Town of Boone
Historic Preservation Commission Advisory Meeting
3:00 PM, December 2, 2025
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. Discussion of Murals in the Historic District

IV. Public Comment

V. Approval of Meeting Minutes

1. November 4, 2025, HPC Advisory Meeting Minutes

VI. Advisory Session Items for Discussion

1. Review of Boone/Kraut Creek Historic Marker Report
2. Stoneman's Raid Interpretative Panel - Review Draft Design Proof by Civil War Trails Marker Program
3. HPC Work Plan Review for Fiscal Year 2026-2027

VII. Other Matters

VIII. Adjournment

TOWN OF BOONE
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
ADVISORY MEETING MINUTES
November 4, 2025, 3:00 pm
Planning & Inspections Department & WebEx Video Conferencing

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

Historic Preservation Commission Members Absent: Krystal Carter

Council Liaison Present: Virginia Roseman (joined via WebEx at 3:09 pm)

Town Staff Present: Jessica Mitchell-Advanced Planning Specialist, Amy Snider-Commercial Zoning Administrator, Jane Shook (via WebEx from 3:00 pm until 3:22 pm), and Brenda Henson-Board Clerk

Others Present: Allison Meade-Town Attorney (via WebEx from 3:00 pm until 3:22 pm)

Call to Order

Chair Smyth called the Boone Historic Preservation Commission meeting, held in the Planning & Inspections Conference Room at 680 West King Street, and via WebEx to order at 3:07 pm.

Adoption of Agenda

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

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

The motion passed.

Approval of Minutes

Vice-Chair Bond made a motion, seconded by Commission Member Gaetano, to approve the October 7, 2025, Historic Preservation Commission Advisory meeting minutes.

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

The motion passed.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Town Attorney Discussion on Expert Witnesses/Testimony

Allison Meade, Town Attorney, stated that a previous Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) case requested placing a weather sealant on the exterior brick. She had since spoken with the staff and Dr. Plaag regarding her concern about applicants requesting something different than what was outlined in Appendix D of the UDO or established by the Secretary of Interior's standards. Ms. Meade noted that there were clear rules that weather sealant was not to be applied to brick. However, the applicant argued that the sealant was breathable. Ms. Meade stated that there were no expert witnesses to provide competent evidence that the

breathable sealant would be acceptable. She proposed that the COA application be revised as soon as possible to advise applicants that they would need to have expert witnesses testify at the hearing when deviations from the historic guidelines were requested. Appendix D also needed revisions. Ms. Meade stated that new techniques and products were constantly emerging that might be accepted by the National Park Service (NPS), and an expert witness, such as a preservationist, could provide competent evidence to the Commission.

Ms. Meade emphasized the importance of letting applicants know upfront what the guidelines were if they wanted to propose any deviation. Additionally, the application should be more explicit about resources available to the applicant, such as the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) or the Secretary of the Interior's standards of the National Park Service.

Chair Smyth agreed with Ms. Meade's suggestions. He asked what credentials were acceptable for an expert witness. Ms. Meade explained that competent evidence in a quasi-judicial setting required someone who could establish what amounted to expert credentials. An expert was something that the Commission had to determine. Ms. Meade noted that someone would present themselves as being qualified as an expert by presenting their credentials. The Commission Chair would decide if the witness would be accepted as an expert. However, the Commission could overrule the Chair if it felt strongly that the witness was not an expert. Ms. Meade stated that the witness could present credentials such as academic training, certification, and experience. She added that an average general contractor would not likely be considered an expert unless they had extensive experience in historic preservation work.

Chair Smyth asked if the HPC could find their own historic expert. Ms. Meade replied that bigger cities likely had historic preservationists on staff or consultants that they could draw from, but the Town of Boone did not. She stated that the HPC would need to rely on staff to do research, contact SHPO, or utilize NPS resources. Ms. Meade added that COA cases might have to be tabled until an expert witness could testify. Vice-Chair Bond noted that in the past, the HPC had relied on local people with historic knowledge. Jessica Mitchell, Advanced Planning Specialist, stated that SHPO might have a reference guide or list of historic preservationists to share with applicants.

Ms. Meade requested that the staff revise the application as soon as possible and send it to her for proofreading.

With nothing further, Ms. Meade left the meeting at 3:22 pm.

