

The Smithfield Board of Historic and Architectural Review held its regular meeting on Tuesday, February 21<sup>st</sup>, 2017. The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. Members present were Mr. Trey Gwaltney, Chairman; Mr. Chris Torre, Vice Chairman; Mr. Ronny Prevatte, Ms. Julia Hillegass, Mr. Russell Hill, Mr. David Goodrich, and Mr. Gary Hess. The staff members present were Mr. William G. Saunders IV, Planning and Zoning Administrator and Mr. William H. Riddick III, Town Attorney. There were thirty-seven (37) citizens present. The media was represented by Ms. Diana McFarland of the Smithfield Times.

Chairman Gwaltney – Ladies and gentlemen, we will call our February meeting of the Board of Historic and Architectural Review to order. Thank you all for coming tonight. The first item on our agenda is the Planning and Zoning Administrator's Report.

Planning and Zoning Administrator – Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would mention that we would possibly have a photograph taken of the Board following the meeting if all members are present. One is not here at the moment. We may or may not be able to do that. I would also like to mention, for the Board members as well as those in the audience, if you are interested in speaking on the 502 Grace Street/Pierceville application it is not a public hearing. Anyone is welcome to speak on that item during the regular public comments section of the agenda. Please do not wait until after public comments for that item on the agenda or you will not be able to speak. It is not a public hearing; so, if you have comments, the proper time to make those comments is during the public comments portion of the agenda.

Chairman Gwaltney – The next item on our agenda is Upcoming Meetings and Activities. We can all see those listed. The next item is Public Comments. I would also like to add that those comments will need to be limited to five (5) minutes. Also, I would like to remind, while we appreciate your concern and thoughts on all of this, the decision that we make as a Board tonight will go on to Town Council for further decision to be made. So, regardless of the outcome on this topic tonight, it will be heard by the Town Council; just so you understand that the buck does not actually stop here. I think we have a few people signed up for comments. When we call your name, please go to podium and state your name and address.

Planning and Zoning Administrator – The first speaker is Mr. Lee Duncan.

Mr. Duncan – I live at 12170 Modest Neck Road in an old house. I am here to talk about delighting the residents and delighting the visitors to this fine town of

Smithfield. Smithfield has a historic district. We have a review Board that helps protect it. We have ordinances and an office that helps enforce that ordinance. It is all part of why our historic district is so wonderful. People come from all over Virginia. They come from elsewhere too because it is beautiful, historic, and it is still here. There were some times in the 1950's, 1960's, 1970's before this historic district existed where a lot of beautiful homes and buildings were demolished. Thank goodness we are past all of that. Now, talking about Pierceville, it is the oldest home in this fine historic district. It was built in 1740. King George II was the king of England. This is an English built house. It was hand hewn from trees that probably grew very close to its current site. It is made of brick. The bricks were probably quarried very close to the house and fired and built there. It is eighty (80%) percent brick. Now, I know what you are thinking, it is not all brick and you are right. It is also made of wood. So, let's go back and do the math. The house was built in 1740 and it is now 2017. That house is two hundred and seventy-seven (277) years old. Some people may think it is 277 years old but it is in shambles; but it is 80% brick. It is not in shambles. You can drive your 1970 Ford Mustang right into the side of it and it would still be standing up. How many hurricanes has it survived? How many Nor-Easters has it survived? Countless; but it may not continue to survive because the current owner does not have the wherewithal to keep it in good repair. The ordinance has protected historic houses and they continue to do so. They said that the house had to be fixed. The owner said she can't or she won't. Offers have been made on this house. This house has been offered to the town with a very small piece of land. It did not include the outbuildings which, by the way, some are as old as the house. Are those outbuildings important? Many people say they are. This was a farm. This farm was there before the town. This farm was there when George Washington supposedly stayed here. It was there when the Revolution took place. It was there during the Civil War. This farm has been here for a very long time. Are the outbuildings important; yes, they are. They fall under the protection of our historic district. Now, some people want to save the house. Have there been reasonable offers to buy or have the land that the house sits on? Yes, even myself, after hearing that the house was going to be given away for free. Free is not enough. This house is worth way more than that so I offered a dollar. I sent the attorney that was in charge of the case a very detailed letter which all the Board members have. I will be happy to share it with anyone in the audience also. Even though I sent them this letter, I never received a

response. I gave them ten (10) good reasons they should accept it. It was ignored. I am not the only one. There is another lady in the audience. Hopefully, she will speak. She was ready to give thousands of dollars for a little bit of land. She wanted to fix up the house. She wanted to fix up the barns. She wanted to make it an asset to our historic district so that even more people would be delighted by this house, delighted by the farmstead. Now, believe it or not, it has been requested to be demolished. We are not talking about changing the color or removing a fence. We are talking about demolishing the oldest house in the town that predates the town. So, what do I want to do? I can cover holes in the house where the weather gets in. You can see the inside of the house from the outside of the house which is really bad. I have a hammer and a drill and a letter for the attorney asking to please let me patch the house for free. I have asked him to please consider this. It would not cost them a dime.

Chairman Gwaltney – Thank you Mr. Duncan.

Planning and Zoning Administrator – Our next speaker is Ms. Cheryl Ketchum.

Ms. Ketchum – I live at 17412 Carroll Bridge Road. I also have a new business at 327 Main Street. I have heard talk that no one has made a reasonable offer for the house and the land. Actually, that is not true. I really wanted the house and the land to fix up as a tourism site. I also work with the Department of Tourism. I ended up opening a general store at 327 Main Street; but I fought hard to get that house to open my store. I also wanted to have five (5) acres so I could have farm animals so the kids could come and see some pigs or maybe a cow. I do have a seventeen (17) acre farm outside of town so I am familiar with raising animals. I have cows, chickens, a donkey, and sheep. I thought it would be fun to bring some animals to town so tourists could actually see farm animals. You would be surprised how many kids have never seen a cow up close. So I offered them their asking price for five (5) acres with the house and a half acre for free which is what they offered; the house and a half acre for free. Well, the house on a half-acre does not include any of the historic outbuildings. I know the ordinances for the town say that you have to have three (3) acres to have farm animals. Since I am familiar with raising farm animals, three (3) acres is not enough if you want a little bit of space. So, I talked to the real estate agent who is responsible and she suggested I offer them the cost of the entire property divided per acre which comes to thirty-four thousand (\$34,000.00) dollars per acre. Then they would give me the house and half an acre for free. So, that is what I did. I sent a letter. You have a copy and what proceeded after

that. So, I offered them their asking price of thirty-four thousand (\$34,000.00) dollars per acre. Well, guess what they did? They came back and said no; that the property was worth more. They said that section was worth fifty thousand (\$50,000.00) dollars per acre and we will only allow you to have three acres. I thought that was ridiculous. They were charging me more for a house that has a lot of liability and then I have to put in an estimated four hundred (\$400,000.00) to five hundred (\$500,000.00) thousand dollars into it to fix it up. I thought that was ridiculous so I met with them again. I do not have a copy of the letter but I think they lowered it by about one thousand per acre. They said I could only have that certain amount of acreage and would have to work with any developer who comes in. They said I could not do anything with it until I talk to the developer. I wonder how many years in the future that might be before I could actually utilize my property. I do not know when there might be a developer picked out who has the proper plans so I gave up. It is really sad that I gave up; but I bought a property on Main Street and since opened up my general store. I still love the property. I drive by it every day. It breaks my heart that it is in such bad condition. I hate to hear them say that they did not have any decent offers. I offered the asking price. Thank you.

