TOWN OF BOONE
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
APRIL 12, 2022, 6:00 p.m.

Historic Preservation Commission Members in Attendance:
Chair Eric Plaag, Vice-Chair Bettie Bond, Chuck Watkins, and Rennie Brantz
Student Member: Izabela Willis
Council Liaisons: Virginia Roseman
Town Staff in Attendance:
Jane Shook-Director of Planning & Inspections, Jessica Mitchell-Long-Range/Special Projects Planner, Christy Turner-Senior Planner, Mark Freed-Director of Cultural Resources, and Marlene Crosby-Board Secretary
Others in Attendance: Allison Meade-Town Attorney, Leigh Blevins and Bill Dixon-Appalachian Architecture, John Cooper and Terry Moore-Mast General Store and Amber Bateman-Director of Watauga County Arts Council

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Call to Order
Chair Eric Plaag called the meeting of the Boone Historic Preservation Commission, held via WebEx, to order at 6:03 p.m., and he provided a brief synopsis of the Historic Preservation Commission, its makeup, and function.

Adoption of Agenda
Chair Plaag suggested adding the Watauga County Jail Landmark Designation Update under Number Nine and adding before Number Six, Discussion of the Historic Preservation Commission Meeting Schedule.

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

Vote: Aye – All
Nay – None
The motion passed.

Public Comment
No individuals requested the opportunity to speak during public comment.

Case Z05530-022822 Mast Store Commercial Entrance
Mr. John Cooper, on behalf of Mast General Store, Inc., has requested a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) for a modified entry to be constructed for retail space along with a new emergency exit door, which is planned at 130 North Depot Street. Both the modified entrance and emergency exit door are to be aluminum storefront (bronze or dark bronze in color). The exiting wood windows will be replaced with an aluminum storefront to match the new entry and exit doors.

Pursuant to the Town of Boone Unified Development Ordinance (UDO), Appendix D, Downtown Boone Local Historic District, specifically the section on COA Application for Major Work, a COA is required for the replacement of architectural details when there will be a change in design or materials from the original or existing details as well as exterior modification of existing buildings for ADA compliance.

Chair Plaag pointed out that his wife, Ms. Teresa Plaag, is an employee of Mast General Store, the applicant of this case, and Ms. Plaag is also an employee stockholder in the company. He asked if there were any objections from any of the HPC Members or any of the participants to him continuing in this case.

Ms. Meade clarified the statutory specifications about conflict of interest. She said if Chair Plaag was an employee of the Mast General Store or if Ms. Plaag was the applicant, it would be a conflict of interest on both counts; but in this case Chair Plaag's wife was the employee of Mast Store so the relationship was a step removed from what was contemplated in the statute governing conflicts of interest. Ms. Meade also pointed out that there might be a perceived conflict in that one might speculate that Chair Plaag might fear for his wife's employment if he voted against the Mast General Store application. Chair Plaag stated that he had no such concern and believed that he could be an objective participant in this case. Ms. Meade asked Mr. Cooper, on behalf of Mast General Store, if he had any objection; there was no objection.

Chair Plaag asked if any other Commissioners had a possible conflict of interest or if any Commissioners had engaged in any undisclosed ex parte communication regarding this application. There being no response in the affirmative, Chair Plaag moved forward with this case.

Chair Plaag asked Mr. Cooper if he had an attorney with him at this meeting or was he presenting on his own. Mr. Cooper was having a computer issue and was not able to respond. Mr. Terry Moore, the Facilities Manager for Mast General Store, responded and said that Mast General Store had employed Mr. Bill Dixon from Appalachian Architecture to provide information for this application. Mr. Moore stated that Mr. Cooper asked Mr. Dixon to represent the Mast General Store for this application. Ms. Meade stated that Mr. Dixon could not act as an attorney, but he could give a narrative and evidence about the case. She further explained that Mr. Dixon could not cross-examine or do the other things an attorney would do. Mr. Moore said that they did not feel that they needed an attorney. Ms. Jane Shook, Director of Planning and Inspections, said that Mr. Cooper was still having technical issues but stated that the Commission should proceed with the case without him.

