

**Town of Boone
Town Council Regular Meeting
9:00 AM, April 8, 2026
Town Council Chambers
1500 Blowing Rock Road**

I. Call to Order

II. Moment of Silence

III. Continuation of March 23, 2026, Public Hearing and Planning Commission Meeting: Case A26-0067 Hemlock Ridge Trace Apartments Conditional District Zoning Map Amendment

1. Case A26-0067 Hemlock Ridge Trace Apartments Conditional District Zoning Map Amendment

IV. Announcements

1. Announcement of Board Vacancies
For Information

V. Tentative Agenda Adoption

VI. Approval of Proclamations and Resolutions

1. Proclamation - Public Power Lineworkers During Lineworkers Appreciation Days
For Action

VII. Public Comment

VIII. Requested Appearances

1. Dr. Patricia Mitchell - Town Manager Search Update
For Information
2. Downtown Boone Development Association Update
Requested Appearance

IX. Approval of Items on Consent Agenda

1. Approval of Resolution - Town of Boone Logo
For Action
2. Consideration of Revisions to Chapter 36:Town Logo
For Action
3. Request for Road Closures and to Allow Open Containers - Boonerang Music & Arts Festival
For Action

4. Presentation of Town of Boone 1872 Award Information
For Information
5. Consideration of Minutes
For Action

X. Planning Matters

1. Consideration of Text Amendment Regarding Public Art (Murals) in the
Downtown Boone Local Historic District
2. Walk-Audit Update
For Information

XI. Council Matters

1. Request to Schedule Park Tours
For Action

XII. Mayor Report

XIII. Town Manager Report

XIV. Town Attorney Report

XV. Board Liaison Report

XVI. Closed Session

1. N.C. Gen. Stat. § 143-318.11(a)(1), to review, approve, and seal closed session minutes from Council's prior closed session(s).

2. N.C. Gen. Stat. § 143-318.11(a)(3), to consult with the Town Attorney in order to preserve the attorney-client privilege between the attorney and the Town Council, and obtain legal advice, consider, and/or give instructions to the attorney concerning one or more potential legal claims.

XVII. Potential Action Following Closed Session

XVIII. Adjournment



Town Of Boone AGENDA ITEM ACTION REQUEST

This form must be completed and attached to all supporting documentation for items to be included in the Town of Boone Council agenda. One (1) form per agenda item.

Submitted By: Nicole Harmon

Department: Planning and Inspections

Contact Phone # 828-268-6960

Date Submitted:

Email: jane.shook@boonenc.gov

Date of Council Meeting to Consider this Item: April 8, 2026

Council Action Requested:

Title: Case A26-0067 Hemlock Ridge Trace Apartments Conditional District Zoning Map Amendment

Summary of Information:

The public hearing and Planning Commission meeting for Case A26-0067 was continued from the March 23rd Public Hearing to the regularly scheduled April 8th Town Council meeting.

Attached:

Draft March 23, 2026, Public Hearing/Planning Commission Minutes

Case A26-0067 Staff Report

Applicant Exhibit 1 Project Narrative

Applicant Exhibit 2 Site Plan

Applicant Exhibit 3 Revised Site Plan

Applicant Exhibit 4 Deviation Request

Applicant Exhibit 5 Neighborhood Meeting Information

Applicant Exhibit 6 Neighborhood Meeting Presentation

Applicant Exhibit 7 Affidavit

Applicant Exhibit 8 Elevations (new exhibit)

**TOWN COUNCIL AND PLANNING COMMISSION
PUBLIC HEARING AND PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES
MONDAY, MARCH 23, 2026, 6:00 PM
1500 BLOWING ROCK ROAD AND WEBEX**

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor Dalton George, Mayor Pro Tem Todd Carter, Eric Plaag, Anne Pruitt, Virginia Roseman, and Adrian Tait

PLANNING COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT: Chair Frank Venio, Garrett Kight, Declan King, Michael Mileski, and Frida Paz-Miranda

PLANNING STAFF PRESENT: Brandon Wise-Deputy Director of Planning & Inspections, Amy Snider-Commercial Zoning Administrator, and Brenda Henson-Board Clerk

OTHER TOWN STAFF OR REPRESENTATIVES PRESENT: Todd Moody-Public Works Director, and Allison Meade-Town Attorney

Call to Order

Mayor George called the Town Council to order at 6:04 p.m. Chair Venio called the Planning Commission to order at the same time. The meeting was held at the Town Council Chambers, located at 1500 Blowing Rock Road, Boone, as well as via WebEx.

Moment of Silence

A moment of silence was observed.

PUBLIC HEARING

Case A26-0066 Wynnefield Forward, LLC – Conditional District Zoning Map Amendment

Wynnefield Forward, LLC has submitted a Conditional District Zoning Map Amendment application for property located on Chestnut Drive and New Market Boulevard (Watauga County PINs: 2910-39-9335-000, 2910-39-9610-000, and 2910-49-2369-000) to rezone the property from Conditional District R5 55+ Housing to Conditional District R5 55+ with a site-specific development plan for Use 1.17 Adult Living Community.

Brandon Wise, Deputy Director of Planning & Inspections, introduced the case as The Villas at South Fork, noting that the project was previously approved for a Conditional District R5 55+ with a site-specific development plan for senior housing. He explained that the plan before the Council and Planning Commission tonight was different than the previously approved site-specific plan, which created the need for another CD approval. Mr. Wise noted that no deviations from the UDO were requested with this Conditional District. A minor lighting issue was found on the site plan, which would require the applicant to reduce the Kelvin rating from 4,000 to 3,000, and this had been relayed to the applicant.

Craig Stone with Wynnefield Forward addressed the Council and Planning Commission. He explained that their original approval was for 60 units, which had been reduced to 48 to improve the building's site stability. The building would be raised from three to four stories and moved down the hill on the site to be directly adjacent to the storage units. Mr. Stone stated that the building's footprint would be reduced by approximately 12%. The retaining walls at the top of the site would also be reduced in height. The entrance would now be off New Market Boulevard, which was better suited to the topography. Mr. Stone stated that they had worked closely with staff to follow all the guidelines.

Council Member Plaag asked for the elevation from grade on the south-facing side of the building to the roof peak. Mr. Stone replied that he was unsure, but estimated it would be 38-45 feet. Council Member Plaag asked how a four-story building could have a 38-foot elevation. Mr. Stone stated that there would be nine-foot ceilings. Commission Member Plaag felt that the elevation would exceed 38 feet. Commission Member Mileski noted that plan sheet 3.1 in the meeting packet indicated an elevation of 53 feet from grade to the top of the roof.

Council Member Pruitt asked whether consideration had been given to the area and its surroundings when developing the building's design. Mr. Stone replied that they planned to use brick and Hardi-plank and had adapted the façade to suit the area.

Council Member Plaag noted that the Boone Next plan had been adopted since the project's original approval. Boone Next identified this area as a walkable mixed-use area, with buildings oriented toward the street and parking to the side or rear. Sidewalks should be wider, and there should be street trees. He asked Mr. Stone whether they had considered building 4-6 smaller buildings to better take advantage of the topography. Mr. Stone replied that they did consider smaller buildings. However, the ADA required a slope of less than 2% throughout the site, leaving few options for locating multiple buildings.

Council Member Plaag referenced the serpentine path from the site to New Market Boulevard. He felt that older people would not use that path. He suggested a standalone elevator building to take people down to the New Market grade. Mr. Stone stated that they had spent a lot of time getting the site accessible for residents and meeting ADA guidelines. He added that moving the building down the hill allowed them to reduce the number of retaining walls on the top of the site.

Council Member Plaag noted that a number of neighbors expressed concern at the original public hearing that the building was out of scale for the area. He stated that the proposed building would be 53 feet above the roof of the Pinnacle Storage building and would block the view of Howard's Knob. Council Member Plaag added that this might not be the right location for a 55+ independent living facility.

Mayor Pro Tem Carter stated that he had the opposite reaction. He noted that securing LIHTC funding was difficult because very few properties qualified. He added that he appreciated the driveway entrance being on New Market Boulevard.

Council Member Pruitt noted that trees were removed along Chestnut Drive and that a bulldozer was brought to the site. Mr. Stone replied that they were performing geotechnical testing and mistakenly removed trees. He added that the driveway had been moved off Chestnut Drive and that access would be from New Market Boulevard. Council Member Pruitt asked how the residents would be shielded from the proposed parking lot. Mr. Stone stated that landscape buffering was included in the plan, and ordinance requirements would be met. He noted that he would be amenable to installing additional buffering along Chestnut Drive. Mr. Stone stated that the driveway access was moved off Chestnut Drive at great expense. However, emergency fire truck access would be on Chestnut Drive.

Mr. Wise explained that the property would require a neighborhood protection buffer. He stated that the emergency services entry would be closed off with knock-down bollards with geogrid. Mr. Wise noted that a 25-foot type C buffer with plantings on both sides of a fence would be installed. Existing landscaping would remain, and additional evergreens would have to be planted to create the buffer. Council Member Pruitt asked what type of fence would be required. Mr. Wise replied that the fence was required to be 6 feet high and opaque, with landscaping on both sides.

Council Member Pruitt asked if there would be a sidewalk on Chestnut Drive. Mr. Wise stated that a 5-foot-wide sidewalk would be installed on Chestnut Drive. He noted that the parking lot and the finished floor of the building would be within two or three feet from the top of the Pinnacle Storage building.

Council Member Tait stated that the previously approved building was three stories and 47 feet in height. The proposed building would be four stories and 11 feet taller than the three-story building. He asked if the plan revisions were driven by cost. Mr. Stone replied that they were trying to reduce the retaining walls on the top side of the site. Council Member Tait noted the request for reduced parking and asked if the requested reduction was reflected on the site plan. Mr. Wise responded that the reduced parking was shown on the site plan.

Council Member Plaag stated that there had been a long-time dream of putting in a trail from the New Market area up to Howard's Knob to connect to the Greenway system. He added that there were some other projects already in the works along Hwy 421 that could help make that happen. He asked the applicant whether they would be open to widening the New Market sidewalk from 5 to 10 feet, so it could be effectively used to connect Howard's Knob to the Greenway. Mr. Stone stated that he did not see a problem with doing that. He also offered to pay a fee in lieu. Ms. Meade reminded everyone that payment in lieu of sidewalk installation was not currently allowed under the ordinance.

Council Member Pruitt asked whether installing a sidewalk along Chestnut Drive would require cutting down more trees and wondered whether it was more important to have a sidewalk or an additional five-foot landscape buffer for the neighbors.

Allison Meade, Town Attorney, wished to address Boone Next and policy concerns versus the UDO. She stated that this was a Conditional District that allowed some movement from the applicant and the Town. Ms. Meade explained that the UDO had not been brought into consistency with the standards in the Boone Next plan, and applicants were coming forward with projects that met current UDO standards. Ms. Meade asked the Council to be aware that applicants were generally meeting current UDO standards, so deviations might be necessary to address policies in Boone Next. She added that some items in Boone Next that encouraged walkability were not in the UDO, and the UDO was very firm about requiring sidewalks with new development. Ms. Meade reminded everyone that the payment-in-lieu-of-sidewalk-installation option was removed from the UDO 3-4 years ago. Mr. Wise added that payment in lieu of sidewalks would only be allowed in extreme circumstances.

Council Member Plaag noted that part of the vote that the Planning Commission and Town Council took was to consider the standards and policies in the comprehensive plan. He stated that it would seem contradictory to approve a project that did not comply with the comprehensive plan, even if the UDO had not been revised to reflect the comp plan's policies. Council Member Plaag stated that he understood there was a requirement to comply with the UDO, but the CD process allowed deviations. Ms. Meade replied that the CD process did allow deviations. However, under state law, zoning amendments that were contrary or inconsistent with the comprehensive plan could be accepted with the understanding that those inconsistencies would be noted upon approval. Ms. Meade stated that if an applicant presented a project that met the requirements of the ordinance, and the Council does not approve the project because it was not quite what they had in mind, based on Boone Next, it seemed unfair to the applicant.

Council Member Roseman asked if the building's façade facing New Market Boulevard could be made to look more like the front of a building. Mr. Stone replied that they could add architectural windows that would not be operable to any unit. Council Member Roseman noted that she voted against the project when it was first approved. She stated that she liked that the building had been moved away from the neighborhood, that there was less parking along Chestnut Drive, and that the trash and recycling had been moved. However, her vote was not going to change.

Council Member Plaag asked the applicant whether they had explored the possibility of orienting the building parallel to New Market Boulevard, with the driveway entering from New Market, parking behind

the building, and having an access on the rear of the building at the third or fourth floor. This could allow seniors to walk out the door onto a grade-level sidewalk at New Market Boulevard and create a park-like setting in the space closer to the neighborhood. Mr. Stone replied that there was no adaptable way to make that work. Orienting the building to face New Market Boulevard would create a sightline down Chestnut Drive, allowing more of the building to be seen. Mr. Stone noted that the building would have to be cut into the grade, necessitating retaining walls around it. He felt this option would create safety issues. He stated that they did explore the option, but felt it was not feasible.

Mr. Wise clarified that the ordinance currently allowed modifications that allowed buildings to be oriented away from the primary public way, as long as there was safe and convenient access for pedestrians. The side of the building facing the public way would have to meet the 10% ground-floor window requirement.

Council Member Tait noted there were 48 proposed units. He asked what the expected occupancy would be for the project. Mr. Stone replied that they would receive approximately 500 residency applications because there was a waiting list. He expected to be 100% occupied. Council Member Tait clarified that he wanted to know how many people would be living in the building. Mr. Stone anticipated an occupancy of 48-50.

Council Member Pruitt noted that the development would be for adults aged 55 and over. She asked the applicant how they would handle the age requirement if someone was 54 or had a grandchild who wanted to live there. Mr. Stone explained that strict federal guidelines could allow someone under 55 to qualify. Otherwise, there would be deed restrictions, a tenant selection plan, and other items that they would submit to the state. Mr. Stone stated that there were extensive requirements regarding how they chose tenants. Council Member Pruitt asked whether this project would be independent living or include any assisted living. Mr. Stone replied that there would be no assisted living at this facility. He noted that they planned to work with the university and local resources to help with credit empowerment. They also plan to offer health checks.

Commission Member Paz-Miranda asked whether there would be a priority for housing Boone residents. Mr. Stone replied that federal fair housing guidelines would not allow that. The housing would be on a first-come, first-served basis. Commission Member Paz-Miranda stated that she was sympathetic to the need for housing for older community members. However, the sheer scale of this building was hard for her to accept. The height of the building would ruin the viewshed of Howard's Knob, one of our biggest and most iconic mountains, and Hwy 421 was a gateway to the community. Commission Member Paz-Miranda recognized that senior housing was needed, but felt that this was not the right site.

Chair Veno asked if there would be stairs from the property to New Market Boulevard. Mr. Stone replied that there would be a sidewalk with an extensive switchback to meet ADA requirements.

Council Member Roseman stated that she bought her house knowing that it butted up against a business district. However, the people in this neighborhood bought their homes knowing that the subject property was zoned R1. She felt that the proposed development was too large for this area. Council Member Roseman again noted that she voted against the original rezoning request and would do so again.

Mayor George invited public comment.

Carolyn Ward of 253 Chestnut Drive provided Council and Commission members with a copy of her comments (**on file**). She stated that she and many of her neighbors were strongly opposed to Wynnefield Properties' conditional district zoning requests to develop the property on Chestnut Drive into a four-story apartment building. Ms. Ward felt that their neighborhood had been under attack from encroaching development for the last seven or eight years. Pinnacle Storage, a four-story building, sat up against multiple one-level single-family homes. Sheetz was built to face the neighborhood, so it has been

subjected to noise, loitering, traffic, and light impacts. Ms. Ward stated that instead of the Town fighting for and protecting them, they were fighting the Town to keep their R1 neighborhood from development that was not in harmony with the surrounding structures. The scale of the proposed 53-foot-tall building would dwarf the surrounding homes. Ms. Ward noted that the objectives in Boone Next were to protect existing housing stock from incompatible redevelopment. This property was labeled as walkable mixed-use, but she felt that this development did not meet that definition. Ms. Ward asked if their neighborhood was not worth protecting. She stated that the neighborhood had been left out of any discussions or planning throughout this process. At the neighborhood meeting, when pressed about landscaping and buffers, the Wynnefield representative stated that they would do what the Town forced them to do, that they would do what is required. Ms. Ward stated that the applicant had proven to the neighborhood that they would do no more than necessary to comply with the Town's requirements. She noted that her home sat directly across from the area where the trees were improperly removed. Ms. Ward stated that she was not opposed to increasing the affordable housing stock. However, that could be attained by constructing small cottages or duplexes, but a project of this size was not right for this location. She added that she supported the affordable housing project off Hwy 421 because it was a suitable site, away from single-family homes, near businesses, and other apartment buildings.

Crystal Cheek stated she had lived at 211 Chestnut Drive for over 20 years. She noted that she had submitted a letter and pictures to the Planning and Inspections Department and requested that copies be shared with each member of the Town Council **(on file)**. The images included views from her driveway, areas near Sheetz and Pinnacle Storage, and homes located above and across from her property, as well as close-up pictures of the buffer required to help protect their neighborhood from the impacts of the adjacent commercial development. Ms. Cheek stated that the neighborhood has experienced increased noise from vehicles and revving engines 24 hours a day, light spilling directly into homes, and visual impacts from commercial activity. She added that the required neighborhood protections were not sufficient. The angled emergency exit on Chestnut Drive would not provide any meaningful protection for the residents. Ms. Cheek stated that there was no realistic way to buffer the height, lighting, and visual impacts of a four-story structure towering above a single-family neighborhood. The size and presence of a building of this scale would fundamentally alter the character of their neighborhood. Ms. Cheek recognized the challenges related to growth and housing. However, she felt that solutions should not come at the expense of a long-standing neighborhood. Ms. Cheek stated that Boone needed more workforce housing and asked what steps the Town Council had taken to create workforce housing in neighborhoods that would balance growth while still protecting existing residential communities. She asked that the Council carefully consider the impacts of its decision on the neighborhood's residents.

Lynne Mason provided the Commission and Council members with a handout of her comments **(on file)**. She stated that she spent 18 years as a Council member fighting for neighborhoods. The proposed project met a housing need, but was in the wrong location. Ms. Mason stated that there were not enough neighborhoods in Boone for our workforce. She said that existing neighborhoods were slowly eroding away and expressed concern that this pattern would continue. Ms. Mason stated that the four-story building would not be in harmony with the neighborhood and that the parking lot lighting would shine into the neighborhood all night. Boone Next planning principles supported established neighborhoods, and this neighborhood did not feel supported or protected. Ms. Mason stated that none of the recent commercial developments near this neighborhood was mixed-use. She noted that there had been prior interest in developing this parcel into workforce housing, which was needed. Ms. Mason concluded by saying that approval of this conditional district zoning map amendment would set a precedent for future encroachments into single-family residential neighborhoods, which were repeatedly under attack.

Andy Mason stated that more workforce and elderly housing were needed, but he felt this was the wrong location for that. He did not think any amount of buffering could hide or reduce the impact on this neighborhood. Mr. Mason stated that Chestnut Drive was not a great walkable area because it was steep. He suggested that if a walkway to New Market were installed, there needed to be a better way for people to cross that street. Mr. Mason asked that this project not be approved.

Virginia Williams stated that she lived on Chestnut Drive directly across from the proposed four-story building, and when she and her husband bought their home, they verified that the surrounding property was zoned R1. She asked Commission and Council members if they had four-story apartment buildings across the street from their homes. Ms. Williams asked if enforceable deed restrictions were only for those who could afford to live in gated communities. She stated that the developer had already proven what kind of neighbor they would like to be by doing work on the site without a permit. There is a pile of debris on the site, and the buffer consists of a few dead rhododendrons and four-foot-tall evergreens. Ms. Williams noted that at neighborhood meetings, the current residents had never been asked about their concerns. Because Boone residents would not be guaranteed a place in the building, this project would encourage low-income seniors to move here, even though Boone was already bursting at the seams. Ms. Williams stated that there needed to be a balance between providing affordable housing and protecting existing neighborhoods.

Joanne Puliatti of 275 Chestnut Drive stated that she was wholeheartedly opposed to this development. She said the neighborhood was filled with working-class or retired people, and that they deserved the neighborhood they had bought into. Ms. Puliatti stated that, if this project were approved, she would request opaque barriers.

Mark Neussmeier of 169 Hidden Valley Circle stated that he often walked down Chestnut Drive, which he considered an inappropriate place to walk. He added that he wanted to preserve the view of Howard's Knob. Mr. Neussmeier felt that more planning was needed so that this type of issue would not be addressed at gunpoint. He noted that the designers had packed a ton of stuff on the site, but it was just not the right location for this development.

Jasmine Shoshana stated that there was an enrollment crisis instead of a housing crisis. She said that ASU was constantly being forced to increase its numbers. Ms. Shoshana noted that we were supposed to be a government for the people and by the people, and it was very obvious that the people were not in favor of this development. She stated that the Town was not here to represent developers, but to represent the people. Ms. Shoshana concluded by saying that if ASU were at a suitable number, there would be plenty of housing.

James Milner stated that the last time this project came up, he made it clear that it was the right project in the wrong location. R1 neighborhoods should be protected. Mr. Milner stated that, if the project was approved, he asked that the building be oriented to the primary way, which meant rotating the building 90 degrees to New Market Boulevard.

Mayor George closed the public comment portion of this hearing.

Council Member Plaag stated that there was an opportunity to have this building on this site, but it would need to orient to New Market Boulevard, tuck it into the hillside, leave the back half of the lot wooded, create a very clear buffer from the neighborhood, still have senior housing with LIHTC financing, and protect an R1 neighborhood at the same time. However, the developer said that they did not want to do that. Council Member Plaag stated that this was a lovely project, but it was not the right place. He added that the applicant's complete disregard for the development requirements in Boone made him question whether the applicant was an honest player. Council Member Plaag stated that he would not vote on this

request because it was his last week on the Town Council, but he did not support the project as currently proposed.

Council Member Tait stated that the project brought up the question of what should buffer R1 neighborhoods from our other developments. Arguably, what was appropriate was some form of housing, such as an eight-unit townhome complex or a duplex. He felt that the proposed development was too much in this spot, citing issues with the topography and retaining walls. Council Member Tait stated he was struggling because he really wanted to support housing for senior adults.

Commission Member Paz-Miranda again stated that this was the right project, but not the right site. For her, the building had to be adjacent to New Market Boulevard on grade, or there should be no project at all. She added that the grade was steep up to the crosswalk on New Market Boulevard, making it difficult and dangerous for senior citizens.

With nothing further, Mayor George closed the public hearing for this case at 7:31 p.m.

Case A26-0067 Taft-Mills Group, LLC – Conditional District Zoning Map Amendment

Taft-Mills Group, LLC has submitted a Conditional District Zoning Map Amendment application to rezone property located on the corner of US Hwy 421 S and Yosef Drive (Watauga County PINs: 2911-70-9321-000, 2911-80-0228-000, and 2911-80-2433-000) from B3 General Business to Conditional District R3 Multiple-Family Residential with a site-specific development plan for Use 1.13 Multi-Family Dwelling (>100 bedrooms).

Amy Snider, Commercial Zoning Administrator, introduced the case. She stated that the project consisted of a 93-unit, 188-bedroom, multi-family affordable housing community. Ms. Snider noted that the applicant's requested deviations were listed on pages 82 and 83 of the meeting packet. She stated that elevations were not submitted, but it appeared the building's orientation would be more inward, which may require a deviation.

Council Member Plaag asked why the project was before them without renderings or elevations, as that was normally part of a site-specific development plan. Ms. Snider replied that the staff had received the site plan, but no elevations had been submitted. She added that comments were submitted, noting that ordinance requirements would be met. Mr. Wise clarified that if the applicant's intent was to meet ordinance requirements, they were not required to submit elevations at this point. However, the Council or Commission could request those renderings. Ms. Meade added that Planning staff could not require the applicant to submit renderings, but it was within the Council's prerogative to request them. She stated that she did not see the requested number for the livability ratio or the retaining wall height deviations in the narrative. It was noted that these items were contained on the site plans.

Council Member Plaag stated he was excited about the prospect of this project, noting that it was in the right place and would help address an acute housing need, but he wanted to know what they would be getting. He explained that the CD process was intended to provide a clear understanding between the Town and a developer of what the development would look like. Council Member Plaag stated that if this were a by-right development, the applicant could build whatever they wanted within the ordinance's regulations without input from the Council. However, this was a conditional district request that afforded the Council the opportunity to seek items outside the strict regulations.

Council Member Pruitt agreed with Council Member Plaag. She stated that this development would be one of the first things people saw upon entering Boone on Hwy 421. While they were meeting the requirements, she still wanted to see what the project would look like.

Chelsea Garrett, attorney representing the Taft-Mills Group, introduced Nate Broman-Fulks from the Taft-Mills Group, Tristan Williams from the Taft-Mills Group, Brian Cook from McMillon, Pazdan, Smith Architecture, and Toby Harris from Three Notch Group. Ms. Garrett stated that they had quite a few examples of what the Taft-Mills Group had done with other projects. She asked Mr. Broman-Fulks to speak.

Mr. Broman-Fulks stated he was the Vice President of development for the Taft-Mills Group, a real estate development company specializing in building multi-family affordable housing using Low Income Housing Tax Credits. He noted that the company, based in Greenville, North Carolina, had developed over 100 of these communities, was active in North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia, and Maryland, was ranked among the top 50 affordable housing developers in the country, and had received the state's highest honor in affordable Housing from the North Carolina Housing Finance Agency. Mr. Broman-Fulks presented a slide showing examples of completed or currently under-construction developments so that Commission and Council members could see what their developments typically looked like. He noted that the architecture could be tailored to the site and what the Town wanted, as much as possible. Mr. Broman-Fulks stated that they had not been asked to provide an elevation and were therefore unprepared for the Council's request. He added that they were working with their architects to create a site-specific plan for Boone and were happy to discuss what that would look like. Mr. Broman-Fulks noted that the site met the high threshold required by the North Carolina Housing Finance Agency to be considered a competitive site, including having access to a grocery store, pharmacy, parks, doctors, schools, etc., within 2 miles of the site. The project would be affordable for households at 60% of the county's area median income, meaning about \$40,000 for a one-person household, or \$65,000 for a four-person household. They proposed three residential buildings with a mix of one, two, and three-bedroom units to serve a variety of housing sizes. Mr. Broman-Fulks stated that this was not student housing, explaining that through the tax credit program, there could not be a household of all students. However, there were a few exceptions, such as if one of the residents had grown up in foster care or was a married couple. He stated that it would be difficult for a student to qualify because applicants could not earn too much or too little. Mr. Broman-Fulks noted that the clubhouse would include a community room, an indoor exercise facility, a business center, an outdoor recreation area, an on-site property manager, and maintenance staff.

Brian Cook stated that there was extensive topography and that they looked at how best to cite the buildings on the site. He noted that the buildings were parallel to Hwy 421 but set back up the hill, and that spaces would be created between them to allow residents to walk and interact. Mr. Cook stated that there would be a playground, picnic shelter areas, and pathways between the buildings. Parking would be in the rear. He noted that the property stepped up quite a bit, but they were trying to terrace the buildings up the hillside. Mr. Cook added that they planned to leave some of the buffer on the back side of the property. The buildings would be three stories with a basement, clad in brick and fiber-cement siding to give a more mountainous look.

Toby Harris stated that the biggest challenge they faced was the topography, which required retaining walls throughout the site to accommodate the buildings and the required parking.

Ms. Garrett asked about the deviation regarding landscaping between the retaining walls. Mr. Harris replied that he would not know the exact extent of the retaining walls until a full grading plan was completed, but there would be several walls. The ordinance required that the walls be terraced, which would push into the parking lot and cause them to lose required parking. Ms. Garrett noted that a deviation was requested for the retaining wall height. Mr. Wise explained that the UDO required no single wall to exceed eight feet. Additionally, if retaining walls exceeded 16 feet in height, buffers were required between the walls. The applicant requested deviations to allow a retaining wall with varying heights up

to 26 feet. Mr. Cook stated that the step-back requirements for each retaining wall would push the buildings farther back into the site and up the hill, thereby eliminating parking spaces.

Ms. Garrett asked about the deviation from the requirement that 25% of the units have a garage or carport. Mr. Cook explained that, under LIHTC guidelines, they were required to provide 1.75 parking spaces per unit. Incorporating garages or carports would take up space that was needed to meet the North Carolina Housing Finance Authority's requirement for parking. For clarification, Ms. Garrett asked whether the 1.75 parking spaces were a requirement of the NCHFA rather than the Town. Mr. Cook replied that this was correct.

Ms. Garrett questioned the deviation from livability space requirements. Ms. Snider stated that there would be a 10% increase from 40% to 50%.

Ms. Garrett asked the applicant whether they would agree to install landscaping, to the extent possible, between the retaining wall tiers. Mr. Broman-Fulks agreed to install as much landscaping as possible.

Ms. Garrett asked about the existing AppalCART stop. Mr. Broman-Fulks replied that they proposed to cover the existing stop.

Mr. Broman-Fulks stated that the requested deviations were necessary to support this development and further align the project with Boone Next.

Council Member Roseman mentioned the tall retaining wall at King Street Flats, which seemed to blend into the surroundings, and the retaining wall on Hwy 421 across from New Market Center, which was so visible.

Council Member Plaag stated that he would normally ask for the building to be broken up; however, he felt that doing so would not work because of the topography. He suggested a single building facing Hwy 421, with parking lot access at the back and a deck with green space at the top. This would allow the tenants to have the whole back of the lot and the top level of the deck to recreate. Council Member Plaag felt that this would get them closer to the livability ratio and solve the problem of retaining walls. Mr. Cook replied that they started with a larger building, but because of the topography and the need to avoid steps within the building, it was better to have multiple buildings. This configuration also allowed more light into the units and more air movement between the buildings.

Council Member Roseman stated that she wanted the buildings to look like they were part of the community. Ms. Garrett stated that the façade facing Hwy 421 would be architecturally pleasing and not resemble the back of a building.

Ms. Garrett asked how long it would take to complete the renderings. Mr. Cook replied that it would take about a week.

Council Member Tait asked whether the applicant had ideas during the design process that they could not construct due to UDO restrictions. Mr. Cook stated that the location of mature trees was challenging. Mr. Broman-Fulks added that they considered a parking deck but found it not financially feasible at this location.

Council Member Pruitt asked whether any remediation would be required as a result of the oil-change business. Mr. Broman-Fulks stated that they would be required to perform a Phase I environmental analysis and would follow any cleanup requirements.

Mayor Pro Tem Carter asked the applicant if they had met with AppalCART to discuss increased ridership from their development. Mr. Broman-Fulks replied that they had met with Craig Hughes from AppalCART, who informed them that the project would be incorporated into AppalCART's planning process and that

he did not anticipate any issues. He noted that if the rezoning was approved and they were awarded the tax credits, it would be approximately three years before the project was completed.

