Town of Boone
Historic Preservation Commission Advisory Meeting
3:00 PM, April 7, 2026
Planning & Inspections Conference Room
680 W. King St., Suite C
Boone, NC 28607

The public may attend the meeting in person at the Planning and Inspections Conference Room at 680 West King Street, Suite C, or online via WebEx, a video conferencing software.

Public Comment: To give public comment, you should appear in person at the physical location of this meeting. Persons who attend the meeting remotely via WebEx may be permitted to speak during public comment but are not assured of that opportunity.

WebEx Participation: To join online or by phone, email Planning and Inspections at planning@boonenc.gov or call 828-268-6960, and you will receive an email invitation. Requests must be submitted no later than one hour before the meeting begins.

I. Call to Order

II. Adoption of Agenda

III. Public Comment

IV. Approval of Meeting Minutes

1. March 3, 2026, HPC Advisory Meeting Minutes

V. Advisory Session Items for Discussion

1. Discussion and Review of Text Amendment for Public Art (Murals) in the Historic District

2. Ceremony Updates and Discussion of Press Release Quote for Stoneman's Raid Interpretative Panel

3. Review and Discuss the Rivers House Park (Northern Peaks State Trail) Sign

4. Review of Boone/Kraut Creek Historic Marker Report
   To Assist Discussion: Report Versions from the December 2, 2025 and March 3, 2026 Advisory Packets are attached.

5. New Town of Boone Logo, Seal, and Story Badges: For Information

VI. Other Matters

VII. Adjournment

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

Historic Preservation Commission Members Present: Bettie Bond-Vice-Chair, Krystal Carter, Bennie Gaetano, and Melody Oxendine

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

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Call to Order

Vice-Chair Bond called the Boone Historic Preservation Commission meeting, held in the Planning & Inspections Conference Room at 680 West King Street, Suite C, and via WebEx to order at 3:01 pm.

Adoption of Agenda

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

Vote: Aye – 4
Nay – 0

The motion passed.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Approval of Minutes

Commission Member Gaetano made a motion, seconded by Commission Member Oxendine, to approve the January 3, 2026, Historic Preservation Commission Advisory meeting minutes.

Vote: Aye – 4
Nay – 0

The motion passed.

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

Ms. Mitchell began by providing updates on the Stoneman's Raid interpretive panel. She stated that Civil War Trails (CWT) informed her that the panel had been fabricated and were looking at dates in late April or early May to integrate installation of the panel into their route of other planned panel installations. Ms. Mitchell stated that she obtained decorative materials for a ribbon cutting ceremony and that she'd like the Commission to decide on tentative dates for the ceremony. She pointed out that previous markers' ceremonies had been held during the day around 1 pm. The HPC briefly discussed post-graduation dates being ideal and potential dates of Town meetings in May that may interfere. Lane Moody pointed out that Downtown Boone Development Association (DBDA) is working on Downtown Boone restaurant week May 18 – May 23 and would be looking into partnering with Watauga Education Foundation. She wondered if this week could be a good fit for the ceremony, especially since it is post-graduation as HPC discussed. Commission Member Gaetano suggested that Tuesday, May 19 might be appropriate. Ms. Mitchell pointed

out that she would like to have two dates to present to Town Council as options for the ceremony. HPC members discussed what times would be appropriate, noting that 1 pm can be difficult for people who don't work Downtown but would like to attend, while 4:30 pm might be a little late for Town staff. Within the discussion, Ms. Moody was asked what times restaurant week events would be held. She stated that it would vary by day, but generally events could be at any time of day for breakfast through dinner. The HPC decided on a time of 3 pm on either Tuesday, May 19 or Thursday, May 21.

Ms. Mitchell stated that she would present these dates to Town Council the following week. She also noted that event logistics would be decided closer to the selected date, and she would confirm if a potential closure of Linney St. is needed for the event. She also informed the HPC that a press release and social media posts were in the works with CWT. Ms. Mitchell informed the HPC that CWT had requested a quote reflecting community sentiment from the HPC, and that Chair Smyth was willing to provide one. She informed the HPC that as he would be speaking on behalf of the HPC, a motion was required for him to provide the quote.

Commission Member Carter made a motion, seconded by Commission Member Oxendine, to approve Chair Smyth providing a quote to Civil War Trails on behalf of the HPC.

Vote: Aye – 4
Nay – 0

The motion passed.

Ms. Moody stated that she would be willing to provide a quote from the DBDA on an association level as well. Ms. Mitchell stated she would confirm with CWT about additional quotes and appreciated the offer.

Ms. Mitchell introduced Adelia Daly, who was attending the meeting as a representative from the Historical Society and Digital Watauga, and will also be speaking at the ceremony. Adelia inquired about the typical brevity of the speaking at the ceremonies, to which Vice-Chair Bond stated that 5-6 minutes is typical. Ms. Mitchell stated that if convenient, it might be helpful to have Adelia at the April 7, 2026, Advisory Meeting for discussion purposes. She also noted that she would include as invitees to the event Town Council members, the Downtown Boone Development Association (DBDA), the Watauga County Historical Society (WCHS), and current & former HPC members to encourage attendance at the event. Adelia inquired about tone/content of comments at the ceremony, to which Vice-Chair Bond recommended that focus stay on the statement of the historical event. Vice-Chair Bond invited Adelia to stay for the remainder of the meeting.

Review of Boone/Kraut Creek Historic Marker Report

Ms. Mitchell introduced the next topic of discussion and noted that Council Member Liaison Roseman would be joining via WebEx late.

Lane Moody left the meeting at 3:28pm.

Commission Member Oxendine began by stating that she had recently re-researched and rewritten the report to be more cohesive, as the previous draft was the work of 3 authors. She felt that the title should change from North State Canning Company, as that name is only part of the history of the building. She suggested changing the name to Watauga Kraut Factory, feeling that it might do more service to the history of the building. Vice-Chair Bond noted that it had contained other entities prior to USDA. Commission Member Oxendine acknowledged this and confirmed an information gap for the building between 1981 and 1987. Vice-Chair Bond stated that American Wicker was there for a time. She also noted that she had grammatical feedback that could be discussed separately. Ms. Mitchell noted that she found a previous version of the report (December 2025) to compare and also had some feedback on structure and flow, citing some specific examples. She went on to reiterate that in previous drafts, work was focused on filling in gaps of the history of the canning company – founded in a cooperative effort of Steele and Blair, the ownership transfer to W.F. Miller around 1928, and the closure of the canning company to its current use as an

agricultural center. Vice-Chair Bond addressed the information gap and presented the idea of simply stating that production ceased in 1981. Ms. Mitchell added that the report can state there is a research gap, and mentioned the research suggestions from the previous report. She then noted that the details of the building's façade were helpful and addressed one of the research gaps. She then inquired about the previous detail of a steam engine. Commission Member Oxendine responded that she could not find research on the engine and removed the reference to it. Ms. Mitchell responded that she thought this report's writing was more well-rounded overall, addressed the previously listed research suggestions, and asked the Commission about pursuing Option 4 for the marker text as a combination of all the others. Vice-Chair Bond suggested changing the verbiage of "southeast" to "from Maryland to Florida." Ms. Mitchell shared the report on the screen and made the discussed change to the Option 4 marker text.

Council Member Liaison Roseman joined via WebEx at 3:40pm.

Ms. Mitchell inquired whether any of the previously discussed collections at Appalachian State University provided any helpful information. Commission Member Oxendine stated that they did not initially, but she may revisit them. She also provided the update that she was able to recently visit the inside of the previous factory and got contacts for potential further research. Ms. Mitchell summarized by stating there will be some final fine-tuning of the report for grammatical revisions, that she would pass along any communication from Chair Smyth, and that this would be revisited in the April HPC Advisory Meeting.

HPC Work Plan for Fiscal Year 2026-2027

Ms. Mitchell directed the HPC to page 17 in the agenda packet as a reference visual. She provided a brief overview of each work plan item, and began with that she was taking on completion of the Jones House Local Historic Landmark Report and that it is being reviewed by the team at the Planning and Inspections Department. After the internal review is completed, she will present the report to the HPC before forwarding it to Town Council for consideration of referral to the State Historic Preservation Office (HPO). Vice-Chair Bond inquired about a completion timeline for the report. Ms. Mitchell answered that she is hopeful for this year, but it depends on text amendments and other cases for the public hearing meetings. She continued on to mention Appendix D, the status of which is currently ongoing.

Vice-Chair Bond inquired about the Ice House Alley Historic Marker. Ms. Mitchell responded that the marker would be regarding the history of how the alley was actually used and they were estimating the end of the calendar year to receive the report. Ms. Mitchell continued that Town Council had directed that the next item for HPC after Kraut Creek would be the Interpretive Panel for Clawson Burnley Park, emphasizing the importance of Loretta Clawson and Velma Burnley as the only women in local mayoral leadership.

Vice-Chair Bond inquired about the Historic District Light Pole Banners, which Ms. Mitchell addressed as being on hold due to the current updating of Town branding, which is tentatively set to go before Town Council in March. Ms. Mitchell also mentioned that the Boone Street Names/Histories Project would be periodically revisited as time allowed and that the Boone Cemetery Survey would require further planning. Vice-Chair Bond added that a common/standardized form to be filled out for each cemetery marker or headstone could be utilized. Commission Member Oxendine volunteered to assist with the creation of that form, as she currently assists Blowing Rock Museum with similar standardization tasks.

Ms. Mitchell mentioned that the Winkers Creek Dam Site would be put on hold until Town Council took action on the property. Vice-Chair Bond inquired whether the Town owned the property in question and Council Member Liaison Roseman confirmed that it did, also noting that they didn't want to emphasize the dam for public viewing until an access trail was in place.

Ms. Mitchell noted that she had spoken to Town Council about the Boone Tobacco Industry Marker after the Planning Retreat, stating that it is likely on hold until next fiscal year. She proceeded to summarize the request: a private property owner was aware that their property was near the site of previous Tobacco

Warehouses and brought it to the attention of the Town. Staff presented this topic to Town Council, where there was a discussion of future HPC research, noting 3 warehouses previously in the area and that the Town currently has a tobacco scale.

Vice-Chair Bond inquired about the status of Rivers House Research (R.L. Clay (Rivers) House Local Historic Landmark Property), with Ms. Mitchell replying that some renovations were underway, as previously brought to the HPC through COA cases. Vice-Chair Bond clarified and asked if there was an existing marker or panel about the house, noting that the family was important to local history, and she'd like to see the house ready for the public. Ms. Mitchell stated that it could be discussed with Town Council at a future time to consider for the HPC work plan.

Council Member Liaison Roseman inquired about dates for the Stoneman's Raid Interpretive Panel since she joined late, and Ms. Mitchell provided a summary of what was previously discussed.

Commission Member Gaetano inquired about updates to the Article 8 & Appendix D Revisions. Ms. Mitchell stated there were not yet any updates due to Planning and Inspections' workload. However, she added that draft text for the mural text amendment would likely be ready for the April HPC Advisory Meeting after Town Staff Review, prior before taking it to public hearing.

Daniel Boone Park Summit Invitation

Ms. Mitchell directed the HPC to the agenda packet which contained a proposed agenda for the Daniel Boone Park Summit. Vice-Chair Bond inquired about the date of the event, and Ms. Mitchell replied that it was scheduled for Friday, March 20. Ms. Mitchell noted the agenda listed the different parties that are scheduled to be involved. She also stated that Town Council has had discussion of a Historic Landmark designation at the property. Ms. Mitchell noted that it was not mandatory but encouraged for the HPC to attend. Vice-Chair Bond inquired about the location of the meeting, and Ms. Mitchell answered that it would take place at Town Council Chambers. Ms. Mitchell noted that the HPC's timeslot for discussion was in the afternoon, but they were welcome and encouraged to attend for the whole day. She also noted that leadership from the Planning & Inspections department leadership would be in attendance. The HPC discussed individual attendance and Ms. Mitchell mentioned the possibility of a remote attendance option.

Other Matters

Ms. Mitchell brought up the Certified Local Government (CLG) webinar training opportunities, including the January 22 webinar on supporting skilled preservation trades. She stated that she would look for additional training options for the HPC.

Ms. Mitchell updated the HPC on the HVAC work happening on the Downtown Post Office building. She stated that Staff wanted to share that the work would fall under a Statement of Conformity (SoC). Vice-Chair Bond emphasized the importance of restoring heat in the Post Office. Ms. Mitchell specified that the Statement of Conformity was due to a conduit line that will need to run alongside the building, ensuring that any attachments are through the mortar joints, and that they will return and paint it an appropriate color.

Ms. Mitchell mentioned the Rivers House Trail Ribbon Cutting Ceremony that is to take place on Friday, April 17, from 3 pm-7 pm, with the official cutting taking place at 3:30 pm.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 4:20 pm.

Vote: Aye – 4
Nay – 0

The motion passed.

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Bettie Bond, Vice-Chair **David Pedersen, Board Clerk**

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Request

Staff presents the following draft text for the Historic Preservation Commission and the Town Council to review for a text amendment to UDO Articles 26, 34, and Appendix D ("Downtown Boone Local Historic District Design Guidelines and Handbook") to modify and clarify the standards for public art, including murals, in the Downtown Boone local historic district.

