



**Town Council
Work Session Minutes
March 14, 2024 – 9:30 a.m.**

Mayor O’Cain called the Work Session Council Meeting to order at 9:30 a.m. on March 14, 2024, in person at Town Hall, 441 White Pine Drive, Laurel Park, NC 28739.

The following attended in person at Town Hall:

- Mayor Carey O’Cain
- Mayor Pro Tempore A. Paul Hansen
- Commissioner George W. Banta
- Commissioner Deb Bridges
- Commissioner Kristin Dunn
- Town Manager Alex Carmichael
- Town Clerk Tamara Amin
- Public Works Director Brandon Johnson
- Interim Planner Kaitland Finkle
- Finance Officer Kirk Medlin
- Crew Leader Matthew Pearce
- Parks Operation Coordinator Bryan Hensley

The following attended via ZOOM:

- Police Chief Bobbie Trotter

The following were absent:

- Fire Chief Tim Garren

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Mayor Pro Tem Hansen asked to add Historical Markers to the Agenda. Commissioner Bridges asked to add a Friends of Laurel Park Update. Commissioner George Banta moved to approve the amended agenda. Mayor O’Cain asked for discussion; there was none. The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

Commissioner Dunn joined the meeting at 9:31 a.m.

OLD BUSINESS

DISCUSSION OF ZONING 1512 BREVARD ROAD

Interim Zoning Administrator Kaitland Finkle said 1512 Brevard Road remains zoned as

Hendersonville ETJ. There are options in the Laurel Park UDO for how to go about rezoning it.

The County has already gone ahead and updated the Municipal Boundary (but they kept it shown as still being zoned under Hendersonville ETJ).

UDO 6.3.15 which states “Neighborhood Information Meeting Required for applications seeking more intense zoning districts” but under UDO 6.2.5 Neighborhood Information Meeting it states:

B: APPLICABILITY

1: Neighborhood information meetings shall be conducted prior to filing of an application for the following types of development applications:

a: Planned developments;

b: Rezoning seeking to establish a more dense or intense zoning district; or

c: Special use permits.

2: A neighborhood information meeting is optional, at the applicant’s discretion, for any proposed development application not listed in subsection (1) above *and for land receiving its first zoning district designation by the Town as part of annexation.*

It is ultimately up to you whether or not to hold the Optional Neighborhood Meeting. To be on the safe side (since more than 60 days has elapsed from the time of annexation) it is probably best to go ahead and hold a Neighborhood Information Meeting which requires First Class Mailed Notice to all Landowners AND Occupants within 300 feet at least 10 days prior to the meeting.

Regardless, the remainder of the process will be as follows:

1. Parks and Greenways Board for Review and Comment Specifically for impacts on tree protection, parks, and greenways
2. Planning Board for Review and Formal Recommendation
3. Schedule the Public Hearing and Properly Notice (includes newspaper advertising, mailing all adjoining properties, posting the property with a sign for all 10-25 days of the Hearing)
4. Public Hearing with Town Council Review and Decision

Council discussed whether to zone it as Mountain Mixed Use or Town Center as well as if they should have a neighborhood meeting. After much discussion, to be transparent they agreed to have an informational meeting and talk about zoning it as Mountain Mixed Use. They would also need to zone it if they were considering selling it.

Interim Planner Finkle left at 9:43 a.m.

NEW BUSINESS

RAIL TRAIL ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVE

Town Clerk Amin said the Rail-Trail Advisory Committee (RTAC) was established by the Board of Commissioners on November 1, 2021. The committee is charged with assisting and

advising the Board of Commissioners by providing input on the operations and policies of the Henderson County rail-trail.

Ms. Nancy McKinley was appointed on 11/17/2021, her term ended June 2023.

Mayor Pro Tem Hansen said he would like to get more reports from Ms. McKinley.

Ms. McKinley is willing to continue to represent Laurel Park if the Council wishes to appoint her.

