



**TOWN OF BOONE
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
MEETING AGENDA**

The Town of Boone Historic Preservation Commission will meet on **Tuesday, December 11, 2018 at 3:00 p.m.** in the Planning & Inspections - Upstairs Conference room located at 680 West King Street. The following items will be on the agenda:

- 1. Call to Order**
- 2. Adoption of Agenda**
- 3. Approval of Minutes**
 - November 13, 2018
- 4. Junaluska Community Marker Application Review**
- 5. Historic Context on Phase One Survey Report Review**
- 6. Linville River Gorge Railway 100th Anniversary Celebration Task List**
- 7. Other Matters by Commission Members or Staff**
 - Set Agenda for next meeting
 -
- 8. Adjournment**

**Boone Historic Preservation Commission
Meeting Minutes
November 13, 2018
3:00 p.m.**

Historic Preservation Commission Members in Attendance: Eric Plaag-Chairperson, Chuck Watkins, Bettie Bond, Phoebe Pollitt 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 3:00 p.m.

Adoption of Agenda

Member Brantz made a motion, seconded by Member Pollitt to accept the agenda as written.

Vote:

Aye – All
Nay – None

The motion passed.

Approval of Minutes

Member Brantz made a motion, seconded by Member Pollitt to accept the October 9, 2018 meeting minutes as amended with the following changes: On page two in paragraph four, in the first sentence change “registry” to “register”. On page four in the first paragraph and first sentence change Council’s to Councill’s and on page five in the first paragraph under Other Matters by Commission Members or Staff in the second sentence change “Council” to Councill”.

Vote:

Aye – All
Nay – None

The motion passed.

Member Brantz made a motion, seconded by Member Bond to accept the October 29, 1028 meeting minutes as amended with the following change: On page one in paragraph three in the last line, change “clearstory” to “clerestory”.

Motion and Vote:

Vote:

Aye – (Bond, Brantz, Plaag, Watkins)

Nay – None

Abstention – (Pollitt)

The motion passed.

Phase I Survey Report Discussion

Chairperson Plaag said he has written everything except for the historic context which he is currently working on. He noted that the historic context section will be fairly lengthy, and it will include photos of the buildings.

Chairperson Plaag handed out the rest of the draft copy of the Final Report of the Comprehensive Architectural Survey of Downtown Boone, North Carolina by Dr. Eric W. Plaag, dated December 2018 for the Historic Preservation Commission to review and propose changes to the 16-page draft document (permanently attached).

Chairperson Plaag explained to the HPC members that he would read aloud the whole draft document and he asked them to let him know of any proposed changes they would like to see made on it.

Discussion ensued on the Introduction section of the draft document. On page three, in the first paragraph of the draft document under the Introduction, Member Pollitt asked how a community changes its name. Chairperson Plaag said there is no way of knowing the thought process at that point in time. There were no substantial changes made to this section of the draft document.

Discussion ensued on the Purpose of the draft document. The following proposed changes were made on page five, in the second paragraph in the second sentence, it was the consensus of the HPC members to add that the unidentified individual as Ms. Christy Turner, as a Planner for the Town of Boone. On page five, in the third paragraph change 2014 to 2015. On page six in the first paragraph add after authorization “two of which.”

Discussion ensued on the Methodology of the draft document. The following proposed changes were made on page nine in the third paragraph in the first sentence remove the “and” between technician training, on page nine in the third paragraph in the first sentence add “absentee” between inform property, on page nine in the third paragraph in the second sentence spell out “WCPL”, on page nine in the fourth paragraph in the third sentence add “the technicians” between instructed to, on page nine in the fourth paragraph add the additional speakers Lu Ann Welter from Hendersonville, North Carolina and Annie McDonald from the North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office, on page 12 in paragraph two Chairperson Plaag further explained about the loss of survey data from the Town laptop where the shell database was stored. He noted that the SHPO still uses Microsoft Access for their database and this software is not used anymore. He said he purchased a new laptop and continued with the work of the survey.

Discussion ensued on the Survey Results and Recommendations of the draft document. The following proposed changes were made on page 15 in paragraph one in the last sentence add “the” between often best, on page 15 in paragraph two, Chairperson Plaag asked about the date for the post office, if it was prior to survey project and Ms. Turner said she could provide him with the date.

Chairperson Plaag explained that he thought about adding another paragraph to the end of the first paragraph on page 16. He said this paragraph would include additional buildings that would be eligible as local landmarks after façade restoration, like the Watauga County Bank, if someone wanted to fix the original entrance, for example.

Chairperson Plaag noted that on page 16 in the second paragraph, he explained that the Boone Community Appearance Commission since the HPC members last met with them has proposed to eliminate a separate Warehouse District and instead leave it grouped with the Downtown core. He told the HPC members that this creates an opportunity for the HPC members to have a wider Historic District, if they wanted to. He said that Ms. Annie MacDonald from SHPO encouraged Chairperson Plaag to advocate for this idea to the HPC and Council but not to instruct them to do so.