Planning and Zoning Administrator – Our next speaker is Mr. Mark Gay.

Mr. Gay – Mr. Chairman and members of the Board, the overwhelming majority of downtown residents and business owners continue to object to the razing of Pierceville. We are providing you a detailed report of the tasks and costs associated with restoration of the Pierce home and outbuildings. We also have a two page, factual summary that captures Thomas Nelson Pierce and Pierceville's historical legacy to our community, the state of Virginia, and our nation. That document also summarizes our opposition to the owner's petition to raze. We ask that you weigh these inputs seriously and that you thoughtfully consider the constructive comments of others who are speaking tonight. Yes, the restoration cost of the physical structures is now considerable. After a near twenty (20) year campaign by those responsible to refuse assistance and obstruct the efforts of well-intended volunteers and to defy the law of the town. However, as the recent advertisement of Preservation of Virginia explains, it has taken eleven (11) years to put together the requisite funding for the Windsor Castle renovation that is now underway. By comparison, we have had fewer than six (6) months to secure funding for Pierceville. We have had precious little, if any, help. The asking price for the fifty-eight (58) acre property remains in excess of one and half

million (\$1,500,000.00) dollars which is three (3) to four (4) times the appraisal value of any comparable farm land and resource management area that I am familiar with in these parts. You should know that we provided Town Council and the Town Manager with a preliminary business plan for Pierceville more than two (2) months ago. We asked them to contact the Trust for Public Land representative for this area. Our intent remains to secure the property at a fair price and a price agreeable to all to establish a profitable organic farm and to restore the Pierce home and outbuildings with those profits. What is needed first is approximately five hundred thousand (\$500,000.00) dollars in first money end funds to make the down payment and allow Trust for Public Land to apply for another five hundred thousand (\$500,00.00) dollars in matching state and federal grants. They have stated that they are confident in accomplishing that. Meanwhile, we continue to solicit private donors for three to five hundred thousand (\$300,000.00 to \$500,000.00) dollar contributions so that everything remains very doable. It simply takes time and unity of effort. In summary, we ask you to reject this latest appeal to raze Pierceville. It fails the requirement for fair value listing in accordance with Article 3M of the Zoning Ordinance. It fails to allow for the necessary time for viable alternatives to be developed, assessed, and funded. Most importantly, it fails the test of common sense as practiced by the citizens of this town and county. Thank you for your consideration.

Chairman Gwaltney – Thank you.

Planning and Zoning Administrator – Our next speakers are Stuart and Bonnie Resor.

Mr. Resor – Good evening Board members. My wife, Bonnie, is with me. We have had an interest in the Pierceville project since Mayor Williams asked us to go and look at it. We had an unsuccessful agreement with Darden Development to fix up or start fixing up the Pierce Manor house and barns on a much more limited budget than Mr. Mark Gay's numbers; but we could certainly enclose it from the weather. We, like Cheryl Ketchum, just gave up at some point; but we did have another strategy that also did not come to pass. This is a fifty-eight (58) acre site with a totally new development on it which is very different from Darden Development. It was a much better project for Smithfield.

Town Attorney – Mr. Resor, your audience is this group.

Mr. Resor – Bonnie and I were first tourists here in Smithfield from California. It is unique nationwide. It is America's finest Victorian town. There is nothing like this in California. You will have tourist from all over. The Pierce manor is a little older than Mr. Duncan had said. If you get the Thomas Pierce will, it looks like it was built around 1730. All of the California missions were built after 1776. That house is older than all of those old missions out there. If they can restore Williamsburg and the Governor's mansion from footings, this house is very restorable. Also, having just walked around the property and never going in, the brick work looks pretty good. It has not collapsed. The ridge beam, the attic beam, the attic structure has not collapsed. There is a lot of deterioration on the sides which does not determine that the building is a total loss. We have a similar interest still. We will be glad if anyone else can get in there and start fixing it up. Our offer was to get the old buildings and begin restoration there. We also needed a five (5) acre portion and that will appear on our drawing. Thank you.

Planning and Zoning Administrator - Our next speaker is Mr. Gary Ramsburg.

Mr. Ramsburg – I live at 4313 Colonial Avenue, Norfolk, Virginia. I am one of the consultants that actually went in and actually got access to the Delk property known as Pierceville. I did an analysis and produced some numbers with Roland McPherson with the McPherson Design Group. Roland is an extremely experienced historical resource in the structural industry. Everybody at Preserve Virginia knows him. He has worked on the Governor's mansion. He has worked on the State Capital and numerous other historic buildings. What we saw and the numbers that we developed, we feel are realistic. There is termite damage. There is a lot of bracing inside. There are sill beams on top of the brick walls that are gone. Our concern is that if it is not mothballed or held in the same state that it is in today then it will further deteriorate. It will occur. Something needs to happen. As another gentleman said, it is a national treasure. This guy signed the Constitution. It is your history and you need to keep that history. Thank you.

Planning and Zoning Administrator – The next speaker is Ms. Betty Clark.

Ms. Clark – I live at 120 North Church Street. There are only twenty (20) houses older than the 1750's on the historic houses list in Virginia. Pierceville is not on that list but should be and upon restoration will be. The Pierce house is older than Mount Vernon. It has taken people and communities working together to restore all of the historical houses in the state that we enjoy visiting. I have some notes from Mark Wagoner who has recently retired from the Virginia Department of Historic Resources.

He said 'the Thomas Pierce house in Smithfield is a significant colonial period dwelling. While Smithfield has a few colonial period buildings, this example has a very traditional eastern Virginia gambrel roof design. Colonial period gambrel roof houses were rarer than regular gables and there are fewer that survived. This large and wide gambrel signifies that the owner had more than average wealth. The families who maintained this farm appeared to have been prosperous based on the extensive number of outbuildings. The Virginia Department of Historic Resources file records for Pierceville go back to the 1930's. The surveyor, Florence Jordan, noted at that time that there were a good many slaves on the farm. Two of the buildings were slave quarters. It appears that at least one of buildings still stands.' The surveyor also notes the burial ground on the property. It is likely to have family members and slave burials. There was no mapping of the property in the 1930's so we do not know where the cemetery is located. With a property of this size, it is likely that some slaves lived immediate to the main house. They would have been the house slaves. The field slaves lived in cabin quarters in the open farm area. It is somewhat likely that there are archeological sites for these field quarters. Their file photos from 1968, 1972, and 1992 show a larger than average number of historic buildings surviving. He notes that based on the roof pitches and exterior details in their older photographs that one farm building may date to the 18<sup>th</sup> century and several others are pre-Civil War period. One building appears to be a double slave tenement. Considered all together, the Pierceville property has a rarer gambrel roof colonial house, a rare ensemble of antebellum farm buildings, relatively high potential for slave field dwelling archeological sites, and a cemetery with multiple burials that spans from the 1700's to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. This is a property that is worth retaining. It is a property that may yield significant historical information valuable for the town and the region. Recent photographs show the damage of an open roof with water infiltration of upper plaster walls and rotting roof timbers. The outbuildings are deteriorating but some may still not have enough physical integrity for rehabilitation. This is what they have in their files. A few days ago, I talked with Sonya Ingram from Preservation Virginia who told me that they work closely with the Department of Historic Resources. She believes it would not be good to let Pierceville continue to deteriorate. These properties are rare and need to be preserved. This is what the state of Virginia thinks. Don't you think we should take those wishes into consideration? Also, we have not heard from Mrs. Crocker in her own words in an open meeting. We only have other

people saying what her wishes are. Don't we find that a little suspect? Don't we owe Mrs. Crocker the courtesy of hearing her personally before deciding to tear down the house she grew up in? You are called the Board of Historical and Architectural Review. Please keep that in mind while you make this decision tonight. Thank you.

