

The Smithfield Planning Commission held its regular meeting on Tuesday, March 8th, 2016. The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. Members present were Mr. Bill Davidson, Chairman; Mr. Charles Bryan, Vice Chairman; Ms. Julia Hillegass, Mr. Randy Pack, Mr. Mike Swecker, Dr. Thomas Pope, and Mr. Michael Torrey. The staff members present were Mr. William H. Riddick III, Town Attorney and Mr. William G. Saunders IV, Planning and Zoning Administrator. There were three (3) citizens present. The media was not represented.

Chairman Davidson – I would like to welcome everyone to the March 8th, 2016 meeting of the Smithfield Planning Commission. If everyone will please stand, we will say the Pledge of Allegiance.

Everyone present stood and recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chairman Davidson – The first item tonight is the Planning and Zoning Administrator's Activity Report.

Planning and Zoning Administrator – Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to mention that the Joseph W. Luter Jr. Sports Complex is in the planning stages now. The town has obtained a piece of property known as the Little farm at the intersection of Waterworks Road and Route 258. The sports complex conceptual plans will probably be finalized this week so it can get started. Some of you may have read that Isle of Wight County has put in a little bit of money too to secure the lion's share of the funding. It was one of the conditions. It looks like things are starting to fall into place. I believe, at last count, there were going to be five baseball fields and possibly a future phase with an indoor multi-use facility that could have basketball, volleyball, and maybe even indoor tennis. There may even be some football fields for Pop Warner. It is a pretty big thing going on there. We will keep you apprised as it works its way through the process.

Chairman Davidson – Next we have Upcoming Meetings and Activities. On March 15th at 6:30 p.m., the Board of Historic and Architectural Review will meet. The Board of Zoning Appeals meeting for March 15th has been cancelled. The Town Council Committee meetings will be on March 28th and 29th at 4:00 p.m. The next Town Council meeting will be on April 5th at 7:30 p.m. On April 12th at 6:30 p.m., we will have our next Planning Commission meeting. Our next item is Public Comments. The public is invited to speak on any item except scheduled public hearings. Does anyone have any public

comments? Hearing none, public comments are closed. We will move to Planning Commission Comments. Does anyone have anything they would like to say? Hearing none, we will move to Public Hearing: SUP – Parking Waiver- Clontz Park Public Boat Ramp Facility – Town of Smithfield, applicant. Could we have a staff report please?

Planning and Zoning Administrator – Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This project is proposed to be at Clontz Park on Clontz Way which is east of the North Church Street bridge. It is a public boat ramp that is proposed to go into the park. A state grant was obtained to reimburse the town for this construction. What is before you tonight though is not to approve the boat ramp itself but to waive the parking and loading requirements that would otherwise require all off street parking spaces and travel ways to be constructed with an all-weather dust free surface such as concrete, pavement, paving blocks or other similar material with curb and guttering, and drainage improvements. There are drainage improvements in this but not curb and gutter. You can see from the site plan that what is proposed there is a gravel surface. There will be areas that will have concrete and handicapped spaces. The boat ramp itself and the main circle near the boat ramp will be concrete but more than six of the parking spaces will be gravel. Instead of curb and gutter, it will have stormwater management swales on either side of it to manage the drainage. That is the waiver that is before you tonight to allow for a gravel parking lot, basically, with no curb and gutter rather than the pavement and curb and gutter that would otherwise be required.

Chairman Davidson – Thank you. Do we have any questions of staff at this point? The public hearing is now open. Is there anyone who would like to speak? Hearing none, we will close the public hearing. We will have consideration. Are there any remarks or questions?

Town Attorney – The only thing that I would point out is that the paving and curb and gutter requirements are generally designed for large asphalt areas such as shopping centers where there is a tremendous amount of traffic. What is being proposed is more in keeping with what is typically used at a boat ramp facility. There is one in the county at Jones Creek and this will be a far better situation than what is down there. They have an asphalt area where you pull the boats in and out. The parking area

has gravel travel ways but part of that is just grass. This will be a much better all-weather surface than what is customarily used in most places.

Chairman Davidson – Thank you. I agree. I have launched at Jones Creek for years. It appears that this will be much nicer.