Discussion ensued on the pictorial survey on Grand Boulevard. Ms. Turner said it was in 2008 when the questionnaires were sent out.

After Chairperson Plaag completed reading the whole draft document, he asked the HPC members, if they saw any further changes or additions that needed to be made.

Member Watkins said under the Purpose section of the draft document, Chairperson Plaag did not include the Watauga County Architectural History pictorial book. Member Watkins said that comparisons were done by the researcher on the various surveys that were done. Chairperson Plaag explained that they are called survey publications and they are now frowned upon by SHPO’s because they are viewed as glorified coffee table books. Chairperson Plaag agreed with Member Watkins that said book needs to be mentioned because it is a link in the chain of evidence. Chairperson Plaag said he would add it to the draft document.

Chairperson Plaag noted that the old Wolfie’s Sandwich space on King Street beside the Qualls Block at one time was the Watauga County Library building from 1944 to 1946. He said this space served as an important purpose in a difficult time when there was not a lot of money for a new library.

With no other proposed changes to the draft document, Chairperson Plaag said that his goal is to have the revised draft document to the HPC members in the next couple of weeks for their review before the next meeting.

Linville River Gorge Railway 100th Anniversary Celebration Finalization

Chairperson Plaag began discussion on the topic stating that he will be presenting the proposed details of the thoughts of the HPC members on the celebration to the Council at their meeting on

Thursday, November 15, 2018. He asked Member Bond to contact the owner of the Proper Restaurant regarding the catering of the food and get back to him prior to November 15, 2018. Ms. Turner talked about the availability of the “How Space” on Howard Street for the proposed celebration event. She said she has not yet been able to find out the availability of said space. She said that Mr. John Ward, Boone Town Manager told her that the Town cannot sell tickets for the proposed celebration event but they can ask for donations. Chairperson Plaag noted that Mr. Ward, told him that January 1, 2019 is a Town holiday and there will not be Town Staff available to help with this proposed celebration event on that date.

Member Pollitt suggested putting this proposed event off until spring and for the Town to try to work with Tweestie Railroad on it just before they open for the year. Chairperson Plaag agreed that this could be a possibility because the railroad depot building was completed in the spring of 1919. He also said there would be Staff available and warmer weather for the proposed event. Member Pollitt said the Appalachian State University students and faculty would be in Town in May. Member Bond suggested having the proposed event on the first Friday, May 3, 2019.

Chairperson Plaag said he learned that there was no dining car service on the Linville River Railway. He said that he learned that people brought “box lunches” on the train for when traveling on daily excursions.

Discussion ensued on making a recommendation to Council for the proposed 100th anniversary celebration. Chairperson Plaag suggested having the proposed event at Jimmy Smith Park or in the courtyard space where the old bus station used to be that is owned by the University. Member Pollitt suggested putting up railroad photos for the month of May in the Town of Boone Jones House.

Motion and Vote:

Member Brantz made a motion, seconded by Member Pollitt to postpone the Linville River Gorge Railway 100th Anniversary Celebration of the construction of the depot until May 3, 2019.

Vote:

Aye – All

Nay – None

The motion passed.

Discussion ensued on the food model and food delivery model for the proposed 100th anniversary celebration event. Chairperson Plaag asked the HPC members to think of ways to deliver the food at the celebration to the community without selling tickets. Ms. Turner said the Town cannot sell the food because it is a Town sponsored event. Member Bond suggested that perhaps the Watauga County Historical Society could sell the food.

Other Matters by Commission Members or Staff

Chairperson Plaag said the HPC members are still waiting on Council’s authorization on their recommendation for a sub-committee to work on the Junaluska Historical Marker. He said he is delighted to mention that Ms. Sue Keefe has created a draft text for the historical marker and once the sub-committee has been approved by Council, he will share it with the sub-committee

and put together a formal marker application to be reviewed by the HPC members and it will be sent to Council for their consideration.

Member Bond noted that one of the best additions to the HPC this year has been the addition of Member Pollitt because of her positive contributions to the HPC agenda items.

Member Brantz left the meeting at approximately 4:36 p.m.

Chairperson Plaag said at the next HPC regular meeting on Tuesday, December 11, 2018 the following items would be on the agenda: The draft Historical Context of the Downtown Boone Comprehensive Architectural Survey, Discussion of the Linville River Railway 100th Anniversary Celebration Event, and Update on the Council decision for the Junaluska Historical Marker Sub-committee.

Adjournment

Member Bond made a motion, seconded by Member Pollitt to adjourn the meeting at 4:38 p.m.

Vote:

Aye – All
Nay – None

The motion passed.