Mayor Pro Tem Hansen moved to appoint Ms. Nancy McKinley for a three-year term ending in June 2026. Mayor O’Cain asked for discussion; there was none. The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

BUDGET AMENDMENT #4

Town Manager Carmichael said Budget Amendment #4 reallocates money by transferring funds from the Public Works Department to the Parks Department in order to provide funding for the Little Laurel Green paver project. It decreases the Public Works line item, Professional Services, by \$10,000, decreases the Installment/Lease line item by \$4,500, and increases the Parks Department line item, Contracted Services Line Item by \$14,500.

The Public Works Department has not had to use any of the funding originally budgeted for Professional Services this year. Additionally, the leases for Public Works were budgeted to fund an entire year, but the vehicles have not been delivered yet (3 quarters into the fiscal year.)

Mr. Carmichael said they are mobilizing today and should be done in two weeks.

Commissioner Banta moved to approve Ordinance 2024-5 as presented. Mayor O’Cain asked for discussion; there was none. The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

BUDGET AMENDMENT #5

Town Manager Carmichael said Budget Amendment #5 appropriates \$15,205 from fund balance to cover the cost of the Highway 64 Comprehensive Planning visioning process. The funds would be allocated to the line item, Contracted Services in the Administration Department.

Mayor Pro Tem Hansen moved to approve Ordinance 2024-6 as presented. Mayor O’Cain asked for discussion; there was none. The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

HISTORICAL MARKERS

Mayor Pro Tem Hansen presented the next two historical markers to the Council.

- a. Pavilion Marker - The aforesaid marker is attached to, and made part of, these minutes as Appendix 1.

- b. Davis Station Marker - The aforesaid marker is attached to, and made part of, these minutes as Appendix 2.

Commissioner Bridges moved to approve the two historical markers. Mayor O’Cain asked for discussion; there was none. The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

FRIENDS OF LAUREL PARK UPDATE

Commissioner Bridges said the Friends of Laurel Park have agreed to provide data on the Yoga at Jump Off Rock but not as a sign-in clipboard. They would rather a show of hands if the attendees were from Laurel Park, drove a car, and a headcount. The Council was okay with doing it that way.

Mayor O’Cain asked about the Town Survey. Town Clerk Amin said Staff is tallying it all up and will present it to Council on Tuesday.

AGENDA REVIEW FOR THE COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING SCHEDULED FOR MARCH 19, 2024

Mr. Carmichael said the Town Council will hold their regularly scheduled Town Council meeting on the third Tuesday of the month, March 19, 2024, at 9:30am. The Town Council reviewed the draft agenda.

1. **Call to Order**
2. **Pledge of Allegiance**
3. **Public Comment**
4. **Approval of the Agenda**
5. **Consent Agenda**
 - A. February Monthly Report
 - B. Minutes for the February 15, 2024 Work Session Meeting
 - C. Minutes for the February 20, 2024 Regular Meeting
 - D. Minutes for the February 20, 2024 Closed Session
 - E. Minutes for the February 21, 2024 Budget Retreat Meeting
 - F. Arbor Day Proclamation
6. **Old Business**
 - A. ABC Merger Discussion

Commissioner Banta said that the City of Hendersonville has approved the contract without looking at the amendments that will be presented on Tuesday.

7. **New Business**
 - A. Laurel Park Highway Survey Results
8. **Town Manager’s Report**
9. **Department Head Reports**
 - A. Public Works
 - B. Fire Department

- C. Police
- D. Administration

10. Mayor and Commissioner Comments

11. Adjournment

Town Manager Carmichael said Staff would like to add the contract for payroll services to Tuesday's agenda.

Commissioner Banta asked Staff to get an update on paving, roads, and culverts. Council would like Mr. Will Buie to be present.

Commissioner Bridges asked to have an update from the Centennial Committee.

Commissioner Dunn asked to have an update about the website. Town Manger Carmichael said Staff is working to gather information on the roads for Summit Marketing.