Ms. Garrett asked the applicant how they arrived at the number of units for this development. Mr. Borman-Fulks explained that they evaluated how many units could be accommodated on the site, taking into account site constraints, including parking, topography, height, density, and financing.

Council Member Plaag asked whether the applicant could turn the higher building so that it was oriented south to north along the west line, and step the building up the terrain to create enough parking in the center area to allow them to decrease the retaining wall height on the east side of the site. Mr. Cook replied that they looked at an iteration similar to that, but the grade jumped up about 30 feet or more in that direction. He added that this configuration would create more steps throughout the site.

Council Member Tait asked if there was a right-of-way or an easement to access the property from Yosef Drive. Mr. Broman-Fulks replied that the survey showed a 60-foot right-of-way to their property line, and they were currently in the process of performing title work to confirm whether that right-of-way would align with their proposed access location. If not, they would work with neighboring property owners to obtain an easement.

Mayor George asked whether green space could be installed on both sides of the sidewalk to bring it more in line with the Grove Street connector plans. Todd Moody, Public Works Director, replied that a five-foot buffer between the roadway and the pathway along Hwy 421 would be required, and this would be in line with the Grove Street connector plan.

Council Member Plaag asked whether a translucent perimeter fence could be installed as a safety measure for children playing so close to Hwy 421. Mr. Cook stated that landscaping or walls between Hwy 421 and the buildings could help create a barrier.

Commission Member King stated that he lived on Yosef Drive and had a good knowledge of the area. He noted that he would not compare the retaining walls across from New Market Center to the proposed retaining walls at this development. Commission Member King supported the idea that the development would bring a sidewalk or multi-use path to the area.

Commission Member Kight asked whether the parking deck that was considered would have been a standalone deck or integrated into a building. Mr. Cook replied that they viewed it as a podium, with the building on top and coming down around the parking deck, so that it was almost enclosed. This configuration would have worked with the topography, but they could not justify the cost.

Commission Member Mileski asked whether there were plans to add windows to the back side of the building at the basement level to provide some daylight to that level. Mr. Cook stated that there would be no windows there because the area would be underground.

Commission Member Paz-Miranda asked what would happen to the current occupants of the house that was on the site. Mr. Broman-Fulks replied that the occupants of the house would relocate.

Chair Veno asked how many people would occupy the 93 units. Mr. Broman-Fulks stated that there would be a mix of one-, two-, and three-bedroom units, with a total of 188 beds, so he estimated an occupancy of approximately 188. Chair Veno asked if the development triggered a transportation impact analysis. Mr. Broman-Fulks replied that the staff determined that a TIA was not required because none of the thresholds were triggered.

Mayor George invited public comment.

Kellie Reed-Ashcraft, Executive Director of the Watauga Housing Council, provided the Commission and Council with a handout (**on file**). She stated that the mission of the Watauga Housing Council was to increase the supply of housing for Watauga County's cost-burdened residents through partnerships and systemic change. Ms. Reed-Ashcraft noted that the WHO supported both of the restricted-income resident rental housing initiatives presented this evening. This project would provide non-student, multi-family housing for community residents earning 60% of the area median income, while the other project would increase housing for our senior community residents.

Casey Maslow, Housing Program Manager at Oasis, stated that her clients faced affordable housing issues every day because of limited incomes, or they were faced with homelessness due to fleeing a situation they could no longer deal with. Ms. Maslow asked the Commission and Council to remember that it was not about how this building would look, but about providing a place where people could continue their lives in the high country.

James Milner noted an earlier statement that Watauga County had an enrollment problem rather than a housing crisis, and he felt that could not be further from the truth. He stated that the only way to fix the housing crisis was with different types of housing stock. However, he encouraged the Council and the Planning Commission to remember that a site's topography did not necessarily create a hardship. Mr. Milner added that a developer could find another site that might not have as many topographical challenges. In the spirit of consistency, Mr. Milner asked that the Planning Commission place a condition on the approval of this development to require the rotation of all three buildings 90 degrees to face the primary way, which was Yosef Drive.

Mayor George closed the public comment portion of this hearing. He suggested moving the final case on the agenda to be the next item heard.

Council Member Plaag made a motion to amend the agenda to have Case A26-0123 be the next case heard. The motion was seconded by Council Member Roseman.

VOTE: Aye – 5
Nay – 0

The motion passed.

Mayor George called a break in the hearing from 8:38 p.m. until 8:45 p.m.

Council Member Plaag stated he was a big believer, particularly with the CD process, in knowing what they would be getting. He added that he was supportive of and appreciative of the applicant's pursuit of a project to help address a critical housing need. However, the presentation lacked some of the necessary information. Council Member Plaag supported continuing the public hearing to allow the applicant time to explore other solutions to the retaining wall issue and to come back with elevation drawings showing what the project would look like, including access to the Greenway or the Grove Street connector.

Council Member Roseman asked whether there would be an opportunity to include some small storage units in the design. Mr. Cook stated that the housing finance requirements include 17 square feet of storage per unit, so they have planned interior closets in the hallways of the buildings and/or cages or individual storage in common rooms to meet that requirement.

Mayor Pro Tem Carter stated he had extensive experience with Housing Finance Agency buildings and that the agency's requirements to keep the property in pristine condition were intense and lasted for 30 years. He supported the project and was amenable to continuing the public hearing.

Ms. Garrett stated that the applicant had a tax deadline that could put them off a year if zoning was not in place by May 15, 2026. Mr. Wise noted that the next regular public hearing would be on April 27 and

the following Town Council meeting would be on May 13, 2026. Ms. Meade suggested continuing the public hearing at the regular Town Council meeting on April 8, 2026. Mr. Wise stated that the applicant would need to have everything sent to Planning and Inspections by next Thursday to accommodate an April 8 hearing. Council Member Plaag suggested scheduling a special hearing for this case only. Ms. Garrett suggested that the Planning Commission proceed with a recommendation, subject to the condition that the applicant present the requested information at the Town Council meeting for a final vote.

Council Member Tait felt it was important to recognize and discuss the requested deviations. He noted the request to deviate from the units' makeup to allow two-bedroom units, which seemed appropriate for families. Council Member Tait noted the deviation for the retaining walls and suggested that they might be able to move some of the buildings around to reduce the retaining wall heights. He stated he had no objection to the requested tree removal. Eliminating the carports made sense for this development. Council Member Tait noted that he also supported the requested vesting period.

Mayor Pro Tem Carter stated that he was not a fan of the carports and supported the requested deviations.

Chair Veno stated that his understanding was that a Conditional District Zoning Map Amendment request must be accompanied by a site-specific plan and asked whether it was correct that this was not included with the request. Ms. Meade replied that a site-specific plan could mean different things. A site-specific plan was submitted with this request, but it was not as specific as the Council generally required.

With the majority of the Council and Planning Commission members in favor of continuing the public hearing, Council Member Plaag made a motion to continue the public hearing for Case A26-0067 until April 8, 2026, at 9:00 a.m. in Town Council Chambers. The applicant must submit elevations and any revisions to Planning and Inspections by April 2, 2026. The motion was seconded by Council Member Roseman.

VOTE: Aye – 5
Nay – 0

The motion passed.

Case A26-0123 Signs, Phasing & Nonconformities – UDO Text Amendment

Modification of UDO Articles 4, 7, and 26 to adopt standards for the phasing of development construction, create a single-family nonconformity exemption, and remove master sign plan regulations.

Mr. Wise stated that this amendment was not a general setback change. He explained that a nonconformity was accidentally omitted from the ordinance at some point, and staff realized the omission when an application was submitted for a new single-family home affected by the nonconformity. Mr. Wise stated that the omitted language allowed a demolished single-family home that did not meet setback requirements to be rebuilt under the preexisting nonconformity. The current UDO language would require a new single-family home to meet current setbacks, and any nonconformity would have to seek a variance from the Board of Adjustment. Mr. Wise noted that this text amendment would be universal throughout town and not specific to any one neighborhood. Ms. Meade added that the language was inadvertently deleted during another UDO amendment, so this would restore it to the ordinance. She stated that the language reestablished the administrator's flexibility regarding setbacks for nonconforming residential lots. She reiterated that this applied to all neighborhoods, but was especially important in neighborhoods with smaller, more irregular lots.

Mr. Wise stated that this request would also restore the phasing language that had inadvertently been deleted. This amendment also addressed the requirement for a master sign plan for multi-tenant developments. Mr. Wise stated that the requirement was added 3-4 years ago, but had become more of a hurdle than a tool for compliance, so they requested that the language be removed.

Council Member Plaag felt that all three of the requested revisions were appropriate.

Commission Member Paz-Miranda asked whether this amendment would affect commercial signs. Mr. Wise replied that commercial sign requirements would otherwise remain the same.

Mayor George invited public comment.

Traci Royster stated that she attended the Boone Mennonite Church 30 years ago when the African American Junaluska community was thriving. However, that changed a few years ago when someone from outside of their community built a house there. Ms. Royster stated that someone originally from the community now wanted to build a house there but could not meet the requirements of the current ordinance because of the removal of the nonconforming language. She asked that the amendment be approved so this family could build their home.

Fred Hay agreed with Ms. Royster's comments. He added that the ancestors of the current residents of the Junaluska community did not buy the land; they were assigned it. The land was considered undesirable at the time, on the side of the mountain, rather than the bottom lands, which were much more useful for gardens. Mr. Hay stated that this community had stayed intact because of its limited footprint. With many of the lots being small, they would not comply with the current code. Mr. Hay felt that the community deserved the Council's support because it wanted to remain viable.

Anitra Ball stated that she was the one trying to place a modular home on her land at 132 Tremont Drive. She said that she and her dad were currently living in the mobile home park behind Walmart, and were fortunate to still have a standing structure after Hurricane Helene. However, the moisture and mold were creating issues for her dad because he had COPD. Ms. Ball stated that she wanted to get her dad into a healthy living environment. She added that she wanted to go back to the neighborhood where they grew up.

Mayor George closed the public comment portion of this hearing.

Mayor Pro Tem Carter stated that the language was inadvertently removed and was never intended to harm this historic community. He added that he would love to see every single block in Junaluska reborn to the vision that the residents wanted in that community.

Mayor George stated that the Planning Commission would make a recommendation this evening, and the Council would make its final vote at the second Council meeting in April. An audience member asked if they could vote on this amendment at the April 8 meeting. Ms. Meade explained that the previous case would have a continued public hearing on April 8, but the actual vote on all of tonight's cases would be on April 22.

Council Member Roseman asked Ms. Ball if she had a deadline to move. Ms. Ball replied that they were ready to move but were at the mercy of the text amendment approval. Mr. Wise clarified that a zoning permit application for the new single-family home had been submitted, but without this text in the UDO, the zoning permit would require a variance for staff to approve. He added that minor modifications to the site plan were needed to meet the UDO requirements under the amended language. Ms. Meade offered that the Council could direct staff to approve the zoning permit based on this evening's conversation and the Council's commitment to approve the amendment. Council members agreed with this suggestion and directed Planning staff to expedite the zoning permit process.

Case A26-0073/A26-0074 Town of Boone – Annexation & Conditional District Zoning Map Amendment

In conjunction with a voluntary satellite annexation request, the Town of Boone has submitted a Conditional District Zoning Map Amendment application for property located on US Hwy 421 S (Watauga County PIN: 2921-90-1402-000) to zone the property Conditional District B3 General Business with a site-specific development plan for Use 5.16 Government Facility and Use 5.13 Town Utility Facility for a new Town of Boone Public Works facility.

Mr. Wise introduced the request. He outlined the requested deviations, including delaying or potentially forgoing the installation of sidewalks, depending on NCDOT approval, having the primary facade and main building entry not face the primary public way, not installing a sidewalk from the primary public way to the main building entrance, not having 10% of ground floor windows, and having the roof pitch be 2:12 rather than 4:12.

Council Member Plaag asked if there were any existing nonconformities on the site. Mr. Wise replied that this was an undeveloped site with no nonconformities.

Bill Dixon, with Appalachian Architecture, introduced Michael Trew with Municipal Engineering. Mr. Dixon stated that the Town desperately needed a new Public Works facility. This property was a 15 1/2-acre tract of land on Hwy 421 across from Food Lion. Mr. Dixon noted that they would be disturbing approximately 10 1/2 acres. The site contained some wetlands, steep banks, and a small partial view shed, none of which would be touched.

Mr. Dixon stated that DOT had not yet made a determination on whether sidewalks could be installed in that area along Hwy 421, so they had requested a delay or deferral of the installation until DOT made that determination. He noted that the property contained three plateau areas and the building would be about the size of a football field. Because of the site's topography and access, it would be nearly impossible to have the building face Hwy 421; it would face the roadway leading up to the building and present a public face to people coming and going. Mr. Dixon stated that the building would be approximately 150 feet away from the highway and about 35 feet above the road.

Mr. Dixon noted that, due to the nature of the use, there would be snowplows, dump trucks, and other heavy equipment, making a 10% glass façade unreasonable. He noted that this would be a metal building and that the required 4:12 roof pitch would add unnecessary height and increase heating and cooling costs.

Council Member Plaag asked if the driveway up to the building would eventually become a Town street. Mr. Moody replied that he did not anticipate it being a Town street. Council Member Plaag felt it was unreasonable to install a sidewalk along Hwy 421 or down to 421 when there was no plan for a sidewalk along the highway. He stated he would be willing to grant both deviations with the understanding that if, at some point in the future, DOT provided pedestrian access along Hwy 421, the Town would commit to installing a sidewalk from the building down to that DOT sidewalk.

Commission Member Paz-Miranda stated that the current Public Works building was not aesthetically pleasing.

Mayor George invited public comment, but there was none.

Council Member Roseman agreed with Council Member Plaag's comments regarding the sidewalks.

Michael Trew stated that the proposed access was the only possible location due to the cut slope along Hwy 421, unless they got an easement from the housing complex property to the east. Access to the property dictated how the building would be oriented. Mr. Trew noted that orienting the building to the access met the intent of the ordinance.

Council Member Plaag asked whether the applicant would agree to a condition requiring the installation of a sidewalk from the building to Hwy 421 if a sidewalk were ever installed along 421. Mr. Moody deferred to Dale Presnell, Interim Town Manager. Mr. Presnell agreed to the condition.

Adjournment of Town Council

Council Member Plaag made a motion to adjourn the Town Council at 9:42 p.m. The motion was seconded by Council Member Roseman.

VOTE: Aye – 5
Nay – 0

The motion passed.

Dalton George, Mayor

Brenda Henson, Board Clerk

Frank Venio, Planning Commission Chair

PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING

Chair Venio called a break in the meeting from 9:42 pm until 9:53 pm.

Discussion and Recommendation on Case(s) Heard at the Public Hearing

Case A26-0066 Wynnefield Forward, LLC – Conditional District Zoning Map Amendment

Wynnefield Forward, LLC has submitted a Conditional District Zoning Map Amendment application for property located on Chestnut Drive and New Market Boulevard (Watauga County PINs: 2910-39-9335-000, 2910-39-9610-000, and 2910-49-2369-000) to rezone the property from Conditional District R5 55+ Housing to Conditional District R5 55+ with a site-specific development plan for Use 1.17 Adult Living Community.

Mr. Wise explained that the previously approved site-specific plan had been altered by the applicant, requiring a new application and approval of the revised plan.

Commission Member Mileski stated that the building was not oriented correctly and the R5 zoning was not fitting for this area. Mr. Wise explained that the original Conditional District approval on May 8, 2024, rezoned the property from R1 and B3 to Conditional District R5, and that zoning designation would not change under the current request. He added that the original approval would expire two years from the date of issuance.

Chair Venio mentioned the tree removal that was done without a permit. Mr. Wise clarified that geotechnical analysis of the ground was allowed without permits. However, that typically did not involve a bulldozer plowing into a site, as happened in this case. Mr. Wise stated that a stop-work order was issued for the site, and the applicant was advised to replant the vegetation they had removed.

Chair Veno asked what would happen to the site if this Conditional District Map Amendment were denied. Mr. Wise replied that the property would remain zoned Conditional District R5, and the applicant would have until May 8, 2026, to get their permits to construct what was approved under the original CD approval in 2024. If The Villas at South Fork were not constructed, any other proposed development would have to seek a Conditional District Map Amendment.

Commission Member Paz-Miranda stated that she did not like the proposed development.

Commission Member Mileski felt that the proposed project was overdeveloped for the area. He stated that reducing the building height to one or two stories would be a better scale.

Commission Member King stated that he did not have a strong stance against the proposal. He noted that conditioning the buffering could provide a middle ground between what the neighborhood wanted and what was expressed in the comp plan and the UDO. Commission Member King acknowledged the strong public opposition to the project, while also noting the need for 55+ housing. He stated he would be in favor of approving this request with conditions.

Commission Member Kight stated he stood with the neighborhood. He noted that this project was not a walkable mixed-use, human-scale development that Boone Next called for. He added that the renderings did a good job of not highlighting those issues.

Commission Member Paz-Miranda felt that placing a senior community in an area with steep slopes was not reasonable. She stated that the building would be an eyesore that would damage the viewshed, adding that the Pinnacle Storage building was a monolith in the middle of the neighborhood.

Commission Member King felt it was important to note that by denying this request, they would be delaying development that the community needed.

Chair Veno stated that he voted in favor of the original CD request. After tonight's public comment and thoughtful consideration of neighborhood concerns, he was on the fence. Chair Veno noted the surrounding developments, Pinnacle Storage, Sheetz, and Woods Masonry, and felt that the proposed senior housing would be the least obtrusive of these.

Commission Member Kight asked if New Market Boulevard was considered the primary public way for this project. Mr. Wise replied that it was. Chair Veno stated that he often traveled on New Market Boulevard and that there was heavy traffic there. He did not believe it would be safe for seniors to walk across New Market Boulevard to reach the shopping center and movie theater.

Vote 1

Commission Member Mileski made a motion that the proposed amendment to the Town's zoning map is not consistent with the Town's current comprehensive plan and any other adopted plan(s) of the Town that are applicable because of the following from Boone Next:

Planning Principle 7: Support the town's established neighborhoods and new residential developments through neighborhood-level engagement and planning.

Goals & Policies

Policy 1.2.1: Support Income-Restricted Housing: Support permanently affordable housing for low- and middle-income residents geographically located throughout the town. Prioritize permanent affordability, particularly for those at or below 60 percent of the area median income, through community land trusts, nonprofit ownership and management, the Housing Authority, town ownership, and restricted deeds and covenants. Consider programs that fund home improvements for low income homeowners in exchange for right of first refusal to purchase homes for affordable housing partners.

Policy 1.2.5: Use Appropriate Transitions Between Different Scales and Intensities: Use appropriate transitions between different building uses and intensities by stepping down building heights and scale from areas allowing taller buildings to primarily residential neighborhoods.

Commission Member Kight wished to amend the motion to add:

Planning Principle 7: Support the town's established neighborhoods and new residential developments through neighborhood-level engagement and planning.

Commission Member Mileski accepted the amendment. The motion was seconded by Commission Member Paz-Miranda.

Vote: Aye – 3
Nay – 1 (King)
Abstention – 1 (Veno)

The motion passed.

Vote 2

Commission Member Kight made a motion, seconded by Commission Member Paz-Miranda, that the Planning Commission recommends denial of Ordinance #A26-0066 within Exhibit A and denial is reasonable and in the public interest because the proposed development is not consistent with the Boone Next plan and is not cohesive with the neighboring R1 zoning.

Vote: Aye – 3
Nay – 1 (King)
Abstention – 1 (Veno)

The motion passed.

Case A26-0067 Taft-Mills Group, LLC – Conditional District Zoning Map Amendment

Taft-Mills Group, LLC has submitted a Conditional District Zoning Map Amendment application to rezone property located on the corner of US Hwy 421 S and Yosef Drive (Watauga County PINs: 2911-70-9321-000, 2911-80-0228-000, and 2911-80-2433-000) from B3 General Business to Conditional District R3 Multiple-Family Residential with a site-specific development plan for Use 1.13 Multi-Family Dwelling (>100 bedrooms).

The public hearing for this case was continued until Wednesday, April 8, 2026, at 9:00 a.m. in Town Council Chambers.

Case A26-0123 Signs, Phasing & Nonconformities – UDO Text Amendment

Modification of UDO Articles 4, 7, and 26 to adopt standards for the phasing of development construction, create a single-family nonconformity exemption, and remove master sign plan regulations.

Vote 1

Commission Member King made a motion that the proposed amendment to the Town's Unified Development Ordinance is consistent with the Town's current comprehensive plan and any other adopted plan(s) of the Town that are applicable because of the following from Boone Next:

Planning Principle 7: Support the town's established neighborhoods and new residential developments through neighborhood-level engagement and planning.

Planning Principle 10: Encourage appropriate development to meet the town's urgent need for housing or other specific community needs by means of density bonuses or other mechanisms.

Goals & Policies

Goal 1.2: Development True To Boone's Vision: Boone's development and redevelopment will enhance the best of the town's existing built environment and reinforce the vision set forth in this plan.

Policy 1.2.2: Infill Development Enhances the Town: Infill development is important because it directs growth away from natural areas, but it must be done well. Infill development shall enhance and not detract from the building character of the town by replicating key elements of Boone's cherished historic design features (like building scale, proportion, setbacks, character) with high quality, pedestrian-oriented design and providing public goods like plazas, wide sidewalks, public art, and affordable spaces for living, artists, and small businesses. Rules for new development should avoid financially incentivizing displacement of vulnerable populations.

The motion was seconded by Commission Member Kight.

Vote: Aye – 5
Nay – 0

The motion passed.

Vote 2

Commission Member King made a motion, seconded by Commission Member Kight, that the Planning Commission recommends approval of Ordinance #A26-0123 within Exhibit A and approval is reasonable and in the public interest because this amendment corrects the UDO to have its intended language and benefit neighborhood communities that may have a unique land use case or unique property case.

Vote: Aye – 5
Nay – 0

The motion passed.

Case A26-0073/A26-0074 Town of Boone – Annexation & Conditional District Zoning Map Amendment

In conjunction with a voluntary satellite annexation request, the Town of Boone has submitted a Conditional District Zoning Map Amendment application for property located on US Hwy 421 S (Watauga County PIN: 2921-90-1402-000) to zone the property Conditional District B3 General Business with a site-specific development plan for Use 5.16 Government Facility and Use 5.13 Town Utility Facility for a new Town of Boone Public Works facility.

Vote 1

Commission Member Mileski made a motion that the proposed amendment to the Town's zoning map is consistent with the Town's current comprehensive plan and any other adopted plan(s) of the Town that are applicable because of the following from Boone Next:

Goals & Policies

Policy 1.1.1: Use the Future Land Use Map: Use the Future Land Use Map to guide development, growth, and conservation decisions. Additionally, use the Focus Area Plans for more detailed policy direction within each of those areas.

Policy 1.5.1: Manage Growth to Balance Protection of Community Character and Natural Areas While Directing Desired Growth to Identified Centers: The town will manage growth in a manner that balances the protection of community character and natural lands while accommodating future population. Change in the community will be carefully managed to protect critical natural lands, provide a variety of housing options for a diversity of households, support economic development, support fiscal balance,

ensure adequate public safety services, and utilize growth patterns that support regional and local transit services. Lands within the town's current corporate limits are priorities for infill and redevelopment. New development areas contiguous with the town and in identified activity centers should be secondary priorities for development and ahead of areas outside centers.

Policy 1.5.2: Guide Utility Service Extensions and Annexations Using the Utility Service and Annexation Criteria: Use the Utility Service and Annexation Criteria of this chapter to evaluate applications for annexation of lands into the town and extension of public utilities to new areas. These criteria serve as the primary guide for making annexation and utility extension decisions. The criteria provide a framework for ensuring decisions are made consistently and in accordance with the Comprehensive Plan. They are complemented by the Growth Management Tiers Map.

Goal 4.2: High Quality Public Services and Facilities: Boone will provide high quality public services and facilities that meet the needs of all Boone residents.

Policy 4.2.1: Maintain and Improve Levels of Service: As the population grows, ensure high quality services and infrastructure are maintained or improved. Support improvements especially within areas of need through strategic planning, community benefits agreements, bonds, and the capital improvements program.

Chair Veno wished to amend the motion to include:

Planning Principle 1: Prioritize thoughtfully designed development of underutilized land within the town's existing built-upon areas over development of undeveloped land on the town's outer limits.

Planning Principle 2: Emphasize quality design to create an attractive, inspiring public and private realm-architecture, streetscape, corridors, gateways, and edges-that is uniquely Boone.

Planning Principle 3: Encourage compact, human-scale development that integrates a vertical mix of uses (residential, commercial, office, institutional, civic, etc.) and connects with existing developed areas.

Chair Veno stated that this request also aligned with the Growth Management Tiers Map.

Commission Member Mileski accepted the amendment.

The motion was seconded by Chair Veno.

Chair Veno offered another amendment to the motion to add the following condition:

1. The Town shall install a sidewalk from the building to Hwy 421 when pedestrian infrastructure along 421 exists.

Commission Member Mileski accepted the amendment.

Vote: Aye – 5
Nay – 0

The motion passed.

Vote 2

Chair Veno made a motion, seconded by Commission Member Kight, that the Planning Commission recommends approval of Ordinance #A26-0074 within Staff Report Exhibit C and approval is reasonable and in the public interest because this project is sorely needed and overdue as the current facility has outlived its usefulness and practicality and is an aesthetically unpleasing edifice on King Street. The recommendation is subject to the following conditions agreed upon by the applicant:

1. The Town shall install a sidewalk from the building to Hwy 421 when pedestrian infrastructure along 421 exists.

Vote: Aye – 5
Nay – 0

The motion passed.

Other Matters

There were no other matters discussed.

Adjournment of Planning Commission

Commission Member Kight made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:28 pm. Commission Member Paz-Miranda seconded the motion.

Vote: Aye – 5
Nay – 0

The motion passed.

Frank Veno, Planning Commission Chair

Brenda Henson, Board Clerk



Staff Report
March 23, 2026

Public Hearing

Case A26-0067 Hemlock Ridge Trace

Conditional District Zoning Map Amendment

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Exhibit #	Items
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Applicant Exhibit 2	Site Plans
Applicant Exhibit 3	Revised Site Plans for Utilities and Landscaping
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Applicant Exhibit 5	Neighborhood Meeting Notice & Mailing Labels, Minutes from Presentation
Applicant Exhibit 6	Neighborhood Meeting Presentation
Applicant Exhibit 7	Signed Affidavit
Staff Report Exhibit A	Ordinance A26-0067

Parcel Information

Parcel Specifics

Property Owner	Three Jimmy's LLC	Judy G South	Shirley A Ray Revocable Trust
Address	1505 US Hwy 421 S	1525 US Hwy 421 S	1545 US Hwy 421 S
Watauga County PIN(s)	2911-70-9321-000	2911-80-0228-000	2911-80-2433-000
Use	11.22 Vehicle Sales and Service	1.01 Single Family Dwelling	
Use Definition	Business	Single-Family Residence	
Size	0.48 acre	0.50 acre	3.196 acres
Access	US Highway 421 South		
Steep or Very Steep Slope	No	No	Yes, along eastern border

Existing Zoning History

The parcels are currently zoned B3 General Business with Corridor District overlay.

Requested Zoning

District Descriptions	Conditional District R3 Multiple-Family Residential District The R3 Multiple-Family Residential District is established to provide a high-density area consisting of three or more dwelling units per lot plus limited service use. The regulations for this district are intended to secure for the persons who reside there a comfortable, healthy, safe, aesthetically pleasing and pleasant environment in which to live, sheltered from incompatible and disruptive activities that properly belong in nonresidential districts. Corridor District Overlay
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The corridor districts are established overlay district intended to protect the main thoroughfares through Town.

US Hwy 421 East: Beginning at the intersection with US Hwy 321 (Hardin Street) and extending east along the centerline of US Hwy 421 to the farthest extent of the Town's planning jurisdiction. This Corridor District includes both the old two-lane portion of US Hwy 421 and the new four lane portion of US Hwy 421 located in the Town's extraterritorial jurisdiction.

Existing Site Characteristics

The combined parcels will be a 4.176-acre site. The site fronts US Highway 421 South to the south, Yosef Dr to the east, and contains a small area of steep slope (30-50%) around the northeastern perimeter of the property.

The elevation at US Highway 421 South is approximately 3226'. From that point, the site rises roughly 64' in elevation with the highest point being in the northern portion of the property. Supporting mapping and photos are provided below.

Photo 1



Photo 2



Photo 3



Photo 4



Zoning and Use of Adjacent Properties

	District	Use
North	B3 General Business, R3 Multi-Family Residential	Commercial, Multi-Family
East	R3 Multi-Family Residential	Multi-Family, Vacant
South	B3 General Business	Commercial
West	B3 General Business	Commercial
North:		East:
		
South:		West:
		

Zoning Analysis

Use Analysis

The applicant has requested for Conditional District R3 Multiple-Family Residential District with the majority of the property also being in the Corridor District overlay. This CD request includes a site-specific development plan for a new multi-family development with three three-story apartment buildings consisting of 93 units containing a mix of one, two, and three-bedrooms for a total of 188 bedrooms (Use 1.13 Multi-Family Dwelling (>100 bedrooms)). See Applicant Exhibits 1, 2, and 3.

1. Use 1.13 Multi-Family Dwelling (>100 bedrooms)

Definition: Pursuant to UDO Article 34 Definitions, a Multi-Family Dwelling is a building or combination of buildings on a single lot which includes three or more dwelling units. Multi-Family dwellings are subject to Limited Use Requirements as detailed in UDO 15.03. This use is only permissible in the R3 Multiple-Family Residential District with Conditional District approval.

Ordinance Requirement	Compliance
15.03.03(A): Townhouse style preferred and no one type of dwelling units, as defined by the number of bedrooms, shall comprise more than 50% of the total units	Deviation Requested, Applicant Exhibit 4
15.03.03(B): Parking shall be limited to two (2) spaces per unit; and a minimum of 25% of units shall have a garage or carport.	Deviation Requested, Applicant Exhibit 4
15.03.03(C): Minimum livability space ratio of .5 with half designated for ground floor units. Additional access requirements detailed therein.	Deviation Requested, Applicant Exhibit 4
15.03.03(D): On-site Property Management required.	Intend to comply, Applicant Exhibit 1
15.03.03(E): Minimum of 5% of the parcel as recreation space along with size requirements for recreation space. Additional recreation space detailed therein.	Yes, Applicant Exhibit 2 & 3
15.03.04: Residential building standards including maximum height, roof pitch, and entrance requirements.	Yes, Applicant Exhibit 2 & 3
15.03.05: Bedroom to bathroom ratio requirements, bathroom size requirements, and required storage.	Yes, Applicant Exhibit 1

Conditional District Site-Specific Vesting Plan Analysis

To streamline staff reports and avoid restating UDO standards, this analysis focuses only on items that require attention by the Planning Commission and Town Council. Below staff have outlined elements including limited use requirements where applicable and any deviations requested by the applicant.

Limited Use Requirements and Requested Deviations (Applicant Exhibit 4):

1. UDO Section 15.03.03(A): The applicant is requesting a deviation to exceed the maximum of 50% of the single type of unit.