Dr. Pope – Can I make a comment about the site plan in general or are we only talking about the gravel tonight?

Chairman Davidson – Primarily, we are just talking about the gravel but if you want to make a comment go ahead.

Dr. Pope – My only concern is the center aisle is two ways. I would like to see it a one way going down. I can see somebody trying to drive towards the creek and turning right into that forty five degree parking area with a boat and trailer and that will not work. It needs to create a circle to me coming around. When you come off the boat ramp after unloading your boat, you are on the far right hand side. It should be one way coming up and out. The other two lanes should be one way down, to me, because that will create a better flow. What you really do not want is somebody parking head on into the lot so that the parking space is to the left because when you try to turn left there is no way you can make that turn with a trailer. I think one way streets in there will make it flow better for people with trailers. Maybe the design people know a little better than me but I have driven a trailer around a lot and it can sometimes be tough if you are not following exactly. My only other concern with this plan is what is going to happen to these spaces if a whole bunch of people come down there and park single cars with no trailers. Will they park double? Is there going to be some sort of marking in there to allow people to park a single car since people come down there to fish? Where are those folks going to park or is it just going to intermix and hope it works out.

Planning and Zoning Administrator – At the head of the entrance where it says Clontz Way on the site plan, it is actually a parking lot. I want to say it holds nine cars which are being used as parking for the pier right now. That parking will remain there for individual cars. I do not know if we are going to try to get a reciprocal agreement with Smithfield Foods for the large parking lot that is adjacent to this. If not, I am sure overflow could certainly find a place over there if need be. If you would catch me after

the meeting and let me mark up what you described earlier, I will pass that along to the engineer.

Chairman Davidson – Are there any other comments? Hearing none, I will entertain a motion that we make a recommendation to grant a waiver for parking and curb and gutters. It would go forward to Town Council.

Mr. Pack – Mr. Chairman, I would like to make a motion to make a recommendation to Town Council to approve the special use permit for the waiver of the parking and loading requirements at Clontz Park under provisions article 3.L, section C.33, and Article 6 of the Zoning Ordinance.

Ms. Hillegass – Second.

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

On call for the vote, seven members were present. Chairman Davidson voted aye, Vice Chairman Bryan voted aye, Ms. Hillegass voted aye, Mr. Pack voted aye, Dr. Pope voted aye, Mr. Swecker voted aye, and Mr. Torrey voted aye. There were no votes against the motion. The motion passed.

Chairman Davidson – Next we have EC-O Design Review – Exterior Renovations and Sign Plan – 1007 S. Church Street – Norm Whitten, Q-Daddy’s BBQ, applicants. Could we have a staff report please?

Planning and Zoning Administrator – As you said, this is an Entrance Corridor Overlay district design review. It deals with the exterior of the structure as well as the sign plan. This was recently the Come and Go Deli & Convenience Mart. You can see the before picture of the sign there. You can also see a before picture of the front when it still had the gas canopy out there. They propose to renovate the exterior as shown. Most of what you see on the siding there is painted brick. They will have board and batten in the rake end of the gable which is the asymmetrical look. Ultimately, it will have standing seam metal roofing on top. Some of this may be phased in. They want to make sure that things will be doing well before they do everything. They are looking for approval for everything they want to do but the roof may not happen as soon as the rest. This is basically what they envision for the site. They would like for you all to consider it for them.

Chairman Davidson – Thank you. Is the applicant here tonight? Would you like to speak sir?

Mr. Norm Whitten – My son and I are open for questions.

Chairman Davidson – Please go to the podium and give your name and address please.

Mr. Jesse Whitten – I live at 227 James Street.

Mr. Norman Whitten – I live on Bleakhorn Road in Suffolk, Virginia.

Chairman Davidson – Does anyone have any questions for the applicant?

Ms. Hillegass – Would you address how you plan to be phasing everything in?

Mr. Norman Whitten – All of the things on the side will be done as we open. We have yet to get a price on the standing seam roof. Eventually it will look very nice. Mr. Saunders has an affinity for the good looks of a standing seam roof. If we cannot do it initially, we will eventually get it done.

Ms. Hillegass – Are you going ahead with the signage?

