

The Smithfield Board of Historic and Architectural Review held its regular meeting on Tuesday, July 19<sup>th</sup>, 2016. The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. Members present were Mr. Trey Gwaltney, Chairman; Mr. Jeff Yeaw, Vice Chairman; Mr. Ronny Prevatte, Ms. Julia Hillegass, Mr. Gary Hess, and Mr. Chris Torre. Mr. Russell Parrish was absent. Staff members present were Mr. Joseph Reish, Planning Technician and Mr. William H. Riddick III, Town Attorney. There were five (5) citizens present. The media was not represented.

Chairman Gwaltney – I would like to welcome you here tonight. I will call this meeting of the Board of Historic and Architectural Review to order. The first item on our agenda is the Planning and Zoning Administrator's Report.

Planning Technician – There have been no administrative approvals issued for this month.

Chairman Gwaltney – Thank you. Our next item on the agenda is Upcoming Meetings and Activities. They are all listed on the agenda. The next item is Public Comments. Our first person to sign up is Ms. Dawn Riddle. Please state your name and address for the record.

Ms. Dawn Riddle – Good evening. I live at 36 Main Street. I am one person who was able to make it tonight to stand in opposition to the demolition of the historic structure on Church Street behind the Smithfield Inn in the historic district. I am aware of others who wanted to be here as well. It would be really beneficial if the agenda could be published in the Smithfield Times perhaps the Wednesday before the BHAR meeting. It would be nice for the public agenda to be posted earlier with more exposure so that people could know what was coming up and be able to speak to you. I know citizens are glad to do that and for you to hear from those who love this town as much as you do. With that in mind, I am just a sole speaker; but it is regretful that we are considering demolishing a historical structure within the historic district. The historic district guidelines from 1978 stipulate that those property owners are responsible for the upkeep and the maintenance of the buildings, structures, and such on their properties within the historic district. There are guidelines. The onus is on the property owner to do that. Also, there could be adaptive reuse of an existing structure that would benefit the town for events that we would have. Certainly, with being such a tourist town and the Smithfield Inn already being an event place for weddings and gatherings and such, I do hope that they will consider that. I just implore the Board to keep this in mind. I will read

a paragraph from Seg Dashiell's book – A Pictorial History of Smithfield. This is, obviously, our very credible resource for the town. It will not take long. On page 19, she starts this paragraph with Dr. Purdie who is referred to as the early historian. It states: 'Dr. Purdie recalls that Wilson Davis operated the inn in the early 1800's. Smithfield lay on the stage coach route from Portsmouth to Petersburg. The coach stopped here to change horses and to give the travelers a chance to refresh themselves at the tavern. As late as 1922, there was a very old and very dilapidated brick and timber building just behind the inn and an outside stairway to the rooms above, which may well have been the former stables and hostler's quarters of the stagecoach era.' This property does have historical significance. I implore you to keep that in mind and not let it be demolished and turned into concrete. Thank you.

Chairman Gwaltney – Thank you. Our next person to speak is Ms. Betty Clark. Please state your name and address for the record.

Ms. Clark – I live at 120 North Church Street. We are back again this month to talk about another piece of historic Smithfield property. Obviously, I cannot remember when the red barn behind the Smithfield Inn has not been there. I had assumed, even before Ms. Riddle read her part, that it had been built for carriages and horses that had brought guests to the inn a century or more ago. We realize that it is just a barn but there are not many historic barns left. They are becoming quite rare and need to be salvaged. I guess the question to be asked is do we want to be a historic town or just a town. I fear that if we continue to allow our history to be torn down, we may not have a town at all. Tourists come to see our historic sites. If these sites go, so will the tourists. Are you aware that China is aggressively buying back its antiquities and artifacts? I do not believe that we would be allowed to go to China and tear down a historic building. Why then should China be allowed to tear down part of our history? I do want to thank you for having the conviction, at last month's meeting, to stand on the side of the house on South Mason Street. You told the owner that he had a responsibility to repair it. These are our town rules. I sincerely hope that we have the courage to require Smithfield Foods to do the same. We should not pick and choose which buildings should be demolished. They should all be saved. Thank you.

Chairman Gwaltney – Thank you, Ms. Clark. Are there any other public comments? Hearing none, do we have any Board Member Comments at this time?

Hearing none, we will move to Proposed Wall Signage – 223 Washington Street – Non-Contributing – T. Carter Williams, applicant.

Mr. Williams – 1410 South Church Street. Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, thank you very much. You all have the picture of what we are looking to do at the VFW building. We have seven (7) windows on the building which are boarded up. They have wood over them. We are looking to install some insignias of each branch of the service and one of the kneeling soldier over the cross at the grave of a departed service member. People come to our functions, such as the Saturday morning breakfast, and just cannot seem to find our building for some reason. We have a great big sign up front and a little sign facing Washington Street but they just do not seem to be able to find the building. We also wanted to dress the building up just a bit and make it a bit better looking. Right now, it is just a plain boarded up windows on a plain building. We thought, maybe, we could fix that and put these insignias on there to make the building look a lot better.

Chairman Gwaltney – Does the Planning Technician have a report on this?

Planning Technician – Yes sir. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As Mr. Williams said, there will be five emblems with the sixth emblem being the kneeling soldier. The signage does exceed what is normally allowed in the ordinance but the BHAR does have the authority to approve or not approve what they see as appropriate when it comes to signage. It is up to the Board.

Chairman Gwaltney – Are there any comments from the Board members?

Mr. Hess – For the praying soldier, is that the one you have by the flag pole?

Mr. Williams – Yes. It will be a replica of that. It will be in black. These insignias will be four (4) foot, round, with a one foot square border around them with the name of the service under that.

