

**TOWN OF BOONE
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
November 8, 2022, 3:00 p.m.
WebEx Video Conferencing**

Historic Preservation Commission Members in Attendance:

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

Council Liaison: Virginia Roseman

Town Staff in Attendance:

Jessica Mitchell-Long-Range/Special Projects Planner, and Marlene Crosby-Board Secretary

Others in Attendance: Allison Meade-Town Attorney, Chelsea Garrett- diSanti, Capua, and Garrett Law Firm; Tony di Santi - diSanti, Capua, and Garrett Law Firm, Steve Wilson-di Santi, Capua, and Garrett Law Firm Project Manager, Bill Dixon-Appalachian Architecture, Jodi Feimster, Tyler Wiley

CALL TO RECONVENE

Chair Eric Plaag reconvened the HPC Quasi-Judicial meeting, held via WebEx, from November 1, 2022, to order at 3:04 p.m.

CASE Z06158-101422 diSanti, Capua and Garrett – Certificate of Appropriateness (COA)

Chelsea Garrett, on behalf of 642 West King Street, LLC, has requested a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) for major work for 642 West King Street in the downtown historic district for a renovation to the façade.

Chair Plaag asked Ms. Mitchell if she had received any written comments for public comment. Ms. Mitchell said she had not received any written comments, but she had received one request from a person to watch the meeting, who had joined the meeting.

Chair Plaag swore in the following Planning Staff members: Ms. Jessica Mitchell, Long-Range/Special Projects Planner, and Ms. Christy Turner, Senior Planner.

Chair Plaag asked the Historic Preservation Commission members if any commissioner had a fixed opinion about the case that is not susceptible to change; had any commissioner had a conflict of interest regarding this case, including any financial interest in the outcome of the case or a close familial relationship with any person affected by the outcome of the case. There were no answers in the affirmative.

Member Watkins noted that he did not have a conflict with the case, but he wanted to mention that many years ago, he had a legal relationship and was advised by the law firm. Chair Plaag asked Member Watkins if the advisement was in any way related to the property involved in this particular application; Member Watkins replied no. Chair Plaag asked Ms. Allison Meade, Town Attorney if she saw an issue with this information that would present a conflict with the case. Ms. Meade asked Member Watkins if he thought he could be fair and impartial with respect to this matter; Member Watkins replied yes. Ms. Meade asked Chair Plaag to ask the applicant if they were comfortable with moving forward with Member Watkins reviewing the case. Chair Plaag confirmed that Ms. Chelsea Garrett, from diSanti, Capua, and Garrett Law Firm (642 West King Street, LLC) was the applicant for the case, and she did not have an issue with Member Watkins reviewing the case.

Chair Plaag asked if any commissioner had engaged in any undisclosed ex-parte communication regarding the application. There were no answers in the affirmative.

Chair Plaag pointed out that Digital Watauga and the Watauga County Historical Society had received many requests for information about the ghost ad on the west wall of the Mast General Store. He said he carefully responded to those requests by talking about the history of these two properties in terms of the descriptions in the Downtown surveys and the material already publicly available. He said he focused on the ghost ad, particularly when it was created, why it was created, and what it was advertising. He noted that the advertisement is not part of this particular application, as he explained the application is focused on the building historically known as the Boone Garage. He continued that the application was not for the Jones building, or what is now known as the Mast General Store building. He said he did not perceive, in response to those inquiries, the information posted about the history of the ghost ad on the Watauga County Historical Society webpage and their Facebook page, that he has a conflict with being able to address this particular case, as long as the applicant does not have an objection. Ms. Garrett said she had no concerns with Chair Plaag reviewing this case.

Chair Plaag swore in the applicant, Ms. Chelsea Garrett. Ms. Meade explained that she agreed with Chair Plaag about Ms. Garrett being sworn in because she would present evidence. Ms. Meade pointed out that the Commissioners should be very clear in distinguishing between her giving factual evidence versus Ms. Garrett arguing about the law or anything as an attorney. She further pointed out that these are two separate things. She explained that to the extent that Ms. Garrett acts as an attorney, it is not facts, and it is not credible evidence before the Commission. Ms. Garrett said that she did not plan on offering factual testimony, but to act in a representative capacity and that she has other witnesses to call upon for this case. Chair Plaag clarified that he swore in Ms. Garrett for the purposes of any testimony that Ms. Garrett may offer, understanding that her intention at this time is not to offer formal testimony, but instead to call other witnesses who will be providing formal testimony. Ms. Garrett said if for some reason, unexpectedly, she needs to venture into the role of attorney, there could be clarification in advance of that role taking place.

