

**TOWN OF BOONE  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION  
MEETING MINUTES  
October 4, 2022, 3:00 p.m.  
WebEx Video Conferencing**

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**Historic Preservation Commission Members in Attendance:**

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

**Council Liaisons:** Virginia Roseman

**Town Staff in Attendance:**

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

**Others in Attendance:** Shea Bruer and JC Feimster

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**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**

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

**Vote:** Aye – All  
Nay – None

**The motion passed.**

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Vice-Chair Bond made a motion, seconded by Member Watkins, to approve August 9, 2022, meeting minutes as amended:

- Page 1, paragraph seven, first sentence change: “lentils” to “lintels”
- Page 2, paragraph five, first sentence change: “sidewalks” to “stairwells”
- Page 2, paragraph nine, first sentence change: “lentils” to “lintels”
- Page 5, paragraph four, fifth sentence change: “no poles and wall-mounted fixtures” to “no poles and instead use wall-mounted fixtures and bollards”
- Page 7, paragraph, paragraph eight add to last sentence: “but noted several examples submitted by applicant that would not meet the standards”
- Page 8, paragraph four, second sentence change: “1930s” to “1940s”
- Page 8, paragraph five, fourth sentence remove: “new construction” to “construction”
- Page 8, paragraph six, third sentence change: “of the building” to “of the applicant’s building in this case”
- Page 9, paragraph one, first paragraph, first sentence change: “storefront, remnants of brick to “storefront, and remnants of brick”
- Page 9, paragraph one, first paragraph, first sentence add: “today” after “visible”
- Page 9, paragraph one, first paragraph, fifth sentence add before façade: “first-floor”
- Page 9, paragraph one, first paragraph, sixth sentence change: “Mr. Deal asked if was not brick” to “Mr. Deal asked if that façade was not brick”
- Page 9, paragraph five, eighth sentence change: “mortar” to “screw or bolt”
- Page 10, paragraph four, first sentence change: “he” to “she”

- Page 10, paragraph one, first sentence change: “same” to “existing”
- Page 10, paragraph four, second sentence change: “Mr.” to “Ms.”
- Page 10, paragraph six, second sentence change: “Mr.” to “Ms.”
- Page 11, paragraph one, second sentence change: “paying the fee” to “applicant paying the fee”
- Page 11, paragraph six, third sentence change: “include” to “included”
- Page 11, paragraph seven, first sentence change: “date is for” to “date for”
- Page 11, paragraph seven, fourth sentence change: “said” to “noted”
- Page 12, paragraph one, last sentence change: “and completed following” to “and repair of the brick completed”
- Page 12, paragraph three, first sentence change: “and” to “provided that new construction is”
- Page 13, paragraph four, fourth sentence change: “second floor” to “first floor”

**Vote:** Aye – All

Nay – None

**The motion passed.**

Vice-Chair Bond made a motion, seconded by Member Watkins, to approve August 15, 2022, meeting minutes as amended:

- Page 1, paragraph six, second sentence change: “obtains” to “considers”
- Page 2, paragraph three, fifth sentence change: “east” to “west”
- Page 2, paragraph five, second sentence change: “2020” to “2022”
- Page 2, paragraph five, third sentence change: “and” to “but”
- Page 2, paragraph five, third sentence change: “though” to “thought”
- Page 2, paragraph six, third sentence change: “finding of fact” to “finding of fact was warranted”
- Page 2, paragraph nine, third sentence change: “sometime” to “sometimes”
- Page 3, paragraph five, fifth sentence change: “now” to “not”
- Page 4, paragraph three, second sentence change: “though” to “thought”
- Page 4, paragraph three, second sentence change: “preserve the upper façade” to “preserve the brick of the upper façade”
- Page 4, paragraph three, fourth sentence change: “in the in the interest” to “in the interest”
- Page 4, paragraph three, last sentence remove: “and the standard recommends, you know, the language is should be removed, the standard encourages that”
- Page 4, paragraph four, first sentence change: “but” to “and”
- Page 4, paragraph four, second sentence change: “with contemporary a” to “with a contemporary design”
- Page 5, paragraph seven, first sentence change: “HPC the right” to “HPC has the right”
- Page 6, paragraph four, first sentence change: “Mr. Lindsey” to “Member Watkins”
- Page 6, paragraph seven, second sentence change: “wood and” to “wood-window type”

**Vote:** Aye – All

Nay – None

**The motion passed.**

Vice-Chair Bond made a motion, seconded by Member Watkins, to approve August 30, 2022, meeting minutes as amended:

- Page 3, paragraph one, first sentence remove: “must be considered”

- Page 3, paragraph one, third sentence change: “Standard” to “Standard’s” and remove “guidelines” and remove “for Restoration”
- Page 3, paragraph two, first sentence change: “the standards” to “the Secretary of Interior Standards”
- Page 4, paragraph five, third sentence change: “structure” to “structural”
- Page 5, paragraph three, third sentence change: “the two over two design” to “the present two over two design”
- Page 5, paragraph three, fifth sentence change: “that the windows” to “that if Mr. Winkler is replacing the windows”
- Page 5, paragraph five, fifth sentence change: “follows” to “follow”
- Page 5, paragraph five, sixth sentence change: “source” to “course”
- Page 7, paragraph four, fourth sentence change: “could” to “should”
- Page 8, paragraph eleven, first sentence change: “and east” to “elevation”
- Page 9, paragraph two, second sentence remove: “or”

