

SOUTHERN PINES APPEARANCE COMMISSION MINUTES
Regular Meeting
March 22, 2016

Present: Carol Haney, Birtha Shaw, Teresa Lenahan, Ellen Slusher and, Jeff Kelly

Staff Present: Debra Fisher, Adam Lindsay, Reagan Parsons, Chris Kennedy, and Jack Taylor

Guest Present: Vince Zucchini

Carol Haney asked if minutes had been read. Birtha Shaw made a motion to approve, Ellen Slusher seconded, approved.

Landscape/Trees/Planters

Tree Concerns: Teresa Lenahan stated that the Tree Committee unanimously agreed to approve a tree removal request at the train station, because of its invasiveness. Adam Lindsay stated that the Southern Pines Garden Club has offered to replace the tree. Lindsay said that it is his understanding that the evasiveness of the tree is a maintenance issue with the town. However, the tree is well established so the intent is to replace the tree which would be an upgrade for the appearance of the Town. Therefore, it would be up to the Appearance Commission to decide if that is what they want to do. Carol Haney asked if everyone was in agreement to replace the tree, everyone was in agreement to have the tree replaced. Teresa Lenahan asked if the trees that were removed on New Hampshire Ave were going to be replaced. Jack Taylor stated that they could not plant any trees in that location because of underground utilities at that location. We are planning to place a brick pavement with benches and maybe place some pots there as well.

Illegal Tree Removal Ordinance Update: Adam Lindsay stated that they submitted for review the revised illegal tree removal ordinance that came about regarding questions on how strong the ordinance was to the illegal removal of trees. Pete Morris researched our illegal tree removal policy and what he found was that Southern Pines is close to the top for punitive action. Our experience is that most of the time people do this not knowing that they can't remove the trees so we don't want to be too strict. We need to make sure that we are educating people and help them understand the rules but we need a policy that is measured in its punitive reaction, taking into consideration those that are most likely to commit infractions. Town attorney Doug Gill got involved and revised this ordinance, meant to be a little simpler than before. The only thing that is really changing in the ordinance is that the Town can work with people willing fix the problem that they created. If they cut down a tree illegally we really just want them to replace the tree. Pete Morris, our Town Horticulturist, will assess the situation and let them know that they have violated a town ordinance and that they need to replace the tree and he will specify exactly how many and where the trees need to be planted and make sure that it is done in a timely manner. Adam Lindsay commented we are not making the policy stricter but we are trying to make it clearer that if you violate this policy you will have to replace the tree and you're going to be told when and where. Adam Lindsay asked the Appearance Commission for their endorsement of the policy. Carol Haney asked for a vote to approve the new tree removal policy, all were in favor of approving the new tree removal policy.

Morganton Rd Median: Jack Taylor stated we are going to take out the sweet bays, and the service berries, and the junipers in a couple of weeks. Then we will see what we have left because they are going to remove another 50 or 60 feet of shrubbery which we will replace with something low growing. We were talking about using the brick pavers on the end of the island and it was suggested we use a cobblestone paver instead of the brick which is a little rougher looking and can be moved if we have a line break and is reusable. Adam Lindsay asked that since we are going to be removing a lot of plant material, are we going to replace them with any additional trees and mulch. Jack Taylor stated that on the end where they are going to take out another 50 or 60 feet we are not going to put trees back because they will overhang so we are going to use something that is low growing.

Etalia Tree Planting Update: Jack Taylor stated that the tree plantings triggered by Etalia's illegal tree removal on W. Pennsylvania has been completed.

General Appearance

Elder Heart: Jeff Kelly stated that the first set of plans from Elder Heart for the landscape design in front of the finance building did not show enough plantings but added a lot of grass area instead, so we gave them some feedback on what we were looking for. They came back with a second set of plans that was very over done with a lot of bushes and trees that would take a lot of money for maintenance so we all agreed they needed to scale back. Jeff Kelly pointed out that there was too much plant material, and a number of the species would grow 10 to 15 feet, the square footage is very large so we said the prime landscaping feature should be the existing trees, and we discussed the holly tree and everyone agreed it would be ok if it were removed or otherwise trimmed. Underneath the drip line everything should be ivy or some sort of groundcover that will be low maintenance. We also discussed maybe the extent of grass from the first plan is not that bad and they are agreeing to install the irrigation. We talked about the appropriate plant materials and we thought we would ask them to add benches. There was a discussion about an existing water meter if they want to pay to move it if it is in the grass area. We also asked them to identify the arbor trees that are to be moved and we need to specify where they need to go. Discussion ensued about the hardscape and landscape design. General agreement was achieved towards Jeff Kelly will revise and make comments to the plan and meet with the Appearance Commission then set up another meeting with Elder Heart.

Building and Property Improvements: Birtha Shaw reported that there is a house located at the corner of Page and Connecticut that has a lot of trash in the yard and needs to be sent a letter. Chris Kennedy stated they would go by there.

Pinecrest High School Circle: Ellen Slusher stated that we should have some plans in April. They are turning it into a Senior Project and have questions about where they can place the signs. Adam Lindsay stated that becomes a D.O.T. question for that area and where would they like to have the sign. Ellen Slusher stated they would like the sign in the circle itself two or three sided and she will have a lot more detail by the next meeting.

Arbor Day: Carol Haney commented that Arbor Day went well and thanked everyone that attended.

Pots: Teresa Lenahan stated she and Jeff Grey are going to be doing the pots this year and will have them out by the end of April.

Sprucing Up Southern Pines: Birtha Shaw stated that she needs the nominations before their next meeting. Adam Lindsay stated that we should notify the people nominated before our Tuesday meeting to make sure they are interested in receiving the award.

Public Relations

Updates: Carol Haney asked if someone had taken pictures of Arbor Day to put in the paper. Teresa Lenahan stated that Cos Barnes is doing a write up and will have it placed in the paper.

New Business: Teresa Lenahan stated that she has concerns about the plantings at the Morganton Rd. interchange. The trees have been planted too close and are already starting to cover one of the signs. Adam Lindsay stated that D.O.T. hasn't accepted that work yet so there is a good chance that we can have them move some of those. Teresa Lenahan commented that they also put the hollies too close together and they are right on the sidewalk and this will be an issue that needs to be addressed. Jack Taylor stated he would bring the issue up with Mark Thompson when they do the walk thru.

Adjournment Teresa Lenahan motioned and Birtha Shaw seconded.

The next meeting will be at 1:00pm on April 26, 2016.

Submitted by:
Debra Fisher
Town of Southern Pines