2. UDO Section 15.03.03(B): The applicant is requesting a deviation of the requirement to have 25% of the units have a garage or carport.
3. UDO Section 15.03.03(C): The applicant is requesting a deviation of the 0.50 livability ratio requirement.
4. UDO Section 25.04.02: The applicant is requesting a deviation of the maximum height of retaining walls.
5. UDO Section 25.04.07: The applicant is requesting a deviation of the requirement to place a buffer between walls exceeding heights of 16'.
6. UDO Section 31.03.04 & 31.03.05: The applicant is requesting a deviation of the requirement to keep all healthy Historic and Significant trees outside of the area of land disturbance.

Staff Note: While the submission includes a request for a deviation on the two subsections of Article 31 noted above staff may approve removal of trees during review of the site plan. The applicant will be required to submit a tree survey during the review of the zoning permit, should the re-zoning be approved, and staff will work with the applicant to ensure compliance.

Comments from other Town Departments: In addition to the Planning review, the submitted plans were evaluated by other Town departments for compliance with applicable codes. Their comments are provided below.

Fire: The application has been reviewed and approved subject to the following:

1. The Fire Department will require grades and verification of the road dimensions for final approval of a site plan.
2. Small adjustments to the FDC and PIV locations may occur during the zoning process, note that the fire hydrant cannot be behind parking spaces per NCFC section 507.5.4, recommended locations have been provided.
3. The property must be addressed from the access point and not off of US Hwy 421 S.
4. To help with water supply for this project and to not negatively affect the existing developments on Yosef Dr, Fire would like this water line to be looped back into the water line on Hwy 421.

Public Works

Public Works – Services: The application has been reviewed and approved subject to the following:

1. A 20' easement from the back of the curb is required along 421 for a Multi-Use path that is an approved NCDOT STIP project. Fee-in-lieu will need to be paid to the Town of Boone for the Multi-Use path due to the project being in the design phase. The cost of Fee-in-lieu is \$80 per linear foot, please see the fee schedule for further details. Reference 23.08.04 and 23.08.05 for details.
2. Multi-family developments are required to provide an area for recycling along with the Solid Waste enclosure that is shown. Reference 91.03 in the Town Code of Ordinance for details.

Public Works – Utilities: The application has been reviewed and approved subject to the following:

1. A looped system to tie into the fire line is preferred. A utility easement to the Town of Boone transferring rights for operation of water and sewer will be required.

Staff Note: If the identified noncompliant items are addressed and the requested deviations approved, the submitted plans and specifications appear to be able to meet all applicable requirements of the UDO. Any items not clearly shown, and any standards not requested for deviations, are expected to meet all applicable requirements. If approved the applicant will be required to submit full plans and specifications demonstrating complete compliance.

Procedural Analysis

This request involves one procedural action for zoning. The process ensures that the actions are considered holistically in light of Boone Next. The process will continue as scheduled unless delayed.

Date	Step	Guidance
March 23, 2026	Zoning Public Hearing	- A public hearing before the Council and the Planning Commission is held on zoning. - The Planning Commission provides a required zoning recommendation.
April 22, 2026	Final Council Decisions	Council votes on zoning consideration.

Conditional District

Pursuant to UDO Subsection 9.09.01 (A), the CD process is established to provide tailored regulations to address specific circumstances or development goals. This process permits the application of additional conditions to proposed developments to ensure compatibility with neighboring uses and alignment with adopted plans or other development goals of the town, while also allowing deviations from existing standards where such serves the town's development goals. By incorporating tailored standards, the CD process offers a degree of flexibility not always achievable through a general use zoning map amendment. Specific procedural steps are mandated and applications must include more detailed information than might otherwise be required.

Staff Note: The applicant has requested a vesting period of four (4) years. The applicant request extended vesting in order to assure time to apply for Low-Income Housing Tax Credits. See Applicant Exhibit 4.

Procedural Requirements (UDO Subsection 9.09.02)

Standard	Comments	Compliance
9.09.02(A) Pre-Application Meeting	December 4, 2025	Yes
9.09.02(B) Neighborhood Meeting		
Notice	January 8, 2026: Mailed and posted on Town website, Exhibit 5	Yes
Location	Council Chambers, 1500 Blowing Rock Road	Yes
Presentation Info	Exhibit 6	Yes
Minutes	Exhibit 5	Yes
Time Limitation	The application was submitted within 6 months of the neighborhood meeting.	Yes

9.09.02(C) Application Submittal		
Allowable Uses	Exhibit 1, Project Narrative Exhibit 4, Deviations and Mitigations	Yes
Deviations		
Mitigation		
Conditions		
Affidavit	Exhibit 7, Affidavit	Yes

Conformity to Adopted Plans

Boone Next: Our Town, Our Future

Community Vision	Land Use and Development Vision
We will be a prosperous, livable, people-oriented mountain community modeling resilient growth that promotes and protects our natural resources with diverse housing options and dynamic economic opportunities. We will celebrate and build upon our community's historic foundation to leave a sustainable and equitable town for future generations.	Grounded in its historic character, Boone will be a distinct pedestrian-oriented town that is affordable, livable, human-scale, and connected through a network of walkable, mixed-use corridors and activity centers.

Planning Principles: The Boone Next Planning Principles are intended, as a collective, to provide a core vision to guide planning, zoning, and development decisions. These principles should be carefully considered with respect to all zoning map amendments, ordinance text amendments, and other development decisions as well as other town planning and policy initiatives.

Planning Principle 1

Prioritize thoughtfully designed development of underutilized land within the town's existing built-upon areas over development of undeveloped land on the town's outer limits.

It is preferable to accommodate growth in locations within the existing town limits that are appropriate for, can support, and would be enhanced by, new development. Infill and redevelopment will occur in a strategic manner that considers community needs like provision of and access to goods, services, transit, and quality public space.

Planning Principle 2

Emphasize quality design to create an attractive, inspiring public and private realm-architecture, streetscape, corridors, gateways, and edges-that is uniquely Boone.

Public areas (streetscapes, sidewalks, parks, plazas, etc.) and private areas (building facades, landscaping, parking facilities, etc.) will be planned, arranged, and designed with quality materials to celebrate a sense of place and character by balancing function, appearance, and affordability, while fostering creativity, innovation, and human-scale design that is true to Boone.

Planning Principle 4

Encourage development and connections that better balance the needs of pedestrians, drivers, cyclists, and transit users.

Opportunities will be sought to improve the street pattern and connectivity, thereby increasing travel options, potentially decreasing vehicle miles, reducing congestion, and improving safety.

Planning Principle 10

Encourage appropriate development to meet the town’s urgent need for housing or other specific community needs by means of density bonuses or other mechanisms.

Encourage construction of affordable housing, public infrastructure, or other identified community needs by means of density bonuses or other incentives in appropriate areas of the town. For example, increased building height or additional units may be allowed in exchange for incorporating affordable housing units in a development.

Growth Management Tiers Map: The Growth Management Tiers Map is a policy tool intended to help Boone manage the growth of its corporate limits. The map identifies areas inside and outside the corporate limits that are likely to face development pressures, and it identifies those areas that are most appropriate for the town to consider serving by means of annexation within the next 10 to 15 years. The Growth Management Tiers Map is supplemented by and should be applied in concert with the Future Land Use Map, where applicable. The overall purposes of the map are to:

- Promote better interjurisdictional and long-range planning between and among the town, Watauga County, and utility providers.
- Encourage long-term fiscally and environmentally sustainable growth by carefully managing the extension of taxpayer-funded town services
- Encourage infill development
- Inform developers, landowners, farmers, and residents with respect to the town’s priorities and approach to the growth of its corporate limits
- Provide policy guidance to town decision-makers regarding annexations, town service provision, fees and incentives, and locations for capital improvements

This property is located within the **Priority Growth Area**.

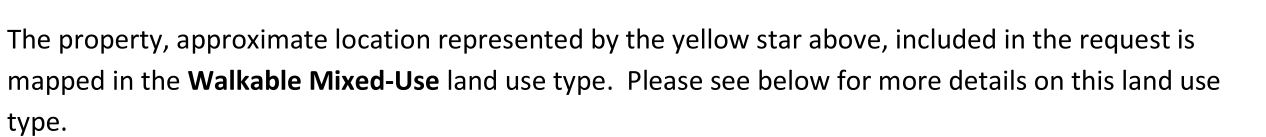
Priority Growth Area is land where growth is most encouraged; designated as Downtown, Downtown Edge, and Walkable Mixed Use on the Future Land Use Map.

Future Land Use Map

The Future Land Use Map is a critical tool intended to give shape to and help implement Boone’s vision for the next 15-20 years. The map and associated land use types provide a framework for development and other land use-related decisions, including decisions on public infrastructure and transportation.

In legislative decision-making cases, Council and the Planning Commission will review Boone Next and the Future Land Use Map to ensure that the request:

- is consistent with the goals and policies set forth in this plan; and
- is consistent with the land use type as shown on the Future Land Use Map;
- and if not ensure that the requested change of zoning will not negatively impact the intent of the mapped land use type; and
- is supported by existing or planned infrastructure.



Description	Walkable Mixed-Use areas are envisioned as places that should evolve from existing auto-oriented patterns into green, walkable, mixed-use corridors and destinations. New street and alley grids may be established, fostering a more urban environment while maintaining a commitment to well-designed, green, and visually-engaging building patterns. Buildings in these areas are oriented toward the street and generally up to four stories in height; in some cases, on appropriately sized and located lots, they may reach up to six stories. Parking and drive aisles in the front are minimized and the majority of parking placed to the sides and rear. Ground floors should feature ample transparent windows and doors. Ground floors should create an inviting atmosphere for pedestrians by, for example, incorporating features like generous transparent windows and inviting entryways. Where appropriate, wider sidewalks and street trees enhance the pedestrian experience and promote a sense of place. The overall vision behind the Walkable Mixed-Use Land Use Type is to foster vibrant, self-sufficient communities where everything is just a short stroll away – a true realization of the “15-minute city” or “city within a city” concept. Here, residents enjoy access to local businesses, services, and amenities that cater to their daily lives,
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	while commercial spaces thrive on the support of a connected residential environment.
Objectives	• Eliminate curb cuts on arterials through rear access parking and new alley construction and dedication • Evaluate opportunities for neighborhood scale- businesses that enhance neighborhoods with accessible resources such as cafes, small grocers/bodegas, and childcare facilities • Mixed-use buildings provide a variation in layout and size for ground floor non-residential uses • Encourage and facilitate public spaces like plazas, playgrounds, and other public amenities
Primary Uses	• Vertical mixed-use with ground floor commercial and upper story residential and/or appropriate commercial uses; or a mix of single-use commercial and/or residential buildings within a single development • Multi-family • Limited light industrial/manufacturing uses with minimal external impacts.

Goals & Policies

Goal 1.1 A SUSTAINABLE BUILT PATTERN

Boone's interwoven natural and built environments will promote social, environmental, and fiscal sustainability while aiming to reduce auto- dependence and the roots of traffic congestion. The town will be a leader of green building design and climate responsibility.

Policy 1.1.1 Use the Future Land Use Map

Use the Future Land Use Map to guide development, growth, and conservation decisions. Additionally, use the Focus Area Plans for more detailed policy direction within each of those areas.

Policy 1.1.2: Use Best Design Practices in New Development

All new growth should move Boone toward creating a network of "communities within a community" - a polycentric pattern of walkable, human-scale activity centers located within short distances of residents across the town. This pattern is key to supporting sustainability by aiming to reduce vehicle trips and their associated emissions, improving human health by supporting active utilitarian modes of transportation, and guiding growth away from natural areas. Where feasible, new growth should establish short blocks and connected rights-of-way, prominent civic spaces, stream daylighting and protected natural resources, front-facing buildings with transparent and welcoming first floors and public spaces, a diversity of housing types, income-restricted housing units, neighborhood-serving and context-sensitive nonresidential uses, rear parking and alleys, front porches (residential), and safe multimodal transportation infrastructure design.

Goal 1.2 DEVELOPMENT TRUE TO BOONE'S VISION

Boone's development and redevelopment will enhance the best of the town's existing built environment and reinforce the vision set forth in this plan.

Policy 1.2.1 Build the Town for People

To the extent possible, the built environment should be human-scale and pedestrian-oriented rather than large-scale and auto-oriented. There are urban design characteristics that transcend eras, styles, and typologies that help to explain

why Boone's beloved downtown makes human beings comfortable. Human-scale development is not defined by density, but instead by urban design that makes human beings comfortable and happy navigating streets, activity centers, and neighborhoods on foot. Human-scale built environments might consider terminating vistas at the end of streets or the width and frontage of new buildings.

Policy 1.2.3 Coordinate Land Use and Transportation Planning

Ensure transportation infrastructure supports walkable development and multimodal transportation options — including connections to activity centers. Important considerations include the width and design of sidewalks, street trees, physically protected bike lanes, tight curb radii at intersections, traffic calming devices, appropriate lane widths that create safer design speeds, and other features that enhance the safety and comfort of all travelers.

Policy 1.2.5: Use Appropriate Transitions Between Different Scales and Intensities

Use appropriate transitions between different building uses and intensities by stepping down building heights and scale from areas allowing taller buildings to primarily residential neighborhoods.

Goal 1.3 A PRESERVED HERITAGE

Boone's unique architectural and cultural history is celebrated. The town preserves historic buildings and encourages the design of new buildings and places that complement its architectural heritage.

Policy 1.3.4: Encourage Reuse and Rehabilitation

Support and encourage adaptive reuse and rehabilitation of existing homes and buildings. Where appropriate, minimum building code standards should be applied in a manner compatible with historic preservation efforts.

Goal 1.4 A NETWORK OF OPEN SPACE & GREEN CORRIDORS

Boone will build on its reputation as a green and outdoor city, creating and protecting an integrated network of green corridors, parks, and open spaces as well as meaningful rural and agricultural uses.

Policy 1.4.2 Integrate Green Space Throughout the Built Environment

Abundant access to green space is vital to human health. Continue to thread green space throughout the built environment by growing, enhancing, and protecting the urban tree canopy like street trees, and providing natural green public spaces, neighborhood gardens, green walls, and greenways. To the extent possible, encourage native landscaping.

Goal 1.5 INTENTIONAL GROWTH MANAGEMENT

Boone will manage growth thoughtfully and intentionally within its borders and at its edges to enhance the town's livability and meet the needs of a growing community.

Policy 1.5.1: Manage Growth to Balance Protection of Community Character and Natural Areas While Directing Desired Growth to Identified Centers

The town will manage growth in a manner that balances the protection of community character and natural lands while accommodating future population. Change in the community will be

carefully managed to protect critical natural lands, provide a variety of housing options for a diversity of households, support economic development, support fiscal balance, ensure adequate public safety services, and utilize growth patterns that support regional and local transit services. Lands within the town's current corporate limits are priorities for infill and redevelopment. New development areas contiguous with the town and in identified activity centers should be secondary priorities for development and ahead of areas outside centers.

Policy 1.5.3: Guide Growth Using the Growth Management Tiers Map

The Growth Management Tiers Map serves as a guide for development and investment decisions. The map's purpose is to ensure Boone accommodates growth consistent with the Boone Next Planning Principles, intentionally directs growth to desired areas, manages the pace of development, and aims for fiscal balance. This map is intended to be used when considering zoning and development approvals, utility service extensions, annexations, incentives, and capital investments. This map should be used in coordination with the Utility Service and Annexation Criteria. The Growth Management Tiers Map will be updated from time to time to reflect changing planning conditions.

Goal 1.6 AN AFFORDABLE TOWN TO LIVE IN

Boone will facilitate sustainable affordable housing for low- to middle-income residents.

Policy 1.6.1: Support Income-Restricted Housing

Support permanently affordable housing for low- and middle-income residents geographically located throughout the town. Prioritize permanent affordability, particularly for those at or below 60 percent of the area median income, through community land trusts, nonprofit ownership and management, the Housing Authority, town ownership, and restricted deeds and covenants. Consider programs that fund home improvements for low income homeowners in exchange for right of first refusal to purchase homes for affordable housing partners.

Policy 1.6.2: Use Innovative Tools to Expand Affordable Housing

Using incentives like density bonuses, regulations, and other strategies, strive to achieve a minimum of 5-10 percent income-restricted units in new multi-unit residential construction projects.

Policy 1.6.3: Diversify Boone's Housing Options

Promote a variety of housing types as well as housing tenure options around Boone. While the town should continue to build single-family, townhome, and multifamily buildings, explore other types of well-designed and contextually compatible housing, such as quadplexes and small-scale multiplexes. The town can use creative tools, like zoning "opt-in" districts, to ensure additional densities come with public benefits like income-restricted units. Also, support alternative housing tenure options like the community land trust model and cooperative housing. Unless Boone's rugged terrain precludes it, consider the use of pre-approved blueprints to reduce construction costs while ensuring high quality building designs and materials.

Policy 1.6.4: Make Daily Needs More Accessible Across Boone

Consider both the cost of housing and the cost of transportation as the town develops, recognizing that transportation costs rise as distances to daily needs like grocery stores, daycare, work, and school increase. Focus on distribution of uses and services using walkable urban design

principles that make daily needs more accessible to all ages and abilities. Measure and track progress toward increasing the proportion of residents living within a comfortable 5-10 minute walk, bike, or transit ride to daycare facilities; grocery stores; parks, greenways, or playgrounds; and employment destinations.

Policy 1.6.5: Preserve the Town’s existing affordable homes

While ensuring housing is safe for tenants through code enforcement, preserve the townwide stock of naturally occurring affordable housing (NOAH) using zoning and other innovative planning tools.

Goal 2.4 INCREASE MOBILITY THROUGH CAPACITY & ACCESS MANAGMENT

Policy 2.4.6: Promote Future Connectivity by Planning Stub Streets, Reducing Access Points on Major Roadways, and Encouraging Cross-Parcel Links During Redevelopment

Design for future connectivity between neighborhoods, such as stub streets for future connections (this somewhat contradicts with the current standards in the UDO and therefore needs careful evaluation).

Identify tools to close access points on properties with multiple access points, particularly on major roadways such as NC 105 or US 321, during redevelopment projects. Identify tools to minimize new access points and encourage cross parcel connectivity during redevelopment and new construction projects.

Goal 4.4 LONG-TERM FISCAL BALANCE

Long-term fiscal balance will be achieved through land use and growth decisions that are informed by long-term fiscal impacts of development.

Policy 4.4.1: Promote Use of Existing Resources

Promote infill, redevelopment, and adaptive use as a way to maximize use of existing services, infrastructure, and utilities.

Policy 4.4.2: Proactively Manage Growth and Development

Anticipate and guide future growth and development using the planning principles, frameworks, and maps in this Comprehensive Plan to ensure that new development can be supported by town infrastructure and services while protecting open space.

Policy 4.4.3: Promote Smart Growth

Ensure new growth and development is fiscally balanced in the long run while directing more growth to areas with existing services and infrastructure. Some types of developments and land uses are necessary to the social needs of the town and do not necessarily directly improve the town’s fiscal balance, such as recreation and cultural facilities or affordable housing. Encourage compact development that can be more efficiently served, especially as indicated on the Future Land Use Map.

Policy 4.4.4: Consider Community Priorities and Long-Term Impacts

Consider community priorities and long-term impacts in decision-making, with the understanding that some community priorities may not have positive fiscal impacts and some decisions may not provide short-term benefits.

Goal 5.1 A SUSTAINABLE AND RESILIENT WATERSHED

Policy 5.1.1: Use Low Impact Development Practices

To protect water quality, use low impact development practices, like bioswales, rain gardens, and permeable pavement that use or mimic natural processes. Promote use of local plant species and limit or eliminate the planting of invasive plant species.

Conditions of Approval

1. Where there is a conflict between the original application information and the plans (received on February 10, 2026), the plans shall control. Insignificant deviations may be permitted to comply with the requirements of the UDO. For application elements not depicted on the plans but included in the written materials provided by the applicant and considered at the public hearing held on March 23, 2026, those details shall be considered part of the approved plan except as may be specifically provided otherwise in these conditions or was represented otherwise by the applicant at the public hearing.
2. Any commitments and representations concerning the proposed development made by the applicant 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 meeting 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.
4. Any other condition agreed upon...

Planning Commission Action Required

Per NCGS 160D-604(b), subsequent to initial adoption of a zoning regulation, all proposed amendments to the zoning regulation or zoning map shall be submitted to the Planning Commission for review and comment. If no written report is received from the Planning Commission within 30 days of referral of the amendment to that board, the Town Council may act on the amendment without the Planning Commission report. The Town Council is not bound by the recommendations, if any, of the Planning Commission. Per NCGS 160D-604(d), when conducting a review of proposed zoning text or map, the Planning Commission shall advise and comment on whether the proposed action is consistent with any comprehensive plan that has been adopted and any other officially adopted plan that is applicable. The Planning Commission shall provide a written recommendation to the governing board that addresses plan consistency and other matters as deemed appropriate by the Planning Commission, but a comment by the Planning Commission that a proposed amendment is inconsistent with the comprehensive plan shall not preclude consideration or approval of the proposed amendment by the governing board.

Vote 1: The proposed amendment to the Town's zoning map ☐is OR ☐is not consistent with the Town's current comprehensive plan and any other adopted plan(s) of the Town that are applicable because:

Note 1

Note 1: describe elements of controlling land use plans and how the plan is or is not consistent.

Vote 2: The Planning Commission recommends ☐approval OR ☐denial of Ordinance #A26-0067 within Staff Report Exhibit B and ☐approval OR ☐denial is reasonable and in the public interest because:

Note 2

Note 2: briefly explain why, factors may include the benefits and detriments to the landowners, the neighbors, and the surrounding community; why the action taken is in the public interest; and any changed conditions warranting the amendment.

Town Council Action Required – March 23, 2026

No Council action is anticipated at this meeting. Final decisions on re-zoning of the property would occur at a future Town Council meeting (anticipated to be April 22, 2026) upon receipt of the Planning Commission's recommendations.

Staff Report Exhibit A: Ordinance A26-0067

ORDINANCE #A26-0067

AN ORDINANCE TO REZONE PROPERTY WITHIN THE TOWN OF BOONE

WHEREAS, pursuant to N.C. Gen. Stat. §160D-601, the Town may amend its zoning map after giving proper public notice and holding a public hearing; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission and Town Council has received the request to amend the Official Zoning Map of the Town of Boone, North Carolina to zone the property below as presented:

Address: TBD Yosef Dr

Watauga County PINs: 2911-70-9321-000; 2911-80-0228-000; 2911-80-2433-000

Property Owner: Taft-Mills Group, LLC

Zoning: Conditional District R3 Multiple-Family Residential with Corridor District Overlay with a site-specific development plan for Use 1.13 Multi-Family Dwelling (>100 bedrooms)

WHEREAS, the Boone Town Council held a duly-noticed public hearing on January 26, 2026 with respect to this rezoning request; and

WHEREAS, the Boone Town Council has taken into full consideration any information offered at the public hearing; and

WHEREAS, this Town Council has reviewed the written recommendations of the Town of Boone Planning Commission; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED as follows:

SECTION 1. The Boone Town Council hereby approves and adopts the modifications to the Town Zoning Map as set forth herein.

SECTION 2. All provisions of any Town ordinance in conflict with this ordinance are hereby repealed to the extent of such conflict.

SECTION 3. This Ordinance shall be effective immediately upon its adoption by Town Council.

Adopted this day April 22, 2026.

The Honorable Dalton George, Mayor

Attest:

Nicole Harmon-Church, Town Clerk



Hemlock Ridge Trace

An Affordable Housing Development

Introduction

Hemlock Ridge Trace is a proposed affordable and workforce multifamily residential community located at 1505, 1525, and 1545 U.S. Highway 421 South in the Town of Boone, North Carolina. The proposed development represents a thoughtful infill redevelopment of underutilized property along a major commercial corridor and is intended to address Boone's well-documented and urgent need for high-quality, income-restricted rental housing for working families and individuals.

The development is being proposed by Taft-Mills Group, LLC, an experienced affordable housing developer with a strong track record of delivering well-designed, service-enriched communities throughout North Carolina and the Southeast. Hemlock Ridge Trace is envisioned as a long-term community asset that aligns closely with the Town's adopted Boone Next Comprehensive Plan, particularly its emphasis on equity, affordable housing, compact development, and redevelopment within existing growth areas.

Owner / Developer Overview

Taft-Mills Group ("TMG") was formed in 2014 with a singular mission: to develop, own, and operate high-quality affordable and workforce housing communities. Since its founding, TMG has developed more than 2,212 affordable apartment homes using the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) program and other public-private financing tools, with projects located throughout North Carolina, South Carolina, and the broader Southeast.

TMG's principals bring more than 49 years of combined experience and have collectively overseen the development of over 5,500 affordable apartment units representing more than \$850 million in total development costs. The firm is an affiliate of Taft Family Ventures, a vertically integrated real estate company with substantial financial capacity and a long-standing history of residential and commercial development.

TMG is regularly ranked among the Top 50 affordable housing developers in the nation by *Affordable Housing Finance Magazine*, reflecting the firm's consistent ability to deliver high-quality, well-managed affordable housing. The North Carolina Housing Finance Agency (NCHFA) has recognized Taft-Mills Group with the Housing North Carolina Award, the state's top housing honor, for the development of Parkside Commons, acknowledging excellence in design, community impact, and the successful delivery of much-needed affordable housing.



TMG communities are designed to blend seamlessly into their surroundings, incorporate durable and context-appropriate materials, and provide residents with amenities and services that support long-term housing stability and quality of life.

Site Location and Existing Conditions

The Hemlock Ridge Trace site encompasses approximately 4.18 acres along U.S. Highway 421 South, a primary transportation corridor serving the southern gateway into Boone. The site is currently zoned B-3 General Business with the Corridor District Overlay and is surrounded by a mix of existing commercial uses and multifamily residential development.

The property is already served by public infrastructure, including water, sewer, and roadway access, making it well-suited for infill residential redevelopment. Its location provides convenient access to employment centers, healthcare, retail services, and public transportation, while minimizing impacts on established single-family neighborhoods.

The surrounding land use context—characterized by commercial development and existing apartments—supports the appropriateness of a residential Conditional District zoning request at this location.

Proposed Zoning Request

The applicant is requesting a Conditional District rezoning to R-3 Multiple-Family Residential with the Corridor District Overlay. The Conditional District approach allows the Town to evaluate the proposal based on a site-specific development plan and enforceable conditions that address compatibility, design, and community impacts.

This rezoning request does not seek to amend the Town’s Unified Development Ordinance. Rather, it applies existing R-3 standards in a manner tailored to the site, ensuring that the proposed development aligns with Boone’s long-range planning goals while providing certainty regarding the scale, layout, and design of the project.



Development Overview

Hemlock Ridge Trace is proposed as a 93-unit multifamily residential community consisting of three three-story apartment buildings. The development will offer a mix of one, two, and three-bedroom units to serve a range of household sizes and housing needs.

The community is designed to provide safe, attractive, and functional living spaces while maintaining a scale and architectural character compatible with surrounding development. Buildings are arranged to create internal pedestrian connectivity, define open spaces, and clear vehicular circulation.

Key development characteristics include:

- 152 parking spaces, exceeding minimum zoning requirements
- 3-story buildings with a mix of 1-, 2-, and 3-bedroom units
- Covered picnic area, playground and tot lot, and outdoor sitting area for residents
- Community room, Business center, and indoor exercise facility
- Internal sidewalks connecting buildings, amenities, and common areas
- On-site AppalCART stop

Affordable Housing Commitment

Hemlock Ridge Trace will be developed using the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) program administered by the North Carolina Housing Finance Agency. All units will be income-restricted and reserved for households earning below 60% of the Area Median Income for at least 30 years, ensuring long-term affordability.

By providing affordable housing along a major employment and services corridor, the development directly supports Boone's workforce, including service employees, healthcare workers, educators, and others who are increasingly priced out of the local housing market.

Amenities and Community Features

Residents of Hemlock Ridge Trace will have access to a range of on-site amenities designed to enhance livability, promote community interaction, and support resident well-being. These amenities include:

- A central multipurpose community room
- Computer and technology center



- Fitness and exercise room
- Outdoor covered picnic and seating areas
- Playground and Tot lot
- Landscaped open spaces and pedestrian pathways

A portion of the units will be designed to meet accessibility standards, ensuring that the community is inclusive and accommodates residents with mobility needs.

Consistence with the Boone Next Comprehensive Plan

The proposed Hemlock Ridge Trace development has been intentionally designed to advance the vision, guiding principles, and policy direction established in the Town of Boone's adopted Boone Next Comprehensive Plan. Boone Next emphasizes the importance of aligning land use decisions with community values related to affordability, equity, environmental stewardship, and compact growth. Hemlock Ridge Trace directly responds to these priorities and represents the type of development the Plan anticipates in appropriate growth areas.

Growth Management, Infill, and Redevelopment

Boone Next calls for directing growth to areas already served by public infrastructure and discouraging outward expansion that places pressure on rural lands and environmentally sensitive areas. The subject site is located along U.S. Highway 421 South, a designated growth corridor characterized by existing commercial development and multifamily housing.

Redeveloping this underutilized property for residential use supports Boone Next's emphasis on infill and redevelopment, efficient use of land, and reinforcement of existing development patterns rather than extending growth into undeveloped areas.

Housing Affordability and Housing Choice

A core theme of Boone Next is the recognition that housing affordability is one of the Town's most pressing challenges. The Plan identifies a need to expand housing opportunities for a range of household types and income levels, particularly for workforce households that support Boone's economy but are increasingly unable to find housing within the community. Hemlock Ridge Trace directly advances this goal by providing long-term, income-restricted multifamily housing that increases the supply of affordable rental units within the Town. The proposed mix of one-, two-, and three-bedroom units supports Boone Next's call for greater housing choice and flexibility to meet the needs of diverse households.

Equity, Inclusion, and Community Stability

Boone Next places a strong emphasis on equity and the creation of inclusive neighborhoods that allow residents to live near employment, services, and community resources. By locating affordable housing within an established corridor close to jobs, healthcare, retail, and public transportation, Hemlock Ridge Trace supports Boone Next's goal of reducing displacement,



strengthening community stability, and ensuring that residents of varying incomes can remain part of the Boone community.

Neighborhood Compatibility and Community Character

The Comprehensive Plan stresses that new development should respect existing context and reinforce Boone’s character as a High Country town with a strong sense of place. The proposed development incorporates building scale, setbacks, buffers, and architectural articulation that are consistent with surrounding commercial and multifamily uses. The Conditional District rezoning framework allows the Town to apply site-specific standards and conditions to ensure compatibility, providing confidence that the development will be integrated thoughtfully into its surroundings in a manner consistent with Boone Next’s design and placemaking principles.

Transportation, Connectivity, and Access to Daily Needs

Boone Next encourages land use patterns that support shorter trips, multimodal transportation, and access to daily needs. Hemlock Ridge Trace’s location along a major corridor and within proximity to employment and services aligns with this objective. Importantly, the site includes an existing transit stop located directly on the property, which will serve as a significant amenity for future residents by providing convenient access to Boone’s transit system without the need for additional vehicle trips. This on-site transit access directly supports Boone Next’s goals related to mobility, equity, and reduced transportation costs for households.

