

The Town of Smithfield Appearance Commission met in regular session on Tuesday, November 17, 2020, at 5:00 in the Town Hall Council Chambers located at 350 East Market Street, Smithfield, North Carolina.

Members Present

Peggy Scott – Chairperson
Robin Cook – Vice Chairperson
Stuart Lee
MaryFoy Ragsdale

Members Absent

Councilman David Steven
Connie Barbour
Julia Narron
Jeremy Pearce

Staff Present

Lawrence Davis – Public Works Superintendent
Shannan Parrish – Town Clerk

Staff Absent

Call to Order

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

Invocation

Lawrence Davis offered the invocation.

Approval of Meeting Minutes – October 20, 2020

Stuart Lee made a motion, seconded by Vice Chairperson Robin Cook, to approve the October minutes as submitted. Unanimously approved.

Chair Person and Vice Chairperson

**Traditionally they are voted in at our January Meeting.
2 nominees will be needed**

Chairperson Peggy Scott explained that at the January meeting the Appearance Commission would vote to elect a Chairperson and Vice Chairperson. She stated she would be stepping down from the Chairperson's position because she has served in this roll since she has been on the Commission. She asked if anyone had any questions or nominees to put forward for a vote.

Chairperson Peggy Scott informed the member of the Appearance Commission that Jeremy Pearce was not seeking reappointment to the Commission after his term expired in December.

Financial Report

Appearance Commission General Fund Balance – \$ 15,369.66
Donate-A-Tree Account Balance – \$200.00
J. B. George Fund Balance – \$3,637.34
J.P. George Fund Balance – \$708.73

Downtown Tree Lights

Chairperson Peggy Scott questioned when all the lights would be removed from the downtown trees. Lawrence Davis responded that staff had already begun working on removing the lights and most of the project should be completed.

Traffic Island on 301 South near Food Lion and Carroll Pharmacy

Chairperson Peggy Scott informed the members of the Appearance Commission that she spoke with Public Works Director Lenny Branch about this area. The landscaping contractor is maintaining the area every two weeks and has begun chemically treating the area for weeds and nuisance grasses. Mrs. Scott stated once the sign was completely cleaned, it was determined it was in disrepair. It was the consensus of the Commission to remove the sign. If the original donors wished to have the sign replaced, the Appearance Commission would replace it.

Revitalization Grant

Chairperson Peggy Scott informed the members of the Appearance Commission the grant had been submitted. She asked if anyone had any revitalization project ideas. She further stated that these funds could be used to install grates around the downtown trees from First Citizens Bank to Highway 301 since those trees do not have grates.

Project Updates

Yellow Rose – Ava Gardner Memorial Donation

This item was not discussed.

Boat Ramp

Steps: new steps have been installed next to the driveway going down to the boat ramp. Replacing the older set at the other end not started as of 11/13.

Landscaping: Under the recommendation of Lenny Branch we met with Clayton Narron 11/5 to discuss ideas and plans for Landscaping. He will get back to us in 6-8 weeks with ideas and options

Chairperson Peggy Scott informed the members of the Appearance Commission that there had been difficulties with the original landscaper providing a design for the boat ramp area. Public Works Director Lenny Branch suggested the Commission contact Clayton Narron. Mr. Narron met with Mrs. Scott and Mrs. Cook on November 5th and provided great ideas for the area. It was determined that natural landscaping such as large rocks or boulders could be used on the hillside along with grasses or plantings. Mr. Narron would research plants that could withstand flooding. The large rocks could also help with the erosion of the hillside. Mrs. Cook also suggested a design from the walking path to the boat ramp so the entire area would have a complete look. Mrs. Scott stated it would most likely be next October before the plantings were completed, but the installation of the large rocks and removal of the trees near the parking lot could be completed before October. She further stated Mr. Narron was willing to provide a complete presentation to the Appearance Commission at the next meeting. Since that project would not be completed during this fiscal year, Mrs. Scott suggested moving forward with the replacement of the dead trees on Market Street.

Market Street Trees

Chairperson Peggy Scott informed the members of the Appearance Commission that Mr. Davis is going to contact the local nurseries to see if the Tokyo Tower Fringe trees can be locally purchased. She and Mr. Davis estimated it would cost \$300 for each of the 15 needed trees for a total of \$4,500. The Paper Bark Maple Trees on Market Street from the First Citizens Bank to Highway 301 have all died and most of the uplighting is not visible because of overgrowth. Stuart Lee suggested adding a high quality weed suppression fabric and rubber mulch when the trees are replaced. Vice Chairperson Robin Cook questioned if there were grates around those trees. Mrs. Scott responded the grates for the trees do not extend into that area. Mr. Davis will also check on the cost to install grates for the 15 trees. Mr. Lee suggested that Mr. Davis determine if the Tokyo Tower Fringe trees

could be purchased. If they could not be purchased, the find out if one of the other 2 top trees could be purchased and use his best judgement. Mr. Lee also suggested that the soil be tested at each of the 15 tree sights. It was the consensus of the Commission that soil testing should be completed first.

Stuart Lee made a motion, seconded by MaryFoy Ragsdale, to authorize spending \$400 for each of the 15 tree sites on East Market Street for a total of \$6,000. Unanimously approved.

Lighting the Community

Chairperson Peggy Scott stated that at the last meeting it was discussed that the lighting the community project could be done on the Greenway from the Amphitheater to the Boat Ramp. During that discussion, it was unsure if walking along the Greenway at night was encouraged. Mrs. Scott explained that the Greenway closes at dusk so lighting there would not be feasible.

Smithfield Art Walk

Chairperson Peggy Scott informed the members of the Appearance Commission that Mr. Lee had provided a comprehensive proposal for the Smithfield Art Walk. She stated she spoke with the Town Manager and he felt funds from tourism that could be used for this project. Mr. Lee stated artists would be encouraged to participate if there was a prize, but this project was community driven and not paid artist driven. Mrs. Scott stated that no one that participated should have to pay for supplies since they were donating their time and their talent. Mr. Lee suggested the plan be provided to the Town Manager for his endorsement. Since DSDC works directly with the downtown property and business owners, it may be beneficial for the Appearance Commission to contact Sarah Edwards to help set up a meeting with the Appearance Commission and property owners to ascertain if they would be in favor of the project and offer the use of their buildings. Mr. Lee stated there was a building on Market Street across from the church that would be a perfect location for a mural of the Smithfield logo which would have to be professional done. The building is believed to be owned by Allen Wellons. MaryFoy Ragsdale stated she would speak to Mr. Wellons about the use of his building for a mural.

Additional comments or concerns:

There were no additional comments or concerns

Adjournment

Being no further business, Vice Chairperson Robin Cook made a motion, seconded by Stuart Lee, to adjourn the meeting. The meeting adjourned at approximately 6:07 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,



Shannan L. Parrish
Town Clerk