



WAYNESVILLE PUBLIC ART COMMISSION
MINUTES – REGULAR MEETING
JANUARY 8, 2015
THURSDAY, 4:00 P.M.
TOWN HALL

Mission Statement: The mission of the Waynesville Public Art Commission is to engage the community and enrich public spaces through original art that celebrates Waynesville’s historic, cultural, natural and human resources.

Those present:

Acting Chairman Jan Griffin

Micah McClure

Charles Mills

Dominick DePaolo

David Blevins

RoAnne “Sug” Barnett

Also Present:

Amie Owens, Town Clerk

Absent:

Vice Chairman Diana Laursen

Sarah Jane League

Ann Melton

Chairman Griffin called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. following the establishment of quorum.

1. Minutes from the December 11, 2014 regular meeting

There was no discussion of nor corrections noted to the minutes.

Mr. Blevins motioned to approve the minutes from the December 11, 2014 regular meeting minutes as presented. Ms. Barnett seconded; the motion carried unanimously.

2. Treasurer’s Report

Ms. League was unable to attend the meeting and a treasurer’s report will be provided at the February 12, 2015 meeting.

3. Hazelwood Art

a. Update on site request

Chairman Griffin was able to obtain copies of the proposed blueprints of the Forga Parking lot in Hazelwood from Mr. Hannah. Lengthy discussion was held regarding the parking lot and potential areas where a mini-park may be complimentary. It was noted that if Ms. Forga would be amenable to allowing use of 1 to 2 parking spaces, a nice area could be available for the public art piece. While members of the WPAC were encouraged to speak with Ms. Forga, the Town will have to work with her regarding upgrades, etc... Ms. Owens will work with Town Manager Marcy Onieal to get a meeting scheduled with Ms. Forga soon.

b. Information on the Plott Family/Plott Hound

Mr. McClure provided information on the Plott Family and Plott Hound from an article in the Smoky Mountain News from 2007. A copy of the information is incorporated into these minutes as attachment 1.

c. Fundraiser Update

Chairman Griffin noted that she has confirmed Bogart's would cater the event. She has not been able to contact the WNC Dog Fanciers but is still actively trying. Mr. McClure mentioned possibly teaming with Plott Fest on June 20 to boost fundraising efforts – having the main WPAC event on Friday night prior to Plott Fest when those who were most interested in the Plott Hound were already in town. The group agreed this could be a good thing.

d. Call for Artists

Chairman Griffin noted that until there was some resolution regarding the space available in Hazelwood, the call for artists could not be completed.

4. Other Business

LaFemme

Chairman Griffin noted that LaFemme would be placed during the first week in April 2015. Mr. Blevins noted that it would be best to have the dedication plaque ready for this event so that there was no delay. All members agreed and asked Mr. McClure to attempt to wordsmith the plaque.

5. Adjourn

There being no further business to discuss, Mr. DePaolo made a motion, seconded by Mr. McClure to adjourn. The motion carried unanimously. Chairman Griffin adjourned the meeting at 5:01 p.m.

Amie Owens, Staff/Secretary

Jan Griffin, Acting Chairman

The next Public Art Commission meeting: **Thursday, February 12, 2015 at 4:00 p.m.**

The fascinating story of the Plott hound
Written by George Ellison

A new book has been published that will be of particular interest to area hunters, outdoorsmen, and dog lovers. It will also be of considerable value to those concerned with the region's human history.

The Story of the Plott Hound: Strike & Stay (Charleston SC: History Press, 2007; soft cover; 189 pages; \$22.99) by Bob Plott is many things. It is above all the story of the evolution of a truly great America breed of dog that commenced when two youthful brothers, **Johannes and Enoch Plott**, brought five of their family's hounds with them from **Germany to America in 1750** and eventually **migrated to Western North Carolina**, where the breed was perfected and continues to flourish.

It is also a family saga — one played out against the background of this country's history from before the American Revolution through the settlement of the southern Appalachian frontier and on down to the present day.