In addition to transit access, the project benefits from continuous sidewalk connections extending from the site to nearby destinations, including Brookshire Park and other key community amenities. Internal pedestrian circulation and sidewalk connections within the development further promote safe, walkable movement between buildings, amenities, and the surrounding area. Together, these features reinforce Boone Next’s emphasis on walkability, connectivity, and providing residents with multiple transportation options that reduce reliance on personal vehicles while improving access to parks, services, and daily needs.

Environmental Stewardship and Resilience

Environmental quality and responsible site design are central components of Boone Next. The site plan for Hemlock Ridge Trace reflects careful consideration of topography, stormwater management, and buffering to minimize environmental impacts while accommodating development. Landscaping, open space, and stormwater features are integrated to manage runoff responsibly and enhance site aesthetics, supporting Boone Next’s emphasis on protecting natural resources and promoting long-term community resilience.

Public Benefit and Implementation of Boone Next

Boone Next emphasizes that land use decisions should advance the public interest and help implement the Plan’s long-term vision. Hemlock Ridge Trace delivers clear public benefits by addressing a documented housing need, efficiently utilizing existing infrastructure, supporting Boone’s workforce, and doing so through a Conditional District framework that provides enforceable commitments and transparency. Taken together, the proposed rezoning and



development represent a reasonable and appropriate implementation of the Boone Next Comprehensive Plan.

Community Engagement

In accordance with the Town's requirements, the development team conducted a neighborhood meeting prior to submitting this rezoning request. Nearby property owners were notified, and the meeting provided an opportunity to present the proposal, answer questions, and receive feedback.

The applicant remains committed to ongoing communication with Town staff, elected officials, and community members throughout the rezoning and development process.

Conclusion

Hemlock Ridge Trace represents a carefully planned, context-sensitive affordable housing community that meets a critical local need while aligning with Boone's long-term vision for growth, equity, and sustainability. Through the Conditional District rezoning process, the Town can ensure that this infill development proceeds with clear standards and enforceable commitments that benefit both future residents and the broader Boone community.

The applicant respectfully requests approval of the Conditional District rezoning to allow this much-needed housing opportunity to move forward.



CONSULTANT LOGO



TOWN OF BOONE CONDITIONAL ZONING

TAFMILLS GROUP, LLC

HEMLOCK RIDGE TRACE - 1506, 1505, 1504, 1545 US HWY 421 S, BOONE, NC

DATE DATE	08/20/2024
PHASE:	08/20/2024
SHEET NAME:	08/20/2024
NO. DATE	DESCRIPTION

NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION

NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION

NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION

EXISTING SITE CONDITIONS

HEMLOCK RIDGE TRACE EXISTING SITE

11/1/2024

A01



SITE MAP

1/15

TOWN OF BOONE	TOTAL
ZONING - B3	UNITS
STREET - 20'	80 TOTAL
MAX HEIGHT - 45'	1 BD - 17 (15%)
PARKING	2 BD - 57 (61%)
17' UNIT PER NCMA	3 BD - 19 (21%)
18 BEDROOMS	
SITE AREA	PARKING
(102,000 SF)	108 x 12 = 12 parking spaces required
30 LIVABILITY RATIO	155 PROVIDED
	NCMA REQUIRED AMENITIES
	• Covered picnic area
	• Playground
	NCMA ADDITIONAL AMENITIES
	• Computer center
	• Outdoor sitting area with benches
	• Lot lot

TOWN OF BOONE CONDITIONAL ZONING

TAFMILLS GROUP, LLC

HEMLOCK HIDE TRAIL - 1505, 1505, 1545 US HWY 42 S, BOONE, NC

DATE DATE	08/20/2024
PHASE:	08/20/2024
SHEET NAME	08/20/2024
NO DATE	08/20/2024
DESCRIPTION	

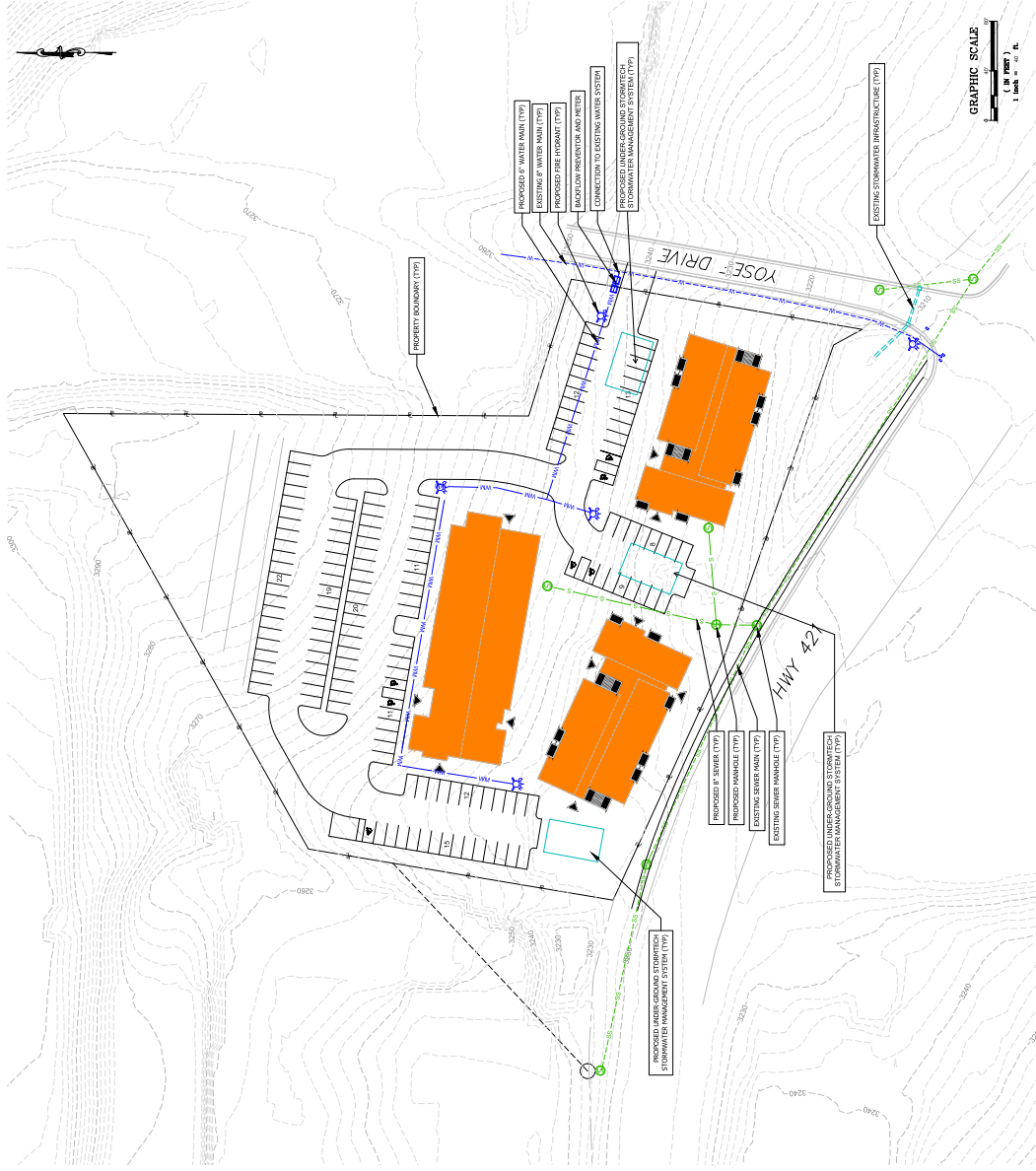
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NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION

PRELIMINARY SITE
PLAN

SHEET NO.

A03



Deviation from Ordinance Standards

ARTICLE 15 LIMITED USE REQUIREMENTS

15.03 1 .07 Duplex; 1.08-1.10 Townhouse; 1.11-1.13 Multi-Family Dwelling; 1.14-1.16 Multi-Family Dwelling in Mixed Use (unless specifically excluded)

15.03.03 B. Parking shall be limited to a maximum of two (2) spaces per unit and a clearly designated parking area for visitors. 1. The square footage of the parking designated for visitors may not exceed ten percent (10%) of the total parking area. A minimum of twenty-five percent (25%) of units shall have a garage or carport. 2. If freestanding, garages and carports shall be architecturally integrated within the development. To the greatest extent practicable, parking shall be located behind or underneath proposed building(s).

15.03.03 C. A livability space ratio of .50 must be met for the development. Fifty percent (50%) of the required livability space shall be designated to a defined area exclusively for the use of ground floor units. This space must consist of a common yard with accompanying private outdoor space for each ground level unit, or individual yards contiguous with the unit served. Either configuration must provide direct access from all ground floor units. The remaining livability space shall be designated for the use of the development as a whole as recreation space and shall be located so as to provide for direct auditory, visual, and physical access from the dwelling units served.

Deviation from Ordinance Standards

Due to the nature of NCHFA requirements for parking, it will be necessary to reduce the livability ratio. Currently the preliminary livability ratio is in accordance with B3 zoning requirements. Garage / carports as well as the required parking will reduce the livability ratio if included. Therefore, we request not to be held to the garage/carport requirement nor to the livability space ratio of .50.

15.03.03.A. No one type of dwelling unit, as defined by the number of bedrooms, shall comprise more than 50% of the total units.

Deviation from Ordinance Standards

The current proposal contains 61% of 2-bedroom units which is over the required maximum of 50% for the total amount of dwelling units. We respectfully request consideration in granting approval of the requested bedroom mix. The primary reason for structuring the proposed unit count was based on market feedback pertaining to a high demand for affordable units that serve households who earn at or below 60% of Watauga County's Area Median Income ("AMI"). The proposed two-bedroom count is reflective of market need and historical data compiled across several thousand units that are owned by our firm. The requested unit will serve low-income families and are not meant to serve the student population.

ARTICLE 25 COMMUNITY APPEARANCE STANDARDS

25.04 Retaining Walls

25.04.02 No retaining wall may be more than eight feet (8') in height. This height does not include decorative caps that are less than eight inches (8") in height. Screen walls shall not be taller than necessary to conceal the item screened (such as a dumpster, HVAC equipment, etc.)

25.04.07 Retaining walls in series which collectively exceed sixteen feet (16') in height shall have a minimum of one (1), ten foot (10') wide Type "A" buffer (see Section 31.05), between two of the walls. Retaining walls which are separated by a building, a road, or a parking area shall be exempt from this requirement. See Figure 2 below.

Deviation from Ordinance Standards

Due to site grading and parking requirements for NCHFA, as well as keeping most parking to the rear of the site, it might be necessary to exceed allowable retaining wall heights in non - street facing portions of the site. All efforts will be made to follow retaining wall guidelines set forth in section 25.04 and maintain human scale and buffer type standards along pedestrian paths.

ARTICLE 31 LANDSCAPE STANDARDS

31.03- Preservation of Existing Vegetation

31.03.04 Every development shall retain all existing healthy Historic trees with drip lines outside the building footprint except new subdivisions. An applicant will be required to modify their design in order to preserve healthy Historic trees, provided the redesign can be accommodated without reducing the intensity of development on the site or increasing the area of land disturbance.

A. Every subdivision shall retain all existing healthy Historic trees with drip lines outside the land disturbing limits associated with proposed streets, drainage, utilities and stormwater management areas.

31.03.05 Every development shall retain all existing healthy significant trees with drip lines outside the building and paving area footprint to the greatest extent possible. An applicant may be required to modify their design in order to preserve healthy Significant trees, provided the redesign can be accommodated without reducing the intensity of development on the site.

A. Every subdivision shall retain all existing healthy Significant trees with drip lines outside the land disturbing limits associated with proposed streets, drainage, utilities and stormwater management areas.

Deviation from Ordinance Standards

Due to site grading and parking requirements for NCHFA, as well as keeping most parking to the rear of the site, it might be necessary to remove existing trees. A tree survey will be performed, and all efforts will be made to preserve as many trees as possible that meet the requirements set forth in 31.03.

Article 4.01 Development Approvals

4.13 Vested Rights for Certain Approvals

4.13.01 A vested right shall be deemed established upon proper and lawful approval of a site-specific vesting plan for a special use permit, major subdivision, or conditional district zoning map amendment.

4.13.02 Duration: Except as provided for in Subsection 4.13.02, a right that has been vested as provided for in this Ordinance shall remain vested for a period of two years. A. This vesting shall not be extended by any amendments or modifications to a site-specific development plan unless expressly provided by the approval authority at the time the amendment or modification is approved. B. A site-specific vesting plan shall be deemed approved upon the effective date of the approval of the authority's action or Ordinance relating thereto. C. The permit-issuing authority may provide that rights vest for a period of time exceeding two (2) years but not exceeding five (5) years, inclusive of all amendments, modifications and phasing, where warranted in light of all relevant circumstances, including but not limited to, the size and phasing of the development, the level of investment, the need for the development, economic cycles, and market conditions. These determinations shall be in the sound discretion of the approval authority at the time the site-specific development plan is approved or modified.

Deviation from Ordinance Standards

Due to the NCHFA application timeline and competitive process, it might be necessary to have a longer vesting period than provided for in the ordinance. While the goal of the development team is to not need to exercise this deviation, the applicant requests a vesting period of 4 years to allow flexibility to continue to pursue the competitive Low-Income Housing Tax Credits required to finance this development.

Summary of Public Benefit and Mitigation

The requested deviations from certain Unified Development Ordinance standards are limited, site-specific, and directly related to the requirements and constraints of delivering long-term affordable housing through the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) program. These deviations are necessary to accommodate financing requirements, site topography, and parking configurations while maintaining a residential character appropriate to the surrounding context. Where ordinance standards related to mixed-use frontage, unit mix, retaining wall height, and tree preservation

cannot be fully met, the development incorporates design strategies that minimize visual impacts, preserve pedestrian-oriented street frontages, and maintain compatibility with adjacent uses.

The proposed development provides substantial public benefit that offsets the requested deviations, including the delivery of deed-restricted affordable housing in an area already served by infrastructure, transit, and services. The project supports Boone Next's core goals by advancing housing affordability, promoting infill development, enhancing walkability and transit access, and strengthening community stability. The requested extended vesting period reflects the realities of the competitive LIHTC financing process and ensures that the Town's approval can be implemented as intended.

Taken together, the applicant believes the deviations are reasonable and in the public's interest, and the Conditional District framework provides enforceable commitments that secure these benefits for the Town of Boone.



To: Property Owners surrounding 1505/1525/1545 U.S. Hwy 421 South, Boone, N.C. 28607

Date Mailed: January 8, 2025

Subject: Petition for a Zoning Change for the proposed development:
Hemlock Ridge Trace Apartments, 1505/1525/1545 U.S. Hwy 421 South, Boone, N.C.

Dear Neighbor(s),

This letter is a notification provided to you as a property owner within 300 feet of the proposed development requesting a zoning change. As the developer of this proposed request, I wanted to share important information with you about this petitioned item. The zoning presently is B3, and we are pursuing to request the zoning change to R3, to accommodate for multi-family dwellings.

Address(es):	1505/1525/1545 U.S. Hwy 421 South, Boone, N.C. 28607
Tax Parcel PIN Numbers:	2911709321000; 2911800228000; 2911802433000
Zoning District:	B3 General Business with Corridor District Overlay
Requested Zoning District:	Conditional District R3 Multiple-Family Residential with Corridor District Overlay

We are proposing a multi-family community and a stand-alone clubhouse for Hemlock Ridge Trace Apartments, which represents an investment in the community and allows occupancy for working families. The proposed development will be privately owned by Taft-Mills Group, LLC, which will have on-site management and offer a variety of amenities located in the stand-alone clubhouse to be utilized by the potential tenants. Those amenities include an outdoor playground, fitness facility, computer center, and a resident activity multi-purpose room.

Meeting Date:	February 4, 2026
Meeting Time:	5:30 p.m.
Meeting Location:	Town Hall Council Chambers 1500 Blowing Rock Road, Boone, N.C. 28607

If you are unable to attend the scheduled meeting but would like to learn more about the project, please feel free to contact our team.

Tristan Williams, (252)341-8150; Tristan@taftmillsgroup.com
Nate Broman-Fulks, (336)870-0721; Nate@taftmillsgroup.com

Sealed Envelope, LLC
PO Box 308
Greenville, NC 27835

2011-02-01-000
WATERGATE TRADING, LLC
Box 13030
Greenville, NC 27835



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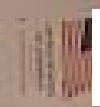
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Boone Neighborhood Meeting Minutes: Town Hall, Town Chambers

1500 Blowing Road, Boone, N.C.

February 4, 2026, 5:30-6:30 p.m.

***PRESENTER: NATE BROMAN-FULKS, VICE-PRESIDENT OF DEVELOPMENT,
TAFT-MILLS GROUP, LLC***

***RECORDER: TRISTAN WILLIAMS, SENIOR VICE-PRESIDENT OF DEVELOPMENT,
TAFT-MILLS GROUP, LLC***

ATTENDEES: Signed listing of attendees including name, address, phone number and email address attached as Exhibit A.

- Sofia da Camara, 289 Ambling Way, Boone, NC; 919-879-4633; sofiadacamara82@gmail.com
- Sierra Lawing, 1065 NC194, Boone, NC; 704-240-2767; sierralawingg@gmail.com
- Kellie Ashcraft, 582 Market Hills DR, Boone, NC; 828-406-3471; kellie@wataugahousing.org
- Deborah Phillips, 3154 Soo Hounds Rd, Boone, NC; 828-773-0061; phillipsdl@appstate.edu

PRESENTER (NATE): Thank you all for coming. We are here this evening to share with you an affordable housing development we are proposing that is going to require a conditional zoning amendment to be requested with the Town of Boone. First, let me give you a quick overview of who we are so you know a little bit more about us and then we'll talk about the site, where it's at and what we are proposing to build on it. We can talk about the process around that as well. We are calling this development Hemlock Ridge Trace. Tristan and I work for Taft-Mills Group. We are a real estate development company that specializes in affordable housing development using Low-income Housing Tax Credits. The company's been around for over a decade. The principals in our company have been doing this for 50+ years collectively have built over 100 affordable communities, over 5,000 units. We are based out of Greenville, North Carolina, and have developed all over North Carolina. This will be our first development in Boone, and we are excited to be in Boone.

In addition to North Carolina, we also develop in South Carolina, Virginia and Maryland. We have been productive and fortunate enough to be consistently ranked in the top 50 Affordable Housing Developers in the country and have been awarded the state's highest housing honor for an affordable housing development we did in Greenville, North Carolina, Parkside Commons.

Here's just a quick snapshot of some of the developments we've completed recently. In North Carolina, you can see we cover a good bit of real estate. This will be our first development in Watauga County. We are working on a few developments in Asheville and

two in Ashe County as well. To get a sense of what is pictured here, this is what we consider our standard garden style apartments, typically three-story garden walk-ups. Our developments are as low as 48 units, but then as high as 180, 200 units. In addition to the garden style walk-up, we do tailor our developments and architecture to the community and its surroundings.

We have a few slides of complete developments that are a little bit different than what you saw in the last slide. This is a senior development in Wake Forest, North Carolina, and is an interior loaded corridor and does have elevators. This is a more urban style development that we recently completed in Maryland. This is in a downtown area and has more of an urban feel to it with parking underneath.

This is the site that we have under contract right now to develop affordable housing on and is located on the corner of Highway 421 and Yosef Drive. The location is next door to the Toyota dealership. Across the street is a retail center with a subway in it.

ATTENDEE (KELLIE): Is this the oil blue garage place?

PRESENTER (NATE): Yes, there's a little auto shop here and two single family homes on the property right now. But currently its zoning is B3 and we will be seeking a conditional zoning to R3 to allow for multifamily development. It's a little over four acres and we think it's in a great location surrounded by multifamily and commercial. It fits well with the area. It also has a public transit stop on the site, on the corner of the property, which will be a great amenity for the residents. It has continuous sidewalks all the way down to Brookshire Park and we'll be putting in additional sidewalks.

ATTENDEE (DEBORAH): Do you mean located on Yosef?

PRESENTER (NATE): Yes, on Yosef. It has a ton of amenities such as grocery stores, parks, shopping, doctors, everything that residents are going to need all within a mile of the site. And as you can see in this one, this is downtown here, and it's less than a two-mile drive to downtown. We think it's a great location for this type of development.

ATTENDEE (KELLIE): With the doctor's office's groceries, pharmacy, are those all good criteria for LIHTC consideration?

PRESENTER (NATE): Exactly. Yes. We submitted a preliminary LIHTC application on this site a couple weeks ago. We are waiting for official scores, but our scores on this development reflect a perfect score. It scores as high as you can because all the amenities are right here.

ATTENDEE (DEBORAH): Is it for young couples, families, or who is it geared towards? Would it be a family development?

PRESENTER (NATE): Yes, it would be a family development and we're proposing 93 affordable housing units for it. That will all be affordable for households making 60% of the area median income and below. So, you know, for a one-person household that's about

\$40,000, you have for three people, I believe that's a low over \$50,000. It'll be a mix of one-, two-, and three-bedroom units. We can serve a variety of household sizes. It is very much proposed to meet the housing needs of the community and the present workforce that's here.

ATTENDEE (DEBORAH): The only thing that concerns me a little bit, and I'm sure you thought of this, is the highway. As far as children. I mean, I'm sure you can construct it in a way that there are barriers where it's not easy for them to get to the highway.

PRESENTER (NATE): Yes. That's a good point. We will address that concern. We're taking notes tonight for any concerns and things you want us to investigate.

This is our current site plan. We will be submitting the conditional zoning application on Friday. Our civil engineer and architect are working hard right now finalizing this plan for submission. It is subject to change a little bit from what is being shared this evening. We're looking at maybe doing a three four split. The one building along highway 421 may look on one side like a four story and on the other side of the three story

Our architects are McMillan Pazdan and Smith; they have done several developments here in town and many of which are with the university.

ATTENDEE (DEBORAH): Will there be a playground?

PRESENTER (NATE): Yes. The site plan is slightly zoomed in so we can see a little bit better, but the amenities for the site will have a clubhouse with a multipurpose room located in this building. It will have a business center, an indoor exercise facility and there will be a playground and a tot lot, covered picnic area and seating areas as a gathering space for the residents.

We do have on-site property management for all our developments as well as maintenance staff to address any property issues that come up and work with residents. They'll be on-site daily. We are proposing underground stormwater detention. It will be underneath one of the parking areas.

ATTENDEE (KELLIE): Is that a lead into the ground or what happens to it? Does it just collect and then slowly disperses?

PRESENTER (NATE): Yes. Most developments you can see stormwater detention ponds. This is kind of a similar version, but it's underground and enclosed. And that just allows more development areas.

We've looked at Boone's NEXT comprehensive plan, and it aligns very well with it.

ATTENDEE (SOPHIA): Can I ask about parking? How many people are going to be in that range and how much parking is allowed?

PRESENTER (NATE): Yes, the Town of Boone's parking requirement is, I believe, 0.75 spaces per bedroom. We will be meeting that as our intent. We're considering if that's something we're going to ask for deviation to in our submission.

We are showing an entrance on 421 here right now as well as on Yosef Drive. We are looking at right now whether we want to eliminate that entrance. Based on feedback from DOT and the town, we are looking at eliminating the entrance off 421, so this site plan is subject to change to remove that second entrance.

ATTENDEE (KELLIE): I remember when I went to the community meeting for Wynnefield Properties, and the second entrance was brought up at that meeting as being required for fire safety. They had to have two, one as a soft exit, for emergencies, in addition to the regular entrance. If that one is eliminated, did the Town of Boone talk about where else you could put one in?

PRESENTER (NATE): We have based this on fire code, where we won't need a second entrance. I believe that is because these buildings will be sprinklered. With these having sprinklers and under 200 units, we believe this is not required. We have been working with fire to make sure that this plan aligns with code and their requirements. I remember that there was a big discussion, but we can review that again to ensure we are meeting requirements.

ATTENDEE (KELLIE): Yes, because the one entrance was going to have to be on the resident side of that neighborhood and neighbors were worried about people coming in and going through. Then fire said it was going to be a soft entrance. I can't remember the language that they used, but it was something that would just allow for emergency vehicles.

PRESENTER (NATE): No, it's good. The codes change from year to year sometimes. Different municipalities have different codes too. Yeah, we're going to make sure it meets fire code. And that's something I just wanted to highlight, a main change between this regiment and what we submit.

We're really excited about being in Boone. This would provide 93 long-term income restricted units that are affordable for at least 30 years. It's going to provide a lot of community benefits. We feel it offers more community benefits than what's on the site right now. We think in this growth corridor, it's somewhat underutilized. This is four acres that could be used for something great. A few notes to mention, addressing equity and access here, these are all categories of the Boone next plan, which we are meeting. This proposed housing is near job services, parks, and transit. It's really a fantastic location.

ATTENDEE (DEBORAH): What about the two homes located on the site. What would happen to them? I believe one is owner occupied right now. I thought they were all Webber Hodges.

PRESENTER (NATE): That's correct. Yes, that's it. One single-family home is occupied, and the other single-family home is vacant. Both would be purchased if we obtain the tax credits and the structures would then be demolished and removed from the present location.

That's a quick overview. And we're happy to continue to answer any questions that you have.

ATTENDEE (KELLIE): One question I got is looking at how close it is to 421. I'm guessing that you probably would have some landscaping to try to do some sound blocking from the highway.

PRESENTER (NATE): Yes. On the site plan there is a buffer here. This will be a landscape buffer, a setback. We have surveys and this will all be pushed back more. There will be a 10-foot multi-use path that we will build. It's part of the larger greenway system that the town has planned. And then there will be some trees and landscaping that will be required and we will ensure we address those details on having the landscaping in place.

ATTENDEE (DEBORAH): I think you said 60% of median income. Is that self-sustaining or does that require financial backing from somewhere to keep it as a sustainable measure? Do you see what I'm saying?

PRESENTER (NATE): I think so. How it works is we apply for the tax credits, the low-income housing tax credits from North Carolina Housing Finance Agency. If we are awarded those tax credits, we then sell those to investors. And that gives us the main equity in the deal. If you're buying a home, you normally put down 20% and then finance 80% but with the tax credits, you are doing the reverse. This then allows us to get a lower permanent mortgage. So that then we can charge lower rents because we have less mortgage to pay off than a typical market rate development. So, it allows us to have a financially viable, sustainable model to keep this affordable for at least 30 years. Is that answered?

ATTENDEE (DEBORAH): Yes. And then in 30 years does will have to be renewed? Is that a town thing or part of the tax credit program? Do you first give first right of refusal to the tenants? What do you do to keep it affordable after 30 years? Is that when you reapply for the tax credits to do a rehab on it?

PRESENTER (NATE): It can be renewed. Part of the tax credit program is acknowledging the affordability of the 30 years.

RECORDER (TRISTAN): If I can add an extra layer, when we get the tax credits and it's for 30 years, there are land use restrictive covenants that are recorded on record at your register of deeds. The land is tied to tax credits and has the affordability on record for 30 years. You can extend it longer than 30 years and, in some cases, we may be obligated longer than that, but we do start at a minimum of 30 years.

PRESENTER (NATE): They are federal tax credits, but those credits are filtered to run through the North Carolina Housing Finance Agency. We get tax credits and then we sell those to

investors such as big banks, big companies that want to write off their tax liability. Some of them have requirements for investing in the communities that they're working in. It is private businesses buying federal tax credits.

ATTENDEE (DEBORAH): What if they sold them, can they sell those?

PRESENTER (NATE): Investors buy them from us. It reduces their tax liability. So, there's no reason for them to want to reduce their liability and sell them

RECORDER (TRISTAN): To add, investors are looking for the tax liability break, and they are ultimately our partners. They're provided annually with tax form. It's a K1 tax form that they get annually to be able to justify that tax liability right off. So, each year when we have our audits and our tax returns, the investor will get the property tax information that, they will in return issue that to their CPA. And that's what allows them to justify the 30 years of the tax credit purchase for their tax liability right off.

ATTENDEE (DEBORAH): So, hearing that you can potentially go beyond those 30 years is exciting. That's really encouraging. So, here's another question. Who's the owner?

PRESENTER (NATE): We are, we're long-term owners and managers. We've been doing this for over a decade now and I've never sold a property. We are in it for the long-term investment.

ATTENDEE (KELLIE): I know that you had that larger meeting with the planning department. Did they talk to you about their conditional district?

PRESENTER (NATE): Yes. We talked about the conditional district with planning, and we are here tonight meeting in advance of applying this Friday for the conditional rezoning.

ATTENDEE (DEBORAH): I think it's fantastic that you solely focus on affordable housing as a company. I would not think there are many people and companies that want to do that.

ATTENDEE (KELLIE): Actually, you must come with me to the NC affordable housing conference. It's so cool that there's a whole world.

PRESENTER (NATE): Yes, there is. To share how competitive this process is annually; we just submitted this in the preliminary tax credit application round. There were 139 tax credit applications submitted for 9% and 58% application submitted for the 4% Bond deals.

RECORDER (TRISTAN): You mention for the agency conference, this past year was the largest they have had. When I started nine years ago, it was maybe 500 people. This past year surpassed 2500 attendees.

ATTENDEE (KELLIE): I certainly didn't recognize several that were there. But then you're in this space with people who all speak the same language and care about affordable housing. It's wonderful.

PRESENTER (NATE): In this industry there are quite a few tax credit developers out there that are working on similar things like us. I will share we are only tax credit application in Watauga County. As you know Wade County, Mecklenburg County to name a couple, they're going to get a lot of applications. And so Western North Carolina historically has not gotten as many applications. There's more this year. There are some hurricane disaster related funding that can help developments work financially. The Western part of the state has not benefited from tax credit development nearly as much as other areas of the state.

ATTENDEE (KELLIE): But is there now an extra point for our area for disasters?

PRESENTER (NATE): Yes, this year there is a bonus point for Helene affected counties. That is going to help this development for sure. We feel good about its chances at this point in getting tax credits. You can never guarantee anything. But we're excited about the opportunity with this submission. As far as the next steps, we'll submit on Friday the conditional rezoning application. And that will put us on a course, assuming planning and development review staff say we have met all the criteria to go to the Planning Commission. There will be a joint Planning Commission and Council meeting in March. That date is March 23, 2026.

ATTENDEE (KELLIE): I think that's where we can offer public comment.

PRESENTER (NATE): Yes. And then there will be another Council meeting in April. That date is April 22, 2026; where they then do the vote.

ATTENDEE (KELLIE): Are you expecting much pushback from anybody near this? Even though it's never something you can know for sure.

PRESENTER (NATE): Based on the turnout tonight, there may not be. These neighborhood meetings are normally the first indicator of how much concern there will be and since none of the neighbors that received the notices are here, that may be an indication there aren't concerned neighbors.