CLOSED SESSION

Commissioner Banta moved that the Council enter Closed Session at 10:06 a.m. pursuant to [N.C.G.S. 143-318.11(a) (6)] To consider the qualifications, competence, performance, condition of appointment of a public officer or employee. Mayor O'Cain asked for discussion; there was none. The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

Commissioner Banta moved to reconvene the Council Work Session Meeting at 10:50 a.m. Mayor O'Cain asked for discussion; there was none. The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

The following were present at Town Hall:

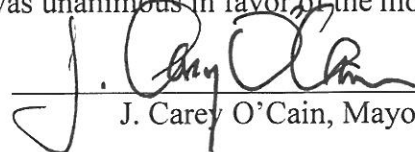
- Mayor J. Carey O'Cain
- Mayor Pro-Tempore A. Paul Hansen
- Commissioner Deb Bridges
- Commissioner George W. Banta
- Commissioner Dunn

ADJOURNMENT

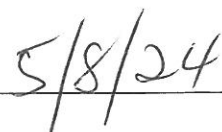
There being no further business, Commissioner Bridges moved to adjourn at 11:03 a.m. Mayor O'Cain asked for discussion; there was none. The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

ATTEST:





J. Carey O'Cain, Mayor



Tamara Amin, CMC, NCCMC
Town Clerk/Deputy Tax Collector

Date

Ord. 2024-5
Town of Laurel Park, North Carolina
Budget Ordinance Amendment
Fiscal Year 2023-2024
Amendment #4

To record the transfer of funds from Public Works to Parks in order to provide funding for the Little Laurel Green paver project.

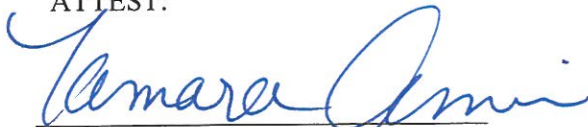
Section 1. To amend the General Fund (10), the appropriations are to be changed as follows:

<u>Account</u>	<u>Decrease</u>	<u>Increase</u>
Contracted Services (10-6130-4450)		\$ 14,500.00
Professional Services (10-4510-1900)	\$ 10,000.00	
Installment/Lease (10-4510-7700)	\$ 4,500.00	
	_____	_____
Total Changes	\$ 14,500.00	\$ 14,500.00

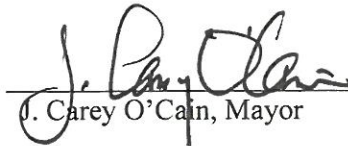
Section 2. Copies of this budget amendment shall be furnished to the Clerk to the Town Council, and to the Budget Officer and the Finance Officer for their direction.

Adopted this 14th day of March, 2024.

ATTEST:



Tamara Amin, CMC, NCCMC
Town Clerk/Deputy Tax Collector



J. Carey O'Connell, Mayor

Town of Laurel Park, North Carolina
Budget Ordinance Amendment

Fiscal Year 2023-2024

Amendment #5

To record the appropriation of additional funds needed to proceed with the Highway 64 comprehensive planning process.

Section 1. To amend the General Fund (10), the appropriations are to be changed as follows:

<u>Account</u>	Decrease	Increase
Contracted Services (10-4120-4450)		\$ 15,205.00
	_____	_____
Total Changes		\$ 15,205.00

Section 2. To amend the General Fund (10), the revenues are to be changed as follows:

<u>Account</u>	Decrease	Increase
Fund Balance Appropriated (10-3070-0000)		\$15,205.00
	_____	_____
Total Changes		\$15,205.00

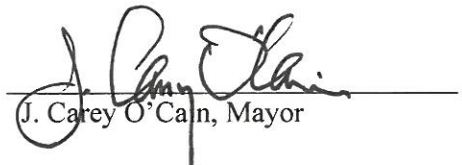
Section 3. Copies of this budget amendment shall be furnished to the Clerk to the Town Council, and to the Budget Officer and the Finance Officer for their direction.

Adopted this 14th day of March, 2024.