Staff Note: The next portion of this Staff Report shows a large portion of the current text with ~~red strikethrough~~ and the suggested text shown in blue underline.

Exhibit A – Modified UDO Language

Article 26 Signs

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26.06.05 Temporary or other signs requiring neither a permit nor registration

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X. Murals

1. Murals shall be treated as wall signs and subject to the same regulations in Section 26.08, except as set forth in this section.
2. A mural shall not be treated as a sign, shall not require permitting, and shall be allowed without restriction as to size, if it meets the following criteria:

   a. ~~3.~~ Murals shall be limited to the rear and secondary facades and shall not be allowed on any primary facade.

   b. ~~4.~~ Murals are allowed to be applied only to wall surfaces. No mural or part of a mural is allowed on any part of any roof, fence, window, door, window trim, door trim, or other architectural feature.

   c. ~~5.~~ Murals proposed for structures located in a historic district or landmark may require approval per historic district/landmark standards. This section is not intended to in any way modify the applicable requirements of the historic district/landmark.

3. Murals that include any brand name, product name, letters of the alphabet spelling or abbreviating the name of any product, company, profession, or business, or any logo, trademark, trade name, or other commercial message are considered advertising signs provided, a mural may have up to 5% of its total space dedicated to a logo, trademark, or tradename (but no other copy) and will not be considered an advertising sign.

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4. A mural that is sponsored by the Town of Boone shall not be considered an advertising sign, but rather government speech, and is subject only to such conditions as the Town Council shall impose; provided, that the foregoing provision shall not be construed as exempting a Town-sponsored mural to be located in a historic district from ~~any~~ applicable requirements of the historic district standards.

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Article 34 Definitions

Mural

Any mosaic, painting, or graphic art or combination thereof which is applied to a building wall (either directly or by means of~~to~~ one or more panels mounted to a building wall) and not interpreted to be advertising by the Administrator. ~~Murals that include any brand name, product name, letters of the alphabet spelling or abbreviating the name of any product, company, profession, or business, or any logo, trademark, trade name, or other commercial message are considered advertising signs provided, a mural may have up to 5% of its total space dedicated to a logo, trademark, or tradename (but no other copy) and will not be considered an advertising sign. A mural that is sponsored by the Town of Boone shall not be considered an advertising sign, but rather government speech, and is subject only to such conditions as the Town Council shall impose; provided, that the foregoing provision shall not be construed as exempting a Town-sponsored mural to be located in a historic district from any applicable requirements of the historic district standards.~~

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Staff Note: Upon review, Staff found that elements included in the definition of murals in Article 34 would provide more clarification if included in mural regulations of Article 26.

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Appendix D Downtown Boone Local Historic District Design Guidelines and Handbook

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Commission Procedures

Elevation Definitions

Primary Elevation: The elevation generally considered ~~thought of~~ as the main facade of a building that faces the public street and that contains the building's primary pedestrian entrance; sometimes referenced as the "front elevation."

Secondary Elevation: An~~The~~ elevation that faces a public street or is plainly visible from a public street ~~adjacent buildings~~ and that may contain one or more ~~additional~~ pedestrian entrances other than the primary pedestrian entrance; sometimes referenced as the "side elevation."

Tertiary Elevation: An~~The~~ elevation(s) that does not face a public street and is generally not visible from public streets. This elevation typically includes posterior, exterior elevations, features, and land area; otherwise references as the "rear elevation."

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Inventory Classifications

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Properties in the historic district are classified as follows per the District Designation Report:

- CA: Contributes to the character of the district based on architectural significance of one or more structures on the property.
- CH: Contributes to the character of the district based on historical significance related to events or individuals associated with the property.
- NC: Non-contributing property, constructed outside of the district's period of significance from 1918 to 1964.
- VL: Vacant lot.

Staff Note: Staff believes it will be helpful to include in Appendix D the definitions of the contributing status of properties from the District Designation Report.

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Table of Minor Work and Major Work in the Historic District

Description of Work	Routine Maintenance	Minor Work (SOC)	Major Work (COA)
Architectural Features (not to include items specifically addressed in other categories) ~~(may include but are not limited to cornices, friezes, medallions, sunbursts, brackets, bays, turrets, fascias, decorative moldings, quoins, columns, brickwork, string courses~~ ***Staff Note: Examples of architectural features are now included in the definition of "Architectural Features" so that examples do not need to be repeated with every reference to that term.***			
In-kind repair/replacement of any existing architectural feature	X		
Addition, removal, or alteration of an architectural feature on tertiary elevation not visible from a public street		X	
All other alterations			X

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Residential Properties Within the District

1. Architectural Components and Details

1.1 It is important to preserve historical architectural features of exterior walls~~, such as cornices, friezes, medallions, sunbursts, brackets, bays, turrets, fascias, and decorative moldings.~~ Original architectural details should always be retained if structurally feasible, even if portions of the original material are damaged or deteriorated to a point requiring replacement.

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3. Masonry

3.9 All historic masonry architectural features ~~, including cornices, moldings, chimneys, and other decorative flourishes,~~ should be retained as they are integral to the architectural character and integrity of the building.

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Commercial Properties Within the District

2. Architectural Components and Details

2.1 It is important to preserve character-defining, historical, architectural features of exterior walls. ~~, such as cornices, friezes, medallions, sunbursts, brackets, bays, turrets, fascias, quoins, columns, brickwork, string courses, and decorative moldings.~~ Original architectural details should always be retained if structurally feasible, even if portions of the original material are damaged or deteriorated to a point requiring replacement. If original details are missing, design replacement features based on historic photos and other documentation.

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4. Masonry

4.8 All historic masonry architectural features ~~, including cornices, moldings, chimneys, and other decorative flourishes,~~ should be retained as they are essential to the architectural character and integrity of the building.

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Design Standards for Historic Streetscapes, Landscapes, Monuments, and Other Resources in the District

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8. Signage

8.01 Sandwich boards, other temporary street signage, seating, and/or merchandise shall not be placed upon the public ways of the District or otherwise impede the pedestrian or traffic flow on those public ways.

8.02 Permanent signs in the historic district are to be historically appropriate for either a contributing or non-contributing building:

A. Permanent signs of a non-contributing building shall be historically appropriate to the period of significance for the district or landmark. The sign shall be of appropriate size, massing, and lighting design relative to the period of significance of the district or landmark.

B. Permanent signs of a contributing building shall be historically appropriate to the period of significance of the building. The sign shall be of appropriate size, massing, and lighting design relative to the period of significance to the building, and shall not harm, damage, or destroy historic materials or features. In the case there is not photographic evidence of materials appropriate to the historic building, then the materials shall be appropriate to the materials in the historic district.

8.03 All signs are subject to the general sign regulations contained in the Town of Boone UDO.

8.04 Ghost Signs: Historic signs, such as ghost signs or those painted on side walls, should be preserved and/or restored whenever reasonably possible in the historic district.

A. If a ghost sign is discovered on a building's exterior, the ghost sign should be restored by repainting and reapplying, using materials and applications that are appropriate to historic buildings. Research and evidence must be submitted to demonstrate the ghost sign being restored. Any application must follow the guidelines for murals herein.

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Staff Note: The next portion of this Staff Report shows a large portion of the current text with ~~red strikethrough~~ and suggested new text shown in blue underline. The intent here is to further elaborate and more clearly organize the guidelines to be used in considering applications for public art installations.

~~*11. Public Art Standards in the Downtown Boone Local Historic District*~~

~~In the historic district, public art refers to works of art that are placed or created outside and intended for public appreciation. Such artworks include, but are not limited to, sculptures, monuments, murals, and mosaics. Functional aspects of streetscapes and landscapes, such as bridges, benches, and fencing may provide opportunities for artistic expressions and in certain situations will be evaluated as public art.~~

~~11.1 Public art installed in the Downtown Boone Local Historic District is to be reviewed by the Historic Preservation Commission for a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA). The HPC does not consider the content, subject matter, or style of any public art. The COA review is concerned with the mass, height, scale, durability, materials, method of installation, and placement of artwork. Artwork is reviewed with respect to these factors to determine if the artwork is congruous with the character of the historic district and the values of historic preservation served by the historic district.~~

~~11.2 The HPC will be focused on the following factors:~~

- ~~The proposed artwork's relationship to character-defining façades or features (such as doors and windows) of a historic building or other structure.~~
- ~~The proposed artwork's placement within a historic streetscape or landscape~~
- ~~The proposed artwork's physical impact on historic materials~~
- ~~The proposed artwork's height, scale, and massing as it relates to the historic setting.~~

~~11.3 The following standards shall generally apply to proposed public artwork:~~

- ~~Artwork should be placed only in locations that do not compromise or detract from the architectural integrity or historic character, design, or materials of the building, site, or district.~~
- ~~Artwork should be placed only in locations that do not materially obstruct or otherwise interfere with the view of historic structures or vistas.~~
- ~~Artwork should not permanently or irreversibly alter the historic character of nearby historically significant buildings or landscapes.~~
- ~~Wall-mounted artwork, including murals, mosaics, or metal installations, should be placed only in locations that do not compromise or diminish the overall design, architectural features, or pattern of the building, site, or district. Wall-mounted artwork may be placed on previously unpainted surfaces by methods of attaching the art to the surface without causing harm to the structure.~~

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- ~~Murals may not be placed around or on windows, doors, pilasters, cornices, building trim, roof lines, and other recessed or projecting features. Murals are appropriate for expanses of wall surfaces otherwise without significant architectural detail. The top of the mural shall not be higher than the roofline of any building.~~
- ~~Murals are permitted only on flat walls where a reasonable amount of open space is available to accommodate an appropriately sized mural.~~
- ~~Previously unpainted surfaces should not be painted. Murals may be painted directly onto a wall surface only if the surface was previously painted. Consideration of the type of paint material that may be required will be location- and district-specific and considered on a case-by-case basis.~~
- ~~It is preferred that wall-mounted artwork be installed on non-historically significant structures. Non-historically significant structures are those that were constructed after the local historic district period of significance from 1918 to 1964.~~

- ~~Artwork should be installed so that it does not conceal, result in damage to, or remove historical details or features.~~
- ~~Artwork should have an appropriate massing in relation to the building, site, or district, and be scaled appropriately for the intended space.~~
- ~~The colors and color palette of artwork is not regulated, except that neon colors are not allowed.~~
- ~~Artwork should consist of traditional materials including wood, stone, masonry, or metal that are durable for exterior installation and compatible with the character of the building, site, or district. It is not appropriate to introduce artwork in contemporary materials including plastic or resin.~~
- ~~Installation of artwork should include methods of stabilization or attachment that are fully reversible and do not cause damage to historic buildings, sites, or materials.~~
- ~~Installation of artwork that includes additional features such as signage, mounting hardware, or lighting should be of compatible materials and should, as appropriate, be installed to be unobtrusive and screened from view as much as possible.~~
- ~~Historic signs, such as ghost ads or those painted on side walls, should be preserved in the historic district.~~
- ~~Artwork should be maintained and repaired as required by the nature of the materials to preserve the appropriate appearance and safety of the artwork. Artwork should be regularly inspected for signs of vandalism and deterioration. When repairs are necessary, use industry best practices and the gentlest available treatments.~~
    - ~~Previously-approved and installed artwork may be replaced with another piece of similar artwork (e.g., a statue replacing a statue, or one mural design replacing another) without need for further approval, so long as general features including mass, scale, durability, method of installation, and placement of the art are not significantly altered and the replacement artwork does not include any new feature that is inconsistent with the standards set forth in this section.~~

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- ~~Any removal of artwork will be evaluated to determine if such removal will damage any historic features artwork is directly placed on, or historic features in close proximity.~~

~~11.4 Historical markers, interpretive signage, and public art that is either (i) located on property owned, controlled or maintained for public use by the Town within a historic district or within the boundaries of a publicly-owned landmark or (ii) funded in whole or in part by the Town must be approved by Town Council and shall be exempt from the COA process.~~

- ~~However, at least 30 days prior to consideration for approval by the Town Council, the proposed historical marker, interpretive signage, and/or public art shall have been considered by the HPC in its advisory capacity with respect to (i) applicable district or landmark standards regarding size, form, massing, materials, and placement, (ii) historical accuracy and appropriateness of the content, and (iii) any other factors, including but not limited to aesthetic considerations, that the HPC deems relevant. The HPC shall forward the results of its review to Town Council. Town Council may consider approval of such historical marker, interpretive signage, or public art within 45 days of consideration by the HPC, regardless of whether or not HPC has submitted the results of its review by that date.~~
- ~~By way of clarification, public art on public property owned or controlled by public authorities other than the Town is not intended to come within the exemption of this subsection 11.4.~~

~~11.5 In order to protect, preserve, and maintain existing monuments located on both public and private property, both the Town of Boone and private property owners should:~~

- ~~Preserve, protect, and maintain the existing historic landforms, topography, and landscape features—including fences, walkways, gates, trees and other plantings, memorials, monuments, and markers—associated with these resources.~~
- ~~Avoid the use of chemical treatments, landscape equipment, fertilizers, and earth-moving devices that are known or likely to result in damage to the historic fabric of these monuments.~~
- ~~Stabilize leaning or loose monuments and prioritize the appropriate restoration of damaged or missing elements of these resources using standards developed by the Secretary of the Interior for the preservation of such resources.~~
- ~~Before treating any type of masonry, correctly identify the materials and document their condition. During treatment, avoid the use of hard mortars on weathered masonry, and treat corroding metal anchors and fences to avoid further damage to masonry elements.~~
- ~~When vandalism occurs, store broken or damaged elements on site or in a secure location nearby until restoration can occur. Take care to label the broken or damaged elements (without further damaging them) to ensure that they are not misplaced or forgotten.~~
- ~~If cleaning of monuments is pursued, use the gentlest procedures available and consult a masonry conservator before using any chemical cleaners. Household products, including bleach, lye, ammonia, and similar items, should never be used.~~

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11. Public Art Standards

11.01 **Overview**: Public art refers to works of art that are installed or created outdoors and intended for public appreciation, including those visible from alleys, sidewalks, and streets, or other public rights-of way. Public art may include, but is not limited to sculptures, monuments, mosaics, murals, and other artistic expressions. Functional elements of a streetscape or landscape, such as bridges, benches, railings, retaining walls, fencing, or other site features may also serve as opportunities for artistic expression, and when designed with artistic intent, may be evaluated as public art.

