

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

1. Name of Property

Historic name: Blue Ridge Tourist Court

Other names/site number: Blue Ridge Motor Court, Economy Inn, Perkins Park Inn, Phoenix Complex, WT0958

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

2. Location

Street & number: 574 Old E. King Street (Office & Tourist Court), 560 Old E. King Street (Annex), 173 Cecil Miller Road (Residence), 187 Cecil Miller Road (Garage Apartment), 191 Cecil Miller Road (Motel)

City or town: Boone State: NC County: Watauga

Not For Publication: N/A Vicinity: N/A

Mailing address: N/A

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this X nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property X meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

 national statewide X local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

 X A X B C D

<p>Signature of certifying official/Title: <u>North Carolina Department of Natural and Cultural Resources</u> State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</p>	<p>Date</p>
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Blue Ridge Tourist Court
Name of Property

Watauga County, NC
County and State

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official: _____ **Date** _____

Title: _____ **State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government** _____

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- ___ entered in the National Register
- ___ determined eligible for the National Register
- ___ determined not eligible for the National Register
- ___ removed from the National Register
- ___ other (explain) _____

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private:
- Public – Local
- Public – State
- Public – Federal

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

- Building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

Blue Ridge Tourist Court
Name of Property

Watauga County, NC
County and State

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>6</u>	<u>0</u>	buildings
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>6</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC—Hotel
DOMESTIC—Single Dwelling

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

VACANT/NOT IN USE
DOMESTIC—Single Dwelling

Blue Ridge Tourist Court
Name of Property

Watauga County, NC
County and State

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

MODERN MOVEMENT

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property:

Foundation: CONCRETE

Walls: CONCRETE, STONE—Granite, WOOD—Weatherboard

Roof: ASPHALT—Shingles

Other: TERRACOTTA, METAL—Steel

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

The Blue Ridge Tourist Court is located on the east side of Boone, Watauga County, North Carolina, and on the south side of Old East King Street, formerly the two-lane US 421/221 at the time of the property's construction. The complex consists of six contributing buildings: The Office and the Tourist Court (built 1950); the Annex (built 1951); the Residence (built circa 1948), located just uphill to the south from the Tourist Court and Annex; the Garage Apartment (built in late 1950 or early 1951), located just to the south of the Residence; and the Motel (built circa 1953), located just to the east of the Residence and Garage Apartment.

Of particular note is the native granite Office building with stones arranged in a random ashlar pattern and keystoned window and door openings. The Office, the Annex, and the Tourist Court also feature deep, overhanging eaves, reminiscent of the Prairie style. Also of note is the application of Shotcrete scored with a brick masonry pattern to the Tourist Court, Annex, and Garage Apartment buildings. The Tourist

Blue Ridge Tourist Court

Name of Property

Watauga County, NC

County and State

Court and Motel buildings also retain many of the original steel casement windows. Original, Craftsman-style windows still survive in the Garage Apartment, although many of the original, Craftsman-style features of the Residence are no longer extant. Original, cedar lap siding is also believed to survive under the present, T1-11, plywood paneling covering of the Motel building, although the condition of the lap siding is not yet known. Interiors of portions of the Tourist Court, the Annex, and the Office also retain original knotty pine paneling, although some of this paneling is water damaged or fire damaged in some areas.

The contributing resources of the Blue Ridge Tourist Court all retain a generally high degree of integrity, and all date to the period of significance (1950 to 1970). The Blue Ridge Tourist Court is also the best-preserved resource associated with Estel G. Wagner and his profound influence on the early development of Boone's postwar, tourism-based economy during the 1950s and 1960s.

Narrative Description

The Setting

The Blue Ridge Tourist Court is located in the east part of Boone, Watauga County, North Carolina, on the south side of Old East King Street, just east of the intersection with Cecil Miller Road. Today, neighboring properties include low-density residential parcels to the east along Old East King Street; newer, high-density apartment and condominium properties to the southeast and south; an industrial property (Blue Ridge Supply and Millwork) to the north that fronts on US 421/US 221 and is largely obscured from view by a drop in grade and a dense stand of trees; Mount Lawn Memorial Park and Cemetery to the northwest; and a wooded park parcel to the west.

At the time of the property's construction, the two-lane Old East King Street carried US 421/US 221 as the principal east-west route linking Boone to Ashe and Wilkes Counties to the east, but that route was abandoned approximately ten years ago for a rerouted and substantially widened US 421/US 221, now located about 200 yards north of the property site. Historically, the Blue Ridge Tourist Court complex consisted of three parcels that were unified in the 1950s in service to the operations of the roadside motel. The northernmost parcel, facing on Old East King Street, included the Blue Ridge Tourist Court rooms set back from the road and arranged in an L-shape; a small, stone Office building located at the road; and an Annex of four rooms separated into two units located at the west end of the L-shaped Tourist Court building and set back slightly. The L-shaped Tourist Court building and the Office were completed in late summer of 1950, while the Annex was completed in 1951.¹ This same parcel originally included a landscaped area at the road frontage, just east of the Office. Later owners of the property added a heated,

¹ No article announcing the opening of the Blue Ridge Tourist Court has been found, but the first reference to the business being open appeared in a want ad on September 21, 1950. See "For Rent," *Watauga Democrat*, 21 September 1950: 8. Dates on the buildings after 1950 are courtesy of Estel G. Wagner's son Allan Wagner, who was born in 1948 and spent his early childhood in the nearby residence. Estel G. Wagner also acknowledged a 1950 start of construction date in his private memoirs, although he appears to have sometimes been off a year or two in other dates when compared with other sources. After acknowledging that he was laying block for the foundation of the L-shaped building in 1950, he wrote, "I built seven rooms in 1951 and then four more in 1952 and built a garage apartment behind the house." See Estel G. Wagner, "Life Story of Estel George Wagner," typescript, unknown date, Wagner family archives. There is good reason to suspect that Wagner may have completed the Garage Apartment as early as October 1950, when an ad ran advertising the following: "FOR RENT—4 room apartment with bath. Available October 1st. Reference preferred. Apply through Blue Ridge Tourist Court, Boone, NC." See "For Rent," *Watauga Democrat*, cited earlier in this note.

Blue Ridge Tourist Court

Watauga County, NC

Name of Property

County and State

above-ground pool on a partial concrete platform in this landscaped area in the late 1960s, but this resource no longer survives. Several brick piers, which apparently supported driveway chains, were also later installed (post-1970) and survived as of 2021 on the King Street road frontage. These posts were removed in 2022.

A separately deeded park area to the west once contained playground equipment installed by the motel owners and used in this tourist court operation, but little evidence of this feature survives today. This same park parcel also contains the remnants of a small, brick pump house that appears to have directed a water supply from a pair of springs to the original Tourist Court parcel, but this pump house and the park were never located directly on the parcels owned by the operators of the Blue Ridge Tourist Court.² Because of this lack of formal association and the loss of historic resources in this area, the park and pump house ruins are not included in the nominated boundary.

The second parcel, located due south of the Tourist Court parcel and at a higher elevation accessible from Cecil Miller Road, contained a brick residence originally built circa 1949, where the proprietors of the Blue Ridge Tourist Court resided with their children. This Residence was never a direct part of the Tourist Court or Motel operations, although the families of the proprietors of the Blue Ridge Tourist Court lived in this residence from late 1949 to at least 1979. In either late 1950 or early 1951, the owner of the Blue Ridge Tourist Court constructed the Garage Apartment building to the south of the Residence, directly at the right of way with Cecil Miller Road, in order to provide a long-term stay option as part of the tourist court operation.³

The third parcel was located to the east of the residence at an even higher elevation on Cecil Miller Road. Before 1951, this parcel contained a small, wood-frame building that may have served as an apartment. In July 1951, the proprietors of the Tourist Court acquired this parcel, demolished the wood-frame building, and erected the present Motel building sometime before 1955, most likely in late 1953 or early 1954.⁴

² The original deed conveying these and other parcels as part of the establishment of the D. O. Ray Development specifically noted “a par[k] with two springs, the same being included in a map of the Ray Development, and a right-of-way to the springs and the park is hereby given proportionately to each and every lot and tract in the above described development.” See Sallie and Lelia Ray to W. N. Ragan and L. A. Greene, Deed Book 45, Page 480, Watauga County Register of Deeds. All real estate instruments referenced in this NRHP Nomination are available through the Watauga County Register of Deeds unless otherwise noted.

³ Allan Wagner indicates that the lower level of the Garage Apartment with the garage doors was used primarily for lawn-mowing equipment and storage, while the upper level was leased on a long-term basis, often to the same family from Virginia who visited during sequential summers in the early 1950s. Allan Wagner, personal conversation with the author, April 20, 2021. As noted previously, this Garage Apartment may have been completed as early as October 1950.

⁴ The owner of the parcels in the early 2000s, who at that time owned all three of these parcels plus a fourth parcel to the east of the Tourist Court parcel as a singular property, chose to subdivide the parcels into the present alignment in order to facilitate a string of mortgages on the property. As a result, the Garage Apartment was associated with the Motel parcel rather than the residence. These owners eventually defaulted on the mortgage on the Residence circa 2010, and the property went through foreclosure, resulting in the present situation where the owner of the Residence parcel is a different entity than the owner of the Tourist Court and Motel parcels. For the original grouping of two parcels, see, for example, Deed of Trust, Celeste F. Gore and David Trivette to Jimmy D. Reeves, July 12, 2001, Book of Record 644, Page 251; and Deed of Trust, David D. Trivette to America’s Wholesale Lender, November 4, 2003, Book of Record 908, Page 786. For evidence of the division into four parcels, see David D. Trivette, Jr., and Celeste F. Gore to Dwayne H. Wiseman, March 16, 2004, Book of Record 945, Page 519.

Blue Ridge Tourist Court

Name of Property

Historic Buildings and Resources

Watauga County, NC

County and State

The Office (1950), 574 Old E. King Street—Contributing Building

Regarding the Tourist Court parcel on Old East King Street, there are three distinct buildings. The first is a small, square, one-story Office building with a flat roof consisting of tar and gray gravel constructed in 1950. When originally surveyed in 2021, the roof of the Office was badly deteriorated from rot and water intrusion, and it featured an unusually large overhang on all four sides that was ceiled with painted, tongue-and-groove pine. As part of renovations in 2022, the entire roof structure was rebuilt and appropriately flashed to conform to its original appearance, with badly damaged portions of the tongue-and-groove pine rebuilt using material salvaged from the Office and the Annex overhangs. Historic images indicate that the roof once supported steel-frame signs with interior lighting (a later version had neon lettering), but these are no longer extant. A smaller lighted sign labeled “Office” and located on the north elevation under the eaves had also gone missing by 2021. Posts under the north elevation overhang supported a bank of mailboxes in 2021, but this was a post-1970 addition to the building. These posts were removed as part of renovations in 2022.

Composed of natural granite arranged in a random ashlar pattern, the Office building is set on a concrete slab and features keystone door and window openings with deep surrounds and stone sills on the windows. These door and window openings were improperly supported and had started to sag by 2021, but repointing and insertion of thin steel plates in the span beneath the keystones in 2022 has restored the exterior walls to their original appearance. The west side of the Office building offers a stout, stone chimney with sloped shoulders and a stunted stack. On the north and south elevations, the Office features two original, exterior, three-paneled doors with three vertical lights in the upper half; both appeared in 2021 to feature replacement hardware, and there was some damage to both doors. Two large, plate glass windows were intact on the north and east elevations, although both panes were cracked. In addition, a rear window on the south elevation retained its original frame and featured an inserted window air conditioning unit. As part of 2022 renovations, the doors were repaired and broken glass in the large, plate glass windows was replaced. The south elevation window frame and window were also repaired, the air conditioning unit removed, and frosted glass panes installed into this window.

The interior of the Office features a keystone, coursed ashlar fireplace with brick firebox. The fireplace is topped off with a polished granite mantel and is unusual given the diminutive nature of the Office building. In 2021, the rest of the interior was paneled in vertical knotty pine with modest pine trim, much of which suffered from water and mold damage, particularly near the floor and top of the mantel. The concrete slab floor was carpeted, but this carpeting was badly deteriorated. A small closet (including the previously described south elevation window) occupied the southeast corner of the office building. The interior ceiling appears to have been clad in 16-inch Celotex affixed to one-by-three cross members; this was later removed for a drop ceiling in a steel grid, most of which had rusted, deteriorated, or collapsed from ongoing roof leakage. As part of renovations in 2022, the carpeting and ceiling elements were removed entirely. Much of the knotty pine paneling was salvaged and cleaned, although spot replacement of some boards was necessary. The closet area has been retrofitted for future laundry and/or storage use.