**Vote:** Aye – All  
Nay – None

**The motion passed.**

Member Sharp made a motion, seconded by Vice-Chair Bond, to approve September 6, 2022, meeting minutes as amended:

- Page 1, paragraph three, sixth sentence change: “business” to “businesses” and change: “helping” to “and helping,” and change: “and building renovations” to “as well as building renovations,”
- Page 2, paragraph one, second sentence change: “and” to “and with”
- Page 2, paragraph one, second sentence change: “and” to “as important to our health”
- Page 2, paragraph three, first sentence change: “of a Certificate” to “of securing a Certificate”
- Page 6, paragraph four, fourth sentence change: “hats that helped: to “had built up additions that resembled hats that helped”
- Page 6, paragraph five, first sentence change: “original” to “19<sup>th</sup> Century”
- Page 6, paragraph five, last sentence change: “Fields” to “Wilkes”
- Page 6, paragraph six, last sentence change: “conservation” to “conversation”
- Page 8, paragraph two, first sentence change: “signed” to “sign”
- Page 9, paragraph one, third sentence change: “public hearing” to “planning commission and public hearing”
- Page 9, paragraph five, fifth sentence change: “Council” to “Councill’s”
- Page 10, paragraph three, first sentence change: “he spoke” to “spoke”
- Page 10, paragraph three, first sentence change: “Digital Watauga Project” to “Digital Watauga Project building an image library of Landmark and District Properties for Planning and Inspections”
- Page 10, paragraph three, third sentence change: “worked for two weeks” to “worked the last two weeks”
- Page 10, paragraph three, last sentence change: “but they begin work again” to “but they are usually rehired again in January”

**Vote:** Aye – All  
Nay - None

**The motion passed.**

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Chair Plaag asked Ms. Mitchell if the Planning Staff had received any requests for public comment. Ms. Mitchell said that Ms. Amber Bateman, Director of the Watauga County Arts Council, had requested to speak during public comment. She noted that Mr. Shea Bruer and Ms. JC Feimster wanted to only listen to the meeting.

Ms. Bateman spoke about the Boone 150 Monument. She said she had approached Ms. Brenda Council, artist of the monument, and encouraged her to present the monument proposal to the HPC. She also thanked the HPC for addressing public art in the town. She said that the Public Arts Placement and Policy Committee had been reviewing the public art standards, and they have some questions about it that she would present once the committee understands its own policy and process.

Ms. Bateman pointed out that she wanted to make it clear that the Public Arts Placement and Policy Committee did not intend for the recommendation that was written and not presented to Town Council to be given to them by Ms. Council at last month's meeting. Ms. Bateman said this is why she went to the Council meeting last month and tried to address it based on the revisions of the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) regarding public art.

Chair Plaag explained to Ms. Bateman that the Boone 150 Monument topic might appear before the HPC in a quasi-judicial manner; therefore, he did not want to create a situation by hearing information about the monument outside of a quasi-judicial setting. He asked Ms. Mitchell to explain the general limitations of public comment regarding a potentially pending case. Ms. Mitchell referred to Appendix D Section 11.4; she said this section mentions if art is proposed to be located on town-owned property, those cases will come before the HPC in their advisory capacity. She said that for an update to be given in this format is alright to do so. She noted that at some point in the future, there should be a request for the HPC to discuss the monument in their advisory role.

Ms. Bateman noted that she understood that the Downtown Boone Post Office is not an ideal place to put the monument because it is a historic landmark. She asked the HPC for suggestions on other locations within the town for the Public Arts Placement and Policy Committee to consider placing the monument. She said she could include those suggestions in their recommendations since they have not yet made a formal recommendation to Council. She noted that Ms. Council and her supporters, the people who have sponsored the monument, do want to have the presence of their family names and their history somewhere within the town.

Chair Plaag asked for Ms. Bateman or Ms. Council to request to be on the HPC agenda to discuss locations for public art within the historic district. He pointed out that generally, during public comment, there is no interaction or feedback from the HPC; they would listen to the public commenter. Ms. Bateman asked the HPC to think about other sites in the historic district where the monument could be placed.

Chair Plaag said that when Mr. John Ward was still Town Manager, there was an informal proposal to take the town parking lot between Town Hall and the Veterans Memorial and build a proposed town hall annex on that site. He explained the informal proposal included a large courtyard at the front would feature the existing Veterans Memorial and probably some seating and plantings. He said he did not know the current status of this informal proposal.

Chair Plaag added that historically, the Jordan Council Jr. property was across the street and the store was purchased by D.B. Dougherty and moved to the parking lot just described in about the 1880s. He said

this might be an excellent location for the monument, and this would give a connection back to the Council store if the HPC and Council approve the monument.

Vice-Chair Bond mentioned the new lot adjacent to the Appalachian State Peacock parking lot, and she supported including the monument in the parking lot between Town Hall and the Veteran's Memorial, making a mini garden with seating in that area. She said this could be more of a pass-through from King Street to Howard Street. She said this suggestion would make the Downtown friendlier and give a softer feel to this area. Chair Plaag shared that this same parking lot area at one time was where the Boone citizens liked to play croquet and other activities. Ms. Bateman mentioned that she has brought to the Downtown Boone Development Association that attention was needed with the planter at this parking lot.