Eric Plaag, Chairperson

Marlene Crosby, Board Secretary



FINAL REPORT (DRAFT ONLY)

**Comprehensive Architectural Survey of
Downtown Boone, North Carolina**

Dr. Eric W. Plaag

December 2018

Cover image: Aerial view of downtown Boone, North Carolina, from the southeast, June 1950. Image by Palmer Blair, used courtesy of Sarah Lynn Spencer and the Digital Watauga Project.

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Introduction

The town of Boone, North Carolina, serves as the county seat for Watauga County, which was created in 1849 from portions of Ashe, Wilkes, Caldwell, and Yancey Counties. Known as early as 1823 as Council's Store, when a post office was established there, the community changed the name of the settlement by 1850 to Boone in honor of Daniel Boone, who was believed to have hunted in the area.¹ Formal incorporation of the Town of Boone did not occur until January 23, 1872, when the act was ratified by the state legislature.

The Town of Boone sits near the center of the present-day boundaries of Watauga County. Located in what is essentially a geographic bowl, Boone is surrounded by mountains on nearly all sides. Immediately to the north of town is the east portion of Rich Mountain and a popular local landmark, Howard's Knob, both of which have long served as barriers to movement to the north. To the west of town is a valley divide that allows passage through Hodges Gap, southwest of town, and a small notch near the Oak Grove community. To the south of town, Pine Ridge, Deck Hill, and Yarnell Knob create another difficult barrier leading to the more distant peaks of Flat Top Mountain and yet another Rich Mountain. The area to the east of town, meanwhile, is dominated by a series of hills leading to Wilson Ridge to the southeast.

As a sleepy county seat for the second half of the nineteenth century and the early years of the twentieth century, Boone relied primarily on a local agrarian interests, some attempts at mining, and court traffic to sustain its economy. Two changes in the early twentieth century, however, dramatically altered Boone's economy and its settlement patterns. The first was the growth of the Watauga Academy (1899) from a small teaching school into the four-year college known as Appalachian State Teachers College in 1929. Thereafter, enrollments continued to increase exponentially, so that today, the school is known as Appalachian State University and is home to more than 19,000 students as of 2018—matching the local population of approximately 19,200 people.

The second change was the arrival of the Linville River Railway in October 1918. While the line served both freight and passengers, its primary significance lay in the

¹ As seen on several early maps prior to the 1830s, the village of Boone may have been known as "Howard," probably in honor of Benjamin Howard, who had a hunting cabin near the present downtown and for whom Howard's Knob was named. For an early map reference to Boone as "Council's Store," see *Map of North and South Carolina Exhibiting the post offices, post roads, canals, railroads, etc., by David H. Burr...entered according to Act of Congress, July 10th 1839*, National Archives II, College Park, MD, RG 28, Burr Atlas, 6. This map is stored as four map sections. Later maps showed the community under the "Boone" name as early as 1865. See Captain William Kossak and John B. Muller, *Military Map Showing the Marches of the United States Forces Under Command of Maj. Genl. W. T. Sherman USA During the Years 1863, 1864, 1865*, St. Louis, 1865, National Archives II, College Park, MD, RG 77, US 254 ½.

introduction of mass quantities of building materials—brick, concrete, limestone, lumber, and sand—into an area that was virtually unreachable by truck traffic in the first quarter of the twentieth century. Not surprisingly, Boone's commercial center was transformed over the next 30 years from a near-equal mix of domestic architecture and frame commercial establishments into an impressive array of brick and steel-frame, commercial block buildings. Once the train stopped running in 1940 as a result of a major flood, improved highways into the area continued to bring new industry and diversity in the downtown area's commercial architecture. By the 1950s, Boone was running out of space in its original downtown area, in part because the growth of the university from the southeast was also beginning to crowd the downtown area. As a result, urban sprawl moved to the east and south of town along US 321 and US 421 in particular, where agricultural lands were ripe for development along the two principal highways leading to larger, distant population centers.

While the town is often reported to have an elevation of 3,333 feet, a geodetic benchmark in the heart of downtown near the corner of Depot and West King Streets reports the elevation as 3,323.602 feet. The original downtown area is located primarily to the north of Boone (Kraut) Creek, which flows downstream to its intersection with Winkler's Creek on the southeast side of town. Winkler's Creek then merges with the East and Middle Forks of the New River to form the South Fork of the New River, which flows away to the northeast on the east side of the current town boundaries. Because of the abundance of drainage from the hills and mountains surrounding Boone, both the original downtown and the lower areas to the southeast are prone to frequent flooding.

The downtown area is dominated by its principal artery, West King Street, running southeast to northwest through the center of town, with Queen Street to the north and Howard Street to the south as important secondary routes in the town's history. Another major thoroughfare, Rivers Street, dates to about 1968 and runs along the old rail bed but now serves as a major boundary between Boone's downtown and Appalachian State University. Primary cross streets in the downtown area, running southwest to northeast, are (west to east) Water Street, Depot Street, and Appalachian Street.