ATTENDEE (KELLIE): One of the members of the Housing Council, on a steering committee, was our superintendent of Watauga County schools. She has questions when we were looking at a potential development on County owned land because we were talking about multifamily housing. She mentioned the overcapacity elementary school in our area. Just to be aware that may be a concern that's going to be mentioned. I say that as a mentioned concern but that we absolutely need affordable housing too. We just need to be mindful of capacities.

RECORDER (TRISTAN): Typically, with new developments in small towns, especially from a rural area myself, you don't have a lot coming in from outside counties. They are already potential tenants that live in your area. They already live here, whether they're staying in other rentals or with family, etc. We understand the school concern as we hear that from time to time. We can look at that and evaluate the numbers.

ATTENDEE (KELLIE): Leslie Alexander is just wonderful, the superintendent, and she knows about the needs. Not sure if this is Hardin Park area or Parkway school district. They are constantly looking for redistricting to try to make sure that the schools are not over-capacity while the other is limited.

ATTENDEE (SOFIA): I do have one more question. So now Mountaineer village already has an Applacart stop. Would you all be wanting to just use the first one? Would you all want another stop for this complex? The only concern I have with this is I often ride the bus that comes through here. It's the green route. The bus that goes up to Mountaineer village by the time it gets done at Mountaineer village, it's at full capacity at the time. I just wanted to know if y'all had any Applacart plans, because I assume that this place would probably be big with Applacart users having a lower income and apple cart is just a great amenity up here.

PRESENTER (NATE): There is an Applacart stop on this site right now. It's at the corner here. I know Mountaineer village has a stop up the hill. Yeah. We had a meeting with Craig Hughes, the Director of Applacart last week to talk about this. Yeah. He's always looking at projections of how many users are going to be in the years to come. This is already on his radar and he felt good about it at this point in time, but we're talking through the timeline of development and when this would come online so that he can start planning if there does need to be increased service, they can be ready for that. We will find out in August whether we get the tax credits. And then we would start construction within a year, and we expect to look at 18 to 24 months build time. We have already started those conversations with Applacart and then put on the radar, but we'll be looking at that schedule and trying to make sure that there's capacity and, do they have enough buses going through? Projected to be completed December 28' timeframe.

ATTENDEE (DEBORAH): I mean, is it first come first, sir?

PRESENTER (NATE): Yeah, there's rules we must follow. No, not first come first serve.

RECORDER (TRISTAN): We have a third-party property management group out of Raleigh, Excel property management. They have strict guidelines where they must follow and have potential tenants provide income verification with tax returns, pay stubs and verification from their employer. Tenants must also provide a background check and credit check. They send all those to compliance. If compliance approves them, then they start going down the line. There are very strict guidelines that they must meet to be able to qualify for those units.

ATTENDEE (DEBORAH): And are they all Section 8?

PRESENTER (NATE): We will accept vouchers, just about any type of voucher. This isn't a project-based voucher development. Any tenant who comes with a voucher the property will accept if the tenant qualifies and meets the remaining guidelines.

Thank you for your time and all your comments. We appreciate it.

1500 Blowing Rock Road, Boone, N.C.

[illegible]

Hemlock Ridge Trace

Boone, NC

Applicant Exhibit 6

A PROPOSED AFFORDABLE HOUSING COMMUNITY BY:

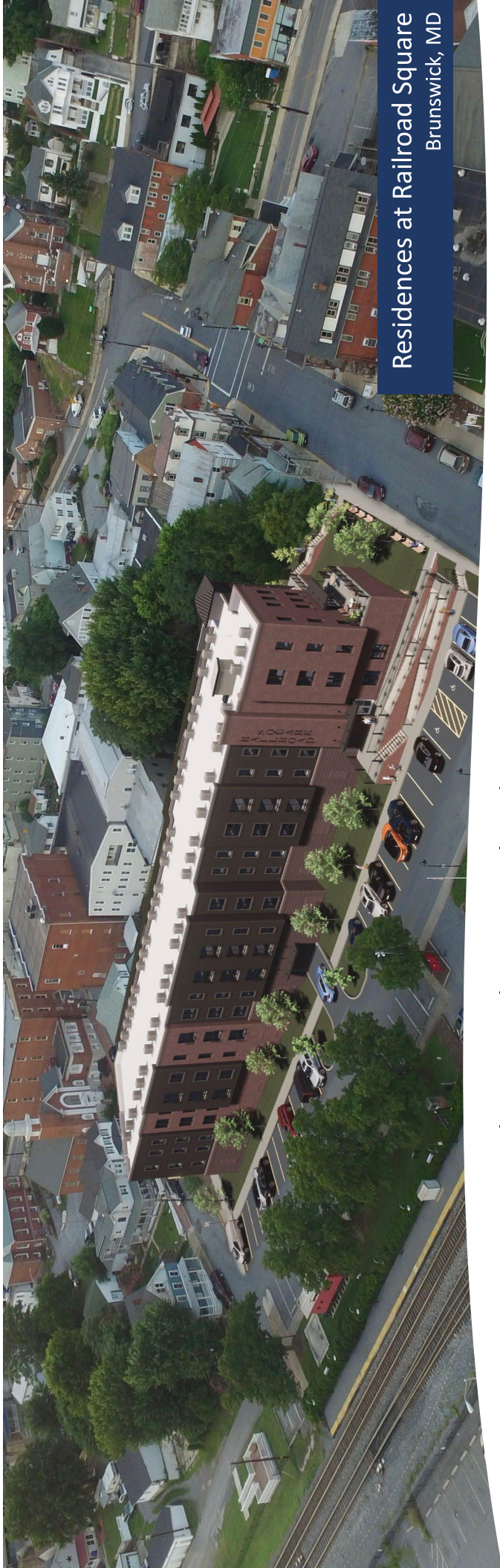


T A F T M I L L S
— GROUP

2/4/26

70





- Principals at TMG have completed:
 - 100+ affordable communities
 - 5,000+ units
 - \$850+ million in total development costs

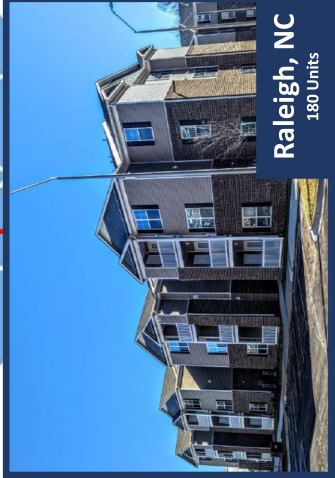
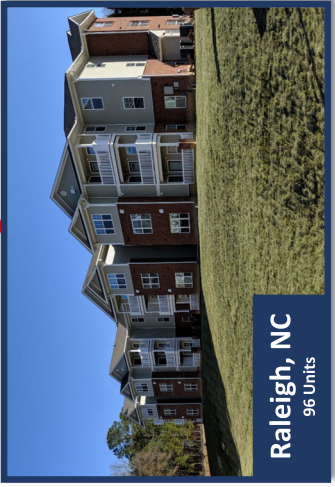
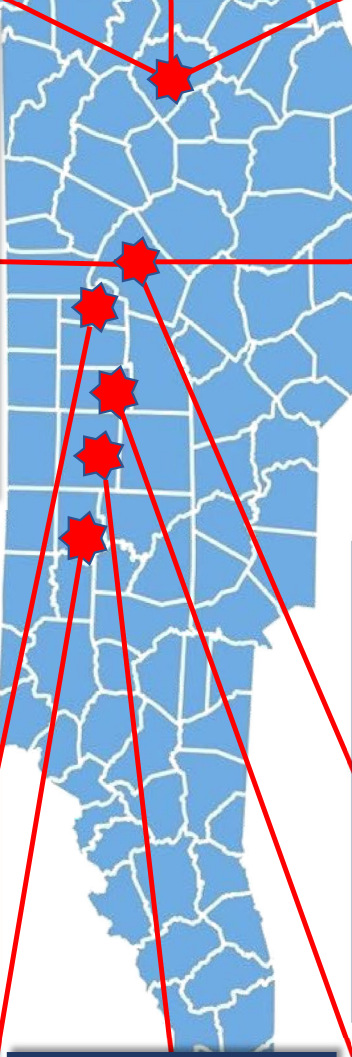
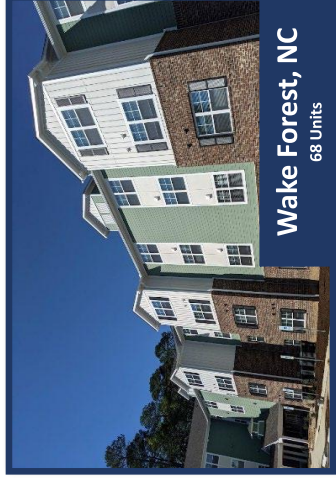
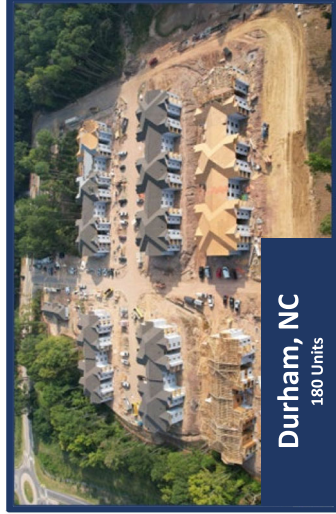
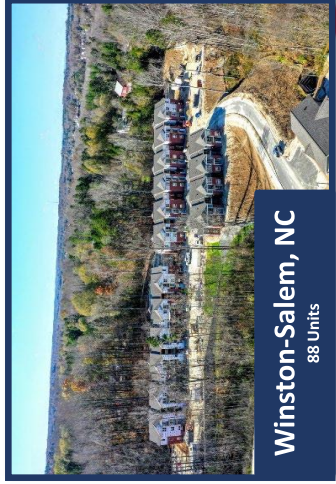
Overview

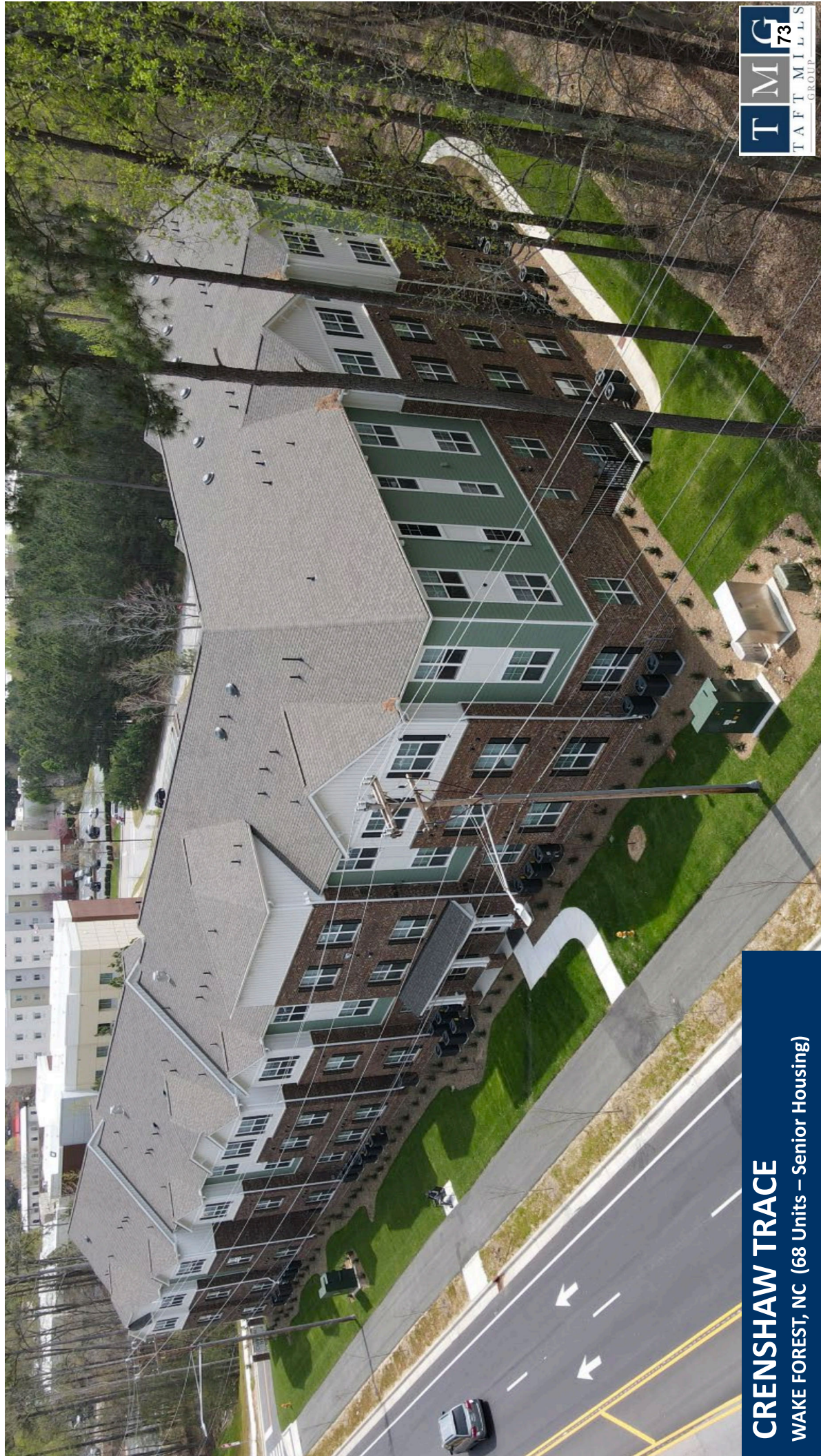
- Active in North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia & Maryland

- Ranked top 50 affordable housing developer nationwide by Affordable Housing Finance

- Awarded the State's Housing Honor in Affordable Housing by NC Housing Finance Agency 71

Recent TMG NC Affordable Activity





CRENSHAW TRACE

WAKE FOREST, NC (68 Units – Senior Housing)

TMG – Under Construction Visual



Residences at Railroad Square

Brunswick, MD (45 family Units)

THE JUNCTION AT 524
524 W SOUTH STREET

THE JUNCTION AT 511
511 W SOUTH STREET



← W SOUTH STREET →

← W PATRICK STREET →

The Junction
Frederick, MD (179 family units)

HWY 421 and Yosef Dr.

4.18 Acres

Current Zoning: B-3

Next to Mountaineer
Village and Toyota

Direct access to public
transit stops

Sidewalks to Brookshire
Park

Nearby Amenities:

- Grocery stores
- Parks
- Shopping
- Doctor offices
- Restaurants
- Commercial options

Site Overview



HWY 421 and Yosef Dr.

4.18 Acres

Current Zoning: B-3

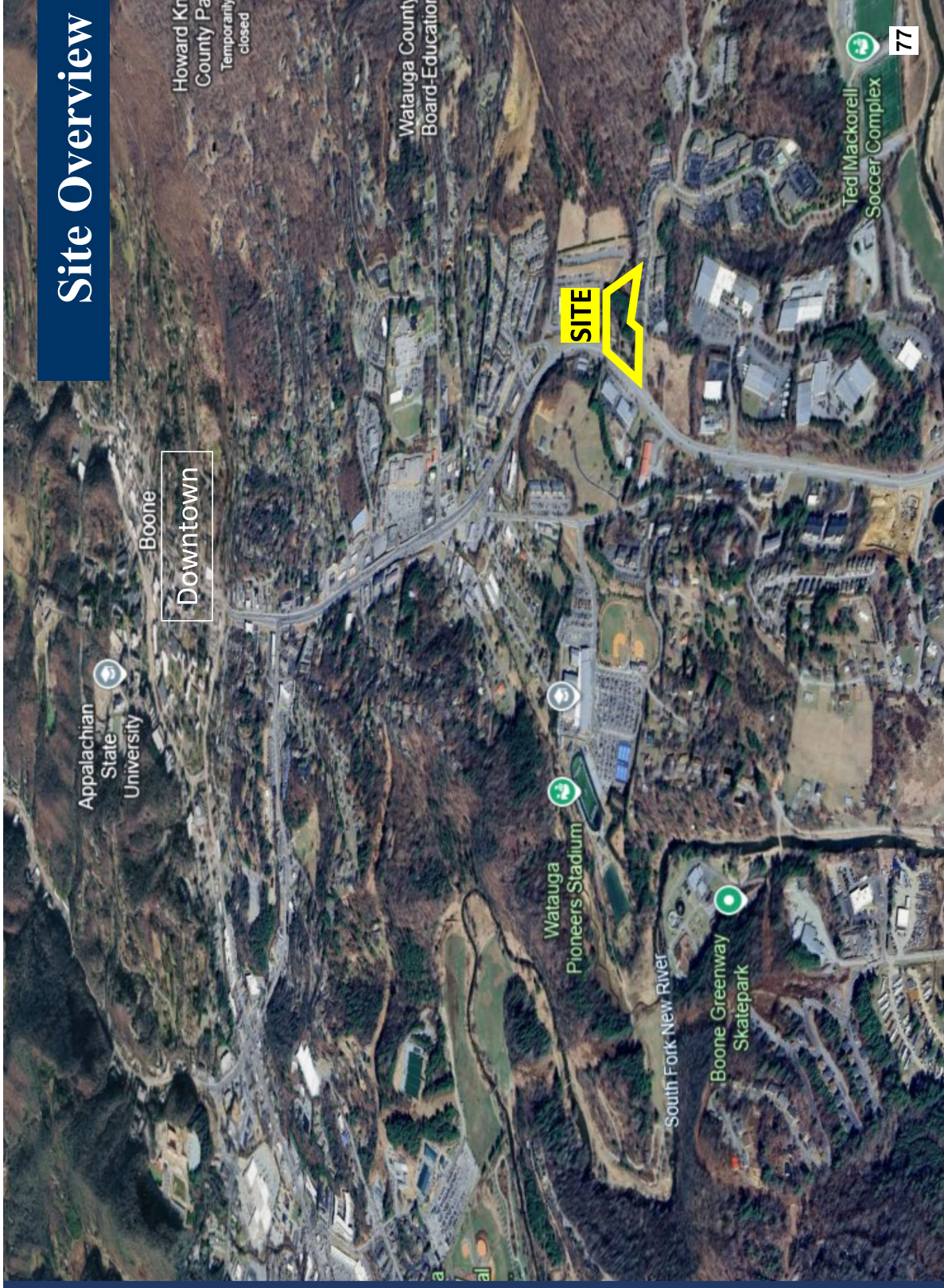
Next to Mountaineer
Village and Toyota

Direct access to public
transit stops

Sidewalks to Brookshire
Park

Nearby Amenities:

- Grocery stores
- Parks
- Shopping
- Doctor offices
- Restaurants
- Commercial options



Site Overview

Howard Kn
County Pa
Temporarily
closed

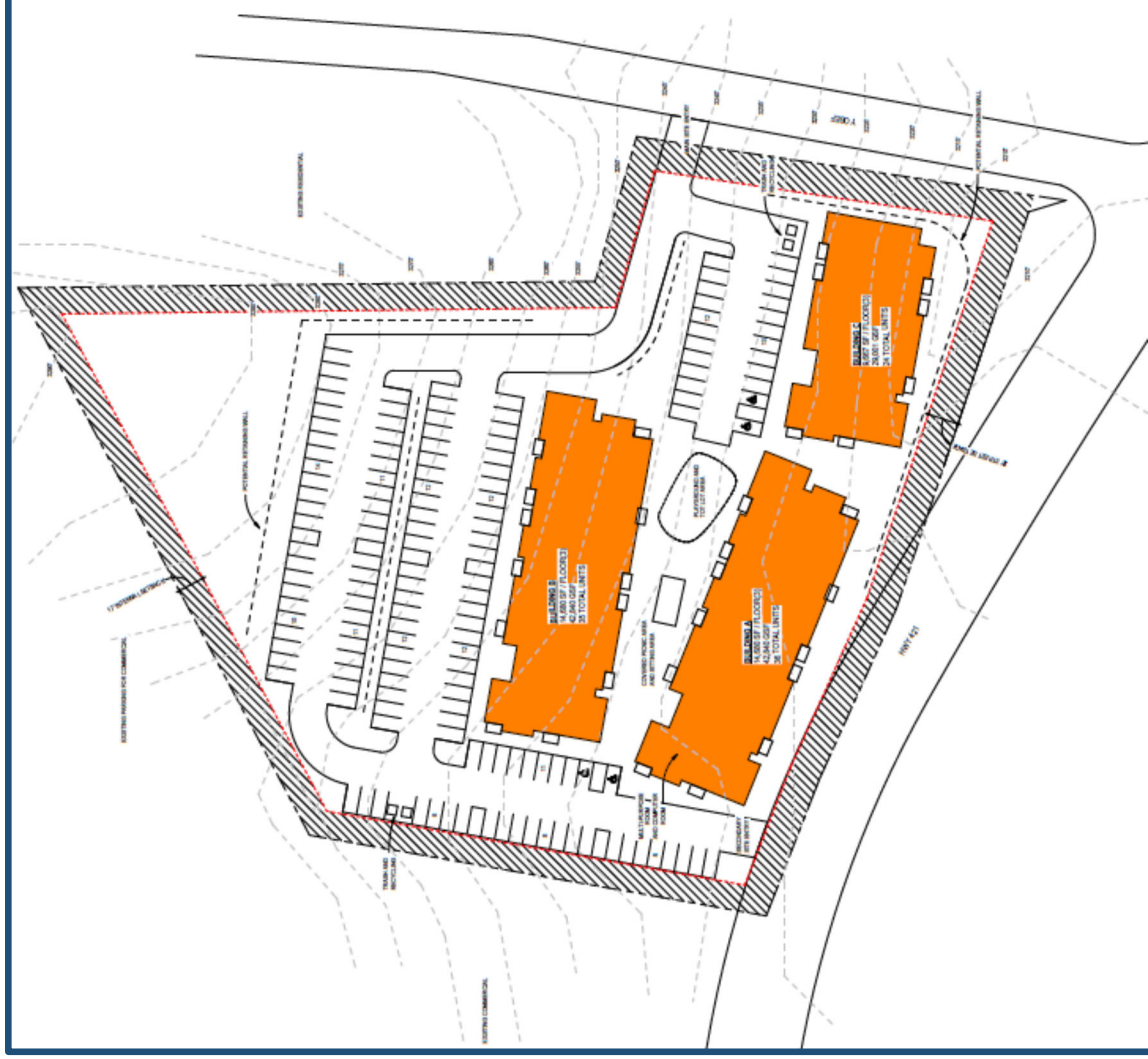
Watauga County
Board-Education

Ted Mackorelli
Soccer Complex

77

Site Plan As Submitted

- 93 proposed affordable housing units
- All units will serve households at/below 60% of Watauga County's area median income (AMI)
- Proposed to meet the housing needs of working families supporting the Boone community
- Three residential buildings
- 1, 2, and 3-bedroom units
- 3-story residential buildings



Site Plan As Submitted

- Site Amenities
 - Clubhouse with community room
 - Indoor exercise facility
 - Business center
 - Outdoor recreation areas
- On-site property management and maintenance staff
- Underground stormwater detention
- Development proposal meets goals of Boone Next – Comprehensive Plan



- The opportunity with this proposal:
 - **Delivers Desperately Needed Affordable Housing**
 - Long-term, income-restricted homes for Boone's community and workforce
 - **Smart Infill**
 - Redevelops an underutilized site in an established growth corridor
 - **Equity + Access**
 - Housing near jobs, services, parks, and daily needs
 - **Transit-Oriented & Walkable**
 - On-site transit stop and sidewalk connections to

Brookshire Park





QUESTIONS?



ZONING COMPLIANCE AFFIDAVIT**PROPERTY ADDRESS:** 1505, 1525, 1545 Hwy 421, Boone, NC**PARCEL/PIN NUMBER:** 2911709321000, 2911800228000, 2911802433000

I, Dustin T. Mills, Managing Member, Taft-Mills Group, LLC, being duly sworn, do hereby depose and state as follows:

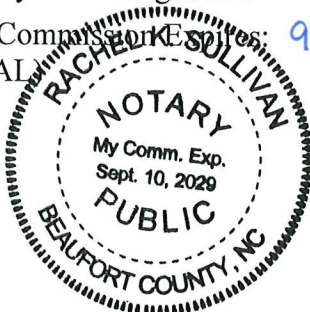
1. I am the Authorized Agent of the property described above and have the legal authority to submit this affidavit.
2. All zoning conditions are voluntarily proposed based solely on the applicant's independent judgment; and
3. The applicant is not relying on any statements from Town staff, Council, or Planning Commission members regarding zoning conditions; and
4. Other interested parties in the rezoning process may rely on the validity of the proposed development proposal including any agreed upon conditions; and
5. All future property owners will be bound by the proposed development approval, including any agreed upon conditions and any commitments or representations made by the applicant.

Affidavit Signature:  **Date:** February 4, 2026**Printed Name:** Dustin T. Mills**Title:** Taft-Mills Group, LLC, Managing Member**NOTARY ACKNOWLEDGMENT**

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 4th day of February, 2026

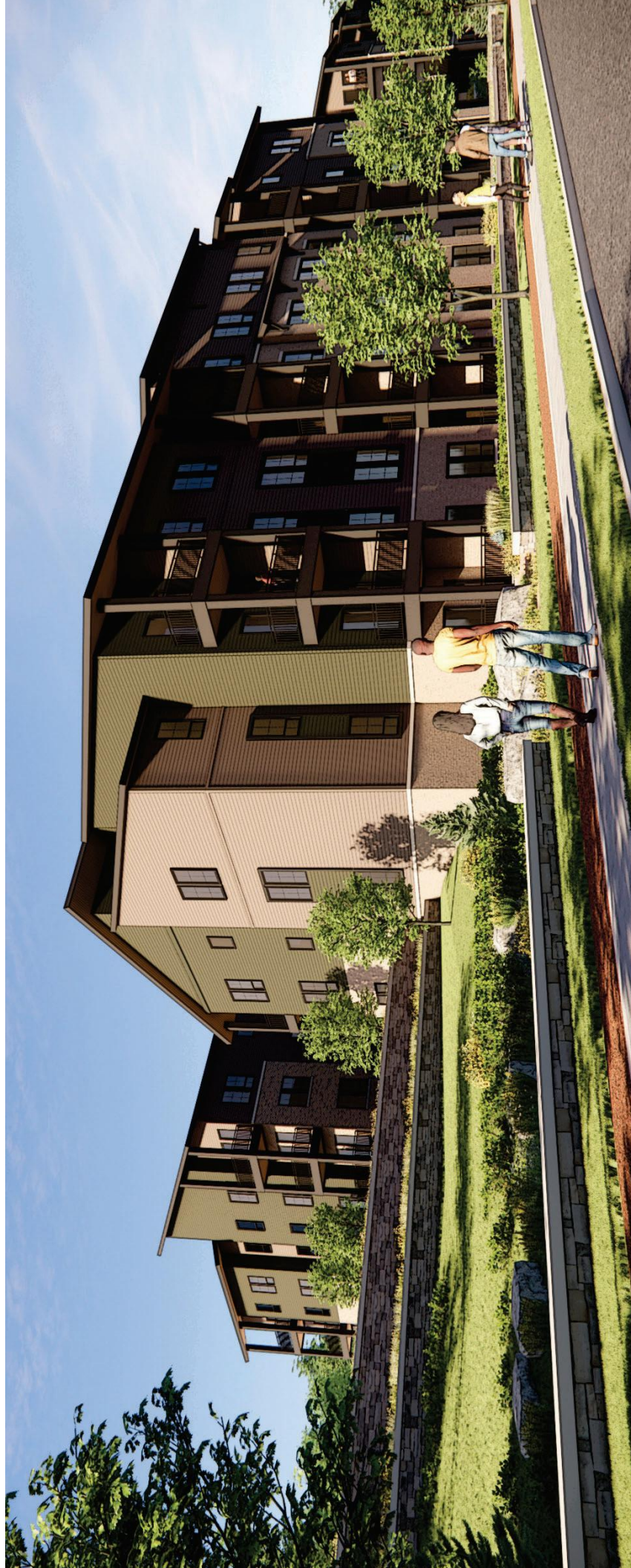


Notary Public Signature

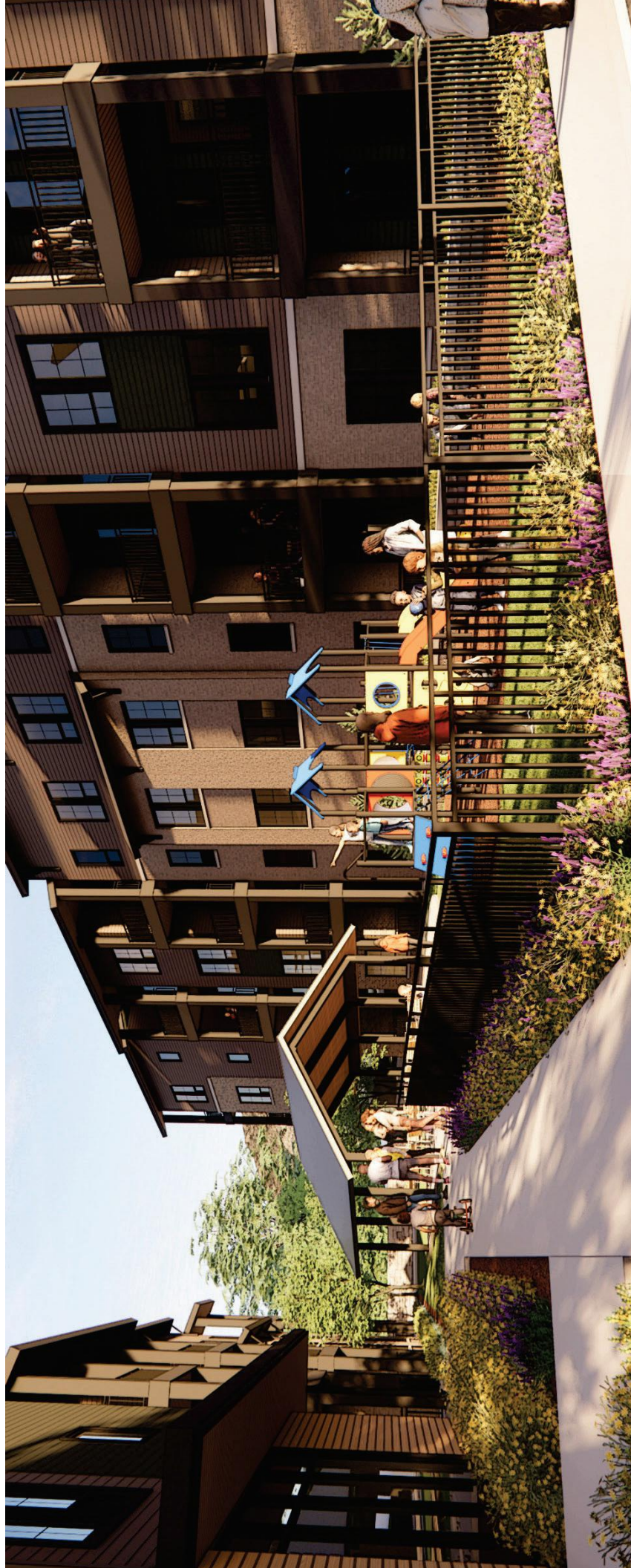
My Comm. Expires: 9-10-2029
(SEAL)Beaufort County, NC

Applicant Exhibit 8









HEMLOCK RIDGE TRACE
COURTYARD VIEW



Town Of Boone AGENDA ITEM ACTION REQUEST

This form must be completed and attached to all supporting documentation for items to be included in the Town of Boone Council agenda. One (1) form per agenda item.