Mr. Dixon was sworn in as a witness by Chair Plaag. Chair Plaag asked Mr. Dixon to give the initial presentation for this case. Chair Plaag asked Mr. Dixon if the applicant had any objections to any of the materials provided in the meeting packet, and Mr. Dixon replied that it did not.

Chair Plaag asked Mr. Dixon if he wished to make an opening statement about the proposed work in this case. Mr. Dixon said the proposal before the Commission is for the appropriateness of replacing the current, non-original plywood door and wood-frame windows at the subject property with metal-framed doors and windows designed consistent with the design of those original features of the original Colvard Chevrolet Showroom. He said the wood windows added in 2005 would be replaced with metal windows, all of which would be consistent with the original windows and storefront of the original Colvard Chevrolet Showroom. Mr. Dixon said he believed the proposal meets the design standards, the intent of the 2006 Comprehensive Plan, and is in the direction that the Town wants to move in. He referred to page 40 of the meeting packet. He said he believed that the proposed exterior modification is congruous with the special character of the historic district.

Chair Plaag asked Ms. Christy Turner, Senior Planner if the Planning Staff wished to present an opening statement or preferred to treat the meeting packet as the Town's opening statement. Ms. Turner said the Planning Staff would present the meeting packet as the opening statement.

Chair Plaag asked Mr. Dixon if he wanted to provide evidence supporting this application. Mr. Dixon referred to page 28 of the meeting packet. He said he thought that items 1.2 through 1.9 were not applicable or that those standards were met. He explained that in replacing the wood windows with metal windows, the original covered windows appear to be metal, as was the other façade. He stated that going back to metal was in keeping with the design standards.

Mr. Dixon noted a correction regarding the historical documentation. He said the porcelain panels were not enamel but were painted metal panels. He said that they were falling off in the late 1990s and early 2000s, and what was left was painted concrete with splotches of glue. In 2005, Mast General Store added the brick façade that was necessitated by those panels. He concluded by stating that the proposed application met the intent of the historic district.

Chair Plaag asked Mr. Dixon if the original skin of the building was similar to a metal panel coated with enamel paint. Mr. Dixon said that was his understanding. Mr. Dixon said that Mr. Moore could better answer this question because he was part of the replacement process.

Chair Plaag asked if there were any questions regarding the material presented in the meeting packet by Mr. Dixon. There were no questions.

Chair Plaag asked Mr. Dixon if the applicant had witnesses to speak to any technical elements or answer any technical questions. Chair Plaag said this might be an appropriate time for Mr. Dixon to call Mr. Moore as a witness to answer the Commissioners' questions. Mr. Dixon said that Mr. Moore could clarify the historical record of the composition of the panels not being porcelain enamel but a painted metal.

After Mr. Moore was sworn in, Chair Plaag asked Mr. Moore about the original skin on the building before the mid-2000s renovations to the building. Mr. Moore pointed out in the historical photos of the building that the panels were wavy and not attached well. He said they were coming loose and were dangerous. He further explained that they obtained permits and removed the panels. He stated they were not all porcelain or anything that would be of historical relevance to the building. He said that at that time, they decided on the brick façade, and the area was used for storage. He said the proposal is to create 2,500 square feet of retail space.

Chair Plaag asked for confirmation that no changes were being proposed to the actual skin of the building. Mr. Dixon said that is correct. Chair Plaag also confirmed that the proposal is about the window and door openings on the west façade of the building to create a storefront in the recessed area where the current paneled wooden paneled sections are located. Chair Plaag reiterated that it is to replicate the original fenestration of the building when it had metal windows and to replicate it not only in muntin divisions, but also in the type of material that would have been used, specifically metal as proposed to a wood. Mr. Dixon said that is correct.

Chair Plaag asked Mr. Dixon about the emergency exits. Mr. Dixon said the plywood panels would be replaced with a storefront door matching the original layout that was originally a doorway.