Chair Plaag asked Ms. Garrett if she had any objections to the materials in the meeting packet. Ms. Garrett said she had no objection to the materials in the meeting packet, but she had one point of clarification which could be a matter of interpretation. She pointed out that the information in the meeting packet refers to a new upstairs window. Chair Plaag confirmed that the information she referred to was a central window on the second elevation. Ms. Garrett noted that based on original images, the window was installed prior to the end of the historic period of significance. She asked the Commissioners to keep this information about the window in mind as they review the case.

Chair Plaag noted that he felt there were several potential areas of confusion in the information in the meeting packet that the applicant presented for this case. He said one area of potential confusion is using the word "original". He noted that because the history of the building is very complex and confusing, he did not want the Commissioners to get bogged down in these terms while Ms. Garrett was presenting the case. Chair Plaag suggested that there be a discussion on the terms used so that there was collectively, shared knowledge about the history of this building, which will help with the conversation about the appropriate way to move forward in terms of the proposed renovations.

Chair Plaag suggested that Ms. Garrett begin the presentation and focus specifically on what the applicant requests in terms of dealing with the façade. He felt it was appropriate for Ms. Garrett to talk about past facades and the façade materials because these items were a part of the case the applicant is making. Ms.

Garrett agreed that the history of the building is complicated, and she also agreed with Chair Plaag's suggestion.

Chair Plaag swore in the following witnesses for this case: Mr. Tony diSanti from diSanti, Capua, and Garrett; Mr. Steve Owen, the Project Manager for diSanti, Capua, and Garrett; and Mr. Bill Dixon, Architect from Appalachian Architecture.

Chair Plaag asked Ms. Garrett to present the opening statement for this case. She pointed out that her law firm partner, Mr. diSanti was working in the building shortly after the period of significance for the building ended. She said that Mr. Owen had been the project manager coordinating and speaking with the on-site engineers and workers. She added that Mr. Dixon was the architect for this case.

Ms. Garrett explained that she had applied for the Certificate of Appropriateness to reface a second building that looks like it is part of one building. She said it is for the area between the front door of the diSanti, Capua, and Garrett Law Firm on King Street, which is on the corner of King Street behind the Doc Watson bench. She said the area between that building and the Mast General Store was originally a separate building, and this is the area that the applicant is seeking a Certificate of Appropriateness to renovate the façade, which was a brick façade. She said it was a different brick than the western side of the building, and she did not know the manufacturer of the brick.

Ms. Garrett explained that on the separate building on the corner, the façade was starting to pull away and was creating a safety hazard. She said the photos indicate the separation was several inches from under support system of the building. She said the same façade was on the northwest façade of the Mast General Store building. She said the façade was on the Mast General Store before Mr. diSanti started his law firm from the building, and she did not know who put that façade on that building. She said that the diSanti, Capua, and Garrett Law Firm did take down the Mast General Store façade. She understood that the Mast General Store façade, which will be a separate façade application, will probably come before the Commissioners in several months. She noted that she had hoped that the ghost sign was more intact than it was.

Ms. Garrett said that when the brick was removed, they were disappointed that it wasn't Grandfather stone underneath it. She said, unfortunately, they found a deteriorated cinderblock structure shown in the photographs that Mr. Owen took of the structure. She said that instead of being able to reface the building, they would have to remove that block. She said the front two offices, where the larger windows are located, are currently not being used and have been boarded up. She said they hoped to get approval from the HPC to seal the building up for winter and get the work underway.

Ms. Garrett pointed out that there were a few good photos of the building in the archive at Digital Watauga. She said some of the photos indicated that during the period of significance, there had been stone, stucco, and brick on the façade of this building. She said they particularly liked the photos that appear to be from a Clean-up Day Parade around 1952. She said these photos show that there was a stucco façade at that time. She noted that they had asked Mr. Dixon to assist them with creating a proposed design to try to mimic the garage door appearance of the old garage and tire store.

Ms. Garrett pointed out that from the photos, it looked like there were two original windows, but at some point, prior to the end of the district's period of significance, a third window was installed with exterior-type blinds that rotate out. She pointed out that the law firm needs the central window because that building floor has a hallway that needs daylight. She noted that the window had been there for quite some

time and would drastically prevent light from entering some of their usable space that has been used for 40 years.

Ms. Garrett asked Mr. Dixon to present the proposed design of the building. Mr. Dixon referred to pages 81 and 82 of the meeting packet. He said the images shown on these pages are what he thought was the original design. He said he was not aware of other previous facades. He said these images show a hard coat stucco finish with two garage doors and windows on the second level. He said that in the proposed design, he tried to create his best interpretation of the garage doors with big trim around them and minimal ornamentation. He pointed out that the owner intends to lease the first-floor area for commercial use. He said he tried to replicate the look of the garage doors with a storefront system to have a door for the new use. He noted that the proposed exterior material is a hard coat stucco with an off-white finish.

