

## Smithfield 2020 Notes from project team meeting of July 11, 2012

### Present:

Jim Abicht	Mark Hall	Connie Rhodes
Rick Bodson	Randy Pack	Peter Stephenson
John Edwards	Russell Parrish	
Sheila Gwaltney	Lisa Perry	

### Admin

Appointment of Smithfield 2020 Project Manager – Mark

Motion to re-appoint Rick Bodson as Smithfield 2020 Project Manager was made and passed with unanimous consent

Report on 2020 sources and uses of funds and current bank balance – Rick

A report of project-to-date sources and uses of funds was reviewed. \$3,922 remains in the façade grant program and \$8,204 undesignated funds remain, for a total balance of \$12,126.

### Project and initiative updates

America in Bloom visit – Russell

The AIB judges were reported as having had a great visit to Smithfield and were particularly impressed with the broad span of underway projects and "...how we're making the most of available resources." Feedback and results of the visit will be available after AIB's late September symposium. A discussion concluded that Smithfield will likely apply again in two years and that the application funding will be sought from community groups such as 2020 vs. the Town. The 2020 team extends congratulations and its appreciation to Russell for leading the initiative and to the Chamber for its lead role in organizing the challenging effort.

Public art project – Judy (via report to Rick)

The porcine statues were installed in time for the America in Bloom visit and were a big hit with the judges and the public. A Porcine Parade brochure, available at the Visitor Center, provides background on each pig and a map to locate each. The pigs were christened by Mayor Hare on Friday, June 29<sup>th</sup> as an Olden Days kick-off; Sheila introduced the artists and acknowledged the sponsors to the assembled crowd. The entire project cost of nearly \$27,000 was privately financed. The artists donated their time and paid for the paint and varnish. Sponsors and underwriters included the Woman's Club of Smithfield, Smithfield Foods, the Arts Center @319, Smithfield 2020 and Knox Automotive, who also secured a donation of the clear-coating material from BASF.

Tourism, through the County Museum, intends to fund the development of porcine parade postcards. Motion was made and passed with unanimous consent to waive copyright to the Museum to use images of the painted pig statues for the commemorative postcards.

### Firehouse of 1939 – Mark

Construction of the first floor shops will be complete in August and the second floor loft apartments in early fall. No leases have yet been signed, but several prospects are under evaluation for best possible fit.

### Taste of Smithfield – Group report

A letter to Smithfield's CEO Larry Pope was sent by 2020 to express the team's congratulations on the opening of Taste of Smithfield and the appreciation for the personal and corporate commitment to the economic vitality of the Historic District.

### Little's Market / signage and repainting – Judy

The Little's Market Welcome Wall was completed in time for the America in Bloom judging. The street facing wall was painted and edged, the window in the wall was repaired and five large banners were hung as a welcome gesture in entrance corridor to the Historic District. Four banners feature Hams, History, Hospitality and HeART and a fifth features the Tourism logo with the word "Welcome". The project was cost was \$3,215; Smithfield 2020 paid \$2,000, the Women's Club of Smithfield \$1,200 and Tourism \$15.

Randy noted that building owner Bobby Little expressed disappointment at receiving an official letter instead of verbal communication from Town staff regarding the condition of the wood shingled awning over the front of the building. With the building still in probate, affecting permanent changes or modifications to the building is constrained. Peter noted the concern and will review procedures with Town staff.

### 17 Main Street – Peter, Mark

In response to a Town attorney request, the building owner provided a timeline on affecting repairs. However, progress against that timeline is not evident and next steps may require legal action by the Town.

### Hayden Lane properties / Town's response to 2020 letter – Peter and John

The disposition of the two small buildings – whether to sell outright or lease – has been put on Town Council's public building committee agenda for discussion. Peter will advise if 2020 should present its position to the committee.

### 117 N. Church Street property – Peter

The RFP for the purchase of 117 N. Church Street has been extended to August 6. To date, the Town has received one letter of interest but no firm bids. 2020's position was reiterated that the objective of selling the Church Street properties is to affect transformative change.

### Courthouse of 1750 / divestiture by Preservation Virginia – John

Preservation Virginia has notified local "branches" that it is discontinuing that organizational structure and divesting itself of historic properties in their care. As a result, Historic Smithfield is negotiating a Memorandum of Understanding whereby it will hold the deed to the 1750 Isle of Wight Courthouse and will absorb as a sponsored program the local volunteer organization for the operation and maintenance of the Courthouse. The transfer is expected to be completed within several months.

Prospective business contact database / input received to date – Judy via report to Rick

The current list of identified businesses for the Historic District includes:

- Coffee from beans shop (Green Mountain Coffee?)
- Men's Clothing (like The Quality Shop)
- Electronics
- Home Furnishings (Paisley Pig is now here!)
- Arts & Craft supply (like Jerry's Art-a-rama)
- Glass Studio
- Bike and Scooter Shop (like Conte's/Beach Scooter)
- Hunting/Fishing & Taxidermy Shop
- Shoe Shop & Repair (like Saxon Shoes or The Walking Store)
- Wine & Gourmet Foods (like Bon Vivant)
- Children's Shop
- Music Store & Luthier (like Jeff's Music)
- Convenience/Grocery Store
- NASCAR Racing Shop
- Niche Specialty Stores (like Dodson's and Rio Grande Traders)

Review of façades improvement matching grant process – Lisa and Connie

No progress to report; deferred to August meeting.

### **New initiatives**

Façade matching grant request / Mansion on Main – Rick

A grant request from Mansion-on-Main for power washing and painting was reviewed, and it was evaluated to be maintenance activity. Motion was made and accepted by unanimous consent that the application be denied.

South Church Street properties – Mark and Connie

The condition of the Church of Christ and Verizon buildings was discussed. Mark noted that the Church has an active congregation but no funds to affect landscaping or façade improvements. Connie noted that dialog has been initiated with Verizon's real estate team. No definitive action plan was proposed but will be followed in future team meetings.

Business open hours / open days – Rick

The on-going challenge of disappointing visitors with closed shops on Mondays was briefly discussed. Rick will assemble a session of merchants, the Tourism team and 2020 members to review the problem and brainstorm possible strategies to address.

**Next meeting:** Wednesday, August 1<sup>st</sup>, 8:30 am, Arts Center @ 319 classroom.

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*These meeting notes submitted by Rick Bodson.*