11.02 **Review Procedures:** Public art requires review to ensure compatibility with the historic character of the district or landmark.

A. HPC Review (COA Required): Unless exempt as provided below, public art installation in the downtown historic district or on a landmark property must be reviewed by the HPC for a COA. The HPC does not evaluate the content, subject matter, or artistic style of the proposed work. In conducting its review, the HPC shall consider the following factors:

1. **Relationship to Character Defining Features**: The HPC shall evaluate how the artwork affects or interacts with character-defining facades or features, including doors, windows, and decorative features.
2. **Streetscape/Landscape Placement**: The HPC shall assess the visual and spatial impact of the artwork on the surrounding historic streetscape, landscape, and public views.
3. **Physical Impact on Historic Materials**: The HPC shall determine whether installation or attachment methods may damage or alter historic building materials or site features.
4. **Congruity with District Character**: The HPC shall consider whether the mass, height, scale, and installation method of the artwork are congruous with the overall character of the district or landmark.

B. Town Council Review (COA Exempt):

1. **Exemption from the COA Review:** Public art located on Town property or funded by the Town requires review and approval by Town Council and is exempt from the COA review.

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2. **HPC Advisory Review**: Prior to final Town Council consideration of a COA-exempt public art proposal, the HPC shall review the proposal in an advisory capacity and provide comments to Town Council as to size, form, massing, scale, materials, placement, historical accuracy, and any factors deemed relevant, which may include artistic expression.

11.03 General Standards

A. Public art shall be placed in locations that complement and enhance the qualities of the landmark property or district (as applicable). Installation and placement should preserve, protect, and maintain existing historic landforms, topography, and landscape features including fences, walkways, gates, trees and other plantings, memorials, monuments, and markers associated with these resources.

B. Public art placement should take into account the visibility of the artwork from adjacent locations.

C. Artwork shall not damage, remove, cover, or obscure from view historic features or materials of the building or adjacent properties, including the ability to visually interpret the building's history (i.e., the ability to identify the additions or other changes to the building).

D. Artwork shall not damage, remove, cover, or obscure building material features, such as siding or stone facade materials.

E. Artwork must be appropriately scaled and proportioned in relation to the building and adjacent properties.

F. Artwork shall not extend above the roofline of the building or adjacent buildings.

G. The color palette of artwork is not regulated, but neon, fluorescent or reflective colors are prohibited.

11.03.01 Installation

A. Artwork must be installed and attached in a manner that is fully reversible.

B. Artwork mounted rather than painted directly on a building facade must be attached through the mortar joints where mortar joints are present. On surfaces without mortar joints, attachment methods must avoid damaging historic materials. In all cases, an air gap must be maintained between the artwork and the facade to prevent moisture retention and allow water to drain.

C. Artwork materials must be durable for exterior use, high-quality, and compatible with the district or landmarks character including wood, stone, masonry, or metal. Contemporary materials such as plastic and artificial stone are not appropriate.

D. Accessories such as mounting hardware or lighting must consist of compatible materials (if visible) and screened from public view where possible.

E. When artwork locations or surfaces need to be prepared prior to installation, power washing, water blasting, or any abrasive cleaning techniques are not appropriate.

F. Mural installation and other wall applications such as waterproof coatings or similar applications on masonry buildings must follow the standards in Appendix D Subsection 4.4.

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11.03.02 Replacement of Previously Approved Artwork: With the exception of murals, previously approved and installed artwork may be replaced with a similar piece (such as a statute replaced with another statute), without additional approval, provided that the mass, scale, durability, installation method, and placement are not significantly altered and no new features conflict with the standards in this section.

11.03.03 Maintenance:

A. General Maintenance Standards

1. Public art must be maintained and repaired as needed to preserve its appearance and safety, based on the durability and composition of selected materials.
2. Regular inspections for vandalism and deterioration are encouraged.
3. Repairs should follow industry best practices and the gentlest effective treatments, consistent with Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.
4. Removal of artwork must return the building or site to condition prior to installation.

B. Monument Maintenance: In addition to the standards in subsection A above, the following apply specifically to monuments:

1. Avoid chemical treatments, landscape equipment, fertilizers, and earth-moving devices that may damage the monument.
2. Stabilize leaning or loose monuments and prioritize appropriate restoration of damaged or missing features using the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.
3. Before treating masonry, correctly identify the materials and document their condition. Avoid hard mortars on weathered masonry and treat corroding metal anchors and fences to prevent further damage.
4. When vandalism occurs, store broken or damaged features on site or in a secure location nearby until restoration can occur and label the components carefully to prevent loss or misplacement.
5. When cleaning is necessary, use the gentlest procedures available and consult a masonry conservator before applying any chemical cleaners. Household products, including bleach, lye, ammonia, and similar items, should never be used.

11.04 Murals

11.04.01 The Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) shall consider applications for mural installation based upon the general guidance provided at subsections 11.02 (A), 11.03, and 11.04.02, above, and based upon the guidance set forth in the following table. The following tables is intended to provide additional guidance specifically for murals; but it is not intended as a checklist compelling approval of a proposed mural installation where guidance is met. The HPC must consider the broader principals set forth above and the overall effects of a proposed mural on the property, adjacent resources, and the overall district.

11.04.02 Table of Guidelines for the Historic Preservation Commission's Consideration of Murals

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***Staff Note: Discussion requested with HPC within the table below - indicated with* yellow highlight.**

Guidelines for the Historic Preservation Commission's Consideration of Murals	**Property Types** Property types are abbreviated as follows: NC: Non-contributing properties* CH: Historically contributing properties* CA: Architecturally contributing properties* LM: Locally designated landmark properties within Town limits * Property classifications as defined in UDO Appendix D Inventory Classifications			
	NC	CH	CA	LM
Mural Locations: Buildings				
Murals may not extend beyond the roofline; paint may not cover roof features.	●	●	●	●
Murals may only be installed on previously painted secondary (side) and tertiary (rear) elevations.		●	●	●
Murals may be installed on secondary (side) and tertiary (rear) elevations (painted or unpainted elevations).	●			
In unusual and carefully considered circumstances, a mural may be appropriate on the primary elevation.	●	●		
Murals may be installed only on smooth surfaces, and not on walls with siding features such as lap, bevel, or board and batten detailing or split-faced stone.	●	●	●	●
A mural painted on one or more panels to be attached to a wall must be attached through the mortar joints where mortar joints are present. On surfaces without mortar joints, attachment methods must avoid damaging historic materials.	●	●	●	●
Mural Locations: Retaining Walls and Other Structures				
Murals may be installed on retaining walls primary, secondary, or tertiary elevations. In some circumstances, depending on the materials of which the wall is constructed or other factors, murals may be appropriate on previously unpainted retaining walls.	●	●	●	●
Murals may be installed on other structures, including but not limited to mechanical screening or dumpster enclosures, when such features are on the secondary (side) and tertiary (rear) elevations.	●	●	●	●
Preserving Architectural Features				

Architectural features may not be painted. Generally, this means that murals may be located only on uninterrupted and smooth wall surfaces.	●	●	●	●
Murals may not engulf (surround) any architectural feature, partially or fully.			●	●
Concealed historic features (such as bricked-up or otherwise covered window and door openings) may be covered with a mural.	●	●	●	●
Mural Paints and Other Applied Coatings				
Murals must be painted using vapor-permeable paints that allow the underlying material to breathe and do not trap moisture. Paints that are appropriate include but are not necessarily limited to lime-wash paints, mineral-based paints, and acrylic latex paints. Any preparation for a mural installation should use these types of masonry appropriate primers.	●	●	●	●
Other wall applications such as waterproof coatings or similar applications on masonry buildings must follow the standards in Appendix D Subsection 4.4.	●	●	●	●

…

Appendices

Glossary of Architectural Terms

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Architectural Features – Architectural features mean the character-defining exterior components, finishes, and details of a building including, by way of example and without limitation: doors and windows (including casings, lintels, and sills), decorative trim, pilasters, cornices, storefront configurations, roof configurations, cast iron ornamentation, stone relief, porch railings, soffits, friezes, medallions, sunbursts, brackets, bays, turrets, fascias, quoins, columns, brickwork, string courses, decorative moldings, and chimneys.

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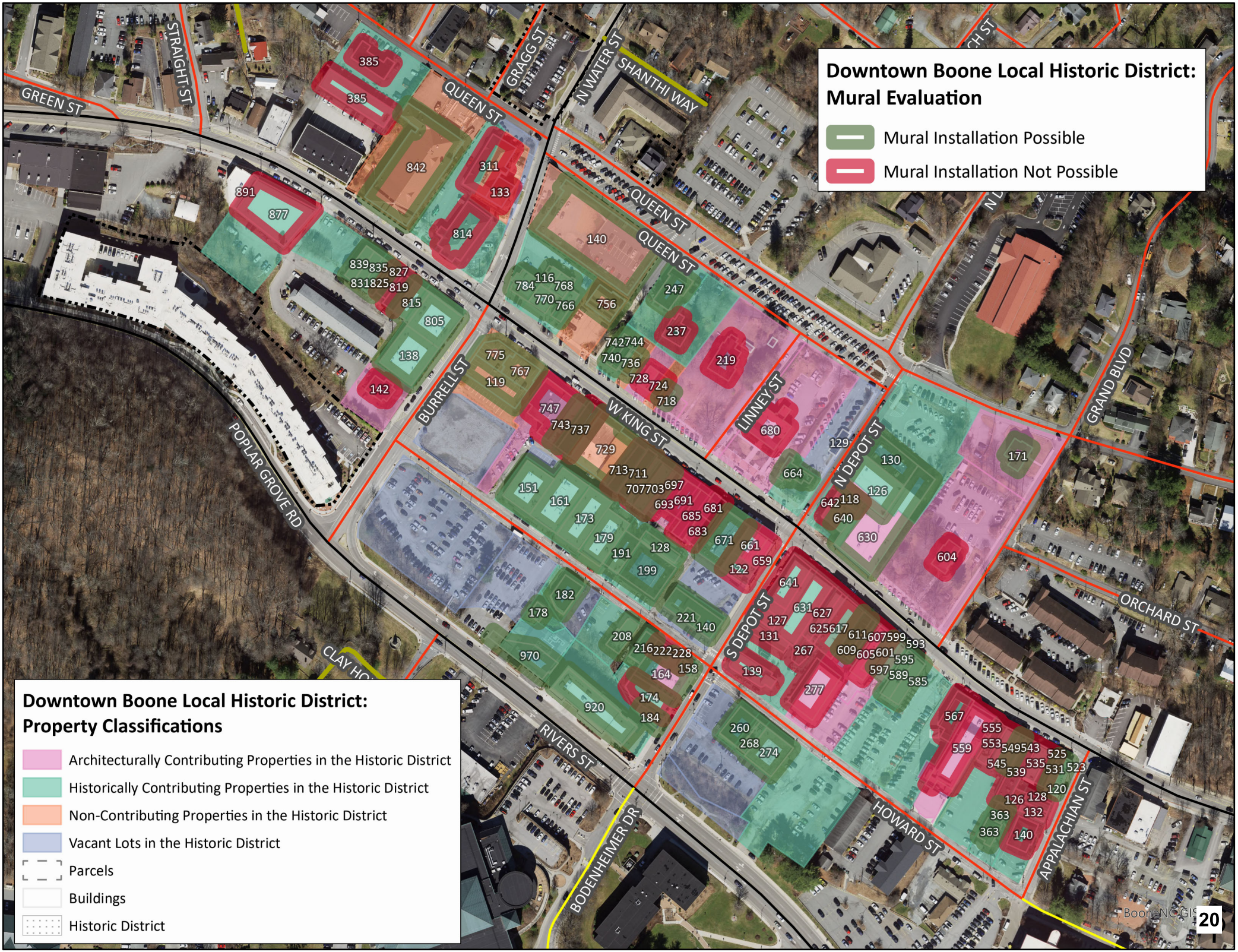
Downtown Boone Local Historic District:
Property Classifications
Architecturally Contributing Properties in the Historic District
Historically Contributing Properties in the Historic District
Non-Contributing Properties in the Historic District
Vacant Lots in the Historic District
Parcels
Buildings
Historic District
GREEN ST
STRAIGHT ST
QUEEN ST
GRAGG ST
N WATER ST
SHANTHI WAY
CHURCH ST
NORTH ST
N DEPOT ST
GRAND BLVD
BURRELL ST
W KING ST
LINNEY ST
POPLAR GROVE RD
S DEPOT ST
ORCHARD ST
CLAY HO
RIVERS ST
BODENHEIMER DR
HOWARD ST
APPALACHIAN ST
BooneNCGIS
19


Downtown Boone Local Historic District: Mural Evaluation
Mural Installation Possible
Mural Installation Not Possible
Downtown Boone Local Historic District: Property Classifications
Architecturally Contributing Properties in the Historic District
Historically Contributing Properties in the Historic District
Non-Contributing Properties in the Historic District
Vacant Lots in the Historic District
Parcels
Buildings
Historic District
GREEN ST
STRAIGHT ST
QUEEN ST
GRAGG ST
N WATER ST
SHANTHI WAY
BURRELL ST
W KING ST
LINNEY ST
N DEPOT ST
S DEPOT ST
GRAND BLVD
ORCHARD ST
POPLAR GROVE RD
CLAY HO
RIVERS ST
BODENHEIMER DR
HOWARD ST
APPALACHIAN ST
BooneNC GIS
20

ABOUT THE RIVERS HOUSE PARK

Rivers House Park is situated on approximately 13 acres that was once owned by the Rivers family of Boone. From 1889 to 1994, the Rivers family owned and edited the Watauga Democrat, Boone's primary newspaper. Rachel Rivers-Coffey and her husband Armfield Coffey began donating the R. L. Clay House and 13 acres of surrounding parcels to the Town of Boone in 1998. Deed restrictions stipulate that the land may be used for recreation, wildlife preservation, and historical purposes.