ATTEST:

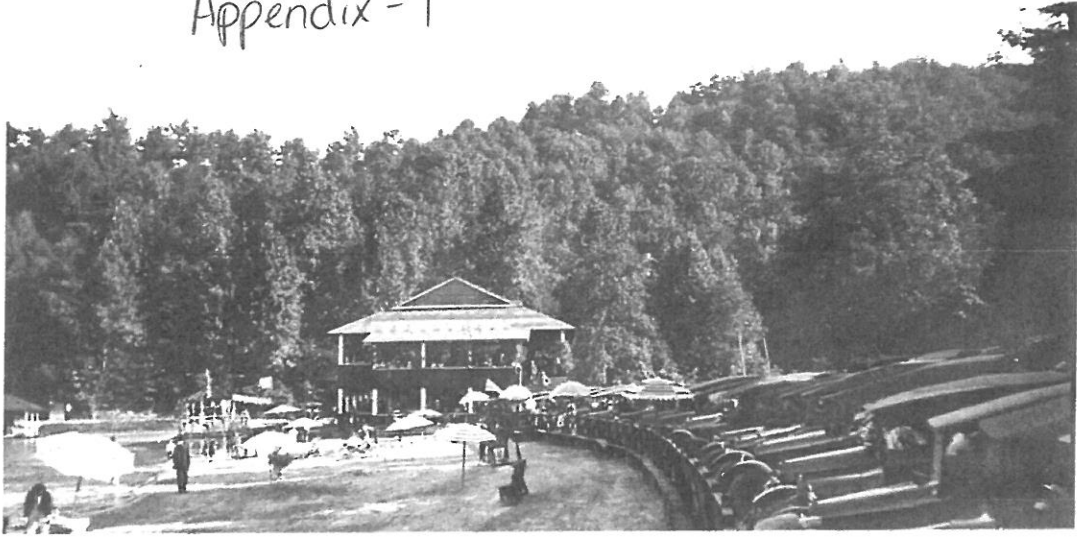


Tamara Amin, CMC, NCCMC
Town Clerk/Deputy Tax Collector



J. Carey O'Callahan, Mayor

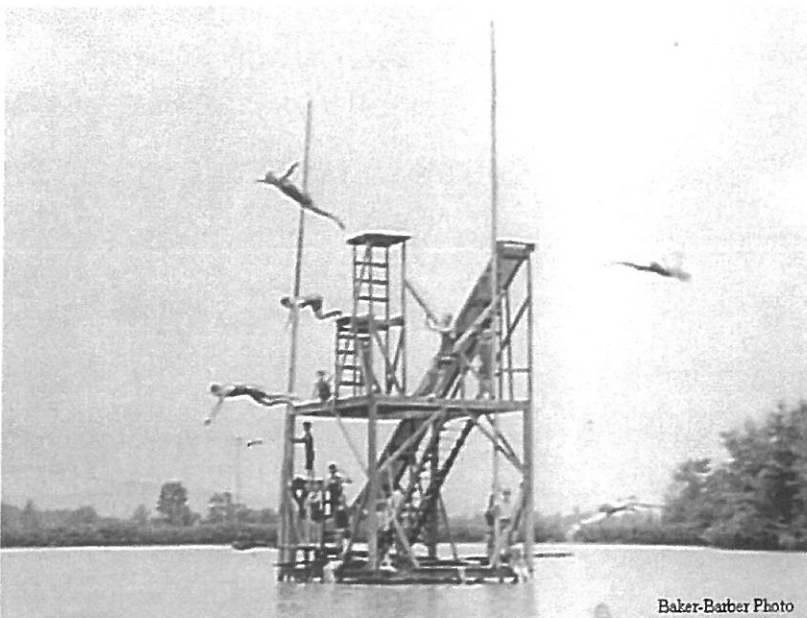
Appendix - 1



The Pavilion at Rhododendron Lake
(Casino II)

In 1921, soon after the fire that destroyed the Casino at Rainbow Lake, W.A. Smith built a two story entertainment facility on the shores of the 10-acre Rhododendron Lake.

The ground floor consisted of the “Tea Room” and “dressing rooms for bathing purposes”. The second floor was a 5,500 sq.ft. dance floor which was reportedly “the second largest of its kind in the South.” Throughout the summer months, large groups of visitors and local residents danced to J.L. Livingston’s Orchestra and other renowned big bands.



Rhododendron Lake had a 20 foot tall slide and diving platform that heightened the enjoyment of a summer swim. Canoes were also available for excursions to the distant shores.