Ms. Garrett asked Mr. Dixon if, in the proposed design, he attempted to replicate the look of the garage doors from the photos; Mr. Dixon replied yes, he tried to replicate those garage doors.

Ms. Garrett asked if the building was originally two commercial spaces, and the applicant's goal was to restore it to two separate commercial spaces on the first floor; Mr. Dixon agreed that this was the goal of the applicant.

Ms. Garrett asked about the new door, in which they proposed to put back a door that existed before the office was converted internally into one law office. Mr. Dixon replied yes, and that previously there were garage doors.

Mr. Garrett asked Mr. Dixon if the window was on the left or right of the large garage bay window. She said it looks like it is on the left side of that window, and asked if it blends in to make it look like it is part of the windows. Mr. Dixon said yes, the window is on the left side of the large window, and he said he used the same appearance on the pedestrian doors.

Ms. Garrett said that on paper for the front elevation, it looked like there was a frame around the windows together. Mr. Dixon said yes, the garage doors shown in the photo on page 81 of the meeting packet appeared wrapped in a thick stucco band. She asked if it slightly protruded from the building. Mr. Dixon said there is a three-inch deep stucco trim around simulated garage door openings.

Ms. Garrett asked Mr. Dixon if he might have used other features from the photos in the proposed design. Mr. Dixon said the proposed design replicated what he saw in the photos on pages 81 and 82 of the Clean-up Day Parade in the meeting packet and no other specific features.

Ms. Garrett said that they are not proposing any changes to the setback to the existing garden area or that there be any improvement to that area. She said the boundary wall would remain where it is. Mr. Dixon stated this was correct. He said that because of the condition of the concrete, they would be removing that masonry and replacing it with a new framed wall.

Ms. Garrett asked Mr. Dixon to discuss his review of the materials, the historical photos, and further, his experiences as an architect in Boone on whether the proposed stucco material and design would be congruous with building designs on King Street and the historic district. Mr. Dixon said there was evidence of stucco being used throughout the historic district. He said there was also evidence of stucco over brick at one point on the buildings. She asked Mr. Dixon about how long ago there was evidence of stucco being applied over brick, and he said about twenty years ago.

Ms. Garrett asked Mr. Dixon if there was, at one point, stone on the façade. Mr. Dixon replied yes, and there were remnants of stone behind the brick. She asked Mr. Dixon if it appeared that the stone was removed or at least most of it was removed and that there was no stone to restore. He said no and what you can see is in poor condition. Ms. Garrett asked Mr. Dixon if he was referring to the block or the stacked stone. He responded that there are remnants of what used to be stone and brick around and behind the entrances.

Ms. Garrett said that, unlike the Mast General Store, it appears that at some point, the rock was removed. Mr. Dixon said it had been removed if there once was a rock there. She asked Mr. Dixon if the rock was there prior to the stucco. He said, in his best estimation, the rock was probably there. She pointed out that from the photos, there was stucco there, at least in the early 1950s, and it is known that there was a brick façade applied to it. She said the stucco on this building was not applied over stone or brick, it was applied and then removed or bricked over, which is the reverse of the Mast General Store. Mr. Dixon said he would have to speculate, but he thinks that is correct.

Ms. Garrett asked Mr. Dixon to talk about the architectural elements of the building, such as the roof, fenestrations, window frames, and materials. Mr. Dixon said the building would have a terra cotta clay parapet cap and aluminum storefront windows with very little trim. Ms. Garrett asked Mr. Dixon if there were materials other than terra cotta clay, aluminum windows, and stucco; Mr. Dixon replied no.

Ms. Garrett said no awning was proposed for this building and asked Mr. Dixon if that was correct. Mr. Dixon said it is correct that no awning is proposed for this building.

Ms. Garrett asked Mr. Dixon if he was the architect assisting the Mast General Store; Mr. Dixon replied yes, and he is assisting the Mast General Store on their western façade. She asked if there had been any coordination of ideas in terms of refacing the front elevation of the diSanti, Capua and Garret law office building and the northwest elevation of their building. Mr. Dixon said the Mast General Store intends to return their façade to a hard coat stucco finish. He said he suspected that Mast General Store would have their application package submitted by the December HPC meeting.

Chair Plaag began his questioning of Mr. Dixon and shared an image that appeared in the July 7, 1938, issue of the Watauga Democrat. He asked if based on this image it appears on the left of the building, historically known as the WR Winkler Tire Company building, presently the main entrance to diSanti, Capua, and Garrett. Mr. Dixon said yes, based on the image. Chair Plaag noted that the building on the right appears to be, based on the answer to the last question, the remnant of the original Hodges Tire Company building known as the Boone Garage. Mr. Dixon said that without knowing the date of the original business, he guessed that would appear to be based on what Chair Plaag stated about the first known photo of the façade. Chair Plaag asked Mr. Dixon based on this photo, does it appear to be a two-story building with a one-garage bay on the left side of the building with a flat arch of stone sills and stone lintels that are keystone and then a stone band of coping at the top of the façade. Mr. Dixon said the things that Chair Plaag mentioned appear visible in the photo.