Planning and Zoning Administrator – The next speaker is Mr. Albert Burckard.

Mr. Burckard – Mr. Chairman and members of the Board, I live on Titus Point Lane. I am the Secretary to the Isle of Wight County Historical Society. Caroline Keen, who is the president, was here a few minutes ago. She has authorized me to speak on her behalf as well as myself. Mr. Chairman, there is something I would like to pass out. This is something I wrote and essentially tells the story of Pierceville for three (3) or four (4) days in January of 1781 when Benedict Arnold came through. I just want to remind you that we are losing historic properties. I will just go through a list real quickly. The Wilson house which is a turn of the last century house behind Hearn Furniture is gone. The 1821 Ned Bunkley house that used to be on Battery Park Road was torn down about ten (10) years ago. The developer wanted to tear it down in order to develop the property but, of course, he never did. The Ned Bunkley house is gone. The old 1902 jail is gone which is not very long ago; but it was on the exact spot of the 1802 jail at the county courthouse complex which was built by Francis Boykin with his own money. He was trying to get the courts to move next to his tavern. Of course, he was successful. The 1834 Roland Edwards house burned down about ten (10) years ago. It was a real shame. It was supposedly a Confederate hospital. It supposedly has dozens of Confederate soldiers buried in its front yard. Another property from 1846 is gone. You are all familiar with the current one; the Wombwell house. There is also the Jordan house, the 1840 Carroll house, and Pierceville. I am not going to take up a lot of your time. Obviously, I am speaking for preservation of the house. I have no solution. I really do not. It is going to take a lot of money that I do not have. If I won the lottery, I would buy it in a heartbeat but I do not. Whatever you can do as a group, as a committee, and as a town to save it, I would encourage you to do that. Let me just close with a quote, William Morris was an English painter and poet born in 1835 which was one hundred (100) years after Pierceville was built. He says 'these old buildings did not belong to us only. They belong to our forefathers. They will belong to our descendants unless we play them false. They are not in any sense our own property to do with as we like with them. We are only trustees for those that come after us.' Thank you.



Planning and Zoning Administrator – The next speaker is Ms. Kerri Lindsay.

Ms. Lindsay – Good evening. I live at 20524 Creekside Drive in Gatling Pointe. I am here in support of preserving Pierceville for a number of reasons. First of all, I am a transplant. I was born and raised in Kentucky. I moved to this area for its open spaces and its green and rural feel. The town, itself, is quaint and charming. There are plenty of small towns that are charming and quaint to draw people. Something about Smithfield that I have noticed in the ten (10) years that I have lived here is that it is not on a major thoroughfare. You cannot stop here on your way somewhere else. It has to be a destination to come to Smithfield. I work at EVMS in Norfolk. With colleagues and coworkers, I have the privilege to let them know what Smithfield is all about and encourage them to visit. The reason that people come to Smithfield and other small towns is for quiet to get away from Norfolk, Portsmouth, or Virginia Beach and to get away from the congestion. Also, they come for the green, open space, fresh air, and the history. It occurs to me that this is the oldest home in the historic district from what I can understand and what little I know about it. Also, I had never seen it before. I read about it in the paper and I have heard about it; but have never seen it. How many people have actually seen this piece of property? It is so obscured and overrun with overgrowth. It would be wonderful if, perhaps, some of the citizens in Smithfield could actually see the property. I took it upon myself to go and take a peek. I was curious. If others saw it, they would think what I thought which was that it is a beautiful piece of property. It is quite and serene. When you look out across the back, you see the land and where it meets the sky. The structure itself is quite impressive. It holds a lot of history for this area of Smithfield. What I would like to say is that I would like for you to consider preserving this piece of property not just for the sake of finances or agendas or who has to gain from this, that, or the other; but from the perspective of the citizens in Smithfield. They would probably love to see this piece of property. If they did, they might find it reminiscent of Windsor Castle Park like I do. It is a beautiful spot. It is the reason I have come to Smithfield, talked about Smithfield, and love Smithfield. I am proud that I live here. I encourage others from other areas to come in and enjoy it like I enjoy it. I think Pierceville could be a draw similar to Windsor Castle Park if it were given the attention that it needs. Thanks.

Planning and Zoning Administrator – Next we have Ms. Theresa Mulherin.

Ms. Mulherin – I live at 206 Washington Street. I am not going to repeat what everyone else has already said as a courtesy. Lee, I have two drills, buckets, and people that can get those weeds to the dump so do not worry about that. I did a little bit of homework. At first, I had to get my head in the right place. I went all the way back to 1973 to the final application by the town to become a historic district. It was humbling. It will make you cry when you read about all the work that was done to do that. With that in mind, I think the application tonight is really about economic hardship. I went to our town Municipal Code, the BHAR code, and the Historic District Overlay. You have no laws or rules about what is economic hardship when it comes to historic preservation. Washington D.C. does, Georgetown does, Richmond does but you do not. The National Trust issued an opinion about that in 2010. I recommend to BHAR that you obtain that. It contains a checklist for demolition by neglect and a checklist to meet the elements of economic hardship. Meeting the elements are the responsibility of the owner of the property. Some pieces in that reflected that you need to determine is the neglect in any way willful. How long have we been talking about Pierceville? It was before I moved here. Was there any willful neglect on the part of the owner or willful neglect by the town? It is hard to make people spend their money to do; but God forbid you pay your water bill late. There is certainly a consequence for that. It is financial and it is immediate. Go back and take a look at that. I recommend that you read it. Remember that the ultimate price of a property does not factor into a decision about economic hardship. If I could make five million (\$5,000,000.00) dollars for my property; but it really is not worth it now as it is zoned, you cannot consider it. Property owners are not entitled to do whatever they want to do; otherwise, I would build a skyscraper full of apartments and I would not have to work another day in my life. Please consider all of the persons that have actually tried to get fair market price, tried to come up with some sort of plan for the property, and we really were not successful. I think what you should do is to button it down, put a lien against the property, and make sure that whoever buys the rest of the lot fixes that house or takes it over. Also, we should ask the owner if she has ever tried to get it listed as a historic property. Then the door would open to all the public funding that is available. Thank you.

Planning and Zoning Administrator – The next speaker is Mr. Brad Face.