Work on the interior of the Office was paused in October 2022 to facilitate opening of the Tourist Court rooms to the public. Completion of the Office interior is expected in early 2023.

Blue Ridge Tourist Court

Name of Property

Watauga County, NC

County and State

The Tourist Court (1950), 574 Old E. King Street—Contributing Building

The main Tourist Court building (constructed 1950) is an L-shaped, one-story, seven-unit roadside motel with the bottom of the ell oriented toward the east side of the parcel. The west side of the building features a concrete stairwell with a concrete block retaining wall descending to a boiler room. The stairwell's retaining wall is badly deteriorated and collapsing into the stairwell. The boiler stack visible at the southwest corner of the Tourist Court building in historic images was removed sometime after 1970, probably when the wall unit heaters present in 2021 were installed in each individual room; these wall unit heaters were removed as part of 2022 renovations. As of 2021, a tall, concrete block retaining wall buttressed by concrete obelisks ran along the south elevation of the Tourist Court building to hold back the hillside to the south. Portions of this wall had been rendered unstable by tree roots, particularly at the southeast end of the wall, and the eastern half of the wall was in imminent danger of collapse. In 2022, the eastern half of this retaining wall as well as all obelisks were removed, and as of August 2022, a new, concrete block, structurally engineered retaining wall was being installed and tied into the remaining west portion. The new block faces were the same size as the original block, but the blocks were significantly thicker to better hold back the hillside.

The main (north) elevation of the Tourist Court and its west-facing elevations are concrete block coated with Shotcrete applied in a brick masonry pattern, the vast majority of which remains intact.⁵ Other than the west end of the building, which rests on the concrete foundation of the boiler room, the remainder of the building had a foundation of concrete slab when first inspected in 2021. Also present was a concrete slab walkway along the main elevation and its ell, much of which was either broken due to severe settling and frost heave, or badly spalled, with evidence of at least two later pours overtop of the original pour to help level the slab, which was repeatedly settling toward the south and directing surface water into the foundation of the Tourist Court. As a result of these issues and the generally poor condition of the walkway slab, the vast majority of this walkway was demolished in 2022.⁶ The north end of the bottom of the ell features a stepped parapet to obscure the roof elements; this parapet was coped in terracotta tiles, a few of which survived. In 2022, the owner located salvaged terracotta tiles matching the originals and was in the process of installing them in August 2022.

The original roof of the Tourist Court was flat with a half-gabled, shingle-covered awning covering the entire north elevation walkway. This awning feature was ceiled in painted, tongue-and-groove pine. At an unknown date between 1968 and 1989 (based on available aerial images), a low-profile, plywood-framed roof was added on top of the original flat roof to create a slight slope toward the rear (south) elevation. This same roof was extended over the west stairwell, while the stairwell itself saw a gate added at the top of the stairs and a balustrade added just to the west of the stairs, presumably for safety reasons. As part of renovations in 2022, this entire roof superstructure, including the extended roof over the stairwell, was removed, and the original roof profile was restored. A new, EPDM rubber membrane roof was installed over a new layer of fiber board on top of much of the original tongue-and-groove decking, some portions of which had to be replaced due to termite damage. Perhaps most importantly, the 19-foot angled beam in Unit 102 (southeast corner) was badly termite damaged and never capable of safely carrying the original roof load, necessitating significant reworking of the beams and joists in the ceiling of this unit in 2022. In addition, the awning roof was stripped of its old asphalt shingles in 2022, which were replaced with three-

⁵ For an excellent overview of Shotcrete, see Anne T. Sullivan, "Shotcrete," *Twentieth-Century Building Materials*, Ed. by Thomas C. Jester, (Washington, DC: McGraw-Hill, 1995), 102-07.

⁶ The owner has retained samples of the exterior walkway and intends to mimic, as best as possible, the original aggregate color and size in the concrete mix for new slabs to be installed.

Blue Ridge Tourist Court

Name of Property

Watauga County, NC

County and State

tab asphalt shingles to match the originals. The tongue-and-groove, pine ceiling of the awning roof was generally repaired, with some minor replacement necessary where termite damage had occurred.⁷

With the exception of the northeast ell, the historic, repeating fenestration pattern of the north elevation from west to east is a single door entry followed by a single, tripartite, steel casement window for the westernmost five units. This pattern is interrupted after the sixth unit door, where no paired window exists because of the turn onto the ell. The main Tourist Court building appears to retain all five of its original, 12-light, steel casement windows along the north elevation, the lights of which are arranged in a grid three columns wide by four rows high, with three-light casements in the outer columns. On the west face of the ell, just beyond the door to the seventh unit, is an eight-light, steel casement window arranged in columns of four lights, with three-light casements, which also still survives. The one missing steel casement window of the north elevation and ell in 2021 was the window on the north face of the ell, which appears originally to have been an eight-light, steel casement window arranged in columns of four lights, with three-light casements. This was replaced at an unknown date with a one-over-one, double-hung sash, wooden window. As part of renovations in 2022, all of the surviving steel casement windows were stripped of paint, straightened, and reglazed as necessary. Window opening hardware—much of which was missing—has been replaced with period-correct hardware. The later north window on the north ell unit was removed and replaced with a steel casement window salvaged from a Beaufort, South Carolina, home; this latter window matches the original design of the steel casement window in this location.

Windowsills are generally of formed concrete. Also surviving are the original four-panel, wooden doors with early (if not original) hardware and an intricate, four-light design at the top of the door. Screen doors that originally covered the unit entry doors no longer survive.⁸ Shotcrete also appears to cover the east and south elevations of the Tourist Court building, although the finish is smooth and plain. While numerous original window piercings survived along the east and south elevations in 2021, including some original framing elements, only the five rear, steel casement windows (typically of eight lights arranged in two columns of four, with three-light casements) appear to survive in place. As part of renovations in 2022, the surviving steel casement windows were stripped of paint, straightened, and reglazed as necessary. Window opening hardware—much of which was missing—has been replaced with period-correct hardware. Bathroom window openings in 2021 had either vinyl replacements of the originals or simply featured plywood over the opening with window-unit air conditioners installed.⁹ These windows have been replaced with fixed pane windows in recessed frames and feature frosted glass. Along the south elevation in 2021, there was also a concrete block chase with a hinged, plywood covering to conceal various mechanical and plumbing elements. This chase and the mechanicals were removed as part of renovations in 2022.

At the time of the 2021 survey, the boiler room was partially filled with water and was generally inaccessible for safety reasons. As part of 2022 renovations, water in this boiler room was pumped out and the old boiler and mechanical equipment removed. The undersized beam supporting Unit 107 above was also removed and replaced with a laminated, veneered lumber beam. Damaged floor joists supporting Unit 107 were also replaced or sistered, as necessary, in order properly support the floor above. Openings

⁷ Historically, there was also a lattice screen shielding the gap between the Tourist Court building and the Annex building; the new owner hopes to recreate a similar barrier as part of renovations.

⁸ The owner intends to have screen doors milled and screened that mimic the appearance of the original, well-documented screen doors.

⁹ These replacement windows will in turn be replaced by fixed pane windows with frosted glass.

Blue Ridge Tourist Court

Name of Property

Watauga County, NC

County and State

in the concrete block foundation were repaired and sealed to prevent ground water intrusion, and a water barrier and sump pump system were installed to assist with groundwater removal.

In 2021, most of the Tourist Court rooms retained their original configuration of an open room area with a small closet and a bathroom with small shower grouped into one corner of the unit. Only one unit—the one second from the west—appeared to have had its bathroom and closet replaced by a modern kitchenette that occupied the same footprint. This unit and the far west unit have a narrow, adjoining doorway, as do the two units at the bottom of the ell. Original floors in all units appear to have been of asbestos tile on concrete slab; these slabs were poured directly on the soil with no preparatory soil compaction, creating massive voids, cracking, and unevenness as a result of settling over time. Exterior walls were generally of plaster mounted on 3/4-inch wood furring strips (many termite damaged over time) and applied to the interior side of the exterior concrete block. Interior walls dividing the units were generally of plaster applied directly to the concrete block. Bathroom and closet walls consisted of wood framing that extended through the concrete slab directly to the soil, with 3/8-inch drywall covered with 3/8-inch plaster applied to the studs. Unfortunately, the stud work for the bathroom and closet walls was done before the concrete slab was poured in these rooms, meaning that studs were resting on footings below the room floor slabs and thus ripe for termite infestation and moisture rot, which was indeed present throughout the entire complex—particularly in interior wall studs, door frames, and sometimes into roof joists. During the 1970s and 1980s, the plaster walls were covered with other materials (cheap wood paneling, drywall).

Bathroom areas in the units generally featured a cut-out area for original showers, with a closet adjacent to the shower area but facing the living area of the unit. In some bathrooms, modern tile treatments had been applied to the walls. Few, if any, of the bathroom fixtures appeared to be original in 2021, although the bathroom footprints were probably original. Some units also featured a sink stand (one with a small, built-in hotplate) outside of the bathroom area, but these are not likely to have been an original feature of the units. Unit 107 (west unit), meanwhile, featured knotty pine paneling, which is generally in good condition, as well as carpet applied to pine, wood plank flooring. This room may have been an early “upscale” room at the complex, while the smaller rooms to the east were likely more conventional in their décor. Interior room ceilings were originally composed of 16-inch Celotex mounted to wood furring strips, much of which was either missing or badly damaged when viewed in 2021. Bathroom ceilings were generally of plaster and were in very poor condition in 2021.

To address these issues as part of 2022 renovations, all asbestos tile was abated and the most of the concrete slab areas and interior bathroom framing were demolished and removed. This facilitated installation of new electrical and plumbing conduit while also allowing the installation of an appropriate, properly compacted, termite-treated substrate covered with a moisture barrier and insulated. New concrete slabs were poured, with rigid foam applied to the edges of the slabs to decrease heat loss from the slab edge as well as moisture intrusion from the block wall. Bathroom floors are now covered with period-appropriate ceramic tile, while main living area floors are covered with glue-down cork tile. All modern treatments were removed from interior walls, and original plaster, sheetrock, and furring strips were removed from exterior walls to facilitate removal of termite-damaged wood, moisture management, and climate control. These exterior walls received a continuous layer of half-inch foam board insulation with taped seams, with half-inch furring strips and half-inch foam board insulation applied on top of that, and half-inch drywall applied as the finish surface. This arrangement created a wall covering thickness identical to the original interior wall covering thickness. Plaster on interior block walls dividing the units was assessed, cleaned, and repaired as necessary. In Unit 107, most of the knotty pine paneling was salvaged and kept in place, and the rotted, tongue-and-groove flooring was replaced with new stock that matches the original. New bathroom configurations, minus the tiny closet facing the main room, were

Blue Ridge Tourist Court

Name of Property

Watauga County, NC

County and State

installed on new studs resting on the slabs to create full bathrooms with tub enclosures. Bathroom walls have period-correct, 4-inch by 4-inch ceramic tiles with mud cap applied. All original baseboard trim, window trim, and ceiling trim has been salvaged, repaired (where possible), or replaced with like kind. All ceiling treatments were removed, with new substrate elements installed and 12-inch Celotex tiles (16-inch Celotex tiles are no longer made) applied in several of the bedroom areas; sheetrock was used in a couple of rooms when Celotex became unavailable in mid-2022 due to supply shortages. Bathroom ceilings were generally replaced with sheetrock. Spaces between the new ceiling treatments and the roof decking were insulated with open cell foam and closed cell foam as needed. Existing sink stands and bathroom fixtures were also removed in 2022, and the owner has installed period-correct tubs and other fixtures.

Renovation of the Tourist Court rooms was completed and the rooms opened to the public in October 2022.