Wonderfully illustrated with hundreds of vintage photographs, it is a story chock full of noble dogs and the men and women who bred, hunted, and cared for them with ingenuity, courage, and love.

And it is the story that family member **Bob Plott, the great-great-great grandson** of Johannes Plott, is uniquely qualified to tell. Here is the way the account opens:

Elias Isaac Plott was tired and worried. Working in the Black Forest as a gamekeeper in all seasons, for years on end, had drained his stamina and weakened his spirit. ... Plott perhaps felt that he and his wife were too old to start a new life in a new world and that the boys were young enough to acclimate themselves quickly there ... Were there relatives or friends who Elias had already arranged to welcome the boys, offering safe refuge for these young strangers in a strange land? Or were they considering working as either indentured servants or craftsmen apprentices to bankroll their start in the new world? ... No one knows for sure, but as a Plott who grew up hearing the family story of my great-great-great-grandfather Johannes, I always believed that it happened the following way. I think that Elias Plott was simply hoping for a better future for his sons ... Since he had little or no money, I think that he gave them a generous parting gift of the only thing of real value that he had access to — his dogs. Whether or not that is true, we do know that Johannes and Enoch Plott took some of the family's most valued possessions — five hunting dogs — with them to America in the summer of 1750. And oh, what dogs they were! Even as special as Elias Plott knew those dogs were then, neither he nor his sons could have imagined that they would ultimately, over the next two hundred years, become one of the best, if not the best, breed of big game hunting dogs the world had ever seen — the Plott bear hound.

The book's sub-title, "Strike & Stay," is a reference to the innate instinct of a Plott hound to hunt in a certain manner. One observer described the trait as follows: "It would strike a bear trail and stay on it. And stay and stay and stay. There was just no quit." Another observed that, "He had to stay and fight, he had to stay with the bear at the tree. This breed of dog won't quit ... The man who isn't game isn't fit to have him."

Much of the book carefully describes how, through the centuries, those very qualities were instilled into their Plott hounds in sundry ways by various legendary hunters. For those of us who aren't particularly interested in dog breeding, the author has made past methods and ongoing controversies a readable and integrated part of the whole.

On board the ship from Europe to America (perhaps Philadelphia), one of the brothers, **Enoch, became sick, died,** and was buried at sea. Now alone, except for the dogs his father had given them, Johannes eventually made his way to the eastern portion of North Carolina. By the end of the eighteenth century, his descendents and their Plott-bred hounds had made their way into the mountains of North Carolina.

By 1801, "Henry Plott and his dogs were firmly established in [what is now] Haywood County [where] the beautiful surrounding area later became known as **Plott Valley**. The towering mountains overlooking the valley would eventually come to be called the Plott Balsams. Henry Plott later extended his holdings to about **1,700 acres in the vicinity** that now includes most of **the Waynesville, Pigeon and Hazelwood**, North Carolina area townships. This is the area where the Plott hound would gain legendary status as one of the premier big game hunting dogs in the world."

This is where "The Story of the Plott Hound" starts to unfold, illuminating, via the medium of one family and their dogs, facets of this region's history and culture in a way that breaks new ground. There are, of course, the fearful hunting stories involving the dogs and the men (and sometimes the women) who followed them. But there are also the stories of families and friends and the joys and hardships they shared. And there are tales — both true and tall — involving characters like Quill Rose, Von Plott, Mark Cathey, Horace Kephart, Taylor Crockett, Alphonzo "Fonz" Cable, Mrs. Montraville Plott (who, when faced with the necessity, killed a marauding wolf with her frying pan), and countless others.

By way of disclosure, I need to note in closing that Bob Plott is a close friend of mine and that I helped him with some preliminary editing. Furthermore, my wife, Elizabeth, prepared the illustration of a Plott hound that graces the book's cover. Nevertheless, despite these vested interests, I can recommend "The Story of the Plott Hound: Strike & Stay" to you without reservation.

Editor's note: This article, a review of Bob Plott's first book, was first published in The Smoky Mountain News in 2007.