Review Boone/Kraut Creek Historic Marker Draft Report

Chair Smyth provided a handout containing Options 1, 2, 3, and 4 for the proposed marker text. Options 1 and 2 were the options shown in the draft report. Options 3 and 4 were modified versions of Options 1 and 2, prepared by Chair Smyth.

Ms. Mitchell provided a recap of the progress from the October 7, 2025, advisory meeting. She suggested to the members that they focus on the marker text and try to format it appropriately by combining the text. Ms. Mitchell asked Commission Member Oxendine for a timeline for the remaining research needed to complete the marker report. Commission Member Oxendine replied that she had a meeting next week in Special Collections (App State library) because her professor had found some canning labels and documents. She felt that she could incorporate any new information from that meeting into the report soon after.

Chair Smyth returned the discussion to the options for the proposed marker text. Commission Member Oxendine preferred Options 2 or 4 because of the numbers and wording contained therein. Ms. Mitchell noted that Option 4 contained the highest word count at 171 words. Members also discussed that Option 4 contained more descriptive information. A discussion ensued regarding modifications to Option 4.

Revisions to Option 4 were discussed with the final version to read:

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 3,000 tons of kraut products a year. 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, 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 shuttered their doors and stopped producing kraut and candy.

Vice-Chair Bond asked if locating a second sign in Durham Park (App State) had been considered.

Ms. Mitchell noted that there was consensus of the Commission to select Option 4, as revised, for the marker text. She stated that the marker report still needed to be finalized and concluded that this item would return to the Commission when the report was fully drafted.

Other Matters

Ms. Mitchell stated that the Civil War Trails (CWT) had reviewed the Stoneman's Raid Interpretative Panel text that HPC members discussed at the October 7, 2025, HPC Advisory meeting, and CWT staff only found minor grammatical errors that they would correct. The text was scheduled to be presented to the Town Council for consideration at its meeting next week. Once the Town Council accepted the text, Ms. Mitchell noted that she would contact CWT to initiate the design process, which should take one to two weeks. HPC, Town Council, and the funding partners would approve the design, and fabrication would take approximately one month, with the exception of review time among all partners. Ms. Mitchell felt that it would be early spring when the sign would be installed and an unveiling ceremony could be held. It is possible that the unveiling could be included in the United States' 250th anniversary events in 2026.

Ms. Mitchell announced that a groundbreaking ceremony for the Northern Peaks State Trail at the R.L. Clay (Rivers) House would take place on November 7, 2025, at 4:00 pm, with limited on-site parking and a shuttle service available.

The next HPC meeting will be a quasi-judicial session on Tuesday, November 18, 2025. December meetings will be held on December 2 and December 9, 2025.

Adjournment

Commission Member Oxendine made a motion, seconded by Commission Member Gaetano, to adjourn the meeting at 3:55 pm.

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

The motion passed.

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Vardell Smyth, Chair **Brenda Henson, Board Clerk**

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.

