

The Town of Smithfield Appearance Commission met in regular session on Tuesday, October 15, 2019, 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
MaryFoy Ragsdale

Members Absent

Councilman David Steven
Perry Harris

Staff Present

Lenny Branch – Public Works Director
Shannan Parrish – Town Clerk

Staff Absent

Call to Order

Chairperson Peggy Scott called the meeting to order at 5:03 pm

Invocation

Chairperson Peggy Scott offered the invocation

Approval of Meeting Minutes – September 19, 2019

Vice Chairperson Robin Cook made a motion, seconded by Jeremy Pearce, to approve the September minutes as submitted. Unanimously approved.

Financial Report

Appearance Commission General Fund Balance – \$3,865.00 will be remaining after estimated funding for approved projects. Estimated total for approved projects is \$27,500.00

\$835.00 of the \$1,500 budgeted was spent on trees for Johnston, Front and South 3rd Street

Donate-A-Tree Account Balance – \$836.75.

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

J.P. George Fund Balance – \$1,117.53

Chairperson Peggy Scott informed the members of the Appearance Commission that Finance Director Greg Siler wished to speak with her about the endowment accounts and the interest they were earning. As of the meeting, she had been unable to schedule a time to meet with Mr. Siler.

Lenny Branch informed the members of the Appearance Commission he recently met with Mr. George. Mr. George was inquiring if the Commission was satisfied with the endowment funds and how the funds could be used. Mr. Branch stated Mr. George was complimentary of the Appearance Commission and of all the completed project. Mrs. Scott questioned if the endowment funds could be used for the Wayfinding Project plantings. Mr. Branch responded those funds could be used for the Wayfinding plantings.

DSDC Report

Jeremy Pearce provided an update to the Appearance Commission on the Downtown Smithfield Development Corporation's monthly meeting. Topics of discussion were as follows: Numerous Downtown Events, Wayfinding signs and Progress on the Downtown Wi-Fi. Mr. Pearce explained the Wi-Fi would be installed from Bridge to Front Street and from Fifth Street to the Neuse River Bridge. Eventually, it would

branch out to all the parks. Chairperson Peggy Scott questioned if speakers could be attached to the light poles so music could be played in the downtown area. Mr. Branch responded the speakers would have to be placed high enough to be out of reach of vandals. Last year, several of the light sets on the Market Street trees were cut into several pieces and would have to be replaced.

Wayfinding

Chairperson Peggy Scott informed the members of the Appearance Commission that she and Planning Director Stephen Wensman visited all of the Wayfinding signs to determine if the approved landscape design would accentuate the signs. The original design has Nellie Stevens Hollies on both side of the sign, oak leaf hydrangea directly next to the sign, and vintage jade in front of the sign. After visiting the signs, it was determined the vintage jade should be replaced with miniature loropetalum so as to not obstruct the view of the sign. The Gateway sign on highway 301 South near Holt Lake currently seemed to be hidden by overgrowth, but Public Works crews would be clearing the area. The gateway sign on Highway 70 West will have a different landscape design because 2 additional Nellie Stevens trees will be planted behind the sign. It was discussed that the landscaping at the gateway sign on Highway 70 East near Ruby Tuesdays not obstruct the view of the restaurant. Lighting would be installed before any of the plants were installed. It was suggested that lights be placed in the Nellie Stevens trees during the Christmas holiday.

Mrs. Scott informed the members of the Appearance Commission that Johnston County Visitors Bureau and the Downtown Smithfield Development Corporation could partner with the Appearance Commission to fund larger future projects.

Project Updates:

Boat Ramp Estimated cost \$30,000 / \$20,000 from App Comm and \$15,000 Grant from Johnston County Visitor's Bureau

- Flag pole;3 Picnic tables; 1 garbage receptacle
- Sail Shade shelter installed with concrete pad
- We voted to add an additional \$5,000 to the project to cover landscaping and some fencing

Chairperson Peggy Scott informed the members of the Appearance Commission she spoke with Parks and Recreation Director Gary Johnson about the project. The actual shelter will be 16' to 18' by 24'. If any larger, it would decrease the parking area. Mr. Johnson asked for a recommendation for the shade sails so he can solicit the required three bids for the project. Julia Narron questioned why the design included the shade sails instead of a solid structure. Mrs. Scott explained the Appearance Commission chose a design that was more cost effective and more modern. The shade sales would be installed high enough to ward off any type of vandalism.

