

Valle Crucis Community Council

Meeting minutes – Thursday, July 27, 2023

Attendees: Walter Browning, John LaCapra, Tracey Heiss, Scott Jensen, Julie Gates, JD Dooley
Not Present: Howell Cook, Alyson Browett, Erin Welsh

Public attendees: Howard Brafman

- Council members approved the minutes from the June 2023 meeting.
- Infrastructure committee:
 - Eric Jones, vice president of H&M Constructors (the contractor building the new Valle Crucis School), offered to attend the August 2023 VCCC meeting to foster a strong relationship with council members. Jones also agreed to discuss possible funding for radar speed signs with his company and sub-contractors. Walter Browning sent radar speed sign quote information received from the Town of Banner Elk and Major Kelly Redmon of the Watauga County Sheriff's Department.
 - Eric also relayed information on upcoming concrete work that will need to start as early as 4:00 AM for approximately five mornings. This early morning work will cause some temporary disruption with overhead lighting, beeping and noise of concrete trucks, etc. Eric agreed to notify the VCCC (Walter) ahead of this scheduled work so neighboring homeowners can be informed.
- Old Valle Crucis School Committee: Julie Gates gave a quick update on discussions involving preservation of the old Valle Crucis School and surrounding property:
 - Two fact-finding meetings occurred in July, 2023 regarding the old Valle Crucis School. On July 6, 2023, Jack Thomson from Preservation NC shared information on possible paths to help with protecting the historic rock portion of the Valle Crucis School. On July 25, 2023, Walter Browning and Julie Gates met with Larry Turnbow, District 4 County Commissioner, to update him on plans to preserve the historic rock Valle Crucis School structure and surrounding property (including the "Valle Landing" property). This preservation work is driven by environmental, historic and community preservation objectives. The goal is to have Watauga County lease the building and surrounding land to a non-profit entity (created by the VCCC) for \$1 per year as they have done with Cove Creek School for 20+ years.
 - Next steps for the VCCC include:
 - Establish a 501(c)(3) that incorporates under the name "Valle Crucis Historic Preservation Society, Inc." Walter Browning made a motion to create this 501(c)(3) that JD Dooley seconded. John LaCapra offered to handle the paperwork to establish this entity.
 - Create a bank account so the corporation can receive funds.
 - Meet with people involved with Cove Creek Preservation and Development, Inc., a similar organization that was created to preserve the historic rock Cove Creek School (also a Works Progress Administration structure).

- Continue work on both the lease relationship with Watauga County and the historic and environmental protection plan with the North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office and Preservation NC.
 - Update Commissioner Turnbow every four to six weeks.
 - VCCC members discussed the need for a fundraising event to secure funds to pay for preservation planning and set-up.
- Website update:
 - The council viewed the current status of the www.vallecrucis.org / VCCC website. Alyson Browett and JD Dooley are working to finalize the site to include VCCC meeting minutes, community information, links to other Valle Crucis organizations like the Valle Crucis Conference Center and the Valle Crucis Community Park, the Valle Crucis Strategic Plan, the Valle Crucis Historic District Ordinance and bylaws, photos, etc. VCCC members agreed to send information for the website to JD (photos, VCCC mission and vision information, strategic plan information, etc.). Thank you to Alyson and JD for their work on the website.
- Meeting adjourned. The next meeting of the VCCC is scheduled for Thursday, August 25, at 6:00 PM. Due to the Valle Crucis Community Park's auction activity, VCCC meetings in August and September 2023 will take place at **Crab Orchard Hall at the Valle Crucis Conference Center.**