(115 Words)



Davis Station
W.A. Drake's Store

In 1897, The Brevard Railroad and Telegraph Company obtained a right of way to lay tracks from Hendersonville to Toxaway. A platform and stop called "Davis Station" stood at this site serving Laurel Park until automobiles negated its need. In 1926, W.A. Drake purchased a lot at the corner of Guice Street and Shaws Creek Road (now Daniel Drive and Highway 64). He operated a country store offering dry and canned goods, meats, local produce and Standard Oil of New Jersey gasoline. A pot-bellied stove and chairs at the rear of the store provided a warm, welcome social space. In 1971, the store was sold and converted to sell antiques and again was sold in 1994 and replaced by an Energy Mart Convenience store. Rail operations ceased in 2000, converting to the Ecusta Trail in 2024.

(136 Words)

Historical Markers

COMPLETED HISTORICAL MARKERS

1. "Woodlawn"

Originally built in 1837, and reconstructed in 1912 by Mr. Joseph Kirkland Singeltary, one of the early developers in Laurel Park. The Robinson family has owned the house and surrounding property since 1932. The house is characteristic of mountain summer homes built in the early twentieth century with round saddled notched logs, chinking, and steep gabled roofs. The original 1837 stone chimney remains. This property has been placed on the National Register of Historic Places by the United States Department of the Interior LPCA 2011

(86 words)

2. ORIGINAL WATER RESERVOIR AND THE CASCADES

In 1888, approval was given for a bond issue, Hendersonville's first, to build a reservoir for a supply of pure water to Main Street. The reservoir, fed by pristine springs in Laurel Park, is nearby. The outflow from this reservoir travels under Laurel Park Highway, where Cascade Falls begin. Water tumbles approximately 400 feet down to Rhododendron Lake. W.A. Smith, founder of Laurel Park, accentuated the Cascades for its natural beauty. LPCA 2010

(73 words)

3. ECHO MOUNTAIN INN

Circa 1896

This stone structure, on the crest of Echo Mountain, was originally built as a summer residence for John H. Patterson of Jacksonville, Florida. It was purchased in 1925 Dr. & Mrs. Charles DeGarmo of Coconut Grove. Due to the financial downturn, here and in South Florida, triggered by the 1926 hurricane, the DeGarmo's operated it as the "Tea Room" until the late 1920's when Isabel Foster opened *Camp Happiness* for girls. W.R. Royall became the first innkeeper when he purchased the property in 1935 and created *Echo Inn*, providing lodging, dining, and great views for visitors to Laurel Park. There have been several site expansions by successive innkeepers plus a name change to *Echo Mountain Inn*. Elevation here 2,680 feet.

LPCA 2013

(128 words)

4. **Crystal Spring**

In the 1890's, W.A. Smith began the development of Laurel Park as a recreational area with Crystal Spring as its focal point. Visitors came here for many years to picnic and drink the clear, cold water from this well-known spring. A latticed shed initially covered the spring but by 1910 this had been replaced with the current a native stone arch. Visitors would also stroll along Cupid's Path, bordered by rhododendron and laurel thickets, on their way to Horseshoe Spring and Rainbow Lake.
LPCA 2011

(85 words)

5. **JUMP OFF ROCK**

In the mid 1800's, the family of Josiah Davis settled on Jump Off Mountain. Shortly thereafter Josiah, his wife, and his son, J.M. (Mountain Man) Davis, used dynamite and an oxen pulled sled to begin building the road known today as Davis Mountain Road. They also built an offset road to Jump Off Rock which was completed in 1907. This was the only access road to Jump Off Rock until Laurel Park Estates built Laurel Park Highway in 1924.

In 1925, W.D. and Nina McAdoo of Pinellas County, Florida, purchased Jump Off Rock from the Davis family and donated the property to the newly formed Town of Laurel Park.