Mr. Face – I live at 334 South Church Street. I came to Smithfield and fell in love with it. I actually fell in love with it when I was a kid. I spent a significant portion of my

adult life trying to revive the historic district, economically, back when we started Historic Smithfield. Obviously, a huge number of people in town who were of like mind managed to pull it off. Believe me, when we started, there were not all that many people who thought that we would. This house has always confused me since I came to town because it is not mentioned very much in local history and local conversations. When you look at Pierceville, it is one of the two most historic buildings in town with the courthouse. An entire British army occupied Smithfield led by the most notorious traitor in American history, Benedict Arnold. The story about how he occupied Pierceville is that he actually took Major Pierce as his prisoner and absconded with his horse and his pocket watch. He then kind of stuck it in his eye by, I imagine, sleeping in his bed. It is a tremendous story. It is a 1730 house sitting there largely ignored by us. The situation is that we have let that property go down but that is no excuse. The BHAR is here to protect the historic district. I am sure you are aware of your rules. The purpose of the historic district is to prevent the demolition of landmarks. That is the purpose of the historic district. That is the first paragraph that describes the function of this historic district. This is your responsibility and also the members of this town's responsibility. This historic district is a national treasure. This is not just nice for Smithfield, Hampton Roads, and the Commonwealth. Places like Smithfield do not exist. It is our responsibility to protect it. That is what we are here to do; to protect it as citizens and specifically with this ordinance. Other considerations have been made as one makes decisions and I understand that you must listen to every petition that comes to you. The highest and best use of the property for the economic benefit of the owner is not on the list of things to consider. The very last criterion on the list is for the owner to receive reasonable benefit from the ownership of the property. All I hear is what I hear. I did not know any of these facts that have been presented tonight; but it seems to me that the owner has already been offered reasonable benefit to be derived from the ownership of that property. That does not mean to do everything she can or they can to maximize the benefit. We are all interested in private property rights; but we need to be interested in all the zoning rules that apply not just the historic zoning rules. We are all constrained by the rules that we adopt and by the laws that we adopt. That property is constrained by law and it is our responsibility to follow the law and protect this national treasure. It is our responsibility. You need to hear this petition but, I think, the response is very, very simple. We need to make sure that we do not allow the destruction of a landmark

property since that is the very function of the district. It is a responsibility of the BHAR and eventually the Town Council. I have been asked by some people who do not wish to speak to call for them to stand in support of preserving Pierceville. For those of you who would like to stand, please do. Thank you very much.

Planning and Zoning Administrator – Next, we have Ms. Deborah Duncan.

Ms. Duncan – I live at 340 South Church Street. I do not have all of the background that a lot of people have where they personally tried to get this place saved. They personally put their own money in. I am speaking as a citizen of Smithfield. I work at the Visitor's Center which deals with visitors coming to Smithfield. I would like to echo what a lot of other people have said already. People come here because it is historic with old houses that people did not demolish when they were going downhill. I have seen pictures of many houses from the 1950's, 1960's, and the 1970's where they were pretty much in a state that any reasonable person would say that the house should be demolished and why keep it. They had foresight and passion and they did it for the greater good. Pierceville is more historic than most of those houses that people decided to put their money into and put effort into even when everyone else told them they were idiots for doing that. We are benefitting right now from those people, their money, their foresight, and their passion to save Smithfield and make Smithfield what it is today. People do not come here because of the Smithfield Station. The Station is wonderful but people stay there because they want to see Smithfield. The places that are new are not the draw. The draw is the history. Everyone in Smithfield benefits from us preserving that history. It is a monetary thing. Smithfield is what it is today because people did not demolish what other people said they should demolish. I do not personally know the owner of Pierceville but I feel that she must not really value it historically. Some people do not. Some people see an old building and think it is not really worth anything. That is fine but if everyone thought like that we would not have Smithfield. Smithfield would not be what it is today. Even if she owns it and has the right, I do not feel she really does have the right because Smithfield is Smithfield because people preserved its history. We are all benefitting from that right now. Thank you.

Chairman Gwaltney – That completes the list of folks that have signed up for public comments. Is there anyone else who would like to speak before we move on? Hearing none, we will move to Board Member Comments. Would any Board member like to make a comment? Hearing none, we will move to Demolish Primary Structure

applicant. Do we have anyone here to speak on behalf of this application? Please state your name and your address for the record.

Mr. Jones – Mr. Chairman and ladies and gentlemen of the Board of Historic and Architectural Review, I practice law here in Smithfield at 1600 South Church Street. I thank you for being who you are and receiving this application on behalf of my client, Mary Delk Crocker. Mrs. Crocker is represented, in addition to me tonight, by Marty and Nancy Lynn Delk. There are nieces from both sides of her family who are her agents under an 'Attorney In Fact.' They have been following her all of their lives. Today, they follow her more closely than ever because Mrs. Crocker lives with them and has ever since she left her home at 502 Grace Street in Smithfield. She is very fortunate to have those two (2) family members taking care of her. I do not expect to be able to overwhelm and alter the opinions of the fine meaning people who spoke to you tonight. They are certainly sincere. They feel passionately about Smithfield. They feel passionately about historical sites of value. Everything they said tonight was quite sincere. However, Mrs. Crocker's situation is somewhat different. She did not come to Smithfield except by birth. She was born in this house. She lived all of her youth there. There have been two (2) times when she was briefly married that she was not at the home. For almost all of her many, many years, she has lived at the home. She values the town of Smithfield, I believe, equally as much as everyone who spoke here tonight values Smithfield. The situation is that this building has been deteriorating for many, many years. If somebody has a significant amount of money and wants to make this an appropriate historical site, it can be done; but you are taking destruction and putting it back together. We do not think that is practical. Mrs. Crocker does not think that is practical. The application before you is the landowner asking you to allow them, which your ordinance requires, to tear down the home at 502 Grace Street and all of the various outbuildings. It is Pierceville to the historians. It is 502 Grace Street to Mrs. Crocker. It is where she grew up and where she left at the pressure of the town. As much as she loves the town of Smithfield, she also feels the pressure that the town of Smithfield is putting upon her. What she is saying to you is to be realistic. Perhaps, it could have been maintained twenty (20), thirty (30), forty (40), and fifty (50) years ago. Her family did not have that interest. She did not have the interest or the financial wherewithal to do it. The reality is that the place is never going to be restored. There

have been a lot of people promising a lot of things that have never materialized over the last three (3) to five (5) years of this process. I think the likelihood that anything is going to come to fruition is very remote and so does she. The only application on the table today for you to consider is whether you will allow her, as she has requested, to tear down the dilapidated buildings at 502 Grace Street. We ask you to do that. Thank you.

Chairman Gwaltney – Are there any comments from the Board?

Mr. Hess – Mr. Chairman, I would just like to ask a question for clarification. The Board has already directed the owner to restore the property. In fact, I think she has been directed several times over the years.

Chairman Gwaltney – Not to necessarily restore it but to at least stabilize it.

Mr. Hess – If the Smithfield Town Council determines that it must be preserved, but the owner does not have the resources, the taxpayers would ultimately have to pay that price. Would that be correct?

Town Attorney – Only if the Town Council agrees that it should be done at the town's expense which has never been done before. It can be but it never has been.

Mr. Hess – I love history as much as everybody in this room but, I think, we do have to take into consideration the financial side of this. I do not know a thing about the owner's finances. If it is to be preserved, somebody has to pay for it. We have several groups that have been trying to raise money. If one of them could pull it off, that would be wonderful; but at the end of the day it is as much about resources as it is about history. That is my statement.

Mr. Goodrich – Mr. Chairman, according to the timeline that I have read, it appears to me that nothing was done by the town prior to November 10<sup>th</sup>, 2009 about putting this property on notice that this property was not up to the standards that we require. Is there any information that indicates that there was anything done prior to 2009?