Chair Plaag shared an earlier image from the 1936 H. Lee Waters film of Boone. He asked Mr. Dixon if it appeared on the right edge of this image where it says Belk White is the Dr. Jones building, as known today as the Mast General Store building. Mr. Dixon said that he presumed that it was the same building. Chair Plaag noted that when looking to the left of that building, it has a south-facing wall and a west-facing wall, both of which say Hodges Tire Company. He asked Mr. Dixon if this appeared to be the original garage

bays of the Hodges Tire Company building, coming out flush with the Jones building to the east. Mr. Dixon said it appears to be the case. Mr. Dixon said that he was not aware of these images prior to the hearing.

Chair Plaag shared another image taken a few seconds later in the same H. Lee Waters film previously shown. He said the camera pans east to west looking at this complex. He asked Mr. Dixon if the building on the left with the Hodges Tire sign underneath the clerestory windows appears to be the west building known as the WR Winkler Tire Company building, and is now the primary entrance to the diSanti, Capua, and Garrett Law Firm. Mr. Dixon said that appears to be the primary entrance to the law firm. Chair Plaag pointed out that on the right, there is the west-facing portion of the Boone Garage that extended out to the street in 1936 when this film was created. He asked Mr. Dixon if this explanation seemed fair; Mr. Dixon replied yes.

Chair Plaag noted that he had shared the two images of the complex from the 1936 H. Lee Waters film, and the 1938 image of the stone façade. He further explained that the stone façade in the 1938 image was accomplished by cutting off that front part of the Hodges Tire Company building, or the Boone Garage building, and pulling back the façade so that it is roughly in line. He stated that this façade protruded slightly toward the WR Winkler Tire Company building, and this work would have to be done around July of 1938.

Chair Plaag had seen an article describing the stuccoing of the Hunt's Department Store building in 1943. He said it was his suspicion, but he could not prove, that the Boone Garage building at that point had a stone façade as of 1938. He said he thought it was stuccoed at the same time for there to be congruity between that west-facing part of Mast General Store and the south-facing part of the Boone Garage.

Chair Plaag shared another image and asked Mr. Dixon if this was the image that he was referring to when he was referencing page 82 of the meeting packet. Mr. Dixon said yes, it was the same image.

Chair Plaag shared another suspicion, which he noted he could not prove, that the building is protruding beyond the south façade plane of the WR Winkler Tire Company building. He continued that they may have stuccoed over the stone. He noted in the image from 1938, there was not an obvious garage door. He thought they created the eastern garage bay to accommodate those roll-top doors; this is where he suspected the bump out came from on the first floor. He thought the bump out was made to create the roll-top storage area at the top of the doorframes and then they stuccoed over it. Chair Plaag asked if this was a reasonable conclusion to draw based on the available images that we have. He further stated he did not know what material they used on it. Mr. Dixon speculated and said he supposed there are many garage doors, and the roll-up type doors have many divisions.

Chair Plaag shared another image and noted he had trouble dating it. He said the image is not online through Digital Watauga, but is in their collections. He said there is a Tweetsie bumper sticker in the image, and it is known that Tweetsie opened in July 1957. He also noted that the image has Christmas trees on the telephone poles. He suspected this image is from December but did not know what year, specifically. He said that this image was taken because of another image that he was going to share between December 1957 and December 1962. He said the image shows the brick veneer on the west wall of Mast General Store, and unfortunately, the ESSO sign obscures almost the entirety of the front of the Boone Garage building that we would like to see. He suspected that the work was done at the same time. He said if you look at the image and the area below the ESSO sign, there appears to be a block underneath that is not faced with the brick facade. Chair Plaag said he thought they removed the entire façade off of this

building, which was the stucco and the stone underneath the façade, and replaced it with a concrete block substrate. He said that is what was found in this demolition and then faced with the brick veneer.

Chair Plaag shared another image from 1963 that showed the first Wagon Trains and parades that went through Boone. He said that by July of 1963, in this image, it shows the middle window in place and the louvered windows that were previously discussed. He said there is a continuous run of an overhang/awning that itself created the necessity years later, after it came down, to put in that band that went across both the Mast General Store wall and the Boone Garage building. He pointed out that this image shows the finished version with the terra cotta coping on the top of the Boone Garage roof and the brick veneer. He asked Mr. Dixon if this was a fair description of what appeared in 1963. Mr. Dixon said it seems to be the case.