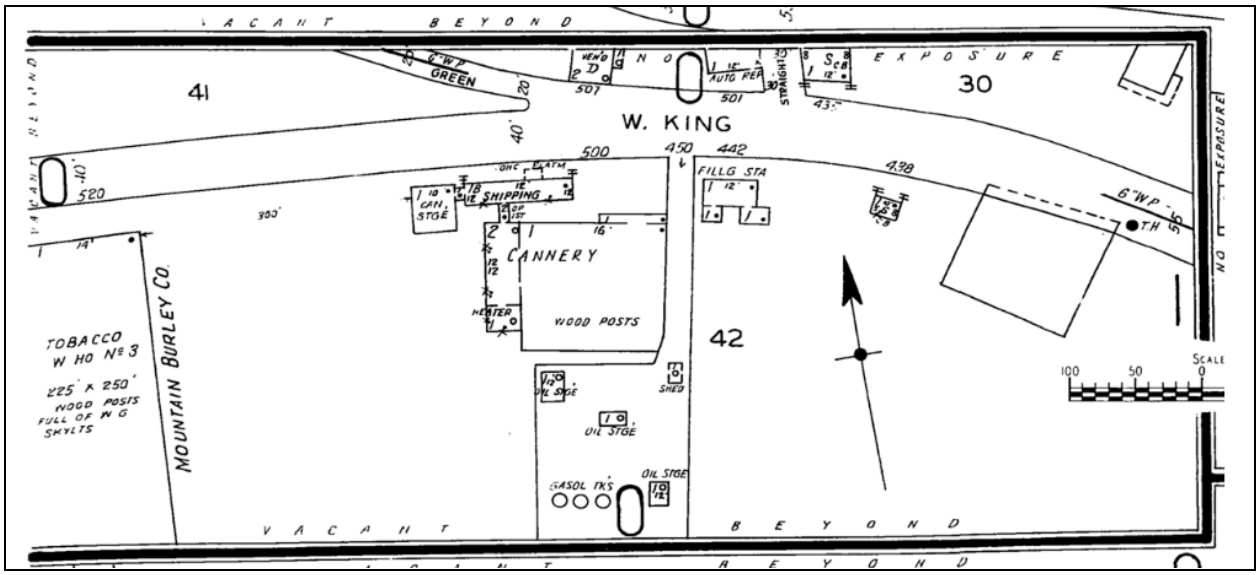


Fig. 2. *Boone, Watauga County, North Carolina 1947*, Map, New York, Sanborn Map Company 1947, Library of Congress, Digital Sanborn Maps 1867-1970.

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.

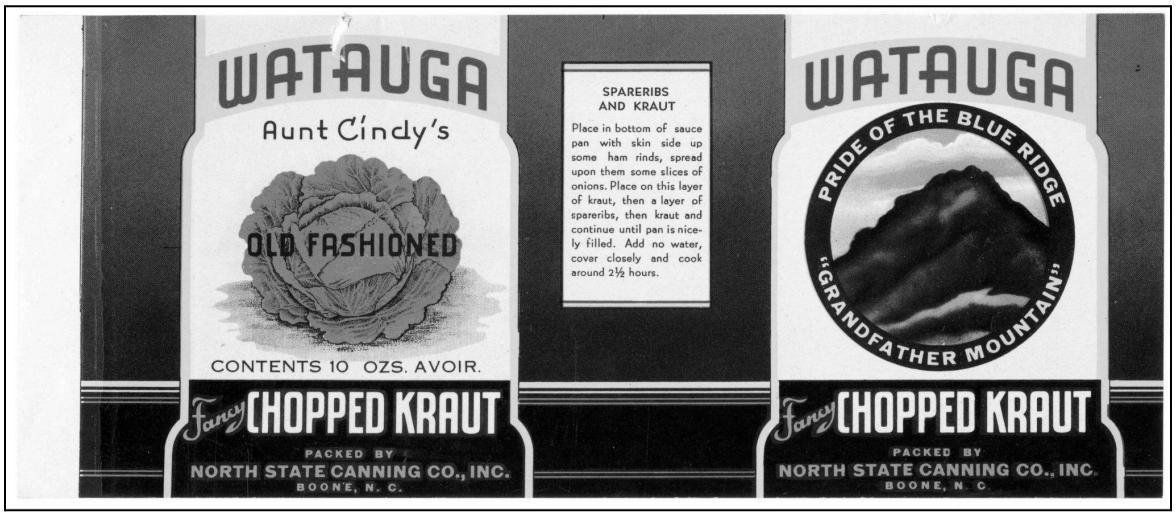
To construct the kraut factory, Blair, in his 1923 article, asked for $40 (or $746.99 adjusted for inflation in 2025) from the 125 farmers and businessmen in the county to help build the $5,000 ($94,729.82 adjusted for inflation in 2025) factory in Boone. About 90 cabbage farmers were organized into 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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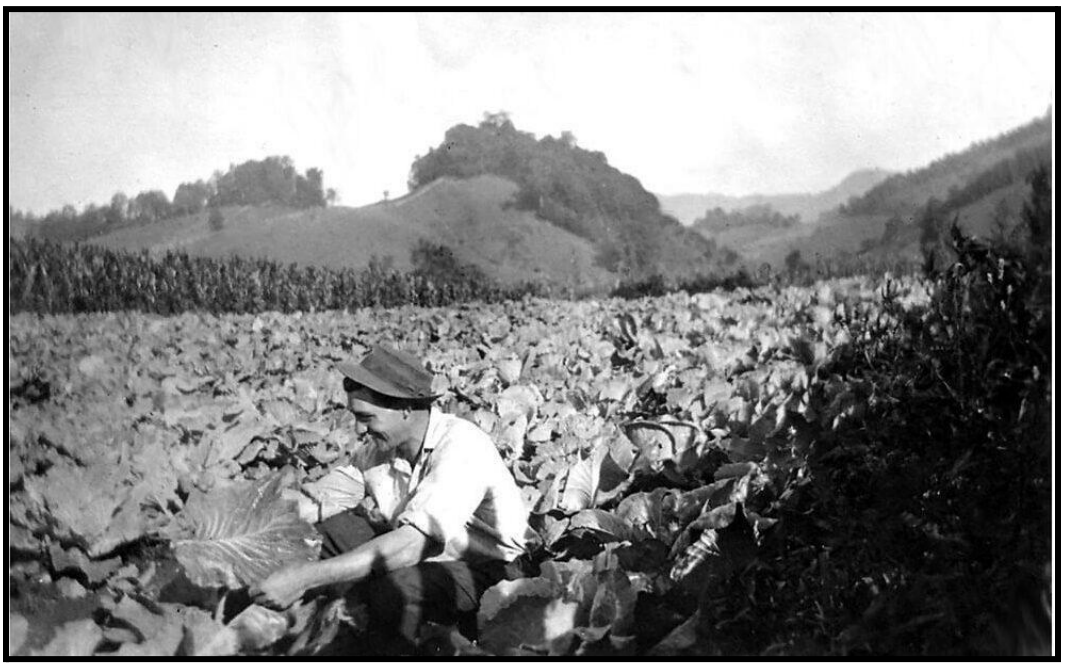
https://newspapers.digitalnc.org/lccn/sn90057235/1947-09-11/ed-1/seq-4/#words=Creek+kraut+Kraut