The Annex (1951), 560 Old E. King Street—Contributing Building

The Annex building (built 1951 to provide long-term stay suites to the complex) sits just to the southwest of the Tourist Court building and features two motel room units of two rooms each designed as suites for longer term stays. One story in height, the Annex is composed of concrete block covered with Shotcrete on all four exterior walls, with the north elevation scored and patterned to resemble brick. The other elevations are all Shotcrete in a smooth and plain finish. The Annex building was built atop a concrete slab covered in asbestos tile, portions of which were badly out of level in 2021 because of poor compaction when the original pours were made. During 2022 renovations, all asbestos was abated. To correct the slab issues and install new plumbing, portions of the concrete slab were cut in both units, with remaining slabs repaired and leveled, and new pours made where necessary.¹⁰

The two wooden entry doors on the north elevation appear to be either original or early to the complex. They are three-paneled in the bottom half with three horizontal, stacked lights in the top half, although one of the doors is slightly thicker than the other, suggesting the possibility that one may have been salvaged from the Residence, perhaps around the time of a devastating, circa 1974 electrical fire that badly damaged the Annex units. Entry to the two units is gained via a two-step, concrete slab that spans about half of the north elevation. Original windows appear to have been three-light, bi-fold casements that occupied two symmetrically-set window piercings on each elevation, but these were replaced at an unknown date with one-over-one, wooden, DHS windows, which were still intact in 2021. These later windows were likely installed as a result of the circa 1974 that caused extensive damage to the east unit and more limited damage to the west unit.¹¹ As part of renovations in 2022, the owner attempted to locate salvaged, steel casement windows that matched the originals to replace the present windows, but these have not yet been located. Accordingly, the existing windows are still intact, save for the southernmost window of the west elevation, which was removed. In its place, a new ADA access—required by local code—was cut into the west wall in the area previously occupied by the window. As of August 2022, the owner was installing an ADA ramp leading from the front of the building to this new ADA entrance, with the ramp approximating the existing grade along this side of the building. Accordingly, no retaining wall

¹⁰ The owner intends to install glue-down cork tile on all slabs except in the bathrooms, where period-correct ceramic tile will be installed.

¹¹ Beverly Blunck, telephone conversation, 25 July 2022. Blunck is the daughter of Basil Smith, who owned the property from March 1972 to April 1979. See additional details in the significance section.

Blue Ridge Tourist Court

Name of Property

Watauga County, NC

County and State

is required alongside the ramp, thus minimizing the impact of ADA compliance on the appearance of the Annex.

The original Annex roof was flat with a hipped, shingled overhang. At an unknown date between 1968 and 1989 (based on available aerial images), some slight build up of this roof was completed, perhaps simply to cover damage to the old flat roof from the circa 1974 fire, but the profile—as viewed during the 2021 survey—remained similar to the original. As part of renovations in 2022, the new owner removed the roof addition and restored the original roof profile and appearance, utilizing an EPDM membrane roof over the original interior dimensions and replacement asphalt shingles similar in size and color to the originals for the hipped overhang. Because of poorly executed framing and damage from the additional roof weight, plywood gussets were also added along the entirety of the overhang framing to increase stability of the roof and eliminate pronounced bowing and warping issues. Tongue-and-groove pine under the eaves of the Annex was salvaged and used to patch missing pieces on the Office, while new tongue-and-groove pine stock that matches the original was installed on the Annex overhang, with special care paid to the corner detail of the original woodwork. Perimeter gutter work, much of which was missing or damaged, was also removed and replaced with new gutters of similar appearance. An L-shaped stockade fence (non-historic) at the northwest corner of the Annex was also removed.

Original interior treatments appear to have included knotty pine paneling throughout both units, some of which was badly damaged in the circa 1974 fire. During the 2021 survey, the surface materials of both units included wall coverings of thin, painted paneling, carpeted floors, and a gridded drop ceiling of acoustical tiles; in the west unit, the paneling of the north room covered original knotty pine paneling that is still present but exhibits some fire damage from the circa 1974 electrical fire. Above the drop ceilings in the west unit was a fiberboard substrate, which appears to have had 16-inch Celotex tiles attached at one time, some of which were still present but heavily damaged by water and smoke from the 1970s fire. The west unit hallway and south room clearly exhibited rich, knotty pine paneling and trim that is likely original (some of which had been painted to hide fire damage). Some areas beneath the carpet revealed what appeared to be asbestos tile, while other areas had newer ceramic tile installed. Each unit featured a hallway connecting the two main rooms of each unit, with a bathroom and a closet on opposite sides of the hallway. The two units were also connected via a very narrow doorway in the rear (south) rooms of the units. Both units appear to have had kitchen facilities originally, although existing cabinetry and fixtures in both cases appeared to be later iterations. The southeast room also had an unusual, heavily water damaged, bench design in one corner; when removed, this revealed a large piece of subterranean ledge rock that protruded through the exterior wall into the room.¹²

As part of the 2022 renovations, all asbestos tile and remaining Celotex was abated from the Annex, and fire-damaged joists, particularly in the northeast room, were replaced as needed. New, 12-inch Celotex is being installed as the ceiling treatment throughout both units, with spray foam installation between the roof decking and the Celotex. Modern wall treatments were removed entirely from both units. In the east unit, which no longer had any knotty pine paneling, these walls were replaced with drywall/sheetrock. In the northwest room, uncovered knotty pine paneling was painted due to the remaining scorch and smoke damage. Some of the knotty pine paneling in the west unit was in reasonably good condition and salvaged to replace badly damaged boards in the Office and Unit 107 of the Tourist Court. In order to meet ADA requirements for the Annex, portions of the closet and bathroom walls of the west unit were removed to allow free wheelchair passage through the space, and the very narrow doorway between the southeast and southwest rooms was widened to allow ADA access. The bathroom walls of the west unit are presently

¹² The owner intends to rebuild this shelf/seating feature during renovations to cover the ledge rock and provide appropriate moisture control.

Blue Ridge Tourist Court

Name of Property

Watauga County, NC

County and State

being re clad using the unpainted knotty pine paneling that had been in this area and was salvaged prior to reworking of the walls. New, period-correct fixtures and period-correct ceramic wall and floor tiles are currently being installed in both bathrooms, while cork tile is presently being installed over concrete slabs in non-bathroom areas.

As of December 2022, work in the Annex building was generally paused to facilitate the opening of the Tourist Court building to the public. Interior work is expected to resume in early 2023.

The Residence (circa 1948), 173 Cecil Miller Road—Contributing Building

Above the Tourist Court and Annex buildings, just up the rise in elevation to the south, is the original Residence, which dates to 1948 or 1949. A driveway originally descended from the residence to the west side of the Annex, where it joined the Tourist Court parking lot, although this driveway has been blocked and covered over with grass for several decades. The Residence is a one and a half-story, side-gabled, painted brick house with basement. A soldier course band serves as a water table for much of the perimeter of the house.

The north elevation of the house, which is believed to have been the original “front” of the building, originally featured an open, wraparound porch with Craftsman-style posts on brick piers on the north and east elevations, but this porch was enclosed by the mid-1950s; its door and window treatments have been further modified since that time. A large, open deck has also been added to the north elevation of the porch. Original windows on the Residence appear to have been Craftsman-style, vertical three-over-one, double-hung sash, wooden windows, but all of these have been switched out to vinyl replacements. A short chimney on the east elevation appears to be original to the house and may serve a fireplace known from Wagner family photos to have been located inside. Another, smaller chimney, which may have served a boiler or stove, rises from the south elevation roof. The roof features asphalt shingles, which appear similar to the original roof covering.

Along the west side of the Residence is a stairwell leading to an entrance to what was advertised in 1949 as a full basement; this area has been covered in recent years by a stockade fence and a shed roof awning.¹³ The south elevation offers a long, concrete slab porch covered with faux stone on concrete block, with posts supporting an asphalt-shingled roof above. Based on Wagner family photos, this porch is clearly a later addition to the house; a circa-1950 image shows two of the Wagner children standing on a much smaller, uncovered, concrete stoop that provided access to what was likely the back door of the house at that time. The present door at this entrance is also a modern replacement for the original Craftsman-style, wooden door that featured three panels in the lower section and three vertical lights in the upper section.

The interior of the Residence, which is separately owned from the rest of the property and occupied by tenants, was not accessible, so a detailed and timely account of the interior appearance is difficult to produce. Online descriptions, however, suggest that the present configuration consists of five bedrooms and three bathrooms. Floor plans suggest that the basement area is one large room accessed from the west, exterior stairwell with a full bath and laundry at the east end. The main level, accessed from a door on the south elevation porch, consists of (east to west) a small foyer and kitchen, a dining room, and a “primary bedroom” on the south side of the house, as well as (west to east) another bedroom, two full baths, a living room, and a hallway and sunroom where the original north porch was located (now

¹³ “Three Big Auction Sales,” *Watauga Democrat*, 12 May 1949: 4.

Blue Ridge Tourist Court

Name of Property

Watauga County, NC

County and State

enclosed). The upper half story, accessed from a stairway near the kitchen, includes two bedrooms, necessitating passage through one to reach the other.¹⁴ Interior images taken by an independent party at an unknown date suggest a mishmash of modern materials and reworkings of the interior, including popcorn ceilings, modern tile floors, wall-to-wall carpeting, and what is likely luxury vinyl tile in some rooms, as well as modern kitchen and appliance fixtures and cabinetry. Some spaces—particularly the basement and bathroom areas—appear to be reworkings of spatial arrangements from the original layout. That said, original wood floors, now painted, appear to be present throughout much of the first floor, and the general layout of the first floor probably approximates the original in most regards. Knotty pine paneling like that seen throughout the Tourist Court, Office, and Annex (albeit now painted) is also visible in the enclosed porch area.¹⁵

The Garage Apartment (circa 1951), 187 Cecil Miller Road—Contributing Building

Just to the southeast of the Residence is the one-story on basement, side-gabled Garage Apartment building, probably built in late 1950 or early 1951 to provide another long-term stay option at the property. Like the Tourist Court and the Annex, this building is composed of concrete block covered in Shotcrete. The south and west elevations are textured to simulate a brick pattern, while the east and north elevations are of a smooth, plain finish. A brick chimney, probably originally in service to a boiler, sits on the east side of the building, although this appears to have been a later addition. A circa 1953 Wagner family photo, likely taken at the time the Motel was being built, shows no chimney on the east elevation, but there was a four-paneled door that appears to have opened onto a small, exterior stoop. This side entrance has been eliminated, although remnants of the stoop and door piercing are still evident in the present-day finish of the east elevation. Renovations in 2021 to the interior of the Garage Apartment uncovered the original east door, accessible from the interior but hidden behind a wall of concrete block and stucco that filled the original exterior opening. This circa 1953 image also reveals that the vertical paneling seen under the gable in 2021 covered what appears to have been either asbestos or asphalt shingles under the gable in the early 1950s; a similar treatment appeared on the west elevation under the gable. As part of renovations in late 2021, this T1-11 paneling was removed on both the west and east elevations to unveil the original asphalt shingle treatment. Another chimney, also probably in service originally to a boiler, is evident at the southwest corner of the house and appears to be original, as it is visible in the circa 1954 image of the entire complex.

Windows for the Garage Apartment are generally Craftsman-style, vertical, three-over-one, double-hung sash, wooden windows; these windows were built to accommodate weighted sashes on pulleys, although the cords and weights were never installed. Metal awnings, apparently not original but probably dating to the period of significance, shield several of the windows. On the south elevation, the main entry in 2021 featured a six-paneled, replacement door that has since been removed and replaced with a salvaged, period-correct, Craftsman-style door with three vertical lights in its upper section and a single panel in the bottom section, thus resembling the original back (south) porch door on the nearby Residence. This entry is capped with a front-gabled, projecting canopy supported by simple wooden brackets. Flanking the door are two bays of double, Craftsman-style windows as described above; the window group to the west of the door is substantially larger than the one to the east, likely because the one to the east is the kitchen space, where windows would have been smaller to accommodate counters and fixtures. No windows are present on the east elevation, but the north elevation features two closely set single windows. The more

¹⁴ Floor plans and a limited number of images of the interior of the residence can be seen at “Cecil Miller Student Rental,” SPA Properties, online, available at <https://www.spapropertygroup.com/cecil-miller>.

¹⁵ “Cecil Miller Student Rental,” online, <https://www.spapropertygroup.com/cecil-miller>.

Blue Ridge Tourist Court

Name of Property

Watauga County, NC

County and State

easterly window is larger than the more westerly one, the latter of which serves the bathroom. At the basement level of the north elevation are another large, single, Craftsman-style window and a door opening (see below). The west elevation features a large and a small, single, Craftsman-style window at the first floor level, similar to those found on the north elevation. At the basement level of the west elevation are two former garage bays with vertical, plywood panel infill.

