

**Appearance Commission Minutes
City of Newton, NC
Meeting on Thursday, December 13, 2012**

Attendees:

Lori Wray	Sandra Waters
Jim Gargis	Jane Martin
Collette Touchette	Melvin Caldwell
Tom Rowe	

Item I: Call to Order

Chairperson, Lori Wray welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order.

Item 2: Approval of Minutes

- The minutes were approved as written.
- It was also approved that the minutes would be written by the secretary, sent to the chairperson for review; any changes recommended by the chairperson will be made prior to being sent out for review by the committee. The secretary will email the minutes to the committee for review.

Item 3: Old Business

A. Appearance commission's mission statement and duties status

- Larry Pitts is still reviewing.

Action: Lori Wray will contact Larry Pitts for closure.

B. Lettering at City Hall and Police Department / Dumpster Enclosure

- A request was made that large identifying lettering be placed on the City Hall Building identifying City Hall and the Police Department.
- Tom Rowe reported that the dumpster in the new City Hall parking lot will be enclosed in a split faced brick wall.

Action: Collette will take the lettering request to the Wayfinding Committee.

C. Planter Boxes around the Square

- A merchant on the square has requested that the tree in the planter box in front of the store be cut down as it is causing too much of a mess on the concrete sidewalk. Sandra Water stated that all the planter boxes have been on the square for several decades. We are not sure if there are bottoms or not. They are cracking and may break if one tries to remove the trees from the planters.
- The committee recommended that all the trees in the planters be cut down and pansies be planted.

Action: Collette Touchette will contact Melinda Herzog with Streetscapes to see if they have a plan for the planter boxes.

D. Wayfinding Committee Report

- Collette Touchette reported that only one meeting had been held since the last Appearance Commission meeting. The City Entrance signs have been changed slightly, The dimensions needed by the Appearance Commission for landscape plans will be determined in January.

E. Committee Work Session Reminder

- The Appearance Commission will be holding a work session to develop the year's project and strategic plans for the coming year on Saturday, January 12 at the Recreation Center.

H. Ordinances for Next City Newsletter

- Lori asked if anyone had suggestions for ordinances as the topic of the next Appearance Column in the City Newsletter.
- Melvin Caldwell suggested the ordinance on yard sales. There are homeowners that are having more than the allowed 3 yard sales a year. They are also leaving their unsold goods in their front yards, which negatively affects the appearance of a neighborhood. The group discussed some of the restrictions that neighboring communities had. The committee agreed that our yard sale ordinance might need to be revamped.
- Collette Touchette suggested the ordinance on no parking on the grass in front yards could be used. She has noticed that the number of people parking on their front yards is multiplying on her street with no apparent enforcement of the ordinance.

Action: Melvin Caldwell will research Newton, Maiden and Hickory's ordinances on yard sales and come back to January's meeting with some suggestions for discussion.

I. Clean up of Citizen's Yard

- One of the ways that the Appearance commission suggested to Captain Hayes that they could work with the Code Enforcement program was to help with any elderly citizen that might be violating nuisances, such as overgrown yards, but have no means or physical ability to fix. Captain Hayes approached the committee to help a lady who owns a house on East D St. Unfortunately, the yard will have to be bush hogged and no one on the Appearance Commission has access to a bush hog.
- Collette Touchette contacted the Boy Scouts. They will be interested in participating in such a project but this one would be too complicated for them and for other reasons could be a safety hazard.

Action: Collette Touchette will contact churches, service clubs, athletic clubs, etc. to line up several groups to be on call to take on this type of project in the future.

J. Appreciation Lunch for Christmas Light City Workers

- It was suggested that we hold the lunch at Holy Cross Lutheran Church.
- The date was set for Wed. Jan. 16.
- The following supply assignments were made:
 - Drinks Tom
 - Paper goods Melvin
 - Sandwiches Sandra
 - Dessert Jim/Jane
 - Soup Collette/Lori

Action: Jane Martin will confirm with Holy Cross that we can use the church on the selected date.

K. Eat Smart/Move More Program

- Lori Wray and Sandra Waters met with the county and who said they can make our signs at no cost. We do not have to go through the state with our plans since we are going through the county.
- The county stated that we are the only city in the county that is participating in this program.
- We are still hoping for a Spring ribbon cutting ceremony.

K. Other

- The America in Bloom – Nat’l Awards Program is still being reviewed by Lori Wray.

Action: Lori Wray will come back to the committee, describe the program, and suggest whether it is something we want to pursue.

Next Meeting Thursday, January 10, 2012