[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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“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

STONEMAN'S RAID

★ ★ ★

"The Fight Got Real Hot"

NORTH CAROLINA CIVIL WAR TRAILS

CivilWarTrails.org

On the morning of March 28, 1865, Union cavalry under Major Myles Keogh rode into Boone on the road to your left, surprising about 100 Confederate Home Guard members who had gathered to drill near the courthouse, then located a short distance north of here.



Union Capt. Myles Keogh. Ebenezer E. Henry, Captain Myles Keogh, 1868–70, collodion wet plate negative, Amon Carter Museum of American Art, Fort Worth, Texas, P1978.122.1.241

Keogh's detachment was the vanguard of Union General George Stoneman's 6,000-man cavalry command ordered into Virginia and North Carolina to "dismantle the country." Priority was placed on destroying rail lines and materiel that could be used by the retreating Confederate Army—while avoiding battle.

As Keogh's Union cavalry approached, shots rang out, and some of the Confederate Home Guard fell back to the home of James W. Councill, which stood to your right. According to one account, Mrs. Councill, hearing the noise, stepped outdoors with her child in her arms—but hurried back inside after the house was struck by a volley of gunfire.

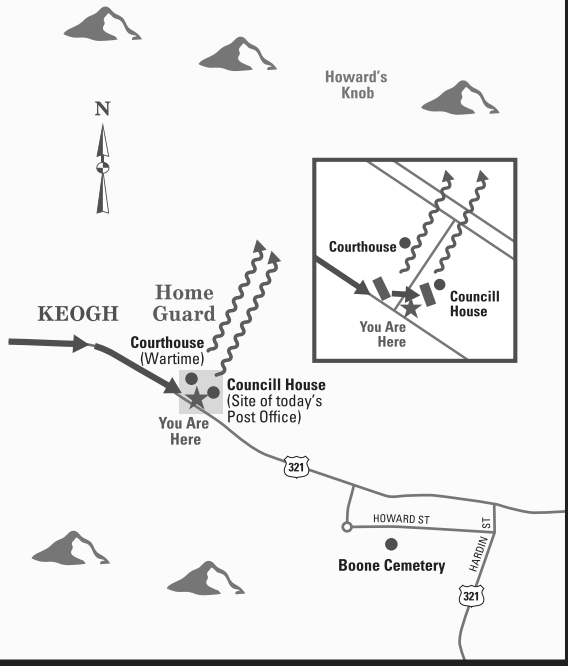
"The fight got real hot," Sheriff A.J. McBride, one of the Home Guard, recalled. The Union cavalry charged, sending the defenders fleeing up the slopes of Howard's Knob.