Chair Plaag described the four versions of what this building looked like between 1936 and 1963. He pointed out that these dates were within the period of significance for the historic district. He said that in the original version, the building went out to the sidewalk, flush with the Hunts Department Store building/Jones building that was next door. He said the 1938 version of the building was carved back, and the stone façade was applied to that remnant of the Boone Garage building. He said the post-1943 version had the stucco treatment applied to some sort of substrate that he suspected was stone, but there is no way of knowing this for sure. He said there was the 1963 version that had the brick veneer installed over a new concrete block substrate that was installed after the 1938 south façade had been ripped off the remnant of the Boone Garage building. He asked Mr. Dixon if he had fairly described the four versions of the building. Mr. Dixon said yes and assumed as much based on the images.

Chair Plaag explained that the HPC has to apply the standards to either a completely new façade for this building that is congruous with the historic district, or the applicant can pick one of the multiple versions of this building during the period of significance. He said the standards lean towards the original, but replicating the original is neither advantageous or realistic to anyone. He did not think anyone wanted to see the garage bays coming out to the street with a drive-through and gas pumps in front of the building. He pointed out that none of these elements survive, and it is not like we can restore it. He said there is one 1936 grainy film, which is difficult to discern the exterior materials and shows the building going out to the sidewalk. He explained that we could not meet or reconstruct the standards as closely as possible using similar materials and dimensions. He said this leaves three designs during the period of significance where we have more information. He said the applicant has opted for the third of those four, which is the stucco finish applied to the façade with two window bays on the second floor and two garage door bays on the first floor. He added that the applicant is proposing this third version of the façade, with the exception that the applicant also wants the third middle window. He noted that the third middle window comes from the 1963 brick-faced version of the building. He asked Mr. Dixon if that was a fair summary; Mr. Dixon replied yes.

Chair Plaag opened the floor for the HPC to ask questions of Mr. Dixon. Member Sharp asked Mr. Dixon if the intent was to restore the second floor from one commercial space to two commercial areas. Mr. Dixon said that was incorrect. He explained that the second floor would be law offices and the first floor, between the two separate buildings, the Winker building and Boone Garage building, would be separated into two separate commercial spaces. Ms. Garrett added that the intent would be for the proposed façade to appear as two entirely separate buildings.

Member Watkins said the application stated the original 1920 stucco façade was delaminating. He wondered if we missed the evidence of the building being stuccoed in 1920. Ms. Garrett explained that

the earliest photo they thought they had was with stucco. She stated that when Mr. Dixon wrote up the narrative, he referred to the year that the building was built as 1920 and called it original stucco. She said the concepts were merged, but it was unintended to do so. Mr. Dixon pointed out that he and the applicant were unaware of the earlier photos.

Chair Plaag asked Mr. Dixon about the images shared during the meeting between 1938 and 1963 when the building was cut back to the stone façade, and 1963 showing the Wagon Train image. He asked Mr. Dixon if any images featured a landscaped area at the front of the building, or was it more realistic to say that there were paved areas with gas pumps in those images. Mr. Dixon said it is more realistic to say paved areas with gas pumps because the landscaping was added later. Chair Plaag said his point is that when thinking about what is congruent to the historic district, during the period of significance, this area was an open area aside from the gas pumps. He asked Mr. Dixon if it was an open area, and Mr. Dixon replied yes.

Chair Plaag asked Ms. Garrett if she would talk about the type of business they were hoping to attract for the commercial space, and if it had played a role in their decisions about how to landscape the open space. Ms. Garrett said that they had talked to a coffee and pastry shop. She noted that they are hesitant about the type of restaurant, and what kinds of smells they want permeating their offices during the day. She asked Chair Plaag if he thought having more patio-type seating in this open space would be more historical. She said they love gardens, but it's a separate thing to have to maintain them. She stated that they would not object to having appropriate plants in the open space.

Chair Plaag said that, historically, the open space was not a yard, but a paved area with gas pumps. He continued that it was a utilitarian space that served the business in that building. He noted that pocket parks are great, and he would be the last to say to get rid of one of them. He said that in terms of use for this open space, that is more historically accurate; he would be intrigued to see what type of design the applicant could come up with that allows outdoor use of that space, without being an eyesore or something problematic in the Town code. He said he would need to defer to Planning Staff on the types of things that can be done. He added that if the applicant can create something more conducive to adaptive reuse of that open space, which is also congruent with the historic district, he thought for the applicant, 50 percent of the population of Boone would agree it sounds great. He said there are historically appropriate ways without necessarily having permanent walls and features in that open space, which would not be historically appropriate.