Council Liaison Roseman referred to Appendix D, Article 11.4. She explained that the Council approved this text so it would be clear that the HPC has a voice when there are projects presented for a proposed town-funded project or on a town-owned property without having to discuss it in a quasi-judicial setting. She continued that Ms. Council's project could have historical flaws where the HPC could comment on in the Commission's expertise, and without this chance for the HPC to comment on the historical value would be a missed opportunity for the community.

Ms. Mitchell confirmed with Ms. Bateman that the Public Arts Placement and Policy Committee was working on a list of locations. Ms. Bateman stated that she would like to discuss with the HPC and have an understanding of places that have a rich historical background and would be great places to draw attention to the arts. She mentioned that the Public Arts Placement and Policy Committee is working on specifics for items such as, timing for approved murals, and also designate and pre-plan areas for a more intentional type of master plan as Town Council requested. Ms. Bateman said that as the Public Arts Committee works on policy, they would also like to identify potential sites where they can put public art. Ms. Mitchell also asked if Ms. Bateman was requesting to discuss with the HPC work on a list of possible sites for public art in the historic district. Ms. Bateman replied yes, and that there might be other members of the Public Arts Placement and Policy Committee that might attend.

Council Liaison Roseman noted that she is on the Public Arts Placement and Policy Committee. She added that the previous conversation about the history of the parking lot was something she did not know before, and that pieces of history such as that would help identify appropriate places. She suggested that Ms. Bateman meet with the HPC and pinpoint sites for public art within the historic district.

Council Liaison Roseman explained that if the HPC and Council approve the Boone 150 Monument, she thought the bike rack location in front of the Downtown Boone Post Office, and her suggestion would be for the monument to not be permanently placed. She explained her suggestion would be for the at location would be suitable for an art pad and different types of art put there on a rotating basis.

Ms. Bateman left the meeting at approximately 3:56 pm.

#### **DISCUSSION OF THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR'S STANDARDS FOR THE TREATMENT OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES AND GUIDELINES FOR PRESERVING, REHABILITATING, RESTORING, AND RECONSTRUCTING HISTORIC BUILDINGS**

Chair Plaag explained that he had requested that this agenda item be placed on this month's agenda regarding something that occurred during the discussions on the Howard Street Ventures, LLC, Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) case. He said that during the final round of discussions with the applicant,

Member Watkins had raised some objections. Chair Plaag noted that he knew what Member Watkins was referring to or quoting was not the Secretary of the Interior Standards for Rehabilitation. He said that Member Watkins referred to the Standards for Restoration. He said the HPC needed a refresher on the documents guiding them and their mission, and the best way to do this is to review several different documents.

The first document that Chair Plaag reviewed was the “Handbook for Historic Preservation Commissions in North Carolina,” and he explained this is a guiding document as a commission within the state. He referred to page 35, Chapter Four, Design Guidelines. He said this section talks about the purpose and development of the guidelines. He read the section as it states:

“...guidelines for alteration, addition, and restoration affecting existing properties that may be grouped under the rehabilitation heading. Rehabilitation is the type of change that the Commission will be most called on to review. A valuable resource for developing rehabilitation guidelines is *The Secretary of the Interior Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties*.”

He said the 1992 version is referenced in this handbook, and there is an updated version from the 2000s or 2010s.

Next, Chair Plaag read the Introduction from *The Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with the Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring, and Reconstructing Historic Buildings* (note, further referenced as Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation); the introduction begins with “Using the Standards and Guidelines for Preservation, Rehabilitation, Restoration, and Reconstruction Projects.” He explained that there are four different categories of treatments for historic buildings, and that each of these categories is viewed differently. He said you have to choose the appropriate treatment of the building that you are reviewing, and the first thing you look at is the level of significance. He referenced the section about National Historic Landmarks, under the section “Level of Significance”, which he stated that they are the highest designation of significance that the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) grants in the United States. He read from this section:

“National Historic Landmarks, designated for their ‘exceptional significance in American history,’ and other properties important for their interpretative value may be candidates for Preservation or Restoration. Rehabilitation, however, is the most commonly used treatment for the majority of historic buildings...Reconstruction [is] the most limited... because so few resources that are no longer extant can be documented to the degree necessary to accurately recreate the property [in a historically significant way].”

Next, Chair Plaag referred to the objections that were made by Member Watkins and stated that they were based on Standards for Restoration, which applies a substantially higher standard to a building. He explained that the HPC does not apply that standard either individually or broadly within the historic district. He said the HPC designed their guidelines to be based around the Secretary of the Interior Standards for Rehabilitation. He referenced the ten Standards for Rehabilitation included within the referenced Secretary of Interior Standards for Rehabilitation; these standards were screen shared during the meeting. He explained that the Standards for Restoration are higher standards than what is called for by the enabling language or by the design standards for the historic district. Chair Plaag said the HPC relies on the Standards for Rehabilitation as the basis for general individual guidance applied to windows, doors, and rooflines.