This comprehensive architectural survey of the historic downtown section of Boone, North Carolina, documents the surviving architectural resources associated with the transformation of this community as outlined above. Indeed, Boone's downtown area contains an impressive array of surviving nineteenth- and early twentieth-century buildings that serve as silent witnesses to and evidence of Boone's historical development patterns.

Purpose

The North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) has facilitated a statewide architectural survey program for nearly 50 years. As stated by the SHPO, the mission of this program is to "identify, record, and encourage the preservation of North Carolina's rich and varied historic and architectural heritage." Central to this program is the participation of local communities and counties in the architectural survey process. Specifically, communities are encouraged—either on their own or through the hiring of qualified consultants—to create "a photographic and written record of historic places" as a critical first step in "recognizing, valuing, and preserving the heritage of the past for the benefit of the present and the future."²

While numerous attempts have been made since the 1980s to document the architectural history of downtown Boone—either individually or as part of larger survey efforts—no one has previously conducted a comprehensive architectural survey of downtown Boone as a distinct district in a manner that meets the architectural survey standards of the SHPO. Past surveys include an informal survey of sixteen buildings in the Boone vicinity completed by Lynne Johnson in 1982; a more formal survey of approximately 100 buildings within the city limits of Boone completed by Elizabeth Stevens and Deborah Thompson in 1988; a Multiple Property Documentation Form entitled "Historic and Architectural Resources of Watauga County, North Carolina, ca. 1763-1952," completed by Tony VanWinkle with the NC SHPO in 2003, which updated many of the survey entries from the Stevens and Thompson survey; the "Town of Boone 2008 Pictorial Study for the Historic Preservation Commission," completed by an unidentified individual; and an architectural survey of the Junaluska neighborhood (located just north of downtown Boone), completed in 2012 as an Appalachian State University class project under the direction of Trent Margrif.³

*Will add the
Watauga County
Arch. Historical
Pictorial book
to draft
document*
→ Add: Christy
Turner, Senior
Planner, Town
of Boone

Given the paucity and dated nature of the existing survey materials on the buildings of downtown Boone, the Boone Historic Preservation Commission obtained authorization from the Boone Town Council in ~~2014~~²⁰¹⁵ to proceed with a comprehensive survey of the downtown Boone area, which roughly aligns with the present boundaries of the Boone Municipal Service District (sometimes referred to

² Quoted material appears on the website for "The Statewide Architectural Survey," North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office, Department of Natural and Cultural Resources, Office of Archives and History, accessed November 10, 2018, <http://www.hpo.ncdcr.gov/bldgsurv.htm>.

³ Surveys from this list stored at the NC SHPO Western Office include Lynne Johnson, "Historic Preservation," July 19, 1982, typescript; Elizabeth C. Stevens, "Town of Boone Historic Sites Survey," typescript, 1989; and Tony VanWinkle, "Historic and Architectural Resources of Watauga County, North Carolina, ca. 1763-1952," MPDF Form, typescript, September 9, 2003. Materials from the Town of Boone Planning and Inspections Office include a series of Property Information Sheets prepared by an unknown individual in 2008 and kept in the archives of the Planning and Inspections Office, which may have been prepared in conjunction with "Town of Boone 2008 Pictorial Study for the Historic Preservation Commission—Research Notes," typescript, 2008, also held by the Town of Boone Planning and Inspections Office. Photographs, notes, and a slideshow presentation prepared by Trent Margrif's class for "Architectural Survey, Junaluska Neighborhood, Boone, North Carolina," 2012, were provided from the private records of Trent Margrif.

as the "MSD" or "B-1"). Six other properties lying outside the MSD were also included in this authorization, ^{two of which} but are not covered by this survey report.

The Boone Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) in turn solicited the assistance of Dr. Eric Plaag of Carolina Historical Consulting, LLC, who also serves as the HPC's chairperson, to direct the survey and supervise a team of interns who would complete the survey fieldwork. Dr. Plaag agreed to undertake this work gratis, as a courtesy to the Town of Boone. In Fall 2015, the HPC held a public information session about the forthcoming survey work, shortly after which the survey fieldwork began. In the three years that followed, comprehensive research on each of the survey-eligible properties in the MSD resulted in updated survey files for 32 properties and new survey files on another 95 resources. In addition, survey files for four other properties lying just outside the MSD were updated for this report, bringing the total to 131 resources evaluated by the survey team. These resources represent a diverse group of building styles and forms from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries that illustrate the many factors that have influenced the development of Boone's historic downtown area between 1890 and 1970.

