

Smithfield 2020 Notes from project team meeting of October 3, 2012

Present

Rick Bodson	Mark Hall	Connie Rhodes
John Edwards	Lori Leib	Peter Stephenson
Sheila Gwaltney	Randy Pack	Judy Winslow
Trey Gwaltney		

Admin

The current 2020 bank account balance is \$12,126. An approved façade improvement matching grant of up to \$1,585 to Smithfield Foods remains outstanding.

Project and initiative updates

The transfer of the 1750 Isle of Wight Courthouse from Preservation Virginia to Historic Smithfield is progressing, albeit at a pace slowed by the Virginia Department of Historic Resources' development of a required historic easement. The formal transfer may not be affected before early 2013. John briefed the Town Council on the project status at the Council's October 2nd meeting.

The Town Council has accepted a proposal from Judy Begland for the purchase of 224 Main Street (formerly the Ham Shop). Ms. Begland, owner of Wharf Hill, intends to transform the building into a women's soft goods boutique on an aggressive timeline and has committed to having the shop be open seven days a week. The Town Council has also authorized the Town Manager to open negotiations with Gourmet Bakery owner Carolyn Burke, currently leasing the other Hayden's Lane gatehouse property at 220 Main, for its purchase.

No progress has been made in ameliorating the demolition by neglect situation with 17 Main Street as the current owners negotiate financing to affect repairs. Town staff is monitoring and has been authorized to initiate legal action if credible progress is not evident soon.

The ownership of the eight porcine statues was discussed; a final project step of donating the statues to the Town was never completed. The objective is to transfer ownership of the statues, which are on public rights of way, from Historic Smithfield, 2020's legal entity, to the Town while retaining the copyright of the art work (the artists assigned the copyright to Historic Smithfield when they submitted the designs). The issue will be vetted with the Historic Smithfield Board and presented to the appropriate Town Council committee in October.

The overwhelmingly positive reaction by the public to the porcine statues has unfortunately prompted many to climb on them for photo ops, damaging them in the process. It was agreed that signage to mitigate the risk of damage is warranted and a motion was made and carried by unanimous consent that up to \$750 be budgeted from unallocated funds to procure and install appropriate warning signs.

New initiatives

With the award of the America in Bloom Award comes an opportunity to build on the positive momentum, as well as the challenge to sustain the momentum. The AIB judging report will be distributed to 2020 team members with an objective of identifying specific initiatives that can be championed by 2020. Judy and Connie volunteered to be on point to develop a proposal on how 2020 attention and resources could address aesthetic improvements identified in the report.

A discussion of on-street parking in the core shopping area of the Historic District engendered frank exchanges of opinions and several possible courses of action. By general consensus, it was agreed that a first step be an inventory of available public parking lots and identification of the location of signage to them. A discussion of the issue and a detailed proposal to increase the awareness and visibility of off-street parking will be taken to the appropriate Town Council committee.

Next meeting: Wednesday, November 7th, 8:30 am, Arts Center @ 319 classroom.

These meeting notes submitted by Rick Bodson.