The second-floor, apartment interior, which is accessible from the south entry at grade, contains four rooms—two bedrooms, a living room, and a kitchen—plus a bathroom with a small shower. During late 2021 renovations, all later floor coverings were removed, and the original, thin, hardwood flooring was uncovered and restored in all rooms, necessitating replacement of some boards in the kitchen, where water damage was extensive, as well as some boards in the hallway, where a return for an old heating system had been punched through the floor and covered with a metal grate. Interior walls on the perimeter of the apartment are generally of plaster applied directly to the concrete block, with the exception of the east wall of the kitchen, where plaster was applied to furring strips on the block in order to provide enough depth to cover up the former exterior door opening in this area. During the late 2021 renovations, the inner interior walls were found to be various forms of sheetrock on wood frame, including some closets that were clearly added to the space at a much later date (1990s). A poorly executed attempt at an arched doorway was present (and collapsing due to settling) between the living room and the small hallway to the bathroom and bedrooms; it is unclear whether this was an original feature. As part of the late 2021 renovations, most interior walls were removed to the studs and replaced due to major sheetrock damage, and the hallway arch was reworked and restored. Emergency stabilization renovations to the joists supporting the first floor in 2021 also prompted the removal of the two bedroom closets that were added in the 1990s, thus returning the apartment interior to its original layout. As part of the late 2021 renovations, the bathroom space was also reworked to create a larger shower area and insulate the walls, and period-correct ceramic tiles were installed as the wall and floor treatments. Ceilings, which included asbestos-containing popcorn treatments when first viewed in 2021, were removed/abated and replaced with drywall. Kitchen appliances and cabinetry were also removed and replaced in late 2021 to bring back this space to a more period-correct appearance.

As noted above, in 2021, the west elevation of the basement level featured two garage bays covered with vertical paneling, through one of which a door had been cut to gain access, and the lower exterior of the north elevation offered a four-paneled door and a window piercing that had been filled with plywood. The plywood was removed in late 2021, and the extant window was removed, repaired, and repainted. At the time of the original site visit, the interior space of the basement contained mechanicals for the upstairs apartment and an enormous amount of stored household goods that made exploration of interior details impossible. In late 2021, the prior owner removed most of these belongings, and the current owner renovated this space to create a laundry room in the northeast corner of the building, salvaging the hidden kitchen door from upstairs to replace the rotted exterior door on the north elevation of the lower level. The new owner also completed emergency repairs to the basement ceiling joists, posts, and beams to stabilize the floor above, which was in severe danger of collapse. The new owner has also removed a kerosene central heating system (not original), as this system was no longer functional and did not meet current occupancy code. The Garage Apartment was placed back into apartment rental service in late 2021 after rehabilitation was completed.

A retaining wall of railroad ties leads away from the north elevation to the north and supports the parking lot for the Motel located uphill and to the east of the Residence and the Garage Apartment. A similar wall runs from the west elevation of the Garage Apartment along Cecil Miller Road. A 1985 survey of the property suggests that these retaining walls were originally of concrete block. A small exterior stairway at

Blue Ridge Tourist Court

Name of Property

Watauga County, NC

County and State

the northeast corner of the Garage Apartment previously rose to the Motel parking lot, as shown in the 1985 survey, but this was removed at an unknown date.

The Motel (circa 1953), 191 Cecil Miller Road—Contributing Building

An asphalt parking lot surrounds the Motel building on the east, south, and west sides. Drives with retaining walls (still extant) originally connected the east and west parking areas to a right of way for a never completed Town of Boone street known as South Street, which connected Cecil Miller Drive and Old East King Street on the east side of the Motel building. The northern portion of South Street sits on a parcel that was never a deeded part of this complex; that portion of the drive has largely been eliminated by changes in grade on the adjoining parcel.

The Motel building itself is one story in height and was likely built in 1953 (or perhaps 1954) directly on a concrete block and slab foundation, part of which serves as the walkway for the west, south, and east elevations. It originally featured ten motel room units with various suite permutations effected by the use of connecting doors. The Motel building appears to be of wood frame construction, and test removal of a small portion of the present T1-11 vertical siding skin in 2022 indicates that it was originally clad in cedar lap siding that still survives underneath the present siding.¹⁶ Like the Annex building, the Motel originally featured a flat roof with a hipped, shingled overhang ceiled in tongue-and-groove bead board. Like the Tourist Court and the Annex, this roof has been slightly built up with a new roof covering applied directly over the original, but it maintains a limited profile.¹⁷

Five rooms were located on each side (west and east) of the Motel. For the purposes of explanation, this narrative description numbers the west side units from north to south as Units 1 through 5, while the east side units are numbered from south to north as Units 6 through 10. Windows and doors of the entire complex are currently covered by plywood for security reasons (or in some cases by T1-11 plywood siding and thus hidden), but the fenestration elements are believed to survive in all cases underneath this plywood, as confirmed in most cases by viewing of those elements from inside the Motel. Windows on the east, south, and west elevations of the Motel are two-over-two, horizontal light, double-hung sash, wooden windows that appear to be original, while the windows on the north elevation (Units 1 and 10, the latter covered but possibly still extant underneath) are significantly more ornate, featuring a fixed, plate glass, center light in a wooden frame, flanked by two-over-two, double-hung sash, wooden windows. Original, four-panel, wooden doors to the units that feature a four-light arrangement at the top of the door remain mostly in place, although at least four doors (Units 4, 8, 9, and—less likely—6; see below) are believed either to be hidden within the walls or no longer extant, while another (Unit 10) has been replaced with a modern, vinyl door. As it presently reads—not accounting for hidden features under the T1-11—the fenestration pattern of the west elevation (north to south) is a repeating pattern of door followed by window, with the fourth door opening covered by T1-11 but clearly visible as a ghost outline nonetheless. The south elevation features two symmetrically spaced window openings with a door opening to a housekeeping closet just right (east) of center. The fenestration pattern of the east elevation (south to north) is a repeating sequence of window followed by door, with five windows but only four doors present, two of which are covered by T1-11 but clearly visible in ghost outline nonetheless. There is some reason to believe that Unit 6 never had its own door entry, for reasons described below. The north elevation originally featured the two elaborate window configurations described earlier for Units 1 and

¹⁶ The present owner intends to remove the T1-11 and restore the original cedar lap siding.

¹⁷ The present owner intends to remove the roof addition elements and restore the roof to its original appearance and configuration.

Blue Ridge Tourist Court

Name of Property

Watauga County, NC

County and State

10, although only the element for Unit 1 is still visible. As mentioned previously, there is a chance that the Unit 10 window element survives under the T1-11 plywood siding, but this is not yet known.

As far as interior details, Units 3 and 8, 4 and 7, and 5 and 6 each featured a connecting door between the rooms. Units 1, 2, 9, and 10 offer an even more complex arrangement: Units 1 and 2, as well as 9 and 10, may have each featured a single connecting door between them (only the one between Units 1 and 2 survives, although its date of origin is not known), and if so, all four rooms could essentially be converted to a four-room suite by virtue of double connecting doors between Units 1 and 10 (both of which survive). Curiously, there is no evidence that Units 2 and 9 ever had an east-west connecting door between them, unlike the other six units to the south.

As suggested by a mid-1950s historical image of the interior of Unit 1, the rooms appear to have been clad originally in vertical, knotty pine paneling and trim, some of which is still visible in some units. Much of it has either been covered or replaced with a cheaper, vertical paneling, probably of plywood, that is also painted. Most units feature gridded drop ceilings with acoustical tiles, but there is some evidence (including the aforementioned photo) that the original ceilings were likely Celotex, some of which survives in some areas. Most original floor coverings have been removed, although it appears likely that the original floor coverings were asbestos tile, which may still survive in some areas beneath later flooring treatments.

In at least two units (Units 3 and 10), the bathroom spaces have been cut in half by the installation of a false wall; speculation is that later owners chose not to handle the removal of fixtures in the hidden spaces, but it is not yet known what survives behind these false walls. Meanwhile, the bathroom in Unit 6 (which may have been marketed as a two-room unit) either never existed or has been altogether removed and replaced with a double-sink kitchenette. A utility closet, probably used for housekeeping equipment, is accessible by a four-paneled door with four upper lights on the south elevation. This utility space, which was probably used for housekeeping storage, effectively robbed Unit 6 of its closet space and made Unit 6 a smaller room than all of the others, lending credence to the idea that it was simply combined with Unit 5 to make a two-room unit. The absence of an east elevation door into Unit 6 further bolsters this theory.

As of December 2022, rehabilitation work on the Motel has generally not yet begun, aside from some abatement of asbestos floor coverings completed in early 2021.

Integrity

Most of the contributing resources of the Blue Ridge Tourist Court retain a high degree of integrity despite severe deterioration in some areas, and all date to the period of significance. The Office, Tourist Court, Annex, Garage Apartment, and Motel retain nearly all of their character-defining features, although some of those features are presently obscured by later renovation efforts. For example, the application of T1-11 vertical plywood siding to the exterior surface of the Motel is a cause for concern, but the cedar lap siding is believed to survive in its entirety, and the T1-11 treatment is reversible through removal. In the case of the Office, Tourist Court, Annex, and Garage Apartment, the present owner has gone to considerable effort to restore the original appearances of these buildings through renovations that are already in progress.¹⁸ Accordingly, exterior integrity remains fairly high. Windows throughout the

¹⁸ As part of present rehabilitation work at the property, the present owner intends to uncover and restore or reconstruct those character-defining features that are no longer visible. Rooflines will be returned to their original

Blue Ridge Tourist Court

Watauga County, NC

Name of Property

County and State

Tourist Court are generally the original, steel casements, and where such windows were no longer present, the present owner has installed salvaged steel casement windows that match the originals. Current doors are believed to date either to original construction or to renovations during the period of significance. Likewise, windows on the Office, Garage Apartment, and Motel are generally original. Even in the absence of original window elements, the original fenestration patterns on all six buildings generally remain, and the Shotcrete treatments original to three of the six buildings remain in place and in remarkably good condition. The Office building retains its original, native stone walls and chimney, which have been responsibly repointed by the present owner. The Residence is the one resource most challenged by integrity issues; many of its original Craftsman features have been removed, and the enclosure or alteration of original porch features, not to mention the re-orientation of the house's primary façade from the north elevation to the south elevation, mean that the Residence does not "read" as it did when built circa 1949. It should be noted, however, that this re-orientation and the removal of some of the Craftsman elements from the Residence took place relatively early in the period of significance, and the general fenestration pattern and existing exterior materials of the Residence remain intact.

As for other elements of integrity, all six buildings remain in their original locations and maintain the same relationship to one another as they did when first constructed, without any subsequent demolition or infill. While there have been some minor changes to the setting through more intensive development to the south and southeast, these newer properties do not have a negative impact on the complex itself. Curiously, the rerouting of US421/US221—now a four-lane highway with center turning lane—has left the original, two-lane state route intact as Old East King Street, preserving the general feeling of the complex's relationship to the surrounding terrain and roadways. In addition, the "park" area to the west of the complex remains undeveloped and filled with scattered trees, further buffering the complex and contributing to its feeling and association with its surroundings.

In short, all six buildings (Office, Tourist Court, Annex, Residence, Garage Apartment, and Motel) retain a generally high degree of integrity in terms of location, design, setting, workmanship, materials, feeling, and association. Taken together, all six buildings convey a strong sense of the overall function of the tourist court operations conducted by motel owners who maintained their families' personal residence on the same property.

Statement of Archaeological Potential

The Blue Ridge Tourist Court is closely related to the surrounding environment and landscape. Archaeological deposits, such as waterlines and drainage features, debris that accumulated on the property during its commercial use, remnant landscape features such as paths and old driveways at the east and west ends of the property, and other remains that may be present, can provide information valuable to the understanding and interpretation of the Blue Ridge Tourist Court. Therefore, archaeological remains may well be an important component of the significance of the Blue Ridge Tourist Court. At this time no investigation has been done to discover these remains, but it is likely that they exist, and this should be considered in any development of the property.

profiles, and the pronounced roof overhangs will be repaired using materials and workmanship equivalent to the originals.

Blue Ridge Tourist Court
Name of Property

Watauga County, NC
County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- B. Removed from its original location
- C. A birthplace or grave
- D. A cemetery
- E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F. A commemorative property
- G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

ENTERTAINMENT/RECREATION

Blue Ridge Tourist Court
Name of Property

Watauga County, NC
County and State

Period of Significance

1950-1970

Significant Dates

1950
Ca. 1951
Ca. 1953

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Wagner, Estel George

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Wagner, Estel George (Office, Tourist Court, Annex, Garage Apartment, and Motel only)

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The Blue Ridge Tourist Court is significant at the local level under Criterion A in the area of entertainment/recreation for its association with mid-century tourism and roadside lodging in Boone and Watauga County at the beginning of the region's transformation into a tourist hub. The period of significance is 1950 to 1970. This date range represents the core period of the property's use as a true roadside tourist court and motel after its construction on the site of an already existing Residence (built circa 1948) and its operation under management first by the Wagner family (1950-1956), then by the Rice family (1956-1970). Significant dates include 1950 (construction of the Tourist Court and Office), circa 1951 (estimated construction of the Annex and Garage Apartment), and circa 1953 (estimated construction of the Motel).