Planning and Zoning Administrator – I am not aware of any action based on the demolition by neglect maintenance standard that was acted on in 2009 prior to that.

Town Attorney – I have been the town attorney since 1993 and I do not think so. The situation with this house is that Mrs. Crocker is a very private person. It is her property. She did not ask or invite people to come upon her property to inspect it. Not until 2009 was there any effort by the town to try to do something with her home. Frankly, you could not see the extent of the damage. Most of it is on the back side of the

house. It is her home and she can do as she wishes to with it. It came to the attention, I think, of a member of the Board that the BHAR should look into the condition of the home and that is how the process started. It started with the town and then it became an issue for the building officials. It went on for quite some time. The town has no jurisdiction on whether or not a house is safe for someone to live in or not. It really became more that sort of an issue. Mrs. Crocker then vacated the premises and it then became a BHAR issue again.

Mr. Goodrich – Mr. Chairman, if I could follow up, my point to the Board would be that the amount of deterioration that exists on that property now did not occur in eight (8) years between November 10<sup>th</sup> of 2009 and 2017. I would just like to point that out. Mr. Riddick pretty much mentioned about the privacy and that people were not invited in to look at it and that type of thing. I understand that; but the town had not been involved before 2009 and the state of the property as seen in the pictures that we have seen did not occur in eight (8) years. I just want to point that out.

Mr. Prevatte – I have a question, Mr. Chairman. I think we have to make a decision here as to what is restorable and what is rebuildable. When you look at a structure that is supposedly restored, there has to be so much of it that can be restored or rebuilt. When you start rebuilding, does that become restoration? That is my question. How much of it is worth restoring or rebuilding? Now, there is some salvageable goods. Perhaps, the floors; but other than that, I can see lathe that needs to be replaced, plaster, and there might even be some asbestos on it. So, my question is how much do you restore and how much do you rebuild? When does it become restoration and when does it become a rebuild?

Mr. Hill – It just depends on what you decide you want to do.

Mr. Prevatte – Exactly.

Mr. Hill – Anything can be rebuilt. You can start from the foundation and go back up if you have enough money to do it.

Mr. Prevatte – Exactly and is that considered restoration or rebuilding?

Mr. Hill – It depends on who is doing it. Like I say, there is a lot of things you can do to these old homes. I do a ton of them.

Mr. Prevatte – But is that restoration or rebuilding?

Mr. Hill – It is restoration when I do them because we make everything from scratch. We are not using new material. We are taking heart pine and making the trim and making everything.

Mr. Prevatte – But my question is does it refer to restoration as we all see it and envision it or is it being rebuilt? If you take an old home and you put ninety (90%) percent new material, is that really a restoration?

Mr. Hill – It depends on how you do it, I think, in my opinion.

Chairman Gwaltney – Most of the projects that I have been involved with are a combination of the two. I will say that whether it is restoration or rebuilding or anything else that you want to label it you do not do any of it after the bulldozers have gone. I guess that comment puts my vote on the table.

Mr. Hill – Exactly.

Chairman Gwaltney – I live in a two hundred and twenty (220) some year old house that had been vacant for forty (40) years when I got it. A lot of people, including my father, thought I was an absolute idiot for buying this house to try to make it my home; but I did. Whether I did a good job or not, I guess that remains to be seen. People paid thirty (\$30) dollars to walk through it a couple of Christmases ago. I guess it must look like something presentable. I look back at things like that and I see that I worked hard to do that house and I spent almost all of the money that I had. If someone had torn that house down, I would have never had the opportunity. The house would not be there today. I agree, and in my opinion, it is going to take a whole lot of money to fix that place up. A lot more money than I will probably ever see. There are probably people out there that have a whole lot more money than I will ever see. I do feel that whether the building is mothballed or stabilized or we all just sit here and watch it until it all falls down that there will be that much more time for somebody who has all the money to come along and do it. It does not solve the problem. It does not make some people happy. As long as the house is still standing there, the option is still on the table for it to be done regardless of how much money it takes or how long before it happens.

Mr. Hess – What is the owner's intent for the property if the Board and the Town Council were to approve demolition? Here is the reason I ask the question. If there is no idea that there is going to be another big development or something of that nature, why is she worried about tearing it down? It is falling down of its own accord unless somebody does something.



Chairman Gwaltney – I do not know that I have the answer to that question.

Mr. Hill – It sounds like, from what I heard tonight, there have been several proposals to buy this piece of property from several different people. If this had happened, the owner of property would not be in this situation and asking to tear the house down. They would have accepted one of the offers on the table already. They actually got themselves in this problem by not accepting somebody's offer that was already put on the table. It is their own fault that they are still fighting this battle; in my opinion.

Vice Chairman Torre – I agree with that one hundred (100%) percent.

Town Attorney – Before you start deciding fault, I will caution you, you all need to read your guidelines. If you did not bring them, we probably need to circulate them and you need to read them. They are what you are charged with considering. These are very well done and that is where you need to go for your guidance.

Mr. Prevatte – Mr. Chairman, I have a question. How do you really mothball something in that bad of shape?

Chairman Gwaltney – I know that the town has done a report through a third party and has a list of things to be done.

Mr. Prevatte – But you are putting money into it.

Chairman Gwaltney – Everything is putting money into something.

Mr. Prevatte – Down the road with what is not redone is eventually going to deteriorate some more unless you stabilize it completely. To me, it looks like double funding.

Planning and Zoning Administrator – Ideally, the money that you would spend on mothballing would go toward restoration. If, as the Chairman says, you are trying to extend the period of time that someone can still come along and salvage the structure then mothballing is the next best option. That money cannot go toward the restoration then. If that is all you can come up with, water is one of the most destructive forces to a structure. By mothballing it, if you do nothing but keeping the water out of the structure, you are allowing what has been wet to dry out and you are extending that time span where someone can come along and restore it.

Mr. Prevatte – Are we really, realistically, looking at somebody down the road?

Chairman Gwaltney – Well, I did not bring my crystal ball tonight to figure that out. None of us knows what the future holds for it. There are two (2) options. One is that

it sits there and either is slightly preserved. The other is that it sits there until it falls and crumbles or it gets torn down.

Mr. Prevatte – But there has to be a conclusion somewhere.

Chairman Gwaltney – I do not know that we are here to predict all of that tonight. Our task is to decide whether we feel it should be demolished now or left for some future consequence.

Vice Chairman Torre – Mr. Chairman, it seems to me that it does not make much difference what we decide to do. It is going to be hideously expensive whether we mothball it or whether we restore it halfway or all the way. It does not make any difference. It is going to cost an awful lot of money. I do not think that makes too much difference. I think the public interest, if the town of Smithfield decides to spend the money to preserve the place, is fairly well protected by the lien rights. Eventually, all of the taxpayer's money is going to be restored to them sooner or later one way or another whether it is through the current landlord or whether somebody else buys the property. The town is going to get its money back. There was, what I consider, a very fair and legitimate offer already on the table that the landlady decided to reject for some reason or another that would have solved the whole dilemma for everybody. In my mind's eye, demolition is not really a topic that we ought to be discussing.

Chairman Gwaltney – But that is the topic under discussion.

Ms. Hillegass – Yes it is.

Chairman Gwaltney – Like it or not, we have to decide.