Chair Plaag asked if there were any other questions for Mr. Moore. Hearing none, Chair Plaag requested the Planning Staff to present any evidence pertinent to the application. Ms. Turner said that she could go over the applicant's request, or the staff report could be considered that included the request. Chair Plaag asked Ms. Turner if there were additional material not included in the staff report that would need to be presented. Ms. Turner said no.

Chair Plaag asked the Commission members if they had any questions regarding the application or the meeting packet, and there were no questions. He asked if any other interested party or any other non-party witness wanted to speak in support of the application. He asked if any interested party or non-party witness wanted to speak or present evidence in opposition to the application. There were no responses to these questions.

Chair Plaag asked the applicant if they would like to rebut any evidence in opposition. Mr. Dixon said no.

Chair Plaag asked Mr. Dixon if he wished to give a closing summary or argument. Mr. Dixon said he would defer a closing statement until the Town provides a closing statement. Chair Plaag asked the Planning Staff if they had a closing statement, and Ms. Turner replied no. Mr. Dixon provided a closing statement regarding the Commission to consider the appropriateness of the project that is to mimic the original Colvard Chevrolet Showroom.

Chair Plaag closed the testimony phase of the case. He opened the floor for the Commissioners to discuss the evidence at hand and limit their discussion to the proposal of its relationship to the standards applicable to the case. Ms. Meade confirmed that there is probably no dispute of fact relevant to the reasons already stated. She agreed that this is entirely a matter of application of the standards to undisputed facts.

Chair Plaag opened the floor for the Commissioners to provide any input on their perception of how the proposal aligns with the standards in place for the Historic District. He reminded the Commissioners of the Historic Preservation Commission Procedure found on packet page 40 and read to the Commissioners the procedure included in the Staff Report. He presented the question before the Commission regarding whether the proposed exterior modification is incongruous or not incongruous with the special character of the historic district. He said, in addition, the Commission may issue the COA subject to reasonable conditions necessary to carry out the purposes of the historic district.

There was consensus from all Commission members that the proposed application is in congruity with the historic district.

Chair Plaag asked for a motion from the Commissioners for this case.

Motion and Vote:
Vice-Chair Bond made a motion, seconded by Member Brantz, to approve this case because it is congruous with the Historic District in addition to the following Staff recommended conditions:

1. Where there is conflict between the application information and the plans (February 28, 2022), the plans control. Insignificant deviations may be permitted to comply with the requirements of the UDO.
2. Any commitments and representations concerning the proposed exterior modification made by the applicant or its (their) 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.
3. The applicant shall submit the necessary applications, plans, details and specifications which meet the requirements of the Town Code, UDO, Building Code and other applicable codes for review and approval necessary to issue Zoning and Building Permits.

Vote: Aye – All
Nay – None
The motion passed.

Chair Plaag closed this public hearing at approximately 6:58 p.m.

Approval of Minutes
Chair Plaag made the following proposed changes to the March 8, 2022, meeting minutes:

- Page six, fourth paragraph, the last line at the end of the paragraph: “Chair Plaag noted that pressure washing can be destructive to masonry and would require its own COA application.”
- Page seven, the second paragraph, rework to page 68 of Appendix D and whether it applies to this case. Chair Plaag read aloud this section: “Ms. Turner said she felt that it could be applied, and the wall should be painted with historic colors, but she noted that the building,”
- Page seven, paragraph four in the last line, reword to: “Chair Plaag asked if the mortar is frequently repointed, and Ms. Turner acknowledged that it is,”
- Page eight, paragraph five, add a sentence to the end: “There were no affirmative answers to these questions.”
- Page 12, paragraph three, reword to: “brief conversation with Ms. Meade regarding Town acquisition of abandoned cemeteries. Ms. Mitchell explained the original question for cemetery designation was if there is not a known property owner, how does enforcement of local landmark regulations work.”
- Page 12, paragraph seven, second line, change “Option B to Option C,”
- Page 13, paragraph three, last sentence reword to: “what he said in his narrative about Judge Greene, but Member Watkin’s alternative text proposed dropping Judge Greene’s name from the marker.”