During a time when roadside accommodations were desperately needed in Boone to support the region's burgeoning, post-World War II automobile tourism industry, the Blue Ridge Tourist Court was one of the earliest of nearly a dozen tourist court and motor court properties to be built in the Boone vicinity. Not only was the Blue Ridge Tourist Court more refined and architecturally complex than its predecessors, the Black Bear Tourist Court and the Mountain Motel, but its original proprietor, Estel G. Wagner (February 16, 1920-July 20, 2011), also consistently strove to improve the accommodations and recognized early on the mid-1950s shift from tourist courts that focused on cabins and buildings with a long string of tiny

Blue Ridge Tourist Court

Watauga County, NC

Name of Property

County and State

rooms to motel buildings that offered suite capabilities and kitchen facilities for longer term stays. Most important, the Blue Ridge Tourist Court is the last of these early, roadside accommodations focused on automobile tourism and built between 1945 and 1958 that remains in Boone, and all five of its operational buildings are intact and largely unchanged from their early 1950s appearance. Given that the Blue Ridge Tourist Court is representative of a key shift in Boone's economy (highlighted by the 1950s focus on new Watauga County attractions such as the Blue Ridge Parkway, *Horn in the West*, Mystery Hill, Tweetsie Railroad, the Boone Golf Club, and general mountain tourism), the Blue Ridge Tourist Court complex is probably Boone's last, best example of roadside accommodation architecture associated with this economic shift. The presence of a new owner committed to its restoration and long-term preservation only amplifies the importance of this property to the preservation of Boone's mid-twentieth century entertainment and recreation history.

The Blue Ridge Tourist Court is also significant at the local level under Criterion B in the area of significance of Entertainment/Recreation for its association with Estel G. Wagner, a mid-century developer and real estate magnate who is believed to have been Boone's first real estate broker and who was a pioneer in the early development of Boone's mid-century tourism trade. Wagner built the L-shaped Blue Ridge Tourist Court building and the native stone Office building in 1950, then added the Annex/Duplex in 1951, the Garage Apartment by 1951, and the Motel building in late 1953 or early 1954. Wagner held the property until its sale in 1956. Wagner played a highly significant role in the early development of Boone's mid-twentieth century tourism trade, serving in leadership roles with the Rotary Club and Boone Chamber of Commerce shortly after his arrival in Boone in 1949. His efforts as a member of the building committee for the Daniel Boone Amphitheatre (where *Horn in the West* continues to be staged) and his marketing of the Blue Ridge Tourist Court as the gathering spot for such diverse events as tourism photographer tours and the North Carolina Writers Conference only underscore his vision for linking roadside accommodations to the act of tourism itself. Wagner was also a visionary in land development, producing two mid-twentieth century Boone subdivisions, and played a major role well into the 1970s as a financial partner in other tourism attractions such as the Boone Golf Club and the Polar Palace. He also constructed several 1950s infill properties in downtown Boone and was one of the partners behind the Cabana Motel, a popular 1960s accommodation on Blowing Rock Road. The Blue Ridge Tourist Court is the earliest and most obvious surviving representation of Estel G. Wagner's powerful influence on the development of Boone's tourism trade during the mid-twentieth century.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

Criterion A: Entertainment/Recreation Context

Prior to World War II, Boone's tourism industry was fairly limited, owing in part to the generally poor quality of roads leading into the High Country and the general lack of developed tourism destination sites. While not impossible to reach, as some commentators have erroneously suggested, getting to late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Boone did require travelers to possess a sturdy vehicle and a bit of moxie.¹⁹ Nevertheless, Boone was home to two hotels as early as 1870—the Coffey (later Critcher) Hotel

¹⁹ By the late nineteenth century, turnpike roads provided vehicular (wagon and early automobile) access to Watauga County. Among these were the Caldwell and Watauga Turnpike (1851), the Boone and Blowing Rock Turnpike (1893), and the Junaluska Turnpike (1905). For a brief overview of this history, see Daniel J. Whitener, *History of Watauga County*, (Boone, NC: N.P., 1949), 47-48. As Whitener noted, "The roads to Tennessee were bad but those east to Lenoir and other places were worse." This poor roads reputation was legitimately earned, but the introduction of the moniker "The Lost Province" after World War I as a "good roads" campaign slogan to describe transportation in the counties of northwest North Carolina was often appropriated to suggest that these counties,

Blue Ridge Tourist Court

Watauga County, NC

Name of Property

County and State

and its Old Brick Row annex, and the Blair Hotel. At least one other hotel, the Blackburn, followed before the end of the century. These hotels primarily catered to clientele visiting Boone for various court weeks throughout the year or passing through Boone as part of overmountain travels.²⁰ By the 1910s, however, former Boone mayor William Lewis Bryan was engaged in creative schemes to draw more tourist traffic to town. Among these were the creation of the Daniel Boone Monument, purported to mark the site of a cabin in which the frontiersman allegedly stayed when hunting in the area, and the Daniel Boone Trail, a series of highway markers that allegedly marked Boone's pathway to Kentucky. These markers led early automobile travelers straight into Boone's downtown business district as they traveled west from Wilkesboro on the state highway.²¹

Following the long-anticipated extension of the Linville River Railway to Boone in 1918, which allowed high-quality brick, finish lumber, sand, and steel to be imported into Boone as rail freight, Boone embarked on an extensive building campaign, known as "Watch Boone Grow," that completely remade Boone's downtown district. Meanwhile, the same civic leaders behind that campaign were actively promoting the expansion of the Appalachian Training School (founded in 1899 as the Watauga Academy) into Appalachian State Teacher's College, including the erection of numerous academic buildings using those same construction materials coming in by rail. Ironically, one of the key casualties of the "Watch Boone Grow" campaign was Boone's existing hotels. The Blair Hotel came down for the Frank A. Linney Block in 1924. Various portions of the Old Brick Row were demolished in stages throughout the 1920s for new commercial block buildings, while the Critcher Hotel held on until 1936. The Blackburn Hotel, long dismissed as well-worn and out of date, finally came down in 1940 for a large retail establishment. To compensate for the loss of lodging space, some of the new buildings of the "Watch Boone Grow" campaign were mixed-use spaces with retail on the first floor and hotel rooms on the second. In 1925, local business leaders also came together to complete a luxury hotel in the heart of downtown—the Daniel Boone Hotel. The Great Depression and World War II, however, halted much of Boone's development, limiting its growth and tourism market.²²

By the end of World War II, lodging options in Boone and its immediate vicinity were few and far between. A 1950 Boone Lions Club study designed to track Boone's "progress" since the founding of the club in 1936 nicely summarized the problem: "In 1936 the tourist industry was not large, and very few accommodations were available."²³ The most luxurious facility was Boone's freestanding Daniel Boone Hotel (no longer extant), located just east of the intersection of King Street and Grand Boulevard.²⁴ Two

including Watauga, were completely cut off from civilization. This simply was not true. On the history of the Junaluska Turnpike, see Eric Plaag, "Junaluska Road," Boone Street Names Project, Town of Boone, 2021, online, available at <http://www.townofboone.net/DocumentCenter/View/1330/Junaluska-Road---Boone-Street-Names-Project---Dec-7-2021>.

²⁰ For one notorious account of Boone from the 1880s, including descriptions of its accommodations (which he refers to as "taverns"), see Charles Dudley Warner, *On Horseback: A Tour in Virginia, North Carolina, and Tennessee*, (Cambridge: The Riverside Press, 1889), 36-38.

²¹ For more on these schemes, see Eric W. Plaag, *Comprehensive Architectural Survey of Downtown Boone, North Carolina, FINAL REPORT*, (Boone, NC: Boone Historic Preservation Commission, February 2021), 14-15, online, available at <http://www.townofboone.net/DocumentCenter/View/1334/Comprehensive-Architectural-Survey-of-Downtown-Boone-North-Carolina-2021>.

²² For discussion of the "Watch Boone Grow" campaign and its key role in the development of modern Boone (as well as the demise of the three earlier hotels), see Plaag, *Comprehensive Architectural Survey*, 33-51.

²³ "Lions' Study Spotlights City Progress Since '36," *Watauga Democrat*, 19 January 1950: 3.

²⁴ For more on the Daniel Boone Hotel, see Michael T. Southern and Jim Sumner, "Daniel Boone Hotel," National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form, 9 April 1981, online, available at <https://files.nc.gov/ncdcr/nr/WT0006.pdf>.

Blue Ridge Tourist Court

Name of Property

Watauga County, NC

County and State

other, less luxurious hotel operations, both located on the second floor of 1920s commercial block buildings in downtown, had also been popular before the war. The Carolina Hotel, located in the Qualls Block (still extant at 603 West King Street), was gutted during a Christmas Day fire in 1952 and never reopened. The Hotel Watauga in the Hahn Building (still extant at 543-549 West King Street) was similarly gutted by fire in April 1953; that space was later converted into an off-campus dormitory for the Appalachian State Teachers College.²⁵ A handful of tourist homes, such as the Gragg House (still extant at 169 Gragg Street as a private residence) at the west end of Boone and the Greene Inn on King Street (demolished March 1954) opposite the Daniel Boone Hotel, provided bed-and-breakfast type accommodations, while the Jones House (still extant at 604 West King Street as the town's community center) provided lodgings for boarders.²⁶ Otherwise, Boone in 1945 had virtually no other accommodations for travelers and certainly nothing of the roadside motel variety. Indeed, Boone was ill prepared for the wave of automobile-based tourism that would come following the war.

While tourist courts originated out of the roadside auto camps of the 1920s, roadside accommodations did not become a staple of the tourism industry until after World War II. In the years following the war, Americans increasingly took to the road for pleasure travel, and the demand for quick and easy roadside lodgings dramatically increased.²⁷ Many of these properties were initially advertised as "tourist courts" before terms like "motor court" and, eventually, "motel" became more popular ways of describing the same limited-service, park-at-your room facilities that evolved to meet the burgeoning demand for roadside lodgings. In Boone and surrounding environs, the Watauga Centennial celebration in 1949, construction on the Blue Ridge Parkway through Watauga County in the early 1950s, and the opening of the *Horn in the West* outdoor drama at the Daniel Boone Amphitheatre in 1952 further amplified this demand for lodging infrastructure.²⁸ Indeed, the town of Boone sat at the intersection of three major national highways in 1945. US 421 had long been the highway approaching Boone from Wilkesboro to the east, passing through Boone and continuing into Tennessee at Trade, effectively following the old Daniel Boone Trail route laid out in the 1910s. US 221 approached Boone from Jefferson to the northeast, briefly joining US 421 before turning south at Boone toward Blowing Rock, then veering southwest at that town. US 321 was the southern route to Boone, coming up the mountain from Hickory and Lenoir, joining US 221 at Blowing Rock, and terminating at that time at the intersection with US 421 at Boone.²⁹

In short, with the Great Depression and World War II finally in the past, Boone was ideally positioned in 1945 to take advantage of automobile-based tourism, and many local business leaders knew this. Local booster Stanley A. Harris, for example, urged his fellow Wataugans in March 1949 to be "Forty Niners," noting, "Watauga County is by nature the most ideal summer playground in America, but vacationists must have hotels, tourist courts, [and] golf courses, and it takes vision, daring, and much hard work to

²⁵ For a detailed description of these two facilities, see Plaag, *Comprehensive Architectural Survey*, 33-51, 149-54, 156-60.

²⁶ On the demise of the Greene Inn, see Rob Rivers, "King Street," *Watauga Democrat*, 18 March 1954: 1, 4. For an image of the Gragg House, which still stands, see *The Gragg House*, Postcard, postmarked 10 July 1952, Bobby Brendell Postcard Collection, Digital Watauga Project, available online, <http://digitalwatauga.org/items/show/20527>. For more on the Jones House, see Mark D. Vickrey, "Jones House," National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form, April 1986, online, available at <https://files.nc.gov/ncdcr/nr/WT0008.pdf>.

²⁷ For an outstanding study of the origins and evolution of roadside motels, see John A. Jakle, et al, *The Motel in America*, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996).

²⁸ See the Criterion B section for more on the significance of the *Horn in the West* outdoor drama production, which remains in operation to the date of this nomination.

²⁹ Shortly after World War II, the road into Tennessee west of Sugar Grove, then known as State Highway 603, was significantly improved as an extension of US 321.