Lastly, Chair Plaag referred to Sections 2, 6, and 7 of the Standards for Restoration that Member Watkins had referred to for the Howard Street Ventures, LLC, COA case. He referenced a shared image comparing the two sets of standards. He said that Member Watkins relied heavily on Section 7 while commenting on

the case. Chair Plaag pointed out the differences between the Standards for Restoration and the Standards for Rehabilitation in these specific sections. He read Sections 2 and 6 of the Standards of Restoration. He noted that the second standard of the Standards for Rehabilitation is a lower standard than the Standards for Restoration. He said Member Watkins mostly referred to Standard 7 in the Standard of Restoration, which does not appear in the Standard of Rehabilitation that the HPC relies on for guidance. He said that Standard 7 is not included in the Standards for Rehabilitation. Moreover, he pointed out that Standard 7 under the Standards for Rehabilitation is found under Standard 8 of the Standards for Restoration. Chair Plaag pointed out that the most relevant or closely aligned standard for rehabilitation that resembles Standard 7 under Restoration is Standard 9 under Rehabilitation.

Chair Plaag noted that he just wanted to point out that Member Watkins was working and making his argument from a different set of standards than the standards that apply to the historic district. He continued that the standards Member Watkins referenced were different than the set the HPC said that they would rely upon and that the National Park Service (NPS) has already provided for us as the basis for our work. He encouraged the HPC to read the Historic Preservation Commission Handbook and the NPS Guidelines for the Treatment for Historic Properties (The Secretary of the Interior Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties), and the design standards for the historic district. He asked for the HPC to remember that the Secretary of the Interior Standards for Rehabilitation are the basis for the HPC's work, not the standards for restoration, preservation, or reconstruction.

Member Watkins asked Chair Plaag what difference does this make if they use the Restoration or Rehabilitation guidelines. Chair Plaag reiterated to Member Watkins that he was applying the restoration standards; they are a different set of standards than what the HPC relies upon in making decisions. Chair Plaag further explained that the restoration standards contained a much higher set of standards. He explained that Member Watkins used those higher standards to frame his opinion on the case. Chair Plaag said the HPC all needs to be in agreement as a body that they are relying upon the same set of standards and that they know what those standards are. He said the enabling legislation in North Carolina and the Commission handbook is very clear that the principle set of standards the HPC is to rely on when making decisions about a COA are their own design standards that they have approved for the historic district. He said these are the only guiding standards for the HPC to follow.

Chair Plaag said that when creating the design standards, the State of North Carolina asks that you base them around the Standards for Rehabilitation. He said the HPC does not rely on the Standards for Restoration. He pointed out that no property in the Boone community currently rises to the standard of National Historic Landmark status. Chair Plaag concluded that said he wanted to ensure that the HPC uses the same standards when reviewing a case, and the HPC does not give inaccurate information to an applicant.

Member Watkins explained what he objects to and will continue to object to regarding the recommendations for the Howard Street Ventures, LLC property. He said what is being suggested is to create a new appearance for that building for which no historical record exists. He said his point was and still is that the only appearance of that building there was evidence of is when the building was stuccoed. He said he was not aware of another image of that building near the construction period that shows the arrangement of the piercings on that first floor. He said the building was built around 1947, and there is about 40 years of the building that is unknown about its appearance, and about 30 years of the appearance of the building that is known. He said that given these two alternatives, his view is to allow the owner to restore the building to the known appearance rather than the owner resort to an unknown appearance. He said that if the HPC applies the Standards of Restoration or Rehabilitation has little

relevance in this case. He said he referred to the Standards of Restoration because it is the most apparent. He said that because these standards can be easily misunderstood, he had spoken to the National Park Service about the wording in the Standards of Restoration. He said he is still comfortable in the position that he took on the case.

In summary, Chair Plaag explained the reasons for bringing this topic to the HPC for discussion: he said the HPC has enabling legislation, State guidance, and a set of design standards approved by the Council. He said there are no other standards the HPC must follow. Member Watkins said he did not see where the HPC is authorized to offer a subjective alternative to existing evidence. Chair Plaag said he did not think that was what the HPC was doing. He said his point is that whenever any HPC member is making suggestions for how a building could be appropriately treated, the HPC needs to ground their decisions into the standards that Council has approved for the HPC.

Discussion ensued on using the approved standards to review COA cases. Member Watkins said he was not advising the applicants for the case but Chair Plaag was advising the applicant. Member Watkins explained that he was stating his opinion to the other HPC members. Member Watkins said what he said had no binding on the property owners. Chair Plaag noted that the discussion of the HPC as a whole needed to be grounded in the approved standards. Chair Plaag emphasized that the HPC is required to either approve or not approve proposals that are submitted. He continued that part of the process is to potentially negotiate with an applicant in order to arrive at changes that meet the standards.

Chair Plaag asked Council Liaison Roseman to explain, as a former member of another Town quasi-judicial body on the mandate, when reviewing cases and making determinations of this type. Council Liaison Roseman pointed out that when she was on the Board of Adjustment (BOA), the board members used the approved bylaws, rules, and guidelines before them to make decisions. She said if the topic is not given to the board member to debate, it is not up for the board members to debate. She explained that whenever there is a conflict, it needs to be addressed with Council to see if Council would like to make a proposed amendment to the UDO on that topic. She said that Chair Plaag is correct; the HPC, when voting, should not use documents that are not directly within the approved documents.

