

Appearance Commission Meeting
May 6, 2013
Minutes

Members Present: Chairwoman Melton, Lee Batson, Fiquet Swain (participated via telephone for 30 minutes)

Members Absent: Kirby Guinn, Sandy Foutch

Staff Present: Zunilda Rodriguez, AICP, Planning Director

Guests: Commissioner Virginia Gray

1. Meeting Called to Order & Welcome

Chairwoman Melton called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

2. Adjustment and Approval of the Agenda

Ms. Rodriguez noted that the meeting tonight would not have a quorum and thus could not take action on any items. She noted that Kirby Guinn had a last minute conflict; Fiquet Swain had thrown her back but would try to participate via telephone; and Sandy Foutch noted she had to remain late at work today and could not attend but offered some remarks to convey to the Appearance Commission on follow-up she conducted.

3. Public Comments:

Staff liaison member Zunilda Rodriguez noted there were no members of the public present that submitted public comments.

4. Discussion, Consideration, and Action on the Following Items:

A. Recap of Spring Litter Sweep 2013

Ms. Rodriguez provided a brief recap of the Spring Litter Sweep 2013 event and noted some of the major takeaways from the event which included the following: 1) need for possible regular clean up of dam area in Brighton subdivision; 2) want to have a similar fall litter sweep event in the fall; and 3) would like to share some of the results with the community and encourage more participation next time.

B. Downtown Murals Program

Ms. Rodriguez offered a brief update on the research she conducted on how other municipalities in North Carolina operate and implemented downtown mural programs. She noted that some communities have issued RFP (request for proposals) from area artists to create downtown murals. The RFP included a basic outline of information on what the community was looking for in the creation of the mural, placement destination of mural, and any requested elements for the downtown mural program. Ms. Rodriguez

noted she made contact with Sarah Powers from Visual Art Exchange who was agreed to distribute an RFP notice to artists within our 500 artist exchange network. They send announcements out each Wednesday and we could include ours in their distribution schedule. There are also groups in the triangle such as Donna Belk based in Raleigh Ms. Rodriguez and Town Manager Piner also visited with an artist last month who stated he could provide a brief mock-up of project costs for a potential design. We toured three locations in town with him as possible future downtown mural design placement.

Fiquet Swain recommended that we contact Chandra Cox with the NC State University who does real art for small towns (i.e. Sanford) and would probably be amenable to doing a downtown mural project for the community. She may be a good contact to follow-up on in the future however.

Commissioner Gray noted that there is a teacher at the Wendell Elementary School who is very talented and we should reach out with her to see if she would be interested in assisting with this project. Commissioner Gray also noted that the art teacher at the East Wake High School (Bartholomew) should also be contacted to perhaps see if his students would be interested in participating in this project. Ms. Rodriguez noted she has done outreach several times to him with no response but will try to work through the school directly to see if contact can be made.

Lee Batson recommended that the town explore reaching out to residents to conduct a survey to best determine their preference for downtown mural. She recommended that perhaps we survey people to best determine what elements makeup their perception of creative version of a Town of Wendell timeline that combines both the historical and modern contexts of the town. Ms. Rodriguez noted she would follow-up with developing a survey framework to pursue.

Fiquet Swain was unable to hear some of the conversation in the meeting and noted she would have to provide for the group. Ms. Rodriguez noted she would regroup with her after the meeting.

C. Business Appearance Makeover Pilot Project

Chairwoman Melton noted that additional work efforts are needed on this but they plan to concentrate on that more after the Silent Auction event. She noted that Lee Batson has agreed to help paint the curtains needed for Primo Pizza. Lee Batson noted she thinks the Appearance Commission should provide some vases with artificial flowers for the tables to enhance the interior ambiance. Batson noted that Primo Pizza has some black and white photos on the walls and new lamps that provide greater ambiance to the interior of the pizzeria.