This report provides a detailed analysis of these resources and those factors that shaped the development of downtown Boone. Organized around historic contexts, the report divides the period from 1890 to 1970 into a series of developmental stages that tell the story of how Boone's downtown core changed over time. Because this report is focused primarily on the MSD (or downtown area), it does not provide historic context for the development of the several historic, residential areas that abut the downtown area, nor does it attempt to explore in detail the urban sprawl that saw expansion of town limits to the south and east that began in the 1950s and continues today. Furthermore, this report focuses primarily on detailed accounts extant resources at the time of the survey, rather than providing exhaustive descriptions of important resources that have disappeared from Boone's landscape. Some of these, like the 1875 and 1905 courthouses, Boone's several nineteenth and early twentieth century, downtown hotels (Blair, Blackburn, Coffey/Critcher, Daniel Boone, and the Greene Inn), and prominent domestic architecture interspersed with commercial building are critical to the history of Boone's development. Having disappeared decades ago, however, their mentions are brief, and usually only in the context of the new architecture for which they were demolished.

This survey report also breaks with the standard protocol for survey reports of this type in North Carolina by providing unusually detailed entries on each of the examined resources. These entries go beyond the usual brief summaries of history and architecture to provide detailed accounts of their construction, their tenancies (where known), and both past and present architectural configurations. The purpose in providing this level of detail is two-fold. First, we found in our research that a great deal of misinformation and myth exists about a number of the resources in downtown Boone, and our hope was to squelch some of those wild and unfounded stories while simultaneously gathering as much reliable information as possible about each resources in a single place. Second, rigorously detailed,

architectural snapshots of a building help future property owners and historic preservation commissioners to better understand the architectural history of a building and which extant elements actually contribute to the significance of a property, as opposed to elements that are less essential or, more often, non-historic and therefore ripe for removal and rehabilitation. These detailed entries appear as a long appendix at the end of this report.

Ultimately, the purpose of this report is to provide the Town of Boone and its Historic Preservation Commission with a well-researched history of its individual buildings in downtown Boone and the contexts that connect those buildings to one another. This study should be used as a long-term planning resource for understanding and interpreting the Town of Boone's history, revising and enforcing its community appearance standards, UDO, and other planning documents, and establishing strategies and protocols for preservation of its significant architectural resources in the downtown area. As with all documents of this type, there is a shelf life. The survey team recommends that this document should be updated at least every 20 years to reflect the changes in downtown Boone's architectural landscape that are already in progress and sure to continue in the years ahead.

Methodology

Throughout the survey process, the survey team has followed the standards and procedures set forth in the NC SHPO's *Architectural Survey Manual: Practical Advice for Recording Historic Resources* (2008), although at times the team's contact at the Western Office of the SHPO has asked that the team modify aspects of its process to comply with shifting aspects of these standards and procedures as currently recommended by the SHPO.

In keeping with these standards and procedures, the Comprehensive Architectural Survey of Downtown Boone, North Carolina, was divided into three stages. The first stage focused on planning for the survey itself. This planning took a number of forms. To start, the HPC and the Town of Boone worked with the SHPO, the Town of Boone Planning and Inspections Office, and local residents to gather all examples of past efforts to survey properties located in downtown Boone. As part of this effort, the Town of Boone also employed a staff intern, Beau Lockard, to assist with gathering these survey materials and provide a summary report on these items. Annie McDonald of the Western Office of the NC SHPO was especially helpful in providing digital copies of most of the previous survey files on properties in Boone. Annie also photocopied and mailed to the survey team a handful of survey files that were too large for scanning and digital delivery.

Once the HPC determined what past survey materials were available, it turned its attention to determining the boundaries for the survey. While the primary survey boundary was essentially an overlay with the existing Boone Municipal Service District (MSD) in the downtown area, the HPC nevertheless included a list of additional properties outside of the survey area that were perceived as being particularly at risk. Four of these properties—the Boone Cemetery (WT0055), the Watauga Handicrafts Building (WT0527), the Frank A. Linney House (WT0582), and the John W. Hodges, Sr., House (WT0624)—are included in this report because of their close proximity to the downtown survey area. Four other resources—Daniel Boone Native Gardens, Hickory Ridge, and the Horn in the West Complex (previously linked inexplicably under a single survey number, WT0518), and the William Wallace Edmisten House (WT0571)—were also surveyed, but these properties are at a considerable distance from the downtown Boone MSD and will be addressed in separate survey reports in the future.

The HPC briefly considered the hiring of an outside consultant with credentials as a qualified preservation professional to serve as the principal investigator for the project and supervisor for the survey team. Because of the considerable cost associated with hiring an outside consultant, the chairperson of the HPC, Dr. Eric Plaag, volunteered to serve as the principal investigator through his consulting firm, Carolina Historical Consulting, LLC. Dr. Plaag offered these services on a pro bono basis to the Town, with the understanding that the Town would cover the cost of hiring field survey technicians to do much of the initial field survey work, as well as the cost of supplies and equipment that the survey team might need. To be clear, Dr.

Plaag has received absolutely no compensation whatsoever for his work on this survey project and report.