Chairman Gwaltney – Who is doing the artwork? How are they made? How are these emblems structured?

Mr. Williams – We have one artist who is going to head that up. She does murals. She will have some help doing them. They will be hand painted. We will cut the circles out of a piece of plywood and treat it like it needs to be treated for weather resistance. We will give it to her and she will paint them. We will install them and then she will paint the border around them with the service branch underneath that. By the way, she is doing it for free. We just have to pay for the materials and supply her with

the plywood to put them on there. Right now, you only see boarded up windows. It just looks like a vacant building really. People just do not recognize us when they come around that area. I think this will dress it up. I am excited about it.

Chairman Gwaltney – You said there are seven windows that are boarded up. Three face James Street and four on the front that face Washington Street. One is smaller than the rest.

Mr. Williams – Yes. We are not going to do the smaller one.

Chairman Gwaltney – There are five emblems and one soldier.

Mr. Williams – Yes.

Ms. Hillegass – Mr. Chairman, I would move to approve as presented.

Vice Chairman Yeaw – Second.

Chairman Gwaltney – A motion has been made and properly seconded. All those in favor say aye, opposed say nay.

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

Mr. Williams – Thank you very much.

Chairman Gwaltney – Thank you. Our next item on the agenda is Proposed Demolition of Accessory Structure – 111 North Church Street – Contributing – Matt Liberman, Smithfield Foods, Inc., applicants. Is there someone here to speak on this? Please state your name and address please.

Mr. Liberman – I represent 111 North Church Street. We propose to tear down the barn structure that is located behind our engineering building at 111 North Church Street. The barn, for God knows how long, has been just holding random junk and is falling apart. The elements are literally eating it away. It is housing trash under it. It has just been left and almost ignored for years and years. It is almost just taking up space at this point. We have done a lot of research on the building itself. It was built between the years 1919 and 1925. We actually have drawings of the Town of Smithfield that have the sites in before it was the Smithfield Inn. We have everything else of the local area. In 1925, the town map actually had the barn in the back labeled as a peanut storage as well as many other peanut storages around town because, obviously, Suffolk and the Smithfield area are big peanut areas. In 1919, the building was not located anywhere on

the map. If you go inside and look at the architecture of the building and the way it was structured, there are no lap joints or anything. It is actually built with nails. It is more modernized than older buildings. It is also built with cheap pine wood rather than oak or anything of significance that back in the historic days it would have been built out of. So, I am here to propose tearing it down on behalf of Smithfield Foods and replacing it with a parking lot so we can get it out of the way and stop housing trash in it. It would literally be getting rid of a safety hazard.

Chairman Gwaltney – Does the Planning Technician have any comments to make?

Planning Technician – It is an accessory structure. It is not the primary structure. Accessory structures are usually classified a bit different. We do not really think of them as contributing, landmark, or non-contributing since they are an accessory structure. The site plan that was provided to us does show a little bit of what they want to do when it comes to adding a few extra parking spaces and possibly adding a smaller shed in the future. It is really kind of hard to see from the road. You do not know it is back there unless you look real carefully for it. Other than that, it is just an accessory structure that has been there for a long time.

Chairman Gwaltney – Are there any comments from the Board members?

Vice Chairman Yeaw – With deference to what has been said tonight, I think we do have to pick and choose in terms of what we say should not be torn down and what may be torn down. I am going to add to that there are other structures and I will mention two that are related. One is the Clay Insurance building which is across from the engineering building that has been let go. Versus saying that I want to tear the building down because I can no longer maintain it, he has chosen to just let it go. Similarly, there is a house down the street from me on Main Street which is a very historic building, it is being allowed to fester and rot, so to speak. While the insurance building has no historic value, the other one does. So I would think that we should decide about the buildings in the historic district. When somebody comes to us and says they can no longer maintain this and it is not a contributing structure and they would rather tear it down, I think we should probably listen to that. When we do go up to someone like we did at the last meeting, we say no and that we do not want you to tear this down because it is contributing. I think it adds more weight.

Mr. Hess – I had no idea that there was a red barn in downtown Smithfield. I went out today to look for it. I circled the block three times before I found it. I suspect I am not the only person who comes to Smithfield and cannot see it. I am not sure how many people would miss it; except for the ladies that have spoken already. I suppose if you have stayed at the Smithfield Inn, I assume you can see it when you go out back. You really have to look for it which I think contributes to the decision. The property that we talked about at last month's meeting could be easily seen. It was a house in the historic district.

Chairman Gwaltney – One of the points made earlier was if the owner was unable to maintain a piece of property. I do not know that it was part of the application from Smithfield Foods. Are they unable to maintain the barn?

Mr. Liberman – That is something that I cannot speak to.

Vice Chairman Yeaw – Sir, I would say unable or unwilling.

Mr. Hess – I would like to ask one question if I could. To your knowledge, has Smithfield Foods over the years made any effort to maintain or repair the barn in any way?

Mr. Liberman – Again, I cannot speak to that. I have been in Smithfield for about three (3) years now. I have only been in the Smithfield Foods engineering building at 111 North Church Street for the past eight (8) months now. I was based out of the North Plant, down the street, running capital projects. In terms of history, I have been working with the historic society on it and trying to find any kind of historic relevance or any kind of major history to it. I have tried to find something worthwhile on it. Honestly, the only thing I have been able to find is that it housed peanuts. There are many of them around town. Almost all of them, except for two (2) or three (3), have been torn down. In terms of Smithfield Foods up keeping it, again, I cannot speak to that. I have no idea who would be in charge of that either.

