

The Smithfield Planning Commission held its regular meeting on Tuesday, August 14<sup>th</sup>, 2018. The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. Members present were Mr. Randy Pack, Chairman; Mr. Charles Bryan, Vice Chairman; Mr. Bill Davidson, Mr. Mike Swecker, Dr. Thomas Pope, Ms. Julia Hillegass, and Mr. Michael Torrey. The staff members present were Mr. William G. Saunders IV, Director of Planning, Engineering and Public Works and Mr. William H. Riddick, III, Town Attorney. There were two (2) citizens present. The media was not represented.

Chairman Pack – Good evening ladies and gentlemen. Welcome to the Smithfield Planning Commission meeting of August 14<sup>th</sup>, 2018. We will start our meeting with the Pledge. Please stand.

*Everyone present stood and recited the Pledge of Allegiance.*

Chairman Pack – The first item on the agenda is the Director of Planning, Engineering and Public Works Activity Report.

Director of Planning, Engineering and Public Works – Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We have a couple of items this evening. Tomorrow, I believe, the contractor finally comes back to the Joseph W. Luter, Jr. Sports Complex to finish the punch list items. He is supposed to stay on site until such time as they are all finished. It should be wrapping up very soon. We thought we had sent the final documents that VDOT needed as it related to plats and deeds on the turn lane project. I report to you, again, that we think we have just recently sent them all the plat and deed information that they need to finally give us approval to advertise for bid for the turn lane project. We have accepted a contractor for the Clontz Park Boat Ramp based on the RFP that went out. We will be holding a pre-construction meeting on that project on Thursday, August 16<sup>th</sup>. Thank you.

Chairman Pack – We are planning on playing fall ball out at the sports complex this year. They start practice this week if not there then out at Beale Park. We will now move to Upcoming Meetings and Activities. The Board of Historic and Architectural Review will meet at 6:30 p.m. on August 21<sup>st</sup>, 2018. The Board of Zoning Appeals meeting for this month has been cancelled. On August 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> beginning at 3:00 p.m., we will have our Town Council Committee meetings. Please note that the time has been changed on this. On September 3<sup>rd</sup>, our town offices will be closed in observance of Labor Day. The next Town Council meeting will be on September 4<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 p.m. Our

next Planning Commission meeting will be September 11<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m. at the Smithfield Center. At this time, I would like to open the meeting for Public Comments. The public is invited to speak on any matter except for scheduled public hearings. Tonight, we do not have any public hearings. Comments are limited to five minutes. Any required response from the town will be provided in writing following the meeting. There are no signups but would anyone like to speak? Hearing none, we will move to Planning Commission Comments. Are there any comments from the Planning Commission members?

Ms. Hillegass – I just have a couple of questions for our Director of Planning, Engineering, and Public Works. I do not mean to put you on the spot. I intended to call you before the meeting but time got away from me. What is the status of the shipping container at the CVS and the pink statue in front of the Smithfield Truck and Auto.

Director of Planning, Engineering, and Public Works – As far as the CVS container, they had it loaded with files. We have given them some extra time to get all of the files out of there. They have finally gotten it emptied and have plans to remove it from the site soon. They have been working with us and we have been working with them. They had to rearrange some space in order to get rid of it. There is also another shipping container that you all may have seen at Christian Outreach. We have also been working with them to get that one removed as well. They had loaded it with furniture. We are working with them to get the furniture out and get it moved. What was your other question?

Ms. Hillegass – The other question was about the statue in front of the Smithfield Truck and Auto on South Church Street. The artsy pigs were approved. The statue at Sesroh was approved; but I do not recall hearing anything about the pig statue. Did I miss that?

Director of Planning, Engineering, and Public Works – It was not approved. Honestly, I think I missed that.

Chairman Pack – It is at Smithfield Truck and Auto which is the old Pomoco building.

Director of Planning, Engineering, and Public Works – I will check into that and you will probably see it in the near future. Thanks for the heads up.