At this stage, the HPC asked Town Council for funding to cover the hiring of up to four temporary employees who would work for the Town of Boone as field survey technicians. Preferred credentials for these temporary employees included either a graduate degree in historic preservation or extensive graduate work in history or historic preservation. Minimum credentials included extensive undergraduate work toward completion of a baccalaureate degree in history or historic preservation. Ultimately, the Town hired a total of three field survey technicians—Paul Fuller, Nicole Holladay, and Carson Hamilton. Dr. Plaag and Annie McDonald then met with the team to train them on architectural nomenclature, proper field survey techniques and protocols, and completion of the survey forms and architectural descriptions. In addition, Dr. Plaag shared the NC SHPO Survey Manual, and three National Register Bulletins—NRB 39 *Researching a Historic Property*, NRB 24 *Guidelines for Local Surveys*, and NRB 15 *How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*—with the survey team and encouraged the team to review these documents closely before beginning the field survey work.

While survey technician and training was taking place, the HPC, on authorization from Town Council, began a public information campaign to inform ^{Absentee} property owners and tenants in the survey area about the upcoming survey efforts. Several efforts were made to convey information about the survey to the public, including a press release on September 10, 2015, to local media; the printing of a brochure about the survey process, which was hand delivered to all properties in the survey area in September 2015; and a public information session held at the WCPL on September 23, 2015. This latter effort was particularly helpful in educating the public about the survey process, as an estimated 50 individuals attended the session. A robust but entirely positive and cooperative question-and-answer session followed a brief presentation by Dr. Plaag and members of the Town of Boone staff.

spell out
WCPL =
Watauga County
Public Library
= Add the
additional speakers

In late September 2015, the project shifted into its second stage, consisting primarily of field survey work with some ancillary research focused primarily on the gathering of historic images to assist with building identification and interpretation. By early October, the survey technicians completed the initial stage of fieldwork, consisting of a windshield survey to rule out buildings that were of relatively recent construction and therefore not regarded as significant ^{the technicians} resources in the architectural period of significance. Specifically, Dr. Plaag instructed ^{the technicians} to rule in those properties that appeared to be built before 1980 and rule out those properties that appeared to be more recent additions. This strategy is a deviation from standard survey protocols that are often focused solely on properties that are at least 50 years of age. Dr. Plaag's reasoning in selecting this methodology is that the survey report itself will likely have a shelf life of 15 to 20 years, so including properties at least 35 years of age is more helpful in what will ultimately be a preservation planning document over that period.

As a result of this strategy, several buildings were eliminated from consideration. These include the multi-story law office building at 890 West King Street, the multi-story law office building at 756 West King Street, the Watauga County Library at 140 Depot Street, a 2014 building at 494 West King Street, ASU's Beasley Media Complex on Rivers Street, the Casey and Casey Law Office at 891 West King Street, and a number of empty lots scattered throughout downtown that are listed as separate parcels but contain no structures or buildings. Otherwise, all other buildings and structures in the downtown area were surveyed for this report. This sometimes resulted in outliers being surveyed. One example is the Appletree Apartments (WT0884), which appeared to be quite a bit older to the survey technicians than its actual age (circa 2000), in part because of its poor condition. Other outliers, like the Stacy Eggers Annex (WT0814, built in 1988) and the Jamie Leigh Building (WT0800, built circa 1982) were included because their designs mimicked older architecture, and their ages were discovered only after rigorous research outside the field survey period.

In addition, the survey team spent time in the Special Collections of Appalachian State University to review and in some cases photograph various past survey materials that were deposited there following past architectural survey efforts. While there, the survey team also hunted for historic photographs in the ASU Special Collections that might assist the survey team when reviewing changes in architecture for downtown buildings. Of special note was a circa 1963 aerial image taken from the east. The survey team also reviewed hundreds of photographs in ASU's Digital Collections and Digital NC's *Rhododendron* yearbook collection online in an effort to locate similar images.

Simultaneous to these efforts, the Digital Watauga Project—a joint effort of the Watauga County Historical Society (WCHS) and the Watauga County Public Library (WCPL)—was just getting underway. This project is an ongoing initiative to urge local residents, organizations, and repositories to share their images, documents, and other materials with the project so that they can be digitized and shared with the public. During the course of the survey project, the Digital Watauga Project (DWP) has digitized more than 5,200 items, many of which have provided the team with crucial, historic views of buildings in downtown Boone. Of particular value has been the Palmer Blair Collection, shot between 1946 and 1957, when the downtown area was undergoing rapid transition and many historic facades were being changed. The Palmer Blair Collection contains several aerial images of downtown Boone taken in 1950, which offer a unique view that helps to articulate Boone's construction history, particularly when combined with the Sanborn Fire Insurance Company maps for Boone from 1928 and 1947.