Due to the hard work and generosity of these few individuals, many generations of residents and visitors can enjoy spectacular views of the Blue Ridge Mountains from Jump Off Rock. Elevation here

LPCA 2014

(147 words)

6. **The Swiss Railway**

In 1909 Laurel Park's founder, W.A. Smith, constructed another attraction in his nature park, called the Swiss Railway. This incline railway consisted of two tram like vehicles on parallel tracks ascending the mountain at a junction of the Dummy Line near Crystal Spring. Customers were charged a minimal amount to go up the steep slope of the mountain through thickets of Rhododendron and Mountain Laurel. Riders emerged another 200 feet in elevation at the nearly 40-foot tall Park Heights Tower. Folks

enjoyed the ride up, but the steep slope made the ride down more novel and interesting.
LPCA 2015

(98 words)

7. Rhododendron Lake

W.A. Smith's evolving vision of Laurel Park included the construction of the 10-acre Rhododendron Lake and beach in 1909. A 30-foot high earthen dam was constructed blocking the stream running down the Cascades from the Reservoir. In addition, The Canal was built to connect with Rainbow Lake. The steam driven Dummy Line railroad was converted to the electric operated Laurel Park Street Railway with an extension from nearby Crystal Spring to Rhododendron Lake. These grand improvements made Laurel Park an extraordinary recreation area, giving visitors and residents of Hendersonville a location for swimming and boating, as well as dining and entertainment at the adjacent Laurel Park Pavilion. In the early 1980's, the earthen dam was deemed unsafe and removed. In 2009, the Town completed the purchase of the lakebed property to restore the natural flow of the stream and to create a nature park called Rhododendron Lake Park.
LPCA 2015

(149 words)

8. The Canal

In 1909 "The Canal" was begun by W.A. Smith to connect the new Rhododendron Lake and the existing Rainbow Lake. The canal allowed visitors to Laurel Park to take excursions between the two lakes on gondola type boats. This section of the park represents the last vestiges of the old canal.

(52 words)

9. Site of Fleetwood Hotel

Nearby was the site of the Fleetwood Hotel, a 14-story edifice begun in 1925 and never completed. A grandiose dream and victim of the severe real estate downturn that began in 1926, the steel skeleton's ghostly frame stood for a number of years as a reminder of the 1925 and early 1926 local land boom and ensuing crash until it was finally demolished and sold for scrap in 1935-1936. LPCA 2011

(76 words)

10. Jump Off Legend

Nearly 300 years ago the Cherokee Indians would gather each summer at Kanasta, now known as Connestee. While the braves were busy shaping their war axes making ready to fight other Indian tribes, one young Cherokee Chieftain found time to roam the mountain paths with one of the tribe's fairest of maidens. One of their favorite meeting places was at the rock cliff at Jump Off Mountain. When the time came for the braves to start on their warring trip the pair parted with many a sigh and a promise to meet again at their favorite trysting place. Evening after evening while the sun slid down its golden path behind the peaks the lonely Indian girl climbed to her look-out post on the rock where she watched and prayed to the "Long Person" for her lover's return. Often standing there she sent the plaintive notes of the Indian love call ringing out but there never came an answering note. The returning warriors brought the sad news that the young Chief had been killed in battle. In the deepening twilight she climbed to the edge of the cliff – a few steps forward and the haunting notes of her love call were hushed forever and her broken body was found later by hunters. Legend has it that on some moonlight nights the ghost of the Indian maid can be seen here.

Legends persist concerning the native peoples that inhabited the Southern Appalachians the importance of which is the heritage that these native tribes contributed to the region. LPCA 2016

(229 words)

11. CCC Rock Walls

CCC

ROCK WALLS c.1937

In 1933, during the depths of the Great Depression, the U.S. Congress passed the Emergency Conservation Work Act forming the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC). The resolution organized and employed unmarried young men, ages 18-25, to battle against the destruction and erosion of the country's natural resources.

In N.C. the CCC helped to construct the Blue Ridge Parkway, planted trees to restore clear-cut forests, built bridges, restored watersheds, and constructed and revitalized parks and recreation sites. Most men of the CCC went on to WWII battlefronts by 1942 thus ending a successful New Deal program.

This rock wall, extending 2,264 feet along Laurel Park Highway, is one of several CCC projects in Henderson County. **FLP 2018**

(117 words)

12. **W.A. Smith – Founder of Laurel Park**

William Alexander Smith

Founder of Laurel Park

After being admitted to the North Carolina Bar in 1876, W.A. Smith (1853-1922) settled in Hendersonville establishing a successful law practice. Among his lifetime achievements were mayor, alderman, city attorney, county attorney, banker, and director of the Toxaway Railroad.