Union cavalry poured into town for the rest of the day, and General Stoneman requisitioned the Councill house for his headquarters. Stoneman and most of his force left Boone the next day.

Beginning April 6, Colonel George W. Kirk's Union troops—the Second and Third North Carolina Mounted Infantry, "Kirk's Raiders"—occupied Boone for several weeks, blockading major routes through the mountains. At least 13 Union loyalists from Watauga County served in the regiments that occupied Boone, and another 5 volunteered with Union forces after Boone's occupation.

Both Union and Confederate soldiers are interred in the nearby Boone Cemetery.

"We arrived this a.m. with the Twelfth Kentucky in the Advance, captured the place, killing 9, capturing 62 home guards..."
—Union Gen. George Stoneman. Union forces reported no casualties.



MEETINGS:

- Advisory (1st Tuesday, 3 pm): met 10 times total in 2025 (10 Regular meetings with 2 Pre-application Workshops as part of 2 Advisory meetings)
- Quasi-Judicial (2nd Tuesday, 3 pm): met 6 times in 2025
- Quasi-Judicial: heard 11 cases in 2025 (1 case tabled, 1 to be heard December 9, 2025; 9 COA cases in 2024).
- Meetings held in-person at the Planning and Inspections Conference Room with remote via WebEx option upon request.

MEMBERSHIP:

Name	Term Expiration	# of Terms Served
Vardell Smyth, Chair	6-30-28	2
Bettie Bond, Vice-Chair	6-30-26	3
Bennie Gaetano (Student)	6-30-26	1
Krystal Carter	6-30-27	1
Melody Oxendine	6-30-27	1

STAFF:

- Advisory: Jessica Mitchell, Brenda Henson/Alyson Wuagneux, Jane Shook/Brandon Wise/Amy Snider (as necessary/required)
- Quasi-Judicial: Brenda Henson, Brandon Wise/Amy Snider, Jane Shook/Jessica Mitchell (as necessary/required)

FUNDING:

FY 2025-2026

Board Training	$600
Annual Digital Watauga Contribution	$6,000
Stoneman's Raid Interpretative Panel (Encumbered for FY26)	$3,000
Total	$9,600

FY 2026-2027 Request

Board Training	$600
Annual Digital Watauga Contribution	$6,000
Boone/Kraut Creek Historic Marker	TBD
Clawson-Burnley Park Historic Marker(s)/Interpretative Panels(?)	TBD
Plus Any Other Item Chosen by Council	?
Total	$6,600

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STAFF RECOMMENDATION FOR WORK PLAN:

During FY2025-2026, Staff relayed to the HPC that Staff's primary responsibility would be the work associated with the Comprehensive Plan update. Now, Staff dedicated to HPC responsibilities will also need to dedicate time to the implementation actions of Boone Next. As requested previously, Staff requests that the HPC be allowed to focus on completing the current in-progress tasks before engaging in any additional tasks. The work plan can be revisited when the in-progress tasks are completed.