In addition, during 2015 to 2017, representatives from the DWP and the WCPL were fierce advocates for the digitization of the *Watauga Democrat* for the years 1923-1963 by the North Carolina Digital Heritage Center (Digital NC). This additional, forty-year run of OCR-searchable, local newspaper coverage, on top of the 1888-1922 run digitized by the Library of Congress several years ago, offered access to

construction details about Boone's buildings that had otherwise been lost. Indeed, had it not been for the images in the DWP and the digitization of the *Watauga Democrat* occurring simultaneous to the downtown survey work, it is doubtful that the present survey report would contain the level of detail that it does.

Several other collections provided key photographs for the interpretation of Boone's history. Among them are the Cy Crumley Scrapbook, particularly a 1939 image of Boone taken from the southwest; several images in the possession of the Town of Boone Cultural Resources Department; the Bobby Brendell Postcard Collection, the Blue Ridge Stemwinder Collection, the George Flowers Collection, the Historic Boone Collection, the Watauga County Agricultural Extension Aerial Images Collection, and the Paul Armfield Coffey Collection, all in Digital Watauga; and the 1936 H. Lee Waters film of Boone and surrounding areas. In addition, several local residents provided occasional leads as they conducted their own research on other historical topics. Particularly helpful in this regard were Terry Harmon, Frank Mohler, Michael Hardy, and Gary Boye, who not only tracked down images but also shared newspaper articles about specific buildings before the survey research shifted full-time into that phase.

Following the windshield survey, the survey team shifted its focus to detailed field survey of the remaining 131 resources within the survey boundary (including the four nearby properties). This fieldwork took an unusually long period of time, in part because survey technicians were learning as they completed their work. Initially, technicians were sent out to work individually, but the team quickly realized that the survey work was more successful if they worked in teams of two, despite the apparent loss in efficiency. This meant that the principal investigator had to be present, also, to provide the third team member with a partner in the field. Weather was also sometimes a factor, as the bulk of this fieldwork was completed between October 2015 and May 2016, when snow, ice, cold temperatures, and very gusty winds are common to Boone. The survey team was also limited by the schedules of the technicians themselves, two of whom were enrolled full-time at Appalachian State University, and all three of whom held other jobs. Further complicating matters was Carson Hamilton's withdrawal from the project in February 2016. Nicole Holladay's graduation in early May 2016 left Dr. Plaag and Paul Fuller to work on completing the remaining survey and architectural description work over the ensuing couple of months until Paul ran out of budgeted hours.

While physically in the field, survey technicians completed field notes on SHPO Historic Property Field Data Forms (April 2008, rev. 2012), took numerous digital photographs, and in some cases completed sketch maps to assist with later interpretation of the resources. These forms also included the site survey numbers that were initially assigned to the properties based either on past survey number assignments (for previously surveyed properties) or assumptions made during the windshield survey about building boundaries. In several cases, the survey team or the principal investigator later realized that multiple resources had sometimes been

grouped together as a single resource when in fact the architectural history demanded that components of those resources be considered separately. Good examples of this are the J. Walter Jones Building and the W. R. Winkler Building (split from WT0591 to include WT0891); the Cook-Nichols Motor Company Building and the Winkler Motor Company Showroom (split from WT0603 to include WT0893); Brendell's Garage Building #1, the Duncan Motor Company Building, and the Rogers Radiator Shop (split from WT0604 to include WT0887 and WT0888); the Wilcox Drug Company Complex and the Boone Tire and Bargain Store Warehouse (split from WT0602 to include WT0892); and the Boone Garage and the W. R. Winkler Tire Company Building (split from WT0819 to include WT0894).

In addition to completing fieldwork during this time, the survey team also began the third stage, which essentially consisted of organizing the field data and conducting detailed historical research on the individual properties. At the beginning of this stage, the technicians set up the initial shell database for the properties, entered the field notes from the field data forms, organized and named the survey photographs, and began crafting detailed architectural descriptions for the individual buildings. This last part presented perhaps the steepest learning curve for the survey technicians, none of whom had ever completed detailed architectural descriptions and all of whom were often unfamiliar with the nomenclature. This process involved many long hours of the principal investigator and one or more of the technicians sitting in a room together and reworking the field notes into viable architectural descriptions. In many cases, past survey files were found to contain inadequate or incorrect architectural descriptions of the resources as they existed at those earlier survey dates, necessitating complete rewrites of the architectural descriptions rather than a mere brief update on changes. After the field technicians departed the project in 2016, the principal investigator discovered that the Town laptop on which the shell database had been stored (including the initial wave of field data) had been disposed of, requiring a complete reconstruction of the shell database and its associated data. To complete the field survey files, the principal investigator has also worked alone to properly label and format the digital photographs onto proof sheets and compile all of the relevant background information, including historic photographs, maps, deeds, and newspaper articles.