Chairman Gwaltney – Has the idea or the consideration of relocating the structure entered into this?

Mr. Liberman – The idea has actually. The Smithfield Winery had wanted to relocate it. They either wanted to relocate it or reclaim it and building things out of it because there is a rustic shop right next door.

Chairman Gwaltney – They could repurpose the materials.

Mr. Liberman – Exactly. Unfortunately, because of the way it was constructed since it is not conventional lap joints or conventional architecture, it is not so easy to tear down. You would have to take the nails out. The labor, time, and cost to do it just does not see the value of the building.

Chairman Gwaltney – One of the things that we talked about since the request to demolish the house at last month's meeting, was that we only have a certain number of structures that we oversee and maintain. With every one that is lost, it is just one less that we have. Sooner or later, they will all be gone. Hopefully, that will be long after all of us are gone. The main point, I think we drove home with our discussion last time, was if we allow something to be taken down then what goes back in its place? I want to make clear as I read this application, at this time; this application does not include replacing it with any other structure. There is a possibility of something but right now this application, as I read it here, is only just to remove it and it does not talk about putting any other structures there.

Mr. Liberman – The only structure would be a shed for the Smithfield Inn.

Chairman Gwaltney – That would still have to come before this Board but that is not the application for tonight. I am asking.

Mr. Liberman – It is not, no. Well, I am not entirely sure. As I read through it again, I believe it says that at one point we will replace it with a structure for the Smithfield Inn.

Ms. Hillegass – That would be in a separate application. It is not in this one.

Mr. Liberman – Okay. I am sorry.

Chairman Gwaltney – So, are we calling it a parking lot?

Planning Technician – There is a site plan provided.

Chairman Gwaltney – It shows parking and a shed.

Planning Technician – It is reserved for a shed.

Mr. Prevatte – What is the main reason for demolishing it?

Mr. Liberman – The true reason behind it is that it is becoming an issue. We actually opened the doors one day to see what was inside of it. Stuff has been tossed in and out of it for years. On the third barn door on the right, there are three barn bays, the door came off the track which posed a safety hazard. Not only that but if you look through the pictures, the roof on one corner is legitimately gone and the bottom panels

are gone. We actually do not even know about the structural integrity. We never got an engineer in to check.

Mr. Prevatte – Could this be re-utilized if it was redone?

Mr. Liberman – No, not by Smithfield Foods and not by the Smithfield Inn. I could not imagine it. The Smithfield Inn uses the first bay on the far left. They use such a small space on it. The only thing they requested was that we bought them a small shed to put in its place. I would have to come back to propose that. The Smithfield Inn uses a little bit of it for their seasonal equipment.

Chairman Gwaltney – I am assuming from your comments that you have had conversations with them and how they feel about it.

Mr. Liberman – Yes. They just want to make sure they have a place to store the seasonal equipment.

Chairman Gwaltney – They are not here to oppose it so I guess they are okay with another shed. I am assuming you are not really picking up any extra parking spaces. You would just be cleaning it up a little.

Mr. Liberman – Yes sir.

Chairman Gwaltney – I guess if you put the shed in there; you would lose some parking spaces.

Mr. Liberman – Actually, we will not lose any. The shed will actually offset some parking curbs. Theoretically, we are not gaining or losing any parking spaces. It will clean it up and bring it to ADA standards because of the handicap spaces; because we do not technically have any.

Chairman Gwaltney – Based on this picture with the proposed shed in it, how do they access the shed if the cars are all parked around it? I know the shed is not part of the proposal but I want to clear it up.

Mr. Liberman – It will be the same way it is now. The parking curbs will probably be a little bit more offset than it is. The twelve (12) feet you see there is just a space for the shed. It will not actually be twelve (12) feet wide. It will probably be a sliding door or maybe an actual opening door on the south side of the drawing you see there.

Mr. Prevatte – It seems like it could be utilized for some purpose.

Mr. Liberman – That very well may be but in terms of storage, Smithfield Foods has a very large warehouse for storage at the old South Plant property. It is where we store everything that we need. We have roll up doors. We have eighteen wheeler bays.

We have everything we need to possibly store anything. Smithfield Foods has a big problem at the moment with hoarding. They just keep things they do not need. We are trying to become more minimalistic as a whole.

Town Attorney – Mr. Chairman, it seems to me you ought to refer to the guidelines. There is a whole section that has to do with demolishing historic structures or contributing structures. It is on page 107 of your guidelines.

Chairman Gwaltney – Would you elaborate on that for us please?

Town Attorney – I would be happy to. There are a lot of factors to be considered, among them; 'the public necessity of the proposed construction/demolition or use, the public purpose or interest in land or buildings to be protected, the historical architectural value and significance of a particular structure and its relationship to the historic value of a surrounding area, the age and character of a historic structure, its condition, its probable life expectancy, the view of the structure or area from a public street or road; present and future, and the present character of the setting of the structure in its surroundings.' It is a mouthful but there are factors that play in both directions. Clearly, it is not something that is easily visible from the street. It is for you to make a determination as to how it contributes to the setting. The setting is a parking lot. Clearly, it has some ambiance to it. Its historic nature is in question. If it is from 1900 then it is more than one hundred (100) years old. As Mr. Reish said, it is a contributing structure that is an accessory structure not a primary structure. When making the decision, you kind of need to go through an analysis and decide what is important to you and what is not.

Mr. Torre – The problem that I have with it is that it seems like it might be the beginning of a precedent. The owner of an old building that he does not like anymore neglects it and lets it deteriorate to the point that it is a safety hazard, does not make any attempt at restoration or preservation, it gets to the point in time where it is just a nuisance, and they come before us and want to knock it down. If we say okay, the building is gone. I think your point is very well taken, Mr. Riddick. Because of its location, it is hard to see but either we are going to preserve the historic district or we are not.