Ms. Garrett said she did not think there would be an issue in exploring ways within the ordinance, and those ways could be discussed with the Planning Staff. She asked if there are guidelines that outline the use of outdoor space in the historic district. She pointed out that opening up a second entrance into the building would create a more impervious surface, and she discussed having some decorative plantings. Chair Plaag noted that this open space is privately owned and not in a public way. Vice-Chair Bond pointed out that they have the Doc Watson bench and statute, and she asked if they were planning on moving it. Ms. Garrett stated that there is a license for the Doc Watson bench and statue, and if the HPC wanted it moved, they would move it, but it is not a part of this proposed project. She was open to discussing possibly moving the Doc Watson bench and statute, if necessary. Vice-Chair Bond also pointed out that Doc Watson's 100th birthday would be in the Spring if the applicant wanted to consider using that space.

Ms. Christy Turner, Senior Planner, pointed out that landscaping is not required in the B-1 Downtown Core (B1DC) for this type of use, except for maybe some street yard trees. Ms. Garrett asked Ms. Turner if

outdoor seating was permitted for restaurants. Ms. Turner said outdoor seating is allowed for a business, but they need to contact the Public Works Department.

Chair Plaag pointed out that there are standards for historical vegetation and landscapes. He also pointed out that the landscaping was not there in any period of significance for the historic district. He said he did not see an obligation under the standards to keep landscaping the open space. He said it is not a historical component of the property. He asked the other HPC members if they wanted to comment on the suggestion of the idea of a courtyard or patio-type feature for the open space. Vice-Chair Bond pointed out that the corner where the law firm is located is very busy, and the applicant might want to keep in mind for whatever business is there.

Chair Plaag asked Mr. Owen about the demolition of the Boone Garage building façade in which if they encountered any elements of the 1938 stone façade when demolishing the brick veneer. Mr. Owen replied that a company, called Stone Restoration, did not encounter any stone until the ground floor. He said that behind the brick façade, there were remnants of rock. Chair Plaag asked Mr. Owen if he would conclude that the concrete block now visible was probably installed as part of the approximate 1963 time, or between the 1958 and 1963 installation of the brick veneer, and that the concrete block was basically the substrate to support the brick veneer. He asked Mr. Owen if this was a fair summary of what happened then. Mr. Owen replied yes. Chair Plaag asked Mr. Owen, from what he had seen of the building, if it is reasonable to conclude that the middle window on the second floor was also a creation in the renovation sometime between 1958 and 1963. Mr. Owen replied yes.

Tyler Willey, public attendee of the meeting, left the meeting at approximately 4:40 p.m.

Chair Plaag asked Ms. Garrett if she had another witness to testify. Ms. Garrett called Mr. Tony diSanti to testify when he arrived at the law office building and to state anything relevant to the case, for example, the window. Mr. diSanti noted that the day he arrived at the law firm office was on August 11, 1975. He said there was a parking lot in front of the law office, and he noted that it was shown in the photos. He seemed to recall that part of the parking lot was gravel, but could not attest to it. He said some of the photos he had seen of the parking lot showed that there was pavement in that area. He said his wife does not remember the gravel parking lot, but she remembered it was pretty much paved. He noted that three windows were added above the garage doors, but he could not say when they were added. He said that, initially, when he arrived at the law office building, the buildings were two completely separate buildings. He said that where the proposed garage doors are planned to be added, there was a separate entrance to that building. He said that the building was for a law firm, Finger and Park, and the entrance was where the garage doors were. He explained that you walked into a reception area with three smaller offices in the back and a restroom facility. He said that the law firm expanded over time with modifications such as, adding a stairway, moving offices upstairs, and expanding into the western portion of the building; he explained that that over time they remodeled and put in offices. He said the last change they made was when they removed the brick and went into the western portion of the building from the downstairs and the upstairs. He said they did not anticipate a large steel wall between the two brick buildings they had to remove to get up to the top floor of the western building. He said that now the entire building has been used for an office.

Ms. Garrett pointed out that Chair Plaag had stated earlier that the applicant could discuss a totally new face to the building, or the applicant could pick one of the versions of the building previously discussed. She said if they picked the version with the stuccoed face, she felt that discussion was needed about the central window, as it was important for the use of the building. She asked the HPC if she needed to request

a variance so they could do the stucco. She said she is open to discussing the central window and any conditions that might need to be placed on it.

Ms. Garrett stated that she did not have any other witnesses, and she would like to close the presentation of the case.

Chair Plaag asked the Planning Staff if they had any evidence to present other than what was provided in the meeting packet. Ms. Turner replied no.

Chair Plaag asked the HPC if they had any questions for the Planning Staff regarding this application. There were no questions from the HPC for the Planning Staff.