Submitted By: Nicole Harmon

Department: Administration

Contact Phone # 828.268.6200

Date Submitted: March 27, 2026

Email: nicole.harmon@boonenc.gov

Date of Council Meeting to Consider this Item: April 8, 2026

Council Action Requested: For Information

Title: Announcement of Board Vacancies

Summary of Information:

Please see attached list of board vacancies.

PUBLIC NOTICE

The Town of Boone is currently soliciting applications from people who would like to serve on the following boards:

POSITIONS OPEN

ABC BOARD

One regular position

BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT

Two alternate positions

CULTURAL RESOURCES

Two regular positions

HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION

Two regular positions

PLANNING COMMISSION

Two regular positions

TOWN COUNCIL

One position

The next application deadline is **May 1, 2026, by 5 p.m.** If you qualify for any of the positions and would like to apply, please contact Town Clerk Nicole Harmon at 268-6200 or e-mail Nicole.harmon@boonenc.gov for more information. You may also visit the Town's Website at www.townofboone.net to view information about the various boards and to download an application form.



Town Of Boone AGENDA ITEM ACTION REQUEST

This form must be completed and attached to all supporting documentation for items to be included in the Town of Boone Council agenda. One (1) form per agenda item.

Submitted By: Nicole Harmon

Department: Administration

Contact Phone # 828.262.8744

Date Submitted: March 26, 2026

Email: greenemc7@appstate.edu

Date of Council Meeting to Consider this Item: April 8, 2026

Council Action Requested: For Action

Title: Proclamation - Public Power Lineworkers During Lineworkers Appreciation Days

Summary of Information:

Mariana Greene, on behalf of New River Light and Power, has submitted the following request:

"For over 110 years, New River Light and Power (NRLP) - a nonprofit public power electric utility - has provided safe, reliable power to Western North Carolina residents. Today, NRLP serves about 9,000 residential and commercial customers who reside in and near the Town of Boone. Each year, we join the state of North Carolina in recognizing the service and dedication of public power lineworkers on the second Monday in April during North Carolina Lineworker Appreciation Day. Similarly, we recognize America's lineworkers on the 18th day of April every year, marking National Lineworker Appreciation Day."



**PROCLAMATION HONORING PUBLIC POWER LINEWORKERS DURING LINEWORKER
APPRECIATION DAYS**

WHEREAS, on January 3, 2017, the 115th Congress of the United States adopted House Resolution 10 recognizing the profession of lineworkers, the contributions these brave men and women make to protect public safety, and expressing support for the designation of April 18 as National Lineman Appreciation Day; and

WHEREAS, on April 15, 2015, the North Carolina General Assembly ratified House Bill 140, which designates the second Monday in April of each year as Lineworker Appreciation Day in North Carolina; and

WHEREAS the Town Council of Boone celebrates the profession of electric lineworkers and wishes to honor them for their exemplary service to the Town and its citizens; and

WHEREAS, lineworkers are often first responders during storms, working to repair broken and damaged electric lines under hazardous conditions to make the area safe for other public safety heroes; and

WHEREAS, lineworkers play a vital role in the lives of our citizens by maintaining and growing our electrical infrastructure, putting their lives on the line every day by working with the dangers of high voltage and ensuring they provide safe, reliable energy; and

WHEREAS, the lineworkers of New River Light and Power's electric utility and their example of service above self are deserving of the respect, admiration, and appreciation of all the citizens of the Town of Boone; now, therefore

BE IT RESOLVED that the Town of Boone, North Carolina, joins all N.C. public power communities and all public power systems in the United States in these celebrations of Lineworker Appreciation Days.

Adopted this 8th day of April, 2026.

The Honorable Dalton George, Mayor

Attest:

Nicole Harmon, Town Clerk



Town Of Boone AGENDA ITEM ACTION REQUEST

This form must be completed and attached to all supporting documentation for items to be included in the Town of Boone Council agenda. One (1) form per agenda item.

Submitted By: Nicole Harmon

Department: Administration

Contact Phone # 828.268.6200

Date Submitted: April 2, 2026

Email: nicole.harmon@boonenc.gov

Date of Council Meeting to Consider this Item: April 8, 2026

Council Action Requested: For Information

Title: Dr. Patricia Mitchell - Town Manager Search Update

Summary of Information:

Dr. Mitchell will give an update regarding the search for Town Manager.



Town Of Boone AGENDA ITEM ACTION REQUEST

This form must be completed and attached to all supporting documentation for items to be included in the Town of Boone Council agenda. One (1) form per agenda item.

Submitted By: Nicole Harmon

Department: Downtown Boone Development Association

Contact Phone # 828-268-6283

Date Submitted: March 18, 2026

Email: lane.moody@boonenc.gov

Date of Council Meeting to Consider this Item: April 8, 2026

Council Action Requested: Requested Appearance

Title: Downtown Boone Development Association Update

Summary of Information:

Update on the Downtown Boone Development Association's recently adopted strategic plan, including the results of the NC Main Street assessment and initiative updates in accordance with the Town contract.



2025

BOONE, NC
828-268-6283
WWW.DOWNTOWNBOONENC.COM

Facebook @downtownboonenc
Instagram @downtownboonenc



VISION/MISSION/GOALS

MAIN STREET

IMPACT REPORT

VISION & MISSION

Vision: Downtown Boone serves as the guide to the high country for locals and visitors. Tucked against the Blue Ridge mountains backdrop, downtown is the hub of high country outdoor recreational adventures, entertainment and culinary experiences in one of the most walkable towns in the region.

Mission: The Downtown Boone Development Association promotes and champions the enhancement of downtown Boone.

ECONOMIC STRATEGY & GOAL

Serves as the guide to the high country for locals and visitors.

Goal: Downtown Boone welcomes all, providing outstanding hospitality.

ECONOMIC STRATEGY & GOAL

Be the hub of the high country for outdoor recreational adventures, entertainment and culinary experiences.

Goal: Downtown Boone is renowned for its culinary and entertainment experiences alongside being the conduit for outdoor recreational adventures.

blocks	12
parcels	141
parcel owners	120
public parking spots	355
1st floor storefronts	105
residential units	543
lodging units	35
restaurants	25
retail	38
coffee spots	4
vacancy rate	4%



INVESTMENT STATS

2024-2025

PUBLIC

\$5,363,114

PRIVATE

\$15,196,761

1 FACADE IMPROVEMENTS

1 BUILDING IMPROVEMENTS

3 NET NEW BUSINESSES

19 NET GAIN JOBS

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

\$11K VOLUNTEER VALUE

403 VOLUNTEER HOURS

“Volunteering is how neighbors become a community, our downtown thrives because people show up for one another. When we share our time and talents, we strengthen local businesses, build connections, and turn good ideas into real progress, making downtown Boone a place where everyone feels welcome and reminding us that we all have a stake in its future.”

Kendra Sink, Board Chair, Downtown Boone Development Association

Professional Headshot Session

Earlier this year, the DBDA hosted a professional headshot session for downtown business owners. The project offered updated portraits at no cost, helping participants refresh their marketing materials, websites, and social media.



Downtown Restaurant Week

The DBDA organized the first Downtown Boone Restaurant Week, scheduled during a time that is traditionally slower for restaurants. The event was successful in bringing people downtown to dine out, discover new spots, and support longtime favorites.



Downtown Trainings

Over the past year, the DBDA offered social media trainings and partnered with the NC Main Street program to host Destination Development sessions. These opportunities focused on practical tools and strategies, giving owners and staff new ways to promote their shops, events, and services while strengthening downtown as a destination.



COMMUNITY

PROFILE - 2025



POPULATION

19,092



HOUSEHOLDS

5,874



MEDIAN HH INCOME

28,633



MEDIAN AGE

21.5 YEARS

“While our Community Profile numbers are heavily influenced by a student population that rivals our own, our private investment speaks volumes about how our community appreciates and understands the significance of a healthy downtown - Main Street Director Lane Moody

DIGITAL IMPACT

WEBSITE REACH

90,500

FACEBOOK REACH

162,133

INSTAGRAM REACH
Last 90 Days

227,335



HELPING BUSINESSES THRIVE

- facade grants
- design services
- marketing
- business trainings

The Downtown Boone Development Association offers a range of business support opportunities and continues to expand them. In addition to grants, marketing, and design services, the DBDA has hosted trainings such as the NC Certified Destination Business program and social media workshops to help businesses attract customers and strengthen their online presence.

REDEVELOPMENT PROJECTS UNDERWAY!

In the past year, Downtown Boone marked the start of the long-awaited Howard Street Revitalization Project, a milestone investment in our community's future. The project includes upgraded underground utilities, improved stormwater systems, and a full streetscape redesign with wider sidewalks, new lighting, landscaping, and safer pedestrian crossings.

As work moves forward, these improvements will not only transform the look and feel of Howard Street but also create a more accessible and welcoming environment that supports downtown businesses and adds to the vibrancy of the district. This long-term investment will leave a lasting impact for residents, visitors, and future generations to enjoy.

PROMOTIONAL ACTIVITIES



The events below are used to increase community engagement and foot traffic in the Downtown area!

- First Friday Art Crawls
- Downtown Restaurant Week
- Boonerang Music and Arts Festival
- Targeted Social Media Campaigns
- Annual Meeting of the Membership in August
- Rotating Public Art Program

"As Vice President of the Downtown Boone Development Association, I believe that celebrating the arts through diverse promotional projects is key to both strengthening our economy and enriching the cultural fabric of downtown. These efforts not only support our local businesses but also inspire creativity, connection, and a shared community spirit that makes Boone a destination for residents and visitors alike."

– Suzanne Livesay, Vice President, Downtown Boone Development Association



DESIGNATIONS

- Certified Local Government
- Downtown Historic District
- Tree City USA
- Bee City USA

NC Main Street is a Main Street America™ Coordinating Program. As a Main Street America™ Coordinating Program, NC Main Street is part a powerful, grassroots network consisting of over 40 Coordinating Programs and over 1,600 neighborhoods and communities across the country committed to creating high-quality places and to building stronger communities through preservation-based economic development.



THE IMPACT OF MAIN STREET

2024-25

IN OUR COMMUNITIES

THE RESULTS ARE IN...

Each year in July, North Carolina Main Street communities report the impact of their work to the North Carolina Department of Commerce. Main Street is the most impactful downtown economic development program in the state of North Carolina.

PUBLIC/PRIVATE INVESTMENT

\$6.1B **\$518M**
1980-2025 2024-2025

NET NEW BUSINESSES

8,518 **288**
1980-2025 2024-2025

NET NEW JOBS

39,530 **1,925**
1980-2025 2024-2025

BUILDINGS REHABILITATED

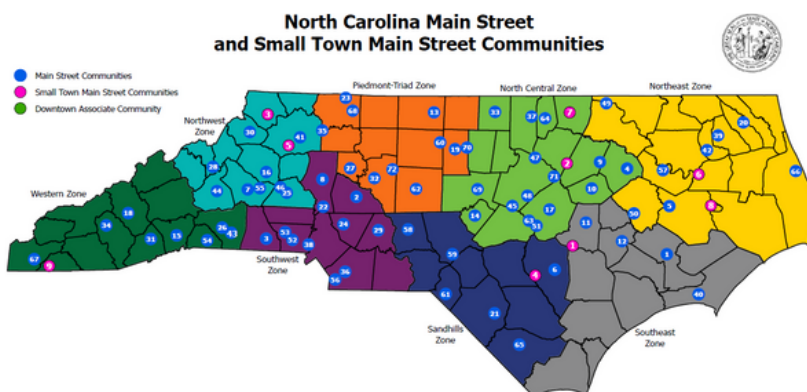
8,419 **293**
1980-2025 2024-2025

FACADE IMPROVEMENTS

9,440 **364**
1980-2025 2024-2025

VOLUNTEER HOURS

127,805 **\$4.2M**
2024-2025 Time Value



**LEARN ABOUT
NC MAIN STREET**

CLICK LOGO TO VIEW
WEBSITE

**LEARN ABOUT OUR
MAIN-TO-MAIN TRAIL**

CLICK LOGO TO VIEW
WEBSITE





Town Of Boone AGENDA ITEM ACTION REQUEST

This form must be completed and attached to all supporting documentation for items to be included in the Town of Boone Council agenda. One (1) form per agenda item.

Submitted By: Nicole Harmon

Department: Town Attorney

Contact Phone # 828.865.5555

Date Submitted: March 24, 2026

Email: ameade@meade-law.com

Date of Council Meeting to Consider this Item: April 8, 2026

Council Action Requested: For Action

Title: Approval of Resolution - Town of Boone Logo

Summary of Information:

Attached for Council's consideration and approval is a resolution adopting the new Town of Boone logo.



A RESOLUTION ADOPTING THE OFFICIAL LOGO AND SEAL OF THE TOWN OF BOONE

WHEREAS, the Town of Boone has historically utilized various logos and seals to represent the municipality in official, promotional, and operational capacities; and

WHEREAS, the Boone Town Council recognizes the importance of maintaining a consistent, modern, and recognizable visual identity that reflects the Town's character, heritage, and strategic vision; and

WHEREAS, with the help of grant funding, the Town has undertaken a comprehensive branding initiative to develop an updated official logo and seal that better represent the community and its values; and

WHEREAS, the Boone Town Council finds it to be in the best interest of the Town to formally adopt a single official logo and single official seal for all municipal purposes and to eliminate confusion arising from the continued use of outdated or unofficial marks;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Boone Town Council that:

1. Adoption of Official Logo and Seal: The Boone Town Council hereby adopts new Town of Boone logos and official seal, as presented and attached hereto as Exhibit A, to serve as official visual identifiers of the Town.
2. Exclusive Use: The adopted logo and seal shall be used for all official Town purposes, including but not limited to correspondence, signage, digital platforms, uniforms, vehicles, publications, and legal documents, unless otherwise authorized by the Town Manager.
3. Implementation: The Town Manager, or their designee, is authorized to implement this Resolution, including the phased replacement of prior logos and seals on Town property, materials, and systems, as practicable and fiscally responsible.
4. Effective Date: This Resolution shall become effective upon adoption.

ADOPTED this the ____ day of _____, 2026.

Mayor

Town Clerk

Exhibit A

BOONE BRAND GUIDE LINE S VERSION 1.0

TOWN PRIMARY MARK

The Town Primary Mark is the main identifier for the town government. This is the primary version to be used for all official Town of Boone communications, programs, and services.

It ensures that the town is visibly recognized for its leadership, investments, and accomplishments—helping residents and partners understand when an initiative comes directly from the municipal government.





Town Of Boone AGENDA ITEM ACTION REQUEST

This form must be completed and attached to all supporting documentation for items to be included in the Town of Boone Council agenda. One (1) form per agenda item.

Submitted By: Nicole Harmon

Department: Town Attorney

Contact Phone # 828.865.5555

Date Submitted: March 24, 2026

Email: ameade@meade-law.com

Date of Council Meeting to Consider this Item: April 8, 2026

Council Action Requested: For Action

Title: Consideration of Revisions to Chapter 36:Town Logo

Summary of Information:

Attached for Council's consideration and approval are amendments to Chapter 36 of the Boone Town Code, including clarification that the Town Council will formally adopt the official logo and seal by resolution, and clarification on permitted uses of the logo.

EXHIBIT A

CHAPTER 36: TOWN LOGO and SEAL

Section

36.01 Town logo and seal designated

36.02 Use of town logo and seal

36.99 Penalty

§ 36.01 TOWN LOGO AND SEAL DESIGNATED.

~~The following is the~~ The official logo logos and seal for the town shall be formally adopted by the Town Council by Resolution.;



(Ord. passed 12-14-2010; Ord. passed --)

§ 36.02 USE OF TOWN LOGO AND TOWN SEAL.

(A) ~~(A)~~ Use of town logo

1. B~~b~~y employees of the town. Any employee of the town is authorized to reproduce the town logo on letterhead, agendas, minutes of meetings, brochures, electronic communication and other forms of communication used for official correspondence or communication by an employee on behalf of the town. A department head may authorize the reproduction of the town's logo on

equipment which is owned or being purchased by the town and on signs identifying real and personal property of the town. Any other use of the town logo by a town employee or department head must be approved by the Town Manager or Town Council. No employee may authorize any other person to reproduce the town's logo without the express authorization of the Town Manager.

2. ~~-(B)-~~ Authorization by Town Manager. Except for those matters expressly reserved to the Town Council, the Town Manager may authorize the reproduction and display of the town logo, including, but not limited to, clothing and other items for distribution by the town to town employees or other persons.
3. ~~-(C)-~~ Use as part of a publication, design or other item in which another person or entity claims intellectual property rights. Except pursuant to the express approval by the Town Council, the town's logo may not be used or reproduced in any publication, design or other item in which another person or entity claims intellectual property rights. Furthermore, even with Town Council approval, it is the policy of the town that no person may reserve or claim intellectual property rights in any publication, design or other item which includes or incorporates the town's logo unless the town is simultaneously licensed for the unlimited reproduction of the publication, design or other item without any further approval required.
4. ~~-(D)-~~ Reproduction of town logo by third persons. Unless explicitly authorized by the town, a person who is not authorized hereunder to reproduce the town's logo may not do so. The town expressly reserves all rights to its logo.
5. ~~-(E)-~~ Use of town logo in signs. No person or entity may include the town's logo in a sign, as that term is defined in the town's Unified Development Ordinance, Art. 18, without action by the Town Council approving the use.

(B) Use of Town Seal: The Town Seal may be used only on official town documents and with the approval of the Town Clerk.

(Ord. passed 12-14-2010)

§ 36.99 PENALTY.

The general penalty provisions of § 10.99 of this code apply to any violation of this chapter. In addition, the town is authorized to take all necessary action to protect its logo and seal, including, but not limited to, the initiation of a civil action and pursuit of an injunction to prohibit or stop ~~the~~ unauthorized display, reproduction or other use ~~of the town's logo~~. Should the town initiate a civil action ~~to protect its logo hereunder~~, it shall be entitled to recover its court costs, including attorney's fees against a person or entity who has improperly displayed, reproduced or used the town's logo or seal.

(Prior Code, § 36.03) (Ord. passed 12-14-2010; Ord. passed 8-14-2018)



Town Of Boone AGENDA ITEM ACTION REQUEST

This form must be completed and attached to all supporting documentation for items to be included in the Town of Boone Council agenda. One (1) form per agenda item.

Submitted By: Nicole Harmon

Department: Cultural Resources Department

Contact Phone # 828.268.6280

Date Submitted: March 27, 2026

Email: mark.freed@boonenc.gov

Date of Council Meeting to Consider this Item: April 8, 2026

Council Action Requested: For Action

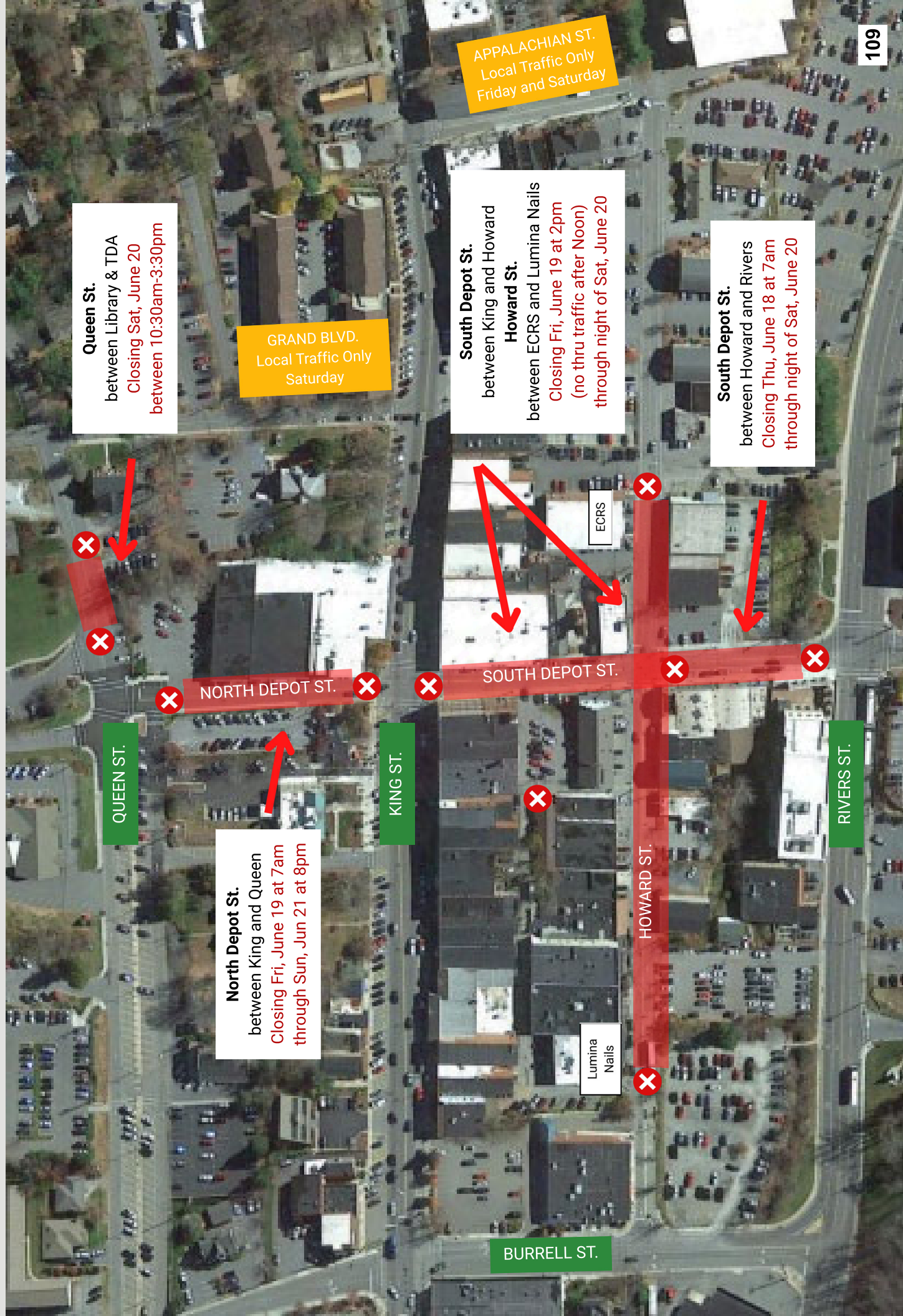
Title: Request for Road Closures and to Allow Open Containers - Boonerang Music & Arts Festival

Summary of Information:

This is a request for action for permission to allow open containers in the zone referenced in the first page of the attached document and street closures referenced in the second page of the attached document for the annual Boonerang Music & Arts Festival, scheduled for June 19-21, 2026. The attached document denotes specific road closure days, times, and locations.



Boonerang Festival - Downtown Road Closures



Queen St.
between Library & TDA
Closing Sat, June 20
between 10:30am-3:30pm

GRAND BLVD.
Local Traffic Only
Saturday

South Depot St.
between King and Howard
Howard St.
between ECRS and Lumina Nails
Closing Fri, June 19 at 2pm
(no thru traffic after Noon)
through night of Sat, June 20

South Depot St.
between Howard and Rivers
Closing Thu, June 18 at 7am
through night of Sat, June 20

North Depot St.
between King and Queen
Closing Fri, June 19 at 7am
through Sun, Jun 21 at 8pm

BURRELL ST.

Lumina
Nails

ECRS



Town Of Boone AGENDA ITEM ACTION REQUEST

This form must be completed and attached to all supporting documentation for items to be included in the Town of Boone Council agenda. One (1) form per agenda item.

Submitted By: Nicole Harmon

Department: Cultural Resources Department

Contact Phone # 828.268.6280

Date Submitted: March 26, 2026

Email: mark.freed@boonenc.gov

Date of Council Meeting to Consider this Item: April 8, 2026

Council Action Requested: For Information

Title: Presentation of Town of Boone 1872 Award Information

Summary of Information:

The annual Town of Boone 1872 Award nominations are currently being accepted through May 1, 2026. Please help spread the word to anyone who would like to submit a nomination. More information about the award, past recipients, and nominations carrying over from prior years is included in the attached information.

The Town of Boone 1872 Award:

The Town of Boone 1872 Award recognizes citizens and organizations for substantial contributions to the Town of Boone.

Objectives:

To provide an annual opportunity to recognize living individuals and active organizations for their substantial contributions to the Town of Boone

Eligibility:

Any individual or organization that has made a significant impact on the Town of Boone may be nominated. Town of Boone residence is not required. Town of Boone staff and elected officials are not eligible. Posthumous nominations will not be considered. Anyone may make a nomination. Once submitted, nominations will stay on file for three years.

The Town of Boone 1872 Award honors both innovation, preservation, service, and tradition, recognizing citizens and organizations for outstanding contributions to the Town of Boone. The award will not be issued in recognition of ideological, political or religious beliefs.

The following list provides some examples of rationale for nominations:

- Contributed to the **cultural fabric** of Boone, helping preserve, pass-on, or celebrate local traditions.
- Made outstanding **public service** contributions by participating in or implementing projects that benefit the community.
- Improved the quality of life in Boone by helping to protect the health of our **environment** or increase **sustainability**.
- Made important **educational impact** on the residents of Boone
- Enhanced **recreational** opportunities for the people and visitors of Boone
- Helped make important contributions to the **historic preservation** of the Town.
- Increased the **economic vitality** of the Town of Boone and its residents.

Nomination:

*The deadline for nominations is **May 1, 2026**.*

Selection:

Nominations will be reviewed by the Cultural Resources Advisory Board and final recommendations will be provided to the Town Council for final approval. Up to three awards may be presented each calendar year, including up to two individuals and one organization. Once selected, award recipients will be contacted for their consent.

Presentation:

Awards will be presented by the Mayor or a member of Town Council at the July 4th Celebration.

Past Recipients:

2023 Town of Boone 1872 Award recipient:

- Renee Boughman of F.A.R.M. Café

2024 Town of Boone 1872 Award recipients:

- Bettie Bond
- Blue Ridge Women in Agriculture

2025 Town of Boone 1872 Award recipients:

- Kay Borkowski
- David Jackson
- Hospitality House of Boone

2026 Town of Boone 1872 Award

Nomination Summary

Leftover nominations carried forward from previous years:

1. Patty Dale nomination for Watauga Humane Society E.D., Justin Vander
2. Patty Dale nomination for Watauga Humane Society
3. Justin Vander nomination for Watauga Humane Society
4. Debra Harman nomination for RAM's Rack
5. George Santucci nomination for High Country Food Hub
6. Heather Smith nomination for Homestead Recover Center
7. Katlynd Taylor nomination for Homestead Recover Center
8. Crystal Trivette nomination for Homestead Recover Center
9. Brittany Matheson nomination for Homestead Recover Center
10. Bob Baker nomination for Homestead Recover Center
11. Dale Hudler nomination for Homestead Recover Center / Mollie Bolick

Nomination Form

Name of Person Making Nomination Patty Dale

Phone Number of Person Making Nomination [828-268-4145](tel:828-268-4145)

Email Address of Person Making Nomination daleph55@gmail.com

Mailing Address of Person Making Nomination 648 Tracy Circle

City Boone

State NC

Zip Code 28607

Relationship to Nominee Board member and volunteer (Section Break)

Name of Person/Organization Being Nominated Watauga Humane Society, Justin Vander, Executive Director

Phone Number of Person/Organization Being Nominated [828-264-7865](tel:828-264-7865)

Email Address of Person/Organization Being Nominatedjustinv@wataugahumane.org

Mailing Address of Person/Organization Being Nominated PO Box 1835

City Boone

State NC

Zip Code 28607

Detailed Reason for Nomination

I would like to nominate the Watauga Humane Society for the Town of Boone 1872 Award to recognize its outstanding public service to our community for more than 50 years.

The Watauga Humane Society was started in 1969 by a group of caring local citizens. One of its founding members was Ms. Velma Burnley who served as the first Watauga Humane Society President and was later the Mayor of Boone from 1989 to 2005. For many years, the shelter was located within the Town of Boone limits by the current wastewater treatment plant, until the current facility was built in 2011.

The Watauga Humane Society houses and cares for the stray animals of the town and county, providing love, care, and medical services to those animals until they are adopted into a permanent, loving home. The Humane Society animals are vaccinated and are spayed and neutered prior to adoption.

In addition, the Watauga Humane Society works with community in several ways – by providing low cost spay and neuter services for the pets of community members with financial need; by providing educational programs on pet care and animal welfare by WHS volunteers visiting our schools; and by holding vaccination and microchip clinics for the community. Funding for the Watauga Humane Society is largely provided by donations from our kind and generous local community.

As a long-time Watauga Humane Society volunteer and Board member, I can attest to the positive impact that the Watauga Humane Society has had on our community for both its humans and pets. The Watauga Humane Society has provided outstanding services to the community for over 50 years and is so deserving of the Town of Boone 1872 Award.

Nomination Form

Name of Person Making Nomination	Patty Dale
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Relationship to Nominee	Watauga Humane Society Board Member
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(Section Break)

Name of Person/Organization Being Nominated	Watauga Humane Society (Contact is Ashlee Yepez, Director of Shelter Operations and Animal Welfare)
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Detailed Reason for Nomination	We nominate the Watauga Humane Society for the Town of Boone 1872 Award to recognize its outstanding public service to the Town of Boone.
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For more than 50 years, the Watauga Humane Society has housed, fed, loved, and found forever homes for abandoned and unwanted animals. Doing so has benefitted the town by reducing animal suffering and providing a source for amazing companion animals. In addition, WHS provides educational programs on animal welfare and pet care, and low-cost spay/neuter services to community members with financial need. WHS provides medical services to animals in our care and maintains its no-kill status by providing care to every healthy, adoptable animal we take in.

The Watauga Humane Society traces its humble beginnings to 1969 and a small facility located beside the Boone Wastewater Treatment Plant on land that the town leased to WHS for \$1 per year. One of the original founders and the first WHS president was Ms. Velma Burnley, who later served as the Mayor of Boone.

Thanks to community support, in 2011, Watauga Humane Society was able to open a large, state-of-the-art shelter on 13 acres. While the facility is no longer within the town limits, it continues to serve the animals and pet owners of Boone.

Nomination Form

Name of Person Making Nomination Justin Vander

Relationship to Nominee Executive Director of the Organization (Section Break)

Name of Person/Organization Being Nominated Watauga Humane Society

Detailed Reason for Nomination

I'd like to nominate the Watauga Humane Society for the Town of Boone 1872 Award to recognize its outstanding public service to the Town of Boone.