Council Liaison Roseman noted that this discussion is an excellent opportunity to see if Member Watkins's argument is valid because the evolution of the building was between 1918 and 1964, the period of significance. She said that Member Watkins did have a good point about not having images of the building for several years. Chair Plaag noted that some images were presented of the first and second floors of the building but not the entirety of the building. She said that maybe the result of Member Watkins's argument might be a reason the HPC might need to review and make revisions to the standards. She reiterated that if with a case, it is not within the document given to the Commission to judge a member cannot use that as the standard of a vote. Chair Plaag agreed that if someone believes something is flawed in the design standards, he said whatever that is should be presented to the HPC for review for a possible revision. He said that right now, the HPC has a current set of approved standards to be used for current cases.

Member Watkins expressed his concerns about the decision made on the appearance, and that his concerns were forwarded to Ms. Allison Meade, Town Attorney, and that he was directed to bring up his concerns at the meeting. Chair Plaag emphasized that he brought us this topic at this meeting to make sure the Commission is on the same page about what the HPC's standards are. Chair Plaag mentioned that there is a great opportunity to discuss if there are flaws in the standards to mention during the advisory session.

Ms. Mitchell pointed out that when she was going through the CLG process, she had to report which set of standards the HPC used, which is the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, approved in 2017. She added that in 2016, the HPC Rules of Procedure, and an additional Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Illustrated Guidelines on Sustainability for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings were both approved. Chair Plaag asked Ms. Mitchell if the standards adopted in Appendix D in 2021 would have replaced the standards adopted in 2017. Ms. Mitchell believed this is correct, and it was stated that it may need to be confirmed with the Town Attorney. Ms. Mitchell noted that it has been discussed before that the HPC looks at Appendix D first and then the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.

Vice-Chair Bond said she believed the Howard Street Project is trying to create the feel of a specific period of rehabilitation to the period of significance, which doesn't require that you have an image of something that existed before that period. Chair Plaag said that Appendix D clearly states what to do when there are no surviving historic features of a building and what is appropriate for that building. He said he quoted the Appendix D section when the case was being discussed.

Council Liaison Roseman noted that she heard Member Watkins's concerns and wanted to ensure that all voices were heard equally and given the weight they deserved. She said that as a Council Member, she wants the best for our community and wants to preserve our history. She stated that the Town is lucky to have the chances to hold onto pieces of history. She said she would like to discuss if there is a time when we cannot pinpoint a building's beginning, or cannot directly prove it with evidence or documentation and use the latest documented history of a building as its point of beginning. Chair Plaag explained that some specific standards in the HPC's standards document encourage the removal of non-historic elements from a building. He said some standards state directly that you are not supposed to put non-historic materials back on the building if the building is being repaired or reconstructed. He said if Member Watkins or any other HPC member wants to revisit those standards and reconsider them, they may request through Ms. Mitchell that this topic be added to the HPC agenda for discussion on revising certain sections of it.

Member Watkins voiced his discontent when he emailed Chair Plaag asking for advice regarding his objections to the case before the meeting. He said that Chair Plaag forwarded his email to the Town Attorney, who advised Chair Plaag to discuss it in the HPC's advisory session. Chair Plaag explained that under state law, he could not respond to Member Watkins's email in person or over the phone while the HPC was in the middle of a case. Council Liaison Roseman further agreed that Chair Plaag could not legally respond to Member Watkins's email.

Member Watkins felt that the HPC would continue to have problems when debating significant issues within a regular meeting, possibly leading to others not understanding what is being said on a given topic. Ms. Mitchell said that the Planning Staff could present these questions to the Town Attorney on behalf of the HPC. Ms. Mitchell informed the HPC that the Planning Staff has an ongoing list of proposed revisions to Appendix D, and she could add any proposed revisions to this list for discussion with the Town Attorney. She offered that the questions for Appendix D could be mentioned at an advisory meeting or by contacting staff, and she stated that it would be best to combine all the conversations about Appendix D together to present to Ms. Meade at one time.

## **REVIEW OF REMAINING WORK PLAN**

Ms. Mitchell said the following items are remaining on the work plan based on a past activities list she gathered for the Certified Local Government (CLG) application: obtaining the Certified Local Government (CLG) status, the Hayes-Bryan-Greene Cemetery Historical Marker and the Councill Store Historical Marker, Watauga County Jail local landmark designation, the Boone Cemetery Interpretative panels, the local landmark designation reports for the R.L. Clay (Rivers) House and the Jones House, the Boone's Street Project, Boone Cemetery Survey. She stated that Planning Staff are working on finishing up on those markers and the Watauga County Jail local landmark designation. Chair Plaag mentioned that the Boone Cemetery Survey was paused for the historic district work, and he has the Boone Cemetery Survey on his personal work plan to complete. He also mentioned that there were several of the Boone Streets left to complete.