Town Attorney – Your point, Mr. Torre, is well taken also. This Board is charged with identifying properties that need its attention so it does not get to the point where its too far gone. Someone mentioned the Clay house. We have already been down that

road one time. We took them to task and forced that. It was in horrible condition at one point. The chimney was falling over. It was completely overgrown. We required him to fix it up. Well, he has done nothing to it since he fixed it up but the process worked. You do not have the ability to make him do yearly maintenance to your satisfaction but you can make him bring things into compliance and he did. So, you do have teeth to the extent that you, collectively, identify properties that need attention. It is what we are here for.

Vice Chairman Yeaw – I guess I would add to that. The Board, before my time, required him to restore or renovate the landmark property but they have not. We have not, to date, asked him to do anything with the non-contributing property that sits on Institute Street.

Town Attorney – Right. Your point is well taken.

Mr. Hess– I think the words ‘pick and choose’ sound pretty cavalier but I think we have to decide. I agree with Mr. Torre that there might be a precedent but, by the same token, I am not sure that any and every building in the historic district must be saved.

Chairman Gwaltney – Are there any other comments from the Board? It is a tricky call. I understand.

Mr. Hess – Mr. Chairman, would it be easier if he were to re-submit what he plans on replacing it with?

Chairman Gwaltney – Well, it would be more to consider. I do not know. It depends on what they presented to replace it with. It might be easier or more difficult.

Mr. Hess – Well, that is true. If we were to approve demolition and the barn is gone; it is gone. Then we have a whole other thing. We have no idea what they might be planning to replace it with.

Chairman Gwaltney – I agree.

Mr. Hess – I would also like to add, for the record, I am kind of in the middle on this thing but I do not want to see us set a precedent where it becomes easy to demolish historic structures.

Town Attorney – I cannot remember a historic structure that we permitted the demolition of. The last one was the Ben Franklin building but that was with a company that offered to build something that looked exactly like it in much better condition. That is the last I remember. I think it was probably a well thought out decision. It has turned out very well for the town. It is the last that I can recall. The notion that we just prevent

the houses to be torn down cavalierly is just not true. It does not happen. I have been doing this for twenty-four (24) years and that is the only one that I recall.

Chairman Gwaltney – Do you recall if that has been the only request? Has there been anything specific to an accessory building?

Town Attorney – I am trying to think. There have been several accessory structures taken down. Mostly, they were of the nature of old lean-to garages and things like that. They were somewhat similar but not the same. They were not as large as this. This town was populated by, for lack of a better word, less than modest garages and outbuildings. They used to have smokehouses and things like that but I do not recall anything like that being torn down. They were probably actually torn down a long time ago to be honest; way before we ever had an ordinance. I do not recall anything of any significance being razed. The buildings that have been torn down over the years would include the old tire building. The old jail was torn down.

Chairman Gwaltney – They built something a little bigger there.

Planning Technician – What about the last peanut warehouse on Commerce Street. It was the old Gwaltney Peanut warehouse.

Chairman Gwaltney – Well, we are sitting in it.

Town Attorney – Also, all of the Gwaltney Shopping Center which is right where we are sitting. It was in a great state of disrepair. I cannot remember anything on Main Street.

Ms. Hillegass – I would not call any of that, except the old jail, historical.

Town Attorney – That is right. It was really long fought but it had some historical nature to it. There were not a lot of fond feelings about the jail. It was from a time when a lot of people were not treated very well so there was not any great support for keeping it. The oldest jail is over near the Smithfield Inn. Whatever your thought process is; please justify your reasons. Mr. Torre was talking about setting a precedent so justify your reasons why you think it should be one way or the other. You need to be deliberative and thoughtful about your reasons whichever way you go.

Chairman Gwaltney – Mr. Liberman, do you have any idea what the proposed shed might be?

Mr. Liberman – Well, it is essentially what it sounds like. What we could do is work with the town or some organization and we could actually reclaim the wood that we would use from the barn and make the shed out of that wood. We could paint it the

same color. We could actually make it resemble the barn itself. I actually put quite a bit of time into the historic value of the barn. From day one, that thing literally just held peanuts from what I understand. Maybe I am wrong; I could very well be wrong. If we were to actually reclaim the wood, reclaim the support beams and actually put brick pilings under it just like it is today; we could make it resemble a shed as it is and still use it as a shed for the Smithfield Inn. It would still hold some historic resemblance. As I said, we would be more than happy to work with the town on doing something like that if that would help push it toward that goal.

Mr. Torre – Would you consider restoring what you have so that it would serve the intended purpose or would you just rather build a whole new building instead?

Mr. Liberman – What I fear is that the price would just be so much cheaper just to bring it down and erect a new structure; because the amount of termite damage to the existing structure is quite excessive. You would actually have to buy many 2 x 8's. They are old 2 x 8's which are actually 1 x 7 ½. It would be the same thing with the 2 x 4's. It would be a lot of custom made timber. It would be a lot of work. We would have to do the entire tin roof as well.

Mr. Prevatte – You would have to pretty much start over.

Mr. Liberman – We would have to rip it down and completely rebuild it. We would have to get nails that represented the era. We just cannot go to Lowe's and get new nails.

Mr. Prevatte – Are they cut nails?

Mr. Liberman – Yes sir.

Chairman Gwaltney – I do not want to try and do the square footage math on this but what you are building back is maybe about a third (1/3) of the size of what is there now?

