

# JACKSON COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

## MINUTES

<b>Date:</b> May 15th, 2018								
<b>Time Begin:</b> 5:31 pm								
<b>Time End:</b> 6:39pm								
<b>Location:</b> C.J. Harris Parlor at Riverwood Shops in Dillsboro								
Members	Present	Absent		Present	Absent		Present	Absent
Maudie Phillips		X	Jane Eastman		X	Carl Iobst		X
Susan Leveille	X		Joe Rhinehart	X		Beth Parris		X
Connie Haire	X		Luther Jones	X				
Bill Crawford	X		Pam Meister	X				

**Others Present:**

Cleis Bonham, Administrative Assistant  
 Caroline Edmonds, Planner 1

**Call to Order and Quorum Check**

Chairman Susan Leveille called the meeting to order at 5:35 p.ms and a quorum was present.

**Public Comment**

There were no public comments.

**Approval of the Agenda**

Pam Meister made a motion to approve the agenda as it was with not additions or modifications and Connie Haire seconded it.

**Approval of Minutes**

Connie Haire made a motion to approve the minutes and Pam Meister seconded it.

**New Business:**

**A.) Webster Methodist Church**

Caroline Edmonds asked the Commission if there were any interesting stories about this church from the past that they would like to share. Joe Rhinehart shared that the Methodists, Baptists and Presbyterians all met together in the beginning and then decided to separate after a certain building (The legend hall) burned down. The Presbyterians dwindled away and the Methodists built their own church. The windows of the Methodist church came from England. It is the oldest building in the county that is still in use. The organ came from Vermont by train to Asheville, then a horse and a wagon hauled it the rest of the way. Both churches had black members but a church for black folks was built later. The women of the Methodist church had ice cream suppers at the court house in order to pay for the organ. There is a church in Scotland that Joe Rhinehart has been to that has an organ just like the one in the Methodist church. When he returned to Scotland for another visit, that church was playing the Methodist church's tape recordings. They also play the Webster Christmas program at the same time Webster does because of the time difference. It is in Shetland Island.

Susan Leveille shared that she grew up in Webster after age 4 and that she used to go to Webster periodically for what she believes was a talent show put on by the community or students from the school. Every class 1<sup>st</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade had to do a program that everyone had to go to. Joe recalls

there were speaking contests and all sorts of things. In the past it seems there was more in this county for young people to do. There was a skating rink on Skyland drive, there were 3 drive-ins with a juke box, and there were the programs at the Methodist church. In the past, the church was really used for community activities. Joe shared with the Commission a newsletter of the Webster Historical Society dated from 1983 that he had obtained copies of. There were 7 churches and one minister ran all of them, now it is down to 2 churches. The Tuckasegee Conference was changed to the Webster Conference. The Episcopal minister a couple generations back took care of several churches that were very small.

## **Old Business:**

### **A.) HPC Interview Project**

Caroline suggested that it is time to maybe start scheduling interviews wherever people are most comfortable to be interviewed. As far as the teens from Smoky Mountain High, nobody has heard anything about the kids wanting to continue to be involved. School is about to let out and if any of them still want to be involved, they are welcome to be. It sounds like the kids only have specific interests rather than wanting to document the lives and stories of people as the HPC wants to. During the last meeting, Caroline had given the Commission a list of questions for them to look over as possible interview questions. The questions she shared with them are meant to lead to more questions. Pam Meister does oral history interviews and her students interviewed some of the locals. They do very specific interviews that are geared toward one thing, such as what it was like to attend a segregated school. If Pam has already gotten interviews from people that are on the HPC interview list, then those people should perhaps be put at the lower end of the list and the people that have never been interviewed should be made more of a priority on the list. Pam has more audio recordings available than visual ones.

The board then discussed how these recordings will be made available once they are completed. Pam suggested that Commission talk with Liz Skene, who is the digital initiatives librarian at Hunter Library because it is possible that there could be a Jackson County History Preservation Commission collection that could be made available through the Library so that it would not completely fall on Caroline to invent it herself.

Historical Society could make the interviews available that they have. The ladies that are 100 years or older were put at the top of the list as the highest priority for being interviewed. The Commission discussed how to get in touch with these people. Susan asked if there was particular information that needed to be recorded so that future listeners of the interviews can easily place those interviewed in a specific time period and place in history and also add clarity to who the person is in relation to others. The Commission also discussed release documents that need to be signed in order to allow the recordings to be made available legally to the public, such as a consent form? The Commission will work on obtaining the correct form by first speaking with the County Attorney.

Luther Jones pointed out that there are apparently 3 interview projects going on and asked if there is anyone coordinating these. If there is not, then it is possible that the same people could be interviewed multiple times. Also, it would not be worthwhile to interview a person with the same questions that have been asked of that person in a previous interview through another project. The commission agreed that they should find out who has been interviewed by other projects in order to better coordinate their plans. The commission spent time divvying out who will contact who for an interview as well as how to get in contact with each person.

### **B.) Historic Home Tour:**

Caroline shared that a little bit of a tour was done at Greening up the Mountain Festival. For next year's Greening up the Mountains Festival, it would be good if they could start planning the fall



before and be at more of a central location where people could hear stories and see pictures in a quieter location. Trying to tell stories while walking down the street is a bit difficult because of the noise level. Homes and businesses need to be updated in the accompanying brochure.

Susan shared that she would like for the C.J. Harris building to be looked at for National Historic Registry. Harris was a big promoter of bringing Jackson County into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. The work he did pushed us into growing. It has never been surveyed or considered, so Caroline will bring information on that process to the next meeting for Susan to look at. The dam was already lost, which was what provided electricity to move this county forward, so it would be a shame to lose the C.J. Harris house. There is not a current biography written up about C.J. Harris, however there is material at Western in special collections.

Caroline shared with the Commission the buildings in Jackson County that have been determined eligible for National Historic Registry according to the website. Caroline suggested we begin looking at those to determine which ones should possibly be safeguarded, these include the, Sylva National Guard Armory, East Fork Hydrological district, Turpin Farm, and a fire tower on the Jackson Swain border.

### **Updates**

Pam Meister shared that the Mountain Heritage Center is hosting a Smithsonian exhibit "The Way We Worked" at Western Carolina University from September 27<sup>th</sup> until November 7<sup>th</sup>. It will be in conjunction with the National Archives and is all about all the different ways people worked from the 1880's to the 1990's and will include incredible photographs. There will be 6 exhibits in the local Jackson County Public library that will display the way we worked here in Jackson County, which include the building of Champion Fiber Company, WCU's 1960's building boom and working along the Blue Ridge Park way. November 11<sup>th</sup> is Armistice Day, and on this date the Mountain Heritage Center will open "I Want You: How World War I Transformed Western North Carolina." This exhibit is also part of a statewide project to ring bells at 11 a.m. on November 11<sup>th</sup> to commemorate the Armistice. The HPC could help to make the public aware of this by publishing a notice in the newspaper. Both exhibits will be at street level. Luther has some WWI materials that he could possibly share in the exhibit.

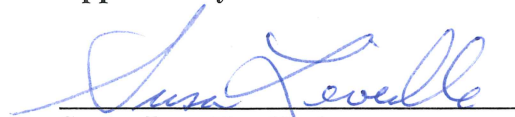
### **Adjournment:**

Pam Meister made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Luther Jones seconded it at 6:39 p.m.

**Respectfully Submitted by:**

  
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Cleis Bonham, Administrative Assistant

**Approved by:**

  
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Susan Leveille, Chair