Mr. Prevatte – I do not think there is anybody in this room who would not like to keep it including myself. I would love to see it restored. Realistically, I do not know.

Chairman Gwaltney – What is realistic for one person is not realistic for another person. Are there any other comments from the Board? We have before us an application to demolish all the structures at 502 Grace Street also known as Pierceville.

Mr. Torre – I move that we vote to disapprove the application for demolition.

Ms. Hillegass – Second.

Chairman Gwaltney – A motion has been made and properly seconded to disapprove this application for demolition. Is there any further discussion?

Mr. Hess – At the end of the day, this is all about resources. The current owner needs to think about that and all of the other groups attempting to raise funds need to think about that. I cannot speak for Town Council any more than the rest of us can; but

Windsor Castle Park was a heavy lift for this town. Pierceville would be at least as heavy I suspect.

Mr. Prevatte – Windsor Castle was a gift.

Mr. Hess – Yes, a gift that keeps on giving.

Ms. Hillegass – A gift of maintenance.

Planning and Zoning Administrator – The motion is to disapprove the application for demolition. I will call for the vote.

On call for the vote, seven members were present. Mr. David Goodrich voted aye, Chairman Gwaltney voted aye, Mr. Gary Hess voted aye, Mr. Russell Hill voted aye, Ms. Julia Hillegass voted aye, Mr. Ronny Prevatte voted aye, and Vice Chairman Torre voted aye. There were no votes against the motion. The motion passed.

Town Attorney – As you stated earlier, Mr. Chairman, there is an automatic appeal to the Town Council for this decision. It is required by the code.

Chairman Gwaltney – We will move on to our next item on the agenda which is New Construction – Single Family Home – Lot 252 Cokes Lane – No Designation – Stuart & Bonnie Resor, applicants. Is anyone here to speak on behalf of this application?

Mrs. Bonnie Resor – We live at 2102 Governor's Point Drive in Suffolk. Thank you, Mr. Chairman and Board members, for hearing us tonight. We have worked in Smithfield in the past. We restored the Pretlow home. It was quite beautiful. When we first walked in and looked, you could see the sky from upstairs. It was pretty bad. We love Smithfield as much as everyone mentioned tonight. We love working and doing things in Smithfield. Thank you for the opportunity. Stuart is going to go over the plans.

Mr. Stuart Resor – Good evening Board members. Bonnie and I live at 2102 Governor's Point Drive in Suffolk. We have been there almost four (4) years now. As mentioned earlier, we were tourists here first. Now, we are getting involved in very small scale things. Our first project was to restore the old Pretlow building. We kept our eye on Cokes Lane. We could see some opportunity over there. Our game plan is to leave the world a better place than we found it in. Cokes Lane is going to fit that concept for us. I will give you a brief update on what is happening on Cokes Lane. The Visitor's Center is close by. Our lot is the large lot on Cokes Lane. It is the size of about four (4) of the other standard lots on the street. I do not know why it is such a large lot. You are all welcome to come by any time. We have notified all of the neighbors of our intent. Our

concept is to build on this lot. We are hoping, over time with our help, the town will honor the history of the tenant William Cocke. We researched it very thoroughly. I am not going to go into that detail at this time. You are welcome to call us; but yes, a substantial mansion right on Main Street was built by Lieutenant Cocke in 1819. It was destroyed to build the hardware store that is now the Visitor's Center. My guess is, by today's standards, that building would have never been taken down. It is long gone. I have something that we found on the site. I will pass it around. There are a lot of interesting things out there. The lot has been very thoroughly surveyed by the architect and by Canada Land Surveying. We plan a three (3) phase project. We would like for you to look at all three (3) phases briefly. We would like to get approval on all three (3) phases if it is okay with you. We want to tell our buyer that the BHAR has approved all elements of this proposal. Our first phase is the living, dining, kitchen, two (2) bedrooms, and a very nice bathroom. There is a nice porch on the front and back. It sits within about twelve (12) feet of Cockes Lane. We will be asking later for a variance on the twenty-five (25) foot front yard setback. If you look at the rendering, you will see that our first portion is not a full element of a three (3) bedroom, two (2) bath house. We are staging this for financial reasons. We would build the whole thing if we could. Eventually, Phase 3 is a two (2) car garage with a live over unit. Tonight, we bring only our plans for the first phase. You should have received all of these documents. It shows the views and the colors we are proposing. The house is one (1) story as seen from Cockes Lane; but back on the west side seen from the neighbors, it is a two (2) story. Three (3) of the neighbors have very similar houses built down on this slope. They have large basements down there. Our basement will be fully set up to be developed by a future owner. We will be using these drawings when marketing this. We have some samples back here of our split faced block. Across the front, we would like to use this high strength concrete block. All will be filled with concrete and rebar on very substantial, structural engineered designed [not discernable]. The exposed face will have a very long lifetime. It is very difficult for a veneer to break off. We are open to any suggestions on the issue of how you would like to see some of these things built. Looking at the plan again, there will be a planter area on either side of the entrance off of Cockes Lane. You can see the front of the house has some nice windows. We have a cupola on top. Hopefully, you guys are okay with that. We have dark gray architectural asphalt shingles on the roof. We have Hardie Plank in a factory dark blue color. We plan

to paint the concrete block below the first level to match the Hardie Plank. Can everybody see it from back there?

Town Attorney – Mr. Resor, your audience is up here.

Mr. Resor – They came tonight.

Town Attorney – But they do not make the decisions.

Mr. Resor – That is pretty much it.

Mr. Prevatte – You are going to use white vinyl soffit.

Mr. Resor – Yes, just the soffit but not the fascia. It is not critical that we use the vinyl there but it is bee proof and allows for ventilation. It has durability, as far as we can tell, that is pretty good. It is not going to rot. It is an area that is subject to a lot of wet conditions. The Hardie Plank is very durable and fireproof.

Vice Chairman Torre – Are these plans reproductions? These are 3/16<sup>th</sup> scale. Are there other drawings at a greater scale?

Mr. Resor – No. I am doing everything at 3/16<sup>th</sup> scale. I can loan you my scale if you need it.

Vice Chairman Torre – I need a microscope.

Mr. Prevatte – Have you thought about going with fiberglass columns?

Mr. Resor – At this point, we are just going to use the multi-section wood columns.

Mr. Prevatte – The fiberglass ones will not rot. They hold paint and look just like wood.

Mr. Resor – We have not investigated that in a tremendous amount of detail.

Mr. Prevatte – You can actually buy them to look like stone.

Mr. Resor – I am sure we can consider that, sir.

Mr. Prevatte – It would help you as far as duration.

Mr. Resor – We are looking for every nickel we can save.

Mr. Prevatte – It will save you down the road.

Mr. Resor – But still provide a permanent or near permanent construction and easy maintenance.

Mr. Hill – I have one question. You said that you are going to use a red block across the front of the house. At the corner, you plan to turn it with the regular block. One side will be painted blue and the front will be red.

Mr. Resor – We would use it all the way around but it is pretty costly. It is twelve (12”) inches. We are trying to go with no bigger than eight (8”) inch on the foundation walls.

Mr. Prevatte – Are you going to be selling this house.

Mr. Resor – We will be selling it.