True to the intent of the donation, the Town of Boone has partnered with Blue Ridge Conservancy to steward the property for the public's enjoyment. This project is a testament to the strength of partnerships, with funding from the following: NC Department of Parks and Recreation through the Recreational Trails Program, the NC Parks and Recreation Trust's Accessible Parks Grant, the Downtown Boone Development Association, Blue Ridge Conservancy, and the Town of Boone.



Howard Knob Park can be viewed from Rivers House Park

THE NORTHERN PEAKS TRAIL AND BLUE RIDGE CONSERVANCY



The Northern Peaks State Trail (NPST) is one of North Carolina's State Trails. As units of the North Carolina state parks system, State Trails are distinguished from other regional and local trails, while still offering regional connectivity and public access. While a state park is operated and managed by the Division of Parks and Recreation, a state trail is composed of multiple, connected sections and epitomizes partnerships.

The mission of the NPST is to connect downtown Boone to West Jefferson and Jefferson, via the Amphibolite Mountains. The NPST will increase public access to one of the most remarkable but difficult to access areas in the region, while also providing crucial active transportation improvements, thus making the High Country a more resilient community.

INTREPRETIVE INFORMATION (NEED A BETTER TITLE)



Tulip Poplar



White-tailed Deer



Carolina Wren

Rivers House Park showcases the remarkable resilience of Southern Appalachian forests as they reclaim former farmland and pastures.

As you explore, notice the mix of younger trees like tulip poplar and black locust alongside mature oaks and hickories – signs of a forest in transition.

Forest fragmentation, while challenging, creates 'edge habitats' where you might spot White-tailed Deer, Eastern Cottontails, and a variety of songbirds.

Ongoing stewardship by the Town of Boone and their non-profit partners includes managing invasive species like garlic mustard and oriental bittersweet, helping native plants reclaim their space in the ecosystem.

Rivers House Park connects to the Amphibolite Mountains just to the north, where ancient volcanic rocks create some of the region's most biodiverse habitats.

THANK YOU TO OUR PARTNERS:

DONOR/PARTNER LOGOS DONOR/PARTNER LOGOS DONOR/PARTNER LOGOS DONOR/PARTNER LOGOS DONOR/PARTNER LOGOS

Rivers Park is named for the Rivers family, who owned and edited Boone's primary newspaper, the Watauga Democrat, from 1889 to 1994 and resided in the nearby R. L. Clay House (Rivers House) for many years. In 1998, Rachel-Rivers Coffey and her husband Armfield Coffey began donating the house and over 12 acres of surrounding parcels to the Town of Boone. The Town purchased additional property in 2000 to round out the park's 13 acres. Deed restrictions stipulate that the land may be used for recreation, wildlife preservation, and historical purposes.

- Additionally, the image suggested to be used is a Digital Watauga image, and Staff has confirmed with Digital Watauga that the image credit should read: Rachel Rivers-Coffey (standing), 1971, from the Jones House Collection, Digital Watauga Project.

DRAFT

Proposal for a Town of Boone Historical Marker

Prepared by Brianna Anctil, Melody Oxendine, and Lara Morgana Cording

May 2025 [DRAFT] Draft, November 2025

A. SUBJECT OF PROPOSED MARKER:

North State Canning Company (Boone Kraut Factory)

B. SITE TO BE MARKED:

Parcel ID: 2900-69-7872-000, 971 West King Street

C. PROPOSED LOCATION OF MARKER:

913 West King Street is located roughly 15 yards east of the building that was once part of the factory. Next to the lower (northwest) entrance to the parking lot, near the front facade in a landscaped green space.



Fig. 1. Google, *Google Maps*, screenshot of 971 West King Street, Boone, NC.

D. HISTORICAL SKETCH:

The North State Canning Company, more commonly remembered as the Boone Kraut Factory, was founded in 1923 in Boone, North Carolina.[1] County Agent John B. Steele recognized that Watauga cabbage farmers were not getting fair prices for their extraordinary cabbage and saw it as an opportunity to develop a cabbage processing facility in Boone. He saw farmers, such as H. Neal Blair, who had been growing cabbage for generations, could make more money on their crop if they organized with other farmers to sell cabbage and kraut to bigger markets.[2] In 1923, Blair was on board with Steele's plan and published a short piece defending his reasoning as to why the kraut factory should be built in Watauga County and how it would operate. Blair argued that North Carolina's kraut had originated from Northern and Midwestern states, and Watauga farmers were not seeing financial gains from growing cabbage or canning kraut, but they could if they sold their cabbage to the factory.[3]

The cabbage processing factory was established at the west end of Boone through the collective efforts of local farmers under the Blue Ridge Farmers Association.[4] According to a 1947 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, the facility was located on upper King Street.[5] The facade faces Green Street, and the southernmost side of the building faces Poplar Grove Road. The Geographic Information System (GIS) maps of the building provided by the Watauga County Property Records prove that the continued use of this building has been consistent until the company's liquidation in 1981. Contemporary records from the Watauga County tax database place the site at 971 West King Street, now occupied by the Agricultural Services Center.[6] The parcel of land was sold to Watauga County on November 24th, 1987, for $400,000 dollars.

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[1] Jeter, F. M. "Kraut Industry Now on Its Feet." *Watauga Democrat.* (Boone, NC), Dec. 18, 1924. https://newspapers.digitalnc.org/lccn/sn82007642/1924-12-18/ed-1/seq-1/#pageinformation

[2] Jeter, F. M. "Kraut Industry."

[3] Blair, H. Neal. "Kraut Factory for Watauga County," *Watauga Democrat.* (Boone, NC), Jan. 11, 1923. https://newspapers.digitalnc.org/lccn/sn82007642/1923-01-11/ed-1/seq-4/#words=CREEK+kraut+krauted

[4] "Watauga's First Kraut Factory Is Now Running At Full Blast." *Watauga Democrat.* (Boone, NC), September 27, 1923. https://newspapers.digitalnc.org/lccn/sn82007642/1923-09-27/ed-1/seq-1/#words=Creek+kraut

[5] *Boone, Watauga County, North Carolina 1947*, Map, New York, Sanborn Map Company 1947, Library of Congress, Digital Sanborn Maps 1867-1970. https://digitalsanbornmaps-proquest-com.proxy006.nclive.org/browse_maps/28/5139/24744/25818/329032?accountid=7980

[6] Watauga County Property Records. Parcel Map. 971 King Street. 2024. https://tax.watgov.org/WataugaNC/maps/mapadv.aspx#2.

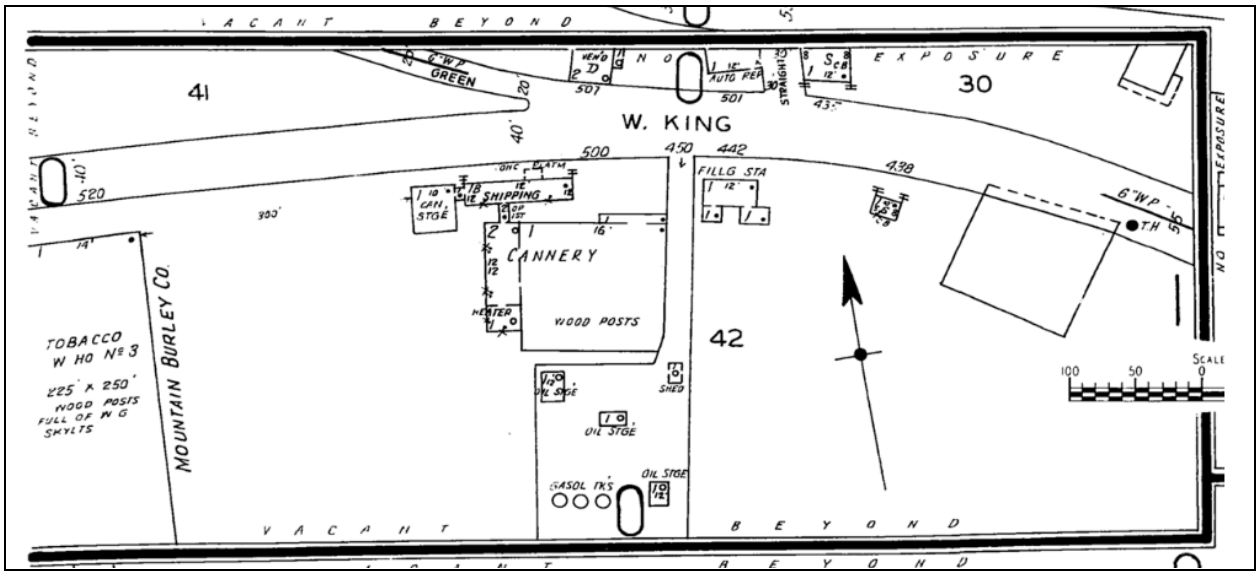

Fig. 2. *Boone, Watauga County, North Carolina 1947*, Map, New York, Sanborn Map Company 1947, Library of Congress, Digital Sanborn Maps 1867-1970.

Based on the available maps and photos of the building during its operation, it is not possible to conclusively determine what original architectural features of the North State Canning Factory remain. The 1947 Sanborn map suggests that the cannery building has been torn down, and the current structure is what was used for shipping. The architectural characteristics—consistent with mid-20th-century industrial construction—suggest that the existing building likely retains most of its original architectural elements; still, it is unclear what exactly has been altered or renovated.

The old North State Canning Company building is situated on the western edge of Boone's historic downtown corridor in a transitional zone between commercial, civic, and residential land uses. King Street, a primary artery through Boone, connects the site to the central business district to the east and to more suburban and rural landscapes to the west. The immediate surroundings feature a mixed-use context. To the north, across Green Street, the area transitions into a residential neighborhood, with modest single-family homes and small apartment complexes nestled into the hillside. To the south and west, near Poplar Grove Road, the landscape becomes more utilitarian and open, with parking lots, service entrances, and low-density development. The proximity to Appalachian State University, just a few blocks east, also contributes to a lively, student-influenced atmosphere in the broader area.

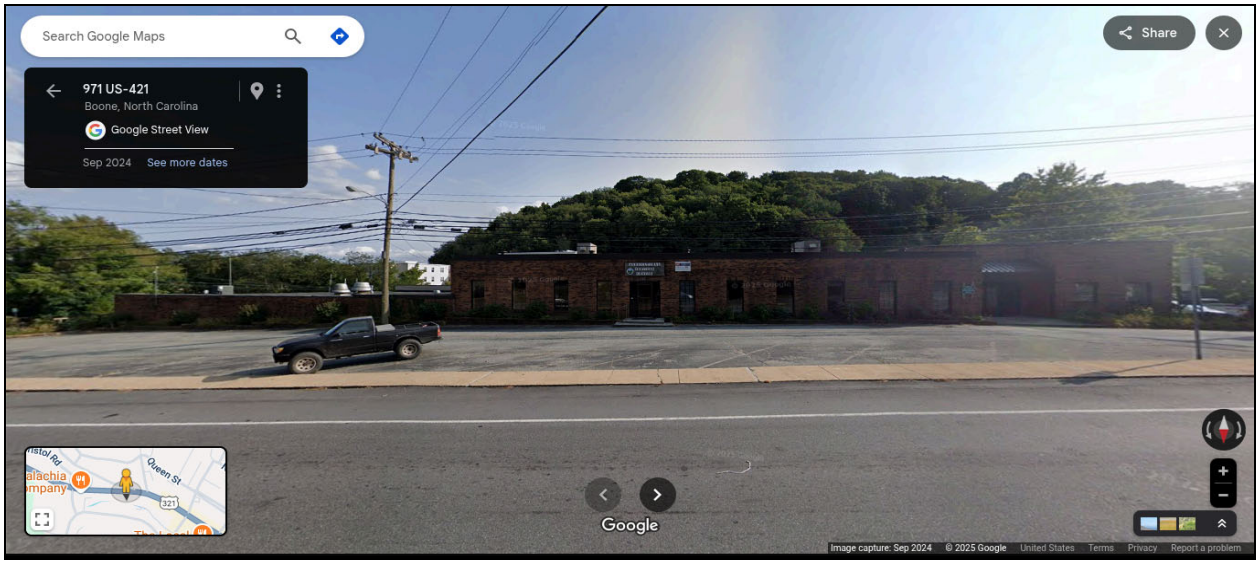

Fig. 3. Google, *Google Maps*, screenshot of 971 West King Street, Boone, NC.

