

Appearance Commission Minutes
City of Newton, NC
Meeting on Thursday, September 12, 2013

Attendees:

Melvin Caldwell	Tom Rowe
Jan Freeman	Collette Touchette
Jim Gargis	Sandra Waters
Sheila Iverson	Bill Sigmon

Guests:

Jessica Setzer

I. Call to Order and Welcome

Chairperson Collette Touchette called the meeting to order and welcomed Jessica Setzer.

II. Approval of Minutes

The July 11, 2013 meeting minutes were approved.

III. Old Business

A. Financial Report

1. Collette reported that no expenditures have been made this year.
2. Plants were not replaced in the concrete planters last year.

B. Adopt-a-Spot Update

1. Collette will make a presentation at the October or November City Council meeting (TBD). Master Gardeners will begin preparation and planting of spot soon. It was reported that Sean Hovis received a packet to forward to a potential Adopt-a-Spot partner. Discussion ensued on best methods to advertise/broadcast the Adopt-a-Spot initiative, with Ms. Setzer suggesting we enlist corporate sponsorship. Maintenance of spots might be the main obstacle for corporations willing to donate funds to purchase plants and materials.
2. Brochures were distributed to Appearance Commission members.
3. Collette distributed a list of potential adoption spots. Members discussed additions.

C. Yard Sale Ordinance

1. Collette gave an update on the yard sale ordinance.
2. At this time, the ordinance is under review by the city attorney.

D. Highway 10 and 16 and Little's median landscape

1. Bill Sigmon shared a schematic/design that he drafted for the Highway 10 and 16 median. The design presentation included a layout of plantings by scale, pictures of the various plants, shrubs, and trees recommended, and Questions/Answers about the landscape design.
2. Commission members approved the beautiful median design recommendation and thanked Mr. Sigmon for the extensive work/time he invested in drafting these plans.
3. Collette will send the design plans to Max Ziegler for discussion and approval.

E. Yard of the Month

1. Sandra and Jan shared ideas and pictures of yard sign designs to purchase for the 2014 Yard-of-the-Month awards.
2. Melvin suggested that Alicia and Jan select 3 designs to present for discussion at next month's commission meeting.

F. Review of Downtown Appearance Status

1. Collette shared updates on the downtown sites noted in the Commission's review. She reported that some property issues have been corrected since the last meeting. She also noted that due to the significant problems caused by area flooding, it is reasonable to believe that Public Works will be delayed in addressing several appearance review items.
2. Collette reported that 39 letters will be sent to businesses or individuals, generated from the review.

G. Streetscape Committee Meeting Update

1. Collette reported that the committee has a timeline, design, and engineering plan in the works.
2. Some Streetscape Committee members will travel to Statesville on October 16 to meet and discuss downtown streetscape initiatives with Statesville representatives.

H. Adopt-a-Pot Update

1. Collette distributed the brochure developed by the DNDA.
2. Members discussed the possibility of pots becoming an Eagle Scout project.

I. Painting of Downtown Appearance Status

1. Sandra reported that the Recreation Department will use a peel bond to prepare the poles for painting, after which painting will begin. City workers will work on this project as time and weather allows over the course of the next months.
2. Members discussed the new preparation product and the time constraints for city workers.

J. Appearance Commission Facebook

1. Melvin reported that there are currently 110 Likes on the Facebook page.
2. Recommendations were made to add "Eat Smart, Move More" and "Adopt-a-Spot" pictures and brochures to the Facebook page.

K. Parks/Cemeteries Review

1. Collette distributed and reviewed maps of the Newton Parks and Cemeteries.
2. Commission members selected sites to review/audit prior to the October meeting.

IV. New Business

A. Fire Station Site Plan Review

1. The Appearance Commission has received a request to review and make recommendations to the fire station landscaping plan.
2. Discussion ensued about the final dates to submit plans.

B. Essay and/or Poster Contest

1. Jan asked for essay topic recommendations for the Newton Appearance Commission's spring contest.
2. It was suggested that all entries receive certificates for submissions. Awards for the winner(s) will be discussed at a later date.
3. A preliminary program outline will be presented at the October meeting.

Next Meeting: October 10, 2013 in the downstairs Recreation Department conference room

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

Respectfully Submitted,
Jan Freeman
Secretary, Appearance Commission
9/4/2013