Mr. Liberman – Roughly. It is probably a little smaller than a third (1/3) but I think we could get it to a third (1/3). Again, we would be happy to work with the town if you would like it to be a certain size.

Mr. Prevatte – The real problem with this is that it has gone so long without being worked on. It is the real factor here. You would pretty much have to take it all down and start over. I doubt if the bottom sill plates would even hold a nail. You said there was no use because you would not utilize it.

Mr. Liberman – No sir.

Mr. Hess – Mr. Chairman, if we are looking for a precedent then maybe Mr. Riddick gave us one. They took down the Ben Franklin store and approved it because they knew what was going in its place.

Chairman Gwaltney – I think you are exactly right. It is where I was going to go with this. Mr. Liberman, do you think that you could perhaps consult with your staff and present a plan to repurpose the salvageable parts of the structure?

Mr. Liberman – As in making the shed out of the repurposed wood, yes. In complete honesty, I came up with the idea as I was standing here. I could absolutely look into that and bring it up to my boss. I am just the messenger here tonight. I am not actually the one pushing this whole thing forward.

Chairman Gwaltney – I commend you on your quick thinking, as the messenger, to try and save not only the building but this meeting as well.

Mr. Prevatte – It does not look like there is too much to salvage.

Mr. Liberman – It is strange but when you actually look at the inside what separates the bays on the inside it should be the same plywood. I cannot verify that because I have not seen the thicknesses of it; but it actually looks like the same kind of plywood. If it is then we could easily make the exterior from the interior wood and just repaint it. The paint, oddly enough, has been done since the early 1980's. We had the paint tested and there is no lead in the paint. So we are lead to believe that the barn has been repainted.

Chairman Gwaltney – I remember when the barn was repainted.

Mr. Liberman – At one point, there was a sign on the barn. I am guessing that it said something about Smithfield Foods.

Chairman Gwaltney – There was a shed roof that came off the front. It was like an awning. They just did not want to paint underneath of it, I guess. As I recall, it was exposed. I remember that.

Mr. Prevatte – So does he rebuild it or tear it down?

Chairman Gwaltney – The other option that he presented tonight is that they reclaim what is salvageable and build a new structure using those materials done in an architectural style that tries to replicate what was there or is, at least, reminiscent of the same period that this building would have come from.

Mr. Liberman – Essentially, it would just be the same color paint and a tin roof because the architectural style of it is actually more relevant than not. If you actually go

on the inside and look at it; it is not very abstract as compared to what most colonial structures are.

Chairman Gwaltney – But you may be able to come up with something that is a little more conducive to the historic district instead of a pre-made shed brought in on skids.

Mr. Liberman – Sure. Earlier, I said it was made of old pine. When you go to barn claimers, I know because I went around a lot, they are not interested in pine. Pine does not hold up as well, over time, as oak. I am nervous that there might not be any wood good enough to build on; maybe everything is just shot.

Mr. Prevatte – If it will not hold a nail then it is useless.

Mr. Liberman – Exactly. We will have to get a professional to look at it. I am by no means a professional in that field.

Mr. Prevatte – It is a shame if you cannot reuse this and redo one just like it.

Mr. Liberman – I do agree with that.

Town Attorney – Pine structures were not made to last forever either. It is why they were built out of pine. It was cheap and they were put up quickly. Over the years, they were replaced from time to time. Heart pine structures that go back two (2) centuries ago are still here. Buildings built one hundred (100) years ago out of pine are not going to last forever.

Mr. Prevatte – It probably had creosote on it at one time.

Town Attorney – You do not have to rush a decision tonight. You can take some time for deliberation.

Mr. Hess – I would like to make a motion that we table this item and wait for a complete package with the proposed replacement options.

Ms. Hillegass – Second.

Chairman Gwaltney – The motion is to table this application and allow the applicant time to go back and reconsider reclaiming materials from the building to submit for demolition of it, reclamation of it, and restructuring of it into similar, acceptable, and appropriate building and see if they can make that work.

Mr. Liberman – We can see what could happen. I am not sure what the price of that is going to come down to. Again, just the price of building something like, I do not know if that is even worth the value of what Smithfield Foods would do.

Chairman Gwaltney – Well, that is what you will come back and tell us whenever you get it all together.

Mr. Prevatte – Would you be willing to build on top of these piers?

Mr. Liberman – Again, I cannot speak to that. I am simply a project engineer. I have no hearsay in anything. I am just told what to do.

Town Attorney – They are probably not looking for a building as large as that footprint.

Mr. Liberman – Not at all.

Town Attorney – If you salvage materials from this building, you are not likely to get all of it.

Chairman Gwaltney – That is why I asked if the size would be about one third (1/3) or so of the size that is there.

Town Attorney – The designation for this is a contributing structure. What you are looking for, I think, would be something that would be reasonably characterized as contributing. You will have to use your imagination to come up with something.

Chairman Gwaltney – A motion has been made and properly seconded to table this and let them bring it back. All in favor say aye, opposed say nay.

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

Mr. Liberman – Thank you.

Chairman Gwaltney – The next item is our Educational Outreach Subcommittee Discussion. Some of you had some homework to do. We can take this person by person of who had something that they wanted to provide.

Mr. Prevatte – I talked to two (2) or three (3) agents. What I was told was that it is a disclosure among the buyer when they move in from the seller. I do not know how legal or practical that is. I had one tell me that it was a good idea to come up with something that would be fruitful for everybody. Again, kind of like Mr. Riddick said at the last meeting, it is kind of a touchy issue.

Chairman Gwaltney – Did you find that the real estate agents felt that they played a role in this?

Mr. Prevatte – I do not think they want to.

Chairman Gwaltney – I am sure they do not but did you think that they felt they should?

