

The Smithfield Planning Commission held its regular meeting on Tuesday, October 9th, 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 three (3) citizens present. The media was not represented.

Chairman Pack – Good evening ladies and gentlemen. Welcome to the Smithfield Planning Commission meeting of October 9th, 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. These are perennial subjects; it seems, for the last few agenda cycles. For the Joseph W. Luter Jr. Sports Complex, we are trying to wrap up the final punch list. We have another meeting with the contractor tomorrow for some of these final punch list items. Unfortunately, there are a few issues with some of the items out there. Hopefully, we can work our way through those in a reasonable amount of time. I also reported to you all the last few months that we thought we had finally given VDOT and the Attorney General's office the last bit of information that they needed to complete their review for the turn lane project. I have been wrong every time. They have come up with another item every time that they want in addition to what they already have. This time it involves the school. Hopefully, it can be remedied in short order; but that is yet to be determined. The contractor for the Clontz Park Boat Ramp has had his surveyors stake out the site. He is in the middle of permitting right now. Once he has those wrapped up, he will start on the site. Also, today is the first day for our new Planning and Zoning Administrator, Mr. John Settle. He will be doing orientation type of activities for the next few days. He will probably be here to see you all at the next meeting. Thank you.

Chairman Pack –We will now move to Upcoming Meetings and Activities. Following this meeting tonight, the Town Council will meet at 7:30 p.m. The Board of

Historic and Architectural Review will meet at 6:30 p.m. on October 16th, 2018. The Board of Zoning Appeals meeting for this month has been cancelled. On October 22nd and 23rd, 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 November 6th, we will have our next Town Council meeting. Our next Planning Commission meeting will be November 13th at 6:30 p.m. at the Smithfield Center. At this time, I would like to open the meeting for Public Comments. There are no public comments this evening. We will now move to Planning Commission Comments. Are there any comments from the Planning Commission members? Hearing none, we move to the Entrance Corridor Overlay District Design Review – 200 Vincent’s Crossing – Smithfield Hotel LLC and Michael Pisa, Alliance Signs of Virginia LLC, applicants. Could we have a staff report please?

Director of Planning, Engineering, and Public Works – I will be presenting this to you since the applicant had a previous engagement and was not able to be here tonight. This application is for 200 Vincent’s Crossing which is the Hampton Inn. They propose to add signage and lighting to the existing site. The signage is a detached sign. They do not currently have a detached sign. It will be in front of the hotel itself as well as some directional signage. They are small signs in two places on the building. If that had been all, we would have likely approved it administratively. The element that made us bring all of this to you is the fact that there are comprehensive sign changes; but also, some architectural changes. This is something we have not seen a lot of in Smithfield in the past. This might be the first time an application like this has been before you. You will see on some of your cut sheets that there is multi-colored cornice lighting shown. It is not representative of the color of the light itself. It is a just a way to illustrate the fact of where the lighting is. We did not think it was proposed to be that color at the beginning of the review. However, they have put a note on here that all accent lighting is to be white. It is low intensity LED lighting that will be in the eaves of the building. While this is not normal, I put a few sections from the Entrance Corridor Guidelines as well as the Entrance Corridor Ordinance in your staff report to reflect this type of activity. As it relates to architectural lighting, the Entrance Corridor Design Guidelines state “reasonable levels of accent lighting to accentuate architectural character may be appropriate in individual instances when it is shielded and aimed towards neighboring

properties, sidewalks, pathways, driveways, or public right-of-ways in such a manner as to distract travel.” The Entrance Corridor Ordinance states “site lighting shall be of low intensity from a concealed source, shall be of clear white or amber light that does not distort colors, and shall not spill over onto adjoining properties, buffers, highways, or in any way interfere with the vision of on-coming motorists.” It also states that “architectural lighting shall be recessed under roof overhangs or generated from a concealed source, low level light fixtures.” In this case, it is accent lighting to accentuate the architecture. It is shielded and not aimed directly toward neighboring properties. It is of low intensity from a concealed source and it is clear white. It is recessed under roof overhangs. With that being said, the way those large white cornices arch over the shielded light position there can be a certain amount of reflection of light off of the cornice. We do not know the extent of it. While it is a low level intensity light, there is still a lot of it. The linear feet of lighting on this will be great because it is such a large building. Overall, as far as the application is concerned, we deem the strengths to be that it meets the current ordinance standards. Also, the proposed signage and the proposed lighting may help hotel patrons locate the hotel. The weaknesses are that the lighting brightness is unknown. Without a photometric plan sheet, it is unknown if the cornice lighting will cause any type of light pollution on the adjacent properties. It is within your discretion to approve it or deny it or recommend modifications. Thank you.

Chairman Pack – The applicant is not here to make a presentation. Are there any comments from the Commissioners?

Dr. Pope – Is this around all four sides of the building including the back?