For more than 50 years, the Watauga Humane Society has housed, fed, loved, and found homes for abandoned and unwanted animals. WHS provides medical services to animals in our care and maintains its no-kill status by providing care to every healthy, adoptable animal we take in. Doing so has benefitted the town by reducing animal suffering and providing a source for amazing companion animals. In addition, Watauga Humane Society (WHS) provides educational programs on animal welfare and pet care, low-cost spay/neuter services to community members with financial need, pet food pantry services for food insecure residents, as well as reunites hundreds of lost pets annually with their owners. Our Arko Dog Park provides a fenced, hillside meadow for recreation to members and their dogs to exercise and socialize.

The Watauga Humane Society traces its humble beginnings to 1969 and a small facility located beside the Boone Wastewater Treatment Plant on land that the town leased to WHS for \$1 per year. One of the original founders and the first WHS president was Ms. Velma Burnley, who later served as the Mayor of Boone.

Thanks to community support, in 2011, Watauga Humane Society was able to open a large, state-of-the-art shelter on 13 acres. While the facility is no longer within the town limits, it continues to serve the animals and pet owners of Boone and is in the forefront of lifesaving shelter practices—something to be very proud of.

As a local business, it provides employment for over 20 folks and contracts services with many small businesses in the community which contributes to the local economy. It also collaborates with business partners for mutually beneficial events and participates in town events and functions, adding to the vitality and cultural fabric of Boone.

Nomination Form

Name of Person Making Nomination	Debra Harmon
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Relationship to Nominee	Employee
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(Section Break)

Name of Person/Organization Being Nominated	Resort Area Ministries/RAM'S Rack
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Detailed Reason for Nomination	I would like to nominate Resort Area Ministries/RAM'S Rack Thrift Shop because I believe this organization has made a significant difference in the lives of many people in the town of Boone as well as Watauga County. This 501c3 nonprofit has been a helping agency in Boone for over 50 years and has helped hundreds of low income families with home repairs, from building handicap ramps to roof repairs. RAM'S Rack has helped thousands of people in need obtain clothing, housewares and other necessities throughout their 40+years of operations. I have been with RAM'S Rack for almost ten years and in that time alone I have seen hundreds of homeless individuals, struggling families and house fire victims all helped with things such as clothing, blankets, shoes, furniture and much, much more. I believe this organization is a wonderful example of the giving, helping spirit of our wonderful mountain home.
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Nomination Form

Name	George Santucci
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Relationship	customer
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(Section Break)

Organization Being Nominated	High Country Food Hub
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Detailed Reason for Nomination	The High Country Food Hub (HCFH) located in the town of Boone, opened in 2017. It offers 1,400 square feet in the Watauga County Agricultural Center of affordable storage options for cold, frozen, and dry products for producers and access to a year-round farmers market for consumers.
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In the early days, local farmers brought in their fresh foods by wagons right into downtown Boone. Today this history of small farms and food preservation is carried on by the High Country Food Hub. The HCFH brought this farmer-consumer connection into the digital age by providing an on-line farmers market.

The HCFH would not have become a reality without the joint cooperation of elected officials from both the town of Boone and the County, as well as Blue Ridge Women in Agriculture, a non-profit, and the Watauga Agriculture Extension.

By simply clicking on

<https://link.edgepilot.com/s/76cdab4b/CoJKNKgB8USo7ji0tkNpMw?u=http://www.highcountryfoodhub.org/>, local shoppers can access a diverse offering from cabbage to coffee, from pork chops to fermented veggies, from artisan bread to prepared foods and much more. In addition, the High Country Food Hub provides technical education to farmers as well as product promotion. The HCFH serves diverse segments of the community through its' Double Up Food Bucks Program for those on EBT benefits, and Local Food as Medicine for those with special dietary needs.

The HCFH has contributed to Boone's quality of life by helping to preserve farm land from over development by providing a market for farmers to sell their goods. Small, local farmers cannot earn a living unless they can sell their products. Watauga County's only year-round Farmers' Market that provides a food system to feed residents, not just isolated farmers. It is this system that promotes our agritourism industry as part of Explore Boone.

The HCFH makes farming as sustainable business. As a result, the economic impact of the HCFH has been huge! Since 2017 it contributed nearly 1.2 million to the Watauga County economy.

In conclusion, The High Country Food Hub is a perfect nomination for the 1872 Award because it reflects local history and culture, it serves the citizens of Boone and Watauga county and because establishing the Hub required city, county and non-profit cooperation.

Nomination Form

Name of Person Making Nomination	Heather Smith
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Relationship to Nominee	No relation
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Name of Person/Organization Being Nominated	Homestead Recovery Center
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Detailed Reason for Nomination	Homestead Recovery Center has made a remarkable impact on the Boone and Watauga County communities by offering invaluable services to individuals in need. This center's dedication to growth and progress is evident in its expansion to support even more residents through two recovery residences. What's more, all of Homestead Recovery Center's services are provided at no cost, ensuring accessibility to all members of the community. Their commitment to service extends beyond their own programs, as they consistently demonstrate a willingness to support others. With an outstanding and compassionate staff, Homestead Recovery Center stands out as an exemplary organization that truly deserves recognition for its contributions and positive influence on the lives of countless individuals.
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Nomination Form

Name of Person Making Nomination	Katlynd Taylor
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Relationship to Nominee	Employer
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Name of Person/Organization Being Nominated	Homestead Recovery Center
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Detailed Reason for Nomination	I am nominating homestead recovery center because I think we make substantial contributions to the town of Boone. Homestead Recovery Center cares deeply about all members of this community and love helping and making a difference. They just opened up 2 halfway houses in the area and all of the clients involved are doing great, and its so great that they are able to keep people local and in recovery.
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Nomination Form

Name of Person Making Nomination	Crystal Trivette
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Relationship to Nominee	Employer
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Name of Person/Organization Being Nominated	Homestead Recovery Center
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Detailed Reason for Nomination	This organization has done an immense amount for the town of Boone. They provide basic supplies including clothing, hygiene items, camping gear, and safe use supplies to individuals in the community, whether they are in active use or recovery. Late last year they opened Watauga County's first Recovery Housing for men and women to have access close to home instead of having to move off the mountain and starting over as active members of society somewhere else. They provide court advocacy services, as well as diversion opportunities for some individuals with Substance Use Disorder. They provide community trainings in safe use, and Narcan trainings.
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Nomination Form

Name of Person Making Nomination	Brittany Matheson
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Relationship to Nominee	Employee
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Name of Person/Organization Being Nominated	Homestead Recovery Center
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Detailed Reason for Nomination	We are a peer-led nonprofit organization dedicated to meeting people exactly where they are in their journey. Through a compassionate, nonjudgmental approach, we offer support services including harm reduction overdose prevention, access to treatment, transportation, and a welcoming peer living room space. Our mission is to walk alongside individuals with lived experience, providing real support and real connection because healing starts with trust.
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Nomination Form

Name of Person Making Nomination	Bob Baker
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Relationship to Nominee	Volunteer
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Name of Person/Organization Being Nominated	Homestead Recovery Center
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Detailed Reason for Nomination	Organization provides compassionate care to clients recovering from substance use disorder. Services, include basic supplies, harm reduction, peer services, including food, shower and laundry, recovery on the inside for clients incarcerated, counseling and case management, and a men's and women's residential recovery program. It has an energetic, encouraging and caring staff that problem solves to meet client needs, The organization works well with its community partners. Staff treats clients as people with worth and purpose and without stigma. Clients greatly appreciate the work of Homestead and I have heard a number of clients tell me the organization has saved his/her life. Most of the services are provided without charge. There are a number of wonderful organizations in this community, and I appreciate the work of all them. In my view there are none who do more good with the limited resources available than Homestead Recovery. I appreciate the opportunity to make this nomination.
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Nomination Form

Name	Dale Hudler
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Relationship	Peer in work setting
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Organization	Homestead Recovery Center/ Mollie Bolick
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Reason for Nomination	Homestead Recover Center is a non-profit Harm Reduction Recovery Center located in Boone. Over the last almost four years, Over the past 4 years our relationships with the community has grow, our services have broadened, and the trust of the community has grown due to the work we do to provide services to the underserved. From the relationships with all law enforcement, Department of Public Safety, the judicial system, the health providers, Social services, Watauga Medical Center other recovery agencies, and the multitudes of agencies that the County so fully supports, we have been part of a strong network to get individuals the help they need.
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Homestead Recovery center has no charge for services(accept for rent at the sober living houses). Our services are; case management, payment for MOUD medication, peer services, showers, laundry facility services, Peer support at Watauga County jail for possible charge diversion or post release support, clothing, help with Social Service sign up, transportation, Licensed clinical therapist services, crisis intervention, Sober living houses for men and women, Peer support, a embedded Social worker position at the Boone Police Department, placement. payment for drug treatment harm reduction supplies, and a day center. This wide range of services and vision has been led by Mollie Bolick. Her continued leadership and passion to continue this invaluable service is an inspiration of what is right and kind in this world.

in the last 4 years, Homestead has placed over 200 clients from the Watauga community into a higher level of care, giving individuals a chance to make different choices.

With addiction and homelessness a significant challenge that our nation faces, Watauga is not exempt from these crisis's. The agency of Homestead Recover Center under the direction of Mollie Bolick may be a strong consideration for the Boone 1872 Award.



Town Of Boone AGENDA ITEM ACTION REQUEST

This form must be completed and attached to all supporting documentation for items to be included in the Town of Boone Council agenda. One (1) form per agenda item.

Submitted By: Nicole Harmon

Department: Administration

Contact Phone # 828.268.6200

Date Submitted: March 27, 2026

Email: nicole.harmon@boonenc.gov

Date of Council Meeting to Consider this Item: April 8, 2026

Council Action Requested: For Action

Title: Consideration of Minutes

Summary of Information:

Attached for Council's consideration and approval are the following sets of minutes:

- March 20, 2026 Special Town Council Meeting
- March 25, 2026 Regular Town Council Meeting
- March 30, 2026 Special Town Council Meeting

**MINUTES – SPECIAL MEETING
BOONE TOWN COUNCIL
MARCH 20, 2026**

CALL TO ORDER

A special meeting of the Boone Town Council was called to order at 9:05 a.m. on Friday, March 20, 2026, in the Boone Town Council Chambers located at 1500 Blowing Rock Road in Boone. Mayor Dalton George presided (entered the meeting at 9:28 a.m.). Council members present included Mayor Pro-Tem Todd Carter, Virginia Roseman (entered the meeting at 9:10 a.m.), Eric Plaag, and Anne Pruitt. Staff present included Interim Town Manager/Human Resources Director Dale Presnell, Town Clerk Nicole Harmon, Grants Coordinator/Communications Laney Wise, Public Works Director Todd Moody, Deputy Public Works Director Justin Stines, Planning Director Jane Shook, Deputy Planning Director Brandon Wise, Cultural Resources Director Mark Freed, Police Chief Daniel Duckworth, Fire Chief Jimmy Isaacs, and Sustainability and Special Projects Manager George Santucci. The purpose of the meeting was to gather input and take potential action regarding the Town-owned property known as Daniel Boone Park and its entities.

MOMENT OF SILENCE

A brief moment of silence was observed.

BRIEF OVERVIEW OF THE PROPERTIES/RESOURCES AT DANIEL BOONE PARK

Councilmember Plaag provided an overview of the property known as Daniel Boone Park, including the resources located on the site. An overview of existing lease and license agreements associated with the property was also presented.

WATAUGA COUNTY FARMERS MARKET

Michelle Dineen provided an overview of Market activities and encouraged Council to prioritize increased safety and accessibility at Daniel Boone Park, including the provision of year-round, fully functional restroom facilities. She inquired whether the Town had initiated an official planning process for the park. Council members indicated that the current discussion represented the first step in that process. Councilmember Plaag noted that previous Councils had been frustrated by the absence of a comprehensive plan for the park, which had resulted in outside entities independently shaping the use of the Town-owned property. He stated that the intent of the current effort was for the Town to take a more active role in planning and to collaborate with partner organizations rather than defer to separate, entity-driven plans. Councilmember Roseman recalled that during her time with SAHA, the Town had not been significantly involved in planning efforts. Councilmember Pruitt expressed a desire to move beyond past plans, while Councilmember Plaag noted that previous plans still held value.

Ms. Dineen asked how the Market could best collaborate with the Town and its partners moving forward. Councilmember Plaag emphasized the importance of clear communication and encouraged the Market to articulate its vision for future growth. Mayor Pro-Tem Carter asked about opportunities for improved signage and connectivity. Ms. Dineen indicated that there was potential for more cohesive signage and better-connected pathways throughout the park. Councilmember Plaag observed that there had been inequities in the use of space and acknowledged past tensions among park entities, including between the Gardens, the Market, and SAHA, particularly related to restroom access and pathway use. He emphasized the need for mutual understanding and cooperation moving forward, noting that the property is Town-owned. Ms. Dineen acknowledged past misunderstandings and expressed the Market's commitment to a collaborative approach, recognizing all entities as shared community assets. Councilmember Pruitt asked whether a master calendar existed for park activities. Ms. Dineen indicated that she was not aware of one. Councilmember Plaag stated that, as a Town resource, the park would benefit from a Town-managed master calendar, and Ms. Dineen agreed. Ms. Dineen also asked whether the Town supported shared branding and marketing efforts for the park, such as a coordinated flag campaign. Council members expressed general agreement with this initiative. Ms. Dineen further inquired about expanding AppalCART service to the park. Mayor Pro-Tem Carter noted that discussions had occurred with AppalCART but that feasibility data would be needed to justify adding a new route, though the idea warranted further exploration. It was noted that ADA services are currently available upon request. Finally, Ms. Dineen asked whether the Town anticipated the Market continuing at its current location. Council members generally indicated support for its continued presence at Daniel Boone Park. Councilmember Plaag noted that there had been no formal discussions regarding relocation, though there had been informal conversations about potentially hosting a separate farmers market event at the Armory.

DANIEL BOONE NATIVE GARDENS

Daniel Boone Native Gardens Director Amy Seely provided a presentation on ongoing operations and needs. Mayor Pro-Tem Carter asked whether funding had been considered for the installation of a fence. Councilmember Plaag noted a perceived inequity in utility costs and that these need to be equitable across all user groups. He raised concerns that SAHA would be responsible for utility costs in the new restrooms when they are open for other uses, and also referenced a cabin on the property, suggesting it could present an opportunity for shared use and collaboration among partner organizations. He further noted that the fern garden and bridges were damaged during Hurricane Helene, and that while the Town had completed some stabilization work, the area may be eligible for disaster recovery funding. Councilmember Roseman stated that assistance with grant writing would need to be considered equitably among all entities. Mayor George asked whether the concert series was envisioned as a long-term revenue source. Rebecca Hutchins, Board Chair, responded that it had generated some revenue in recent years but that sponsorships and donations had been difficult to secure, noting potential for future

growth. Mayor George suggested coordinating with Cultural Resources on pricing strategies. Councilmember Plaag also suggested exploring partnerships with the Appalachian Theatre and Valle Crucis Community Park to assist with promotion of non-ticketed events.

SOUTHERN APPALACHIAN HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

Southern Appalachian Historical Association Director Marrena Greer provided an overview of upcoming events and requested support from the Mayor, including storytelling and an opening-season letter. She noted ongoing construction at the site, including an ADA-accessible pathway funded by the State, and expressed enthusiasm for the addition of year-round restroom facilities. She also reported that grant work was underway, along with electrical, paving, and tree-related improvements, and stated that a 36-night regular season was planned. Ms. Greer thanked the Gardens for their cooperation in addressing sound concerns and noted an increase in visitation to the museum from school groups. Councilmember Plaag acknowledged the history of deferred maintenance at the property and stated that the Town holds responsibility for maintaining the facility and pursuing grant funding, rather than relying solely on SAHA to communicate needs. He also noted that, while SAHA operates under a license agreement, there should be flexibility to allow other groups to use the property at appropriate times. Councilmember Pruitt suggested that such coordination be addressed within the license agreement and further noted that the agreement should clarify that the licensee is responsible for the conduct of its guests in order to alleviate issues experienced during previous events. Ms. Greer expressed a desire to be included in discussions regarding additional events. Mayor George agreed and emphasized the importance of consistency across agreements. Councilmember Plaag asked whether SAHA maintains insurance on the Hickory Ridge buildings that SAHA owns. He indicated that SAHA should be responsible for maintaining insurance on these and not the Town, but that the grounds at Hickory Ridge and the grounds and other buildings elsewhere on the property are clearly Town property and should be insured as such. Ms. Greer indicated she would need to confirm. Councilmember Roseman stated that, if additional events are scheduled, SAHA would be interested in partnering to manage ticketing and concessions as a potential revenue source. Mayor George noted that such arrangements could be explored but should be approached cautiously to ensure fairness among all users. Ms. Greer also raised concerns regarding utility costs, stating that with the addition of new restroom facilities, it would not be equitable for SAHA to bear the full cost of water usage.

Mayor George declared a break at 10:59 a.m. Council reconvened at 11:13 a.m.

INPUT FROM TOWN DEPARTMENTS

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

Public Works Director Todd Moody provided a historical overview of maintenance and improvements at Daniel Boone Park. He noted that between 1996 and 2004, the Town performed minimal maintenance beyond leaf collection. In 2005, restroom renovations and winterization efforts were completed to extend the facility's usability, followed by general building maintenance in 2006 and significant work on outdoor lighting. He reported that the Powderhorn Theatre was demolished in 2014, major electrical upgrades were completed in 2008 and approved by an inspector, and a building for use as a sound booth was purchased in 2009. Additional improvements included roof replacement and cabin repairs at the Gardens in 2009, removal of numerous trees between 2012 and 2014, installation of an ADA-accessible sidewalk in 2014, and construction of a stage in 2025. He also noted that the Town had provided mowing services at the Daniel Boone Native Gardens for approximately 15 to 20 years. Mr. Moody stated that approximately \$300,000 in Town funds had been invested over the past 20 years, with approximately \$1,574 remaining in that budget line, not including staff time. He requested direction from Council and noted that future considerations should include both maintenance funding and staffing needs. Councilmember Plaag asked, excluding staff time, what level of funding would be necessary to ensure safety, proper use, and adequate infrastructure, such as parking. Mr. Moody stated that he could not provide a precise estimate without further review, but indicated that the need would likely total in the millions. Councilmember Plaag expressed appreciation for staff efforts but stated that the limited historical investment reflected a lack of prioritization by past Councils and emphasized the need for increased investment moving forward. Councilmember Pruitt suggested that park-related expenditures may be more appropriately managed under a Parks and Recreation function rather than Public Works. Councilmember Plaag also raised questions regarding utility cost allocation, particularly with the addition of shared restroom facilities, and whether a different cost structure should be considered. Mr. Moody indicated that it would not be appropriate for SAHA to bear the full cost of water usage and noted that additional information on existing utility payments would need to be confirmed. Cultural Resources Director Mark Freed explained that a credit system is currently used, whereby the Town pays to maintain certain utility lines, such as parking lot lighting, and those costs are factored into overall usage. Councilmember Plaag asked whether the Gardens contribute to restroom-related utility costs, and Ms. Hutchins responded that their electric costs have been minimal and that she was unsure what all was covered. Councilmember Plaag acknowledged staff efforts to maintain equitable arrangements but stated that the addition of new restroom facilities would likely require restructuring of existing agreements. He further noted that past Councils had determined it was beneficial to allow licensees to occupy the property without charging rent.

CULTURAL RESOURCES

Cultural Resources Director Mark Freed recognized the park's partner organizations as valuable contributors to the community and noted their strong commitment and collaboration. It was stated that the use and condition of the property have varied over time based on direction from Council and Town management. Mr. Freed requested

guidance on several operational matters, including whether to actively encourage increased use of the park and how to manage a centralized calendar of events. It was noted that annual coordination meetings with each partner organization had occurred in the past but were not held in the previous year due to the anticipation of the summit; however, staff indicated that a calendar could be managed internally with clear direction from Council. Mr. Freed also requested clarification on funding responsibilities, specifically distinguishing between program-related needs, which should be funded by individual organizations, and broader park-related needs, which should be funded by the Town. It was noted that exceptions have occurred, such as the stage turntable, which was funded by SAHA, and staff requested direction on how such situations should be handled moving forward. Additional guidance was requested regarding the pursuit and coordination of grant funding. Mr. Freed referenced prior planning efforts, including the marquee haul back plan, which was Town-funded and included stakeholder and community input. He indicated that feedback from that process emphasized the desire for the park to function as “Boone’s Central Park,” valuing traditions such as Horn in the West while also supporting expanded use of the amphitheater for additional events. Identified needs included fencing, improved condition of cabins and stage facilities, electrical and lighting upgrades, trail development, a permanent farmers market structure with community space, and upgrades to concessions and amphitheater seating. Mr. Freed noted a preference for avoiding reliance solely on arts-related fundraising to support these improvements. Mayor George acknowledged that both successful and challenging events have occurred at the park. Mr. Freed noted that events such as vintage markets, haunted trails, and Daniel Boone Days have been successful. Mayor George suggested that these examples could serve as a model or framework for future event organizers. A discussion was held regarding the licensing of events and the need to review current processes. Mr. Freed noted that scheduling constraints are present, as Saturdays are in high demand as the Farmers Market holds a license for the upper lot from April through November until 2:00 p.m. each Saturday, and SAHA holds a license from May through August. Mr. Freed requested clarification on how the Town could schedule events within the Gardens area under current agreements. Ms. Hutchins indicated that such use would require coordination and agreement, similar to any other external party. Mayor Pro-Tem Carter cited examples from other communities, noting that partnerships between municipalities and universities have been used to draw attention to public spaces and increase residents' familiarity with and use of them.

POLICE DEPARTMENT

Chief Duckworth provided an overview from a law enforcement perspective regarding operations at Daniel Boone Park. It was noted that officers conduct preventative measures, including routine property checks, though full walkthroughs of the entire property are limited. For events, staff evaluate factors such as crowd size, demographics, presence of alcohol, and overall threat level in order to determine appropriate staffing levels. Typical incidents include graffiti and parking lot accidents, though a few arrests were reported at a prior “Thaw Out” event. Councilmember Plaag asked whether security

personnel hired for outside events are off-duty officers or separate from Town staffing. Chief Duckworth responded that most are off-duty officers coordinated through Major Robbins. Councilmember Plaag asked whether it would be preferable for the Town to provide security services directly and bill event organizers, rather than coordinating separately. Chief Duckworth indicated that additional analysis would be needed to evaluate costs and options and noted that the Town Attorney has reviewed off-duty contract arrangements. Councilmember Pruitt cautioned that such an approach may involve additional considerations, including overtime, fees, and insurance costs, and emphasized the importance of accounting for those factors. Chief Duckworth noted that some jurisdictions charge up to \$100 per hour for such services compared to Boone's \$60. In response to a question regarding frequency, he stated that off-duty assignments vary among officers, with some working none and others working several per month, and that scheduling is monitored to ensure officers remain adequately rested for their regular duties.

LUNCH

Mayor George declared a break at 12:09 p.m. Council reconvened at 12:57 p.m.

DISCUSSION OF CREATION OF POSSIBLE PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT

Councilmember Plaag noted that the Town manages a variety of properties, some functioning as parks and others that are less obvious, such as Mayor Brantz Park at the Jones House and Jimmy Smith Park. He noted the lease agreement with the American Legion for Junaluska Park and encouraged exploring acquisition or lease-to-own opportunities with the American Legion. Mayor George concurred. Mayor George further observed that park-related responsibilities are currently dispersed across multiple departments, including Cultural Resources and Public Works, and that there is no clear advocate within the budget process. He suggested that, rather than creating a full department, the Town could consider dedicating one or two staff positions to manage park assets and expand programming. Councilmember Plaag suggested establishing a parks division within the Cultural Resources Department. Mayor George acknowledged current budget constraints, particularly with the upcoming Public Works facility, but emphasized the importance of setting a long-term goal. Mayor Pro-Tem Carter referenced the Elizabeth Young Garden as an example of a space evolving toward park status and noted the need for a clear vision, potentially modeled after communities that incorporate parks within a Cultural Resources framework. Mayor George suggested that the term "Parks and Recreation" could be confusing, given the County's role, and proposed "Parks and Open Spaces" as a more appropriate designation. Councilmember Roseman noted that the Rivers House, previously considered by the TDA, could serve as a potential location for staff dedicated to park management and programming, and suggested this as a long-term goal. Councilmember Pruitt emphasized the importance of establishing a timeline for implementation. It was stated that staff would work together with the Town Manager to develop a proposed structure, timeline, and approach for Council consideration at a future

work session. Mayor Pro-Tem Carter suggested using a strategic planning model for this effort. Councilmember Plaag also encouraged the development of a comprehensive inventory of Town-owned properties.

OPEN DISCUSSION AMONG TOWN COUNCIL, PLANNING COMMISSION, HPC, AND CRAB REGARDING LONG-RANGE PRIORITIES FOR DANIEL BOONE PARK

Vardell Smyth, Chair of the Historic Preservation Commission, noted that SAHA manages its own operations and expressed support for the ongoing planning process. Vardell emphasized the importance of establishing a single point of contact to coordinate efforts among the various entities involved.

Frida PazMiranda of the Planning Commission discussed opportunities to address immediate, achievable improvements at the park. Frida agreed that management of a centralized calendar by the Cultural Resources Department would be appropriate, that it should be made accessible on the Town's website, and that the need to improve signage throughout the park should be addressed. It was noted that future planning for the park should be led by Town staff, with consideration given to preserving the community's history and character. Frida also discussed the potential benefits of expanding AppalCART service or implementing a shuttle option to improve access, while acknowledging the challenges of coordinating private hotel shuttle services due to their operational constraints.

Frank Veno, Chair of the Planning Commission, agreed that expanded shuttle service would be beneficial, noting that traffic and parking constraints continue to be challenges at the site. He also observed that a significant portion of Farmers Market patrons are tourists.

Loretta Clawson, Cultural Resources Advisory Board member, expressed appreciation for the opportunity to provide input. Councilmember Plaag asked for reflections on how the park could have been managed differently in the past. Mrs. Clawson responded that responsibilities were often deferred over time due to limited funding and emphasized the need for greater investment in park resources moving forward. She noted that funding challenges will likely persist but acknowledged that current efforts are moving in a positive direction, including the allocation of parking-related funds to SAHA. Councilmember Plaag observed that parking revenue generated at Daniel Boone Park could serve as a potential funding source and suggested that Council consider dedicating or sequestering those funds specifically for reinvestment in the park.

Bettie Bond, Historic Preservation Commission Vice Chair, was supportive of the summit and believed an inventory of Town-owned property was in order.

Jill Juris, Cultural Resources Advisory Board member, expressed enthusiasm about the progress of the discussion and noted appreciation for the anticipated creation of a position to advocate for park spaces.

Mayor George noted that a recurring theme among presenters was the importance of trail connectivity and highlighted opportunities to link key areas, including Strawberry Hill and Jaycee Park. He suggested that painted crosswalks, potentially designed by local artists, could help guide pedestrian movement and could be achieved through volunteer efforts. Ms. Bond emphasized the importance of historic markers and signage, while Mayor George stated that establishing connectivity should be prioritized before expanding signage. Ms. Bond also suggested coordinating with the Tourism Development Authority to develop a map of the area. Councilmember Pruitt recommended engaging Eagle Scout projects to assist with implementation efforts. Mayor George expressed support for increased marketing, development of a master calendar, and encouraging broader use of the park as construction projects are completed. A brief discussion was also held regarding the potential for metered parking at Jaycee Park. Councilmember Plaag noted prior discussions with Mayor George about the possibility of forming a community organization to serve as a steward for Strawberry Hill.

Mayor Pro-Tem Carter noted that the Tourism Development Authority has recently invested in a Bloomberg Philanthropies application through the Arts Council to support interactive art walks and trails. He explained that the platform would allow the Town to incorporate markers, trail information, videos, and narration to guide users through the experience. Mayor George asked whether the TDA could also support funding for physical signage, and Councilmember Carter indicated that such support may be possible.

Mr. Veno inquired about insurance coverage for the park facilities. Mr. Presnell explained that the Town maintains a policy covering Town-owned properties, while partner entities maintain their own separate insurance coverage. Mr. Veno also asked about utility billing arrangements. Mr. Freed stated that the Town pays each water bill, while Daniel Boone Native Gardens maintains its own power account. SAHA, the Farmers Market, and the Strawberry Hill restrooms each have separate power accounts, with the Town covering the base charge. It was noted that when outside groups use the space, they are asked to provide a small donation to offset daily electric costs.

Next, Mr. Veno asked about the lease structure, specifically why the Gardens' lease is set at \$1 per year. Councilmember Roseman explained that the Gardens entered into a long-term lease with the Town, which included a nominal annual payment, though the original rationale was unclear. Mr. Presnell noted that leases require an exchange of value, and Mayor George added that the Town has chosen to subsidize use of the property at minimal cost. Councilmember Roseman further noted that long-term leases can be advantageous when applying for grant funding.

Mr. Veno raised concerns regarding the newer playground equipment at Junaluska Park and whether that investment could be at risk if the lease were to expire. Mayor George responded that staff have been working with stakeholders at Jaycee Park on revitalization efforts and grant opportunities. Mayor Pro-Tem Carter asked whether the Town intends to

move toward lease or license agreements for all entities. Councilmember Plaag noted that leases may convey too much control over Town property and referenced concerns raised by the Town Attorney regarding multiple leases within the amphitheater area, particularly as they may limit the Town's ability to accommodate other users. Mayor George suggested further discussion with the Town Attorney before making decisions. Councilmember Plaag emphasized the importance of planning for the long-term future of park spaces and encouraged formalizing SAHA's current use in some manner. It was noted that staff would compile a comprehensive inventory of Town-owned properties, with the goal of presenting that information by the second meeting in April or early May. Mayor George indicated that Council anticipates discussing these matters further in May and encouraged partner entities to meet and communicate more regularly moving forward.

Hearing no objections, Mayor George adjourned the meeting at 2:23 p.m.

Nicole Harmon, Clerk

Dalton George, Mayor

**MINUTES – SPECIAL MEETING
BOONE TOWN COUNCIL
MARCH 30, 2026**

CALL TO ORDER

A special meeting of the Boone Town Council was called to order on Monday, March 30, 2026, at 9:00 a.m. at the Police Department located at 1500 Blowing Rock Road in Boone. Mayor Dalton George presided. Town Council members present included Mayor Pro-Tem Todd Carter, Virginia Roseman, Adrian Tait, and Anne Pruitt. Town Staff present included Interim Town Manager/Human Resources Director Dale Presnell and Town Clerk Nicole Harmon. The purpose of the meeting was to allow members to tour various Town facilities and meet staff.

POLICE DEPARTMENT

Council members toured the Police Department and listened to a brief history of the building given by Police Chief Daniel Duckworth and Assistant Chief Shane Robbins. Space needs and necessary upgrades to the camera system were noted.

WATER TREATMENT PLANT

Council members toured the Ricky L. Miller Water Treatment Plant located on Deck Hill Road. Water Treatment Plant Superintendent Jody Prevette noted that a filter and tank at the facility are in need of replacement.