The building, now occupied by the Agricultural Services Center, is representative of mid-20th-century utilitarian industrial architecture. The structure is a large, rectangular, single-story complex, reflecting functional priorities over decorative considerations. The north elevation faces the opening of Green Street, across West King, and serves as the building's primary facade. It is constructed primarily of red brick laid in a running bond pattern and has a row of symmetrical metal-framed windows. It has a flat roof with no overhang, consistent with mid-20th-century utilitarian industrial design. The east elevation does not have a brick facade and has plain gray siding. It features a service entrance, reflecting its use as a loading and shipping building for the factory, which would have facilitated the movement of goods. The rear elevation faces Poplar Grove Road.

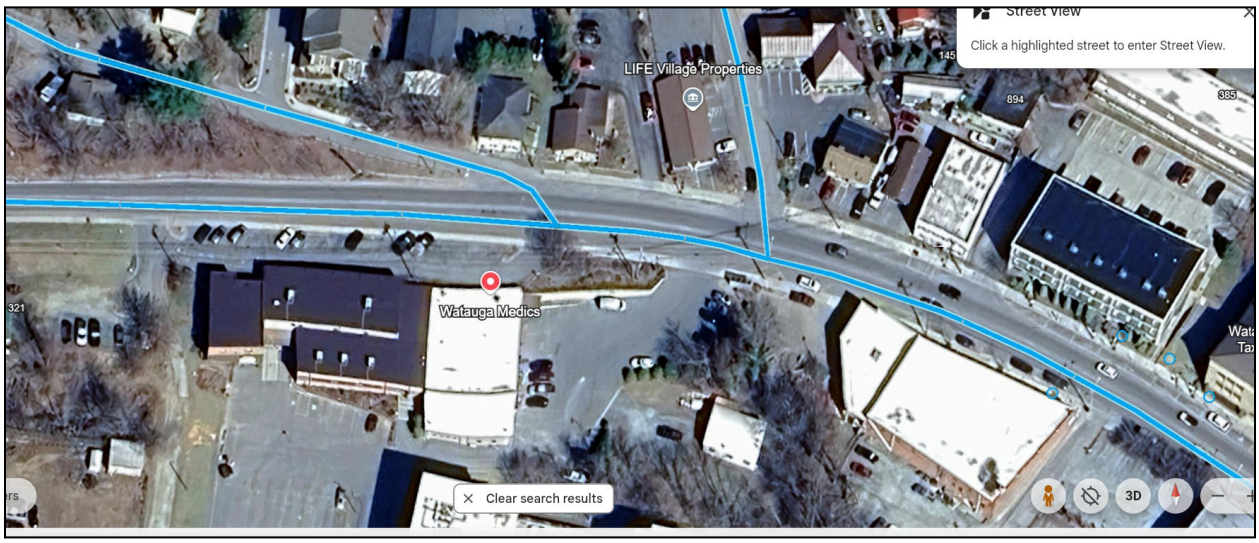

Fig. 4. Google, *Google Maps*, aerial view of 971 West King Street, Boone, NC.

To construct the kraut factory, Blair, in his 1923 article, asked for $40 (or $746.99 adjusted for inflation in 2025) from the 125 farmers and businessmen in the county to help build the $5,000 ($94,729.82 adjusted for inflation in 2025) factory in Boone. About 90 cabbage farmers were organized into the Blue Ridge Farmers Association, which helped fund the construction and later grew cabbage to sell to the factory. They were organized under Blair and Steele.[7] At the time, Blair believed that the factory would handle 50 acres of kraut cabbage and 50 acres of market cabbage, but that it would grow into a large trade business.[8] In the first season in 1923, 350 tons of cabbage were delivered to the factory by Association members– a good sign for the new local industry. The factory was prepared for the surplus, and farmers earned a better price than usual by selling to them, which bolstered the local economy.[9] The next challenge was marketing the North State kraut. They found it difficult to market sauerkraut to places like Raleigh, as kraut was considered a "low-brow" food for that region of the state.[10] A highly reputable doctor from Raleigh, Dr. Lowery, helped to market it by highlighting the health benefits of fermented foods, which helped some, but many grocers had contracts for a couple of years already and could not contract with North State Canning Company yet.[11] With the help of a local salesman, Mr. Betty, the kraut factory was able to sell their product in nearby grocery stores and get the word out about the kraut made from cabbage grown in the Blue Ridge Mountains of North Carolina.[12] By the late 1920s, the factory was handling 1,000 tons of cabbage per season and had become an important factor in the local economy.[13]

The association between the sauerkraut manufactured in Boone and the cabbage grown in Watauga County was integral to the marketing of the product. The can labels had an image of blue mountains with a note that said, "Pride of the Blue Ridge" and "Grandfather Mountain."[14] It is implied that the sauerkraut in the can is one of the great prides of the mountains and a staple in the region's culture, and it has historically been a staple in the diet. They can also include a brief recipe for spare ribs with kraut that presumably any consumer of the canned kraut could make at home.[15] Additionally, newspaper articles from western North Carolina offered information about how to make kraut and what side dishes to pair it with, which highlighted the importance of cabbage and sauerkraut as a staple in the mountain diet.[16] Some newspapers from the North

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[7] Jeter. "Kraut Industry."having been a staple in the diet for a long time
[8] Blair, "Kraut Factory."
[9] Jeter. "Kraut Industry."
[10] Jeter. "Kraut Industry."
[11] Jeter. "Kraut Industry."
[12] Jeter. "Kraut Industry."
[13] "Will grow cabbage for making Kraut" *Forest City Courier* (Forest City, NC), June 13, 1929. https://newspapers.digitalnc.org/lccn/sn91068175/1929-06-13/ed-1/seq-10/#words=Creek+Kraut+kraut+KRAUT
[14] North State Canning Company, "10 oz. Chopped Kraut Label From North State Canning Co.," *Digital Watauga*. https://digitalwatauga.org/items/show/20894.
[15] North State Canning Co. "10oz. Chopped Kraut."
[16] "Make Sauer Kraut for Winter Meals." *Alleghany News.* (Sparta, NC), Sept. 11, 1947.

Carolina coast included recipes for sauerkraut in the winter, which demonstrated how the North State Canning Company had successfully marketed to the coastal regions of the state as an "old-fashioned," homely food for when they faced cold temperatures like the mountain region.[17]



"10 oz. Chopped Kraut Label From North State Canning Co." Image courtesy of Eric Plaag Collection, Digital Watauga Project.

Shortly after the kraut factory was up and running, John B. Steele wrote about his observations on the local economy and the cabbage market. Essentially, by manufacturing sauerkraut, it stopped some cabbage from entering the market and left only the highest grade cabbage to be sold, which prevented oversaturation and a drop in prices.[18] The kraut factory, with the help of the Blue Ridge Farmers' Association, had tremendous benefits for Watauga farmers and consumers by maintaining high-quality crops and regulating market prices.

By the 1960s, Watauga County was the number one cabbage producer in the state and 32nd in the nation.[19] The cabbage economy was integral for Watauga County folks. In 1967, only about 60 farmers were under contract to supply the factory with cabbage, but the factory was

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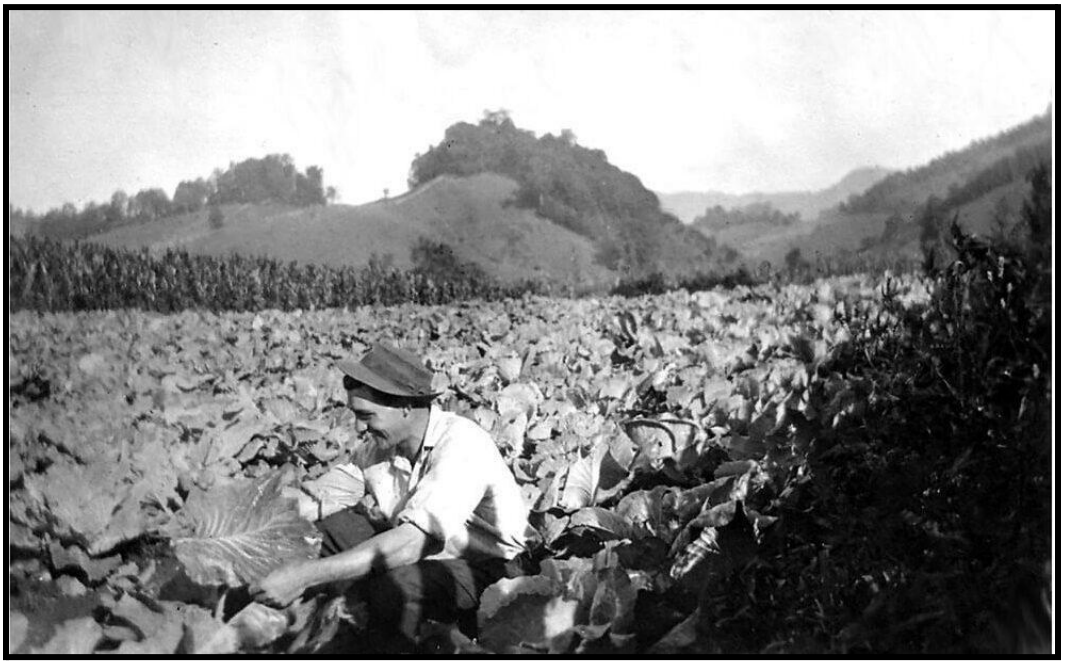
https://newspapers.digitalnc.org/lccn/sn90057235/1947-09-11/ed-1/seq-4/#words=Creek+kraut+Kraut

[17] Cecily Brownstone. "For Good Winter Supper, It's Old-Fashion Kraut." *Carteret County News-Times.* (Morehead City and Beaufort, NC), Jan. 28, 1955. steehttps://newspapers.digitalnc.org/lccn/sn94058246/1955-01-28/ed-1/seq-10/#words=Creek+kraut+Kraut

[18] Steele, B. John. "County Agent Makes Usual Monthly Report." *Watauga Democrat.* (Boone, NC), Oct. 4, 1923. https://newspapers.digitalnc.org/lccn/sn82007642/1923-10-04/ed-1/seq-1/#words=CREEK+Creek+kraut

[19] North State Canning Company, "10 oz. Chopped Kraut Label From North State Canning Co.," *Digital Watauga*, accessed September 26, 2025, https://digitalwatauga.org/items/show/20894.

more profitable than ever.[20] That same year, the kraut factory added 12 40-ton vats to the 32 vats that were in use the year before, doubling the factory's production.[21] The old vats, made of cypress lumber that last indefinitely with minor maintenance, were moved to a new building and continued to be used.[22] This new facility was a wooden building that housed the vats. It, along with a rock building and a large two-story warehouse, made up the buildings of the factory.[23] Generally, farmers across Watauga and Ashe counties delivered their cabbage crops to the south of the new building. The season for growing kraut began in July and lasted through October when the first freeze usually hits.[24] It took about 30 days to turn cabbage into kraut that is ready to be canned, so the vats were filled two to three times per season.[25] The factory processed as many as 24,000 cans of kraut per day, but when the expansion was completed, it was projected that more than 3,000 tons of kraut would be produced each year.[26] When the kraut was canned, the cans were placed upright, labeled, and prepared for shipment. Consumers as far north as Maryland and as far south as Florida bought the kraut and its juice.[27]



[20] Minor, Joe. "New Boone Cannery Building to Double Production of Kraut," *Watauga Democrat.* (Boone, NC), May 25, 1967. https://newspapers.digitalnc.org/lccn/sn82007642/1967-05-25/ed-1/seq-1/
[21] Minor. "New Boone Cannery."
[22] Minor. "New Boone Cannery."
[23] Minor. "New Boone Cannery."
[24] Minor. "New Boone Cannery."
[25] Minor. "New Boone Cannery."
[26] Minor. "New Boone Cannery."
[27] Minor. "New Boone Cannery."