Blue Ridge Tourist Court

Watauga County, NC

Name of Property

County and State

build these accommodations. Will we be forty niners in developing what nature has given us?”³⁰ A year later, Sam P. Weems, superintendent of the Blue Ridge Parkway, specifically warned the Boone Chamber of Commerce that they needed to take the demand for tourist accommodations more seriously: “The superintendent urged the people of Boone to develop the tourist trade and not be complacent in their attitudes. He said the [Blue Ridge] Parkway should be the ‘backbone’ of the tourist trade, and that somebody must provide for these travelers.”³¹

Probably the first of these roadside lodging properties in the Boone area was Earl D. Cook’s Black Bear Tourist Court, a large home surrounded by small, disconnected cabins located just east of Boone town limits on US 421 near Hillside Drive. Cook’s operation was celebrated in the local press when it was first announced in October 1945: “This venture will be particularly helpful to visitors to this section, where living accommodations have been crowded, and will represent a splendid addition to the fast-growing community.”³² Opened in 1946, any remaining vestige of those buildings was swept away with the widening of US 421 in the early 2010s. Another tourist court operation, spurred by demands from the local Junior Chamber of Commerce, was the Mountain Motel, opened by L. T. Tatum in August 1948.³³ This property expanded in size as demand increased in the years that followed, but it was demolished for a McDonald’s a couple of decades ago.

Estel G. Wagner opened the Blue Ridge Tourist Court in what was then the Perkinsville community just east of Boone’s town limits in the late summer of 1950, urged to do so by none other than Stanley A. Harris and the other Chamber of Commerce luminaries whom Wagner had quickly befriended after he arrived in Boone the preceding fall.³⁴ Its location on the east edge of Perkinsville effectively made it the first roadside accommodation that travelers encountered as they entered the Boone vicinity from the east. Wagner’s initial business model was the operation of a fairly conventional tourist court—an attractive but small, independent office unit of native stone at the highway’s edge drawing travelers to the seven-unit, L-shaped arrangement of tiny rooms that was set back from the highway and offered only minimal possibilities for suite configuration. In 1951, he added the Annex building with its duality as two independent units with kitchenettes but the possibility for utilization as interlocking suites, recognizing that automobile tourists desired the flexibility to provide for their larger, post-war families and once again have cooking facilities, which had gone out of fashion in the early 1930s. Part of this shift was no doubt driven by Wagner’s own experience in operating the tourist court; he increasingly found that a significant but minority percentage of his guests sought long-term accommodations that could last for months at a

³⁰ Stanley A. Harris, “Be a Forty Niner,” *Watauga Democrat*, 3 March 1949: 4.

³¹ “Boone Should Prepare for Tourists Now Weems Says,” *Watauga Democrat*, 19 January 1950: 1, 6.

³² “New Buildings Being Erected in This Locality,” *Watauga Democrat*, 25 October 1945: 1.

³³ On the opening of the Mountain Motel, see Rob Rivers, “King Street,” *Watauga Democrat*, 5 August 1948: 1. For “Ladies Night” at the Chamber of Commerce in June 1948, which members of the Junior Chamber of Commerce were encouraged to attend, one of the principal topics for discussion was “the possibilities of building a modern tourist court.” See “Ladies Night at C. of C. Planned,” *Watauga Democrat*, 24 June 1948: 1. A Chamber of Commerce committee composed of several Boone business luminaries was also formed in June 1948 “to ascertain how many local people are interested in building hotels and tourist courts.” See “Junior Jaycee Group May Be Formed Here,” *Watauga Democrat*, 3 June 1948: 2.

³⁴ Wagner noted in his autobiography, “Dempsey Wilcox invited me to go as his guest to a Chamber of Commerce meeting. I enjoyed it very much and met Mrs. Stallings, Stanley Harris, Alfred Adams, Ruby Ellis, etc. I went to three or four meetings and got involved with the community and joined the Boone Chamber of Commerce.” See Estel G. Wagner, “Life Story of Estel George Wagner,” typescript, unknown date, Wagner family archives, 15.

Blue Ridge Tourist Court

Watauga County, NC

Name of Property

County and State

time. This was likely the impetus for the construction of the Garage Apartment behind the Residence by 1951 and the Motel, with its assortment of complex suite configurations circa 1953.³⁵

Today, the Blue Ridge Tourist Court and Motel is believed to be the last of the early tourist courts and motels of the late 1940s and early 1950s to survive in Boone. All others have met with partial or complete demolition. By early 1951, for example, the Hamby Tourist Court was in operation just east of downtown Boone on King Street as a collection of cabins around the A. E. Hamby home.³⁶ While one of the smaller buildings of that operation still survives as an unrecognizable student apartment house, the Hamby Tourist Court appears to have ceased operations by the mid 1960s, and the main house and other cabins no longer stand. By 1956, Boone advertised considerably more lodging opportunities. The ten-unit Boone Trail Motel (completed 1952), located on East King Street halfway between Boone and Perkinsville, was demolished in 2019 to make way for a student apartment complex.³⁷ Four other motels located on Blowing Rock Road about a mile and a half from downtown Boone near Deerfield Road and US 321—the Longvue Motor Court (completed late 1951), the Oakwood Motel (completed 1952), the Watauga Tourist Court (built 1952), and the Cardinal Motel (completed 1953)—were demolished decades ago.³⁸ Even the motels that followed in the late 1950s and 1960s have largely vanished from Boone. Only one, an operation known as Greene’s Motor Court (built 1959), located on Blowing Rock Road near the intersection with Shadowline Drive, still stands.³⁹ Originally built as a 12-unit strip, this motel attached a massive, three-story building behind the strip by the 1980s (52 total units) and is nearly unrecognizable when compared to its original 1959 iteration. As of August 2022, it is being entirely gutted for redevelopment.

After operating the Blue Ridge Tourist Court for six years, Estel G. Wagner sold the motel operation, including the Residence, to Harold E., Mary, and W. B. Rice in January 1956, who made the Residence their home.⁴⁰ The Rices continued to operate the business as a “AAA Approved” facility under the name “Blue Ridge Motor Court,” adding an above-ground, heated swimming pool to the Tourist Court parcel on the former grassy strip at the road frontage about 1968. The site also advertised a picnic ground and playground area, apparently located in the low park area to the west of the Annex, despite the fact that

³⁵ For more on the complex geography of motel spaces in the late 1940s and 1950s, see Jakle, et al, 240-50. There is good reason to suspect that Wagner may have completed the Garage Apartment as early as October 1950, when an ad ran advertising the following: “FOR RENT—4 room apartment with bath. Available October 1st. Reference preferred. Apply through Blue Ridge Tourist Court, Boone, NC.” See *Watauga Democrat*, 21 September 1950: 8. The description matches the Garage Apartment layout. As noted previously, however, Allan Wagner reported that the Garage Apartment was rented out for several years to the same family visiting for the summer. See Note 3, *supra*.

³⁶ “For Rent,” *Watauga Democrat*, 8 February 1951: 6.

³⁷ The first newspaper reference to the Boone Trail Motel appeared in 1952. See “Grades Hotels, Cafes in County Are Given Out,” *Watauga Democrat*, 7 August 1952: 1.

³⁸ For the first reference to the Longvue Motor Court, see “Eating Places Rate Grade ‘A,’” *Watauga Democrat*, 10 January 1952: 1. The Longvue Motor Court appears to have been built around a café that was in operation in early 1951. For the first reference to the Watauga Tourist Court, see “For Sale,” *Watauga Democrat*, 29 May 1952: 7. For the first reference to the Oakwood Motel, see “Grades Hotels, Cafes in County Are Given Out,” *Watauga Democrat*, 7 August 1952: 1. For news of the completion of the Cardinal Motel, see Rob Rivers, “King Street,” *Watauga Democrat*, 6 August 1953: 1.

³⁹ The first newspaper reference to Greene’s Motor Court appeared in 1959. See Joe Maples, “Speaking of Golf,” *Watauga Democrat*, 13 August 1959: 2.

⁴⁰ See Estel G. Wagner and his wife Lucille V. Wagner to Harold E. Rice and his wife Mary J. Rice a one half interest as estate by the entireties and W. B. Rice a one half undivided interest, 3 January 1956, Deed Book 74, Page 567.

Blue Ridge Tourist Court

Name of Property

Watauga County, NC

County and State

this land was not technically within the parcel boundaries for the property.⁴¹ During this period, Harold Rice served as the secretary of the North Carolina Motel Association and as the association's convention chairman in 1962, attesting to the continued influence of the property as a desired accommodation.⁴² The Rices continued to own the Blue Ridge Motor Court until 1970, when the property was sold again.⁴³ Following the Rices' sale of the property, the Tourist Court began a gradual decline, triggered in part by the introduction of larger and more luxurious motels and hotels in Boone during the late 1960s and 1970s, such as the Holiday Inn on Blowing Rock Road (built 1966).⁴⁴

The Blue Ridge Tourist Court is the last of nearly a dozen tourist court, motor court, and early motel buildings constructed in and around Boone between 1946 and 1958, largely in response to the burgeoning demands of the automobile tourist trade and the arrival of new attractions at or near Boone (*Horn in the West*, Blue Ridge Parkway, Boone Golf Club, Tweetsie Railroad) that were developed during this same period. All other such tourist court properties in Boone have been demolished, several of them just within the past few years. Even among later motels in Boone that were stylistically different from the tourist/motor court type that defined the initial postwar years, only one such property—Greene's Motor Court—remains at Boone, but it bears little resemblance to its original appearance. Accordingly, the Blue Ridge Tourist Court is the best remaining example in Boone of roadside tourism accommodations associated with the immediate postwar period.

Criterion B: Estel George Wagner (1920-2011) and the Entertainment/Recreation Context

Born to Judson E. Wagner and Effie Dean (Smith) Wagner in Harlow, Montana, on February 16, 1920, Estel Wagner moved frequently as a child, spending time in Harford, Maryland, and Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, before he married Virginia Lucille Miller, a Watauga County native, in 1942. Through much of the 1940s, Wagner worked as a farmer, laboring first on his father's farm, then managing two separate farms in Lancaster County, then operating his own farm after 1945. A medical crisis in 1949 nearly killed Wagner and effectively ended his farming career, however. Ordered to spend about a year recuperating, Estel and Lucille determined to move back to Watauga County near her eldest brother, Cecil Miller, whose home was located a short distance from the eventual site of the Blue Ridge Tourist Court.⁴⁵ The timing was fortunate, too; in May 1949, the Carolina Land Auction Company announced the auction of Tom Bumgarner's "New Brick 7-Room Home" on one acre of land located just down the hill from Cecil Miller's farm.⁴⁶ Bumgarner desperately needed to sell the property to pay off a substantial fine from a criminal conviction for running an illegal liquor operation.⁴⁷ That September, Tom and Pansy Bumgarner conveyed the parcel containing the Residence and the land that would eventually feature the

⁴¹ For examples of advertisements sporting the American Automobile Association endorsement, see *Watauga Democrat*, 27 August 1959, B1; 30 June 1960, 3; 8 September 1960, 2; and 24 August 1961: 12. For advertisements about the pool, picnic area, and playground, see *Charlotte Observer*, 9 June 1968: 109; and 8 June 1969: 126.

⁴² "State Motel Group to Hold Convention Here," *Watauga Democrat*, 19 April 1962: 1.

⁴³ This conversion took place in two steps. See W. B. Rice to Harold E. Rice and wife Mary J. Rice, 20 November 1969, Deed Book 109, Page 453; and Harold E. Rice and wife Mary J. Rice to Donald B. Hollis and wife Pauline B. Hollis, 24 September 1970, Deed Book 116, Page 40.

⁴⁴ Reference to the Holiday Inn's opening in 1966 can be found at "Planning Open House Sunday," *Watauga Democrat*, 23 November 1972: 9A.

⁴⁵ Much of this information on Estel G. Wagner's early life comes from Wagner, "Life Story."

⁴⁶ See "Three Big Auction Sales," advertisement, *Watauga Democrat*, 12 May 1949: 4.

⁴⁷ According to local press reports, "Tom Bumgarner was fined \$2,000 and the cost, and given an eighteen months suspended sentence, having entered a plea of guilty to possession for the purpose of sale. He was placed on probation for three years, and his driving license revoked." The fine amount is equivalent to \$21,400 in 2021. See "Heavy Fines in Liquor Cases," *Watauga Democrat*, 5 May 1949: 1.

Blue Ridge Tourist Court

Watauga County, NC

Name of Property

County and State

Tourist Court, the Annex, and the Office to Estel G. Wagner.⁴⁸ The Wagners immediately made the Residence their home. At the time, this property was located on the eastern fringe of a community known as Perkinsville, about a mile east of the Boone town limits. This area was later annexed into the corporate limits of Boone.

