

Zebulon celebrates with historic ribbon-cutting

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Preservation Zebulon Director Mary Beth Carpenter makes remarks before the ribbon cutting for the historic district. Laura Browne | The Wake Weekly

ZEBULON — Community leaders took a major step toward preserving the town of Zebulon’s rich history, which has steadily developed since its founding in 1907.

Zebulon celebrated the official grand opening of its first historic district Thursday, April 27 with a ribbon-cutting ceremony at the historic Stickland-Temple house. Later, attendees were invited to tour the Stickland-Temple home for cake, which featured a map of the historic district.

“Today, we are the ones who can celebrate our town’s heritage and honor those who came before us while preserving Zebulon for generations to come,” said Scott Carpenter, Preservation Zebulon board chair.

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The effort to secure a historic district in Zebulon began in 2015, Carpenter said, when a group of residents came together to preserve, document and celebrate the history of their town with the goal of creating the district. This led to the nonprofit Preservation Zebulon.

The Zebulon Historic District was officially added to the National Register of Historic Places in August 2022, after years of work by the town.

John Saffold called the historic structures that comprise the district “icons” of the town’s history and the people who have been a part of Zebulon’s past.

“They all contribute to telling the story of these communities,” said Saffold, executive director of the Zebulon Chamber of Commerce. “And once these buildings are gone, you cannot replace them.”

The historic district spans 159 acres and is made up of 316 contributing structures, Carpenter said.

The Zebulon Historic District is one of more than 600 historic districts in North Carolina, said Ramona Bartos, deputy state historic preservation officer for the state.

Darin Waters is deputy secretary for the Office of Archives and History for the N.C. Department of National and Cultural Resources. He said preserving historic buildings and structures will continue to shape future generations while benefiting the town and its people.

“One of the things that’s really important about preservation, as well as you know, (is) that it helps to not only build and reconnect people with their communities, but it also stimulates economic development in communities,” Waters said.

The historic district may also help the community in other ways, said Mary Beth Carpenter, Preservation Zebulon director.

“Contributing structures to the district may have tax advantages at the state and federal governments for repairing and restoring buildings according to the standards set by the department of the interior,” Mary Beth Carpenter said. “Our historic

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Also a point of pride for Zebulon.”

Mayor Glenn York said the district showcases the proud traditions, agricultural heritage and hard work that shaped the community and emphasized a commitment to preserving history.

Preservation Zebulon will host a historic homes tour on Saturday, April 29 featuring six homes 100 years old or older. The homes are in the style of Queen Anne, Colonial Revival and Craftsman Era architecture, Mary Beth Carpenter said.



A celebratory cake features a map of the Zebulon Historic District. Laura Browne | The Wake Weekly