

**TOWN OF BOONE
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
MARCH 11, 2025, 3:00 PM
Planning & Inspections Department & WebEx Video Conferencing**

Historic Preservation Commission Members Present: Vardell Smyth-Chair, Bettie Bond-Vice-Chair, and Ayden Basinger (via WebEx)

Council Liaison: Virginia Roseman (via WebEx)

Planning Staff Present: Brandon Wise-Deputy Director, Jessica Mitchell-Advanced Planning Specialist, Amy Snider-Commercial Zoning Administrator, and Brenda Henson-Board Clerk

Other Town Staff/Representatives Present: Allison Meade-Town Attorney (via WebEx)

Call to Order

Chair Smyth called the Boone Historic Preservation Commission meeting to order at 3:06 p.m. The meeting was held in the Planning & Inspections Conference Room at 680 West King Street and via WebEx.

Adoption of Agenda

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

Vote: Aye – 3
Nay – 0

The motion passed.

Case A25-0045 713 W King St – Certificate of Appropriateness

J. Swartz Construction, LLC has submitted an application, on behalf of the property owner, for a Certificate of Appropriateness for Major Work for 713 W King St (D.L. Wilcox Building) located in the Downtown Boone Local Historic District to alter the primary elevation by applying a new layer of stucco to existing stucco creating a smoother texture.

Jessica Mitchell, Brandon Wise, and Amy Snider, Town Staff members, were sworn in by Chair Smyth.

Commission members indicated they had no fixed opinions, no conflicts of interest, and had not participated in ex-parte communication regarding this case.

Josh Swartz, applicant for the case, was sworn in by Chair Smyth.

Chair Smyth asked Mr. Swartz if he had any objections to the contents of the meeting packet. Mr. Swartz replied that he had no objections.

Ms. Snider presented the request as outlined in the meeting packet.

Vice-Chair Bond asked if there was damage to the building caused by Hurricane Helene. Mr. Swartz replied that there was no damage to the stucco. However, there was flooding in the basement. He suggested that replacing the stucco might help with potential future flooding in the basement but noted this replacement was primarily aesthetic.

Chair Smyth stated that the building's façade was dramatically changed from its original façade, so the current façade was no longer historic.

Mr. Swartz explained that the property owner wanted to redo the front of the building altogether but decided there were too many hoops to jump through. Because the intent was to sell the building, the property owner felt it would be easier to replace the stucco and repaint it to make the façade a little more attractive. Mr. Swartz asked if the paint color would need to remain the same. Ms. Snider replied that the paint color would need to stay the same. If the property owner wished to paint the exterior a different color or paint an unpainted surface, that request would require approval by the Historic Preservation Commission.

Chair Smyth stated that the entire front façade, except for the storefront windows, was no longer historical to the building because the building had been through several renovations.

Chair Smyth noted that Mast Store had removed the awning on the front of their building, and the gorgeous clerestory windows were now visible. He also stated that for this property, there were clerestory windows that were once there that might be under the current façade.

There was no public comment on this case.

Motion and Vote:

Vice-Chair Bond made a motion, seconded by Commission Member Basinger, that the proposed development is congruous with the special character of the Downtown Boone Local Historic District because the appearance and color of the building's façade will remain the same. The COA is approved subject to the following conditions:

- Where there is a conflict between the application information and the plans (January 21, 2025), the plans control. Insignificant deviations may be permitted to comply with the requirements of the UDO.
- Any commitments and representations concerning the proposed exterior modification made by the applicant or its representatives at the public hearing shall also become a condition of the permit and a basis for a stop work order and/or permit revocation if violated.
- The applicant shall submit the necessary applications, plans, details, and specifications which meet the requirements of the Town Code, UDO, Building Code, and any other applicable codes for review and approval necessary to issue Zoning and Building Permits.

Vote: Aye – 3

Nay – 0

The motion passed.

Case A25-0061 Come Back Shack – Certificate of Appropriateness

Elliot Coatney, on behalf of Family Only Inc., has submitted an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness for Major Work for the Come Back Shack at 767 W. King Street, located in the Downtown Boone Local Historic District. The request is for the addition of a covered patio attached to the structure on the secondary elevation.