- Page 13, paragraph four in the fourth line, reword to; "Greene who is there is Judge Greene, and this is the person who helped establish the cemetery and maintained it for decades, improving it for years before his death so it could be maintained in the future, then it seems an odd choice,"
- Page 14, paragraph three, reword to: "Chair Plaag said that Mr. Henson explained to him that he interviewed Howard Cottrell several years ago, and Howard Cottrell explained to Henson that he was with his grandfather,"
- Page 14, paragraph four, add a line at the end: "There was consensus to make this change to the Howard Street narrative text."
- Page 16, paragraph five, second line, delete the phrase: "because it would be part of public art week."

Member Brantz made a motion, seconded by Vice-Chair Bond, to approve the March 8, 2022, meeting minutes as amended.

Vote: Aye – All
Nay – None
The motion passed.

<u>Discussion of Historic Preservation Commission Meetings and Times</u>
Chair Plaag said he had talked to another Commission member who had expressed concern about having longer meetings that continue for more than two hours. Chair Plaag noted that the Board of Adjustment typically limits their meetings and does not start new things after the three-hour mark. Chair Plaag said he would like to discuss a way to hold two meetings each month. One meeting would be for advisory board topics, and the other meeting would be for quasi-judicial hearings of Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) cases. After Chair Plaag asked each Commission member their thoughts on two meetings each month, the Commissioners proposed the first Tuesday of each month to discuss advisory board topics and the second Tuesday of the month to hear quasi-judicial COA cases.

Vice-Chair Bond said she felt that we need to be more sensitive to the timeframe of the people making the application and the designers. She suggested having the meetings during the regular workday. Student Member Willis noted that her schedule is open from May until August of 2022 if the meetings are virtual. Ms. Meade said that virtual meetings are still undecided. Ms. Meade stated that one could go forward with assuming virtual work for decision-making during this meeting. Ms. Shook agreed.

Ms. Shook pointed out that one of the reasons the Council lightened the Planning Staff workload is to avoid having two meetings each month. Ms. Shook clarified that two meetings do not mean two separate deadlines. She said she would like to see that the Planning Staff's work is limited, and there are things to be worked out for a second meeting. She asked Ms. Meade if there was a reason that both meetings could not be held during the day. Ms. Meade said both meetings could be held during the day. Chair Plaag pointed out that the HPC changed to an evening meeting to draw more applicants to the board. He said we had gone almost a year with that change, and it has not encouraged other people to apply other than Student Member Willis. Ms. Shook asked Council Liaison Roseman how a meeting change would affect her schedule. Council Liaison Roseman said she wanted to support the HPC and needed enough time to adjust her schedule. Chair Plaag noted that keeping the regular meetings in the evenings might make it easier on Council Liaison Roseman, and she agreed.

Discussion ensued on voting on the possible change of meeting dates and times. Chair Plaag asked Ms. Meade how the HPC should vote on this topic. Ms. Shook and Ms. Meade agreed that the HPC could amend the agenda and still take action. Ms. Shook said the whole point of the HPC discussing design standards and the process is to make everything better. Ms. Meade noted that the HPC could recommend to Council, and the HPC is in complete control of how and when they meet subject to Council agreement. Ms. Meade said the HPC could discuss the said topic and ask the Planning Staff to take the HPC's views back to Council for their consideration. Chair Plaag said there are three options: (1) Leave the meetings as they are, (2) Split the quasi-judicial and regular meetings into two, with the quasi-judicial meeting at 3 p.m. on the second Tuesday and the regular meeting at 6 p.m. on some other Tuesday, (3) Moving both meetings to sometime during the day possibly at 3 p.m.

