

SMITHFIELD APPEARANCE COMMISSION

Draft Minutes

Tuesday, July 18, 2006
6:00 p.m.

I. Call to Order

Co-Chairman Ragland called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday, July 18, 2006 in the conference of the Smithfield Municipal Building.

Members present: Ann Ragland; Wallace Ashley, Jr.; Candace Jackson; Bettie Robinson; and Joe Morgan

Staff present: Code Enforcement Officer Mike McKinney

Members absent: Kay Long, Harold Tharrington, Regina Sanders and Phillip Starr

Invocation

Co-Chairman Ragland opened the meeting with prayer.

Introduction of New Member, Candace Jackson

Ms. Jackson is rejoining the Commission, after having served previously for several years. She expressed pleasure to return to serve with the Commission.

II. Approval of Agenda

On motion of Mr. Ashley, seconded by Ms. Jackson and duly carried, the agenda was approved; with the moving of Mr. Embler's presentation to the time of his arrival so he will not have to wait through discussion of other matters on the agenda.

III. Approval of Meeting Minutes, June 20, 2006

On motion of Ms. Robinson, seconded by Ms. Jackson, the minutes were approved as corrected.

IV. Financial Report

Mr. McKinney presented the monthly report from Finance Director Mark Stephens.

1). Appearance Commission Budget in Public Works

Fiscal Year 2005-06 encumbrance: The Co-Chairmen arranged an encumbrance for purchase of plant materials to be used as a buffer on the east side of the Oakland Cemetery. The encumbrance will use most of the \$4,665 balance from the fiscal year allocation of \$5,000.

FY 2006-07 \$5,000 allocation: When the Commission approved submission of an application for the Creating Place Grant from the North Carolina Arts Council, it adopted the following budget for fiscal year 2006-07:

TOWN OF SMITHFIELD APPEARANCE COMMISSION
 BUDGET STATEMENT FOR APPLICATION TO NORTH
 CAROLINA ARTS COUNCIL

BUDGET CATEGORY	FISCAL YEAR
REVENUE	2006-07
GENERAL FUND TAXES	PROJECTED
GENERAL FUND TAXES	\$ 5,000.00
J. B. GEORGE FUND	\$ 3,500.00
TOTAL REVENUE	\$ 8,500.00
EXPENSE	
LANDSCAPING MATERIALS	\$ 1,000.00
TOWN ENTRYWAY BEAUTIFICATION PROGRAM	\$ 1,000.00
NC ARTS COUNCIL CREATING PLACE GRANTS MATCH	\$ 1,000.00
J. B. GEORGE FUND BEAUTIFICATION PROJECTS	\$ 3,500.00
PEDESTRIAN PLAN COMPLETION	\$ 1,000.00
STREET TREE PLAN	\$ 1,000.00
TOTAL EXPENSE	\$ 8,500.00

Co-Chairman Ragland suggested review and adjustment of the budget expenditure details would be timely early in the current fiscal year.

2). J. B. George Fund

\$3,407 is available to carry over to fiscal year 2006-07 for 2006 approved projects.

Presentation by Smithfield Town Planning Director Paul Emblar

Mr. Emblar shared a perspective on the history of the Commission from his role as both current Planning Director and a former volunteer member of the Commission. He encouraged the Commission to focus on its responsibilities under the newly revised ordinance adopted by Town Council in 2005. He emphasized the need to concentrate on the planning and organizational duties of the Commission. He advised the Commission to involve, to the greatest extent feasible, as many organizations and individuals as possible in the actual programs of the Commission's Plan of Work. He gave an overview of many of the planning and development activities underway in Smithfield.

He invited the Commission members to participate in the monthly planning meetings, at which the new Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) is being drafted. The meetings are held every third Thursday night at the Town Hall. Plans are to present the ordinance to Town Council in the fall of 2006. The UDO will bring up to date the Town's approach to development.

Detailed small area land use plans are underway for five areas of the Town. One example is the proposed Neuse River Canal, featuring a significant water amenity and flood management structure, as well as new residential and commercial areas in the current flood plain of the Neuse River, on the west bank both upstream and downstream from the Market Street bridge.

Mr. Embler advised the entryway assistance plan was approved in the past to be funded as warranted. According to Mr. Embler, the assistance available is \$3,000 per qualifying existing or future commercial property located along one of the Town's major entryways. The availability of this assistance should be of great use in the Commission's current plans for the Brogden Road Entryway.

Mr. Embler also reviewed the Town Commons to Community Park Greenway Trail plan, bidding and construction progress. The greenway is funded with a \$900,000 grant. The trail should open in 2007. The North Carolina Department of Transportation is funding the Buffalo Road underpass for the greenway trail. The greenway compliments the study of the Wake County line to Interstate 95 greenway trail, which is funded by Federal, State, County and town governments. The plan is a pre-requisite to phased implementation of a cross county trail, that is coordinated with the long term North Carolina, mountain to the sea trail planning.