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IN-PROGRESS		
Date Assigned	Task	Funding
Ongoing	**Board Training:** Training necessary to meet CLG status requirements for Federal Year 2025-2026; Staff to seek free to low-cost training as much as possible.	$600
Discussed in FY2023-2024	**Jones House Local Historic Landmark Designation:** Staff is awaiting final draft report (by former HPC member Ms. Ziegler) to begin designation process with Town Council consideration.	
FY2023-2024 10/11/2023	**Stoneman's Raid Interpretative Panel:** HPC and Staff continue to collaborate with the Civil War Trails marker program. Town Council reviewed final draft text in November 2025, with an anticipated completion in Spring 2026. Depending on project progress, funding is requested to be encumbered for FY27.	FY27 Encumbered
Discussed in FY2023-2024	**Article 8 & Appendix D Revisions:** Modifications to streamline and clarify requirements for the Downtown Boone Local Historic District and other Historic Landmark properties.	
Staff Note: Jessica Mitchell studied in the Spring and Fall 2025 semesters through the University of Kentucky's online Historic Preservation Graduate Certificate Program. This education is to be applied to ongoing and future work with the HPC and within the historic district (including UDO Appendix D Revisions). She will resume her studies within the program in Fall 2026.		
TOWN COUNCIL DIRECTED TASKS		
8/9/2023	**Potential Plaque for "Ice House Alley":** ***Staff Note: Town Council Member Plaag volunteered to write the report at the May 14, 2025, Town Council meeting.***	
1/10/2024	**Winklers Creek Dam/Site:** Pending.	
4/23/2025	**Boone Kraut Creek Historic Marker:** To prepare a historic marker report for this topic. Placement is recommended to be in the vicinity of the Ag Extension building. HPC has collaborated with an App State history class on a draft report, and HPC continues to refine the proposed marker text and report, as of November 2025.	FY26/FY27
5/14/2025	**Clawson Burnley Park Historic Marker(s)/Interpretative Panels(?)**: To prepare a historic marker report for this topic.	FY27
OTHER IN-PROGRESS TASKS		
	Digital Watauga/Downtown Boone Local Historic District Photo Library: Digital Watauga Staff continues to work on this project and will communicate with Planning Staff on completion, TBD for 2025.	$5,000
	Architectural Survey of the Downtown Boone Local Historic District: Completed May 2025.	
IN-PROGRESS – TO BE COMPLETED (DELAYED TO OTHER ONGOING WORK)		
Date Assigned	Task	Funding
Discussed in FY2023-2024	Boone Street Name/Histories project: Reports to be completed for: King Street, Queen Street, Depot Street, Rivers Street, Water Street/Burrell Street; https://townofboone.net/588/Boone-Street-Names-Project	

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Discussed in FY2023-2024, Prior to Historic District Designation	Boone Cemetery Survey: NOT COMPLETED as of December 2023. HPC to consider resurveying cemetery, as initial completion date (June 30, 2023) was not met. HPC discussed possibility of potential collaboration with ASU.	
Discussed in FY2023-2024	Historic District Light Pole Banners: Staff would coordinate with Downtown Boone Development Coordinator and Public Works on possible implementation. Staff would like permission to create a possible HPC logo to incorporate.	TBD

FUTURE HPC REQUESTED TASKS	
Gragg House Local Historic Landmark Designation: Project recommended by HPC; If approved, Staff would contact property owner to determine interest in local landmark designation. *Staff Note: In continuation from FY24, Staff would like to ensure all current landmark properties are accounted for the in Appendix D revisions/standards before designating additional landmark properties.*	
Blair Farm Local Historic Landmark Designation: Project recommended by HPC; If approved, Staff would contact property owner to determine interest in local landmark designation. *Staff Note: In continuation from FY24, Staff would like to ensure all current landmark properties are accounted for the in Appendix D revisions/standards before designating additional landmark properties.*	
New Historic District Consideration: Begin comprehensive architectural surveys on the two areas as follows, building on work completed by ASU classes: a. Grand Boulevard (Daniel Boone Park) neighborhood b. Cherry Park (Cherry Dr., Eastbrook, Westbrook, Cherrybrook) *Staff Note*: *In continuation from FY24, Staff would like careful consideration before beginning any new historic district planning to ensure future success. Additionally, Staff would suggest engaging with the neighborhoods to determine interest prior to beginning designation.*	
Edmisten Cemetery Survey (Dale Street): Possible collaboration with ASU classes, as interested	
Adams Cemetery Mapping and Survey: Contact property owners of private property cemetery (Adams Cemetery) regarding adding cemetery to existing Cemetery Map and permission to survey	
Interpretative signs (attached signs) for contributing buildings in the historic district *Staff Note: In continuation from FY24, Staff would like to evaluate the success and cost of the interpretative signs for the Dana Folk Way project before deciding on the feasibility of this potential project.*	TBD
Architectural terms glossary	

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COMPLETED TASKS	
Task	Completion Date
Board Training Requirements for CLG Reporting Year 2024-2025	**September 2025**
Installation of the Boone Cemetery Interpretative Panels	**May 2025**
Completion of the Downtown Boone Local Historic District Architectural Survey	**May 2025**
R.L. Clay (Rivers) House Local Historic Landmark Designation	**June 2024**
Councill's Store Historic Marker	February 2023
Hayes-Bryan-Greene Cemetery Historic Marker	June 2023
Howard Street Boone Street Name Report	September 2023

CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS (COA) CASES: Total 9

1. A25-0045 713 West King Street – Certificate of Appropriateness

   J. Swartz Construction, LLC submitted an application, on behalf of the property owner, for a Certificate of Appropriateness for Major Work for 713 W King St (D.L. Wilcox Building) to alter the primary elevation by applying a new layer of stucco to existing stucco. This request was approved.