Chairman Gwaltney – I have a question that will not save you a nickel; it will cost you several dollars. On the color rendering that we have showing Phase 1, I am looking at what appears to be an interesting mix of architecture. This structure looks, for lack of a better term, lopsided. I can see the proposed future additions to it. I can see how it all works together. I have a difficult time falling in love with this picture looking somewhat lopsided. I am wondering if it is an option to include the portion of the second phase to make it balance out the house. I think, in my opinion, it would make it look much more appealing. I am wondering if that is an option to do from the beginning.

Mr. Resor – If this were a level lot that was already clean, we would be able to afford Phase 1 and Phase 2.

Mr. Prevatte – It almost looks like a Craftsman style.

Chairman Gwaltney – I think it is a mix. There are elements of several different architectural styles.

Mr. Resor – Mr. Gwaltney is correct. It is a mixture of a little Colonial and a little Craftsman. The interior is contemporary.

Chairman Gwaltney - In being a new structure, we and you are not totally as limited as to what it has to be or what confines have to be placed on it as long as it is complimentary to some degree with the surrounding structures. There is a variety of architecture around that piece of property.

Mr. Resor – Well, Mr. Gwaltney, Bonnie and I take a significant risk on this site. Our nearest neighbor is a big visual negative. Cockes Lane is just an alley. If it looked like Hayden Lane, it would be a lot easier for us to go forward with the initial investment. The other factor is that is as far as we can go. In fact, it has taken us all the way to our limit to do Phase 1.

Mr. Hess – What timeline do you envision having completion of all phases?

Mr. Resor – We have no exact timeline at the moment. We just sort of chip away at it every day. Once we start, we are going to have to go pretty quickly. Right now, we are just doing the cleanup. We are just getting utilities hooked up. We are just pursuing

the idea that Cockes Lane will, at some point in time, be more attractive. We are trying to get the neighbors on board with the idea that Cockes Lane will be fixed up at some point in time. They have to give up two (2') feet of their front yards all the way down Cockes Lane. Whether we succeed at that or not, I do not know.

Mr. Hess – You said you have talked to the neighbors. What kind of feedback have you gotten from them?

Mr. Resor – Nobody has said that they will go for the improvements on Cockes Lane. We need two (2') feet. If we cannot get it, we will just go with the twelve (12') foot right-of-way that is there now and make the best of it. We are going to be asking the town if they will top coat Cockes Lane when they pave Main Street. It has not been patched or maintained at all in years upon years. The street sweeper does not go down Cockes Lane; but, every time there is an event at Windsor Castle Park, all of those tourists walk down Cockes Lane. It is very quiet the rest of the week over there.

Mr. Hess – My biggest concern is that when you get to the end of Phase 1, if you decide you cannot go further, we are left with a house that kind of looks incomplete. It would not necessarily require the garage but the roof line would be better with the right side added. It would look a lot more complete.

Mr. Resor – We are counting on our buyers needing that Master Bedroom suite. They are going to want it. How are they going to achieve that? They might be back here to ask you to put it in the basement; but, I think, if you have approved at least Phase 1 and Phase 2 then the odds go way up that they come back with Phase 2 as approved.

Mr. Hess – You mentioned a buyer. Do you have someone who is interested in this already?

Mr. Resor – We have already had several people stop by to say they are interested. We are not anxious to pre-sell it at this stage of the game. We want to take it as far as we can; particularly with the detail on the interior. It is going to be a tough sell. It might be the toughest one we have ever had.

Mr. Hill – With that said, if you sell the house without Phase 2 then the house could sit there for ten (10) years without that bedroom on it.

Mr. Resor – That could be correct. It certainly is a risk that we take and you take.

Chairman Gwaltney – If we do not like the house looking lopsided and we approve it; we take the risk that it might stay that way forever.

Mr. Hess – Yes.

Mr. Prevatte – But it should not.

Town Attorney – I would point you back to your guidelines. You need to go and look them. There are whole sections on building mass, building materials, building elements, and the whole thing. It gives you guidance as to approval so you ought to apply them.

Mr. Prevatte – Is there any way you can change that vinyl soffit and use wood?

Mr. Resor – Absolutely.

Mr. Prevatte – You are going all out with everything else. Everything else looks pretty good.

Mr. Resor – For what we build, we are going all out. It gets the ball started over there.

Mr. Prevatte – When a person buys it, they will probably be glad you did that.

Mr. Resor – So far, we have had customers on our prior projects that have valued all we have done very much.

Mr. Prevatte – When people come into the area, they are looking at originality. It is what they like about it. It is your biggest selling item other than the price.

Mr. Resor – Who here has been down Cockes Lane? It is not coming up a ladder of improvement.

Mr. Prevatte – You can start it.

Mr. Resor – We are going to start it. It is a start. It is not perfect but it is a start. If you have noticed, we have spent two (2) months cleaning up.

Mr. Prevatte – You did a great job on the Pretlow house.

Mr. Resor – Thank you, sir. We had the black community come out in tears and hugs many times thanking us for fixing up that house. It was our little start here.

Mr. Prevatte – Maybe you should buy some more.

Mr. Resor – There are other things we look at. We gamble on Cockes Lane because of the BHAR and the protection of the historic nature of Smithfield. It adds value to our game plan.

Mr. Prevatte – It helps everybody. We all, pretty much, have a historic home.

Mr. Goodrich – I have looked at the drawings of this property. I truly believe that you have to do all you can to bring up neighborhoods or streets or alleys to look better. Cockes Lane could look better. This house, to me, has no historical character to it at all.



It is a close as you can get to the downtown historic district. It has a cupola on top but it does not look historic. It does not fit in to me.

Chairman Gwaltney – It is a mix. In my opinion, what sort of sets it apart is that it is a combination of elements. I do not mean that good or bad. We are used to seeing almost all of these elements; but not on one house. To me, that is what makes it look different.

Mr. Goodrich – Mr. Chairman, I have tried to find in the guidelines under new construction anything that mentions those types of windows that are on the front upper level. They do not fit into anything with our guidelines that I can find. It appears that the lower level windows are very much like some that we have in our guidelines.

Chairman Gwaltney – It is close to a bungalow. I tried to decide if I needed to place this in a specific era of genre. Is it Colonial, Victorian, Federal, or Craftsman? There are elements that relate to all of them. I looked at those windows too and debated back and forth if I would accept those windows. I sort of went with a bungalow sort of thing.

Mr. Prevatte – The scale does fall under building mass in the guidelines.

Chairman Gwaltney - While I would like to see the right hand side put on it, I look at the whole thing and wonder if the house becomes too big for the scale of the houses that are in that neighborhood. There are certainly some big houses in this town but they are not on Cockes Lane. I wondered, since it is a pretty big lot, that maybe they should build two (2) little houses; but that is not for me to decide tonight.

Mr. Resor – Let me mention something on the lot split question. Our first interested buyer was going to split that into two (2) lots because that was their interest. It is not doable. The town wants a minimum of twenty-five (25') foot right-of-way. As soon as you take that land away from the lot, it is not feasible.

Mr. Prevatte – We are here to follow up on what you want to do not what a buyer wants.

Mr. Resor – Well, we had a question of why not split it into two (2) lots.

Chairman Gwaltney – Well, I do not know that it was actually a question to do it.

Mr. Resor – We did explore that. We did not want to do that. The small lots on Cockes Lane are giving us no value. When this big lot gets fixed up and done right, there will be lots of value. We have appraisals over there that are near nothing compared to what they should be.

