

Smithfield Historic Preservation Commission Minutes
Tuesday, May 2, 2006
4:00 p.m., Town Hall Meeting Room

Members Present:

Richard Williams
Chris Johnson
Shirley Booker
Todd Johnson
Julia Narron
Jan Branch

Members Absent:

Staff Present:

Mark Helmer

Chairman Williams opened the public meeting.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM APRIL 2006.

OPEN DISCUSSION

Mr. Williams recommended the following items to be addressed by the Board as part of a 12 month plan of action for the Board

1. Designate the Bingham and Hastings houses as historic properties. Mary Frances Bingham has been contacted and is OK with the designation.
2. Get the Design Guidelines approved.
 - A. We need a Landmark Designation Application in order to designate historic properties. Todd moved, with Chris' second, that we use the State's forms. All approved.
 - B. We also need to review the final draft and obtain approval from Melinda Coleman at the State Preservation office. Chris will present to the HPC the final draft of the Guidelines by our June 6 meeting.
3. Get Certified Local Government (CLG) designation.
4. Schedule the Ed McMahon video to be shown to the Town Council by August.

Chris Johnson stated that items #1 and #2 would need to be approved by the Town Council.

Todd Johnson stated that Nancy Van Dolsen is working on a comprehensive plan of which properties need to be designated as historic. She should have the plan to him by the middle of next week.

Mr. Williams asked how the Board could do something visual to let the people of Smithfield know that the Historic Preservation Commission exists.

Julia Narron suggested signs at the entrances to each historic area such as “Historic Brooklyn.”

Jan Branch said that we could use add-on signs such as are used in Atlanta. They are simple plaques reading “Historic Brooklyn” that are attached to the top of street-corner signs.

Chris Johnson noted that the add-on signs should all be uniform and tie in with what is being done in the new downtown streetscape project. He asked if we should request the Town to set aside money for the signs.

Mark Helmer said that he was not aware of any money left in the Planning Department budget for HPC’s use and the Town’s fiscal year ends in June. The members of the HPC thought there was money for our use. This needs to be clarified.

Richard Williams will ask Pete for \$6000 to be put in the next year’s budget.

Julia Narron stated that we really should do something at Christmas reflecting our historic purpose. She suggested that, on the Third Street lawn of the Courthouse, we could put white lights in the trees, life-sized reindeer, etc. Also we should ask businesses and homeowners in the historic areas to put white candles in all of their windows. The Board agreed to explore that issue further and hopefully decide at the next meeting.

The Board again discussed as to whether and when to do a tour of homes. The houses look beautiful at Christmas, but there are many conflicts. The town is beautiful in spring, so that time of year is also a possibility.

Shirley Booker stated that we need a good reason for doing a tour as a fundraiser in order to justify the cost of tickets. Possibilities are to revitalize public gardens, rehabilitate the Hasting House, etc.

Shirley Booker and Julia Narron agreed to look into which homes might be amenable to public tours. We will decide on the timing at our next meeting.

OLD BUSINESS.

There was none.

NEW BUSINESS.

There was none.

ADJOURNMENT.

Being nothing further, the meeting was adjourned.