Vice Chairman Bryan – I have a comment. This past Wednesday I was taking a walk through Windsor Castle Park. I entered at the Smithfield Station and crossed over towards the kayak launch. I got to the intersection of Jericho Road and Kayak Lane and came across a lot of cars. The parking lot was filled and people who were parked up and down the road on Jericho Road. I could not recall any advertising about anything happening there.

Ms. Hillegass – It was because of the sunflowers.

Vice Chairman Bryan – So, I asked two people who were approaching me what the special event was. They said none. They said that everyone is here for the sunflowers. It was just a lot of people all over. Sunday afternoon I went again with my wife and, again, the park was full of people in cars. Whoever's idea that was, I think it is great.

Mr. Davidson – They advertised on Facebook and I think it has really drawn people in. I spoke to a few people and many of them were not local. They came from out of town just to see the sunflowers. I think it is a good attraction for the town. It should probably continue.

Chairman Pack – Mr. Dean Stallings donated his time and the materials to plant the sunflowers. Also, the entire kayak field was planted but the deer ate them. I have asked our Town Manager to add that to our Committee agenda. There is a little bit of traffic control that needs to be addressed. Perhaps some signage would help to tell people where to park.

Mr. Davidson – I also have a question for Mr. Saunders. What about all the containers in the Food Lion parking lot. As you come into town, there is a beautiful sign welcoming people to Smithfield and then there is the junk immediately after it.

Director of Planning, Engineering, and Public Works – They are supposed to be for the renovation of the Food Lion.

Mr. Davidson – But they have said that is complete.

Director of Planning, Engineering, and Public Works – Then the trailers need to go as well. I will ask them about it.

Mr. Davidson – Thank you, sir.

Chairman Pack – Are there any other Planning Commission comments?

Mr. Swecker – Have you all seen on Facebook where the Smithfield Police Department put up their Lip Sync video?

Ms. Hillegass – Yes; they did a good job.

Chairman Pack – Are there any other comments? Hearing none, we will move to the Entrance Corridor Overlay District Design Review – 1604 South Church Street – Ray Barlow, applicant. Could we have a staff report please?

Director of Planning, Engineering, and Public Works – Yes sir, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Ray Barlow recently acquired 1604 South Church Street. It is the location of the old Boulevard Cleaners. He would like to make some exterior as well as interior changes. The most relevant to you tonight is the exterior changes. The lot is .44 acres. The primary use is commercial. It is in our Highway Retail Commercial zoning district on South Church Street. The applicant proposes changes as follows: replace the existing siding with gray vinyl siding, replace two existing front windows with 48” x 60” picture windows, remove the chimney, add handicapped ramp to both ends, and remove the large pine tree from the front. As a note, there is no plan at this time that has been submitted to the town for any type of replacement landscaping. Staff finds that the design and materials proposed are in keeping with the ECO requirements. The strengths of the application is that the proposed changes will improve the façade of an existing building that predated the Entrance Corridor District which brings it into conformity with the district. The weakness of the application is that there is no plan for landscaping to corridor standards at this time. Thank you.

Chairman Pack – Would the applicant like to speak about his project? Please come to the podium and state your name and address for the record.

Mr. Barlow – I live at 17541 Scotts Factory Road. I am working on the project at 1604 South Church Street. I have an addendum to what I gave each one of you. I will pass out a copy now. Some of the changes that I have listed on here were intended to be in a separate meeting with you all in another month. Some of it was based on some potential clients that I would want to have in there as renters. We are kind of leaving the driveway and shrubbery a little up to their discretion and a little bit of ours and a little bit of yours altogether. In order to take the tree out, I realize we have to put some kind of shrubbery or foliage back in the front. Basically, we are looking at doing some shrubs