Mr. Prevatte – I think there should be some type of disclosure with whoever is buying the property.

Chairman Gwaltney – So they are putting the burden of that back on the seller.

Mr. Prevatte – I do not know this but I do not think you can force them to do it. They were willing to put a packet together to hand out which is probably about all you can do.

Chairman Gwaltney – Mr. Riddick, from a legal standpoint, can you make them do anything like that?

Town Attorney – We cannot require them to do that. All you can do is ask them. It is good business for them to disclose it. If you can make people understand that it is not an onerous process, they would be less fearful of buying a home in the historic district.

Mr. Prevatte – It may take a while but I am still going to find out some feedback on what their approach would be. It would not be mandatory; just what would be appealing to them.

Chairman Gwaltney – Well, I think that is a good start; to make that contact and see how they feel and what they understand at this point is required, not required, or requested.

Mr. Prevatte – It would be nice if they just volunteered to take the information and make the buyer aware. As far as signing off on it, I do not think they want to get involved in that.

Chairman Gwaltney – As Mr. Riddick said, we are limited as to what we can require of anybody. I think the most we can do is to put something in their hands and ask them to do it. We will have done what we can do.

Mr. Hess – Is there a legal requirement for a real estate agent to inform a prospective buyer that a home is in an area where there is a homeowner's association?

Town Attorney – Yes but this is not an area with a homeowner's association.

Mr. Hess – It is simpler in concept in that there are restrictions as to what you can do.

Town Attorney – Buyers are charged with the duty to do their own due diligence too. You would have to be pretty uninformed and unobservant to not realize you are in a historic district but I guess it happens.

Chairman Gwaltney – I think they realize they are here but they feel like it is their house, they paid for it, and they will do what they want. I would say that is a good start with real estate agents for that portion of what we are trying to do. Are there any other comments about real estate agents?

Mr. Prevatte – It think if we had some handouts it would be helpful. I know they are costly.

Chairman Gwaltney – We talked about printing it and doing some stuff specific to contractors and agents.

Mr. Prevatte – It think it is something they would put out for others to take. If you go in and are interested in buying a house and they see it; they may take it.

Town Attorney – The problem with that, Mr. Prevatte, is that there are so many real estate companies. It is not like the old days where you had a couple of places in town that handled all of the transactions. It is not the way it is anymore. There are listings from all over. I do not know how you would cover all of those bases. We do not have a large enough budget to provide that many materials to all of companies that might sell homes in Smithfield.

Mr. Prevatte – It would be expensive.

Chairman Gwaltney – I guess, if nothing else, we could start with something local.

Town Attorney – The newsletter is a good place to start. You can let people know that if they are selling their home that we are here to be of assistance. We can let people know that the process is not onerous or unfriendly.

Mr. Prevatte – I think the information is put together real well.

Ms. Hillegass – When does the next newsletter go out?

Planning Technician – I think it is September or October. It is twice a year. In the past, Mr. Saunders and I have had them put in a paragraph about the historic district maintenance violations and how to avoid those.

Chairman Gwaltney – Mr. Prevatte, if you would continue to talk to a couple of real estate agents and ask them what they might suggest as a good way to notify people. We will see what we can do. If we come up with an idea then maybe we could start with a half dozen agencies that are close by.

Mr. Prevatte – I have done work for ERA over in Newport News. I could probably pop in and ask them what they think since they are out of town. Maybe they would have

some good ideas if they knew we were trying to be a helpful medium as far as sourcing it out.

Planning Technician – There is certainly value in education. Mr. Saunders and I are kind of the front line troops with people since they come see us first a lot of the time. We can let people know about the historic district and the guidelines and things of that nature. It is a good thing.

Chairman Gwaltney – Mr. Prevatte, we will let you continue on for another month of your diligent research into the world of real estate agencies. You can see if you, with their assistance, can come up with some brilliant ideas as to how we might reach out to real estate transactions as they happen and make sure that everybody is aware of what they are getting into. Good work. Mr. Torre is next. He was coming up with things about contractors.

Mr. Torre – I got a start and there they are. I did not do these personally. I used a gal who used to work for me in California. It is a first attempt and kind of a rough one at getting an informational flyer out for contractors and architects to alert them to the fact that we exist and that there are rules and regulations. I think a perfect example of why something like this might work is because of Mr. Liberman who spoke earlier. It appeared to me that he had absolutely no idea of the contents of the ordinance or the guidelines. His application specifically lacked any means to address what is in either one of them. If he had known, or read them, or if his boss had and they had gotten something like this six months ago in order for them to knock that barn down then the presentation would have been a lot better. It would have been much more complete and much more in compliance with what we need. This is the first attempt. The reason I brought it tonight is so that you can take a look at it, mark it up, cross it off, or change it so that it reads the way that you want it to and then we could get something going on it.

Chairman Gwaltney – I think it is a good start. Are there any comments on the flyers in front of us?

Mr. Prevatte – It could say something as simple as ‘Protect Your Investment.’

Chairman Gwaltney – I am going to suggest that everybody take these nice printed color copies and think about it from a contractor’s, builder’s, or architect’s perspective. Take a look at this and mark it up, add things, and do whatever you think needs to be done; but think of it from the perspective of the professional who is hired to

do build, alter, or demolish something in the historic district. Is that fair enough for what we are looking at here?

Mr. Torre – Exactly. I am leaving on vacation on Saturday. I will not be back until September so I will miss the next meeting.

Chairman Gwaltney – Everyone else is still tasked with getting something back here in the next month even if we have to hold it until you get back.

