

The Smithfield Board of Historic and Architectural Review held its regular meeting on Tuesday, February 16th, 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, Mr. Russell Parrish, Mr. Gary Hess, and Mr. Chris Torre. Ms. Julia Hillegass was absent. Staff members present were Mr. William G. Saunders, IV; Planning and Zoning Administrator and Mr. William H. Riddick III, Town Attorney. There were four (4) citizens present.

Chairman Gwaltney – I would like to call this meeting of the Board of Historic and Architectural Review to order. The first item is the Planning and Zoning Administrator's Report.

Planning and Zoning Administrator – Thank you, Chairman. I have a few items to report tonight. I would like to recognize our new Board member, Mr. Chris Torre. He is a commercial contractor. He has a lot of experience and has done a lot of very nice looking work in his career. I would like to welcome him to the Board. I will also mention that Ms. Julia Hillegass was reappointed to the Board for another term at the last Town Council meeting. I was going to mention that we would have a new Board photo taken if everyone was here but Ms. Hillegass is absent. If she does make it by the end of the meeting, we will take the photo. If not, we will do it next time. Thank you.

Chairman Gwaltney – The next item on the agenda is Upcoming Meetings and Activities. A list is provided. Next we have Public Comments. Are there any signups? Hearing none, we will move to Board Member Comments. Hearing none, we will move to Proposed Cabana – 417 South Church Street (Smithfield Station) - Contributing – Ron Pack, applicant. Could we have a staff report please?

Planning and Zoning Administrator – This is an application for a cabana. It would be a poolside cabana. I inserted a couple of photos of the area into your packet. One photo shows it as seen from the bridge to give you a perspective that much of it would be visible from the street. You can see a temporary cabana type structure in there. I believe it is the location for the new cabana. It will be further away from the bridge than either of the buildings. The exterior materials and colors are going to be similar to the buildings that are currently there. It will have architectural shingles to match. The columns will be white fiberglass. The column bases would be red common brick to match existing brick pavers by the poolside. The trim and fascia would be white PVC or

equivalent. It will be very similar to the structures that are currently poolside. It is what to expect from this proposal.

Chairman Gwaltney – Thank you. Is there anyone here to speak on this application? Please step forward and state your name and address please.

Mr. Ronald Pack – Good evening. I am the president of Smithfield Station. I live at 508 Jordan Avenue. I am a resident of Smithfield. I was telling Mr. Saunders before that this is the first time I have been here in eight years. That means I have not been doing anything. I need to do more. Many people may not know that there is a swimming pool along the boardwalk at the Smithfield Station. It has been there since 1994. Unless you have walked down that way, you cannot see it. You can hardly see it when you drive by in a high rise truck. You cannot see it from the other side of the bridge at all. Periodically over the last five years, we have put various kinds of tents and temporary items down there. We have lost almost all of those in storms. They have faded, blown away, torn railings out, and caused destruction. We would like to do a permanent shade area adjacent to the pool. It would provide shade for our customers. It would be permanent so it does not blow away. The drawings are in front of you. Architecturally, they are pretty much the same as the Smithfield Station is throughout. I can answer any questions you may have.

Chairman Gwaltney – Does anyone have any questions or comments?

Mr. Hess – I would like to make a motion to approve as presented.

Mr. Prevatte – 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, Mr. Ronny Prevatte voted aye, Mr. Russell Parrish 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 – The motion was approved as presented.

Mr. Pack – Thank you very much.

Chairman Gwaltney – Our next item is Porch Post Change (After the Fact) – 362 South Church Street – Contributing – Ray Barlow, applicant. Could we have a staff report please?

Planning and Zoning Administrator – Yes sir, Mr. Chairman. This came to us as a reported violation. The post on the front of the house had been changed without Board review or approval. I put some information in your packet that relates to this home and this style of home in the historic district. There are before and after photos. The before photo shows the turned columns or turned posts with gingerbread trim. The picture showing the square white posts is what is currently there now. You have a copy of the survey form from where we did the historic district surveys which discuss what the structure had in 1990 and what type of architecture is represented by this structure. There is a page from our design guidelines that references that style of architecture. It is before you as an ‘after the fact’ review of this change without having prior Board approval.

Chairman Gwaltney – Thank you, Mr. Saunders. Is there anyone here to speak about this property? Please step forward and state your name and address.

Mr. Ray Barlow – I live on Scotts Factory Road.

Chairman Gwaltney – I would like to have full disclosure on this. Due to some business dealings that I have with the applicant, I am going to step aside on this particular item and turn the meeting over to the Vice Chairman. I will step outside during the discussion on this and let the rest of the Board take care of it. Should you want me back after that, someone can let me know to come back in. I will turn the rest of this item over to Vice Chairman Yeaw.

Vice Chairman Yeaw – You can go ahead Mr. Barlow.