right in the front beds that are adjacent to road frontage. We would like to keep it off of the building itself so we do not damage the building. We are talking to a landscaper. We are thinking that three shrubs on each side would be adequate. They will not be small. They would be shrubs that would grow to three to five feet in height along with some greenery around there in flower beds. That takes care of what we are looking at as far as replacing the tree that will come down. What you see on the top of that sheet is something we are looking at if these renters move in. They asked if they could get additional parking. This is what I was going to come back about in a month and propose. I figured since I was here; I could run it past you now. We have land access to the right of that building. We are looking at maybe doing an aggregate driveway with staff parking in the back behind the building. Right now, if you were to look at an aerial shot, you would see where it had been used as a parking lot for years because the grass has always been rutted out. I just want to do it with aggregate so it is not muddy. This would, hopefully, hold around ten cars in the back with the customer parking being in the front only. It seems more practical that way because there is a side door entrance that employees can use as well that will be staying there. This is all just done freehand. It will be done better for you later. The driveway just kind of wraps around and shows the side door entrance on the right hand side. In talking to the county and the town, we were trying to figure out how to get a handicapped ramp accessible to the front of this building and not causing rot inside the building. Typically, handicap ramps that are flush with an entrance expose the wood on the inside of the building for rain and snow. They propose to come to the side and put the handicap ramp down the side instead. Also, it would be lower to the ground and our ramp will not have to be quite as long and steep. It will not intrude into the front parking lot area. The county and the town are working with me to try to get it straightened out as far as what we can and cannot do. I will come back again and propose this if need be. On the third page, it just shows an aerial view of the existing "T" shaped parking lot in the front and the small square area in the back that would hold ten cars. Are there any questions on this proposal?

Mr. Torrey – I see that you have the floor plan broken out into seven office spaces. Are you looking at one tenant or multiple tenants?

Mr. Barlow – That all depends. Right now, the elongated room on the right hand side will have one tenant. The other tenant is looking at using everything else in there. The county has advised me that they require the dual handicap male/female bathrooms on the inside. It is something they are having me do whether I have one tenant or ten tenants. They say I can have up to fifteen according to their guidelines; therefore, I have to have that many bathrooms. Also, I have to put the handicap ramp in according to code because the property is commercial. It is kind of dictating what I can and cannot do according to today's codes. Are there any other questions?

Chairman Pack – I am looking at your parking. What types of businesses are looking at renting this space?

Mr. Barlow – The one who has verbally signed a contract for office #7 is going to be a roofing and siding company. Basically, it would be a showroom for them to meet customers. It would be one client at a time. The other one I am talking to is an event planner who is actually friends with the people who own The Main Event. They actually own a place called the Hampton Roads Event Center. They would basically look at doing that. The other company I am talking to is going to be a housecleaning type business. They do not have a name yet; but needed four offices. They will be doing business cleaning and personal cleaning. Whoever comes first is who I will be renting out to; obviously.

Vice Chairman Bryan – Mr. Barlow, you said there was one office here for a separate tenant. Is that office #6?

Mr. Barlow – It is office #7.

Vice Chairman Bryan – Then how would you suggest the tenants in office #7 get access to the restrooms?

Mr. Barlow – Since I submitted this to you, we took the original plan to the county inspections office. They denied this one. We had to make a couple of changes. They liked the concept; but we had to put the bathrooms in the center. I meant to bring that one for you tonight that shows the bathrooms moved to the center which allows everybody with access to all bathrooms and nobody has to go through any other person's office.

Vice Chairman Bryan – So, this is the old one.

Mr. Barlow – Yes, sir.

Mr. Davidson – But it still does not show how you get out of office #7 to get to the restrooms.

Town Attorney – That is a building code issue and really does not have anything to do with the Planning Commission. What he does inside is between him and the building official.

Mr. Barlow – Mr. Reish explained to me that the inside is with the county and the outside is with the town. I was more focused on bringing you the outside information. Also, he suggested I bring the actual sample of the siding instead of just a picture. I have it if you want to see it.

Ms. Hillegass – Yes.

Mr. Torrey – I was asking about tenants, not because of the layout, because of parking and how many spots you would need. It seems like there would only be one or two cars at a time in the front with employees around in the back.

Mr. Barlow – It is something I have always wondered about when it used to be Boulevard Cleaners. You can only realistically get six cars in there and that is it. If I have seven offices with seven different people then I will not have enough parking. It is why everybody is asking for more parking. We have also talked to the county about potentially expanding it in the back. They say we are within our guidelines to add on and double or triple the size if we wanted to if needed in the future. It would be a future meeting with you if we decide to do that.

