

The Town of Smithfield Appearance Commission met in regular session on Tuesday, January 20, 2020, at 5:00 in the Town Hall Conference Room located at 350 East Market Street, Smithfield, North Carolina.

Members Present

Peggy Scott – Chairperson
Robin Cook – Vice Chairperson
Connie Barbour
Jeremy Pearce
Julia Narron
MaryFoy Ragsdale

Members Absent

Councilman David Steven

Staff Present

Lawrence Davis – Public Works Superintendent
Gary Johnson – Parks and Recreation Director
Shannan Parrish – Town Clerk

Staff Absent

Call to Order

Chairperson Peggy Scott called the meeting to order at 5:06 pm

Invocation

Public Works Superintendent Lawrence Davis offered the invocation.

Approval of Meeting Minutes – November 19, 2019

Julia Narron made a motion, seconded by Connie Barbour, to approve the November minutes as submitted. Unanimously approved.

Financial Report

Appearance Commission General Fund Balance – \$ 7,403.25 will be remaining after estimated funding for approved projects. Estimated total for approved projects is \$23, 961.75

Donate-A-Tree Account Balance – \$1,236.75

Lawrence Davis informed the members of the Appearance Commission two more trees had been donated. Chairperson Peggy Scott stated a decision would have to be made on purchasing another plaque.

J. B. George Fund Balance – \$2,901.34

J.P. George Fund Balance – \$1,117.35

Chairperson Peggy Scott informed the members of the Appearance Commission that funds from the JB and JP George endowments would be used for landscaping the remaining Wayfinding signs.

Wayfinding

Chairperson Peggy Scott informed the members of the Appearance Commission all three of the major signs have been installed with lighting. Two of those signs have been landscaped leaving one to be completed. Lawrence Davis stated the landscaping should be completed within the next two weeks. Mrs. Scott stated there were still some questions as to where the sign would be located on Highway 301 North.

NC Forestry Visit

Chairperson Peggy Scott informed the members of the Appearance Commission the visit with Jennifer Rall was very informative. Ms. Rall taught Town staff how to properly trim the trees and left a manual

for them to reference. Also during the visit, Ms. Rall provided a listing of trees that could be planted on Market Street. Mrs. Scott stated whatever tree was chosen, the uplighting would need to be considered. She asked Mr. Davis to speak with Public Works Director Lenny Branch to determine what they felt would be the best type of tree for Market Street. Mrs. Ragsdale stated there isn't enough room on Market Street for large shade trees. She felt if the Upright European hornbeam was limbed up they would look stately on Market Street. Mr. Davis explained they were going to remove all the dead Paper Bark Maples on Market Street. Ms. Rall had explained the trees listed below could be purchased locally and should have a higher survival rate. Mrs. Scott asked for a volunteer to look into the best solution for street trees along Market St.

Scientific Name	Common Name	Height/Spread	Characteristics
<i>Acer truncatum</i> 'Main Street'	Main Street Shantung maple	25'-30' x 20'-25'	Drought tolerant; Orange-red fall color
<i>Amelanchier x grandiflora</i> 'Autumn Brilliance'	Autumn Brilliance serviceberry	15'-25' x 15'-25'	White flowers in April; Blue berries in June; Red to red-orange fall color
<i>Carpinus betulus</i> 'Fastigiata'	Upright European hornbeam	30'-40' x 20'-30'	Bright green foliage during growing season; Yellow-orange fall color
<i>Cercis canadensis</i>	Eastern redbud (various cultivars)	20'-30' x 15'-25' (varies by cultivar)	Blooms in early Spring (bloom color varies by cultivar); Foliage color varies by cultivar
<i>Chionanthus retusus</i> 'Tokyo Tower'	Tokyo Tower Chinese fringe tree	12'-15' x 4'-6'	White flowers in late spring/early summer; Blueberry-like fruit; Yellow fall color
<i>Cotinus coggygria</i> 'Royal Purple'	Royal Purple smoketree	10'-15' x 15'-20'	Showy purple puffs follow yellow flowers in late spring; Purple foliage
<i>Ilex opaca</i> 'Delia Bradley'	Delia Bradley holly	20'-30' x 10'-15'	Upright, pyramidal evergreen American holly
<i>Prunus</i> 'Okame'	Okame flowering cherry	15'-25' x 15'-20'	Pink flowers in spring; Bronzy red to bright orange to red fall color
<i>Prunus</i> 'Snow Goose'	Snow Goose flowering cherry	15'-20' x 15'-20'	White flowers in spring; Orange fall color
<i>Prunus cerasifera</i> 'Krauter Vesuvius'	Krauter Vesuvius cherry plum	15'-20' x 15'-20'	Pink flowers in April; Dark reddish-purple leaves

Town of Smithfield – Recommended Street Trees along Market Street

Boat Ramp:

Estimated cost \$30,000: \$20,000 from Appearance Commission and \$15,000 Grant from Johnston County Visitor's Bureau

- Flag pole: pole height 25' with 1 4x6 American flag on top and 2 2 x3 flags Town flag and NC flag
- 3 Picnic tables and 1 garbage receptacle
- Sail Shade: blue/green with brown poles. Parks and recreation Director Gary Johnson has suggested white poles after looking at the finished picture
- We voted to add an additional \$5,000 to the project to cover landscaping and some fencing

Parks and Recreation Director Gary Johnson informed the members of the Appearance Commission that when the rendering was received from the manufacture, it was determined that while poles would look better than any other color.

