

Town of Siler City Planning Board

The Siler City Planning Board met on Monday, January 12, 2015 in the courtroom at City Hall.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Darrell Andrews, Curtis Brown, Steve Crotts, Mary Harris, Dacia Hayes (Vice Chair) and JP Joyner (Chair)

MEMBERS ABSENT: Wallace Matthews

STAFF PRESENT: Jack Meadows (Planning Director), William C. Morgan (Attorney), Bryan Thompson (Town Manager), and Dee Lee Thompkins (Administrative Support Specialist)

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER: Joyner called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm. Hayes gave the invocation and Joyner led the Pledge of Allegiance.

AGENDA ADJUSTMENTS/APPROVAL OF AGENDA: *Brown made a motion to approve the agenda, Harris seconded, and unanimously approved.*

CONSENT AGENDA: *Crotts made a motion to approve the consent agenda including the minutes of December 8, 2014, Hayes seconded, and unanimously approved.*

NEW BUSINESS:

a. Siler City Appearance Review Committee Recommendations: Meadows reported that the Appearance Review Committee was established by the Board of Commissioners on July 7, 2014 (see attached resolution). He explained that the purpose of the Committee was to conduct the study of, make recommendations on, and advise an action plan for the appearance improvement of certain areas within the Siler City Community. The areas shall include, but not be limited to: primary entrance corridors, commercial corridors, central business district, and high volume vehicular and pedestrian traffic areas.

Meadows stated that the Committee was comprised of nine (9) members (Zoann Adams, Sue Baker-Vice Chair, Curtis Brown, Jessica Fields, Marcia Grimes, Kenneth McPherson, John Morris-Chair, Ann Radcliffe, and Ed Spence). Town Manager Bryan Thompson, Building Codes Administrator Charlie McLaurin, Public Works and Utilities Director Terry Green, Town Clerk Jenifer Everage, Administrative Support Specialist Dee Lee Thompkins, and Director of Planning and Community Development Jack Meadows provided staff support and assistance.

Meadows explained that the Committee met eight (8) times between August 13, 2014 and December 10, 2014 (meeting minutes attached). The Committee received a two month extension from the Town Board of Commissioners. The Committees study, recommendations, and action plan for the appearance improvement of certain areas within the Siler City Community is attached.

Meadows added that the Planning Board needs to make recommendation to the Siler City Board of Commissioners on or before the March 9, 2015 Planning Board meeting regarding the Committees study, recommendations, and action plan for the appearance improvement of certain areas within the Siler City Community.

John Morris, Chair stated what we are experiencing in Siler City right now we hope will lead to some opportunity that will better our community. He explained that the report has some assets they hope will help with better industrial recruitment with implementation of many things like a more positive attitude with our citizens. All nine members came to their first meeting on wanting to serve and with different ideas on what might work. When they left their December 10th meeting they were a unified group. In the report that you have before you it reflects a realistic and reasonable approach on some things that the

town commissioners can consider on the recommendation that the planning board would have that can better our community.

Basically some of the things the committee is going to suggest is an educational process. The committee had to be educated on what is the process, what our situation is, why is it like it is, who is responsible, what are their limitations, and where do we go from here. They are hoping this can lead to more civic pride, not just looking after your own place, but thru voluntary services. One of the suggestions is to see if our town government is sincere about appearance being one of the factors that will encourage industrial growth. There are grants that might be able to help the town. They have ridden with DOT and they have talked at length with town staff to educate their self. He feels like the committee has been given the opportunity to contribute in their way. Morris closed with implementation is the key and talk is cheap and it's going to take implementation of these ideas.

Zoann Adams added that good things have come out from this committee. NCDOT had some inmates to clean the curbs. SCDO had a work day on a Saturday. They uncovered some sidewalks that have not been seen in years. Little things have started to make a difference. More involvement and education will make a difference.

Joyner stated that he read through the recommendations twice and was very impressed with the amount of work that went into the plan. Dacia Hayes mentioned the code enforcement chart that was included.

Andrews stated he thought their planning, thoughts, ideas and suggestions is something this town has needed for a long time. He added that if the town can achieve or require the resources to make it happen then he is all for it and it would be the greatest thing that could happen to this town. If a stranger rides around Siler City looking for a house and sees all the junked up yards, junk cars and grass that needs mowing, who is going to want to move here. Andrews said if corporate America comes to Siler City and sees a clean town then it shows it is a well-oiled machine and they will want to invest here. This report is a plus for the town.

Andrews made a motion to accept the Appearance Review Committee Proposal, Crofts seconded, and unanimously approved.

b. Façade/Streetscape Grant Program Review: Meadows explained that at the last two meetings the planning board had talked about changing some of the guidelines for the grant program. The board had discussed changing the grant requirements not to have a minimal amount and not to require a second estimate. He shared with the board the SC Appearance Review Committee Recommendation for the Façade Grant which was as follow:

Consider establishing a committee-directed, full funding Façade Grant program, rather than a self-identified, matching grant program. Rework the existing Façade Grant concept so that necessary improvements are identified and directed by the Appearance Committee or Planning Board subcommittee, rather than being left up to property owners to volunteer for the program. Allow the committee to identify improvements, which need to be made. Repairs to be made to broken glass storefronts, remove dysfunctional awnings, non-working wiring, repaint doors, soffits, etc. Remove the requirement for matching funds, from the property owner in certain circumstances. Establish a revolving loan program or investigate establishing a hybrid program involving both outright grants and revolving loans. Apply for RBEG funds.

Meadows then asked the board if they wanted to vote on it tonight or table it till the February meeting.


Hayes made a motion to strike requirement of minimal amount and second estimates desirable but not required, Brown seconded, and unanimously approved.

PLANNING DIRECTOR'S REPORT: Meadows directed the Board to review the memo in their agenda packet.

ADJOURNMENT: Hayes made a motion to adjourn at 7:50 pm, seconded by Andrews, and unanimously approved.

ATTEST:

Dee Lee Thompkins, Recording Secretary


JP Joyner, Chair