

## **Smithfield 2020**

### **Notes from project team meeting of November 6, 2013**

#### **Present**

Jim Abicht	Lee Duncan	Lisa Perry
Priscilla Barbour	Sheila Gwaltney	Russell Parrish
Rick Bodson	Trey Gwaltney	Judy Winslow
Bob Cole	Mark Hall	Amy Ring, guest

#### **Admin**

The team welcomed Bob Cole and Russell Parrish as the appointed representatives for the Chamber of Commerce

Current funds balance is \$21,865 and reflects payments of \$2,344 in October in support of the launch of the branding project. The commitment from undesignated funds of \$5,200 for a design proposal for the Riverview Campus and the remaining \$156 from the \$2,500 allocation for the branding launch as well as the façade grants of \$1,000 for 207 Main Street (Fulton Jones building) and \$1,010 for Smithfield Baptist Church are outstanding.

Rick discussed that the team leadership (Judy, Mark, John and Rick) recommend that Randy Pack be reappointed as a Member-at-Large in 2014. Absent presentation of other candidates at the December meeting, the appointment will be put to ratification vote in January.

The protocol for assignment of team members from the represented organizations was briefly reviewed, as was the opportunity to replace the Project Manager at the January meeting. Nominees for the 2014 Project Manager should be communicated to Judy, Mark or John.

#### **Project and initiative updates**

The streetscape improvement project (planting of a buffer of holly bushes between the property and Main Street sidewalk) was reviewed and judged complete. A motion to release the \$1,010 matching grant was passed by unanimous vote.

Rick reported for Connie Rhodes that the building owner of 207 Main confirmed plans for an awning replacement but that discussions with the owner of the adjacent private residence are needed to address the continuing problem of the overhanging weeping willow. After a review of several alternatives, the team tasked Trey to confirm with Connie the current status and, as appropriate, approach both building owners to identify a mutually beneficial way forward.

Judy highlighted several initiatives under development now that the branding logos have been publicly introduced at Town & Country Day. The introduction received consistently positive feedback, but roll-out has built up modest momentum. To address the challenge, a detailed implementation plan by the branding core team is under development addressing options such as print ads in select publications, submission of an article for the next "Slice of Smithfield", a series to be presented on [www.genuinesmithfieldva.com](http://www.genuinesmithfieldva.com) profiling "Genuine

Smithfield People” – local folks who exemplify genuine Ham, History, Hospitality and HeArt. As well, Virginia Beach time-shares will be targeted for personal visits to entice activity directors and concierges to send tourists to Smithfield.

Within the context of branding, the continuing challenge of raising customer service and shop open hours was again discussed and several creative ideas were offered for consideration. A review of the options will be put on the December meeting agenda.

Rick reported for that December 6<sup>th</sup>, 9:15 am, is set for a show cause hearing in Suffolk Circuit Court on the 17 Main Street demolition by neglect issue.

2020’s involvement with the Riverview Campus initiative was reviewed. A strategic plan review hosted by PDCCC on October 23<sup>rd</sup> identified several activities and projects that the tenant organizations (PDCCC, Library, Luter Y, Children’s Center) have initiated, demonstrating tangible and credible willingness from the leadership of each to continue to develop joint efforts. Rick will follow up with further dialog with individual reps of the tenant organizations to more fully scope the shared vision of an improved campus before requesting the release of funds for the conceptual architectural plan.

The open projects list was briefly reviewed and several were removed from the open list – lamp posts across the Cypress Creek bridge, a letter to VDOT re: Miss Utility, Church of Christ property improvement and the evaluation of parking capacity in the Historic District; these projects will be re-activated if requested by the owning team member.

### **Organization updates / announcements**

Arts League: The Board of Directors is developing an initiative to address the lack of funding for art supplies in County Schools. Sheila will update on the initiative in December.

Chamber: Bob reviewed highlights from the Chamber Board’s recent meeting with Smithfield CEO Larry Pope. Key points shared: The transition to Shuanghui ownership is progressing well and the early dynamics confirm that the relationship is one based on investment in, not close management of, Smithfield and in emulating Smithfield’s expertise in the pork industry supply chain in China and dramatically increasing export of Smithfield products. The company’s commitment to the Town is unchanged; summarized succinctly by Mr. Pope: “Same old Smithfield, only better.”

Tourism: Judy reviewed several events that the Tourism team will be coordinating in the next several months and in a busy 2014, underscoring the commitment to event-driven economic activity. The first major event is the December 13<sup>th</sup> evening Farmers Market, which will be staged in the 100 and 200 blocks of Main Street.

**Next meeting:** Wednesday, December 4<sup>th</sup>, 8:45 am, Arts Center @ 319.

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*These meeting notes submitted by Rick Bodson.*