Mr. Barlow – Basically, what I was going to say was that we went out there and replaced the posts. We did this because it is the second time this porch has been rotting out. We bought this house around twenty to twenty two years ago. At that time, there were three different posts on the front of the house. We had no problem from the county. We just went out there and put, basically store bought, four inch diameter colonial turned posts on there. We did not ask them. No one complained or anything of that nature. What was there originally was one turn post and the other two were two, two x four’s sandwiched together just barely holding the roof up. The county was thrilled that we took this house off of their hands because it had been sitting vacant for forty years. At that time, we put in what we thought matched the house and went with it. We looked at the houses around it. The ones on that side of the street, at least, looked like

six by six square columns. That is the reason that we went with this. Should I have had approval? Absolutely. I should have but honestly the porch was failing. We figured we just needed to get it back and get it working again. We did use the existing handrails. We brought them up to the original specs they were back in the day. They have not been changed. Other than that, it is all that we did. We are asking for approval, after the fact, if you see fit in your mind.

Mr. Prevatte – I think it looks nice. We really do not know whether this was original or not. There are some houses that are like this. I know it is a Queen Anne. A lot of the Queen Anne's have been modified.

Mr. Parrish – There is not a lot of detail left on this house as far as all of the “frilly” nature such as scrollwork and everything.

Mr. Prevatte – It looks nice. It is an improvement.

Mr. Hess – I noticed in the first photograph that the house right next door has square posts on it. I have not gone through town to see how many have square posts and how many have turned posts. I take it that there is probably a pretty good mix.

Planning and Zoning Administrator – I am sure there is. This will be the first time we will miss Mr. Ealy and his vast knowledge of architecture. The house right next door may not be a Queen Anne either. This one has the asymmetrical roof lines and the unique window in the rake end of the gable. There are several other things that denote the Queen Anne style. Typically, as was illustrated from the survey as well as the design guideline page, the Queen Anne is going to have turned posts. However, 1990 is really not that long ago as it relates to a historical home so who is to say what was on it before 1990. It certainly could have been square posts in the past. The ideal type for a Queen Anne is turned posts but it does not mean it was originally built that way. You will definitely see both styles throughout town.

Mr. Prevatte – What color are you going to paint them?

Mr. Barlow – Right now, we have them primer white. We were going to go back with white because that was the original. When we pulled it down, we had blue handrails and blue posts. It was not what was there when we originally bought the house. It was just all white.

Mr. Prevatte – They were in bad shape I know. I had seen them.

Mr. Barlow – It was in bad shape. Like you said, it has been redone prior to us purchasing it for a rental years ago. It is all vinyl siding now. The foundation does not have original brick. It has all been jacked up and redone. Nothing on this house, including the interior, is original.

Mr. Prevatte – It is pretty on the inside. I have been in it.

Mr. Barlow – Do you want to buy it?

Mr. Prevatte – No.

Mr. Barlow – We have been trying to sell that one too. It is unfortunate but it is the nature of that side of the street as opposed to the other side which is nicer. It is more like your historic area in the five or six block home setting. Not to say we should make them all that degree of change. Like I said, ninety percent of it was done prior to us coming there anyway.

Mr. Prevatte – I see you put the turn caps on the top of the posts which looks nice.

Mr. Barlow – Yes.

Mr. Prevatte – You finished it off. What about the bases?

Mr. Barlow – We did a lifter base on it for two reasons. One, it gives it more appeal that way. The second reason is because of the rot that we receive on this house so much. Like I said, this is the third time replacing the bottom of the posts. Next time, all I have to do is lift it up, take the platform out and put a new platform in without replacing the entire post. It is the reason we dressed it up that way.

Mr. Prevatte – It looks better than it did.

Mr. Barlow – It is not falling down this time either.

Vice Chairman Yeaw – Are there any other questions or comments?

Mr. Parrish – I make a motion to approve.

Mr. Hess – Second.

Vice Chairman Yeaw – 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 abstained, Vice Chairman Yeaw voted aye, Mr. Ronny Prevatte voted aye, Mr. Russell Parrish voted aye, Mr. Gary Hess voted aye, and Mr. Chris Torre voted aye. There was one abstention. The motion passed.

Vice Chairman Yeaw – Thank you sir.

Chairman Gwaltney – Our next item on the agenda is a Proposed Detached Sign – 405 Grace Street (Hallwood) – Non-Contributing – Mark Hall, applicant. Do we have a staff report?

Planning and Zoning Administrator – Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This is an application for a multi-tenant sign at 405 Grace Street which is the Hallwood Enterprises building. The proposed area of the sign, height and set back requirements all meet the ordinance requirement for a multi-tenant sign. Everything else is pretty straight forward. You have information regarding the design of the sign and the landscaping proposed to go around it. The one thing that I would recommend for the Board to consider, other than what is obvious, is the possibility of blanket approval of future tenant panel changes. They need to be done in a manner consistent with those that are originally approved so that every time a business comes and goes; the applicant does not have to come back before the Board. This has been done at the Smithfield Station shops and also at Home Sweet Home Care. There is blanket approval for future tenant panels as long as they are the same style as what is originally approved.