At the Community Park, off Booker Dairy Road, a natatorium is planned in cooperation with the Johnston County School Board. The facility will be an attractive compliment to other Town recreation amenities, which will put Smithfield at or equal any Town of its size in the southeastern United States.

He also advised of the recent Town Council adoption of an incentive for new residential construction. Emphasis will be on environmentally sensitive development with attention to open space. The increase in rental occupied residences remains a planning challenge in Smithfield. The impact of the new Historic District Ordinance will require maintenance of significant architectural features.

He commended Mr. McKinney for having over 1,300 active code compliance investigations underway in 2006. A minimum housing code enforcement officer is budgeted for addition to the Planning Department staff in 2007.

He reviewed planning on the traffic congestion in the vicinity of the Pottery and outlet malls. A threefold rise in traffic is expected within ten years, increasing traffic up to 45,000 vehicles per day, on West Market Street.

He responded to questions on sidewalk improvement. He recommended supporting the Public Works Department's emphasis on sidewalk inventory and assessment, so that a long-term plan for sidewalk maintenance can be implemented and funded. The Rural Planning Organization is funding the sidewalk study underway this year. The study may offer an opportunity to plan sidewalk and pedestrian access improvements.

He and Mr. McKinney advised the new secretary for the Planning Department would be available to record the minutes of the Commission, beginning with the August Commission meeting.

He noted the high daytime population of Smithfield, and its role hosting the seat of county government, create a disproportionate emergency services and law enforcement burden. That burden is not offset by property taxes due to the tax-exempt status of the county owned facilities. To date paying service fees to offset the burden has not been well received by the Johnston County government. Adding to this burden is the Town's responsibility, under state and federal law, for storm water management. Smithfield is at the low range of the population bracket eligibility for such management. Smaller towns escape eligibility and do not bear the same storm water management burden.

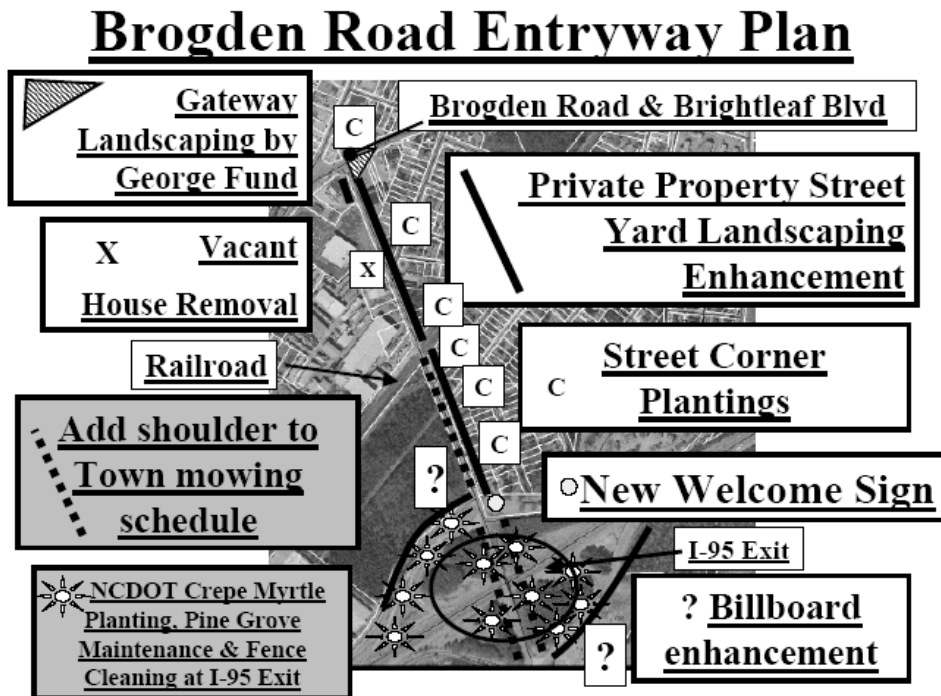
He noted work on the Shirley family property west of the Market Street Bridge. He is working with the property owners to suggest enhancements for both appearance and commercial viability.

Co-chairman Ragland thanked Mr. Embler for his informative presentation.

V. Old Business

1). Brogden Road Entryway:

Mr. Morgan presented a draft plan. The next steps are for the committee to review the draft and seek cost estimates for the plan components. The committee set a meeting for 4:45 p.m. on Tuesday, August 15 at the Town Hall conference room. A schematic of the plan is:



2). Chamber of Commerce Development Committee:
The Chamber of Commerce staff has been notified of Mr. Starr's appointment.