To keep the deadlines, the same, Ms. Shook asked to leave the quasi-judicial hearing on the second Tuesday. Ms. Meade also pointed out from a financial perspective, and Ms. Shook pointed out from an administrative point of view that the meetings during the day would be better. Ms. Meade added that the agenda for both meetings could be published once, together, in advance of the first meeting. This would limit the Planning Staff's work, and everything would be ready in advance. There was a consensus from the HPC members to have a meeting on the first Tuesday to discuss advisory board topics and on the second Tuesday to hear quasi-judicial cases. If there is no case, there will be no need to have a hearing.

Discussion ensued on the Rules of Procedure for the number of cases to be heard in a month. Ms. Shook said the Board of Adjustment does it by time versus number of cases. Ms. Meade said this topic has already been addressed, and it is definitely based on time. She said each case could be ten minutes or two hours, and sometimes you cannot tell in advance. Ms. Meade suggested keeping it on time; she said it is still within the HPC's power to control the length of its meeting in the course of any given meeting. Ms. Meade noted that the general direction contained in the rules of procedure is between two or three hours.

Council Liaison Roseman asked, because we are already so far into the month of April would this proposed change occur in June. Ms. Shook said she thought the change could occur in May. Council Liaison Roseman noted that she might not be able to change her schedule that quickly, but she would re-evaluate it.

Vice-Chair Bond left the meeting at approximately 8:15 p.m.

<u>HPC Rules of Procedure</u>
Ms. Mitchell asked Ms. Meade if she had an update on the HPC Rules of Procedure. Ms. Meade requested that this agenda topic be moved to the first May advisory meeting. Chair Plaag agreed with Ms. Meade's request.

Chair Plaag made a motion, seconded by Member Brantz, to table the HPC Rules of Procedure update for the May 2022 advisory meeting

Vote: Aye – All
Nay – None
The motion passed.

<u>Historic District/Landmark Design Standards</u>
<u>Discussion of Murals and Public Art</u>
Ms. Mitchell noted that this topic was tabled from the last agenda to allow Ms. Meade to speak to Council on it. Ms. Meade said she had scheduled it for Council and then asked Council to postpone their discussion until the HPC had a chance to have an initial discussion. Ms. Meade said she hoped that Council would discuss it on April 13, 2022.

Discussion ensued on standards for Murals and Public Art. Ms. Meade pointed out that she thought the standards could generally use additional information with respect to public art. She said she found a well-written set of standards for public art in Hillsborough, North Carolina. She pointed out public art and murals concerns in the Downtown Historic District and the Town's concerns about murals and public art, but murals specifically. She said if a mural does not have a commercial or advertising message, it is considered public art and not a sign. She said there is no town code or UDO standard that speaks to non-sign murals right now. She said this needs to be addressed Town-wide by the Council. She recommended that the HPC recommend and suggest to Council to adopt Historic District standards on public art, meaning publicly-viewable art installations such as murals. She said that as a separate matter, Council could consider a town-wide mural ordinance and potentially a more comprehensive program related to publicly-funded/supported art. She noted that public art commissions in larger cities consider applications for publicly-funded/supported art installations.

Ms. Meade asked the HPC to share their view on whether they thought murals were consistent, as a general matter, with the Downtown Historic District. She said the HPC's opinion on murals should be given to Council. Chair Plaag indicated that in his view murals were generally consistent with the historic district, but that there should be historic district standards in place to govern such matters as the appropriate placement and installation of murals. Ms. Meade stated that such standards should consider mass, scale, durability, installation method and placement, and the manner of installation.

Member Watkins took issue with certain prefatory language contained in the Hillsborough historic standards for public art that Ms. Meade had offered for the HPC's consideration, asking just how public art "helps define the community's identity and reveal the unique nature of a specific neighborhood". Ms. Meade that public art and murals are frequently and highly associated with neighborhoods in certain locales, such as Philadelphia.

Chair Plaag asked Ms. Meade to have the Planning Staff email the Hillsborough, North Carolina standards to the HPC members. He also suggested that the Planning Staff contact the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and ask if they can recommend a set of local historic district standards for murals.