Chairman Gwaltney – It looks like we have someone to speak on it. Please state your name and address for the record.

Mr. Mark Hall – Thank you, Chairman. I am speaking on behalf of Franklin E. Hall Real Estate as the manager. I am from 7432 Bartons Landing in Isle of Wight County. I would like to say that I think we have given a pretty good illustration in your packet of what we plan to do. The property has never had a detached monument type sign. This will be the first. This is a part of a larger project which will entail significant landscaping in that green space between our commercial property and some residential properties. We plan to install lighting for the sign and irrigation for the landscaping to upgrade the grassy area a little bit. I would like to say thanks to Mr. Saunders and Mr. Griffin who joined me onsite to take a look at it. I wanted to make sure. It is a little awkward there because there is a utility pole that makes it difficult for us to deal with. We only have so much space to work with between the right of way and this pole trying to make it effective. The town engineer and Mr. Saunders were both very helpful in meeting me onsite to make sure we could get it situated properly. I would be glad to answer any questions. I appreciate the suggestion for the blanket approval because, as you can

see, we have tenants who may come and go from time to time. If we could just keep those plates consistent then I think the sign will continue to look pretty consistent. In fact, since I made that drawing there has been one tenant who has already given notice and is on the way out. Someone new will be coming in soon.

Chairman Gwaltney – Are there any comments or questions?

Mr. Parrish – Are you trying to grow ivy up the pole? In the rendering, it looks like it.

Mr. Hall – I think that may have been a little bit of poetic license or whatever. I wish I could get rid of that pole. We have tried but other poles would fall down if we clipped the guidewire that it uses. I do not think we will be able to get rid of it.

Mr. Parrish – I make a motion to approve it along with the motion for blanket approval for future tenants as long as the sign is consistent.

Mr. 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, Mr. Ronny Prevatte voted aye, Mr. Russell Parrish 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 – The motion carries. Thank you. Our next item is a Proposed Detached Sign – 407 Grace Street (Cofer Auto) – Landmark – Thomas Askew, applicant. Is there anyone here to speak on behalf of this?

Mr. Thomas Askew – I live at 107 North Street in Smithfield. I am the owner of Cofer Auto. My pole sign at the road is actually very old and not very appealing. It also has American Car Care Center which I am no longer affiliated with anymore. I have just signed an Auto Value Parts deal and we are hopefully going to get a sign from them. I either have a choice of that or a Michelin sign. The Michelin sign is much, much larger. I know it would never be approved because it is about twice the size of this one. I just need to get something that looks better that is lit up at night and will show the identity of the parts that I sell.

Chairman Gwaltney – Mr. Saunders, do you have comments to add for this?

Planning and Zoning Administrator – Yes sir. The proposed sign does exceed the area allowable by the ordinance but I also believe the existing sign does as well. Typically, the heights of sign posts are brought under conformity. However, the BHAR has the discretion to override the ordinance on these two items if you so choose. You can approve the sign as presented even though it is larger. You can allow the sign pole to remain at its existing height. The applicant does park cars underneath this sign so the height is probably logical in that case. It is really up to the Board. You have a lot of leeway on this. You can approve it as presented, piece meal it, or deny it. Like I said, both the existing sign and the proposed sign exceed the area in the ordinance.

Chairman Gwaltney – Mr. Askew, can you explain to us the difference of the two sizes of the two signs?

Mr. Askew – Yes. The new sign is the same width but it is about six inches taller. The current sign I have now is no longer made in that size. The pole that I am putting it on will be the same. I am not changing the pole. I am just changing the physical sign.

Mr. Hess – Will the new sign still have Cofer Auto at the top and have the other name.

Mr. Askew – No. The new one will just have Auto Value Certified Service Center with “service” under the bottom. I actually have Cofer Auto in the front of the shop and on the side. I am not requiring them to do that.

Chairman Gwaltney – So it is like the picture.

Mr. Askew – It is the exact sign right there.

Mr. Prevatte – I would like to make a motion that we approve it as presented.

Mr. Parrish – 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, Mr. Ronny Prevatte voted aye, Mr. Russell Parrish 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 – The motion carries.

Mr. Askew – Thank you very much.

Chairman Gwaltney – Our next item is Approval of the January 19th, 2016

Minutes.

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

Mr. Hess – I make a motion to approve the minutes.

Mr. 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, Mr. Ronny Prevatte voted aye, Mr. Russell Parrish 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 – Is there any other business or discussion? Hearing none, we are adjourned.

The meeting adjourned at 6:54 p.m.

Mr. Trey Gwaltney
Chairman

Mr. William G. Saunders IV
Planning and Zoning Administrator