Mr. Prevatte – That is everywhere.

Mr. Resor - Today, the Carroll house in Carrollton was mentioned. It has almost those exact features. If you go to the Main Street Restaurant, there is a house to the west of it that has this clerestory on it and it is very old.

Mr. Goodrich – I do not doubt that and am not disputing that. What I am disputing is the fact that it is not in the guidelines for the types of windows and new construction that we have to go by to make the decision. I cannot find it. If anybody else can, I would like to see it. I do not dispute that it is certainly historical.

Chairman Gwaltney – Are there any other comments or questions?

Mr. Hess – There have been a lot of comments about the windows and the right side of the house. It occurs to me that it might be to your advantage and the town's if you were to go back and consider some of the comments that were made and see what changes you are able to make inside your financial envelop that you are working with and then bring it back to us.

Vice Chairman Torre – That is a really good suggestion. I would like to follow up on that if you do not mind. I think Mr. Resor is the architect; are you not?

Mr. Resor – Yes. Bonnie and I work on them together; every detail. I can get you a larger scale if that would help.

Vice Chairman Torre – I think it really would; so would some cuts, some sections, and some greater detail so we know what we are looking at. I cannot tell from these drawings what in the world your intent is. If it comes to a vote, I am going to abstain because I cannot makes heads or tails out of this. My suggestion is that maybe you note some of the comments that have been made by the Board tonight and you incorporate those. I am new here. Apparently, you have worked in Smithfield before. Apparently, you are familiar with the guidelines and the ordinance. You could provide a detail or section that references your intent in relation to the recommendation. It would make life a lot easier for us.

Mr. Prevatte – We have talked about Cockes Lane needing changes.

Mr. Resor – It will be.

Mr. Prevatte – This could be the model. Believe me, a lot of people will look at it if they want to make the changes. The first thing they will do is say 'well, he did it.'

Chairman Gwaltney – I think I am probably safe in saying that all of us on the Board applaud your zeal and enthusiasm to improve our community and our historic

district. I find it difficult to approve a building that looks like half of it is missing. I am sorry to be blunt about it; but that is what we have been presented with tonight. I can fully appreciate, as stated earlier; having spent almost all of my money on a house I can appreciate what it costs to do it. It is a relative thing for all of us but our job is not always to decide how much it costs; but what we are presented with tonight is what we have to consider. Personally, I am looking at a presentation of a house that looks like half of it is missing. If I was presented with the complete house or presented with a design that looked complete, I would have an easier time getting as excited about it as you are.

Mr. Resor – I have an idea on that. We were about to build a model that sort of comes apart. Maybe we can make some changes to the design and the model and come back with larger plans. We can make some revisions based on the comments here and come back with more information and a clearer, easier to understand picture of what this cute little house is all about. We will still show it in phases because we cannot build Phase 2. It cannot happen unless we took a partner or something like that.

Chairman Gwaltney – I think that might be an idea to consider based on the comments that we have had tonight. At some point, they become public and you can read through them again. Do you have a copy of the guidelines?

Mr. Resor – Yes, we do.

Chairman Gwaltney – I think we have referenced a few things in the book that can be reviewed. We, obviously, have not told you that you cannot build the house. It is just a matter of how it looks.

Mr. Hill – I have one more comment. I do right much building myself. You might want to look at a regular block and brick foundation so that this color goes all the way around versus a blue foundation. You are not going to find a historical house with a blue foundation anywhere. The brick/block could save you some money. I have one other suggestion. With the upper windows to get light, you might want to put two (2) dormers up there to look like traditional dormers. It gives you the light and the curb appeal that you are looking for in a historical house. It is just a suggestion.

Mr. Resor – Well taken.

Chairman Gwaltney – I feel certain that any or all of us would be glad to listen to any other comments you want to tell us about.

Mr. Hess – I would like to make a motion that the architect go back and consider the comments that were made and present a revision to us at a future date.

Mr. Goodrich – Second.

Chairman Gwaltney – A motion has been made and properly seconded that the application be reviewed by the applicant again taking into consideration our discussion tonight and presented to us again at a later date. All those in favor signify by saying aye, opposed say nay.

On call for the vote, seven members were present. Mr. David Goodrich voted aye, Mr. Gary Hess voted aye, Mr. Russell Hill voted aye, Ms. Julia Hillegass voted aye, Mr. Ronny Prevatte voted aye, Vice Chairman Torre voted aye, and Chairman Gwaltney voted aye. There were no votes against the motion. The motion passed.

Chairman Gwaltney – Mr. Resor, thank you very much. We will look forward to seeing you at a later date. Our next item is Review of Board of Historic and Architectural Review Bylaws. Could we have a staff report please?

Planning and Zoning Administrator – Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I inserted a copy of the bylaws into your packet tonight. I have determined to do so the first of every year. They have been long overlooked. There is some working knowledge in there that we have not been aware of for some time such as BHAR election of officers is biennial rather than annual. If you wonder why we did not have an election this year, it is because Mr. Gwaltney's election in 2016 was for two (2) years not for one (1). I put these in your packet for you all to review and to re-familiarize yourself with them. If you have any recommendation for amendments, you can bring it to the Board next month for discussion. Otherwise, I am just going to put one in there for the first meeting of every year just for folks to familiarize themselves with the bylaws. If there are any questions about the bylaws tonight, I am sure the Town Attorney would be glad to answer them. Otherwise, they are just for your review and familiarization.

Town Attorney – They are pretty straight forward and simple. If you feel a compelling need to make a change, you certainly may. The last time they were amended was to change the meeting time and nothing else.

Chairman Gwaltney – Our next item is Approval of the December 20<sup>th</sup>, 2016 Meeting Minutes.

Town Attorney – Mr. Chairman, I recommend approval of the minutes as presented.

Ms. Hillegass – So moved.

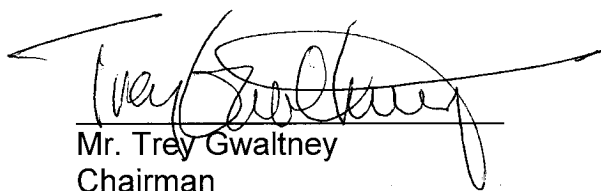
Mr. Hess – Second.

Chairman Gwaltney – A motion has been made and properly seconded that we approve the minutes. All those in favor signify by saying aye, opposed say nay.

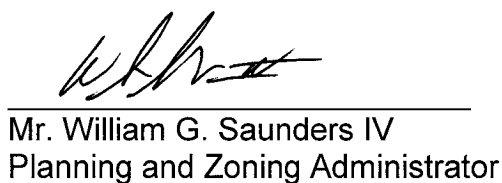
On call for the vote, seven members were present. Mr. David Goodrich voted aye, Mr. Gary Hess voted aye, Mr. Russell Hill voted aye, Ms. Julia Hillegass voted aye, Mr. Ronny Prevatte voted aye, Vice Chairman Torre voted aye, and Chairman Gwaltney voted aye. There were no votes against the motion. The motion passed.

Chairman Gwaltney – Our meeting is adjourned.

The meeting adjourned at 8:25 p.m.



Mr. Trey Gwaltney  
Chairman



Mr. William G. Saunders IV  
Planning and Zoning Administrator