TOWN OF BOONE
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
ADVISORY MEETING MINUTES
January 6, 2026, 3:00 pm
Planning & Inspections Department & WebEx Video Conferencing

Historic Preservation Commission Members Present: Vardell Smyth-Chair, Bettie Bond-Vice-Chair, Krystal Carter, Bennie Gaetano, and Melody Oxendine (via WebEx)

Town Staff Present: Jessica Mitchell-Advanced Planning Specialist, Virginia Roseman-Council Member Liaison (via WebEx), and David Pedersen-Board Clerk

---

Call to Order

Chair Smyth called the Boone Historic Preservation Commission meeting, held in the Planning & Inspections Conference Room at 680 West King Street, and via WebEx to order at 3:02 pm.

Adoption of Agenda

Commission Member Carter made a motion, seconded by Commission Member Gaetano, to adopt the agenda.

Vote: Aye – 5
Nay – 0

The motion passed.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Approval of Minutes

Commission Member Carter noted that in the December 2, 2025, Historic Preservation Commission Advisory meeting minutes, the Adoption of Agenda section listed Commission Member Carter as absent for the vote while she was present and seconded the motion to vote. The vote will be revised to show "Aye – 5" and remove the line "Absent – 1 (Carter).

Commission Member Gaetano made a motion, seconded by Commission Member Carter, to approve the December 2, 2025, Historic Preservation Commission Advisory meeting minutes with the above revision and the December 9, 2025, Historic Preservation Commission Quasi-Judicial meeting minutes.

Vote: Aye – 5
Nay – 0

The motion passed.

Approval of Written Decision

Commission Member Gaetano made a motion, seconded by Commission Member Carter, to approve the Written Decision for Case A25-0811 Ram's Rack – Certificate of Appropriateness.

Vote: Aye – 5
Nay – 0

The motion passed.

Stoneman's Raid Interpretative Panel – Review Revised Draft Proof by Civil War Trails Marker Program

Ms. Mitchell provided updates and an overview of changes regarding the Stoneman's Raid Interpretative Panel revised draft proof by the Civil War Trails (CWT) marker program. She reiterated that the changes included modifying the inset map, including a map legend, and adding an image caption. Ms. Mitchell noted that she had shared the design proof with funding partners. She pointed out that the Downtown Boone Development Association (DBDA) has a meeting on January 27, 2026, so there are no comments yet. Additionally, comments are yet to be received from the Watauga County Historical Society. She stated that Town Council had a meeting on January 28, 2026, in which the panel would be presented. She noted that CWT had asked her to reach out to the Amon Carter Museum, where the image was received from. The museum was favorable of the design proof. The HPC agreed that they were satisfied with the panel's design, with Commission Member Gaetano being happy with the map, Vice-Chair Bond liking the inclusion of the cemetery, and Commission Member Oxendine liking that the mountains were kept.

Ms. Mitchell stated that due to fabrication time for the panel, CWT has estimated an April installation date, with an unveiling to follow. Vice-Chair Bond mentioned that it would be nice if it could happen on March 28, 2026, noting that it was the date of the event the panel depicts. Chair Smyth agreed that it would be a neat idea, but understood that the fabrication process may not allow it. Ms. Mitchell noted that CWT estimates fabrication takes approximately a month after design approval, and she would pass along the suggestion.

Other Matters

Ms. Mitchell briefly mentioned that the Boone/Kraut Creek marker report would resume discussion and be included on the February Advisory agenda. Chair Smyth mentioned that he has been unable to contact the magazine source and likely will not be able to next week either. Commission Member Oxendine has reached out, but there has been no reply thus far.

Chair Smyth pointed out that there would be no Quasi-Judicial meeting next week.

Ms. Mitchell noted that there was an opportunity to attend a webinar next Tuesday, January 13, 2026, at noon as an option for one (1) of the three (3) required trainings by the end of September for the Certified Local Government (CLG) reporting year. Vice Chair Bond pointed out that this coincided with the Chamber of Commerce ribbon-cutting ceremony at the library from 12 pm -1:30 pm, so she would be unable to attend the webinar. Ms. Mitchell provided a detailed description of the webinar: it is based on challenges faced by building owners with aging building facades that require upkeep, with discussion of facade overcladding processes and solutions to address these challenges. Chair Smyth mentioned that this sounded very applicable to the Commission. Commission Member Carter asked if there was an option to watch a recorded version at a different time. Ms. Mitchell was unsure, but would share the information when she found out.

Ms. Mitchell mentioned that the annual Planning Retreat is this Friday, January 9, 2026, in which Town Planning Staff will meet with Town Council. One of the topics will include the HPC's work plan and discussion of priorities. She noted that if there were any changes to the work plan, she would bring them to the Commission in February.

Chair Smyth asked if there were any updates on mural policy. Ms. Mitchell stated that Staff would continue working on the mural text amendment, but did not have any text ready for the HPC's review at this meeting. She noted that, unfortunately, the timing did not work out for Staff to have a draft ready, but that Staff has started looking at mapping the contributing properties in the historic district and researching applicable standards. She concluded that formal discussions/review were forthcoming and that Staff might have a draft prepared for the February Advisory meeting.

Vice Chair Bond also mentioned the Boone Docs Film Festival on February 27-28, 2026, with Commission Member Carter noting that Friday evening was the free, feature-length film, and Saturday featured a full day of films (tickets available for purchase).

Adjournment

Commission Member Gaetano made a motion, seconded by Commission Member Carter, to adjourn the meeting at 3:25 pm.

Vote: Aye – 5
Nay – 0

The motion passed.

_____ _____

Vardell Smyth, Chair **David Pedersen, Board Clerk**