

Smithfield 2020 Notes from project team meeting of October 8th, 2014

Present

Jim Abicht	John Edwards	Russell Parrish
Priscilla Barbour	Sheila Gwaltney	Amy Ring
Rick Bodson	Trey Gwaltney	Judy Winslow
Andy Cripps	Mark Hall	
Lee Duncan	Randy Pack	

Admin

Current funds balance is \$16,873.79 and reflects the expense reimbursement to the Arts Center @ 319 and payment for the installation of lamp post banners. The banner project will be completed within its \$8,000 budget. The commitment of \$2,500 to incent participation in the Hambassador program has expired; there are no outstanding commitment of funds.

Project and initiative updates

Banners have been installed on Town-owned lamp posts. A decision by Dominion allowing installation on Church Street lamp posts is not yet resolved but escalation of the request and supporting documentation has been submitted.

Five businesses / organizations and 18 participants have enrolled in the Hambassador program; 13 (excluding Tourism staff) have completed all steps and feedback from participants has been consistently positive. No 2020 incentive payments have been requested though the Hambassador program continues to be available to local businesses.

The discussion on the proposal to combine the two SHDBA representatives and three members-at-large was deferred to the November meeting.

New initiatives

The issue of signage to draw Main Street visitors to North and South Church Street and down Wharf Hill was discussed (extending any solution to the 300 block was included). Several options for placement and design were proposed. A task team, which will select its point person, was assigned; Mark, Jim, Andy, Judy, Lee, Sheila and Russell will evaluate options, take a first cut at costs and consult as necessary with Randy and Peter on ramifications to existing Historic District signage ordinances. Target date for a first presentation of options to the 2020 team is November and subsequently to the Town Council Public Building & Welfare Committee at its November 26th meeting.

Judy requested that a “LOVE” wall initiative be added to November’s agenda.

Organization updates / announcements

Historic Smithfield: The fundraising campaign for the 1750 Courthouse remediation project has progressed to the point where negotiations with the lead contractor are expected to begin within a week. An early 2015 start for the project is anticipated.

Arts League: A public art program and national contest for selection of sculptures in Lenore, NC, provides an excellent model for the proposed initiative for Hayden's Lane. Cil has discussed the proposal for Hayden's Lane with the Woman's Club and did not receive push-back. The initiative will be promoted to active project status, with Cil and Sheila on point.

The Arts League and its Smithfield Music program are hosting a reception for Isle of Wight County School music faculty on October 22nd, 6:00 to 7:30 PM, Smithfield Center. 2020 team members are encouraged to attend.

County: The various permitting bureaus have now centralized into a contiguous area in the Courthouse complex; the "one-stop shop" approach is part of the County's commitment to being new business friendly. In concert with that strategy, the Economic Development team is developing a new Website to improve navigation to its several business support resources.

Chamber: Several events, including the annual Isle Fest, are on the Chamber's calendar. The Chamber is also hosting an opportunity to form a South Church Street Business Council as part of its outreach strategy. The initial meeting is scheduled for October 30th, 6:30 PM, at the Hampton Inn; 2020 team members are encouraged to attend.

Tourism: The Bacon Days events drew large crowds and will now become the kick-off to the busy October events season. Next up are Town & Country Days with its multiple activities; details are provided on the Tourism Website.

Historic District Businesses: Three new businesses have (or are about to) opened. Relics, a "re-imagined furniture" shop, and Parlor 39, a differentiated spa, are in the 1939 Firehouse; Vintage Potential has located in the former Southern Chic shop on Main Street. An early April public opening for the Smithfield Winery is planned by the owners, though production of wine has begun in the North Church Street building.

Next meeting: Wednesday, November 5th, 8:30 am, Arts Center @ 319 classroom.

These meeting notes submitted by Rick Bodson.