

Smithfield 2020 Notes from Team meeting of November 2nd, 2016

Present

Jim Abicht	John Edwards	Randy Pack
Priscilla Barbour	Sheila Gwaltney	Amy Ring
Rick Bodson	Trey Gwaltney	Peter Stephenson
Lee Duncan	Mark Hall	Judy Winslow

Admin

Current funds balance is \$14,833.85. There are no outstanding commitment of funds beyond the \$386 remaining in the project budget for repairs to painted pig Magnolia.

Jen Gangemi has accepted a position with the Department of Defense and closed the Paisley Pig. The business owner reps have undertaken the recruitment of a new Team member.

Project and initiative updates

A summary of vacant / turn-over retail properties in the Historic District:

- 17 Main (old shoe shop) is slowly being restored and interest in re-establishing a retail business is being evaluated.
- 124 Main (Anne of Smithfield) has closed; no leasing activity has been identified.
- 130 Main (Frisly Lilly / Clerk's Office) has been vacated; a lease for a retail business is being evaluated by Historic Smithfield's 1750 Courthouse board.
- 131 Main (Imagine Art) will continue to be used for office space by Smithfield Foods for an undetermined time.
- 202 Main (Paisley Pig) has closed and a new retail business has plans to open by December 1.
- 209 Main (1st Colony Engraving) is changing ownership but business remains as is.
- 213 Main (Modlin Printing) has been purchased by Kelly and Marie Payne, is under extensive renovation and will re-open as Yummaries bakery in early 2017.
- 223 Main (Laura & Lucy's) is for sale and open on a limited number of days.
- 235 Main (Return Engagements) converting to residence; possible antique shop in basement.
- 237 Main (Olive's) has closed and is on the market for sale.
- 323 Main (Old World Tea Co.) has been purchased by Cheryl Ketcham and will re-open as Finley's General Store.
- 409 S. Church St (Station Boardwalk shops) has one vacancy and no firm candidate.

New initiatives

A multi-family residential complex of 12 duplexes and 56 apartments for the south side Cedar Street west of Underwood Lane has been reviewed by Town staff in a pre-application meeting; a review by the Planning Commission is pending. The duplexes are proposed to be 1,600 +/- square feet, 2-3 bedrooms, with parking behind the buildings (there is no on-street parking on Cedar). The one-bedroom apartments are planned to be age and income restricted. Since no elevations have been presented, the aesthetic cohesion within the Historic District

and the neighboring properties can't yet been evaluated. The economic impact of additional Historic District residents is positive, the target demographic is positive, the price points of the proposed units should not have an adverse effect on the neighboring properties, but a definitive 2020 evaluation and statement on the proposed development are deferred until the designs and site details are presented by the developer to the Planning Commission and reviewed by the Team.

Historic District events and street closures has been under review and the Tourism team has solicited feedback from merchants; a modest number of submissions was characterized as positive and a handful of solvable issues are being addressed. Planning and oversight is managed through a Special Events Committee with representation by Tourism, Town Police, Public Works, Smithfield Center and, recently, Town Council. The Committee's processes have evolved with each event, all of which are reviewed "post mortem" for issues and opportunities for adjustment in planning and execution.

A suggestion for Tourism to host an "open house" briefing for Historic District business and residents early in 2017 to review the year's plans and schedule will be evaluated.

The 2020 working group of six merchants / restaurateur will be reconvened in January to debrief the fall / holiday events and the impact each had on business operation and economic vitality.

Dr. Daniel Lufkin, recently appointed president of Paul D. Camp Community College, has launched a communication initiative to present PDCCC's strengthening programs in work force development. The Team has been provided a copy of Dr. Lufkin's presentation; 2020 will pursue its dialog with the director of the Smithfield campus.

Organization updates / announcements

County: Economic Development has launched several initiatives for work-force training. A work force development group with representatives from the Blackwater Library system, IOW County Schools, local industrial businesses and Paul D Camp Community College has a primary focus on IOW County needs. Another program targets a work-ready credential designation through a Federal program and [another](#) addresses career and technical education that reaches down into IOW County schools.

Chamber: The 2016 Student Leadership Class has concluded with a strong and enthusiastic group focus on economic development in the community. Opportunities to further engage the graduates in Historic District businesses and initiatives will be pursued.

Tourism: [Restaurant Week](#) will be reprised in early winter to sustain the overall positive trend in meals revenue.

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

These meeting notes submitted by Rick Bodson.