Mr. Norman Whitten – Yes. This is a new project for us. We will just have to go down the road and see how much money it takes to do this building. We are in a discovery phase right now. There are a lot of snakes in those walls so to speak.

Ms. Hillegass – It will be a great improvement.

Mr. Swecker – When do you anticipate opening it up? When would you like to open up?

Mr. Norman Whitten – We are about halfway through our discovery period. It will probably take three to four months after that. It will probably be in the Fall. We do not want to get into a winter time opening.

Dr. Pope – Do you have other stores?

Mr. Jesse Whitten – This will be our first one.

Mr. Norman Whitten – We have done a lot of barbeque competitions around the country. We have a lot of experience at it. My son has been in the Marine Corp. We spent a lot of time talking about it. He spent a lot of time practicing with one of the country's best barbequers, Tommy Houston. He is out of Martinsville. He wants to do this for a living. I told him that Smithfield needed a real barbeque joint. So let's give them one.

Ms. Hillegass – Yes we do.

Mr. Swecker – Do you know George Robert Pulley from Smithfield who has also done travelling competitions?

Mr. Norman Whitten – I do not know him. I do know that we took first place in ribs in the one competition that Smithfield had. It was at the fairgrounds. I had talked to a couple of people and encouraged them to put on a competition. It was sad that they did not continue it. It was really fun. We brought some people in. We even beat Melissa Cookston with first place in ribs. It was really cool. My wife's chicken salad won first place too.

Mr. Swecker – Will you serve that there too?

Mr. Jesse Whitten – Yes but the plan is to open with a very limited menu. Our goal is to do everything we do with excellence and purpose. Upon opening, it will be a limited menu to ensure that our quality, standards, and our excellence are there. Of course, much like the building being done in phases, we will phase in different menu items as we go along to ensure that we can live up to our own reputation of winning first place.

Mr. Torrey – As far as the sign, are you going to be putting in a completely new one or tearing apart the gas station sign and putting up your own logo?

Mr. Norman Whitten – I believe we will probably use that sign. We may put some dressing around the sides but we will probably use it since it is already there. It already has power to it. It is already illuminated.

Mr. Torrey – I was just wondering because the design did not have any dimensions on it so I just wanted to make sure.

Mr. Norman Whitten – We are going to have to stay within the guidelines of what is already there.

Planning and Zoning Administrator – They are going to reface the existing frame. It is actually larger than what they could get now. It is grandfathered if they just reface it and keep it. They may paint it or whatever but they will keep the same frame and reface the existing sign.

Chairman Davidson – Are there any other questions?

Vice Chairman Bryan – I am looking at the plan you have here. Is the brick siding actually going to be part of the remodel and the upgrades that you do? Also, will you be having outside areas for eating?

Mr. Norman Whitten – We have another plan that shows the parking lot. We are going to try to incorporate some green space and have some outside seating. My son and I have been working on the plans on the interior with the dining rooms and so forth. We are looking to try to see if we can put a door in and push out the back with some deck seating. The property is very deep. The building sits only on the middle of the property. Of course, we will have to work with Mr. Saunders to see about all that. It will be neat to be able to put in some decking so people could eat outside if they wanted to. Right now, it looks like we have about forty to fifty seats inside. We have about thirty or so parking places. If the business dictates it, we can come back and add the additional areas for seating. Hopefully, we will have some seating outside as well. Over on the left hand side, we are going to try to put in a green space with an arbor.

Vice Chairman Bryan – What about the brick siding?

Mr. Norman Whitten – The building has really ugly vinyl siding on it. Underneath it is some very nice brick much like the 7-Eleven. The brick on this building is identical or similar to the brick on the 7-Eleven next door. We think they may have put siding on it because there may have been other entrances in and out. Instead of trying to match the brick, they just covered it all over. Everywhere we have looked and pulled away siding, we find this really nice brick. The brick will be painted. If you see the lines on the plan, those will be rows that will be painted a different color. It will have some dimension. Russell Parrish has been really helping us a lot on this design concept. We are relying on his professionals to bring out what will really look good for the Town of Smithfield.

Vice Chairman Bryan – It is an attractive design.

Mr. Norman Whitten – He is pretty sharp. We formed a really good relationship right out of the gate. I like his passion for what he does. I have fed him a lot of barbeque and he is anxious to really work on the project. He had a family gathering and we made him a Texas style, with a bit of Virginia twist, brisket and took it over. He said it was unbelievable.

