

**TOWN OF BOONE
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
NOVEMBER 12, 2024, 3:00 PM
Planning & Inspections Department & WebEx Video Conferencing**

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

Council Liaison: Virginia Roseman (via WebEx)

Planning Staff Present: Jessica Mitchell-Advanced Planning Specialist, Brandon Wise-Deputy Director, 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 3:02 p.m. The meeting was held in the Planning & Inspections Conference Room at 680 West King Street and via WebEx.

Adoption of Agenda

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

Vote: Aye – All
Nay – None

The motion passed.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Chair Smyth provided a brief synopsis of the Historic Preservation Commission, its makeup, and its function.

Case A24-0660 SPA Properties – Certificate of Appropriateness

Wesley Fitzgerald of The RBA Group, on behalf of SPA Properties V, LLC, has submitted an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness for Major Work for 585-589 West King Street (WT0847 John W Hodges Building) located in the Downtown Boone Local Historic District. The request includes the following items:

- Replacement of the limestone frieze plate that currently reads “Vetro MMII” with a frieze plate reading “Horton”, “Horton Hotel”, or “John W. Hodges”.
- Replacing the storefronts along King Street with matching anodized black storefronts
- Replace non-historic iron bars on east elevation with storefront matching surrounding windows
- New windows on the west elevation
- Replacing existing fabric canopy awnings with cable-hung metal awnings

The applicant intends to renovate the upper floor and a portion of the basement to house a small hotel to be a sister hotel to the Horton located at 611 W King Street.

Jessica Mitchell and Brandon Wise, Town Staff members, and David Malushizky, architect for the project, 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.

Mr. Wise noted that an updated elevation showing the relocation of a wall louver had been submitted after the meeting packet was distributed. This revised plan modified the original elevation plan in the meeting packet on page 8. The updated plan was shown on the screen in the meeting.

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

Mr. Malushizky stated that the frieze plate on the front of the building that read “Vetro MMII” was not original to the building. He asked if the frieze plate could be removed and replaced. He also noted that this project would be an annex to the Horton Hotel, but they did not plan to replace the frieze plate with one containing the name Horton.

Mr. Malushizky stated that the window frames had previously been painted forest green, and the hotel owners would like to have at least the upper floor window frames painted black to match the Horton Hotel and the proposed black canopy.

Mr. Malushizky explained that the change in the louver location from the back of the building to the side was because there would not be proper head clearance at the back of the building due to the location of the door.

Mr. Malushizky referred to the west elevation of the building, noting three original windows had been bricked in that they would like to open back up. However, there was a code issue that might allow them to open only one or two of the windows.

Mr. Malushizky stated that the front windows on the upper floor were installed in a masonry opening that was not original to the building and did not fit. He asked that those windows be replaced with newer ones matching the six over one or eight over one windows currently on the building. Mr. Malushizky noted that the iron gate on the front of the building and the iron bars on the side window would be removed and replaced with windows to match the other windows.

Discussion ensued regarding the frieze plate. Mr. Wise noted that the building was originally called the John W. Hodges building, and that name could be placed on the building without a sign permit. Vice-Chair Bond asked if anyone had spoken to the Hodges family to see if they would agree to have their name displayed on the building. Mr. Malushizky replied that the Hodges family had not been contacted. Vice-Chair Bond felt that they should be consulted out of courtesy, and she agreed to contact Jimmy Hodges. Mr. Malushizky stated there was a possibility that nothing could be underneath the Vetro frieze plate, but they would not know until the plate was removed.

Mr. Malushizky noted that there was a fire escape on the back of the building that was not original, and they were interested in replacing a portion of it and increasing its size to allow the hotel guests to use it as an outdoor space. He stated that this would be a future project that would have to come back before the HPC for approval. Vice-Chair Bond noted that she did not want to encourage people to use the fire escape as an accessory bar area. Mr. Wise added that the building code required fire escapes to be clear at all times.

Commission Member Basinger stated that having the Hodges name on the building would be more in keeping with the Downtown Boone Local Historic District Design Standards Storefronts, Upper Facades, Side Elevations, and Rear Elevations 1.1 and 1.2 which reads:

Whenever possible, historic storefronts and storefront features such as entrance configurations, display windows, doors, clerestory windows, transom bars and windows, bulkheads, corbelling, cornice work, windows, stonework, stringcourses, structural glass, and other architectural flourishes should be retained and preserved. When repairing these features, retain and preserve in place original elements as much as possible. If repair is not possible, replace damaged elements with materials that match the originals in composition, design, texture, color, and other visual qualities.

When reconstructing an 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.

Vice-Chair Bond asked if the first floor would house a restaurant. Mr. Malushizky replied that the first floor was currently under construction and would soon be a restaurant. The upper floor would be the hotel guest rooms, and the lower level would be the amenity space.

Chair Smyth stated he thought the project looked good and was excited about opening up the windows that had been bricked in.

Conditions of approval were discussed. It was agreed that there be a condition that the Hodges family would be consulted regarding their desire to have the Hodges name on the building. Mr. Malushizky asked what they should do if no name were underneath the Vetro frieze plate.

For clarification, Ms. Meade stated that if a Hodges sign were underneath the Vetro sign, it would have to stay because it would be historic to the building. It could be replaced if there was a non-historic sign underneath or no sign at all. The Hodges family could then agree to have their name on a new sign, or they could decline. If the Hodges declined to have their name on a new sign, the owners could put what they wanted there, and then the only issue would be what it was supposed to look like. Ms. Meade stated that any new sign should fit back into the same space without destroying or upsetting the existing masonry and be an appropriate material. Mr. Malushizky noted that the owners had not discussed what they would like to do if nothing was underneath the Vetro sign.

Chair Smyth stated that if the Hodges sign was underneath the Vetro sign, it should be exposed and left intact. If the Hodges sign were not underneath the Vetro sign, this would become an administrative decision regarding signage.

Vice-Chair Bond agreed to contact the Hodges family to see if they would be willing to have the Hodges name placed on a new sign for the building if the Hodges name was not found underneath the Vetro sign.

There was no public comment on this case.

Motion and Vote:

Commission Member Basinger 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. The COA is approved subject to the following conditions:

- Where there is a conflict between the application information and the plans (April 25, 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.
- If the Hodges sign is underneath the Vetro sign, it should be exposed and left intact. If the Hodges sign is not underneath the Vetro sign, replacement signage will be an administrative decision.

Vote: Aye – All
Nay – None

The motion passed.

Other Matters

Ms. Mitchell provided an update following the Stoneman’s Raid Interpretative Panel discussion at the November 5, 2024, Advisory meeting, that the Blair Farm property owners had no documentation regarding Stoneman’s Raid. She stated there would need to be a discussion at the December HPC advisory meeting regarding the quote and revised map.

Vice-Chair Bond noted that the next HPC advisory meeting was scheduled for December 3, and the next quasi-judicial meeting was scheduled for December 10.

Adjournment

Chair Smyth adjourned the meeting at 3:58 p.m.

Vardell Smyth, Chair

Brenda Henson, Board Clerk