Discussion ensued on topics for the HPC to work on in 2023. Chair Plaag asked if there were any other landmark designations beyond the two previously mentioned. Ms. Mitchell asked what year that would have been discussed. Chair Plaag said that the HPC created a work-plan list in possibly late 2020 or early 2021. Ms. Mitchell said she would try to locate that list in the minutes. Vice-Chair Bond mentioned that they had discussed Founders Hall, and Chair Plaag added that building was on their list to evaluate. Ms. Mitchell asked about the Boone Cemetery footstone information for markers. Chair Plaag added there was discussion to put a row of stones dividing the cemetery into two sections, and getting stones for the sites in the historic black section of the cemetery. He added that the Junaluska Heritage Association has taken on the footstones project, and the other project was abandoned. Vice-Chair Bond added that the dividing stones project was abandoned because of problems with mowing, and the Austin & Barnes Funeral Home was helpful before identifying where to get stones.

Chair Plaag encouraged the HPC to think of projects that the HPC has not addressed yet. He told the HPC that there are a lot of historical resources in Boone, and asked the HPC to think of another part of town they would like to take up as a potential survey. He mentioned that the Blair Farm is on the National Register, but it is not a local historic landmark. He also mentioned the Gragg House on Gragg Street. He asked the HPC if a neighborhood has rich architectural resources that the HPC would want to see surveyed. He said the HPC might want to ask the Council for funding to do this type of survey.

Chair Plaag said that behind the scenes, Dr. Kristen Deathridge had asked him if there was anything that her class could work on because she taught a course where students could work on an architectural survey. He said that over the last several semesters, she has done preliminary surveys on Grand Boulevard and started the process on the Cherry Park neighborhood, including Dale Street, Westbrook Drive, Eastbrook Drive, and Cherry Drive. He asked the HPC if they might want to work on these. He asked the HPC to come back to the next HPC advisory session with some ideas of things that should be made a priority. Ms. Mitchell added that in the past, the HPC had discussed Grand Boulevard and Cherrybrook Street as other historic districts, if the HPC wanted to add these to their 2023 work plan.

Chair Plaag said that the HPC has learned about the historical marker process and the temperature of Council and the community. He asked if it was time for our community to work on things like the former courtroom in the 1875 Court House being renamed Ku Klux Klan Hall. He asked if it is time to deal with the active recruitment of a Klan parade through Downtown Boone. He asked the HPC about future historical markers, for example, what kind of things they wanted to acknowledge or celebrate as a community.

Vice-Chair Bond said that since the Mount Lawn Cemetery has been privately purchased, the new owners are seeking their 501-3C status. She said Dr. Deathridge might want her students to survey their cemetery.

Chair Plaag said that the HPC had identified other cemeteries that could be surveyed. He asked the HPC if they wanted to contact those cemetery owners to see if they could be surveyed by either the HPC or Dr. Deathridge's class.

#### **STAFF UPDATES**

Mr. Mark Freed, Director of the Cultural Resources Department, began the update of the Boone 150 events for October. He said the cemetery tours would start in the evening going into the nighttime this Friday, October 7, and every Friday through the month, including Halloween night. He said that Chair Plaag, Vice-Chair Bond, Historian Trent Margrif from Appalachian State University, and Ms. Ellie McCorkle, Staff Intern, would be the tour guides. He said the tours are very popular with the public, have been filling up, and have drawn some attention from the media. He said the Daniel Boone Forum Event would be held on October 26<sup>th</sup> in the evening at the Appalachian Theatre. He said it is a free ticket event, and the public will be asked to RSVP for the event. He said the Sacred Songs event was scheduled for last Saturday, and with the impending storm, they decided to postpone the event. He said they intend to have the Sacred Songs event at the Three Forks Baptist Church later in the fall. Vice-Chair Bond added that on October 13<sup>th</sup> at 6 p.m., the Watauga County Historical Society will hold an event at the Watauga County Library to talk about the history of the Three Forks Baptist Church. She also added that on October 14<sup>th</sup> at 3:30 p.m., at the Watauga County Public Library will be a presentation about the Shipley Family. She mentioned the Shipley's involvement with the county as they still own a farm in the county, were involved in the Cove Creek School, and a part of the Future Farmers of America. She said that Mr. Evan Smith had written a book entitled, "Here by the Owl," about the Shipley Family. She said that Mr. Smith would also give a presentation on his book on November 3<sup>rd</sup> at the "67<sup>th</sup> Annual Farm City Banquet," in which Mr. Shipley was the leader.

Mr. Freed left the meeting at approximately 5:07 pm.

Ms. Jane Shook, Director of Planning and Inspections, said that the Planning Staff has talked with the other departments of the Town. She mentioned that we are going to endeavor through Planning Staff, and that Staff has talked with the Public Works Department, Ms. Paige Henderson, the Downtown Boone Development Coordinator, and Mr. Freed, and Planning Staff will endeavor to inform the HPC of any significant work done at the Boone Cemetery, the Rivers Property, or any town-owned property within the historic district. She said this endeavor and updates would not include routine maintenance or infrastructure work approved by Council. She said this information has gone out to other departments.