Vice Chairman Bryan – If it looks like the rendering, it will be quite an improvement on the current building.

Mr. Pack – This will be a huge improvement. The sign on the side of the building looks as though it is more than ten percent of the building. Would it require a special waiver of our sign ordinance? I have no problems with the design. I just want to make sure we get it right.

Planning and Zoning Administrator – It probably would but since it is a corner lot they are allowed two wall signs. We discussed it. They are probably going to make the size a little bit smaller to where it would not exceed what they are allowed on the two sides. Since it wraps on two sides, I think we can work it out without a special sign exception. It probably will be a little bit smaller than what is shown in this rendering to get it under that area.

Mr. Pack – Thank you.

Chairman Davidson – Are there any other questions or comments? Hearing none, can I have a motion?

Ms. Hillegass – Mr. Chairman, I move to recommend it for approval.

Mr. Swecker – Second.

Chairman Davidson – A motion has been made and properly seconded to recommend approval for the exterior renovations and sign plan at 1007 South Church Street. All those in favor say aye, opposed say nay.

Mr. Pack – Ms. Hillegass made a motion for approval. What exactly are we approving? Is it the concept here?

Planning and Zoning Administrator – It is the exterior renovation and the sign plan design. Since it is in the entrance corridor, it requires design review. If it was just their sign plan, we would have done that administratively. Since it is in conjunction with the exterior renovation, it should all come to you for you to approve.

Mr. Pack – Thank you.

Chairman Davidson – Are there any other questions? We have a motion on the floor. All in favor say aye, opposed say nay.

On call for the vote, seven members were present. Chairman Davidson voted aye, Vice Chairman Bryan voted aye, Ms. Hillegass voted aye, Mr. Pack voted aye, Dr.

Pope voted aye, Mr. Swecker voted aye, and Mr. Torrey voted aye. There were no votes against the motion. The motion passed.

Chairman Davidson – Our next item is EC-O Design Review – Exterior Renovations and Sign Plan – 1808 South Church Street – Tabitha Perkins, Total Image Solutions, applicants. Could we have a staff report please?

Planning and Zoning Administrator – Yes sir, Mr. Chairman. This is for the Sunoco at 1808 South Church Street. It is across the street from Hardee's near the bypass. This station will be changing from a Sunoco to a BP. Therefore, they want to change the signage as well as change some of the color on the fascia band around the top of the building. You can see in the first image that they propose to go from Sunoco blue to a white fascia. The gas canopy would go from the Sunoco blue to a white canopy. The signs would be changed to two BP logo signs. Similar to the previous application, the detached sign is grandfathered in size. Sunoco had brought the height of the sign down to meet the ordinance requirements. As far as the area, they are just going to reface it so they can maintain the area that is currently there now. They will be making the background opaque as shown on the diagram. There is a site image included that shows where it is going to happen. All of this should meet the ordinance requirements as long as it passes muster as far as the design with you all.

Chairman Davidson – Thank you. Are there any questions for staff?

Planning and Zoning Administrator – The applicant is not here tonight.

Chairman Davidson – It is pretty straight forward. They are mainly just changing the colors and the sign as far as I can see. They are changing from Sunoco to BP and changing the colors from blue to white.

Dr. Pope – Are they proposing any changes to the building color?

Planning and Zoning Administrator – They are only changing the fascia color.

Mr. Pack – This building pre-dates our entrance corridor codes. I imagine it is grandfathered. Are there any 'teeth' in our ordinance that requires a more attractive site? There is very little landscaping. The building is square and plain. Do we have anything that says that if we are making changes then make it prettier?

Planning and Zoning Administrator – I do not know that you have that kind of authority with just a simple change like this. The Town Attorney can chime in if I am

going down the wrong path. I believe that at such time as there may be some type of addition or expansion of the primary structure or something else on site that requires a site plan to be submitted that is the time that a lot of things will have to come into conformity.

Town Attorney – This used to be a big tire store. Most of it was demolished. They just kept this small part to be used as a convenience store which is why it is mostly pavement. It was an enormous tire store and this is what is left.