3). Update of J. B. George Approved Projects
Scheduling of projects is underway. Parks and Recreation Director Tim Johnson has approved the installation of the Spring Branch Second Street Culvert bank stabilization plantings and the Riverwalk Day Lily bed. He offered for his grounds maintenance crew to assist the Public Works Appearance Division staff with the installation. Public Works Director Marty Anderson has advised Mr. Morgan to work with Appearance Division Director Lenny Branch to order and schedule the installation of the Spring Branch, Riverwalk and Brightleaf Boulevard / Brogden Road corner landscaping prior to cold weather. Mr. Anderson advised that the Riverwalk Day Lily bed will need to avoid removal of any substantial trees as mandated by the State law protecting riparian buffers.

4). East Market Street Civic Welcome Sign
Mr. Ashley has reviewed the status of the civic clubs that are listed on the sign. He has talked with several clubs and encouraged them to provide an updated sign. The Jaycees and Optimists signs may be removed, as these clubs are no longer active. The Chamber of Commerce has been asked to provide a sign with its new logo. Mr. Ashley is making contact with all the other clubs currently listed, except the GFWC, which cannot be identified. Mr. Ashley will request Public Works Director Marty Anderson to remove the signs for the Jaycees, Optimists and GFWC.

5). Recognition Celebration with Heritage Center
Scheduling the date and event planning will be placed on the August Commission agenda.

VI. New Business

1). Guest Speaker, Mr. Paul Embler, Planning Director

Mr. Embler's presentation was made earlier in the meeting.

2). Review of Member Website Information

The Commission corrected the listing and requested the following information be placed on the Town web page:

APPEARANCE COMMISSION

Meets 3rd Tuesday of each month, 6:00 PM, Town Hall

[Click here to view minutes of the Smithfield Appearance Commission.](#)

Name	Phone	e-mail	Yrs. Served at term ends	Term expires
Kay Long (co-chair)	989-8671	bnkaymonet@earthlink.net	6	2/09

Name	Phone	e-mail	Yrs. Served at term ends	Term expires
Ann Ragland (co-chair)	938-2083	rragla24154@earthlink.net	3	2/08
Wallace Ashley Jr.	934-4431	-	9	2/09
Candace Jackson	938-2820	candacej@ipass.net	6	
Joe Morgan (corresponding secretary)	938-3025	jnmorgan@megahits.com	3	8/07
Betty Robinson	989-8018	-	3	6/07
Regina Sanders	934-5077	-	6	2/09
Phillip Star (recording secretary)	417-1500	pstarr2@nc.rr.com	6	6/07
Harold Tharrington	934-3749	hwtharrin@aol.com	3	3/09
Staff Liaison:				
Mike McKinney	934-2071	mike.mckinney@ci.smithfield.nc.us		

3). SUP-06-09, John Dupree

Mr. McKinney explained the request and staff report. The request is to open a restaurant with pool tables in the Equity Plaza retail shopping center. Staff recommends the establishment maintain the standards set under the Alcohol and Beverage Control Regulations for restaurant operation and, if not, the entire establishment will be closed and the Special Use Permit revoked. Landscaping standards within the Equity Plaza will meet current Town requirements for new commercial establishments.

On motion of Mr. Ashley, seconded by Mr. Morgan and duly carried, the Commission recommended approval of the request as recommended by the Planning Department staff.

4). SUP-06-10, Joey Boykin

Mr. McKinney explained the request and staff report. The request is for a “fee for play” soccer field. Staff recommends approval with additional parking, dedicated access and compliance with Town commercial street-yard standards. Street yard landscaping for the site was previously required when the automotive sales business was established thereon; however, the landscaping

does not extend the entire length of the property along the Interstate 95 on and off ramps. These ramps, particularly the off ramp for northbound Interstate 95 traffic are the beginning of a major entryway into Smithfield via Brogden Road. It is the Commission's hope that the appearance of the Brogden Road entryway can be substantially improved.

On motion of Mr. Morgan, seconded by Ms. Ragland and duly carried, the Commission recommended approval of the Special Use Permit request, with the conditions recommended by the Planning Department staff, and with the requirement that landscaping required for commercial street yard frontage be installed on the property adjacent to the entire length of the Interstate 95 on and off ramps, which border the property.

5). SUP-06-011, Joey Boykin

Mr. McKinney explained the request and staff report. The request is for the same site as the previous request listed in these minutes. The request is for a mobile taco stand trailer for use during sporting events.

On motion of Mr. Ashley, seconded by Mr. Robinson and duly carried, the Commission recommended approval of the Special Use Permit request.

VII. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned. The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Town of Smithfield Appearance Commission will be held at 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday, August 15, 2006 at 6:00 p.m. in the Town Hall conference room.