Ms. Mitchell began her staff updates beginning with the Certified Local Government (CLG) application status. She said she should hear back about the CLG status on October 17<sup>th</sup> and have an update for the HPC at their November meeting. She continued with updates on the historical markers mentioning for the Hayes-Bryan-Greene Cemetery Historical Marker, this marker's production date would be late this year or early 2023, which the latter might be more likely. She explained that the Council's Store marker is being processed sooner than the Hayes-Bryan-Greene Cemetery marker because of the order dates. She mentioned that she was waiting to receive a proof for the Council Store Historical Marker and that would be another four to six weeks. She confirmed with Sewah Studios that she would be able to see a proof before they start production of the marker. She said she estimated to get that proof by the end of October. She said that once she approves of the marker proof, it will go into production, and we will receive it by the end of 2022. She mentioned that with both of these it would be a great way to end the Boone 150 celebrations into the new year.

Ms. Mitchell gave an update last week on the work of the intern, Ms. Ellie McCorkle. Ms. McCorkle has made progress on the Rivers House local landmark designation report by gathering digitized deeds and archives of the Watauga Democrat, gathering primary sources for significance of the families and their relationship to the Town, generating a floor plan from the house visit, and researching Clay and R.C. Rivers as well as Rachel Coffey Rivers in the beginning, phases of outlining the report and starting the architectural description. Chair Plaag, in his role at Digital Watauga, added that he and Ms. McCorkle had discussed completing a draft report by January, and she had agreed that this was feasible for her.

Ms. Mitchell explained that she would be working with Ms. Laney Pilkington, Administrative Support Specialist/Communications, on her project of social media posts of historic landmarks and the historic district as part of the ending of the Boone 150 year. She explained that Ms. Pilkington's work would be on the social media platforms of Instagram and Facebook. She further stated that she directed Ms. Pilkington to use the resources and do a direct copy from the information on the Planning and Inspections webpage and the reports available online, such as the landmark reports and the architectural survey, with citations. She explained that the pictures used would be photographs that Ms. Pilkington has taken or will take, and historic photos that Ms. Pilkington has requested and received written permission to use. Ms. Mitchell said she wanted to inform the HPC that Ms. Pilkington would be doing these media posts and asked the HPC if they had any concerns. Chair Plaag noted that he is happy to answer questions from Ms. Pilkington on the historical landmarks or the historical markers. Ms. Mitchell said she would inform Ms. Pilkington that she could reach out to Chair Plaag if she or Planning Staff cannot answer.

Ms. Mitchell explained that last month she started working with Ms. Paige Henderson, the Downtown Boone Development Coordinator, on a project to promote the historic district. She said they are still in the brainstorming phases for that project between their two roles and operations in their departments. Ms. Mitchell explained that they are looking at the façade grant application through the Downtown Boone Development Association (DBDA) to make it clearer for applicants to know about the information in UDO Appendix D and Article Eight regarding the historic district standards. She said there is an existing underlying process that the Planning Staff and Ms. Henderson would inform each other when an applicant either applies for a façade grant or contacts the Planning Staff on a property in the historic district. Ms. Mitchell noted that she and Ms. Henderson are also looking at educational ways to promote the historic district and the format for the final products. Ms. Mitchell said they would research Main Street Programs that have historic districts to see what type of format they use to promote their districts, as Ms. Henderson's role is working with the Main Street program.

Chair Plaag asked if there was a DBDA social media webpage. Ms. Mitchell said there might be one and that Ms. Henderson and Ms. Pilkington might manage it. Chair Plaag suggested that at least once a month, the social media posts showcase properties that have received façade grants and include the history from the survey report. He indicated that they should use portions of the long survey report entry, excise most of the architectural description, and focus on the owners and the year it was built and the original intent, include the year that they received their façade grant and what they did with it. He said this approach has the effect of celebrating success stories and encouraging others to apply for the façade incentive program. He said some of the successful places that have received the façade grants are the "Common Goods," which was formerly "Did Somebody Say Party" place and the "Appalachian Theatre." She said that she would pass this information on to Ms. Henderson. He mentioned this would be a way to get people within the Municipal Service District (MSD) excited about the program.

Ms. Mitchell said that she included Ms. Henderson on the project of historic district signage, as Ms. Henderson was more familiar with the newest wayfinding signage by the Watauga County Tourism

Development Authority (TDA). Ms. Mitchell said she contacted the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) about signage. She received a response from someone in the NCDOT Raleigh, North Carolina office, and since the Downtown Boone local historic district is not recognized at the state level, the Town does not qualify for the brown historic district signs. She explained that she had contacted Ms. Kristi Brantley, North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office, who suggested that she contact NCDOT. She said the Town does not qualify for the historic brown sign because we do not meet the criteria for the tourist oriented directional sign from NCDOT. She explained those qualifications are to have a set site for tours, recreational activity, or a visitor center where someone is available for directions, provide tours, or an open museum. She explained the direction she received would involve the existing town limits sign and could add to the "Welcome to" sign with a line to mention the historic district. She explained that in asking other Town staff there was a difficult process in the past to get the current signs with current wording regarding the Appalachian State University championship. She said that in the past, she had been given direction that if we had a sign design, she could try to get it approved by NCDOT. She said she asked this question again and could not get a direct answer. She said she did not know if it would be worth navigating this possibility to get a sign put up. She stated that if we did that possibility for a sign, it would be required to see what NCDOT approval would involve for the right of ways and easements. In conclusion, she explained that the Town cannot get the historic district brown sign at this time unless we navigate another option.