Mr. Wise presented the case as outlined in the meeting packet. He noted that the proposed covered area had open seating and an entry door. Mr. Wise stated that the building was newly constructed in the historic district. The patio area was in a "false alley" created during the new construction that would not block the walkways.

Steven Prewitt and Scott Prewitt, Family Only, Inc. members, and Elliot Coatney, applicant for Come Back Shack, were sworn in by Chair Smyth.

Chair Smyth stated that this was an extension to a new building that did not have to be historic because the building was not historic. Mr. Wise replied that the addition to the building should be compatible with the historic district. He added that some cable-hung awnings on the side of the building were approved with the building's construction, and this request would expand the awnings. However, the new awnings would require footers and attachment to the building because they were not cable-hung. Mr. Wise noted that the new construction of the building was approved before the enactment of the historic district.

There was no public comment on this case.

Motion and Vote:

Chair Smyth made a motion, seconded by Vice-Chair Bond, that the proposed development is congruous with the special character of the Downtown Boone Local Historic District because of the evidence presented in the meeting packet. The COA is approved subject to the following conditions:

- Where there is a conflict between the application information and the plans (August 30, 2024), the plans control. Insignificant deviations may be permitted to comply with the requirements of the UDO.
- Any commitments and representations concerning the proposed exterior modification made by the applicant or its representatives at the public hearing shall also become a condition of the permit and a basis for a stop work order and/or permit revocation if violated.
- The applicant shall submit the necessary applications, plans, details, and specifications which meet the requirements of the Town Code, UDO, Building Code, and any other applicable codes for review and approval necessary to issue Zoning and Building Permits.

Vote: Aye – 3
Nay – 0

The motion passed.

Other Matters

Ms. Meade suggested that at an advisory meeting, the HPC, staff, and herself should evaluate previous COA cases to see if there were matters that could be handled administratively instead of having to go before the Commission. They could also discuss past projects to see what elements worked and which did not turn out like the HPC thought they would.

Chair Smyth suggested the possibility of a paint color palette so that property owners who wanted to paint the exterior of their buildings downtown could do so without approval from the HPC if they chose an approved color.

Ms. Mitchell stated that revisions to Appendix D had been delayed due to work on the Comprehensive Plan and would still take several months to complete.

Chair Smyth noted that he could not attend the April 1, 2025, HPC advisory meeting. The HPC agreed to cancel the April 1, 2025, HPC meeting. The next meeting would be the April 8, 2025, quasi-judicial meeting.

Mr. Wise noted that one Statement of Conformity should be submitted for Mellow Mushroom to remove shutters from their building that were not historic.

Vice-Chair Bond noted that the quilting emblems over the antique mall were down. Mr. Wise replied that one fell off and the others deteriorated, so the property owner removed them. He added that work was completed to replace the previously damaged storefront window in kind.

Ms. Mitchell provided an update on HPC tasks and collaboration with an Appalachian State history class. She said she followed up with Dr. Deathridge regarding her class researching the Boone/Kraut Creek historic marker project. She gave Dr. Deathridge the project details she told the HPC last week. She stated that Dr. Deathridge would like to do the work this semester with her class. Ms. Mitchell noted that Dr. Deathridge expressed an interest in working on more than one project. Dr. Deathridge proposed having her students come up with other potential historical marker sites, understanding that HPC could hear them. Still, it would be up to the Town Council to decide if there would be interest in a historical marker for the other locations.

Ms. Mitchell anticipated that Dr. Deathridge's class would have their draft work ready to present at the June HPC advisory meeting. She provided Dr. Deathridge with information on previous historic marker reports and marker companies that the Town had worked with to give her an idea of what was expected.

Vice-Chair Bond felt that the history of Howard Street, from the Daniel Boone Inn to the former Watauga County Jail (Proper Restaurant), would be an interesting project.

Adjournment

Chair Smyth motioned to adjourn the meeting at 4:49 p.m. Vice-Chair Bond seconded the motion.

Vote: Aye – 3
Nay – 0

The motion passed.

Vardell Smyth, Chair

Brenda Henson, Board Clerk