TOWN OF BOONE
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
ADVISORY MEETING MINUTES
September 2, 2025, 3:00 p.m.
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, Lane Moody-Downtown Development Coordinator, and Brenda Henson-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 and via WebEx to order at 3:02 p.m.

Adoption of Agenda

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

Vote: Aye – 4
Nay – 0
Absent – 1 (Smyth)

The motion passed.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Approval of Minutes

Commission Member Carter made a motion, seconded by Commission Member Oxendine, to approve the August 25, 2025, Historic Preservation Commission Advisory meeting minutes as written.

Vote: Aye – 4
Nay – 0
Absent – 1 (Smyth)

The motion passed.

Approval of Written Decision

After a brief explanation for the newest members regarding the Commission's role in reviewing written decisions, Commission Member Gaetano made a motion, seconded by Commission Member Carter, to approve the Written Decision for Case A25-0169 Rivers House Trail - COA.

Vote: Aye – 4
Nay – 0
Absent – 1 (Smyth)

The motion passed.

Review Boone/Kraut Creek Marker Draft Report

Jessica Mitchell, Advanced Planning Specialist, opened the discussion on this topic as a continuation from the August 5, 2025, Advisory meeting. She stated that once HPC determined the language and location for this marker, the Town Council would need to give its consent. Additionally, necessary rights-of-way and/or easements would need to be determined, and the Town attorney would need to review everything.

Ms. Mitchell referred to the draft Boone/Kraut Creek Marker Report contained in the meeting packet, noting that Commission Member Oxendine co-wrote the report. Ms. Mitchell invited discussion on potential edits to the text. She stated that the caption underneath the can label photo on report page 6, packet page 18, needed to be revised so that it was more in line with what Digital Watauga typically requested for citations from their image collection.

Vice-Chair Bond asked the following questions:

Was H. Neal Blair related to Palmer Blair?

Who was County Agent John B. Steele?

Was Jim Hamilton contacted for acquiring any of the report information?

Is there a list of the farmers and businessmen who donated $40 to help build the factory?

Does anyone have any artifacts from the Kraut Factory?

Could the HPC conduct oral interviews with anyone willing to share information about the Kraut Factory?

Is there a tie-in with the Kraut Factory and the Candy Factory (Hospitality Mints)?

Vice-Chair Bond stated that this was a very important period in Boone's financial development.

Commission Member Carter asked where any artifacts or oral interviews would be stored. She added that consent forms were required from those who gave oral histories.

Ms. Mitchell stated that she had some grammatical and stylistic corrections to the report. Vice-Chair Bond added that she also had the same type of corrections. Ms. Mitchell and Vice-Chair Bond provided their corrections to Commission Member Oxendine. Ms. Mitchell referred to the first page of the report, noting two different addresses, 971 and 913 West King Street, listed for the property.

Ms. Mitchell noted the section entitled Further Research Suggestions in the report, beginning on report page 12, packet page 24. She felt that it could be helpful to complete that research. She pointed out the proposed marker text options beginning on report page 11, packet page 23. Ms. Mitchell stated that both options were within the 150 to 165-word count range.

Vice-Chair Bond suggested that App State create a sign about Kraut Creek to place in Durham Park.

Ms. Mitchell referred to report page 10, packet page 22, which spoke about funding for the Blue Ridge Women in Agriculture. She stated that a source might need to be listed when saying that the Town of Boone provided funding for the BRWIA. She added that she would try to obtain more information about that fact.

Ms. Mitchell asked if any Commission members had changes to the content of the report. There were no changes noted by other members. Ms. Mitchell encouraged members to do further research that could be discussed at the next HPC advisory meeting.

Other Matters

Ms. Mitchell reported that the Town Council approved Vardell Smyth as Chair of the Historic Preservation Commission and Bettie Bond as Vice-Chair. Town Council expressed their thanks for the work and commitment of both members.

Ms. Mitchell stated that there were no Statements of Conformity submitted in August.

Ms. Mitchell noted that there would not be a quasi-judicial meeting on September 9, 2025. The next meetings were scheduled for October 7 and October 14, 2025.

Ms. Mitchell asked Commission members to turn in the Certified Local Government (CLG) training worksheets for the Cemetery Care Training Video by September 22, 2025.

Ms. Mitchell updated the Commission that the Town attorney was reviewing the Stoneman's Raid interpretative panel text. She noted that Civil War Trails staff were understanding of the extra review time.

Regarding the Jones House Local Historic Landmark Designation Report, Ms. Mitchell noted that she had spoken with Riley Ziegler about further edits to the report. Once those edits have been made, the revised report will be brought back to the HPC for review, then sent to the Town Council for their permission to send the report to the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). The SHPO would have 30 days to review the report before sending it back to the HPC. A public hearing would then be set for tentative adoption of the designation.

Vice-Chair Bond stated that the Watauga County Historical Society would meet on September 3, 2025, at 5:30 p.m. in the Watauga County Public Library. She urged everyone to stop by the library to view the 14-foot-long Watauga County Commemorative Quilt provided by the Mountain Laurel Quilt Guild. Vice-Chair Bond stated that the quilt would also travel to every public school in the county.

Adjournment

Commission Member Carter made a motion, seconded by Commission Member Oxendine, to adjourn the meeting at 4:02 p.m.

Vote: Aye – 4
Nay – 0
Absent – 1 (Smyth)

The motion passed.

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Bettie Bond, Vice-Chair **Brenda Henson, Board Clerk**