As Wagner made connections in the Boone vicinity and sought a new career path, he began attending Chamber of Commerce meetings, where he met many of the key players committed to Boone's efforts to stimulate tourism in the region. As early as February of 1950, the Chamber appointed Wagner to its Tourists Committee.⁴⁹ According to Wagner's unpublished autobiography, Chamber discussions by 1950 were centered on bringing to Boone a Kermit Hunter outdoor drama production like *Unto These Hills*, which opened that summer at Cherokee, North Carolina. Chamber members expressed frustrations, though, that there weren't sufficient lodging facilities in Boone to support that level of tourism. As Wagner remembered, "At that time, they were exploring the possibility of hiring Kermit Hunter, the author of 'Horn in the West,' to write a pageant. That is how I became involved with the outdoor theatre—Horn in the West!!! One of the problems with the drama coming to Boone was there was no place for people to sleep or eat. We had to have accommodations for visitors to the area. So I decided to build a motel—the Blue Ridge Tourist Court was born."⁵⁰ Wagner accordingly built the seven-room Tourist Court building in 1950 and added the four-room (two-unit) Annex and the Garage Apartment by 1951, the latter two of which were designed to accommodate long-term stays by virtue of their kitchen facilities.⁵¹ Wagner acquired the Motel parcel in July 1951 and constructed the Motel building in either late 1953 or early 1954, bringing his unit count to 20 (sometimes advertised as 22 rooms because of the double rooms in the Annex units).⁵²

As a testament to the demand for tourist court lodgings in the early 1950s, the Blue Ridge Tourist Court helped host newspaper writers from ten states as part of a Blue Ridge Parkway tourism promotional tour

⁴⁸ See Tom and Pansy Bumgarner to Estel G. Wagner, 5 September 1949, Deed Book 67, Page 312.

⁴⁹ "C. of C. Lists 1950 Committees," *Watauga Democrat*, 23 February 1950: 1.

⁵⁰ See Wagner, "Life Story," 15-16. Hunter's *Unto These Hills* opened in Cherokee in 1950. The Boone Chamber of Commerce invited Hunter to speak in September 1951. See "Kermit Hunter to Speak to Chamber of Commerce," *Watauga Democrat*, 13 September 1951: 1. Plans to hire Hunter to write a drama were not publicly discussed until later that year. See "Historical Association Sponsors Drama; Kermit Hunter Visitor," *Watauga Democrat*, 15 November 1951: 1. Plans were already percolating in Boone, however, in the wake of the 1949 Watauga County Centennial celebration, which had featured a series of vignettes on the county's history. Known as *Echoes of the Blue Ridge* and staged by Russell L. Rowland, that outdoor drama covered Watauga County history in a series of "episodes," including "Early Cherokee Indian Village," "Watauga's First Visitors," "Daniel Boone's Cabin," "Carolinian Patriotism," "Watauga County Is Born," "War Between the States," "The Gay 90s," and "The Iron Horse Comes to Watauga County." See *Echoes of the Blue Ridge* Program, July 1949, Bradley Lawson Collection, Digital Watauga Project, online, <http://digitalwatauga.org/items/show/20978>. A variation on this production was offered in 1950 as well, designed to "emulate the general trend of outdoor drama as typified by such successful productions as the *Lost Colony*, the *Common Glory*, and the more recent *Unto These Hills*." See "Colorful Parades, Pageantry Feature Holiday Celebration," *Watauga Democrat*, 6 July 1950: 1.

⁵¹ As noted several times elsewhere in this nomination, there is good reason to suspect that Wagner may have completed the Garage Apartment as early as October 1950, when an ad ran advertising the following: "FOR RENT—4 room apartment with bath. Available October 1st. Reference preferred. Apply through Blue Ridge Tourist Court, Boone, NC." See *Watauga Democrat*, 21 September 1950: 8.

⁵² There is some dispute about the year the Motel was completed. Estel G. Wagner, who is sometimes loose with dates in his autobiography, says 1954. See Wagner, "Life Story," 20. In this same sentence, he also says he added "the upper level 12 units," when in fact there were only ten units in that building. Wagner's son, Allan Wagner, reported in a private conversation with the author on April 20, 2021, that he believed the Motel was completed in 1953.

Blue Ridge Tourist Court

Name of Property

Watauga County, NC

County and State

in 1951, and served as the sole host for the Fourth Annual North Carolina Writers Conference in 1953, despite the fact that the property lacked any restaurant or conference facilities.⁵³ As late as 1956, the Blue Ridge Tourist Court remained in demand for traveling groups; in July that year, it hosted (along with the Daniel Boone Hotel) a busload of business and farm leaders from seven North Carolina counties representing the Northwest North Carolina Development Association.⁵⁴

Meanwhile, Wagner continued to be involved in the Boone Chamber of Commerce, serving as a director and second vice president of the Chamber by early 1953.⁵⁵ Wagner was also active in the Boone Rotary, where he served as vice president in 1952.⁵⁶ His immense popularity among the business and political set prompted the Watauga County Republican Party to nominate Wagner as a Board of Commissioners candidate that year. Wagner promptly declined the nomination, noting that, "having only lived here a short time, I don't feel qualified."⁵⁷ This popularity was no doubt the result of one of his most noteworthy contributions to Boone's developing tourism industry, which also came in 1952, when he was appointed along with W. R. Winkler, Russell Hodges, Alfred Adams, and Grover Robbins to the Daniel Boone Amphitheatre Building Committee for the planned *Horn in the West* outdoor drama.⁵⁸ With his Building Committee colleagues, Wagner played a pivotal role in overseeing the construction of the amphitheatre and ensuring the facility was ready for its 1952 premiere. This association also proved lucrative for Wagner's tourist court business. In June 1952, the Blue Ridge Tourist Court hosted photographers from *LIFE* magazine and various news services who were in town to photograph the photo rehearsal of *Horn in the West*.⁵⁹ Five years later, his colleagues called on him again, when Wagner played a critical role in the 1957 purchase of the land for the Boone Golf Club, an Ellis Maples-designed course; Wagner went on to serve for over 40 years on the club's board of directors.⁶⁰

Wagner's other business ventures in Boone included his early 1952 purchase of the Murray Esso Station at the corner of Hardin Street and Howard Street, as well as his 1954 purchase of the CK&M Gateway

⁵³ On the Blue Ridge Tourist Court hosting the Blue Ridge Parkway promotional tour, see "Newsmen, Others from 10 States Tour Parkway," *Watauga Democrat*, 24 May 1951: 1, 4. The newsmen were also guests of the Longvue Tourist Court and the Mountain Motel. Regarding the North Carolina Writers Conference in 1953, the Blue Ridge Tourist Court served as "Registration Headquarters" for the event, but conference events were held elsewhere, including on the Appalachian State Teachers College campus. Saturday's events included a session at the home of Elizabeth Boatwright Coker in Blowing Rock, followed by dinner at her home. See "Writers to Gather for 3-Day Session," *Watauga Democrat*, 6 August 1953: 1. A summary of the events of the conference can be found in Charles Blackburn, Jr., and Robert G. Anthony, Jr., compilers, *Fifty Splendid Summers: A Short History of the North Carolina Writers Conference, 1950-1999*, (Manteo, NC: North Carolina Writers Conference, 1999), 7-8. These notes indicate that 22 guests were in attendance (only two of them a married couple), and that they had clearly stayed together at a motel, presumably the Blue Ridge Tourist Court.

⁵⁴ See "Program Set for Leaders," *News and Observer*, 14 July 1956: 16.

⁵⁵ "Chamber Commerce Has Installation of Officers," *Watauga Democrat*, 19 February 1953: 1.

⁵⁶ "Thompson Heads Rotary Club," *Watauga Democrat*, 10 April 1952: 1.

⁵⁷ Estel Wagner, "To the Voters of Watauga County," advertisement, *Watauga Democrat*, 25 September 1952: 8. See also "GOP Offers Winkler for Assembly," *Watauga Democrat*, 18 September 1952: 1.

⁵⁸ "Theater Work Nearing Completion in Boone," *Asheville Citizen*, 2 June 1952: 7. *Horn in the West* is the oldest Revolutionary War drama in the United States and continues to be performed (using a shortened and modified script compared to Hunter's original, three-hour version) to this day.

⁵⁹ "Photographers Have Field Day Monday at Full Dress Rehearsal Outdoor Drama," *Watauga Democrat*, 26 June 1952: 1, 4; and "Photographers Are to Be Feted End of Week," *Watauga Democrat*, 19 June 1952: 1.

⁶⁰ "Land Is Bought to Assure Building Local Golf Course," *Watauga Democrat*, 21 November 1957: 1. See also Estel G. Wagner obituary, Austin and Barnes Funeral Home, 2011, online, <https://austinandbarnesfuneralhome.com/tribute/details/1818/Estel-Wagner/obituary.html>.

Blue Ridge Tourist Court

Watauga County, NC

Name of Property

County and State

Restaurant in the Hodges Building in downtown Boone, which he sold later that year.⁶¹ He also purchased nine acres of land in the Perkinsville area that he developed into the Hillcrest Circle neighborhood, and he later developed the Estel Wagner Subdivision on Farthing Street.⁶² In 1957, Wagner completed construction on a two-story, concrete brick building at the southwest corner of King and Appalachian Streets in Boone, with retail on the first floor and apartments on the second. This building still stands at 525 West King Street and is home today to a Jimmy John's.⁶³ In 1959, Wagner also sat for North Carolina's real estate broker license exam, earning his place as Boone's first licensed broker.⁶⁴ That same year, he completed construction of the Cook and Wagner Apartment Building with his partner J. D. Cook; this building housed his first brokerage office on the first floor and apartments on the second, and it still stands at 199 Howard Street in downtown Boone.⁶⁵ In 1963, Wagner and Cecil Miller built the Cabana Motel on Blowing Rock Road, which opened in 1963. Wagner sold that motel in 1971.⁶⁶ It was demolished in 2017 for construction of a massive student apartment complex. In the early 1970s, Wagner was also one of the six original partners on the Polar Palace, a popular Boone ice skating rink that also no longer stands.⁶⁷ Accordingly, the Blue Ridge Tourist Court is the earliest tourism-related property associated with Wagner that remains in Boone.

Obviously, Wagner was not alone in his efforts to capitalize on Boone's new tourism trade, but he occupied a unique position that allowed him to not only provide some of the accommodations infrastructure to support that trade, but also to immerse himself in the planning, financing, and promotion of many of those new tourism attractions that had a direct impact on Boone's economy. None of his peers, some of whom were outstanding for their activities in other context areas related to Boone's or Watauga County's history, had anywhere near the same influence in the development of local travel infrastructure to help support Boone's new, postwar, entertainment and recreation-based economy. William Ralph "W. R." Winkler, for example, was an exceedingly powerful and influential Boone businessman, known primarily for his local automobile sales empire and commercial development projects in downtown Boone. When offered the opportunity to develop a motel property with his son-in-law, Carl Fidler, in the early 1960s, however, Winkler actively opposed Fidler's project and generally steered away from such initiatives.⁶⁸ Constance Shoun Stallings was a driving force in the completion of the *Horn in the West* project and countless other community improvement projects from the 1950s into the 1970s, but as the owner of a popular, local jewelry business, she had little time for investments in tourism infrastructure.⁶⁹ Alfred Adams was a banker primarily interested in financing projects associated with the burgeoning tourism trade, as opposed to actually building and operating them.⁷⁰ And while Grover Cleveland Robbins, Jr., and his brother Spencer Robbins were titans in the world of tourism development in

⁶¹ On the Esso station, see "Estel Wagner Buys Murray Esso Place," *Watauga Democrat*, 7 February 1952: 1. On the restaurant, see "Announcing Change of Ownership," advertisement, *Watauga Democrat*, 1 July 1954: 2; and Wagner, "Life Story," 22.

⁶² Allan Wagner, private conversation with the author, 20 April 2021. See also Wagner, "Life Story," 22.

⁶³ "Three New Concerns Move into New Wagner Building," *Watauga Democrat*, 2 May 1957: 1.

⁶⁴ See Wagner, "Life Story," 22-23.

⁶⁵ See "Estel G. Wagner Announces the Opening," advertisement, *Watauga Democrat*, 14 May 1959: 7; and Wagner, "Life Story," 22-23.

⁶⁶ See "Local Building Boom Seen; Many Structures Going Up," *Watauga Democrat*, 9 May 1963: 1, 6. See also Wagner, "Life Story," 32.

⁶⁷ See Wagner, "Life Story," 32. Wagner called this "probably my worst venture in real estate.... I probably lost \$25,000 on this deal."

⁶⁸ Carl Fidler, personal interview with the author, July 8, 2013.

⁶⁹ "Deaths and Funerals in North Carolina," *Charlotte Observer*, 3 April 1982: 20.

⁷⁰ "Alfred Thomas Adams," *Winston-Salem Journal*, 20 October 2002, online, <https://www.legacy.com/us/obituaries/winstonsalem/name/alfred-adams-obituary?pid=548881>.

