

**DRAFT**  
**Smithfield Historic Properties Minutes**  
**Thursday, October 15, 2020**  
**3:00 P.M., Town Hall, Conference Room**

**Members Present:**

Chairman-Dr. Oliver Johnson  
Jan Branch  
Paul Worley  
Rachel Ayers

**Members Absent:**

Deanna Simmons  
Vice-Chair-Art Andrews

**Staff Present:**

Stephen Wensman, Planning Director  
Mark Helmer  
Gary Johnson  
Sarah Edwards

**Staff Absent:**

Julie Edmonds, Admin Support

**Call to Order**

**Approval of the minutes July 20<sup>th</sup>, 2020**

Paul Worley made a motion to approve the minutes from July 20<sup>th</sup>, 2020; seconded by Jan Branch. Unanimously Approved

**Public Hearing**

None

**New Business**

Stephen Wensman stated that the proposed ordinance amendment will adopt the HPC regulations into the UDO. They were left out of the UDO when the Planning Board and Board of Adjustments were moved to the UDO.521.2. Instead, they remained in the Town's Administrative Code. We hope to accomplish this at the next Town Council meeting or soon afterwards.

Dr. Oliver Johnson said looking at section 3.5 Historic Properties Commission, it still reads the Purpose of this District instead of Commission. It was agreed upon at the last HPC meeting in July that it would be changed. He wanted to make sure this was corrected before it went to Town Council for approval.

Mr. Wensman said he would make the correction and thanked Dr. Johnson for catching the error.

Mr. Wensman mentioned the proposed ordinance amendment will change the official name of the Smithfield Historic Properties Commission to Historic Preservation Commission to match the Board's name as found in the Town of Smithfield Historic Preservation Design Guidelines manual.

## Proposed Ordinance Defines Major and Minor Work

### 3.5.21.2 Work Requiring a Certificate of Appropriateness

3.5.21.2.1 Minor Works. Certain activities are considered by the Commission to not have a significant impact on the exterior appearance of the historic structures, and are delegated to the appropriate staff person for administrative approval.

3.5.21.2.2 Major Works. Consist of modifications which significantly alter the appearance of the structure or site. These projects are required to be reviewed by the Commission. The Commission shall hold public hearings for these cases.

Gary Johnson, Smithfield Parks and Recreation Director discussed a 170,000 grant for the Hastings House. In order to be eligible for the grant the property had to be eligible for the National Registry. The preliminary determination for eligibility was done from the NC HPO office. That went to the Department of Interior. They received a letter from the Department of Interior stating that the Hastings House was eligible to be placed on the national registry of Historic Places. In order to get the grant, they have to make application to the registry for inclusion.

Sarah Edwards, Downtown Development Director stated this grant was for damage done to publicly owned buildings by recent hurricanes.

Gary Johnson said not only is the Hastings House eligible but he questions if the Primitive Church, the Town Commons and even the boat ramp all the way back to the cemetery would be. The decision to include it would be up to the Town Council.

Mark Helmer said Planning Staff met with Jennifer Rose from the NC State Historic Preservation Office. She's the National Registered Coordinator. Jennifer mentioned visiting Smithfield to inventory the structures in the area and she mentioned some properties that Sarah Edwards thought would be of interest.

Sarah Edwards said currently Smithfield has 3 Historic Districts the North Smithfield Historic District, the Brooklyn Historic District and the Downtown Historic District. She named off a few locations that could be included into the Historic District.

Paul Worley asked if the properties on North Third Street, North of the Heritage Center had been altered too much to come into the Historic District.

Sarah Edwards said yes, from We Ship It down to Pizazz and even on down to The Meeting Place as well. The Meeting Place is a very large building that doesn't serve a lot of modern uses. It was built as a Sears Distribution Center. There is potential for that block to be redeveloped.

Paul Worley asked if there was a local match on the Parks and Recreation Grant.

Gary Johnson said no.

Paul Worley asked if it was coming from FEMA or State money.

Gary Johnson said it federal funding but he doesn't think it is coming from FEMA.

Paul Worley asked if there were terms and conditions regarding continuing control over the property once funds are awarded.

Gary Johnson said there are for a certain number of years based on the amount of money you receive. You can request up to 1 million dollars and for the Town of Smithfield it would be for 10 years. It would have to be open to the public so many hours per week.

Mark Helmer showed a map of the Proposed Historic Smithfield Riverfront study area. It starts from the Girl Scout Hut and ends at the Boat Ramp. All of these proposed sites are owned by the Town except for the Little Brown Jug. He went through each property explaining some of the history on each one and provided photographs of them. He also shared a website for the board members to visit that gives information on any property through the North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office. This is a GIS web service.

Mary Nell Ferguson said we have the map and we have looked at the district. Will the next step be for someone to come out from the State?

Mark Helmer said yes, before we make application to be nominated, we need them to be on board with it. If they are not interested, then they will make recommendations and if they can't they will let us know before we go to the trouble of hiring consultants and generating all these reports only to be turned down.

Mark Helmer recommended hiring a consultant if this board did want to do something like a district.

### **Old Business**

None

### **Adjournment**

Jan Branch made a motion to adjourn the meeting; seconded by Mary Nell Ferguson. Unanimously approved

Dr. Johnson adjourned the meeting.

The next HPC meeting is scheduled for January 21st, 2021 at 3pm.



Julie Edmonds  
Administrative Support Specialist  
Planning Department