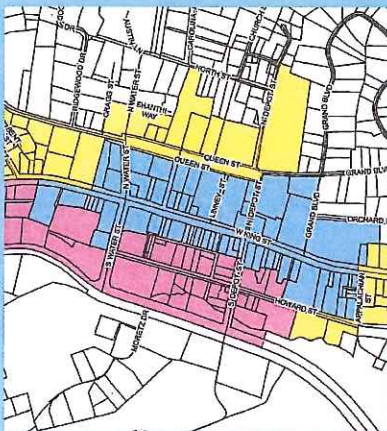
With the assistance of the Boone Historic Preservation Commission, the Town of Boone has made three local historic landmark designations to date: The Frank A. Linney House (1894/1915), the Linney Law Office (1923), and the Boone Post Office (1939). Local landmark status offers significant protections and tax advantages to designated properties in exchange for owner commitment to maintaining historic features. Other properties currently being considered for local landmark designation include the Blair Farm (1844), Boone Cemetery (1860s), the former Watauga County Jail (1889), the Jones House (1908), and the R. L. Clay House (1933), better known as the Rivers House.

National Register of Historic Places Listing

A federal program maintained by the National Park Service and assisted by state governments, the National Register offers honorary listing for properties of high integrity with local, state, or national significance. NRHP listing also offers significant state and federal tax credits for rehabilitation of the listed property. The Blair Farm, the Jones House, and the Boone Post Office are currently listed. The former Watauga County Jail, the Frank A. Linney House, the Linney Law Office, and the R. L. Clay House are all under consideration for NRHP listing.



The R. L. Clay House (top) and the former Watauga County Jail, both near Water Street



Local Historic District Designation

The Boone Historic Preservation Commission began a comprehensive survey of Downtown Boone in 2015 with an eye toward designation of a local historic district. This designation offers major protections to properties within the district and typically results in increases in tourism and property values for district properties. The HPC expects to make a local historic district recommendation in Fall 2018.