Vice-Chair Bond added that the current signs, referencing the wayfinding signs by the Watauga County TDA, answer these concerns as well. She was concerned that there might be too many signs, and she thought the wayfinding signs were attractive. Chair Plaag suggested that the most straightforward solution might be to hang a banner off one of the light poles at each end of the historic district to say, "Welcome to the Historic District" because the town controls the light poles. Vice-Chair Bond added that on U.S. Highway 321 towards Hickory, North Carolina, said it might be worth researching how the Town of Lenoir got its historic district sign. Ms. Mitchell explained that Ms. Henderson had more contact with the Watauga County TDA to know the progress of that project. She stated she would contact the Public Works Department to ask more about the banner signs. Ms. Shook agreed that the banner would be doable for the town, but it would take funds to do it. She suggested that the HPC discuss the design of the banner. Chair Plaag said that it might be that the DBDA will want to weigh in on the design of the banner since it directly affects their properties. Ms. Mitchell said she could do the research about the current banners and get an estimated cost for the banner. She said we could continue this project into 2023.

Ms. Mitchell gave the status of the Watauga County Jail for local landmark designation. She said this case is scheduled to be heard on Monday, November 28, 2022, at 6 p.m., at the Public Hearing/Planning Commission meeting. She noted that the HPC was required to attend for the public hearing as part of the landmark designation process. She said the Planning Staff does not foresee an issue placing this agenda item near the top of the Public Hearing/Planning Commission meeting agenda. Ms. Shook confirmed that the Town will still use WebEx for this meeting. Ms. Shook told the HPC to plan a virtual meeting.

Chair Plaag asked Ms. Mitchell if she had reached out to the property owners of the Watauga County Jail property, Mr. and Mrs. Sam Furgiuele, to make sure they were on board with their property being considered for a landmark designation. Ms. Mitchell said that she hoped to contact them this week.

Ms. Mitchell presented the question regarding standards for designated local landmarks. She explained that the most recent local historic landmark was the Blue Ridge Tourist Court property in which the ordinance included UDO Article 8 and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. She

asked the HPC since the Watauga County Jail property is the first historic landmark designation since the historic district was approved, if it would be the HPC's recommendation to include Appendix D with consideration that it is known what the historic district's period of significance is. She continued that the Watauga County Jail's period of significance is between 1889 and 1927, so it does fall within that period of significance of the district. She the property's period of significance is towards the beginning of the district's period of significance. She asked if this is still enough to consider it underneath the historic district standards, and if the HPC wants the ordinance to include UDO Article Eight and Appendix D as the guiding standards for the property. Chair Plaag said that ideally, with all landmark properties, the HPC needs to write standards for each landmark. He said that technically we are supposed to have separate standards specific to each property, even if the landmark property is within the district and listed individually as a landmark. He suggested that Planning Staff lists the period of significance in the ordinance from 1889 to 1927, and the guiding standards, for now, would be the existing district standards along with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, broadly speaking, and until a revised set of standards is approved by Council. Ms. Mitchell said this was a question Planning Staff came across thinking about the property, especially considering materials and the property's period of significance.

#### **HPC MEMBER UPDATES**

Chair Plaag said the HPC member updates not otherwise covered on the agenda were the Interpretative Panels for Stoneman's Raid and the glossary of architectural terms. He asked that these two items be tabled to the HPC's November meeting as he did not have time to complete them this month.

Chair Plaag asked that the item regarding Boone Cemetery Interpretative Panels, including the draft text and attachments included in the meeting packet, be tabled to the HPC's November meeting. He asked that the HPC review the draft text for the panels. He said that he and Ms. Mitchell are continuing to get additional guidance on a word count and other things that will influence the final version of the panels. He asked the HPC to review the draft text and come back with feedback regarding the panels, recognizing that word limitations may limit what can be put on the panels.

Member Sharp asked if a uniform style or format is followed for this type of work. Chair Plaag said not for Boone. He explained that it would also depend on the panel maker. He said that he and Ms. Mitchell had not had time to research the options for the panels. He said he drafted the text from past discussions in 2020 and 2021 about the panels the HPC wanted to have at that time.

#### **HPC CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR**

Ms. Mitchell explained that an application for the HPC Chair and Vice-Chair is included in the meeting packet that needs to be completed and submitted to the Planning Staff by the November HPC Advisory meeting. She stated she did not see an issue with submitting the application for the November Town Council meeting deadline, although it would be before the HPC would meet in November. She stated that the HPC can make their recommendations at the next HPC meeting, and Planning Staff can present that information to Council.

Member Watkins asked Chair Plaag if the current slate of officers is willing to run again. Vice-Chair Bond nominated Member Sharp for Vice-Chair. Chair Plaag said he is willing to accept the position of Chair.

Ms. Mitchell pointed out that the standards for the positions of Chair and Vice-Chair are in UDO Article Two, which states that a person can apply for repetitive terms, moreover for one year with unlimited reappointment, provided that the member's term is still valid.

**OTHER DISCUSSION**

There were no other topics discussed at this meeting.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Chair Plaag made a motion, seconded by Member Sharp, to adjourn the meeting at 5:21 pm.

**Vote:**

Aye – All

Nay – None

**The motion passed.**

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**Eric Plaag, Chair**

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**Marlene Crosby, Board Secretary**