Below are the recommendations for the shade sale color and pole color:

- Connie Barbour: Dark green shade sales with brown or black poles
- Julia Narron: Dark green shade sales with brown or black poles
- MaryFoy Ragsdale: Dark green shade sales with brown poles
- Robin Cook: Dark green shade sales with black poles
- Jeremy Pearce: Dark green shade sales with black poles
- Lenny Brach: Khaki shade sales with black poles

The ultimate goal for the area would be to expand the parking lot, construct permanent restrooms, clear and landscape the area near Dr. Booker's property, clear and landscape the hillside adjacent to the picnic

area. Fencing would also be installed between the picnic area and the parking lot. The picnic area would have three picnic tables and one garbage receptacle. Installing a grill was also an option though Mr. Johnson was cautious because people sometimes do not properly dispose of hot coals/ashes. Signs could be placed on the grill as a reminder of how to properly dispose hot coals/ashes. Smith-Collins Park has an installed grill and there has never been an issue. Also, until permanent restrooms could be constructed, a privacy fence could be installed around the portable restroom. Jeremy Pearce questioned if the picnic area would be a rented space. Mrs. Scott responded she was unsure, but could ask Mr. Johnson. It was the consensus of the Appearance Commission to determine if the area would be considered a Parks and Recreation rental facility before deciding on the purchase and installation of a grill.

It was the decision of the Appearance Commission to allow Gary Johnson to choose the flag pole based on the recommendation made by the Commission. There was no decision on where the flag pole would be installed, but it was suggested it be installed in the lighted area.

Improve Old Well Cover

Vice Chairperson Robin Cook informed the members of the Appearance Commission that she received the bid in the amount of \$3,800.00 to repair the Grantham Well on South Fourth Street. The Grantham's granddaughter, Lena Parks, was willing to contribute \$2,800.00 to restore the well back to its original state. Mrs. Parks also wants to set up a fund to ensure the well will always be maintained. Chairperson Peggy Scott suggested the Appearance Commission contribute \$1,000.00 since Mrs. Parks was willing to pay the lion's share of cost.

Connie Barbour made a motion, seconded by Jeremy Pearce, to spend \$1,000.00 on the Grantham Well Restoration Project. Unanimously approved.

Projects in the future:

Neighborhood Sign

Chairperson Peggy Scott questioned who was responsible for maintaining and cleaning the Historic Brooklyn Neighborhood Signs on South Third Street and South Fourth Street. Mr. Branch responded his crews cleaned them earlier in the day. He explained the sign on Third Street was faded and needed to be replaced. Mrs. Scott questioned if it was the Appearance Commission's responsibility to fix the signs. Mr. Branch responded it was not the Appearance Commission's responsibility, but could be the responsibility of the Downtown Smithfield Development Corporation or the Historic Properties Commission. Vice Chairperson Robin Cook will speak with Chris Johnson or the Planning Director Stephen Wensman about replacement of the signs.


Trees for Market street

Chairperson Peggy Scott stated the dead Paper Bark Maple Trees on Market Street needed to be replaced, but she asked the members of the Appearance Commission to be patient to see how the new trees on Johnston Street survived. Mrs. Scott stated the Appearance Commission should do some research on street trees that would be appropriate for the area and that would also be accentuated by the up-lighting. Vice Chairperson Robin Cook questioned if the dead trees could be removed and new trees planted later. Julia Narron suggested contacting an arborist. Mrs. Scott responded that Anita Liverman had contact an arborist when she was on the commission. Connie Barbour suggesting setting funds aside for a tree study. Lenny Branch responded the Town already has such a study.

Adjournment

Being no further business, Vice Chairperson Robin Cook made a motion, seconded by Jeremy Pearce, to adjourn the meeting. The meeting adjourned at approximately 6:17 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Shannan L. Parrish". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial 'S'.

Shannan L. Parrish
Town Clerk