Fig. 6. Man harvesting cabbage with the mountains in the background, date unknown, *Our State Magazine.*[28]

The factory raked in $225,600 for the Watauga County economy in 1968.[29] The county agent in 1969, L.E. Tuckwiller, estimated that the market cabbage would take up a total of 300 acres in the county, and kraut cabbage would take up about 80 acres of land in the county.[30] Typically, kraut cabbage is larger and more brittle than the market cabbage.[31] This was a slight increase for kraut cabbage, but a significant decrease for market cabbage from 1959. Tuckwiller argued that the drop in acreage does not indicate that cabbage was becoming less desirable, but that there was a shortage of labor and a higher cost of labor, requiring farmers to cut back on how much they grew.[32] By this time, most of the cabbage was handled through four local product companies: V. C Shore and Sons, Hollar and Greene Product Company, Critcher Brothers, and Goodnight Brothers Produce Company.[33] And of course, the North State Canning Company took the majority of the kraut cabbage grown in the county to produce Watauga Kraut.

The North State Canning Company continued to operate at full capacity as an economic powerhouse for farmers in the county, but ten years later, in 1978, the factory underwent drastic changes. The company had been in the family of W. F. Miller Jr. since 1928, but he and his wife sold it to Nina and Tom Ennis, who took it over during the first of the year.[34] Nina's father, Charles P. Minges, loved sauerkraut and became obsessed with the kraut produced in Watauga, so he and Nina called Miller to ask if he would consider selling the company.[35] He and his wife had been considering retiring, so Miller sold them the company.[36] The Minges family, who also had connections to the Pepsi-Cola bottling industry, had owned a candy manufacturing company in Rockingham in Richmond County, North Carolina, but they moved their operations to Boone and combined it with the kraut manufacturing plant and renamed it North State Foods.[37] The candy continued to be produced under the label of Nina-Menz.[38]

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[28] Our State Magazine. "Green Cabbage Remains a Symbol of Old Mountain Ways and Comforting Suppers." Our State. September 26, 2019. https://www.ourstate.com/where-the-cabbage-is-king-the-history-of-green-cabbage-in-watauga-county-north-carolina/

[29] "Market and Kraut Cabbage in Watauga Bring $225,600," *Watauga Democrat* (Boone, NC), Aug. 28, 1969. https://newspapers.digitalnc.org/lccn/sn82007642/1969-08-28/ed-1/seq-12/#words=Creek+kraut+Kraut

[30] "Market and Kraut Cabbage." *Watauga Democrat.*

[31] "Market and Kraut Cabbage." *Watauga Democrat.*

[32] "Market and Kraut Cabbage." *Watauga Democrat.*

[33] "Market and Kraut Cabbage." *Watauga Democrat.*

[34] Conrad Paysour, "Candy and Kraut Do Mix," *Watauga Democrat* (Boone, NC), May 7, 1978. https://digitalwatauga.org/items/show/33569

[35] Paysour. "Candy and Kraut."

[36] Paysour. "Candy and Kraut."

[37] Paysour. "Candy and Kraut."

[38] Paysour. "Candy and Kraut."

Later, in 1981, there was a discussion that North State Foods would cease operations, but it is not clear why they would close their doors. Many Watauga County locals saw the production of sauerkraut at the factory as an enlargement of the home operation and bought from them once it began operating.[39] They were largely thankful that the company turned their cabbage into a cash crop, bolstering the local economy.[40] A closure of the factory would mean that locals would have to revert to the home fermentation process, a long tradition for mountain families before the 1920s. A 1924 article from the *North Wilkesboro Hustler* advised readers not to rely entirely on the factory kraut and keep their barrel fixtures and other kraut-making supplies.[41] Hopefully, the high country farmers listened to the *Hustler* and kept their supplies because in 1981, the company officially liquidated its assets, paid out their shareholders, and ended their manufacturing operations for good.[42]

Despite the company's economic success during its operating years, it had some environmental impact on the waterways of Boone. Since the building was located with Boone Creek directly behind it, parallel to Poplar Grove Road, it became heavily affected by the runoff from the business. This runoff gave it a distinct smell of sauerkraut; thus, the creek earned its nickname, "Kraut Creek." The creek had been piped, paved over, and faced pollution during the factory's operation. The contaminants in Boone Creek from the North State Canning Company "killed off everything" in the stream.[43] While the wildlife and trout that now inhabit the stream had to be reintroduced and manually stocked into the stream.

After the North State Canning Company closed, the building remained vacant for about six years until the Watauga Agricultural Center opened in 1987 in the same location. Currently, Watauga County uses the building to hold conferences, educational seminars, classes, and offer equipment rentals. This Agricultural Center serves as a component of the North Carolina Cooperative Extension led by North Carolina State University and North Carolina A&T University. The Extension's goal is to establish a branch in each county as a research-based educational resource that identifies problems and issues within the agricultural discipline while providing solutions. This information is then broadcast to communities at seminars hosted at the Agricultural Centers across the state.[44]

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[39] Rogers Whitener, "Cabbage for sauerkraut was important crop in mountains," *Black Mountain News* (Black Mountain, NC) Feb. 12, 1981. https://newspapers.digitalnc.org/lccn/sn96086030/1981-02-12/ed-1/seq-2/#words=Creek+kraut+Kraut

[40] Whitener, "Cabbage for sauerkraut."

[41] "Mountain Cabbage and Kraut. *North Wilkesboro Hustler.* (North Wilkesboro, NC), Oct. 8, 1924. https://newspapers.digitalnc.org/lccn/sn92072938/1924-10-08/ed-1/seq-1/#words=Creek+kraut+Kraut

[42] Robert and Mary Capps to Watauga County. *Deed of Sale.* Book 83, p. 187, Watauga County Register of Deeds, Boone, North Carolina.

[43] Department of Geography and Planning, *Boone Creek.* 5.

[44] "How Extension Works," n.d. NC State Extension, https://www.ces.ncsu.edu/how-extension-works/

Blue Ridge Women in Agriculture (BRWIA) manages the High Country Food Hub, which has been housed in the Agricultural Center since September 2016. Watauga County Commissioners approved the use of the building for operations, and BRWIA secured funding from sources including the NC A&T Extension, The Golden Leaf Fund, Z. Smith Reynolds, and Appalachian State University's Appalachian Studies Department. Locals requested more areas for food storage and supplies within Boone, especially during the winter months, and the Agricultural Center, with its familiarity to farmers and gardeners, proved to be the ideal location.[45] The Food Hub operates as an online farmers' market offering a variety of products, including vegetables, fruits, flowers, meat, and body care products. Its large selection of goods can be picked up in several locations, including Boone, Banner Elk, Blowing Rock, West Jefferson, and Deep Gap. The Food Hub now proves to be a useful tool for farmers to work within the local community, sharing and selling their goods.[46] It also plays a key role in keeping local heritage and traditions alive while maintaining the spirit of the building, based on providing the community with nutrition. The connection between the current Watauga Agricultural Center and High Country Food Hub, from its birth as a locally focused major supplier of high-quality sauerkraut and other farm products through the North State Canning Company, shows a profound correlation and connection to the heritage of the Blue Ridge Mountains.

E. PROPOSED MARKER TEXT:

Option 1:

The North State Canning Company operated near here from 1923 to 1981. County agent John B. Steele and local farmers, including H.N. Blair, created the Blue Ridge Farmers Association, which managed the company. By the 1960s, Watauga County was the number one kraut producer in the state, 32nd in the nation, and was essential to local farmers. During processing, the Canning Company drained into local water, polluting Boone Creek over the years. The smell was so pungent across the Town of Boone that the waterway gained its nickname "Kraut Creek." In 1978, North State Canning Company, then owned by W. F. Miller, Jr., sold the company to Nina and Tom Ennis, who merged kraut production with their candy business, Nina-Menz. In 1981, the factory shut its doors and stopped production. [132 words]

Option 2:

The North State Canning Company, operating from 1923 to 1981, was a local company established at the west end of Boone through the collective efforts of county agent John B. Steele and local farmers like H. N. Blair under the Blue Ridge Farmers Association. By the 1960s,

[45] "About," High Country Food Hub, 2016. https://www.highcountryfoodhub.org/about.html
[46] "Local Food at the Click of a Button." n.d. High Country Food Hub. https://www.highcountryfoodhub.org/

Watauga County was the number one cabbage producer in the state and 32nd in the nation. The factory raked in $225,600 for the Watauga County economy in 1968. During processing, the Canning Company dumped Kraut drainage into the creek, which led to the pollution of the Boone Creek over the years. The smell was so pungent across the town of Boone that it gained its nickname “Kraut Creek.” In 1978, North State Canning Company under W. F. Miller Jr. sold the company to Nina and Tom Ennis, who merged kraut production with their candy business, Nina-Menz. In 1981, the factory shut its doors and stopped producing kraut and candy. [156 words]

Option 3:

The North State Canning Company, operating near here from 1923 to 1981, was managed by the Blue Ridge Farmers Association, established through the collective efforts of county agent John B. Steele, and local farmers like H. N. Blair. An essential part of the local agricultural economy, by the 1960s the company produced over 3,000 tons of kraut a year, and was the number one kraut producer in the state. Distributed from Maryland to Florida it was the 32nd largest producer in the nation. Between the pungent smell from production, and periodic discharges into the Boone Creek, the waterway gained the nickname “Kraut Creek.” In 1978, North State Canning Company under W. F. Miller Jr. sold the company to Nina and Tom Ennis, who merged kraut production with their candy business, Nina-Menz. In 1981, the factory shut its doors and stopped producing kraut and candy. [145 words]

Option 4:

The North State Canning Company, operating near here from 1923 to 1981, was managed by the Blue Ridge Farmers Association, established through the collective efforts of county agent John B. Steele. 125 local farmers and businessmen contributed to the factory’s construction. At its peak, the company produced over 24,000 cases a day and approximately 3,000 tons of kraut products annually. The factory became an essential part of the local economy, the number one kraut producer in the state, and sold throughout the Southeast. Between the pungent smell from production and periodic discharges into Boone Creek, the waterway gained the nickname “Kraut Creek.” In 1978, the North State Canning Company, under the leadership of W. F. Miller Jr. was sold to Nina and Tom Ennis, who merged kraut production with their candy business, Nina-Menz. In 1981, the factory shut its doors and ceased production of kraut and candy. [140 words]

F. FURTHER RESEARCH SUGGESTIONS

Despite group efforts to fill in the historical narrative about the North State Canning Company, there are still some gaps in the narrative that our collective research was unable to fill.

Shortly after the company was founded in a cooperative effort under Steele and Blair, a *Watauga Democrat* newspaper article confirmed that the ownership was then transferred to W. F. Miller around 1928. It is unclear how and why he acquired the company. We were not able to determine what the full name of Miller is, which makes it difficult to find more information about him. It would be possible to find more information about how this ownership change happened by determining Miller's full name and digging through more deeds at the Watauga County Register of Deeds website.[47]

It is also unclear what the Canning Company building was used for between the closure of the factory and its use now as The Agricultural Center. Property tax records and a 1987 deed indicate that the county bought it from Robert and Mary Capps; however, it is unclear if and how the Capps used the building or how the county used the building.[48] It is also unknown how the Capps family came to own the property. It has been challenging to track down deeds in the Watauga County Register of Deeds, but with more time, it may be possible to fill in the gaps. It would be helpful to collect all the deeds and property tax records[49] related to that parcel of land to help determine who owned it and then look for information about that person in newspapers. Reaching out to Watauga County and/or Boone community members about it could also shed light on what the building was used for after the factory closure.

Regarding the building itself, it is confirmed that the current building is the same one that the factory used for its shipping functions; however, it is unclear what exactly the outside of the building looked like when it was operating at full capacity. The only photos the group found in our research were aerial photos, which made it difficult to tell what the architectural features looked like in the early 1900s. In 1967, a new building was constructed on the property; however, the exact location of this building and its current status are unknown. Old maps of Boone may help determine this information. Local community members may have photos of the building before its closure and can confirm some of its basic architectural features.

A 1923 article in the *Watauga Democrat* noted that when the factory first opened, it was being powered by a Fordson Tractor in the basement, but it would later be powered by a steam engine.[50] As a group, we were unable to confirm if the factory ran on steam or for how long, but this would help shed light on the environmental impacts of the factory. Speaking with local community members may be the only way to find out more about what powered the factory.

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[47] For further research into the Watauga County deeds look at the Watauga County Register of Deeds Website, https://www.wataugacounty.org/AppPages/Dept/Deeds/home.aspx.
For further information about the deed trail as of writing, https://drive.google.com/drive/u/2/folders/1kkRa-XCKCnhNF9xIAbFie1t7wzoe3zZz

[48] Watauga County Property Records. Parcel Map. 971 King Street. https://tax.watgov.org/WataugaNC/maps/mapadv.aspx#2.

[49] For further research into property tax records, look at the Watauga County Tax Administration Website, https://www.wataugacounty.org/App_Pages/Dept/Tax/searchbills.aspx

[50] "Watauga's First." *Watauga Democrat.*

Additionally, there is no documentation that our group has found prior to the 2000s about the pollution of Boone Creek. It is possible that there are student articles written by Appalachian State University students in their school newspaper, *The Appalachian*, about studies or research about the pollution or student complaints of the smell, but this would require more time for research.[51]

[51] For further research into *Appalachian*, https://omeka.library.appstate.edu/

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Proposal for a Town of Boone Historical Marker

Prepared by Melody Oxendine, February 5th [DRAFT]

A. SUBJECT OF PROPOSED MARKER:

Watauga Kraut Factory or North State Canning Company

Commented [1]: Disscuss preference for title in meeting

B. SITE TO BE MARKED:

Parcel ID: 2900-69-7872-000, 971 West King Street

C. PROPOSED LOCATION OF MARKER:

913 West King Street is located roughly 15 yards east of the building that was once part of the factory. Next to the lower (northwest) entrance to the parking lot, near the front facade in a landscaped green space.



