

Smithfield 2020 Notes from project team meeting of July 3, 2013

Present

Jim Abicht	Sheila Gwaltney	Peter Stephenson
Priscilla Barbour	Trey Gwaltney	Judy Winslow
Rick Bodson	Mark Hall	Kristi Sutphin - guest
Lee Duncan	Connie Rhodes	

Admin

Current funds balance of \$24,409.55 reflects June payments from SHDBA funds for support of the Olden Days concert and the subsidy of a Tourism ad. The commitment of \$5,200 from undesignated funds for a design proposal for the Riverview Campus is outstanding.

Project and initiative updates

Judy reported that the June Merchants Studio introduced the branding initiative to two dozen attendees. Feedback on the program content was overwhelmingly positive and notes captured during the session have been distributed to the “2020 focus on Smithfield” email list. Work by the creative team on a logo and tag line continues; October’s Town & Country Day is a target date for introduction. Based on all of the input to date, the branding will focus on “Genuine” matched with the current Hams, History, Hospitality and HeArt.

Rick reported that a kick-off meeting of the Riverview Campus organizations (Paul D. Camp, Library, YMCA, Children’s Center) was held June 11th. A few tactical issues were discussed and several action items generated, including first-ever participation by all in the August 6th National Night Out event which has traditionally been hosted at Riverview Park but will now move into the YMCA’s gym. Further report on this initiative will be provided when dialog and planning by the Riverview Campus group substantiates a consideration of the release of the funds committed for a design proposal. The working group’s next scheduled meeting is July 17th; the development of a shared vision statement is the primary agenda item.

Several suggestions pointed to the need for and value of work-force development programs and that focus will be introduced into the workgroup’s efforts. At Connie’s suggestion, the recent Student Leadership Institute’s presentation on the need for a youth community / activity center will also be introduced into the discussions.

New initiatives

Sheila and Priscilla have taken a first cut at a public art project for Hayden’s Lane and presented a concept of a seasonal – April to October – display of the works of local and regional sculptors. To both celebrate and raise funds for the project, tie-in opening and closing events with the Brew & Wine Fest and Town & Country Day, respectively, are under consideration. Modest site improvements to Hayden’s Lane such as foundations for the sculptures (similar to the bases now in place for the Porcine Parade statues) and lighting will

likely be required. Available space on the Lane will allow for three to six sculptures.

Next steps are to work through some specifics on several points and then request time on the Town Council's Public Buildings & Welfare Committee for a feasibility checkpoint.

Organization updates / announcements

Arts League: Key events on the arts calendar are the July 26th opening of the Members Show at the Arts Center, the August 4th Sundays at Four "Terrific Teen Talent" showcase, and the August 17th Smithfield Music house concert presenting Tim Buppert.

County: Lisa, Judy and Lee, representing County Economic Development, Tourism and Historic District stakeholders, have facilitated several meetings between the property owners of the lots at the bottom of Wharf Hill and realtors, a commercial developer and an engineering firm to discuss a concept for development of that area. While the financial challenges are significant, substantial dialog is nonetheless progressing.

Chamber: Connie noted a concern with the appearance of façade awnings at several locations on Main Street and took for action opening a dialog with at least one building owner on evaluating replacement or cleaning options. Replacement of awnings would qualify for consideration for a 2020 façade improvement matching grant.

SHDBA: With the closing of American Attic at 315 Main Street, Peter has issued an RFP for sub-lease of the property; proposals are due July 15th. Proposals will be reviewed by Town Council and the proposed business use and hours of operation will be factored in the consideration and selection of a tenant.

Town: The issue of demolition by neglect of 17 Main Street (the old shoe shop) was reviewed in District Court on June 18th and the building owner was given 90 days in which to affect substantial repairs. Failing to do so will result in a contempt of court ruling.

The Town will host a meeting July 11th to reach agreement on a number of operational issues related to the public restrooms at the Plaza at 206 Main. This will be a pre-requisite to the formal transfer of ownership of the property from Smithfield Foods to the Town.

Natural Playgrounds will return to Smithfield next week to present a final design and proposal for the natural play area to be sited in Windsor Castle Park

Next meeting: Wednesday, August 7, 8:45 am, Arts Center @ 319.

These meeting notes submitted by Rick Bodson.