Blue Ridge Tourist Court

Name of Property

Watauga County, NC

County and State

Watauga County, playing direct roles in the development of Tweetsie Railroad, Land of Oz, and elite properties such as Hound Ears Golf and Ski Club, Linville Land Harbor, and Beech Mountain, those projects all followed Estel G. Wagner's prodigious, early influence in recognizing Boone's opportunity to develop its postwar tourism trade and provide the necessary roadside travel infrastructure to facilitate doing so.⁷¹ The Robbins brothers also had deeper ties to Blowing Rock than Boone, perhaps explaining why the projects of the Robbins brothers also tended to target upper class consumers rather than the middle class audience Wagner clearly tried to capture in the immediate postwar years. Boone's other aforementioned early tourist court operators, such as Earl D. Cook, A. E. Hamby, and L. T. Tatum, also lagged significantly behind Wagner in their influence on the broader development of the postwar tourism industry in Boone.

Additional Historic Context

After 1970, the Blue Ridge Motor Court was perceived as a budget accommodation and had largely lost its allure as a preferred motel, and by the late 1970s, its clientele increasingly transitioned to locals seeking cheap, apartment-style accommodations. A fire in the Annex during the 1970s caused significant damage to the interior, necessitating slapdash renovations that were completed over several months primarily by the family members of the owners, further contributing to its budget-oriented reputation.⁷² The property changed hands several times during the 1970s and 1980s, and by 1992, it was known as the Economy Inn.⁷³ During the ownership cycle of Tony and Phyllis Kerzman (1979-1985), the Kerzmans went through a series of transactions to secure to themselves ownership of a section of park land to the

⁷¹ "Grover Robbins, 59, Resort Developer," *New York Times*, 6 March 1970: 39; "Spencer Robbins of Boone, North Carolina, 1927-2020," Hampton Funeral Service, online, <https://www.hamptonfuneralnc.com/obituary/edmond-robbins>.

⁷² Beverly Blunck, telephone conversation, 25 July 2022. Blunck is the daughter of Basil Smith, who owned the property from March 1972 to April 1979. In the early to mid-1970s Blunck and her sister, both teenagers at the time, worked throughout the year as housekeepers at the property, while the family lived in the brick Residence just above the Tourist Court. She recalled that her father's purchase of the property was sudden and enormously frustrating to the rest of the family, who still harbor resentment about the long hours spent trying to keep the business afloat. Blunck recalled that the best part was the pool, which was used primarily by neighbors and friends, rather than guests. Blunck was insistent that the Annex fire was before 1975, the year her sister left for college, because they both spent many long hours scrubbing smoke and water damage from the Annex interior and helping with other repairs. Blunck also distinctly remembered a photo that ran in "the newspaper" showing her father on the roof of the Annex trying to extinguish the flames. A meticulous search of the *Watauga Democrat* on microfilm from January 1972 to July 1975 found no such photo, nor was any coverage of the fire found in searches of all available North Carolina newspapers at Newspapers.com and DigitalNC.org between 1972 and 1979. In October 2022, however, a retired fireman passing by the completed Tourist Court stopped in to share an image of the fire in progress. This undated press corps image shows the window and entrance to the east unit of the Annex engulfed in flames as firefighters stand by with a garden hose.

⁷³ Relevant deeds during this period include Donald B. Hollis by and through his Attorney in Fact, Pauline B. Hollis, and Pauline B. Hollis individually to Greene Smith and Basil Smith, 28 March 1972, Deed Book 128, Page 330; Greeneville Smith to Thomas Basil Smith and wife Nancy Jeannie Smith, 7 April 1978, Deed Book 182, Page 252; Thomas Basil Smith and wife Nancy Jeannie Smith to Tony L. Kerzmann and wife Phyllis R. Kerzmann, 25 April 1979, Deed Book 189, Page 162; Tony L. Kerzmann and wife Phyllis R. Kerzmann to S. K. Vashee, 28 May 1985, Book of Record 13, Page 258; S. K. Vashee and wife Sarlaben Vashee to Amar Corp, 26 April 1986, Book of Record 37, Page 495; Amar Corp to David B. Jagirdar and wife Amita D. Jagirdar, 28 April 1986, Book of Record 37, Page 498; and David B. Jagirdar and wife Amita D. Patel to Ernest Dubuque, 17 November 1992, Book of Record 230, Page 563. This last deed refers to the property as the Economy Inn.

Blue Ridge Tourist Court

Watauga County, NC

Name of Property

County and State

west on which the western driveway for the Blue Ridge Tourist Court intruded, as well as portions of South Street to the east.⁷⁴

Following additional transactions in the 1990s, the property was known as the Perkins Park Inn when David D. Trivette, Jr., and Celese F. Gore purchased the property in 1998, despite the fact that it was operating entirely at that point as a deteriorated, ramshackle apartment complex.⁷⁵ Trivette and Gore appear to have changed the name to the Phoenix Complex, and the property continued to deteriorate as a result of deferred maintenance and an increasingly transient clientele occupying the “apartments.” Through a series of defaults and disclosures, Trivette and Gore lost the Residence parcel in 2011 and the Tourist Court and Motel parcels in 2019, by which time the latter buildings had been condemned by the Town of Boone.⁷⁶ Blue Ridge Tourist Court, LLC, acquired the Tourist Court and Motel parcels in April 2021 with plans to restore the property to its early 1950s appearance.⁷⁷

⁷⁴ The relevant deed for the 4,361-square-foot park portion shown on the Pennell survey dated February 5, 1985, is D. O. Ray and wife Betty Jane Ray to Tony L. Kerzmann and wife Phyllis R. Kerzmann, 7 February 1985, Book of Record 11, Page 341. The relevant South Street deeds include D. O. Ray and wife Betty Jane Ray, George Lewis, et al, to Tony L. Kerzmann and wife Phyllis R. Kerzmann, 7 March 1985, Book of Record 11, Page 334, in which the Kerzmann’s secured interest in the southern portion of South Street; and Tony L. Kerzmann and Phyllis R. Kerzmann to D. O. Ray and Betty Jane Ray, May 1985, Book of Record 12, Page 128, in which the Kerzmans surrendered the northern portion of South Street.

⁷⁵ For relevant transactions involving the Blue Ridge Tourist Court and Motel properties, see Ernest C. Dubuque to Four Seasons Apartments, Inc., 13 June 1994, Book of Record 292, Page 28; Memorandum of Installment Land Sale Contract, Four Seasons Apartments, Inc., to Celeste F. Gore and David D. Trivette, Jr., 1 October 1998, Book of Record 476, Page 767, in which the property is referred to as the Perkins Park Inn; and Four Seasons Apartments, Inc., to Celeste F. Gore and David D. Trivette, Jr., 1 October 1998, Book of Record 644, Page 248. Interestingly, the South Street portion was not conveyed as part of this transaction.

⁷⁶ For the sale of the Residence parcel out of foreclosure, see Richard P. McNeely, Substitute Trustee, to US Bank National Association, Trustee, 21 July 2011, Book of Record 1582, Page 655. For the foreclosure sale of the Tourist Court and Motel parcels, see Benjamin N. Neece, Substitute Trustee, to Highlands Union Bank, 19 July 2019, Book of Record 2038, Page 414. The Phoenix Complex was the residence of numerous individuals who were arrested on assault, theft, and drug charges during the late 2010s. See, for example, Garrett Price, “Police Reports,” *Watauga Democrat*, 5 June 2016, online, https://www.wataugademocrat.com/zz_styling/police-reports/article_ec5b2a41-cefc-5d50-afe6-b6d088bd3957.html; Kayla Lasure, “Sheriff’s Reports,” *Watauga Democrat*, 1 June 2017, online, https://www.wataugademocrat.com/news/sheriffs-reports/article_c41d1317-c2f0-5918-b267-7d7cfd19d6f9.html; Kayla Lasure, “Sheriff’s Reports,” *Watauga Democrat*, 26 September 2017, online, https://www.wataugademocrat.com/news/sheriffs-reports/article_83bfef5c-78b0-53fb-a71c-a63c8a6cbc34.html; and Kayla Lasure, “Sheriff’s Reports,” *Watauga Democrat*, 7 October 2019, online, https://www.wataugademocrat.com/news/sheriffs-reports/article_c2ab69dd-5e6b-5ba8-9d4e-7989603a8a0c.html.

⁷⁷ See First Community Bank to Blue Ridge Tourist Court, LLC, 12 April 2021, Book of Record 2182, Page 345.

Blue Ridge Tourist Court

Name of Property

Watauga County, NC

County and State

9. Major Bibliographical References

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Blue Ridge Tourist Court

Name of Property

Watauga County, NC

County and State

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Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
 previously listed in the National Register
 previously determined eligible by the National Register
 designated a National Historic Landmark
 recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
 recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
 recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
 Other State agency
 Federal agency
 Local government
 University
 Other

Name of repository: Wagner Family Archives

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): WT0958

Blue Ridge Tourist Court
Name of Property

Watauga County, NC
County and State

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The stated National Register property boundary includes the all resources historically associated with the operations of the Blue Ridge Tourist Court and its adjacent residence. The boundary generally conforms to the historic lot boundaries and use areas of the Blue Ridge Tourist Court during its period of significance, aside from a portion of the South Street driveway that is no longer extant and that was never on land legally owned by the operators of the Tourist Court during its period of significance. In addition, because of a lack of formal association and the loss of historic resources in the park area to the west of the boundary, the park and pump house ruins are not included in the nominated boundary.

Current Owners:

Office, Tourist Court, Annex, Garage Apartment, and Motel

Name: Blue Ridge Tourist Court, LLC
Address: 505 Grand Boulevard, Boone, NC 28607
Phone: (205) 908-2329
Email: brian28607@gmail.com

Residence

Name: KK Capital LLC
1 Kascar Plaza, Greenville, SC 29605

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Eric Plaa, PhD
organization: Carolina Historical Consulting, LLC
street & number: 703 Junaluska Rd.
city or town: Boone state: NC zip code: 28607
e-mail ericplaa@gmail.com
telephone: (828) 773-6525
date: December 29, 2022

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A USGS map or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

Blue Ridge Tourist Court

Name of Property

Watauga County, NC

County and State

- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

The following information pertains to all photographs listed below:

Name of Property: Blue Ridge Tourist Court

City or Vicinity: Boone

County: Watauga County

State: NC

Photographer: Eric Plaag, unless *otherwise noted*

Location of Original Digital Files: 703 Junaluska Rd., Boone, NC 28607

1. Overview of Blue Ridge Tourist Court, looking southeast, Office in foreground, Tourist Court and Annex in mid-distance, Motel and Residence on hill, April 17, 2021
2. Overview of Blue Ridge Tourist Court, looking southeast, Office in foreground, Tourist Court and Annex in mid-distance, Motel and Residence on hill, December 15, 2022
3. Tourist Court, looking southwest, April 17, 2021
4. Tourist Court, looking southeast, December 15, 2022
5. Annex, looking south, April 17, 2021
6. West end of Tourist Court and Annex, looking southeast, December 15, 2022
7. Annex after rehabilitation of roof, looking south, June 22, 2022
8. Annex after installation of ADA ramp, looking southeast, December 15, 2022
9. Tourist Court, Room 101 interior, looking northeast, October 21, 2022, *Mira Williams*
10. Tourist Court, Room 102 interior, looking southwest, October 21, 2022, *Mira Williams*
11. Tourist Court, Room 103 interior, looking southeast, October 20, 2022, *Mira Williams*
12. Tourist Court, Room 104 interior, looking south, October 20, 2022, *Mira Williams*
13. Tourist Court, Room 106 interior, looking southeast, October 20, 2022, *Mira Williams*
14. Office interior, looking north, June 22, 2022
15. Annex, west unit, front room interior, looking southwest, June 22, 2022
16. Annex, west unit, rear room interior, looking northeast, June 22, 2022
17. Residence, north and west elevations, looking southeast, April 17, 2021

Blue Ridge Tourist Court

Name of Property

Watauga County, NC

County and State

18. Residence (west and south elevations) at center left, west elevation of Garage Apartment at right, looking east, April 17, 2021
19. Garage Apartment south elevation, looking north, April 17, 2021
20. Garage Apartment, east and north elevations, looking southwest, August 13, 2021
21. Garage Apartment, kitchen interior, looking southeast, August 13, 2021
22. Motel, west and south elevations, looking northeast, April 17, 2021
23. Motel, south and east elevations, looking northwest, April 17, 2021
24. Motel, Unit 1 interior, looking northeast, March 18, 2021

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.