

REGULAR MEETING
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
TOWN OF WAYNESVILLE
NOVEMBER 2, 2011
WEDNESDAY, 2:00 PM

The Historic Preservation Commission held a regular meeting on Wednesday, November 2, 2011. Members present were Chairman Nikki Owens, Vice-Chairman Peter Sterling, Henry Foy, Bette Sprecher, and Ann Melton. Also present: Town Planner Paul Benson and Secretary Ginny Boyer. Absent: Shawn Leatherwood. The meeting was called to order at 2:15.

Approval of Minutes

Bette Sprecher made a motion to accept the minutes of the September 7, 2011 meeting. This was seconded by Henry Foy. The minutes of September 7 were unanimously approved as presented.

Presentation by Paul Benson, Design Guidelines

Mr. Benson, after having distributed “Hendersonville Historic Preservation Commission—Main Street Local Historic District Design Guidelines” at the September 7 HPC meeting, made a follow-up presentation looking both at the Hendersonville guidelines and what is currently in place in the Town of Waynesville Land Development Standards (5.10 Mixed-Use/Commercial Building Design Guidelines).

He gave several examples of what is currently required under the zoning ordinance in the central business district as a “point of departure” when the Commission considers something more detailed, exemplified in the Hendersonville guidelines.

Chairman Owens suggested Commission members read through the Hendersonville Design Guidelines and comment, under each topic, on things that are significant to Waynesville. She said when she worked on the design guidelines for Ocracoke, the Secretary of Interior standards were applied to each main heading, a town meeting was held and the community commented on what was important to them under each section. Chairman Owens believes the first step is to get the Commission’s ideas together, then meet with Main Street businesses and folks from Spread Out and have a similar roundtable.

Peter Sterling mentioned the importance of having community curators, ones responsible for the aforementioned meetings. Mr. Sterling believes the entire Town should be considered a living museum, and the community can benefit from very knowledgeable people such as Bette Sprecher and Henry Foy. Mr. Sterling said in Williamsburg and Charleston, foundations have formed, not commissions.

Sandra Owen on Penland School of Crafts

Sandra Owen, after having attended an October historic preservation workshop at Penland School of Crafts in Penland, NC, highly recommended the school to commission members.

Ms. Owen said Penland has several historic buildings that are being restored one at the time and the stories behind the properties, presented by keynote speaker J. Myrick Howard, were very interesting. Also, it was stressed that not only do structures themselves need to be preserved, but the surrounding areas of these structures. Considering zoning and districts needs to be a priority to avoid having an historic property standing with commercial development all around it. It was recommended to be proactive, keeping up with historically designated sights; when they change hands, get to the new owners quickly.

Buffy Phillips of the Downtown Waynesville Association said sometimes we are the last to know when someone has purchased a property, referring, for example, to the new ownership of the Strand Theater, the use of which may be a warehouse. Ms. Phillips also mentioned the fear of property owners when, years ago, there was an attempt to make Main Street a historic district.

Mr. Sterling stressed the Commission's role in educating the public. Historic photographs, specifically those of facades, coupled with present-day photographs of structures, could raise public awareness. Sandra Owen mentioned the possibility of using Commission meetings to work on this project, taking one section of downtown, a building at the time. It was mentioned that Henry Foy and Ann Melton have Main Street photographs catalogued through 1930 and Joyce Cope, with the Haywood County Public Library, is digitally archiving the photographs of four to five thousand buildings from the Sheryl Collection.

Mr. Sterling said present issues need to be placed on the agenda so the Committee can be a proactive, community-sensitive body. He said he will contact Vicki Hyatt of the Mountaineer in hopes that she will be interested in an editorial detailing the Snapshot Project and what has been accomplished.

Bette Sprecher hopes to have an advertisement for the Haywood County; Portrait of a Mountain Community in three consecutive newspaper editions.

Sandra Owen said historic walks could be held once a year much like watershed hikes. Ann Melton agreed, adding that historic districts could be opened up as in Natchez. Chairman Owens said this could be a joint effort between the Historic Preservation Commission and the Downtown Waynesville Association.

Adjournment

The meeting of the Historic Preservation Commission adjourned at 3:25.

Ginny Boyer, Secretary

Nikki Owens, Chairman