Chairman Davidson – Is there any other discussion?

Dr. Pope – I think the white band is just kind of plain and in your face. I would love to see a BP logo up there just to break up the white. I do not know what we can ask them to do compared to what they propose to do. I would like to see that band broken up a little bit.

Planning and Zoning Administrator – I made them aware that there was nothing to prohibit them trying to put the BP green on the fascia and the canopy. They said that if they could not put the different stripes on there that they wanted to; they would rather have plain white than one color green and not have all the multi-colored stripes all over it. This is how it ended up.

Dr. Pope – Is there a multi-colored stripe that is part of their logo? Or is it just their color scheme?

Planning and Zoning Administrator – It is their color scheme. It is not technically part of their logo. It would have been too busy to meet the entrance corridor requirements but they could have had one of the BP greens by itself on there but they chose not to.

Chairman Davidson – Are you saying there would have been white, yellow, and two colors of green on there to match the BP logo?

Ms. Hillegass – They do the different shades of green then yellow and stripes in the band.

Planning and Zoning Administrator – There is a white, yellow, and two different greens. The stripes would have been numerous combinations of all of those colors. It would have exceeded the guidelines. I told them they could use one of those greens and not be exceeding the guidelines. They did not choose to do that.

Mr. Torrey – It looks like the old canopy and trim are the same color. They are doing the same thing for the new but just in white.

Mr. Swecker – The green would give it more appeal than the white when you come into town.

Town Attorney – I have a suggestion. Why not approve it with the white but recommend the green and see what they do.

Mr. Pack – Can we approve green but not white? I do not think we can dictate colors.

Town Attorney – No but what they are proposing is not preferred. Usually, we have people that are asking to do something that is objectionable. It is usually over the top and multi-colored. They have gone in the other directions so it is hard.

Chairman Davidson – It is hard to disapprove it just because it is too plain. I like the idea of approving of the white but recommending the green.

Dr. Pope – Are we recommending the light or dark green?

Ms. Hillegass – Do we specify one of the shades in the logo?

Mr. Pack – I would like to make a motion to recommend approval as submitted with the recommendation to the applicant to use one of their logo greens for fascia and canopy.

Ms. Hillegass – Second.

Chairman Davidson – A motion has been made and properly seconded that we approve it as presented with a recommendation that they use one of the two greens in their logo sign for the fascia and canopy. All in favor say aye, opposed say nay.

On call for the vote, seven members were present. Chairman Davidson voted aye, Vice Chairman Bryan voted aye, Ms. Hillegass voted aye, Mr. Pack voted aye, Dr. Pope voted aye, Mr. Swecker voted aye, and Mr. Torrey voted aye. There were no votes against the motion. The motion passed.

Chairman Davidson – The next item is Approval of the January 12th, 2016 Meeting Minutes.

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

Ms. Hillegass – So moved

Mr. Pack – Second.

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

On call for the vote, seven members were present. Chairman Davidson voted aye, Vice Chairman Bryan voted aye, Ms. Hillegass voted aye, Mr. Pack voted aye, Dr. Pope voted aye, Mr. Swecker voted aye, and Mr. Torrey voted aye. There were no votes against the motion. The motion passed.

Town Attorney – There is a lady here who has something to say.

Chairman Davidson – Would you please give your name and address for the record.

Ms. Natalie Roberts – I live on 406 Church Street. Please excuse me. I am also trying to dial in my neighbor who lives beside me.

Town Attorney – We do not do that. You cannot do that.

Ms. Roberts – He is in D.C. and had a question he wanted to ask you all too because you all sent him a letter too; not just me.

Town Attorney – I am sorry but we do not do telephone conversations. You cannot do that. You can ask him what the question is and come back in but we do not do telephone meetings. It is not permitted.

Ms. Roberts – Okay.

Ms. Roberts took a moment (by phone) to ask the adjacent property owner what his question was for the Planning Commission regarding the boat ramp planned for Clontz Park.

Ms. Roberts – Basically, we are at the hill at Clontz Park. We are trying to get a description of what exactly are you all trying to do so we can have an idea of the amount of traffic we will have.