Toward the end of the 19th Century, a new railroad line from Charleston ended in the small mountain town of Hendersonville with its cool summer climate, thus spawning visitors eager for a reprieve from the South's stifling heat. Realizing a need to create recreation for these visitors, W.A. Smith purchased over 250 acres of land on Echo Mountain west of Hendersonville and gradually turned it into "The most beautiful nature park in America", calling it Laurel Park.

Mr. Smith's initial vision for Laurel Park was to create a countryside recreational journey by establishing nature trails centered around Crystal Spring. He then built the "Casino" at Rainbow Lake for entertainment and the "Dummy Line Railroad" to make the excursion easier. To accommodate more visitors, Mr. Smith added "Rhododendron Lake" and the "Swiss Railway".

In 1911, Mr. Smith built his family home on this site overlooking his handiwork, calling it "Holly Hill."

Friends of Laurel Park 2020

(189 Words)

13. **The Quarry Tract**

The Quarry Tract

The granite foundations of Jump Off and Echo Mountains in Laurel Park conceivably predate the Appalachian Orogeny hundreds of million years ago. Massive sections of this bedrock are visible today, breaking the surface at Jump Off Rock, The Cascades, and here at The Quarry.

W.A. Smith began his quarry operations at the turn of the 20th Century after he and Judge Pace purchased a 240-acre tract west of Hendersonville. He exhibited "outstanding specimens of rock,

susceptible to a fine polish” at his office on Main Street. In 1909, he installed a giant stone crusher for the purpose of supplying

gravel for road improvements, admix for concrete, and ballast to place between railroad ties.

Rock quarried at this site was used in the construction of many commercial and residential sites in the area, including the façade of the Hendersonville High School gym built in 1938. In 2020, the gym was demolished with some of the stone returning to this site as the foundation of this historical marker.

Friends of Laurel Park 2021

(166 Words)

14. The Laurel Park Railroad

THE LAUREL PARK RAILROAD 1905-1917

In 1903 W.A. Smith obtained a charter for a railroad to transport folks out to Laurel Park and in 1905 started laying tracks from Main Street out Broad Street (now 5th Avenue) and then purchased a steam powered locomotive and passenger car. The railroad was completed in time to bring attendees to the annual WNC Fair in September of that year. Riders paid a one-way fare of five cents for the twenty-minute trip. Since there was no turn-around and it had to go in reverse back to Main Street, the smoking and belching steam powered train, with its shrill whistle, was affectionately called the “Dummy”. In 1913, it was replaced by electric street cars and service was extended to Rhododendron Lake.

This railroad enhanced the appeal of Laurel Park’s venues such as Crystal Spring, the Casino at Rainbow Lake, Retreat Hotel, Swiss Incline Railway, and Rhododendron Lake. Designated the “most beautiful natural park in America”, Laurel Park became an entertainment destination known throughout the South as the “Playground of Hendersonville”.

During WWI, coal to run the LPRR’s electric generating station became scarce, and the automobile more numerous. Operations ceased September 1917.

(191 Words)

15. The Park and Amusement Grounds

With support of the Hendersonville Board of Trade, the Park and Amusement Grounds were established in 1903 with the construction of a baseball field, grandstand, and a 2-story clubhouse to “provide entertainment, interest, and amusement for the strangers within our gates.”

By 1904, W.A. Smith had built an earthen dam across the ravine creating Rainbow Lake for boating and swimming, adding an entertainment facility in 1907 called the Casino.

The baseball field was created as the ballpark for the Hendersonville home team with one of the first regional games between Hendersonville and Asheville. "Echoes of wild and woolly cheers pounded on Long John Mountain across the way and rumbled through the valley" into the late 1930s.

This site was also used for the annual Western North Carolina Fair with exhibits of farm animals, fruits and vegetables, jams and jellies, art exhibits, A.F. Baker photographs, and "T.S. Morrison's Buncombe Beauty Buggies." Yearly horse shows were followed later by automobile shows.