Director of Planning, Engineering, and Public Works – I wanted to make a couple of comments with these new developments. I was not able to discuss them in the staff report. Basically, this is a site that was a previously developed site with a previous commercial use in it. It has typically been our policy, whether written or not since I have been with the town, that when we try to get businesses into these locations that have been vacant for some time that we work with the applicants as much as we can with phasing in improvements and not make them bring everything up to standard particularly as it relates to landscaping and such and whether that is the policy we want to maintain going forward. It may be some of the things we will be discussing in work sessions in the near future as it relates to the Entrance Corridor Overlay District. A lot of

these new businesses that start in existing structures, they do not make it. It is partly economic development and partly trying to get a business in which is why we have not made them meet every single standard on an existing site in the past. I did mention that there was no landscape plan; but that is not something that we have typically held them to as it relates to that. Since he is removing the tree from the site which I think is logical because it is oversized for its location, it would be great if he could put something in its place. Also, as it relates to parking, in a lot of cases if it is going to be a similar use even if the original parking lot did not have the same number of spaces as today's standard would require. As long as they were not changing the use that was more intensive, we would allow them to use that space. If this is just going to be used as office space, likely the parking in the front would have been allowed to be maintained as it is. If he is trying to get a more intensive use in there, he may need the additional parking that he describes. In the Entrance Corridor, we do try to get some of the parking in the rear. I think putting employee parking in the rear with customer parking in the front meets the spirit of the Entrance Corridor Overlay. However, adding a parking area of the size that he proposes would trigger a site plan. There will have to be some type of site plan review done to add the parking lot in the rear as is proposed in this drawing.

Dr. Pope – What about signage?

Director of Planning, Engineering, and Public Works – Signs are typically administratively reviewed and approved unless they come along with the exterior. Since he does not know how many folks he is going to have and who it is going to be, we did not require him to bring the sign to this meeting with this exterior application. At such time as he determines what his sign requirements are, he will work with staff on what meets the standards and the Town Manager usually reviews the design for signs in the Entrance Corridor.

Chairman Pack – There is a sign in place.

Director of Planning, Engineering, and Public Works – He can reface that sign if he chooses to.

Town Attorney – Mr. Barlow, are you proposing to come back with details pertaining to your parking lot and the landscaping?

Mr. Barlow – Yes. The biggest thing with the landscaping is if we can just go ahead and get that large tree out of there. We can then come back with the proposal for everything else going into the front. I will try to do that next month.

Mr. Torrey – So, what we are looking at tonight is the type and color of the siding, addition of the windows, removing the tree, and removal of the chimney. The handicap ramp is still being reviewed.

Mr. Barlow – Yes. We are looking to put that on the side. It will be to code and accessible by 36" wide. Either way, we will have to have one no matter what. I have a question on the windows. How much variance can it be if they are larger than that?

Director of Planning, Engineering, and Public Works – It will be up to the Planning Commission and how they formulate their motion.

Town Attorney – You are entitled to give him some leeway if he is asking for some.

Chairman Pack – I think we can call those two large picture windows and make it a little less specific.

Mr. Barlow – Okay.

Dr. Pope – We are responsible for the outside and the way it looks; but in order to remove the tree and demolish the chimney, does he have to get a ground disturbance permit from the county to be able to proceed on work, or demolition, or removing the siding? If we are granting the approval of these five items and say that we agree to your concept, can he really start work if he does not have a site plan and a stormwater management plan? Can he realistically really start work until he gets everything from the county?

Director of Planning, Engineering, and Public Works – I do not believe the siding will require a building permit. The removal of the chimney will not either; I do not believe. It is not structural. If he is just going to cut down the tree right now and grind the stump, it will not trigger any type of land disturbance. What would trigger that is the addition of the parking area that he describes.

Dr. Pope – So, he can just start some work; but he just has to be careful with what he does.

Director of Planning, Engineering, and Public Works – I think he can do everything in his original plan that came in the packet. Some of the things that he just proposed tonight will have to wait. He acknowledged that in his presentation.

Mr. Davidson – We are really only talking tonight about removing the chimney, changing the siding, replacing the windows, removing the tree, and adding the handicap ramp.

