

Appearance Commission Minutes

Thursday, Oct. 9, 2014

Attendees:

Bill Sigmon
Collette Touchette
Alicia Rayfield

Sheila Iveson
Jim Gargis
Sandra Waters

Guests:

Jon Raines
Amelia Kennedy

I. Welcome

- A. Collette called the meeting to order and welcomed all members and guests.

II. Approval of Minutes of Thursday, Sept. 11, 2014

The minutes were approved with a correction in Section II. E.

III. Old Business

A. Financial Report

1. No changes in financial report since last month.
2. Sandra inquired about the budget for Christmas light. Collette stated that it was \$2500.00 this year.

B. Report from Code Enforcement

1. Jon reported the following statistics for the period Jan 1 – Oct. 1

629 service complaints

166 initiated reports

146/166 – nuisances (mainly unmowed grass)

11/166 - junk vehicles

9/166 - minimum housing

2. About one year ago the city lost access to their demolition agent. They are presently looking for a new one and will expect to negotiate an agreement with one in the next few weeks. Once this is accomplished the homes identified as not passing minimum housing will be demolished.

C. 'Lookin Good'

1. Since the last meeting no postings have been made for the "Looking Good" campaign.

D. Clean Sweep Results

1. Collette thanked Bill Sigmon and Shelia Iveson for helping with the clean sweep.
2. Collette reported that in the Spring we will start discussing the Spring Clean Sweep in February and hope to get better participation with the community. The Clean Sweep will be sometime in April. This fall we only had 10 participants.

E. Adopt-a-Spot

1. Collette asked Sandra to investigate some possible plaques to identify the caretakers of the spots.
2. The Hwy 10/16 median is coming along. Had to address a gas pipe which runs under the median and concrete that was approximately 2 feet deep.
3. A silt fence had to be installed around the drain pipe.
4. Planting is expected to start the week of 10/13 depending on the weather.

F. Fire Station Site Plan

1. Bill Sigmon, Collette, Doyle and Greg from the Rec. Dept. met on 9/29 to discuss the fire station landscape plan. Doyle and Greg presented a draft landscape plan which was discussed
2. It was reported that the asphalt and concrete will be poured before winter sets in.
3. Collette will contact Chief Yoder to remind him that the landscape plan must be completed before the sprinkler system plan is developed. The sprinkler system must then be installed before any asphalt or concrete is laid.

G. Tree Trimming in Town

1. Several people have complained to the Appearance Commission about how the trees were trimmed along South College Ave. and the bushes were topped in Southside Park.
2. Collette spoke with Johnny Williams, Tree Board Chairperson, as this comes under their realm of responsibility.
3. Collette also showed a document entitled "Guidelines for Planting within Highway Right-of-Way."
4. Duke Power uses lateral or directional pruning.
5. It was suggested that the Tree Board be invited to our next meeting.

I. Hwy 16 Loop

1. Collette reported that she spoke with Randy Isenhower seeking help with getting this area maintained. We've had no response from either commissioner.
2. The commission reviewed a presentation concerning the maintenance of this area that is on the agenda for the Oct. 21 Newton City Council Meeting.

J. Other

1. The City Newsletter will not be printed until a new PR person has been hired.
2. Wayfinding – S. Hovis is exploring size of type, size of sign and easement restrictions for the signs.

3. Streetscape – Allison Platt Co. has been selected to develop a downtown plan. The next Streetscape meeting will be Thurs., Oct. 16.

New Business

A. Downtown Appearance Ordinance

Collette reported that the proposed ordinance for the downtown area as presented by the Planning Commission was voted down by the City Commissioners.

B. Danner Industrial Park

The city will be putting signs at the entrance to the park. Collette requested that the Appearance Commission be part of the planning to ensure appropriate landscaping can be accomplished.

C. Yarn Bombs

1. Collette reported seeing pictures of light poles in Waxhaw, NC enclosed in knitted yarn sleeves. The commission was asked if this was something they would like to pursue. Collette contacted the Waxhaw city commissioner that was involved with their project and got some information. It turns out that this is a national effort and Charlotte has several “Yarn Bomb” projects.
2. Sandra will ask the members of the City’s knitting classes if they would like to participate.
3. The idea of placing artwork of some kind in empty storefronts was brought up again by Alisha. She was approached by the Newton-Conover High Art instructor regarding such a project. The commission was in agreement to utilize her services. Alicia will investigate further with the NCHS Art department.

Next Meeting: November 13, 2014
Recreation Department – Downstairs

Notation: Highlighted sections denote an “Action Item,” requiring action by one or more commission members.

Respectfully Submitted,
Collette Touchette
Chairperson, Appearance Commission
10/4/2014