Fig. 1. Google, *Google Maps*, screenshot of 971 West King Street, Boone, NC.

D. HISTORICAL SKETCH:

The history of kraut production in Watauga is a complicated and winding story. The first traces of a sauerkraut factory date back to 1923. Originally operated by The Blue Ridge Farmers Association, the factory was located on the west side of Boone. The company operated under the title "Watagua Kruat Factory", producing sauerkraut made with cabbage supplied by the local farmers. Mr. John Steele, the Watauga County agent, was an overseer of the company and provided advice when needed. Steele met with the local farmers at the courthouse and formed the Watauga Cabbage Growers Association. "Each of 100 farmers agreed to raise one acre of cabbage and pay $40.00 to build a kraut factory in Boone; they also raised a preferred stock of about 3- 800 to pay 7 percent." The Blue Ridge (Farmers) Association was formed to sell products of the factory, as well as those of other local horticulture associations. Mr. H. Neal Blair was elected as the Kraut expert and head of product development. Other leaders were elected by sections of the county: Messrs, W. L. Winkler, H. Neal Blair, J. C. Miller, Carter Farthing, N. L. Mast, and one unrecorded.[1]

The location of the factory was west of Boone and started with 10 small vats. The vats, cannery, and storage were all in the same wooden building.[2] Operating at a capacity of producing 250 tons of kraut per season.[3] The factory was under the leadership of H. Neil Blair and John B. Steele and was funded by C.D. Matthews until the company was financially stable. H. Neil Blair and John B. Steele launched a large advertising campaign to spread the word of the Watauga Kraut Factory. Dr. J. R. Lowery, a renowned stomach specialist in Raleigh, corroborated that the mountain kraut was good for the stomach lining. "I know of nothing that gives as good results as the eating daily of pure lactic acid kraut, therefore anything that I can do that will educate the people to eat this healthful product, I will be glad to do".[4]

The factory offered better prices than selling privately or down the mountain.[5] Farmers found they favored selling their high-grade kraut to the local factory due to high cuts and familiarity with the owners. The factory would stabilize under the leadership of the Watauga Farmers Association. The association would meet on April 10th, 1926, to discuss dissolution and selling the corporation. This would be done under the leadership of W. L. Winkler as vice

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[1] "Watauga's Kraut Factory Is Success in First Season," *Greensboro Daily News*, November 18, 1923, https://newscomwc.newspapers.com/image/936675408/?terms=%22blue%20ridge%20farmers%20association%22&pqsid=ie1mFcM_aBqSNEMAnZSO0Q%3A2121307%3A250077210.

[2] Joe Minor, "New Boone Cannery Building to Double Production of Kraut," *Watauga Democrat* 89, no. 47 (May 25, 1967), info:lccn/sn82007642.

[3] F. H. Jeter, "State's Kraut Industry," December 15, 1924, https://newscomwc.newspapers.com/image/936664867/?match=1&terms=%22blue%20ridge%20farmers%20association%22&pqsid=ie1mFcM_aBqSNEMAnZSO0Q%3A2121307%3A250077210.

[4] F. M. Jeter, "Kraut Industry Now on Its Feet," *Greensboro Daily News*, December 18, 1924, https://newscomwc.newspapers.com/image/936664867/?match=1&terms=%22blue%20ridge%20farmers%20association%22&pqsid=ie1mFcM_aBqSNEMAnZSO0Q%3A2121307%3A250077210..

[5] F. H. Jeter, "State's Kraut Industry," *Greensboro Daily News*, December 15, 1924, https://newscomwc.newspapers.com/image/936664867/?match=1&terms=%22blue%20ridge%20farmers%20association%22&pqsid=ie1mFcM_aBqSNEMAnZSO0Q%3A2121307%3A250077210.

president and H. Neal Blair as secretary. In September of 1926, the Blue Ridge Farmers Association leased the building and land to the newly emerged company, North State Canning Company, and James L. Hemphill. Mr. H. Neal Blair was appointed as manager of the operation. The new company also expanded the product line to include canned fruits.[6] Soon, the cannery was operating at full capacity, and a building expansion was needed to meet the growing product line and high demand.[7] Neil Blair and John Steele would sell the group to W. F. Miller Sr., Charles Hulcher, and J. B. Church. By 1930, the North State Canning Company was projected to produce 2,000,000 pounds of kraut.[8] The company was slowly bought out from the shareholders. H. B. Perry bought out Church's shares. In 1938 Perry and Bill Jr. bought out Hulcher's portion of the company.

In November of 1959, North State Canning Company had products being sent as far away as Germany, according to Assistant County Agent W. C. Richardson's records. W. F. Miller Jr. and his mother, Mrs. W. F. Miller, were managers of the company. Employing around 30 individuals during the six-month season. The payroll records wages ranging from $18,000 to $20,000. All farmers who produced for the company were under contract. Reports show that 60 registered farmers harvested 80 acres of cabbage yearly for the company. The plant would pay roughly $20,000 to $25,000 to the growers during this six-month season of production.[9]

Advertising for North State Canning Company would boost, during this time. The marketing campaign focused on incorporating tourist interest with the natural environment. This was due to the popularity of the Blue Ridge Parkway and Grandfather Mountain. Thus, labels gained picturesque images of the Blue Ridge Mountains that had text below noting "Pride of the Blue Ridge" and "Grandfather Mountain".[10] The canning labels highlight the cultural and historical staple that kraut has served in the diets of individuals in the high country.[11] Other newspaper articles from Western North Carolina highlight features as well, some including recipes for sauerkraut dishes. Spreading these traditional recipes from the mountains to the coast. One common recipe was for sauerkraut during the winter, marketed as a fundamental part of the

[6] "Boone Will Get New Canning Firm," *Winston-Salem Journal*, February 19, 1929, https://newscomwc.newspapers.com/image/932511851/?match=1&terms=North%20State%20canning%20company&pqsid=ztygor3kyB0sVvKMgz64Mw%3A2177566%3A1235193882.

[7] Ted League, "More Kraut," *The Cleveland Star*, April 22, 1929, https://newspapers.digitalnc.org/lccn/sn97064509/1929-04-22/ed-1/seq-20/#words=North+State+Canning+company

[8] "Kraut Factory Do Bigger Business," *Johnson City Chronicle*, August 22, 1930, https://newscomwc.newspapers.com/image/585686688/?match=1&terms=%22north%20state%20canning%20company%22&pqsid=m82XQAzQ0pSBSw1rIHe5ww%3A13808%3A1480761698.

[9] John Corey, "Sauerkraut Factory," *Johnson City Press*, November 20, 1959, https://newscomwc.newspapers.com/image/586914805/?match=1&terms=%22north%20state%20canning%20company%22&pqsid=m82XQAzQ0pSBSw1rIHe5ww%3A222520%3A1834193534.

[10] North State Canning Company, "10 oz. Chopped Kraut Label From North State Canning Co.," *Digital Watauga*. https://digitalwatauga.org/items/show/20894.

[11] North State Canning Co. "10oz. Chopped Kraut."

mountain diet. This “old-fashioned” cuisine was a staple on the plates of residents who faced the cold and brutal winters in the mountainous regions.[12]

By the 1960s, North State Canning Company had launched Watauga County as the number one cabbage producer in the state, and 32nd in the United States.[13] W. F. (Bill) Miller Jr. reported that by 1967, the kraut factory expanded to 40 ton vats from the previous 32-ton vats, which allowed the factory to double its production capacity. The previous vats were constructed from cypress lumber, which is a long-lasting material with minimal maintenance needed. The old vats were moved to storage, while new ones took their places.[14] This new facility was of brick and steel construction, replacing the old wooden structure that the factory had been housed in for years.[15] A wooden storage building held unused material on the property. The rock building and two-story warehouse were the main sections for the use of the kraut production.[16] With this expansion, the factory was able to process 24,000 cans of kraut a day. Equalling 3,000 tons of kraut to be produced annually. The kraut had a fermentation period of around 30 days, the vats being refilled with fresh cabbage two to three times each season. After processing, the kraut would be canned, labeled, and shipped. Lovers of the kraut spanned from Florida to Maryland.[17] The owners of the factory were listed as Dr. H. B. Perry Jr. Miss Gertrude Perry, son and daughter of Dr. Perry Sr. and Mrs. W. F Miller Sr., and W. F. Miller Jr.[18]

By 1968 The factory was a powerhouse in Watauga County, contributing $225,600 to the local economy.[19] The county agent in 1969, L. E. Tuckwiller, estimated that the market cabbage would compose 300 acres and kraut cabbage would take up about 80 acres of land within the county.[20] Typically, kraut cabbage is larger and more brittle than the market cabbage.[21] This was a slight increase for kraut cabbage, but a significant decrease for market cabbage from 1959. Tuckwiller argued that the drop in acreage does not indicate that cabbage was becoming less desirable, but that there was a shortage of and a higher cost of labor, requiring farmers to cut back on how much they grew.[22] Most of the cabbage production was managed through four local companies: V. C. Shore and Sons, Hollar and Greene Product Company, Critcher Brothers, and Goodnight Brothers Produce Company. The North State Canning Company took the majority of the kraut cabbage grown in the county to produce the famous Watauga Kraut.[23]

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[12] Cecily Brownstone, “For Good Winter Supper, It’s Old-Fashion Kraut,” *Carteret County News Times*, January 28, 1955, https://newspapers.digitalnc.org/lccn/sn94058246/1955-01-28/ed-1/seq-10/#words=Creek+kraut+Kraut.
[13] North State Canning Company, “10 oz. Chopped Kraut Label From North State Canning Co.,” *Digital Watauga*, accessed September 26, 2025, https://digitalwatauga.org/items/show/20894.
[14] Minor. “New Boone Cannery.”
[15] Minor. “New Boone Cannery.”
[16] Minor. “New Boone Cannery.”
[17] Minor. “New Boone Cannery.”
[18] Minor. “New Boone Cannery.”
[19] “Market and Kraut Cabbage in Watauga Bring $225,000,” *Watauga Democrat*, August 28, 1969, https://newspapers.digitalnc.org/lccn/sn82007642/1969-08-28/ed-1/seq-12/#words=Creek+kraut+Kraut.
[20] “Market and Kraut Cabbage.” *Watauga Democrat.*
[21] “Market and Kraut Cabbage.” *Watauga Democrat.*
[22] “Market and Kraut Cabbage.” *Watauga Democrat.*
[23] “Market and Kraut Cabbage.” *Watauga Democrat.*

In May of 1978, Mr. W. F. Miller Jr. and Mrs. W. F. Miller sold North State Canning Company to the successful candy maker Charles P. Minges and his daughter, Mrs. Nina Ennis. The Ennis family was originally from Rockingham, North Carolina. They had recently moved to Valle Crusis, a decision spurred on by Minges's favored taste for Watauga kraut and W. F. Miller Jrs. goal of retirement. The candy company moved the candy manufacturing business to the North State Canning Company building and merged with the Nin-a-Menz company. A name change occurred during this merger, equalling the new name of "North State Foods." The Minges main goal was to triple the production of kraut from 1977, due to the "bad year of cabbage". This could have been attributed to a fungal disease that heavily impacted local cabbage populations, thus decreasing kraut production as well.[24] [25] Charles Minges excitedly wrote that to celebrate the merger of companies, he was attempting to secure a sauerkraut candy recipe.[26]or[27] The continuous function of the structure proved to be kraut production until the company's liquidation in 1981.[28] The closure is attributed to a combination of factors. Partially due to the fungal disease that plagued the crops of the late 1970s, but also due to the declining availability of useful farmland in the country.[29] The lasting legacy of the renowned Watagua Kruat Factory is most notable in the lasting environmental impacts. In which the runoff from the building drained into the Boone Creek, creating a pungent and recognizable scent of kraut within the waterway. This stream gained the nickname "Kraut Creek."[30]

Many Watauga County locals saw the production of sauerkraut at the factory as an enlargement of the rural traditions of the region and were large consumers of the product.[31] The locals acknowledged the canning company as a powerhouse in the county that turned their cabbage into a cash crop, bolstering the local economy.[32] A closure of the factory would mean that locals would have to revert to the home fermentation process, a long tradition for mountain families before the 1920s. A 1924 article from the *North Wilkesboro Hustler* advised readers not to rely entirely on the factory kraut and keep their barrel fixtures and other kraut-making