Mr. Prevatte – You know, we almost always have to demolish something to rebuild it because nothing last. It is all you are doing. Some people call it restoring. Some people call it rebuilding. If you take something one hundred (100) years old, the thing is to put it back similar to what it was to keep that image.

Chairman Gwaltney – I think that is what we are striving for here.

Mr. Prevatte – Do you know what would really help us, I think? We could get some information on the different products that we already approve. We would present that to them if they want it as a library of sources.

Chairman Gwaltney – You may be more familiar with those products than some of us because you are more in the trades. I am thinking that could be some of what you might suggest as how this product works or adds to it. You could make a list. You could redesign the flyer so that it features those items.

Mr. Prevatte – It is something we could bring in here and sit on the table for when they signup. It is just an idea.

Chairman Gwaltney – We can do that.

Mr. Torre – One of the ideas contained in this is going online to look at our webpage. I actually did it. You can read everything that is in the ordinance online. We do not have to print it; we just have to make them aware of it.

Ms. Hillegass – The list of products that we typically approve could be a resource online.

Mr. Torre – Exactly.

Mr. Prevatte – That would entice them to do things properly.

Chairman Gwaltney – Remember, part of what we are looking to achieve with printed matter like this is possibly distributing them to hardware stores, paint stores and places like that for the contractors. Again, this focuses on the contractors. Like with everything, we want to drive them to the website; but this part of what we are doing is trying to figure out the best way to reach the contractors.

Mr. Prevatte – It is just like with gutters. If you like half round, I have it on my house and it is a vinyl but it looks very, very similar to galvanized. I have had it on there for fifteen years. It does not rust. It is inexpensive and you can put it up yourself. A lot of people are not aware of that. It comes in ten (10) foot sections for fifteen (\$15.00) dollars. They have all sizes. Those are the resources I am talking about. I talked to a man the other day who did not know you could get that. He asked where I got it.

Chairman Gwaltney – Educate the world for us, Mr. Prevatte. I think that will be good. Make your list of all of those kinds of things. It will be a good addition to what you have started.

Mr. Prevatte – It is why I am here; to help the town.

Chairman Gwaltney – Okay. Everyone make some notes on these flyers and bring them back next month. We can talk about them and see how much discussion we allow for that next month. When Mr. Torre gets back from vacation, we can go over that some more. Next we have Ms. Hillegass.

Ms. Hillegass – I have spoken with the local paper. I think they are struggling with how to handle it in terms of who does the writing. Since we have another demolition, it may be enough controversy to spur another article. You may get a follow up phone call. I may create a follow up phone call, Mr. Chairman, so please be prepared for that. I have not pushed too hard because of John's health issues but he knows what we would like to do and is not opposed to it. I think he is just struggling with who would do the writing of that.

Chairman Gwaltney – Good job. Stay in touch with the Smithfield Times and find out from them who could write it.

Ms. Hillegass – Mr. Reish, do you all have the capabilities to put something up on the website if I wrote it; or is it an elaborate process?

Planning Technician – I believe we could. Mr. Saunders is actually very familiar with the website.

Ms. Hillegass – Okay. I will call him about that.

Chairman Gwaltney – Mr. Hess, I believe you were working on something.

Mr. Hess – Yes and I am still working on it. I am outlining my thoughts. Mr. Saunders is trying to get me a list of names and addresses of everyone in the historic district. The thought process was to establish an email roster. Most people have email these days and we could email everyone when there is something important going on.

The other thing I was thinking about doing, likewise, it is a historic district was to use technology. In addition to the webpage, maybe we should have a Facebook page. People could ask questions. I think if we could figure out a way to communicate with everybody in the district, there would be an upfront postage cost. We could hand deliver them, I suppose. Everybody will not be willing to give us their email address.

Chairman Gwaltney – Email is great but email addresses will change a lot more frequently when someone moves than an address of a historic building in the district. I think it is a good start. Mr. Saunders had mentioned to me that he was trying to figure out the best way to put that info together.

Mr. Hess – Apparently, it is not that easy.

Chairman Gwaltney – The addresses themselves are but trying to find a data base that can show only the historic district addresses is more difficult.

Planning Technician – You would basically have to look up every single address and update it yearly or so.

Chairman Gwaltney – I do not know if you, or he, have talked to the Post Office about it? As far as the mailings, that might be something to consider. They might be able to provide that information if it were requested by the town. I do not know.

Town Attorney – They will not provide that.

Mr. Hess – We could send it to ‘Current Resident.’ Some people will think it is junk mail and toss it.

Town Attorney – The information is easily gotten from the tax records. It is easy to get; it would just take a lot of time. You just go to the tax records and put in a street name and it will give you every owner on that street. It is very simple to come up with the names and addresses but it is going to take a long time.

Chairman Gwaltney – Well, continue your diligent work.

Mr. Hess – Actually, I am talking to Mr. Saunders about it since I do not have access to the system. I think if we can get a data base established then I think we can communicate.

Planning Technician – One thing that may be helpful, that actually moves right into the next thing which is the historic district designation, is that we have an Excel spreadsheet that does already have all of the addresses on it. We already have a list of addresses if that helps any.

Town Attorney – I probably misspoke a minute ago. The historic district is not that big. It would still take a pretty good while to do it but you are not talking about thousands of addresses; you are only talking about four hundred (400) addresses.

Chairman Gwaltney – And some of those are not residences. Some of those are just structures.

Planning Technician – As part of the historic district designation review, we have a picture of every structure in the historic district. We updated the list as we did that. There have been probably a dozen or two structures that have been added since this list was last updated in 1990.

Mr. Hess – What I will do between now and the next meeting, I will draft the body of the letter to try to attract them to us.

