

The Smithfield Board of Historic and Architectural Review held its regular meeting on September 15th, 2015. The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. Members present were Mr. Roger Ealy, Chairman; Mr. Trey Gwaltney, Vice Chairman; Mr. Ronny Prevatte, Mr. Russell Parrish, Ms. Julia Hillegass, Mr. Gary Hess, and Mr. Jeff Yeaw. Staff members present were Mr. William G. Saunders, IV; Planning and Zoning Administrator and Mr. William H. Riddick III, Town Attorney. There were seventeen (17) citizens present.

Chairman Ealy – I would like to call the September 15th, 2015 Board of Historic and Architectural Review meeting to order. The first item on the agenda is the Planning and Zoning Administrator's Report.

Planning and Zoning Administrator – Thank you, Chairman. I have a briefing on where the Cary & Main Rezoning project stands. The Planning Commission recommended denial on both votes related to this project. There will be a public hearing at the Town Council meeting on November 3rd for the Cary and Main Rezoning project. It is a month further back than we may have expected due to some scheduling issues. It will probably be coming back to the Board of Historic and Architectural Review for review and recommendation at the October 20th meeting. Please bring the materials for the Cary & Main Rezoning project that you were previously given to next month's meeting if you see it on the agenda. Some of the items may be updated but if you bring the previous items as well I would appreciate it. Does anyone have any questions on that project? Thank you.

Chairman Ealy – Next is Upcoming Meetings and Activities which you have a list of. I am going to make one comment before we go to public comments. This Board only makes recommendations on the architectural merits of what they want to put up as far as materials and so forth. We have nothing to do with density or placement. Please bear that in mind. Next we have Public Comments. Please state your name for the record.

Ms. Braunhardt – My name is Sharla Braunhardt. I live at 101 Goose Hill Way. I understand what you are saying about the comments. I have spoken before the Planning Commission and the Town Council and what I said in front of those two Boards maybe I need to say to you all next month when this subject is brought up. What you are going to hear from me is utter frustration. I want to respectfully ask that the process a development proposal goes through be explained to the public. The proposal and rezoning request has already been rejected by the Planning Commission. The next

logical step is the Town Council and yet three months will go by before there is a public hearing. We have learned that the proposal is still bouncing around with other Council committees and town staff. I am sure you can all agree that transparency in government is a cornerstone of our democracy. That is why I am asking for an explanation of the process with references to the applicable written town policies. In addition to the sheer number of taxpayers who are already voicing their opposition to this development and petitioners have provided testimony and evidence that this rezoning development proposal should be rejected. The petitioners have listened to the developer's representatives on several occasions and met with them. After voicing our objections to the plan, which included density, architectural, and other things, an offer was made by the representative of the developer to increase the amount of shrubbery. We have been talking about the ridiculously low proffers and how the taxpayer is going to be left once again to correct the insufficiencies. Has any change occurred with their proposal? No, it has not. We have pointed out the flaws within their traffic study. There have been absolutely no changes. What I have learned in the process of studying the proposal and any pro-development reports is that all the projections are based on incomplete data. The bottom line is that the petitioners are not going away. We are more resolved than ever to fight this. Thank you.

Chairman Ealy – Our next speaker.

Ms. Clark – My name is Betty Clark. I live at 120 North Church Street. As most of you know after the death of my daughter I with the help of Ms. Dawn Riddle have maintain Mansion on Main Bed & Breakfast. The house was built in 1889. It is considered a contributing piece of architecture in Smithfield. I know from the time and funds put into this structure that houses built in the Victorian style cannot be constructed for the money the developer is willing to spend. The Smithfield Historic and Architectural Review Board have the duty to keep Smithfield's history in tacked for future generations. How can you in good faith possibly allow the historic property of Pierceville to be changed from what it has always been a farm with a landmark house? Is it not your job to see that the house is restored and the land used as it was intended three to four hundred years ago? At the Planning Commission meeting on August 11th, 2015, the vote was not to change the zoning of the Pierceville property. If the Town Council and the Board of Historic and Architectural Review are not going to respect the Planning Commission's decision then why do we have a Planning Commission? I would like to

see the materials for these houses if built. What kind of roof and windows will be used?

Will there be Victorian porches with columns? History is what brings people to our town.

If we continue the way the developer wishes our history will be lost among the little houses packed together on property that should have been protected by this board.

Those of you who have restored an old house know the time, money, and effort the process takes. But it is a labor of love. Mr. Trey Gwaltney almost lost his life while restoring his house. His house is a lovely addition to South Mason Street and our town.

My daughter died while restoring the Bed & Breakfast to save it for future generations. It is obvious that the majority of the people in Smithfield do not want this development. As members of this board should have the courage to fight for the town's history. You have the opportunity and the responsibility to protect Smithfield's history. Thank you.

Chairman Ealy – Our next speaker is R. B. Braunhardt.

Mr. Braunhardt – Not at this time.

Chairman Ealy – Next is Mr. Chris Torre.

Mr. Torre – Not at this time.

Chairman Ealy – Is there anyone that would like to speak? Hearing none, are there any Board Member Comments? Hearing none, we will move to Proposed Sign and Exterior Plan – 103 Main Street – (Landmark) – Jennifer England, IOW County Museum, applicants.

