

The Town of Smithfield Appearance Commission met on Tuesday, February 21, 2023, at 5:00 in the Town Hall Council Chambers located at 350 East Market Street, Smithfield, North Carolina.

Members Present

Kaitlyn Tarley – Chairperson
Emery Ashley, Jr. – Vice Chairperson
Michelle Choe
Robin Cook
Peggy Scott

Members Absent

Carmen Zepp
Elizabeth Baker

Staff Present

Lawrence Davis – Public Works Director
Shannan Parrish – Town Clerk

Staff Absent

Call to Order

Chairperson Kaitlyn Tarley called the meeting to order at 5:07 pm

Invocation

Peggy Scott offered the invocation.

Approval of Meeting Minutes – January 17, 2023

Robin Cook made a motion, seconded by Peggy Scott, to table approval of the minutes as the Commission had not been able to review them prior to the meeting. Unanimously approved.

Nomination for Chairperson and Vice Chairperson

Chairperson

Robin Cook made a motion, seconded by Peggy Scott, to nominate Kaitlyn Tarley to serve as the Chairperson of the Appearance Commission. Unanimously approved.

Vice Chairperson

Robin Cook made a motion, seconded by Peggy Scott, to nominate Emery Ashley, Jr. to serve as the Vice Chairperson of the Appearance Commission. Unanimously approved.

Financial Report

Peggy Scott informed the members of the Appearance Commission she had not received the most recent financial reports from the Finance Director. She stated she was unaware of any funds being spent and the balances should be the same as last month.

Agenda Items

Signage Landscaping – Wayfinding signs

Plantings Around Signs Exit 95 and 93

Public Works Director Lawrence Davis informed the Commission that he had drafted a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for landscaping plans and plant installation at the Wayfinding Signs. The original plan was to enhance the landscaping around the signs at I-95 exits 93 and 95, but it was

his understanding that the Commission was considering adding other locations to the scope of work.

Vice Chairperson Emery Ashley, Jr. stated at the last meeting, the Commission discussed adding the additional gateway and entryway signs to the plan, but prioritize the signs at exits 93 and 95. While he understood bidding requirements, he stated he preferred to have a Smithfield based landscape architect. Lawrence Davis responded the bidding process was an open process that had to be fair. Mr. Davis further stated that if the Commission members knew local landscape architects, they should direct them to the Town's website when the RFQ was advertised.

Lawrence Davis asked for a member of the Appearance Commission to be present when the bids were scheduled to be opened. Peggy Scott volunteered to be present at the bid opening.

Lawrence Davis also questioned when the Commission wanted the advertisement to be published and how long they wished to allow the process to run (from advertisement to bid opening). It was the consensus of the Commission to advertise the RFQ on March 1st and the bid opening was commence on or after April 1st.

Michelle Choe reminded the Commission there had been discussion concerning the submission of landscape designs to be brought to the Commission before a landscape architect was chosen.

Peggy Scott stated it was important to included a maintenance agreement and plant warranty into the scope of work.

Vice Chairperson Emery Ashley, Jr. asked for the total number of signs that should be considered for this project. Lawrence Davis responded he was unsure of the total number, but he would contact the Planning Director to determine the total number of signs that should be considered for this project.

At the last meeting, Peggy Scott provided photos of all the entrance signs. Locations of signs included: Highway 70 East (Exit 95), Highway 70 West, Brogden Road (Exit 93), Outlet Center Drive (near Dewayne's), 301 North, 301 South, Buffalo Road and Highway 210. She felt the landscaping at the Highway 70 West location was fine. The trees behind the Outlet Center Drive location should be trimmed more.

Chairperson Kaitlyn Tarley stated the Commission discussed have some type of uniformity in the landscape designs.

Robin Cook made a motion, seconded by Peggy Scott, to allow Public Works Director Lawrence Davis to bid the Wayfinding Entrance Sign landscaping project to include all the entrance way signs. Unanimously approved.

Boat Ramp

Peggy Scott informed the Commission that she spoke with Parks and Recreation Director Gary Johnson regarding the dead plants at the Boat Ramp. Mr. Johnson indicated he would have the dead plants replaced. Mrs. Scott stated she would continue to remind him until they were replaced.

Additional Topics

Arts Council Assistance

Chairperson Kaitlyn Tarley informed the Commission that she contacted the Johnston County Arts Council on partnering with the Appearance Commission on the Art Walk Project or other public art displays. The Arts Council will be assigning a local person to assist the Commission.

Large Planters at Town Hall

Peggy Scott reminded the members of the Commission there was previous discussion about purchasing two large planters for the entrance at Town Hall. She explained she visited Dewayne's and Home Goods for pricing options. Dewayne's planters cost approximately \$400 each while Home Goods was \$70 each. Dewayne's offered a service where they custom design and install the planting material in the pots. She was unsure if they would deliver the complete planter or if Public Works would have to deliver it.

It was the consensus of the Commission to move forward with this project. Peggy Scott and Robin Cook agreed to work on this project.

New Trail at the College Pond

Peggy Scott informed the members of the Appearance Commission she had been exploring options for the new trail. She provided pictures of sculptures, benches, tables, swings and children's pieces to be installed around the trail.

Chairperson Kaitlyn Tarley questioned the feasibility of installing a sculpture or something at the location. Lawrence Davis responded he wanted to clean up the area before anything was installed.

Vice Chairperson Emery Ashley, Jr. questioned if the Commission could partner with students at Smithfield Selma High School for some type of art project for that area. Michelle Choe also suggested contacting the Boy Scouts because there could be potential Eagle Scout Projects at that location. Mr. Ashley stated he would like to take advantage of and showcase the potential artists in the local schools and area.

Peggy Scott suggested some of the sculptures could be dedicated in honor/memory of someone. Vice Chairperson Emery Ashley, Jr. responded it could be a fundraising opportunity for the Town.

CSX Railroad Bridge/Underpass

Robin Cook informed the members of the Commission she was still working on trying to get the CSX to allow the Town to clean up the bridge/underpass. She stated CSX would not allow anything to be affixed to the structure. She explained if the Town chose to paint the bridge/underpass, it would have to have a road crew and flaggers for safety reasons. She stated it might be best if the Town started with simply pressure washing it and repainting the measurement tape.

Peggy Scott suggested adding more plants to the hillsides near the bridge.

Spring Clean-Up

Chairperson Kaitlyn Tarley questioned if the Commission wanted to hold a separate spring clean-up event since the Town-wide clean up event was going to be held on April 22nd. She would like the clean-up efforts to be concentrated along the Greenway. It was suggested that she speak with Parks and Recreation Director Gary Johnson about scheduling this event.

Recognition of Former Chairperson Stuart Lee

Vice Chairperson Emery Ashley, Jr. asked the Appearance Commission to formally recognize the contributions made by former Appearance Commission Member and Chairperson Stuart Lee. He stated that while he had not served with Mr. Lee very long, it seemed Mr. Lee did a lot of positive things for the Appearance Commission and the Town. His dedication should be commended.

(Note) Stuart Lee tendered his resignation to the Town Clerk prior to this meeting citing increased work demands and other obligations.

Adjourn

Having no further business, Robin Cook made a motion, seconded by Peggy Scott, to adjourn the meeting. The meeting adjourned at approximately 6:02 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Shannan L. Parrish".

Shannan L. Parrish
Town Clerk