Tracking down the historical information and photographs for this last stage has consumed most of the principal investigator's time on this project for the past two years. The vast majority of the relevant historic images found in the Digital Watauga Project were not available until after the budget-driven departure of the survey technicians in mid-2016. As photographic discoveries have been made, the principal investigator has often returned to the individual building narratives he has completed in order to update the narrative with more accurate information. In addition, the principal investigator has completed a deep dive into the digitized *Watauga Democrat* (1888-1963) to construct as detailed a history as possible of the architectural and tenant changes in all of the surveyed buildings that were extant during that window. The result is a set of survey entries that provide a fairly exhaustive account of the history of most of the buildings within the survey area.

Taken together with the Historic Context narrative that follows this section, along with the Survey Results and Recommendations that follow the Historic Context, the Town of Boone and its Historic Preservation Commission now possess a vibrant, highly detailed description of its surviving historic resources in downtown Boone. This document should serve as a vital planning document for framing decisions about the evaluation, registration, and designation of historic properties at both the National Register and Local Landmark and District levels. In addition, this survey report should serve as the basis for preservation and community appearance decisions, policies, and legislation for the Town of Boone for many years to come.

Historic Context
(To be completed)

Survey Results and Recommendations

The primary goal of this comprehensive survey of downtown Boone properties was to compile detailed information about all 131 survey properties that met the survey team's criteria for consideration. As with all comprehensive architectural surveys, though, there are long-term possibilities, the burden for which ultimately shifts to the property owners, the local municipality, and local preservation interests. Among these are National Register listing for individual properties and districts, as well as Local Historic Landmark and Local Historic District listings. While these projects can be undertaken by anyone with the desire and training to complete them, many municipalities have found that support from and completion of work by the historic preservation organization or commission toward securing such designations is often ^{the} best and most efficient approach.

As of December 2018, the downtown Boone survey area contains a total of two properties that are presently listed in the National Register of Historic Places and still survive: the Jones House (WT0008) and the United States Post Office (Boone) (WT0049). A third property, the Daniel Boone Hotel (WT0006) was listed in 1982 but was demolished shortly thereafter. In addition, the Town of Boone has designated three resources as Local Historic Landmarks since this survey project started. These include the United States Post Office (Boone) (WT0049), the Frank A. Linney House (WT0582), and the Linney Law Office (WT0587).

Beyond these properties that have already been listed, several additional properties have been identified by the survey team as National Register-eligible in their present condition. First and most important among these is the Watauga County Jail (WT0067), which is presently Study Listed and stands out as the only nineteenth-century governmental building to survive in Watauga County. While minor changes over the past 129 years have modified the front porch and other aspects of the exterior appearance, the building nevertheless appears to be an outstanding candidate for National Register listing for its significance under Criterion A. Other candidates for National Register listing include the R. L. Clay House (WT0530, Criteria B and C), the Chapell Wilson House (WT0580, Criteria A, B, and C), the Frank A. Linney House (WT0582, Criteria A, B, and C), and the Linney Law Office (WT0587, Criteria A, B, and C). The principal investigator is already in discussions with the property owners and the NC SHPO about preparation of Study List applications for the Linney properties and a National Register nomination for the Watauga County Jail.

For all of the properties listed above, the survey team also recommends that the Town of Boone and its Historic Preservation Commission consider pursuing individual listing as Local Historic Landmarks. In the case of the R. L. Clay House, this property is owned by the Town of Boone, which should streamline its consideration. In addition to these properties, the John W. Hodges, Sr., House (WT0624) and the Boone Cemetery (WT0055), both lying just outside the survey area, also appear to be candidates for Local Historic Landmark designation.

Furthermore, the Jones House (WT0008), which is already National Register-listed, would appear to be a relatively straightforward candidate for Local Historic Landmark designation, especially since it is also Town-owned.

At the district level, the area bounded by Queen Street to the north, Appalachian Street to the east, Rivers Street to the south, and Water Street to the west has a particularly rich concentration of commercial buildings that illustrate Boone's transformation from a sleepy, county seat in 1918 to a bustling commercial center by the early 1960s. This concentration is most pronounced along West King Street from the Smithey's Department Store Building (WT0584) on the west end of town to the intersection of Appalachian Street and West King Street. This area also aligns most obviously with Boone's traditional downtown business district between the 1910s and the 1940s, and taken as a whole, the commercial resources located within this stretch retain an unusually high degree of integrity in terms of design and materials. While some of the individual resources may not retain sufficient integrity to be included as a contributing resources in a National Register District listing, at the very least, this area should be considered for Local Landmark District listing. Careful consideration should be paid to whether to treat the buildings along the West King Street corridor as a separate district from the warehouse-related properties along Howard and Depot Streets to the south, or whether to incorporate them into a singular district, given their ability to tell the story of Boone's changing downtown over the period from 1918 to 1960.

In addition, the cluster of residential properties found on what is traditionally known as "Hippy Hill," in the east part of the study area, is worthy of further study for consideration as a separate Local Historic District based on its history and residential characteristics. This additional study should include the possibility of including these resources with other residential resources found on nearby Wallace Circle, Orchard Street, and Grand Boulevard, which have yet to be surveyed in context to one another.