Ms. England – I am Jennifer England. I am the Director of the Isle of Wight County Museum. You have in your packet some changes that we would like to make to the exterior of the museum. The vinyl adhesives signs that say Museum and Gift Shop on the front windows we do not want to install. We do not wish to install the administrative office sign either. We rarely use it for entrance or exit. The support mechanism for the signs is fiberglass just like the ones along Main Street. They are made of fiberglass so they will flex a little bit in the wind. As far as the vinyl graphics we have some banners on the window right now. The design is a little bit different but this version is just an adhesive vinyl graphic. They will match the new sign that we put up a few months ago.

Chairman Ealy – Are you adding a new awnings?

Ms. England – Yes. The black ones that are there now are a little large. We would like to make them a little smaller and change the color to burgundy.

Chairman Ealy – Are there any comments or questions from the Board?

Mr. Prevatte – It will be an eye catcher.

Ms. England – We are looking to dress it up a little bit.

Mr. Hess – Could you explain again how these will be attached?

Ms. England – Do you mean on the front of the building?

Mr. Hess – Yes.

Ms. England – The light poles along Main Street have the fiberglass pieces to hold them. It is apparently the same thing but there is a very strong anchor that is stainless steel so it will not rust. It is anchored on the building so it should be very secure.

Mr. Hess – Thank you.

Vice Chairman Gwaltney – You have four of them around the door. I am guessing they are not there to look at. Are they double sided?

Ms. England – Yes.

Vice Chairman Gwaltney – When two of them are next to each other are they far enough apart so that people can see them? When you approach the building you are really only going to see the one. I like the design of the signs. I wonder if four is a little heavy around the door.

Ms. England – If you prefer two we can certainly do that. We had originally done the design where they were flat on the building but when we were looking at that we realized that the only way you would be able to see them if you were driving straight in from the Smithfield Center direction. We thought we would angle them out a little.

Vice Chairman Gwaltney – Would it be something to consider just hanging one on either side of the door and rotating them out every so often. I like all four of the designs.

Ms. England – It is a possibility. I do not have a ladder tall enough but I am sure we could get one.

Vice Chairman Gwaltney – Who is the lady on there?

Ms. England – The lady is from Isle of Wight County and the Civil War. We have her image in our Civil War exhibit.

Vice Chairman Gwaltney – My only comment is that it looks a little heavy having four banners around the door.

Chairman Ealy – Are there any other comments or questions?

Ms. Hillegass – I think I would prefer only two as well. There is too much going on there.

Chairman Ealy – I think it might be a bit more interesting to switch them out every so often.

Vice Chairman Gwaltney – I feel if you are walking down the sidewalk you will probably not see all four of them anyway.

Town Attorney – Are you going to tell them how to advertise?

Vice Chairman Gwaltney – I am going to fully recommend at this time that only two of these be mounted and approve all of the designs. They can be switched out every so often. I think it would be interesting for people who only come here every so often. It will also be interesting for people who drive the street every day.

Town Attorney – That is your recommendation but are you going to approve what they are asking for?

Vice Chairman Gwaltney – No. I do not approve four. I approve two.

Town Attorney – We are not in the business of designing and advertising for the museum. You are in the business of determining if something is an appropriate addition to downtown.

Vice Chairman Gwaltney – Can we recommend two and then approve two?

Town Attorney – You can make a recommendation. Are you saying you would only let them have two or are you going to let them have what they want?

Vice Chairman Gwaltney – I do not want them to have four. I want them to have two.

Town Attorney – Are you saying that four is inappropriate? If you think it is inappropriate then say it is inappropriate. If you like them then it is their decision is it not? You all can debate among yourselves. It is sort of out of the realm of the guidelines but it is on a contributing structure.

Vice Chairman Gwaltney – It think it is a lot of stuff hanging on a contributing structure. How should I say it?

Town Attorney – I am just saying that you are substituting your judgement for their desires. I think your position is whether it is appropriate or inappropriate. If it is inappropriate then state why.

Vice Chairman Gwaltney – I will defer the issue to my fellow members of the board to see what they say.

Mr. Parrish – I would like to make a motion to approve as submitted.

Chairman Ealy – Do you have a recommendation to go along with it?

Mr. Parrish – No.

Mr. Prevatte – Second.

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

On call for the vote, seven members were present. Chairman Ealy voted aye, Vice Chairman Gwaltney voted nay, Ms. Hillegass voted nay, Mr. Parrish voted aye, Mr. Hess voted aye, Mr. Yeaw voted aye, and Mr. Prevatte voted aye. There were two votes against the motion. The motion passed.

Chairman Ealy – Our next item is Approval of the July 21st, 2015 Meeting Minutes.

Town Attorney – Mr. Chairman and members of the Board, I have reviewed the minutes and find them to be accurate. I recommend the minutes to be approved as presented.

Ms. Hillegass – So moved.

Mr. Yeaw – Second.

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

On call for the vote, seven members were present. Chairman Ealy voted aye, Vice Chairman Gwaltney voted aye, Ms. Hillegass voted aye, Mr. Parrish voted aye, Mr. Hess voted aye, Mr. Yeaw voted aye, and Mr. Prevatte voted aye. There were no votes against the motion. The motion passed.

Chairman Ealy – Is there any other business? We are adjourned.

The meeting adjourned at 6:49 p.m.

Roger Ealy
Chairman

Mr. William G. Saunders IV
Planning and Zoning Administrator