Director of Planning, Engineering, and Public Works – Yes. It is everywhere that you see a blue, yellow, purple, or green stripe at the top which is where a run of lighting is going to go. There will be a couple going around the carport in the front. There will be at least one or two going around the entire structure.

Dr. Pope – Does it shine below and above or just above?

Director of Planning, Engineering, and Public Works – There is a sheet that shows it. It is basically like a gutter and it only shines up from that; but if you see how that cornice arches over that gutter, it is unknown how much reflective light there will be

on adjacent properties even though the source is low intensity. You might note, in the overhead shot, that there is an apartment complex directly behind it.

Dr. Pope – Do you know if they will have control so they can dim them or is it just that one intense light goes in and that is it?

Director of Planning, Engineering, and Public Works – I do not know about that.

Mr. Torrey - Does it say what type of lighting it is?

Director of Planning, Engineering, and Public Works – It is LED trough lighting.

Chairman Pack – What examples of accent lighting do we have in Smithfield currently? I know there are some on the Smithfield Foods building that shine up onto the building.

Director of Planning, Engineering, and Public Works – I do not know of any that are actually affixed to the building other than flood lamps on the ground that shine on the whole building. There may be some but I cannot recall any. Honestly, if they were only proposing it on the architectural features on the front, I would not have as many reservations of the fact that they are proposing it for a number of areas all the way around and the signs.

Mr. Davidson – It says the total length is 429 feet. I assume that goes all the way around.

Vice Chairman Bryan – Well, that is what concerns me is that it is all around instead of just the front.

Chairman Pack – So, the thought is to accent this building so that it is better recognized as a Hampton Inn. I assume their intention is to attract additional customers. It is not a safety item.

Town Attorney – You probably do not need to attract customers from the rear.

Chairman Pack – The question we need to ask ourselves is does this fit the concept that we have for that stretch of the retail corridor.

Mrs. Hillegass – I am not sure the lighting goes all the way around. If you look at the plan for location #5, it shows the towers on the ends and the carport area. The stretches in the middle are not labeled as having any.

Director of Planning, Engineering, and Public Works – The sheet that shows location #5 is the best representation of where it is.

Mrs. Hillegass – It is not really going all the way around the building.

Director of Planning, Engineering, and Public Works - But there is some on all sides.

Mrs. Hillegass – There is less on the back.

Chairman Pack – I think the point is that it is not continuous.

Mr. Davidson – We have no idea at all about how bright these lights are. There are an awful lot of lights there. I think we need more information than we have.

Director of Planning, Engineering, and Public Works – If it were a light that cast downward, the photometrics would be known. They could do a photometric plan that shows a grid that shows how many lumens are all around the site. Given that fact that this would be a reflection that is shining down, I do not know if they can quantify that on a photometric plan.

Town Attorney – They could provide photographs of similarly lit facilities.

Ms. Hillegass – Yes. Do they have pictures of other Hampton Inns with these lights?

Director of Planning, Engineering, and Public Works – There likely are since it is a franchise.

Vice Chairman Bryan – Were there light specifications with the application?

Director of Planning, Engineering, and Public Works – Again, like I said, it is reflective light. It is hard to quantify unlike a direct downward facing light.

Mr. Davidson – Because of the people in the apartments behind them, I think we need more information.

Vice Chairman Bryan – And one of the main concerns is the light pollution and how it affects the adjacent areas.

Chairman Pack – If the applicant were here, they could address those concerns with us.

Mr. Davidson – I think we should table it and request more information.

Town Attorney – If you are okay with the other stuff, you could move forward with that. He may decide not to do the lighting.

Director of Planning, Engineering, and Public Works - I would ask you all to consider voting on the two signs separately if you were to table the lighting. I know they

have an event coming up. I would like to give them as much as we can. The signs are pretty straight forward.

Dr. Pope – I found a Hampton Inn that has the cornice lit up in the picture at night similar to what they are asking for.

Mr. Torrey – The idea is to draw attention to their building; right? I imagine it will be lit up pretty good.

Town Attorney – I do not know how you will make a decision without some more information.

Mr. Davidson – I do not either. More information is needed on the LED cornice lighting. If we want to split it off and vote for the signage then we can. My motion would be that we approve the monument and the other signage but table the LED cornice lighting at this time until we have more information.

Ms. Hillegass – 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 August 14th, 2018 Meeting Minutes.

Town Attorney – Mr. Chairman and members of the Planning Commission, I made some changes to those and would recommend they be approved as revised.

Ms. Hillegass – So moved.

Mr. Swecker – 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 – Our last item is Approval of the August 14th, 2018 Work Session Summary Minutes.

Town Attorney – I thought they were fine and recommend they be approved as presented.

Ms. Hillegass – So moved.

Mr. Swecker – 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 6:53 p.m.

Mr. Randy Pack
Chairman

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