[24] Sheri Castle, "Green Cabbage Remains a Symbol of Old Mountain Ways and Comforting Suppers," Our State, September 26, 2019, https://www.ourstate.com/where-the-cabbage-is-king-the-history-of-green-cabbage-in-watauga-county-north-carolina/.
[25] Conrad Paysour, "Candy and Kraut Do Mix," *Greensboro Daily News*, May 7, 1978, https://digitalwatauga.org/files/original/fd1bcb35a54237c228162b303132714c.pdf.
[26] Conrad Paysour, "Candy and Kraut Do Mix,"
[27] Paysour, "Candy and Kraut Do Mix,"
[28] "Watauga County, NC ," Watgov.org, accessed February 23, 2026, https://tax.watgov.org/WataugaNC/maps/mapadv.aspx#2.
[29] Rick McDaniel, "Recipe for Success," WNC Magazine, November 2015, https://wncmagazine.com/feature/recipe_success.
[30] Castle, "Green Cabbage Remains a Symbol of Old Mountain Ways and Comforting Suppers,"
[31] Roger Whitener, "The Black Mountain News," *Digitalnc.org*, February 12, 1981, 2, info:lccn/sn96086030.
[32] Whitener, "Cabbage for sauerkraut."

supplies.[33] In 1981, the company officially liquidated its assets, paid out its shareholders, and ended its manufacturing operations.[34]

The kraut factory was located at the west end of Boone, according to the 1947 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map and corroborated with news reports from 1967.[35] Situated on Upper King Street, the facade faced the modern streets of Green Street, the southern side situated near Poplar Grove Road. The Geographic Information System, which documents the buildings and topography of Watauga County, reported this parcel as just outside the Boone Historic Downtown district and corridor to residential and commercial properties.[36] The Watauga County tax database records the site as 971 West King Street. The parcel of land was sold to Watauga County on November 24th, 1987, for $400,000 dollars. The surrounding buildings vary from single-family homes to apartments that are nestled into the mountainside. In the south and west, of Popular Grave Road, the land usage is more open with passive utilization. Parking lots, service entrances, and development of low-density usage. The building is within a mile east of Appalachian State University, the college town spirit combining with the historical soul of a rural Appalachian community

The architectural distinctions are consistent with mid-20th-century industrial design in construction. While these discrepancies align with historical accounts, there are no large reports of the building being altered or renovated drastically since its construction in 1967.[37] The building is composed of red brick masonry laid in a running bond pattern. A row of commercial metal frame double-pane windows and a flat roof with no overhang. The east elevation lacks a brick exterior, but is rather a gray weatherboard siding. This side features the service entrance for loading and shipping, remnants of the building's original use. The rear or southern elevation faces Popular Grove Road. After the closure of the canning company, the building remained vacant for about six years until the Watauga Agricultural Center opened in 1987. Currently, Watauga County uses the building to hold conferences, educational seminars, classes, and offer equipment rentals. This Agricultural Center serves as a component of the North Carolina Cooperative Extension led by North Carolina State University and North Carolina A&T University. The Extension's goal is to establish a branch in each county as a research-based educational resource that identifies problems and issues within the agricultural discipline while providing solutions. This information is then broadcast to communities at seminars hosted at the Agricultural Centers across the state.[38]

Commented [2]: Yes or no, go see?

[33] "Mountain Cabbage and Kraut," *The North Wilkesboro Hustler*, October 8, 1924, https://newspapers.digitalnc.org/lccn/sn92072938/1924-10-08/ed-1/seq-1/#words=Creek+kraut+Kraut.
[34] Robert and Mary Capps to Watauga County. *Deed of Sale.* neighborhood Book 83, p. 187, Watauga County Register of Deeds, Boone, North Carolina.
[35]Minor. "New Boone Cannery."
[36] *Boone, Watauga County, North Carolina 1947*, Map, New York, Sanborn Map Company 1947, Library of Congress, Digital Sanborn Maps 1867-1970.
[37] *Boone, Watauga County, North Carolina 1947*, Map.
[38] "How Extension Works," www.ces.ncsu.edu, accessed February 23, 2026, https://www.ces.ncsu.edu/how-extension-works/.

Blue Ridge Women in Agriculture (BRWIA) manages the High Country Food Hub, which has been housed in the Agricultural Center since September 2016. Watauga County Commissioners approved the use of the building for operations, and BRWIA secured funding from sources including the NC A&T Extension, The Golden Leaf Fund, Z. Smith Reynolds, and Appalachian State University's Appalachian Studies Department. Locals requested more areas for food storage and supplies within Boone, especially during the winter months, and the Agricultural Center, with its familiarity to farmers and gardeners, proved to be the ideal location.[39] The Food Hub operates as an online farmers' market offering a variety of products, including vegetables, fruits, flowers, meat, and body care products. Its large selection of goods can be picked up in several locations, including Boone, Banner Elk, Blowing Rock, West Jefferson, and Deep Gap. The Food Hub now proves to be a useful tool for farmers to work within the local community, sharing and selling their goods.[40] It also plays a key role in keeping local heritage and traditions alive while maintaining the spirit of the building, based on providing the community with nutrition. The connection between the current Watauga Agricultural Center and High Country Food Hub, from its birth as a locally focused major supplier of high-quality sauerkraut and other farm products through the North State Canning Company, shows a profound correlation and connection to the heritage of the Blue Ridge Mountains.

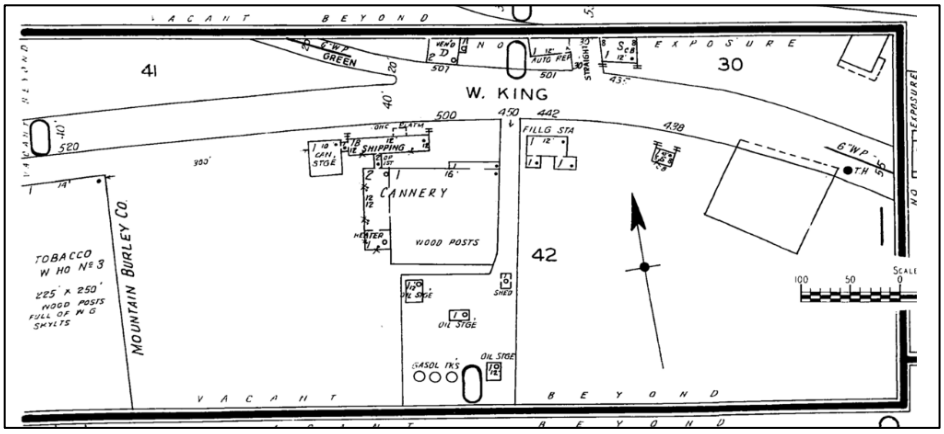

Fig. 2. *Boone, Watauga County, North Carolina 1947*, Map, New York, Sanborn Map Company 1947, Library of Congress, Digital Sanborn Maps 1867-1970.

[39] "About," High Country Food Hub, 2016. https://www.highcountryfoodhub.org/about.html
[40] "Local Food at the Click of a Button." n.d. High Country Food Hub. https://www.highcountryfoodhub.org/

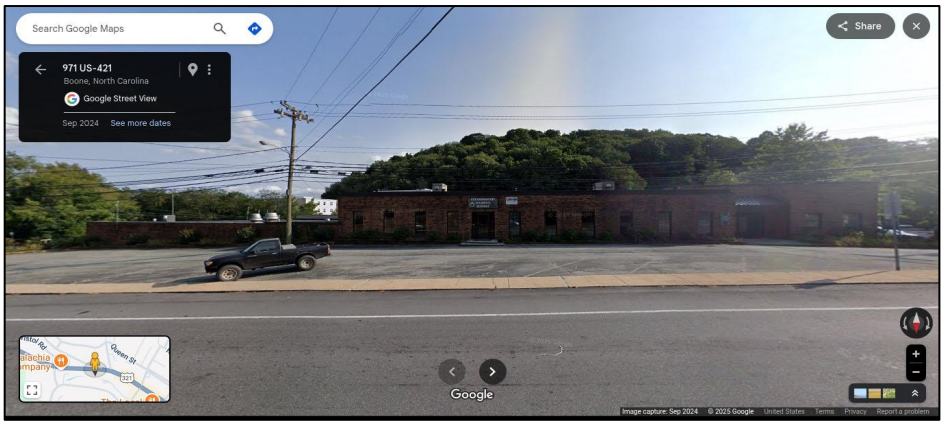

Fig. 3. Google, *Google Maps*, screenshot of 971 West King Street, Boone, NC.

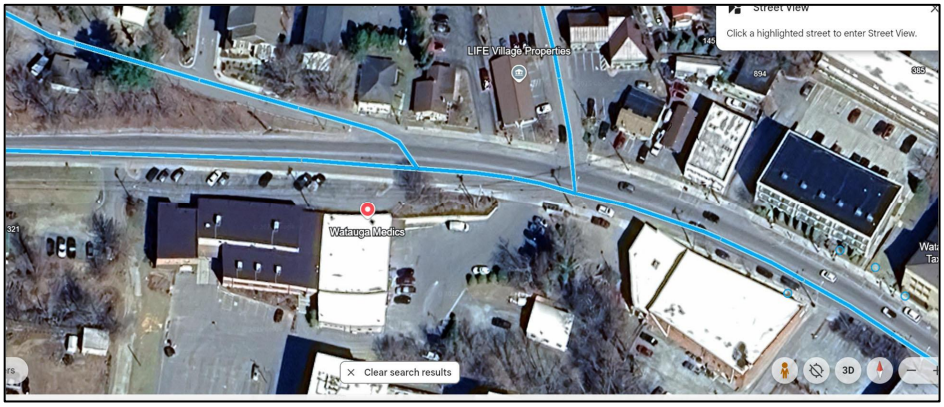

Fig. 4. Google, *Google Maps*, aerial view of 971 West King Street, Boone, NC.



"10 oz. Chopped Kraut Label From North State Canning Co." Image courtesy of Eric Plaag Collection, Digital Watauga Project.

E. PROPOSED MARKER TEXT:

Option 1:

The North State Canning Company operated near here from 1923 to 1981. County agent John B. Steele and local farmers, including H. N. Blair, created the Blue Ridge Farmers Association, which managed the company. By the 1960s, Watauga County was the number one kraut producer in the state, 32nd in the nation, and was essential to local farmers. During processing, the Canning Company drained into local water, polluting Boone Creek over the years. The smell was so pungent across the Town of Boone that the waterway gained its nickname "Kraut Creek." In 1978, North State Canning Company, then owned by W. F. Miller, Jr., sold the company to Nina and Tom Ennis, who merged kraut production with their candy business, Nina-Menz. In 1981, the factory shut its doors and stopped production. [132 words]

Option 2:

The North State Canning Company, operating from 1923 to 1981, was a local company established at the west end of Boone through the collective efforts of county agent John B. Steele and local farmers like H. N. Blair under the Blue Ridge Farmers Association. By the 1960s, Watauga County was the number one cabbage producer in the state and 32nd in the nation. The factory raked in $225,600 for the Watauga County economy in 1968. During processing, the Canning Company dumped Kraut drainage into the creek, which led to the pollution of the Boone Creek over the years. The smell was so pungent across the town of Boone that it gained its nickname "Kraut Creek." In 1978, North State Canning Company under W. F. Miller Jr. sold the company to Nina and Tom Ennis, who merged kraut production with their candy business, Nina-Menz. In 1981, the factory shut its doors and stopped producing kraut and candy. [156 words]

Commented [3]: Adjusted for inflation this is over 2 million in 2025 dollars. Historic dollar values with no adjustment may have limited meaning to modern readers in conveying value, and as this number will change yearly, it may be best to generalize the scale of the impact.

Option 3:

The North State Canning Company, operating near here from 1923 to 1981, was managed by the Blue Ridge Farmers Association, established through the collective efforts of county agent John B. Steele, and local farmers like H. N. Blair. An essential part of the local agricultural economy, by the 1960s, the company produced over 3,000 tons of kraut a year and was the number one kraut producer in the state. Distributed from Maryland to Florida, it was the 32nd largest producer in the nation. Between the pungent smell from production and periodic discharges into the Boone Creek, the waterway gained the nickname "Kraut Creek." In 1978, North State Canning Company, under W. F. Miller Jr. sold the company to Nina and Tom Ennis, who merged kraut production with their candy business, Nina-Menz. In 1981, the factory shut its doors and stopped producing kraut and candy. [145 words]

Option 4:

The North State Canning Company, operating near here from 1923 to 1981, was managed by the Blue Ridge Farmers Association, established through the collective efforts of county agent John B. Steele. 125 local farmers and businessmen contributed to the factory's construction. At its peak, the company produced over 24,000 cases a day and approximately 3,000 tons of kraut products annually. The factory became an essential part of the local economy, the number one kraut producer in the state, and sold throughout the Southeast. Between the pungent smell from production and periodic discharges into Boone Creek, the waterway gained the nickname "Kraut Creek." ~~In 1978, the North State Canning Company, under the leadership of W. F. Miller Jr. was sold to Nina and Tom Ennis, who merged kraut production with their candy business, Nina-Menz.~~ In 1981, the factory shut its doors and ceased production of kraut ~~and candy~~.
[140 words]

Commented [4]: Watauga Cabbage Growers Association --- ?

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TOWN OF BOONE, NORTH CAROLINA
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MADE IN
BOONE


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HERITAGE


THE HIGH COUNTRY
3,333'
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BOONE
SUSTAINABILITY


PROTECT
OUR WATERS
TOWN OF BOONE


CULTURE + ARTS
MUSIC
COMMUNITY


GOOD NEIGHBOR
BOONE