Chair Plaag asked if there was any other interested party to speak or present evidence supporting the application. There were no questions from anyone attending the meeting.

Chair Plaag noted that the rest of these questions were unnecessary, as everyone attending the meeting had been identified for this case, and he stated that he would not ask if there were no objections. Ms. Garrett did not object to these questions not being asked at this meeting.

Chair Plaag explained to Ms. Garrett that the applicant has the option to see if the Planning Staff has information for a closing statement, or the applicant may give their closing statement. Ms. Garrett began the closing statement and said it has been evident throughout the hearing that the applicant would like to have a building congruent with the historical portions of the building. She stated that she appreciated the summary on the evolution of the building façade. She asked for some flexibility so they can continue the current use as it is in terms of the upstairs window. She said she appreciated the willingness to consider all of the different facades during the period of significance. She explained that this renovation was out of necessity and would be fairly substantial expenditure for the law firm. She said they want to create two building facades that the HPC can approve and that the community wants to see. She said they are open to suggestions and like the patio concept discussed earlier in this hearing. She said they would be willing to consider anything suggested by the HPC if they can make it work.

Chair Plaag asked the Planning Staff if they had a closing statement. Ms. Turner replied that the Town did not have a closing statement.

Chair Plaag opened the floor for the HPC to discuss the evidence at hand and the standards or findings of fact that apply to them. Chair Plaag suggested that the HPC highlight the standards that appear most relevant to what the applicant is requesting.

Chair Plaag referred to packet page 64 and read the following Design Standards for Storefronts, Upper Facades, Side Elevations, and Rear Elevations:

- 1.2 When reconstructing a historic storefront, upper façade, or other elevation, use historical research and evidence as the basis for the design. Reconstructed storefronts should incorporate original dimensions, proportions, and architectural elements.
- 1.4 When original or early storefronts or upper facades no longer exist, are too deteriorated to save, or cannot be reconstructed based on the available documentary evidence, retain the commercial character and any salvageable architectural details through a contemporary design that is compatible with the scale, materials, color, style, design, and texture of the surviving and surrounding historical buildings

Chair Plaag referred to packet pages 65 through 67 and read the following Design Standards for Commercial Properties Within the District, Standards for Commercial Properties within the District, Windows Doors, and Awnings:

- 6.1 The pattern, arrangement, location, size, and shape of windows and doors contribute significantly to a building's historic character, and their consistency within the district helps unify the buildings in context to one another. For this reason, it is always preferable to repair damaged windows and doors rather than replacing them. Furthermore, it is imperative that the fenestration pattern of the door and window openings on the building and of the doors and windows themselves (muntin width, number of lights per sash, etc.) be maintained when repairs to or replacement of elements are underway. It is never appropriate to introduce new features, such as vents, bays, windows, or door openings, in exterior walls if they diminish the historic character of the wall or damage historical materials.
- 6.4 Unless restoring the appearance of a building to its original historical context, the pattern, arrangements, and dimensions of doors and windows on principal elevations should be retained. On tertiary elevations not visible from the street, new door or window openings should be proportionate to existing ones and include matching design elements.
- 6.6 In cases where historic windows are deteriorated or damaged beyond repair, replacement windows on historic properties must match the original, historic window casings, sash details, and muntin divisions. In most cases, this will mean the use of true, divided light sashes, rather than sashes featuring simulated divided lights. Grids between glass (GBG) windows, vinyl replacement windows, and windows made of fiberglass, aluminum, or other materials that are incongruous to the district are not permitted. For new windows in new construction or an addition to an historic property, new windows may use simulated divided light sashes (with muntins permanently attached to the interior and exterior of the window panes and a matching space in between the glazing) that approximate the general appearance of windows in other residential properties in the district.
- 6.16 New construction, additions, and renovations to existing historic buildings or properties within historic districts should maintain established proportions and spacing of window and door openings.

Chair Plaag stated that the principal reason he had read these standards is that there is some conflict with these standards regarding this building. He said the applicant's proposal mimics a post-1943 or an approximate pre-1960-time design of the building, with one important exception, which is the retention of a third window piercing at the center of the second-floor façade. He explained that this window was not a part of the approximate 1960 renovations. He pointed out that the issue is that the original façade that was flush with the street and the Mast General Store, does not survive. He said there are three other façade iterations left between 1938 to 1963. He noted that none of those original materials survived from the other three iterations. He explained that because of the emergency measures that had to be taken for public safety purposes, we ultimately lost the original historical materials from any of the three points in the period of significance. He said that those said materials do not survive.

Chair Plaag said that the applicant has tried to create an appearance for this renovation that speaks to one of those periods, although not entirely accurate. He opened the floor for the HPC members to comment on this case.