Town Attorney – Just so you understand what this was all about, the town owns that property over there. We received a grant to install a boat launch. We can provide you with a copy of it. The boat ramp is a permitted use. It can happen. You can assume that because there will be a boat ramp there will be a lot more traffic.

Ms. Roberts – Exactly which is why we are trying to see exactly where it is. The reason I am asking is because I have four little children. My concern is because there is

more traffic while my children are at play. I see regular traffic with just fishing. It is crazy sometimes. If I have my little ones out at play and somebody is not paying attention, will there be public signs that will let them know that children are at play? I see what you might not see at nighttime and in the daytime. It can be crazy sometimes. If you have extra boating traffic that is coming in, it is going to get wild. I want to know where exactly the boat ramp will be and how the extra traffic will be handled.

Town Attorney – There is only one road in and one road out.

Ms. Roberts – Is the ramp is going to be down by the pier?

Town Attorney – Sure it is. It is where the water is.

Ms. Roberts – Okay but then I just heard somebody else say something about the parking even though there is public parking. When we have the fishing parking, in the summer, it is crazy. They park in my space.

Town Attorney – I have a site plan here that you can have.

Planning and Zoning Administrator – It is also on the website.

Town Attorney – There will be twenty nine additional parking places. It is going to be a very large parking area. It is designed for vehicles with a trailers. They are large diagonal parking places for people to park.

Ms. Roberts – So are you saying that on that same side where the parking is now that you all are taking some more of that grass space that is right there? I am trying to get a visual because this is something I will look at every day. I am trying to exactly see where it is and what is happening.

Planning and Zoning Administrator – It is on the website but you can have this copy.

Ms. Roberts – I just want you to explain it to me.

Planning and Zoning Administrator – A picture is worth a thousand words. This is the copy for you to have. It shows your property and I guess next to you is the gentlemen in D.C. This shows the road and the parking area that is there now. You will drive straight through to the boat ramp. There are parking places for the vehicles with trailers.

Ms. Roberts – So it is farther down than I thought. I have to visually see it to share with my neighbor who is blind. I have to tell him in exact words where everything is going.

Planning and Zoning Administrator – Everything is on the far side of the park from your houses.

Ms. Roberts – Also, is there a way that I can have a sign with ‘children at play’?

Planning and Zoning Administrator – You just put your request on the record. There will be minutes typed up from this recorded meeting. The information will be passed along to the engineer.

Town Attorney – Ms. Roberts, I would just like to caution you that a sign does not protect your children.

Ms. Roberts – It does not but it makes people aware.

Town Attorney – I understand that but you have to plan on a high level of supervision and maybe a fence. If you are counting on a sign to save your children; it is not going to.

Ms. Roberts – They are already out there very limited because of the different cats that are over there. I already have them out there very limited anyway. I just wanted to visually see where everything would be. Thank you.

Vice Chairman Bryan – Ms. Roberts, I have a question. You said there is a lot of activity out there at night.

Ms. Roberts - I thank God for the policemen because we see them all the time. I see some different things at night time. I thank God for the police who come two and three times a night to make sure the traffic is down to a minimum. When they come; they do leave.

Town Attorney – If you see any illegal or suspicious activity, feel free to call the police.

Ms. Roberts – I will. I have seen different things going on and I will.

Town Attorney – They will be happy to respond if you see something that is not supposed to be happening.

Ms. Roberts – They do.

Vice Chairman Bryan – The park is open dawn until dusk. Is there a sign out there that says that?

Ms. Roberts – Yes there is.

Planning and Zoning Administrator – This is going to be different. This parking lot is proposed to have streetlights in it. It will not just be open from dawn until dusk. You have a lot of fishermen that go out at night. I think when the boat ramp goes in it will not just be a dawn to dusk park anymore.

Town Attorney – The lighting might help your situation some.

Ms. Roberts – And other people situations. I hope so. Are you saying there will also be professional fisherman?

Town Attorney – No.

Planning and Zoning Administrator – People who have their own boat will go out at night; especially during Striper season, they go out at night.

Ms. Roberts – Thank you.

Chairman Davidson – Is there any other business? Hearing none, this meeting is adjourned.

The meeting adjourned at 7:10 p.m.



Mr. Bill Davidson
Chairman



William G. Saunders, IV
Planning and Zoning Administrator