

TOWN OF BOONE
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
ADVISORY MEETING MINUTES
December 3, 2024, 3:00 p.m.
Planning & Inspections Department & WebEx Video Conferencing

Historic Preservation Commission Members in Attendance: Vardell Smyth-Chair, Bettie Bond-Vice-Chair, and Ayden Basinger

Council Liaison: Virginia Roseman (absent)

Town Staff in Attendance: Jessica Mitchell-Advanced Planning Specialist (via WebEx), Brandon Wise-Deputy Director of Planning & Inspections, and Brenda Henson-Board Clerk

Call to Order

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

Adoption of Agenda

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

Vote: Aye – 3
Nay – 0

The motion passed.

Approval of Minutes

Commission Member Basinger made a motion, seconded by Vice-Chair Bond, to approve the November 5, 2024 advisory meeting minutes as written.

Vote: Aye – 3
Nay – 0

The motion passed.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Stoneman's Raid Interpretative Panel Update

Ms. Mitchell provided a brief recap of the discussion at the last advisory meeting for Stoneman's Raid. She noted that Drew Gruber, Executive Director of the Civil War Trails (CWT) program, had requested the addition of a quote and a revised sketch map that focused more on Boone and not the surrounding area.

Discussion ensued regarding selecting a quote, and the HPC recommended the following from military official records, which were presented in the last advisory meeting packet:

Major-General Thomas:

"We arrived here this a.m., the Twelfth Kentucky in the advance, captured the place, killing 9, capturing 62 home guards..."

Geo. Stoneman, Major-General, Commanding

Chair Smyth stated that the wording on the panel would need to change based on using the quote. He suggested that the second paragraph of the final draft panel text be revised as follows:

The Union forces surprised the Confederate Home Guard assembled at the James W. Councill House, which stood directly in front of you. The home Guard fired on the advancing Union forces, who returned fire. Many Home Guard fled toward Howard's Knob and the conflict ended quickly. ~~Two Home Guard were killed, five injured, and 68 taken prisoner.~~ General Stoneman's forces, including at least 13 Union loyalists from Watauga and surrounding counties, reported no casualties.

Chair Smyth felt that the last paragraph of the panel text should be removed because it did not directly relate to Stoneman's Raid. The referenced text reads:

Three Union soldiers of the 3rd NC Mounted Infantry who died from disease are buried at the Boone Cemetery, half a mile southeast.

Ms. Mitchell stated that the Town Council expressed an interest in keeping this text in the panel during the Council's review of the draft text.

Chair Smyth stated that the current panel text left out interesting information about what happened in the 48 hours after Stoneman's forces rode into Boone. He suggested the possibility of creating an additional plaque or panel that would provide more information regarding the aftermath of the raid. Ms. Mitchell replied that the topic of an additional plaque might be placed on the HPC's 2025 Work Plan for the Town Council's direction.

It was noted that there were no names mentioned in the panel text of prominent townsfolk who were killed in the raid. After some discussion, it was agreed that citing names could become problematic.

HPC members discussed the sketch map. Chair Smyth stated that there were not many notable areas in Boone to cite on a revised sketch map (revised sketch map following CWT suggestion). Ms. Mitchell suggested using an image of the previously discussed Wiser map instead of trying to revise the sketch map. HPC members agreed that using the Wiser map image would be a suitable replacement for the proposed sketch map.

Ms. Mitchell summarized the changes as follows:

- Replace sketch map with Wiser map image
- Remove sentence from 2nd paragraph of draft panel text
- Submit quote from the original records by Stoneman
- Suggest to CWT the HPC's comment to remove the last paragraph of panel text referring to the Boone Cemetery

Staff Updates

Statement of Conformity Report

Ms. Mitchell stated there were no new applications for Statements of Conformity in November.

Howard Street Project

Ms. Mitchell stated that the Town Council had selected a contractor for the Howard Street project. Mr. Wise added that they planned to break ground in March 2025.

Certified Local Government (CLG) Reporting

Ms. Mitchell noted that annual reporting for the Town's Certified Local Government status was due in the next few weeks. She stated that she had compiled the information to send to the State Historic Preservation Office. She mentioned that she shared the report with the Mayor and the HPC Chair as part of the reporting

process. As an update on approved COA cases, Ms. Mitchell added that portions of the Quall's Block building and the Vetro building would not be completed in 2024.

HPC Member Updates

Chair Smyth stated that the frieze plate on the Vetro building appeared to be bolted on. Vice-Chair Bond noted that she had not been able to locate anyone to speak with from the Hodges family regarding the John W. Hodges sign on the Vetro building.

ADJOURNMENT

Commission Member Basinger made a motion, seconded by Vice-Chair Bond, to adjourn the meeting at 3:53 p.m.

Vote: Aye – 3
Nay – 0

The motion passed.

Vardell Smyth, Chair

Brenda Henson, Board Clerk