Chairman Pack – Are there any other questions for the applicant? Hearing none, we thank you Mr. Barlow.

Ms. Hillegass – Are the rules about replacing trees just in the historic district? When you take one down, you have to replace it.

Director of Planning, Engineering, and Public Works – If you take down a healthy tree over a certain diameter then you are supposed to replace it with three trees. In lieu of that, you can also submit a landscaping plan that can be reviewed and approved for that. You do not have to have a landscaping plan just to cut down a healthy tree; however, there are exceptions. If the tree is dead, diseased or dying, we can make exceptions and if the tree is some type of nuisance or hazardous to structures. Typically, any tree within twenty feet of structure will be allowed to be removed. This tree would probably fall on the structure if it fell. Since it is in the Entrance Corridor, we are hoping that he will improve the landscaping as part of the process. I do not see a problem with getting that tree out of there.

Chairman Pack – The Terminix building next door did a good job with their landscaping there. The one thing that really makes a community is a strong landscaping presence. I would like to see him bring the landscaping in line with the current guidelines for the Entrance Corridor Overlay District. Remodeling this building will be a vast improvement. I do not believe we can discuss the aggregate driveway around the back because it is going to trigger a site plan as Mr. Saunders said. We can certainly decide on the other items. Is there any further discussion?

Director of Planning, Engineering, and Public Works – I would like to add one more thing as it relates to the landscaping. Typically, staff works with applicants that are putting in landscaping plans for the season. We want those plantings to be successful. If it is in the heat of the summer, we will let them wait until fall to get the plants in. It is not

necessarily something that has to happen overnight if the plans approved. If it is too long, we may want to bond the work. We can do that or issue a temporary Certificate of Occupancy where that is a condition. We have done that in the past. It gives them a certain amount of time to get that done in the fall or spring.

Chairman Pack – What I would recommend is that we make a motion to approve the plan as presented with the caveat that he works with Mr. Saunders to bring the landscaping in accordance with our ordinance for the Entrance Corridor Overlay District and change the wording on the windows to two large picture windows so he has some flexibility.

Mr. Davidson – Is that your motion?

Town Attorney – No. He said he would entertain a motion.

Mr. Davidson – I see.

Chairman Pack – I did not make the motion on that; but it seems like a logical motion to me.

Dr. Pope – I agree. I would like to make a motion to bring the landscaping in accordance with our ordinance for the Entrance Corridor Overlay District and change the wording on the windows to two large picture windows so he has some flexibility.

Mr. Davidson – Second.

Chairman Pack –A motion has been made and properly seconded. Is there any further discussion? Hearing none, roll call vote.

On call for the vote, seven members were present. Vice Chairman Bryan voted aye, Mr. Davidson voted aye, Ms. Hillegass voted aye, Dr. Pope voted aye, Mr. Swecker voted aye, Mr. Michael Torrey voted aye, and Chairman Pack voted aye. There were no votes against the motion. The motion passed.

Chairman Pack – Moving on, we have Approval of the July 10<sup>th</sup>, 2018 Meeting Minutes.

Town Attorney – Mr. Chairman and members of the Planning Commission, I recommend approval of the minutes as presented.

Ms. Hillegass – So moved

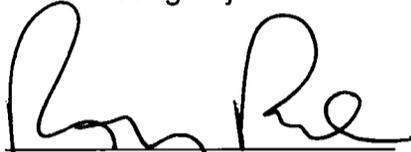
Mr. Davidson – Second.

Chairman Pack – A motion has been made and properly seconded. All in favor signify by saying aye, opposed say nay.

On call for the vote, seven members were present. Vice Chairman Bryan voted aye, Mr. Davidson voted aye, Ms. Hillegass voted aye, Dr. Pope voted aye, Mr. Swecker voted aye, Mr. Michael Torrey voted aye, and Chairman Pack voted aye. There were no votes against the motion. The motion passed.

Chairman Pack – Ladies and gentlemen, thank you very much. We are adjourned.

The meeting adjourned at 7:03 p.m.



Mr. Randy Pack  
Chairman



Mr. William G. Saunders, IV  
Director of Planning, Engineering and  
Public Works