Ms. Amber Bateman, Director of the Watauga Arts Council, talked about a statement that was made about murals being placed on doors and then requiring them to stay, negating an opportunity for a doorway to be in that place. She pointed out that just because a mural is painted on a door doesn't mean the mural has to stay there forever.

Ms. Bateman talked about West Jefferson, North Carolina, having a Mural and Arts Council that oversees appropriate murals. She thought a Public Arts Commission in connection with the HPC could oversee the standards of appropriateness and help guide the size of a mural on a building. Chair Plaag told Ms. Bateman that the HPC would not be regulating the murals' content. He said it is appropriate for the HPC to regulate the standards for the location of particular types of murals. He further explained to Ms. Bateman that temporary murals have an approval period of a certain amount of time or until such a time that the building owner decides to rehabilitate the building. Ms. Bateman pointed out that she did not intend the proposed Junaluska Community mural on the Mast General Store entrance doors to be permanent. He pointed out that at this time, there is no set of standards that would have allowed the said mural to be temporary. He said that the HPC needs to develop a set of standards with regard to preserving the historic district. He pointed out that the ability to decide where murals generally will be placed should be done by the HPC and not by a Public Arts Commission.

In summary, Ms. Shook confirmed that Ms. Meade introduced murals and public art standards for the HPC to review and bring back information from the standards for discussion at a future meeting. Ms. Shook clarified that we are not discussing or suggesting that there will be an actual Public Arts Commission. Ms. Meade said she would report to Council the HPC's intent and recommendation for better standards for public art.

Minor/Major Works Draft Text UDO Modification – Presented to Town Council on February 9, 2022

Ms. Mitchell referred to packet page 59 and noted that the Planning Staff and Ms. Meade looked at Article Eight of the UDO. She said they compared how other jurisdictions classify a Statement of Conformity and Certificate of Appropriateness. She detailed that the proposed text in the color blue are the additions, and the text in the color red are the removed items. She stated the comparisons of text came from Cary and Rocky Mount, North Carolina. She said the Planning Staff had presented the proposed text changes to Council in February. Town Council recommended that the HPC review them and make proposed changes. Ms. Shook clarified that Council had suggested that the Planning Staff look at ways to make the COA process and standards more user-friendly. She said that the list does not totally define what should be minor or major works in the current setup.

Chair Plaag explained the HPC's understanding of instances where a proposed work application considered minor work could become major work if the Planning Staff determines that historical elements might be damaged or destroyed or if there is a question the staff is unsure about the proposed work. Ms. Shook noted that she thought this process needed to be clarified on what can be done administratively and what needs to go through the COA process. Ms. Meade said she thought the language needed modifying for the sake of the guidance to the public.

Chair Plaag pointed out the following proposed changes to Article Eight:

- **Article 8.05.02(H),** if the addition of awnings, canopies, or shutters has a historical component, they go through the COA process. The removal of awnings, canopies, or shutters with no historical component goes through the Statement of Conformity process.
- **Article 8.04.02(D)** Removal of existing fences and walls was proposed to have similar language as previously mentioned regarding historical or no historical components.
- **Article 8.04.02 (B)** Removal of existing decks, patios, and sidewalks was proposed to have similar language as previously mentioned regarding historical or no historical components.
- **Gutters** Removal of gutters and downspouts was proposed to have similar language as previously mentioned regarding historical or no historical components.
- **Lighting** Installation, Alteration, or Removal of exterior lighting fixtures was proposed to have similar language as previously mentioned regarding historical or no historical components.
- **Driveways** Construction of Driveways, Removal of Driveways, and Alteration/addition to existing driveways to Major Work (COA) because of potential historic landscape issues. And include some refining of the language to address a change in gravel, gravel parking lot to asphalt parking lot, which could be minor work to be reviewed by staff.
- **Article 8.03.01(D),** painting where there is a change in color only because there is no language about colors that are not historically sympathetic to the district or not historical to the building.
- **Article 8.05.02(N),** All other Roof Attachments are to be clarified along with Rooftop Addition.