Member Watkins compared one of the photos with the Exhibit 5 Proposed Front Elevation drawing on packet page 48. He said that the fenestration on the second floor does not match up with the Spring Clean

Up Parade photo in 1952 on packet page 47. He referred to the earliest building, Boone Garage, referred to as WT0819, and said the top of the second-floor windows seemed to be on the same level as the bottom to the left. He said that in the photo, it looks like the tops of those windows come halfway up on the windows of the W.R. Winkler Tire Company building, referred to as WT0894. He also pointed out that the windows on the bottom of the Boone Garage appear above the top of that rectangular panel that he assumed were windows on the photo. He said on the drawing that the bottom of those windows comes halfway down on that horizontal window. Chair Plaag pointed out that if you look at the parapet of the building in question in relation to the recessed brick area of the W.R. Winkler Tire Company building to the left in the drawing on packet page 48, the parapet stops at the tops of the windows of the W. R. Winkler Tire Company building. He said when looking at all of the historical photos of this building, the parapet goes clearly up to where you see the beginning of the progression of the brick back out to the façade on the W.R. Winkler Tire Company. Chair Plaag estimated a two-foot difference between the parapet and the brick material. He wondered if it skews the apparent placement of the façade in the drawing.

Chair Plaag asked Mr. Dixon to address the differences between the photo and the drawing. Mr. Dixon said that he understood the concern that Chair Plaag and Member Watkins voiced from Exhibit 5 and the Spring Clean Up Parade photo regarding the second-floor windows not lining up with the W.R. Winkler Tire Company building. He said the window heights of the second-floor level windows could be adjusted up or down as well as the parapet. He said there is about a six-foot attic area above the second-floor level. He said the ceiling heights on the first and second floors are fairly low, approximately eight to nine feet. He pointed out that there is only a certain placement from where the first levels are and where the attic level is to put the windows. He said if it was the desire of the HPC, the parapet could be raised.

Ms. Garrett said to Mr. Owen that she recalled him stating that he went into the attic of the building. Mr. Owen replied yes, that he had been into the attic. She asked Mr. Owen if the attic space could be used to increase the ceiling height of the second-floor office. Mr. Owen noted that he felt that it could be very costly to move the attic space to increase the ceiling height for the offices. Ms. Garrett asked Mr. Dixon if he thought the windows could be moved up without affecting the interior ceiling of the second floor. Mr. Dixon said he thought the windows could be moved up a little bit.

Chair Plaag referred to the 1963 Wagon Train photo and saw what Member Watkins was referring to with the louvered windows. Chair Plaag noted that they are located substantially below the bottom of the second-floor level windows to the west of the W.R. Winkler Tire Company building.

Chair Plaag asked Mr. Dixon if it seemed to him that the attic space was created later. Mr. Dixon said no based on Mr. Owen's photos of the attic. Mr. Dixon said timber framing in the attic appears to be from the original building. Mr. Dixon said it has a truss system that supports the ceiling and roof above it.

Chair Plaag said that he believed that Member Watkins's point that he shared earlier is that if the applicant is going to choose the option of the 1943 to approximately 1960-time period as the starting point, some changes will need to be made. Chair Plaag thought there was an alternative in the district design standards, specifically the previously referenced section 6.16. Chair Plaag explained that there is an assumption in this standard that we are talking about new elements and not old elements for the building. He said they also need to maintain those established proportions of the building. Chair Plaag asked Member Watkins if the summary he gave regarding his point was fair; Member Watkins replied it was a fair summary.

Chair Plaag stated that the applicant's work is a renovation/new façade. He clarified that it is not a restoration or reconstruction of some earlier version of the building. He said the third central window is an element during the period of significance. He said that he did not think it was out of the question for the applicant to ask for the third window.

Chair Plaag noted that in the next meeting for this case, the discussion will probably be focused on the appropriate exterior treatment. He said the discussion would be regarding if stucco is used from one period and the proposed window placement is from another period, and a third window that refers to another period. He asked if there was a way to align these proposed changes with the design standards, and that this was an open question. He said he felt this is a challenging question for what is proposed in this application.

Discussion ensued on the date and time to continue the case. Chair Plaag noted that the soonest he could attend the meeting would be the week following the Thanksgiving holiday. He suggested having a Special HPC meeting on Tuesday, November 29, 2022 at 3 p.m. Ms. Garrett confirmed that she, her witnesses, and Mr. Dixon were available. Ms. Mitchell said the Planning Staff could meet at that date and time. There was consensus from the HPC to have a special HPC meeting at the date and time suggested by Chair Plaag.

Recess the Meeting

Chair Plaag recessed this meeting, noting it would be continued to Tuesday, November 29, 2022, at 3 p.m. via WebEx.

Eric Plaag, Chair

Marlene Crosby, Board Secretary