2. A25-0061 Come Back Shack – Certificate of Appropriateness

   Elliot Coatney, on behalf of Family Only Inc., submitted an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness for Major Work for the Come Back Shack at 767 W. King Street, located in the Downtown Boone Local Historic District. The request was for the addition of a covered patio on the secondary elevation. This request was approved.

3. A25-0213 Mellow Mushroom – Certificate of Appropriateness

   LD&B of Boone, LLC submitted a Certificate of Appropriateness for Major Work application for 805 West King Street (WT0878 Sebastian Building), located in the Downtown Boone Local Historic District, to change the paint color of the trim around the windows and along the lower roof trim to Sherwin-Williams (SW) 7515 Homestead Brown and the upper roof trim to SW 9610 Stony Creek, and removing the blue plastic shutters from the east elevation. This request was approved.

4. A25-0215 Chai & Chutney – Certificate of Appropriateness

   Chai & Chutney submitted a Certificate of Appropriateness for Major Work application for 664 West King Street (WT0815 Todd and Higgins Esso Service Station), owned by Michael Vetro and located in the Downtown Boone Local Historic District, to reconfigure the existing rooftop ductwork and exhaust fan for an eight-foot kitchen exhaust hood and add ductwork and an exhaust fan for a new ten-foot kitchen exhaust hood. This request was approved.

5. A25-0216 Shoppes at Farmers – Certificate of Appropriateness

   The Shoppes at Farmers Hardware submitted a Certificate of Appropriateness for Major Work application for 661 West King Street (WT0589 Boone Hardware/Farmer's Hardware Block) located in the Downtown Boone Local Historic District, to replace the existing metal framing and windows with new black anodized aluminum framing and windows. This request was approved with a condition that the corrugated metal below the windows be removed to expose the original brick.

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6. A25-0169 Rivers House Trail – Certificate of Appropriateness
   The Town of Boone submitted a Certificate of Appropriateness for Major Work application for the parcel adjacent to 150 Clay House Drive (WT0530 R. L. Clay House), designated as a Historic Landmark within the Town of Boone, for the construction of 4,786 feet of trail that will become the southern terminus of the Northern Peaks State Trail, installation of 128 stone steps near the State Champion Sugar Maple Tree, Baby, and for the historical review and recommendation on the addition of trailhead signage. This request was approved.

7. A25-0195 Rivers House Bathroom Renovation – Certificate of Appropriateness
   The Town of Boone submitted an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness for Major Work for 150 Clay House Drive (WT0530 R.L. Clay House), designated as a Historic Landmark within the Town of Boone, for renovation of the accessory building for the addition of ADA accessible restrooms. This request was approved.

8. A25-0466 Speckles Trout Outfitters New Stairs – Certificate of Appropriateness
   Farmer's Ski Shop, Inc. submitted an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness for Major Work for 140 S Depot Street (WT0605 Watauga Motor Company Building), located in the Downtown Boone Local Historic District, to add a staircase as an entryway to an existing loading dock door on the western side of the northern elevation. This request was approved.

9. A25-0482 Qualls Block Waterproofing – Certificate of Appropriateness
   Trade Land Company, LLC submitted an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness for Major Work for 605 West King Street, located in the Downtown Boone Local Historic District, for mortar joint repairs along the east, west, and south elevations of the building, including a water-based sealant. This request was approved with a condition that a sealant shall not be applied, and that if water infiltration persists after repointing, the applicant must return to the Historic Preservation Commission with a historic specialist

10. A25-0683 Fizz Ed – Mural – Certificate of Appropriateness
    260 Howard Street Property, LLC has submitted an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness for Major Work for 260 Howard Street, located in the Downtown Boone Local Historic District. The request is for a mural along the south elevation of the building. The scope of work details having artist Josh Johnston paint a previously painted wall with acrylic paint, consisting of Montana spray paint, Golden Mural, and theme paint. The case was tabled until Town Council discussed and possibly made modifications to the standards related to public art and murals in the historic district.

11. A25-0811 – Ram's Rack – Roof Replacement – Certificate of Appropriateness
    To be heard at the December 9, 2025 Quasi-Judicial Meeting.

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