In Chair Plaag's statement of Roof Attachments, he questioned if this is to include rooftop accessory uses; for example, a rooftop bar located in the tertiary elevation of the building would need to be reviewed. Ms. Shook replied that it would be considered a rooftop addition versus a rooftop attachment.

Ms. Shook asked to identify if there are other areas to be completed administratively with a Statement of Conformity and what needs to go through the COA process. Chair Plaag noted that he could take another look at the major works category to see if any of those could be moved to minor works. Chair Plaag asked Ms. Shook if she wanted to make the revisions, wait on some additional informal input, and maybe bring a final draft to the May HPC meeting. Ms. Shook noted that we would like to move forward as quickly as possible. Ms. Shook said the Planning Staff could revise it and incorporate it with the text amendment and include the changes for public art. Ms. Meade also suggested moving forward with the proposed Article Eight as quickly as possible. Ms. Meade said she could review the revised draft, and it could go to the next Public Hearing, which would be the quickest way it could be done. Chair Plaag thought the HPC could vote on the proposed draft at the May HPC meeting. Chair Plaag, Ms. Meade, and Ms. Shook agreed that they could make it happen by the May Public Hearing date.

Certificate of Appropriateness Process

Ms. Shook said that from the Planning Staff's perspective, we would like to define better how we meet with applicants in this process. She mentioned that with a successful application at this meeting, she suggested that the Planning Staff could contact the applicant and ask him for a model application or plan for Staff to show future applicants. She said the Planning Staff is looking for ways to help make the process easier for the applicants, whether obtaining historic materials or giving them resources for those historical materials. Ms. Shook mentioned working on making the hearings run more smoothly. Council Liaison Roseman suggested having the applicant attend a hearing to review an application before their case is heard. Ms. Meade suggested that the Commissioners take a critical eye on the staff report and ensure that the standards are relevant to the case. Ms. Meade suggested that the staff report be much shorter because the longer they are, the less likely people will want to read them. Chair Plaag agreed and noted that it is a balancing act, and we are learning as we go on what is most relevant to be included in the staff reports.

Ms. Meade left the meeting at approximately 8:24 p.m.

Project Updates by Planning Staff
Ms. Mitchell summarized the items presented in the meeting packet and agenda.

Hayes-Bryan-Greene Cemetery Marker Update
Ms. Mitchell said the action request for the Hayes-Bryan-Greene Cemetery historical marker would go to Council for their consideration on April 13, 2022.

Councill's Store Historical Marker
Ms. Mitchell said that Sewah Studios received the order form for the Councill's Store historical marker. The marker will be made without a QR code from the company.

CLG Status
Ms. Mitchell said she continues to work on the Certified Local Government (CLG) application and that the deadlines are on track for submitting a draft application in mid-May or early June of 2022.

Project Updates
Watauga County Jail Local Landmark Designation Draft Report
Chair Plaag said that he believes that he can finish the draft report in about one week. He said he would try to send out the draft report to the HPC for their review by early next week.

History of North Street Park Land
Chair Plaag explained that Mr. Mark Freed, Director of Cultural Resources, asked him about the North Street Park land history. Mr. Freed was inquiring about the best use of this land. Chair Plaag created a draft report on the park based on his home resources. He said he might have to go to the courthouse, Appalachian State University, or Digital Watauga collections to clarify some things in the report. Chair Plaag said he brought this topic to the HPC's attention because it is historical. He asked Mr. Freed if he had anything to add to this topic. Mr. Freed said that he had some community projects happening at the park. He further mentioned that it is important to know the history of the parks to move forward with other potential developments like a pavilion or other uses for the community space. Council Liaison Roseman commented on the report having postcard images showing the timeline for the park. Chair Plaag said he found it somewhat of a mystery how a parcel could remain essentially untouched for so long.

Other Discussion
There was no other discussion.

Adjournment
Member Watkins made a motion, seconded by Member Brantz, to adjourn the meeting at 8:35 p.m.

Vote: Aye - All
Nay – None
The motion passed.

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Eric Plaag, Chair **Marlene Crosby, Board Secretary**