FIRE STATION TWO

Fire Chief Jimmy Isaacs and Division Chief of Operations Kent Brown provided a tour of Fire Station Two on State Farm Road. They noted that the facility, constructed in 1985 specifically for fire service operations, has been maintained and updated as needed over time. Staff indicated plans to relocate the trailers currently stored in the rear parking lot to Fire Station Four upon its completion. Chief Isaacs also highlighted ongoing concerns related to cut-through pedestrian traffic from adjacent parks, which can create conflicts with Fire Department vehicle operations.

Mayor George declared a break at 12:00 p.m. The meeting reconvened at 1:00 p.m.

WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT

Council members toured the Jimmy Smith Wastewater Treatment Plant located on Casey Lane. Wastewater Treatment Plant Superintendent Rudy Broschinski provided a tour of the grounds, and Lab Supervisor Karen Reece provided a tour of the lab facility.

FIRE STATION THREE

Council members toured Fire Station Three, located on Bamboo Road. Fire Chief Jimmy Isaacs provided a brief history of the property, noting that it had originally been a residential property that was later converted into a functioning fire station.

With no objection, Mayor George adjourned the meeting at 3:11 p.m.

Nicole Harmon, Town Clerk

Dalton George, Mayor

**MINUTES – BOONE TOWN COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
MARCH 25, 2026**

CALL TO ORDER

A regular meeting of the Boone Town Council was called to order at 5:00 p.m. at the Boone Town Council Chambers located at 1500 Blowing Rock Road in Boone. Mayor Dalton George presided. Council members present included Mayor Pro-Tem Todd Carter, Virginia Roseman, Eric Plaag, Adrian Tait, and Anne Pruitt. Town Staff present included Interim Town Manager/Human Resources Director Dale Presnell, Town Clerk Nicole Harmon, Grants Coordinator/Communications Laney Wise, Public Works Director Todd Moody, Commercial Zoning Administrator Amy Snider, Deputy Planning Director Brandon Wise, Sustainability/Special Projects Manager George Santucci, Police Chief Daniel Duckworth, Finance Director Guy Miller, and Town Attorney Allison Meade.

MOMENT OF SILENCE

A brief moment of silence was observed.

WORK SESSION

Council engaged in a discussion regarding recent tenant communications surrounding leases and conditions at Hippie Hill, including concerns about perceived eviction threats and changes imposed by the new property owner. Members noted that while tenant-landlord conflicts are not uncommon, the nature of the reported concerns, if accurate, was particularly troubling.

Councilmember Plaag stated that a new owner had acquired the property with multiple active mid-term leases and that some tenants appeared to be experiencing what he described as an unofficial eviction process. He outlined reported issues, including denial of services, increased parking costs, removal of access to laundry facilities, requirements for renters' insurance, and the introduction of non-disclosure agreements. He noted that, if accurate, these actions were deeply concerning.

Mayor George acknowledged the complexity of the situation, emphasizing that a lease is a legally binding contract and that the Town's authority in landlord-tenant matters is limited due to statutory regulations. He noted that the Town's minimum housing code provides one avenue for enforcement and suggested that tenants should be connected with legal assistance. He referenced local legal aid resources, though noted they are often overextended, and shared that he had spoken with legal representatives at Appalachian

State University who had historically expressed support for tenant rights. He indicated that access to legal counsel could help protect affected tenants.

Councilmember Plaag clarified that although he had responded to some tenant communications, he did so in an individual capacity, not on behalf of the Council. He encouraged tenants experiencing potential housing code violations, such as mold or lack of heat, to file formal complaints through the Town's established online process. He explained that such actions could require landlord compliance and potentially provide tenants additional time to address their situations. He further advised that tenants seek legal assistance.

Mayor George stated that while the Town cannot formally sponsor legal efforts, he would be willing to informally explore the possibility of reviving a prior legal clinic model and reaching out to community partners. He referenced a previous effort he presented to Council during his time as a student and indicated willingness to engage contacts in his individual capacity to support tenants. He also noted that Karla Rushe is associated with a legal clinic program available to students through the university.

Councilmember Roseman expressed concern that the discussion was occurring without the press present and noted that members of the public had been advised to attend at a later time. She encouraged that a summary of the discussion be shared during public comment when members of the press were in attendance.

Mayor George reiterated that tenants have previously brought lease documents and correspondence to attorneys for review and emphasized that many lease agreements tend to favor landlords. Councilmember Plaag shared a personal situation regarding pursuing action against a former landlord in small claims court. He also emphasized that while the Town could not intervene in a private legal dispute, the Town does have mechanisms available to assist tenants within its legal authority. Councilmember Plaag cautioned that some tenants may feel overwhelmed and not pursue available remedies, noting that this dynamic can contribute to such situations. He encouraged communication among tenants to raise awareness of available options.

Council members discussed limitations imposed by state law, noting that the North Carolina General Assembly has largely restricted municipal involvement in landlord-tenant disputes. Mayor George suggested that it may be worthwhile to revisit broader discussions around fair housing policies that he had previously raised prior to his election.

In response to an inquiry from Councilmember Plaag regarding potential redevelopment activity, Deputy Planning Director Wise confirmed that no current applications had been

submitted by the new owner for rehabilitation or redevelopment of the property. He noted that the most recent activity on record involved stair repairs.

Councilmember Plaag further noted that several communications indicated the property-owning entity may not be registered as a corporation. While emphasizing that he could not provide legal advice, he suggested that, if true, tenants may consider contacting the North Carolina Attorney General's Office and the North Carolina Secretary of State regarding potential business registration concerns.

The discussion concluded with Council reiterating its concern for affected tenants and its willingness to provide guidance within the limits of its legal authority.

Next, Councilmember Tait presented information regarding fencing options for the Daniel Boone Native Gardens. He explained that the most expensive option would be to continue the existing metal fencing currently installed near the upper portion of the neighborhood. He noted that the least expensive option would be netting, but stated that its primary drawbacks included difficulty with winter maintenance and a lifespan of only one season. Councilmember Tait said he had attempted to identify a middle-ground option and had explored a hybrid approach consisting of black chain-link fencing around the guardrail area with deer fencing extending above that portion. He reported that pricing had been obtained and that the chain-link option appeared to be the best hybrid in terms of cost and durability. He added that there was still uncertainty about how the project would be funded and what the Town's role should be, but stated his view that the garden, as Town property, is ultimately the Town's responsibility.

Mayor Pro-Tem Carter referenced prior discussion at the Council summit and noted that it had been suggested the Gardens explore a fundraising model similar to the solar panel project at Hospitality House, such as allowing donors to purchase a certain length of fencing. Councilmember Plaag stated that historic preservation is not an exact science and said that if the proposal were to come before the state review board, he would have concerns about altering the historic entry configuration by adding black fencing in an area where such fencing had not historically existed. However, he stated that if the improvement remained reversible, he did not believe most preservation advocates would object. He added that, once that concern was addressed, he would prefer for the Town to work with the Gardens to create a unified fencing appearance and stated that, if maintaining a native gardens facility is a Town priority, the project should be done properly. He suggested that the Town consider providing either a matching contribution toward the fencing project or a flat dollar amount.

Mayor Pro-Tem Carter expressed support for a matching-challenge model and said it would be a good way to involve donors. Councilmember Tait emphasized the importance

of considering the issue comprehensively and selecting the best long-term option. Mayor George asked whether the Gardens had indicated a preferred timeline for the project. Councilmember Tait responded that their hope was to move forward as soon as possible, but added that additional information was still needed from the Daniel Boone Native Gardens regarding their preferred option.

Next, Mayor George presented a handout outlining a proposed policy on proclamations, focusing on improving efficiency and clarifying the distinction between proclamations and resolutions. It was noted that allowing proclamations to be issued administratively through the Mayor's office would align with practices in other municipalities across the state and reflect the Town's historical approach.

Councilmember Plaag expressed a preference for clearly separating proclamations and resolutions within the policy framework. He stated that proclamations, particularly those recognizing individuals, could present concerns if issued solely at the discretion of the Mayor in ways that may not reflect the views of the full Council. He suggested that such provisions could be removed or revised to avoid potential conflicts.

Councilmember Plaag further indicated openness to a structure in which proclamations could be issued with the support of a majority of Council members, noting that such an approach would provide additional consistency and accountability. Mayor George responded that actions requiring majority Council support would more appropriately fall under the definition of a resolution.

Councilmember Roseman and Mayor Pro-Tem Carter emphasized the importance of clearly delineating the roles of proclamations and resolutions. Mayor Pro-Tem Carter stated that resolutions should originate from Council or its boards and commissions, while proclamations should generally be reserved for requests from external organizations, such as nonprofit entities.

The discussion concluded with a general consensus on the need to distinguish between the two instruments and to refine the policy to reflect appropriate authority, process, and use.

Councilmember Tait presented the need for a comprehensive strategic plan for the Town's parks system. It was noted that no formal strategic plan currently exists, and members expressed interest in developing a more coordinated approach to future planning efforts. Discussion included consideration of greenway connectivity, particularly in relation to the University Village area. Councilmember Tait noted that prior efforts associated with the Kennedy Trails project had contemplated connections between that neighborhood and the broader trail system. He inquired about the possibility of continuing discussions by

engaging with Appalachian State University to assess their interest in extending greenway connections to University Village and potentially other surrounding neighborhoods.

Members were generally in agreement with exploring these opportunities. Mayor George stated that staff are expected to present additional information regarding Town parks during the May work session and expressed hope that Council could move forward with next steps following that presentation.

Lastly, Councilmember Plaag recalled a recent citizen concern regarding a vehicle that had been towed from a residential property without prior notice. It was reported that the individual discovered their vehicle missing upon exiting their apartment and had not received an explanation at the time of removal. The Boone Police Department advised that the matter was civil in nature.

After contacting Bill's Garage, the owner clarified that the vehicle had been towed due to a parking placard not being properly displayed, despite the individual having paid for parking.

Members explored the possibility of establishing a municipal penalty in such cases. Specifically, the discussion included a potential policy under which a penalty of up to three times the towing or booting charge could be assessed if a vehicle is removed despite valid authorization to park. Council members noted that, even in instances where a placard is not visibly displayed, there should be a reasonable expectation that the towing operator or property owner will verify parking authorization through available records prior to taking enforcement action. The discussion emphasized the importance of balancing enforcement with fairness and accountability, and ensuring that individuals who have lawfully paid for parking are not subject to undue penalties due to administrative or unnecessary display-related issues. Councilmember Plaag asked that Council discuss this matter as part of its broader review of local booting and towing regulations.

Mayor George declared a break at 5:51 p.m. Council reconvened at 6:02 p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

No announcements were made.

TENTATIVE AGENDA ADOPTION

Upon a motion by Councilmember Roseman, seconded by Councilmember Plaag, Council voted unanimously to adopt the agenda as presented.

REQUESTED APPEARANCES

Mayor George indicated that the first scheduled requested appearance, Nancy LaPlaca, would not be in attendance due to a scheduling conflict. He noted that he and Mayor Pro-Tem Carter had met with New River Light and Power, who would attend the Council meeting in April to present on rate increases.

Mayor George stated that Jordan Sellers was running behind and suggested that Council table his presentation until he was in attendance.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Walker Stone of Boone commented regarding infrastructure conditions in areas of the town and the surrounding jurisdiction. Mr. Stone expressed concern about the condition of pedestrian pathways, noting that few properly maintained walkways exist in certain areas and that existing paths are often composed of coarse gravel or are covered in sand and dust. He specifically referenced the area around Winkler's Creek, noting a lack of adequate sidewalks and a desire to see improved pedestrian infrastructure. Mr. Stone also raised concerns about roadway conditions in the Town and County, including numerous potholes. He acknowledged that some of these issues fall under County jurisdiction but expressed overall dissatisfaction with the current state of road maintenance. He emphasized the need for improvements to road surfaces and for enhanced road markings and reflectors to improve safety. In addition, Mr. Stone stated that he had researched the ownership of the Hippie Hill property and reported that it is owned by a company based in Gastonia, operating from a residential address.

Pam Williamson of Boone spoke regarding a recent development matter involving the Church of Latter-day Saints. Ms. Williamson stated that she had attended the previous meeting with the Council and Planning Commission, and expressed appreciation for the Planning Commission's thorough review of the issues presented. She emphasized the importance of buffering in relation to the project and noted that it remains a key concern for nearby stakeholders. Ms. Williamson also raised concerns regarding vehicle speeds in the area, indicating that traffic safety continues to be an issue requiring attention.

Caroline Rupe, a resident of Campus Hill Apartments, commented regarding recent changes under new property ownership. Ms. Rupe stated that a new landlord had purchased the building and implemented changes immediately, which she described as including threats toward tenants. She reported that a cash incentive had been offered to tenants, and included a threat of involvement from authorities, and noted that approximately half of the available parking had been removed. Ms. Rupe expressed that, as a result of these changes and conditions, she no longer feels safe in her living environment.

William Robinson of Boone spoke regarding current conditions at the property known as Hippie Hill. Mr. Robinson stated that he had spoken with multiple residents and described the situation as dire, noting that many tenants feel scared and pressured to leave. He reported that the landlord had posted notices indicating that the laundry room had been closed and that renters' insurance would be required, despite such a requirement not being included in existing lease agreements. Mr. Robinson further stated that some residents had received notices offering a \$2,000 financial incentive to vacate the property by March 27, with reduced amounts for later dates. Mr. Robinson also described receiving or observing violation notices posted on doors, including allegations related to sanitation and garbage disposal, such as odor concerns. He stated that he has lived at the property for two years without prior complaints and expressed concern that he felt specifically targeted, noting that he rolls his own cigarettes and keeps a jar outside his residence.

Elizabeth Collie, a resident of Boone for six years and a downtown employee, spoke regarding conditions at Campus Hill Apartments. Ms. Collie stated that she had lived at the property for two years and described herself as a compliant tenant who has followed all rules and lease requirements. She reported that on the previous Friday, the landlord had posted notices on the tenants' doors citing alleged lease violations. Ms. Collie noted that inspections had been conducted by SCS Future in January and that, following recent changes in ownership, access to the laundry facilities had been suspended until August. She further stated that parking fees had been increased to \$125 per space per month and that parking privileges had been suspended for tenants not considered to be in good standing. Ms. Collie also reported that tenants had been approached with offers to buy out their leases and stated that those who declined such offers were told they could face eviction. Councilmember Plaag inquired about the structure of parking arrangements, specifically whether parking was included in the lease or operated on a month-to-month basis. Ms. Collie responded that parking was not guaranteed, noting that she had waited approximately eight months to obtain a space and that there had been no prior indication that parking rates could increase significantly. She stated that parking was managed through SCS Future on a month-to-month basis, with operations managed via a waitlist system.

Councilmember Plaag further asked whether the property management had the authority to decline renewal of parking permits or whether the arrangement functioned strictly as a monthly fee. Ms. Collie indicated that she was uncertain but reiterated that the system had been administered on a month-to-month basis through SCS Future.

Macy Farrington, a tenant of Campus Hill Apartments for three years, commented regarding recent changes under new property ownership. Ms. Farrington stated that tenants had received notice of an increase in parking costs and that access to laundry facilities would be suspended until August. She expressed concern that tenants were

being coerced into vacating their units and emphasized the importance of the property as a source of affordable housing. Ms. Farrington concluded her remarks by requesting assistance from Council in addressing the situation.

Donna Lillian, a resident of Chestnut Drive in Boone, spoke regarding a proposed senior housing development project on Chestnut Drive. Ms. Lillian expressed support for the development and emphasized the need for additional housing options for seniors in the community.

She clarified that she was not speaking on behalf of the residents at 306 Chestnut but noted that they had expressed support for the project, provided that the primary entrance is located on New Market Boulevard.

Brenda Lether, representative of the Church of Latter-day Saints, spoke to let Council know she was available via WebEx for questions or comments later in the agenda.

Upon a motion by Councilmember Plaag, seconded by Councilmember Roseman, Council voted unanimously to amend the agenda to include an item to discuss the landlord-tenant issue at Hippie Hill.

JORDAN SELLERS – REQUEST TO NAME TRAIL SEGMENTS AT RIVERS HOUSE PARK

Jordan Sellers, representing the Blue Ridge Conservancy, addressed Council to confirm its intent regarding the naming of the trails at Rivers House Park/Northern Peaks State Trail. Mr. Sellers proposed “Rachel’s Loop” for the outer loop (indicated in blue in images) and suggested “State Champion Trail” for the trail extending from the kiosk to the state champion sugar maple (indicated in purple in images). Mayor George expressed support for the proposed names, and Councilmember Roseman indicated agreement. Councilmember Roseman then moved to adopt the trail names as presented. Councilmember Plaag seconded the motion, which carried unanimously. Mr. Sellers thanked Council members for their support and announced the upcoming ribbon-cutting ceremony on April 17th.

APPROVAL OF ITEMS ON CONSENT AGENDA

Upon a motion by Councilmember Roseman, seconded by Councilmember Tait, Council voted unanimously to approve the following items on the consent agenda:

1. Ordinance – Pride Parade
2. Letter of Support for Town Staff’s Application to Pursue FY27 Congressionally Directed Spending

3. Budget Amendments:

Public Works:

TO:	Maintenance-Vehicles	030-700-805-525301	\$4,950.00
FROM:	Miscellaneous Revenue	030-000-000-489900	\$4,950.00

Explanation: Insurance check to repair damaged 2021 Ford Ranger at the Jimmy Smith WWTP.

Police Department:

TO:	Maintenance-Vehicles	010-500-300-525301	\$11,920.00
FROM:	Miscellaneous Revenue	010-000-000-489900	(\$11,920.00)

Explanation: Insurance check from deer collision claim #3250123560 on asset 6760 /26 GMC Sierra.

TO:	Maintenance-Vehicles	010-500-300-525301	\$2,473.00
FROM:	Appropriated Fund Balance	010-000-000-499900	(\$2,473.00)

Explanation: Insurance check received in June 2025 for repairs to patrol vehicle asset 6581.

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TOWN OF BOONE

Ordinance _____

AN ORDINANCE DECLARING A ROAD CLOSURE FOR AN ANNUAL CELEBRATION

WHEREAS, The Boone Town Council acknowledges that the annual Boone Pride March has exceeded capacity on town sidewalks.; and

WHEREAS, the Boone Town Council wishes to ensure the health and safety of all participants and spectators; and provide road closure to facilitate a Boone Pride Parade; and

WHEREAS, the Boone Town Council recognizes June as LGBTQ Pride Month and acknowledges support of its LGTQBIA+ citizens and that the Boone Pride Parade is a benefit to the community for all its citizens; and

WHEREAS, the Boone Town Council acknowledges that the annual Boone Pride Parade requires approximately thirty (30) minutes to install signage, and traffic control, and also requires approximately thirty (30) minutes for removing signs, traffic control, and litter;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT ORDAINED by the Town of Boone pursuant to the authority granted by G.S. 20-169 that they do hereby declare a temporary road closure during the day(s) and times set forth below on the following described portion of a State Highway System route:

Date(s): Saturday, June 27, 2026

Times: 11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Route Description: King Street (U.S. Route 421) between Poplar Grove Connector and Appalachian Street. Parade to continue down Appalachian Street to Howard Street to Burrell St. Then proceeding onto the sidewalk on Poplar Grove Rd to Watauga County Agriculture Conference Center Parking Lot.

This ordinance to become effective when signs are erected giving notice of the limits and times of the parade, and implementation of adequate traffic control to guide through vehicles around the parade route.

Adopted this _____ day of _____, 2026

The Honorable Dalton George, Mayor

Attest:

Nicole Harmon, Town Clerk

Council continued discussion regarding tenant concerns at Hippie Hill, with particular emphasis on public awareness and available resources for affected residents. Councilmember Roseman thanked the press for attending and stressed the urgency of drawing attention to the situation. She encouraged media representatives to help communicate the concerns raised and noted the importance of recognizing students and tenants as a vital part of the Boone community.

Mayor George reiterated that the Town's primary authority lies in enforcing minimum housing standards, stating that if units are found to be substandard, the Town can intervene through that process. He acknowledged that the Town's ability to address lease-

related matters is limited but noted that Council members, in their individual capacities, could work with local attorneys to review leases and correspondence in order to help identify potential violations or inconsistencies. Mayor George and Council members encouraged tenants, particularly students, to seek assistance through legal resources at Appalachian State University, including the university's legal clinic. Specific reference was made to the clinic's leadership and its familiarity with landlord-tenant issues. It was further noted that while legal aid organizations have historically provided support, recent funding reductions have limited the availability of local services, though online and regional resources may remain accessible.

Mayor Pro-Tem Carter encouraged tenants to organize collectively and engage with available legal resources, suggesting that group outreach may improve access to assistance. Additional discussion highlighted the potential value of involving university faculty or staff who may also be impacted, as a means of increasing awareness and institutional engagement.

Mayor George stated his desire for Council to revisit a formal request to the North Carolina Attorney General's Office to review recurring landlord practices that may be perceived as predatory. He noted that Council had previously made similar requests and expressed interest in pursuing the matter again in light of ongoing concerns.

Town Attorney Allison Meade stated that comprehensive statutory protections exist under state law, including provisions within Chapter 42 of the North Carolina General Statutes, and the primary barrier for many tenants is not the absence of legal rights but the ability to access and afford legal representation.

Council members discussed the limitations of existing support systems, including the reduction of local legal aid resources. A member of the public shared that they had contacted legal aid services and were informed that assistance is currently limited to cases involving formal eviction proceedings, leaving tenants without support in earlier stages of disputes. Councilmember Plaag inquired whether the Town could facilitate access to legal review, either through the Human Relations Commission or by sponsoring an attorney to provide brief consultations for residents. Ms. Meade indicated that she was uncertain, and that there might be limited avenues tied to affordable housing assistance that could warrant further exploration. Councilmember Plaag further raised the possibility of the Town sponsoring or partnering with an organization to provide legal services for residents, particularly in light of what he described as a pattern of predatory practices over recent years. Council members acknowledged that such an approach would require further legal and budgetary review.

Mayor George encouraged Council members to engage with attorneys in their personal and professional networks to help connect affected residents with legal assistance. Ms. Meade added that, despite local limitations, other legal aid offices may still provide some level of support and should not be entirely discounted as a resource.

Councilmember Plaag inquired whether any work was occurring on the property that would require permitting and suggested that, if so, an inspection be conducted and a stop-work order issued if necessary. Deputy Planning Director Wise confirmed that the site is being monitored and that inspections can be conducted to ensure compliance with permitting requirements.

Ms. Meade provided general information regarding tenant rights under the North Carolina Residential Rental Agreements Act. She explained that the statute governs residential landlord-tenant relationships and includes various limitations, but emphasized that outcomes depend heavily on the specific terms of each lease. She noted that tenants under fixed-term leases are generally entitled to the conditions outlined in their agreements, while those on month-to-month arrangements may be subject to more immediate changes or termination. She also indicated that questions regarding amenities or additional requirements would require review of individual lease provisions.

Councilmember Plaag expressed concern regarding reports that tenants were being asked to sign non-disclosure agreements in connection with lease changes or buyout offers. While noting he was not providing legal advice, he stated that such a request raised significant concerns. Ms. Meade responded that she could not provide legal advice in this context but noted that she had not commonly encountered such requirements in similar situations.

Council members concluded the discussion by reiterating the importance of connecting tenants with available legal resources in each member's individual capacity, continuing to monitor conditions at the property, and raising public awareness of the issue through community and media engagement.

PLANNING MATTERS

Commercial Zoning Administrator Amy Snider presented Case A25-0982/A25-0893 Greer Watauga LLC and indicated that the Planning Commission recommended approval with the listed conditions. It was noted that the revised plans reflect the applicant's agreement to modify the building orientation as previously discussed at the Planning Commission/Public Hearing. Councilmember Plaag inquired whether the applicant had agreed to all recommended conditions. Attorney Tyler Moffatt representing the applicant, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, confirmed that the applicant is agreeable

to all three conditions outlined in the meeting materials. These included coordination with NCDOT regarding a potential reduced speed limit, implementation of additional landscaping, and reorientation of the building as shown in the revised plans.

Mr. Moffatt explained that the applicant is willing to participate in a joint effort with the Town regarding the NCDOT request, whether led by the Town or the applicant. He further confirmed that the applicant agreed to additional landscaping as described in the staff report and to the revised building orientation to Old 421.

Additional clarification was provided regarding the timing of the applicant's agreement to the building orientation condition. It was noted that due to the organizational structure of the Church, approval required action by a governing body, which occurred following the prior Planning Commission/Public Hearing meeting. Brenda Lether, representing the applicant, confirmed that the organization is supportive of the conditions and expressed enthusiasm for the project and its potential positive impact on the community.

Ms. Meade noted that the condition language would be refined after final approval to ensure clarity and enforceability, and that the final approved conditions would be recorded with the final documents.

Next, Council discussed the landscaping condition in greater detail, noting some ambiguity in the phrase "additional landscaping." Ms. Snider and Mr. Wise, along with Mr. Moffatt, clarified that the applicant had already agreed, under a separate contractual obligation, to provide a 50-foot buffer along the property line. The condition under consideration would require additional landscaping within open green spaces to enhance the canopy and buffering beyond the existing requirements. It was noted that the final language would need to clearly incorporate both the contractual buffer and the additional landscaping expectations.

Further discussion regarding the steeple addressed whether any deviations from standard requirements needed to be separately included in the motion. It was clarified that the proposal includes one deviation, which would be encompassed within the overall approval unless specifically excluded.

Council members also discussed the process for requesting a reduced speed limit from NCDOT. Council members indicated support for a joint effort between the Town and the applicant and discussed whether additional support, such as letters from Town staff, stakeholders, or community members, could strengthen the request. It was concluded that the Mayor, on behalf of the Town Council, and Chief Duckworth would send a letter of support to the NCDOT to lower the speed limit.

Councilmember Tait made a motion that the proposed amendment to the Town's zoning map is consistent with the Town's current comprehensive plan and any other adopted plan(s) of the Town that are applicable because of the following from Boone Next: Policy 1.1.1, Policy 4.4.2, Policy 4.4.3, and Policy 5.2.2, in addition to the following conditions: to contact NCDOT in coordination with the Town; to adhere to staff recommendations for additional landscaping plantings; and the building and parking lot to be reoriented as presented in the packet. Councilmember Plaag made a friendly amendment that the first condition be to specifically coordinate a request with the Town of Boone to NCDOT to lower the speed limit. Councilmember Tait accepted the condition, and Councilmember Plaag seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Councilmember Tait made a second motion to approve Ordinance #A25-089, and that approval is reasonable and in the public interest because this development upholds community values, provides community gatherings, utilizes underutilized corridor/acreage in east Boone, and benefits future development of Old US 421 for mixed use. Mayor Pro-Tem Carter seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Councilmember Plaag made a motion to approve the annexation contained in Ordinance #A25-0893. Councilmember Tait seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

COUNCIL MATTERS

It was the consensus of Council to schedule the annual budget retreat on Wednesday, May 20, 2026, beginning at 9 a.m. at the Boone Town Council Chambers.

Dr. Patricia Mitchell gave a brief update on the search for a new Town Manager, indicating that the posting had received 4 applications within a day of being posted.

CLOSED SESSION

Upon a motion by Councilmember Roseman, seconded by Councilmember Plaag, Council voted unanimously to enter into closed session at 7:25 p.m. pursuant to:

1. N.C. Gen. Stat. § 143-318.11(a)(1), to review, approve, and seal closed session minutes from Council's prior closed session(s).

2. N.C. Gen. Stat. § 143-318.11(a)(3), to consult with the Town Attorney in order to preserve the attorney-client privilege between the attorney and the Town Council, and obtain legal advice, consider, and/or give instructions to the attorney concerning one or more potential legal claims.

ADJOURNMENT

Without objection, Mayor George adjourned the meeting at 7:41 p.m.

Nicole Harmon, Clerk

Dalton George, Mayor



Town Of Boone AGENDA ITEM ACTION REQUEST

This form must be completed and attached to all supporting documentation for items to be included in the Town of Boone Council agenda. One (1) form per agenda item.

Submitted By: Nicole Harmon

Department: Planning and Inspections

Contact Phone # 828-268-6960

Date Submitted: March 26, 2026

Email: jessica.mitchell@boonenc.gov

Date of Council Meeting to Consider this Item: April 8, 2026

Council Action Requested:

Title: Consideration of Text Amendment Regarding Public Art (Murals) in the Downtown Boone Local Historic District

Summary of Information:

Per direction given at the November 12, 2025, Town Council meeting, Staff has drafted revisions to the public art standards (including murals) in Appendix D. The Historic Preservation Commission is scheduled to review these draft changes at the April 7, 2026, HPC Advisory meeting. Planning Staff will present the draft changes, along with the HPC's recommendations at the April 8, 2026, Town Council meeting. The goal is to take final draft language to the April 27, 2026, Public Hearing. Final documents will be distributed to Town Council prior to the start of the meeting.



Town Of Boone AGENDA ITEM ACTION REQUEST

This form must be completed and attached to all supporting documentation for items to be included in the Town of Boone Council agenda. One (1) form per agenda item.

Submitted By: Nicole Harmon

Department: Planning and Inspections

Contact Phone # 828-268-6960

Date Submitted: March 30, 2026

Email: jane.shook@boonenc.gov

Date of Council Meeting to Consider this Item: April 8, 2026

Council Action Requested: For Information

Title: Walk-Audit Update

Summary of Information:

Last week, Mayor Pro-Tem Carter, and I had the opportunity to meet with both AARP representatives and a representative from MountainTrue to discuss a possible collaboration on a community walk-audit for the Town of Boone.

A walk-audit provides a structured way to evaluate the walkability of selected locations by documenting how safely and comfortably a pedestrian can navigate a route. The Town's last formal walk-audit occurred in 2019. At that time, Council expressed interest in conducting these audits periodically so the Town could better track understand conditions that may not be apparent unless you regularly walk the identified route.

Subsequent to the meeting, I had the opportunity to speak with Public Works Director Todd Moody, and we have identified a way document issues along the route using GIS. The goal would be for each walk-audit team to include a Planning and Inspection staff member who could document issues directly into a web map application which then can be accessed by the Town for any needed follow-up.

Given current department work, Staff recommends scheduling the walk-audit in Fall 2026.

This would allow preparation for the GIS mapping, route selection, and time to coordinate with AARP, and other interested organizations.

Staff will come back with more information once possible routes and potential dates have been identified.



Town Of Boone AGENDA ITEM ACTION REQUEST

This form must be completed and attached to all supporting documentation for items to be included in the Town of Boone Council agenda. One (1) form per agenda item.

Submitted By: Nicole Harmon

Department: Town Council

Contact Phone # 828.268.6200

Date Submitted: March 31, 2026

Email: dalton.george@boonenc.gov

Date of Council Meeting to Consider this Item: April 8, 2026

Council Action Requested: For Action

Title: Request to Schedule Park Tours

Summary of Information:

Mayor George requests that the Town Council schedule a special meeting to allow members to tour Town parks, including Daniel Boone Park, Jaycee Park, North Street Park, and the Bolick Property.