D. Prep for Silent Auction Event

Due to the lack of quorum, Chairwoman Melton and appearance commission member Lee Batson discussed pushing back the Silent Auction event from May 18 since there was

a lot of work that needed to be done and a firm commitment on details had not been achieved. Ms. Rodriguez noted that the Vintage Dreamzzz antique business on Main Street may be a business opportunity to explore to partner up with for a silent auction since they have merchandise and experience and would be able to bring a built in customer base to an event that the Appearance Commission holds.

Lee Batson noted that the Appearance Commission would need to meet and vote soon to cancel the May 18 Silent Auction date. Batson she would notify the Women's Club regarding the canceled date and reschedule but wonder if they would be available for a future date since they went to certain lengths to provide a schedule date. Batson noted she was not inclined to ask them for a new date if the May 18 date is canceled.

Ms. Rodriguez noted that other alternate venues could be pursued by the Appearance Commission once an alternate date was selected which included: 1) Agave restaurant since they are in the process of getting their ABC license; 2) Wendell Community Center since we could easily get free space; and 3) Other businesses with available space in the downtown such as Kilas, for example, since they do networking events in the summer.

Batson noted she would like for Ms. Rodriguez to pursue calling a special meeting this week so they can discuss as a group. Ms. Rodriguez noted she would reach out to the Appearance Commission members regarding their availability to hold a special meeting. However, she noted that they may not need to meet to vote to reschedule the event date since they did not vote at their meeting last month on the date. Ms. Rodriguez noted they discussed silent auction possible meeting dates but then confirmed the date after the meeting after outreach was done to each of the members.

They also discussed whether it would be better to pursue some other fundraisers that are smaller such as conducting a raffle of their design services; conducting a yard sale, etc.

Commissioner Gray noted that the Appearance Commission should consider developing a Town of Wendell ornament through the assistance of perhaps Sid Bynes to help provide as a fundraising item.

Ms. Rodriguez relayed some brief follow-up action updates to the Appearance Commission from Sandy Foutch which included the following:

- 1) Sandy Foutch visited "The Dance Exchange" thrift store & spoke to Christine Smith on how we could help spruce up her store front. One thing she would like is to have their logo painted on the front window along w/verbiage stating this is a "Dancer's Thrift Store". As for other changes she stated she knows what she wants but needs the money first.

Jenny Melton noted that she would prefer a more permanent item that is timeless over generations of ownership of a property rather than a temporary item. She stated she would not be interested in the Appearance Commission painting a business specific logo. Batson agreed with Melton on this point.

- 2) Sandy Foutch also noted she spoke to Lynette who runs the art studio in town. Lynette said they would be glad to assist but to keep in mind the work would be from amateurs so it may not be exact. Not sure how bad/good the art would be with her comment "would be from armatures".....So open to more discussions

Jenny Melton noted that this may be something we should discuss more as a group.

5. Chairman and Board Members' Comments

Chairwoman Melton noted that she had the following comments:

- 1) She would like staff liaison, Ms. Rodriguez, to contact all Appearance Commissioners tomorrow that missed the meeting tonight to discuss the importance of maintaining quorums and ask them if a special meeting can be accommodated this week.
- 2) Melton also noted that she would like for the town to provide a letter of introduction so they may solicit donations from companies for donated items to the Appearance Commission (i.e. Loews, Home Depot, etc.)

Lee Batson expressed the following comments:

- 1) She was disappointed at the lack of quorum tonight and wanted to stress the importance of making future meetings of the Appearance Commission. She stated that regular attendance is proving to be an issue. She asked Ms. Rodriguez if there is a way to get additional members on the commission.

Ms. Rodriguez responded that the Town is seeking citizen appointments for all the volunteer advisory boards including the Appearance Commission. She stated she would send a copy of the application to all the appearance commission members to encourage them to recruit additional members. The application deadline is May 17.

6. Adjourn

Chairwoman Melton made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Lee Batson seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.