(159 Words)

16. The Retreat Hotel

Originally built as a clubhouse for the Fairgrounds and Baseball Field, in 1907 W.A. Smith had architect Erle Stillwell prepare remodeling plans "to convert the building into a modern family hotel." The lobby of the renovated 20-room hotel had a large granite stone chimney from W.A. Smith's quarry and rocking chair porches on both floors.

In 1911, W.A. Smith sold the hotel to Florence Jordan who operated it as an exclusive family hotel with "comfortable rooms and good cuisine." Miss Jordan, as she was fondly called, added more rooms, baths, and other amenities in 1912 and renamed it the Laurel Park Villa. Guests were prominently listed in the society page of the local newspaper and arrived from all over the Southeast.

The hotel ceased operations in 1934.

(127 Words)

17. The Casino at Rainbow Lake

W.A. Smith's improvements to the Park and Amusement Grounds started in 1907 with the construction of a 5,000 square foot modern roller skating rink. The building's foundation, erected above water level on 8-foot piers, provided boat houses, dressing rooms, "shower baths" and an outdoor restaurant at the lake level. The spacious building had 16-foot-high walls with maple flooring and electric lighting.

In addition to skating, the Casino was a venue for "high class vaudeville," theatre performances, dancing, "silent pictures," wrestling matches, and the annual Horse Show Ball. Many famous orchestras of the day performed at the Casino to the tens of thousands of visitors from throughout the South that annually descended on Laurel Park.

Each summer season brought the latest entertainment until the night of January 11, 1921, when some hooligans broke into the Casino and started a fire on the maple floor to keep warm. This resulted in the structure being destroyed. The Casino's popularity amongst a wide-ranging populace was evidenced by the spreading of its fate in newspapers all over North Carolina and nearby states.

(177 words)

18. Park Heights Tower

Early in W.A. Smith's crafting of Laurel Park, a sightseer could trek up Echo Mountain to an observation tower just above Crystal Spring. At 2600 feet above sea-level, Park Heights Tower offered an unobstructed panoramic bird's-eye view of the Hendersonville valley and beyond. The tallest mountain east of the Mississippi, Mount Mitchell was a favorite view through the four-foot long "looking glass." The addition of the Swiss Railway's upper terminus in 1905 made it an even more popular destination for visitors to Laurel Park. Electric lights were added to outline the structure, making the tower a beacon from downtown Hendersonville.

(100 Words)

19. Laurel Park Sign (Hollywood type sign)

On this site is a rock wall that was built to support what was believed to be the largest outdoor sign in North Carolina in 1924. It consisted of individual letters, each 18 feet high and twelve feet across, that spelled out LAUREL PARK. It could be seen from downtown Hendersonville and from as far away as Sugar Loaf Mountain when lighted. Laurel Park Estates made this a focal point of land sales on the mountain.

(76 Words)

20. The Pavilion (Casino II)

In 1921, soon after the fire that destroyed the Casino at Rainbow Lake, W.A. Smith built a two story entertainment facility on the shores of the 10-acre Rhododendron Lake.

The ground floor consisted of the "Tea Room" and "dressing rooms for bathing purposes". The second floor was a 5,500 sq.ft. dance floor which was reportedly "the second largest of its kind in the South." Throughout the summer months, large groups of visitors and local residents danced to J.L. Livingston's Orchestra and other renowned big bands.

Rhododendron Lake had a 20-foot-tall slide and diving platform that heightened the enjoyment of a summer swim. Canoes were also available for excursions to the distant shores.

(115 words)

21. Davis Station – Drake's Store

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22. PMA Boys Camp

The Porter Military Academy summer camp was established in 1912 by I.B. Brown of Charleston, S.C. Initially called a “summer school” for boys, the rustic camp set tents at the head of Rhododendron Lake each season for 12 years. It was the second camp to operate in Henderson County, the first being the YMCA Camp for boys.

23. Laurel Park Inn

24. Poplar Lodge

25. Glenn Rock Spring (?)

27. Horseshoe Spring – Basin Spring

28. Mount Crystal Baptist Church and Cemetery

29. Hendersonville Country Club

Ransier Pony Farm