

The Town of Smithfield Appearance Commission met in regular session on Tuesday, January 19, 2021, at 5:00 in the Town Hall Council Chambers located at 350 East Market Street, Smithfield, North Carolina.

Members Present

Peggy Scott – Chairperson
Stuart Lee – Chairperson-Elect
Connie Barbour
Julia Narron
MaryFoy Ragsdale

Members Absent

Councilman David Steven
Robin Cook – Vice Chairperson

Staff Present

Michael Scott – Town Manager
Lawrence Davis – Public Works Superintendent
Gary Johnson – Parks and Recreation Director
Shannan Parrish – Town Clerk

Staff Absent

Call to Order

Chairperson Peggy Scott called the meeting to order at 5:05 pm

Invocation

Stuart Lee offered the invocation.

Approval of Meeting Minutes – November 17, 2020

Connie Barbour made a motion, seconded by MaryFoy Ragsdale, to approve the November minutes as submitted. Unanimously approved.

Chairperson and Vice Chairperson

Chairperson Peggy Scott made a motion, seconded by Connie Barbour, to nominate Stuart Lee to serve as the Chairperson of the Appearance Commission. Unanimously approved.

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

(Newly elected Chairperson Stuart Lee conducted the remainder of the meeting)

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

DSDC Report

Currently, there are no Appearance Commission members serving on the DSDC Board. Julia Narron informed the Appearance Commission members that she would provide the DSDC report to the Appearance Commission in the future.

Project Updates

Market Street Trees

Public Works Superintendent Lawrence Davis informed the members of the Appearance Commission he tried to locate the Tokyo Tower Trees for the Market Street Project. The trees are not in circulation at this time, but they would be available in July or August. Mr. Davis was told that the trees were rare. These trees would be ordered from a vendor in Michigan. Mr. Davis further explained the trees were available in 7 gallon and 15 gallon. The 7-gallon trees cost \$89.95 a tree and the 15-gallon cost \$163.95. Since 12 trees were needed, it would cost \$1,079.40 for the 7-gallon trees and \$1,967.40 for the 15-gallon trees.

Mr. Davis explained he also investigated the cost of the tree grate systems. The total cost for one grate system would be \$2,124.00. The total cost for ten grate systems would be \$21,240.00. The grates would also have to be welded at an approximate cost of \$200 per grate system.

Mr. Davis informed the members of the Appearance Commission that he was awaiting the results of the soil samples. The total cost of the 10 soil samples was \$40.00. Funds for these samples were taken from the JP George Street Tree Endowment.

Mrs. Scott reminded everyone that Jennifer Rauls from Urban Forestry recommended the trees be purchased locally so they would survive. The Paper Bark Maple Trees were purchased from the NC mountains and all but a few have died. Mr. Davis stated he spoke with Lanny at Swift Creek Nursery and he was unfamiliar with the Tokyo Tower tree. Mrs. Scott asked Mr. Davis if he would ask Lanny for a tree recommendation. If the trees had to be ordered, they needed to be ordered at the same time so they would be the same size and color. Mr. Davis suggested he receive the soil samples and then speak with Lanny about the type of trees that could be planted based on the results of the samples.

Smithfield Art Walk

MaryFoy Ragsdale stated she emailed Mr. Wellons about the use of his building for a mural, but had not received a reply. Chairperson Stuart Lee stated he would take a photo of the building and do a mock-up of how the mural could look on the building.

Mr. Lee suggested that the Commission members look for any additional areas in the downtown for potential locations for the art walk.

Peggy Scott questioned if anyone had talked with Sarah Edwards, DSDC Executive Director, about the art walk idea. Mr. Lee stated he would schedule a meeting with Ms. Edwards to discuss the project.

Boat Ramp

Clayton Narron provided a landscape rendering of the boat ramp area. He explained the overall project would have white and pink muhly grass along the bank. Boulders would be installed at various locations on the slope to break the landscape areas into sections. Old lace juniper would be planted around the groups of rocks/boulders. In the flagpole and picnic area, low growing gardenia and lora pendulum would be planted. River Birch trees would be planted. Mr. Narron suggested removing the Bradford Pear trees and installing Cherry Trees on the back side of the parking lot and in the medians. Holly trees were to be installed at the end of the parking lot near the picnic area. Mr. Narron stated if this plan was acceptable, he could develop a construction plan and cost estimates could be obtained from Lanny at Swift creek Nursery.

MaryFoy Ragsdale asked for Mr. Narron's opinion on the types of trees that could be planted on Market Street to accentuate the uplighting. Mr. Narron responded he would investigate the types of trees that would flourish in the area. Mr. Narron will provide a construction plan to Mrs. Scott within two weeks.

Yellow Roses: Ava Gardner Donation

Peggy Scott informed the members of the Appearance Commission that she received an email from Todd Johnson concerning the Ava Gardner Rose Garden. The email explained that Carmen Vargas, secretary to Ava Gardner, is having an Ecuadorian horticulturist to develop a hybrid rose that will be named after Ava Gardner. These are the roses Ms. Vargas would like to donate for the Rose Garden. It will likely be another year before the project can move forward.

Talking Voice Boxes – Oakey the Oak Tree

Peggy Scott informed the members of the Appearance Commission that the talking oak tree near the river has been a success. She suggested possibly installing others around Town near the Hastings House, Riverside Cemetery, and the old bridge site. Julia Narron questioned if there was a way to determine how often it was being used. Parks and Recreation Director Gary Johnson responded he would find out if it produced that type of data. The total cost of each would be \$1500.

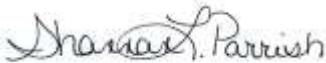
Additional comments or concerns:

Chairperson Stuart Lee suggested the Commission begin recruitment efforts for citizens who would serve on the Appearance Commission.

Adjournment

Being no further business, Julia Narron made a motion, seconded by MaryFoy Ragsdale, to adjourn the meeting. The meeting adjourned at approximately 6:04 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,



Shannan L. Parrish
Town Clerk