Mrs. Narron stated she did have concerns about the project. She suggested the project be delayed until the Comprehensive Growth Plan was finalized. Part of that plan deals with the riverfront from the Hastings House to the boat ramp. She suggested doing something in conjunction with the entire riverfront plan. Mrs. Narron stated the whole area needed to be cleaned so it could be properly landscaped. Her fear was this project would not be done with any real context to the whole riverfront. Chairperson Peggy Scott responded that when the Appearance Commission first started talking about the boat ramp, it was done in conjunction with improvements to the amphitheater and the overall appearance of the riverfront. It was the decision of the Appearance Commission to move forward with the project because so many people were using the area and there was a need for a picnic area. Mr. Johnson stated the design lends itself to go along with some of the plans for the riverfront. Mr. Johnson further stated that the Comprehensive Growth Plan involved Planning Director Stephen Wensman, a consultant and a committee. Mr. Wensman assisted the Appearance Commission with this project by determining the placement of the shade sail structure. Mr. Johnson further stated the project design was conducive to the area. Also, more shade sail structures were being used throughout Town. Mrs. Scott questioned Mr. Johnson's vision for the landscaping. Mr. Johnson replied he would like the bank extensively landscaped. A fence should be installed for liability and safety purposes because of the steep drop off. He suggested adding a fence to separate the picnic area from the parking lot. Mrs. Scott stated the Appearance Commission wanted to remove the existing fence. Mr. Johnson responded the Appearance Commission may want to install something more solid than a split rail fence to eliminate the possibility of a child falling down the embankment. Mrs. Scott stated bushes could be planted to make the whole area really inviting.

Mrs. Scott further stated the Appearance Commission did investigate other areas for the picnic shelter, but those other areas were prone to flooding or the cost was too high. Connie Barbour stated the signage on the Greenway matched the shade sails therefore there was consistency. Mrs. Narron stated she was very sensitive about this project because it's located near her home. She questioned if there was any plans to clear and landscape the slope that goes up to Dr. Booker's property. She also questioned the maintenance of the landscaping once it was installed. Mr. Johnson responded that since this area is considered Parks and Recreation, it would be maintained by the landscaping contractor hired by the Town. Mrs. Scott stated some areas were maintained by Parks and Recreation while other areas were maintained by Public Works. Mrs. Scott stated he understood Mrs. Narron's concerns about maintaining the landscaping. She explained the Appearance Commission often chose to install plantings that were low maintenance. Mrs. Scott further stated she did not want this project to be just about the picnic area. It was her vision that the area including the slope to Dr. Booker's house be cleared and fully landscaped. Mrs. Scott asked for a volunteer to help design a landscape plan for the area. Mr. Johnson reminded the Appearance Commission the deadline to have everything completed was July 1st.

Connie Barbour made a motion, seconded by Vice Chairperson Robin Cook, to move forward with the project. Unanimously approved.

There was so general discussion about getting the community involved in assisting with maintaining the parks. Vice Chairperson Robin Cook stated she would create a flier to solicit assistance from the various civic organizations.

White Fence behind the African American Monument

Chairperson Peggy Scott stated she wanted to make a special note to make sure the fencing at the boat ramp matched the fencing at the African American Monument. The current fencing at the African

American Monument was not aesthetically pleasing. Mr. Johnson explained the fence was installed for safety reasons. He was in agreement that the fencing should match.

Breakfast for Public Works Employees

Chairperson Peggy Scott informed the members of the Appearance Commission that the Appearance Commission provided breakfast for the Public Works Employees. It was the consensus of the Appearance Commission to hold the breakfast on Wednesday, March 11th.

Donate-A- Tree Plaque

Chairperson Peggy Scott informed the members of the Appearance Commission that a new plaque would need to be ordered in the near future. She explained the last bid she received for a Corian plaque like the other Donate-A-Tree plaques were \$2,132 for a 50-space plaque and \$3,568 for a 100-space plaque. She questioned if the Commission wished to do a different type of plaque in a different location or a similar plaque to be located with the others in the Town Hall Park. Mrs. Scott stated a decision would have to be made at the February meeting. Mrs. Narron suggested purchasing the least expensive plaque so more of the funds could be used towards the purchase of the tree. Vice Chairperson Robin Cook stated she preferred purchasing a similar plaque. Mrs. Scott stated the plaques could be installed throughout Town in various parks. She suggested adding weatherproof brochure holders so more people would have knowledge of the Donate-A-Tree project. Vice Chairperson Robin Cook volunteered to investigate other appropriate locations for the Donate-A-Tree plaque.

Street Tree City USA

Chairperson Peggy Scott informed the members of the Appearance Commission that during Jennifer Rall's visit, she mentioned the Town becoming a Street Tree City. After further review, it was determined the Town met all the criteria. The information will be provided to the Town Council for approval.

South Second Street Trees

Mrs. Narron questioned if the trees on Second Street would be removed now that they have been topped. Mrs. Scott responded there had been discussion concerning the removal of the trees, and the Town Manager is looking into this area.

Adjournment

Being no further business, Jeremy Pearce made a motion, seconded by Connie Barbour, to adjourn the meeting. The meeting adjourned at approximately 6:19 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,



Shannan L. Parrish
Town Clerk