Chairman Gwaltney – Alright. If you will put that together and continue your discussion with Mr. Saunders and Mr. Reish about the best way to build this data base. We will see what we can come up with and see how much of it we can make work and what direction we have to go in. The next item on our agenda is the Historic District Designation Review Discussion. If you look at the packet, Mr. Saunders has put this together as an example. He has pulled properties and inventoried all of them. All of the buildings come with a fact sheet which is called a survey form. It gives you the basic details about the structure, its architecture, when it was built, what it was, and all that kind of stuff. The last time that was done was about twenty-five (25) years ago. We are going to take on the project of updating all of this information. I will give you the highlights. The plan that we are going to put into place is starting next month. There will be some time designated in each of the meetings where we will take up a batch of properties and basically look at them one by one to determine if we agree with the information or do we need to change it or update it. Has it now become a landmark from a contributing, was it torn down, was it altered in some way, or the architecture that might have been changed. If you look at the survey, it goes into a fair amount of detail about what is actually on the house. As an example, I am sure when it comes up for my house it will say it has a standing seam metal roof. It no longer has that type of roof; so we will make that change. Mr. Saunders is hoping, so that we do not have to kill half the forest to print this out, we will be doing a lot of this on a video screen or monitor of some sort to look at the pictures of the house and anything else that he is going to put up there. We can basically just have the survey form in front of us. We may be

reconfigured so that we can face the screen however he is going to set that up. That is basically the plan. There are about four hundred (400) buildings they say. Some will be fairly easy because they have not changed. Their landmark status is probably still a landmark status. Anyway, that is the basic overall concept of what we are going to address. We anticipate that this may take about a year depending on how quickly we roll through them. That is not a challenge to see how quickly we can roll through them. Depending on how much discussion there is will determine how many we schedule. Do you have any further comments, Mr. Reish?

Planning Technician – No sir. It think you have touched on just about all of it right there. It sounds good. As you said, the good news is that a whole lot of them are not going to change. Most of the structures would not have a big change. You mentioned us bringing it to you but I am not one hundred (100%) percent sure which method Mr. Saunders will want to use to bring them to you. I think alphabetical order would probably work. We certainly appreciate being able to do it on a slideshow or something of that nature and save some paper. Four hundred (400) structures and three (3) to four (4) sheets of paper per structure is a lot of paper and a lot of ink. The surveys that we have now were done twenty-five years ago. I think it is safe to say it is time to look at some of these properties to determine if the designation has changed. I have a lot of pictures.

Chairman Gwaltney – We appreciate your work of traipsing around town trying to update photographs and all of the work to get these documents together. I would suggest that you all read this cover sheet on this little packet that came with it to give you an idea of what we are looking at. I strongly suggest, as I am sure Mr. Riddick would echo, that you get a copy of the handbook if you do not have one already. Go through it and familiarize yourself with all of the information that is in there. The more that we have done that and are ready to go through these as they come before us; the less questions and explanations we will have to go through. Read up on this stuff and be ready to know what you are talking about and what we are voting on and we can get those done with relative speed. Are there any questions?

Town Attorney – The handbook is award winning and outstanding. It really tells you everything. It is very, very well done. It is designed for those who are not as well informed. It has pictures and drawings. It could not be any easier to understand.

Chairman Gwaltney – It is, if I am correct, all online.

Planning Technician – Yes. The whole book is online.

Chairman Gwaltney – If you want a hard copy if you do not have one, I am thinking Mr. Reish can get you one.

Planning Technician – I do not see it being a problem.

Chairman Gwaltney – I know they do not have them printed and ready as much as they used to because it is online.

Planning Technician – Correct.

Mr. Torre – Mr. Saunders told us the other day that they cost fifteen (\$15.00) dollars.

Chairman Gwaltney – They used to sell them for fifteen (\$15.00) dollars when it was a different method of binding the book together. It was a little more solid book.

Town Attorney – Members of the Board do not have to pay for a copy.

Planning Technician – Correct. We are more than happy to provide you with one.

Chairman Gwaltney – They do not bind them like that anymore. It is the same book as if you see an older one with a bound spine but now they use the spirals like the one I have here.

Mr. Prevatte – It would be good for someone coming here and buying a house.

Chairman Gwaltney – It would. I think that is why we are trying to drive them to the website so we do not have to spend fifteen (\$15.00) dollars every time we sell a house. I bet the town does not want to do that.

Town Attorney – No. The town is not going to pay for a copy every time someone buys a house.

Chairman Gwaltney – It is a valid idea. Are there any other questions or comments about this designation review that we will be going over for the next year or so? Hearing none, we move to Approval of the June 21<sup>st</sup>, 2016 Meeting Minutes.

Town Attorney – Mr. Chairman and members of the Board, I recommend the minutes be approved as presented.

Ms. Hillegass – So moved.

Mr. Hess – Second.

Chairman Gwaltney – A motion has been made and properly seconded. All in in favor say aye, opposed say nay.

On call for the vote, six members were present. Chairman Gwaltney voted aye, Vice Chairman Yeaw voted aye, Ms. Julia Hillegass voted aye, Mr. Ronny Prevatte

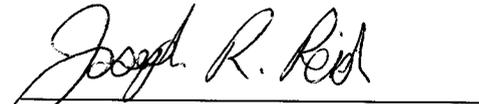
voted aye, Mr. Gary Hess voted aye, and Mr. Chris Torre voted aye. There were no votes against the motion. The motion passed.

Chairman Gwaltney – This meeting is adjourned.

The meeting adjourned at 7:49 p.m.



Mr. Trey Gwaltney  
Chairman



Mr. Joseph Reish  
Planning Technician