

COMMUNITY APPEARANCE COMMISSION MINUTES

December 7, 2011
Greenville, NC

The Community Appearance Commission met on the above date at 5:30 p.m. in the third floor conference room #337 of City Hall located at 200 West Fifth Street.

Community Appearance Commission Members Present:

Mark Abboud, Vice Chair	Perry Kachroo	Fred E. Wright, III
Myron Caspar, Chair	Albi McLawhorn	
Brenda Diggs	Jeffrey O'Neill	
Jeffrey Scott Johnson	Joanne Robertson	

Community Appearance Commission Members Absent:

Carol Phillips

Staff Present: Carlton Dawson, Code Enforcement Officer; Sandy Gale Edmundson, Secretary; and Carl Rees, Senior Planner

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Commission members pledged allegiance to the flag of the United States of America.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: DECEMBER 7, 2011

Motion was made by Mr. Scott Johnson and seconded by Mr. Jeffrey O'Neill to approve the December 7, 2011 agenda. Motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: OCTOBER 5, 2011

Motion was made by Mr. Albi McLawhorn and seconded by Mr. Mark Abboud to approve the October 5, 2011 minutes. Motion carried unanimously.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. Caspar: The Commission appointed me to serve on the Tree Preservation Task Force. Recommendations will be ready soon. I have not seen the final recommendations, but I will send them out as soon as I do. An open meeting will occur to discuss the changes possibly in January.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

NEW BUSINESS

Code Enforcement Report

Mr. Dawson introduced himself and announced that he was going to give a brief update on Code Enforcement.

Mr. Caspar announced that he was hoping that Mr. Dawson was going to give the Commission the good news that he had been named Chief Code Enforcement Officer.

Mr. Dawson: The position has not been filled.

Mr. Caspar said Mr. Dawson you would certainly be an excellent candidate, and I wish you luck.

Mr. Dawson: District A is the West Greenville area with officers Deb Angler and Rebecca Szalaj.

A problem property behind Kings Mart off of West Fifth Street is being cleaned up through increased code enforcement efforts that involve minimum housing inspections, and the property owner has posted no trespassing signs and has signed a no trespassing agreement with the Greenville Police Department. This property has been a popular hangout for drunks. Code Enforcement Officer Deb Angler

Abandoned railroad cars located near West Street and South Memorial Drive are being addressed through code enforcement for overgrown vegetation, graffiti and use by vagrants. Code Enforcement Officer Rebecca Szalaj

Officer Szalaj and the City Attorney are working with an elderly property owner (Ms. Pearline Felder) who owns about 14 properties in West Greenville to hopefully get her to bring them into compliance or sell them to more responsible property managers

Three property owners were caught making housing repairs without building permits. (Officer Szalaj)

Officer Szalaj has been working with renters to make sure that they have operable heating systems. This has been a real problem in the West Greenville district.

District B is the East Greenville area with Code Enforcement Officers AJ Basile, Carlton Dawson and Laura Hensley.

Officer Hensley is working on a new more three unrelated case at 411 East Third Street and has begun issuing civil citations to the property owner.

Officer Hensley is working with our parking officers concerning vehicles parked on the grass in the Tar River University Neighborhood district. Parking officers Keith Gorham and Gervis Leathers have been on top of this by ticketing repeated offenders. Officer Hensley has sent courtesy letters to property owners concerning repeat offenders as well.

Mr. Dawson: In the River Hills Neighborhood, there has been illegal dumping on River Hills Drive, so I am trying to get that cleaned up and keep it cleaned up. Storm damage debris is still being worked on. Most debris was gone when re-inspection was completed. Code Enforcement is working with Zoning Officers to address convenient stores/tobacco stores. Examples of public nuisance violations being addressed are dumpsters that have trash that is spilling on to the ground, because the dumpsters are filled to the brim, trash in parking lots, overgrown vegetation, and line of sight issues. Examples of zoning violations being addressed are temporary signs (permit exempt) including number, size and sight line encroachment and off premise signs; prohibited signs like banners without the permit number written on them; and eyesores on storefronts and handbills like yard sales signs on utility poles.

Mr. McLawhorn: What percentage of what you field comes from the West Greenville area and University area?

Mr. Dawson: They are the main focus areas, but there is no percentage.

Mr. Kachroo: Where do I get a district map?

Mr. Dawson: The City of Greenville's website has a district map.

Mr. Rees: Staff can bring the district map to the January 2012 Commission meeting.

Mr. McLawhorn: Who handles the loud parties?

Mr. Dawson: Law enforcement handles the loud parties. Police would have to monitor the noise violation.

Mr. McLawhorn: Does diminishing problems in certain areas of the City push the problems to other areas of the City or does it push the problems outside the city limits?

Mr. Dawson: When students moved to the apartment complexes outside of the university area, rent went down in the University area, and property owners became more relaxed with their leasing agreements, so tenants moved from other areas to the University area. Code Enforcement should work with property owners to make sure that housing continues to meet the housing code, so that lease agreements will be strengthened.

Mr. Caspar: There is no response as quick as when the Code Enforcement Office is called from 8:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. Monday - Friday. After 5:00 p.m., the Police Department is called with code enforcement issues and is slow to respond. Fourth Street is used more as a through way than Fifth Street. There is a lot of traffic with night classes. Is there anything that can be done for safety? Parking on yards is also taking place after 5:00 p.m.

Mr. Dawson: Students know our schedule, so adjustment to our schedules may be needed.

Mr. Caspar: On Monday at noon and on Monday evenings, the Rotary Club has cars that are not being towed.

Mr. Kachroo: Public Works needs to clearly mark where to park.

Mr. McLawhorn: Parking gets out of hand after 5:00 p.m.

Mr. Dawson: Parking is a small part of what a Code Enforcement Officer does. Code Enforcement is a proactive approach. Police have more authority than we do. Can tow cars and check for underage drinking.

The Commission thanked Carlton Dawson for the information he presented.

Mr. Kachroo: Can the Commission have an update on the Wildflower Project?

Community Appearance Commission Work Plan 2011 – 2012

Mr. Rees: The Neighborhood Advisory Board (NAB) began using the postcards to put thoughts down, provide comments, address specific concerns, implement ideas, and request responses. The postcards are used as a forum. Members of the Community Appearance Commission are being asked to use these postcards as well. Staff will give responses to the postcards.

Mr. Rees: Go over the Work Plan, take comments from Commission members and then adopt. Establish timelines and put them in Work Plan. The Work Plan reflects interests of the Commission. These are your items. Accomplish these items and develop and implement programs. The grant program is yours.

Mr. Rees: Are there any questions or comments?

Mr. Caspar: Take the Work Plan home and look it over. The Commission can take action at the January meeting.

Mr. Rees: Mr. Heifferon of Public Works asked that the Commission be involved in participating in Greenville Roots Day.

December Community Appearance Awards and New Nominations

The Commission voted for the Pitt County Arboretum at the Pitt County Agricultural Center in the name of Danny Lauderdale created by his band of Master Gardeners.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

There were no subcommittee reports.

UPDATES BY STAFF

There were no updates.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion was made by Mr. Mark Abboud and seconded by Mr. Perry Kachroo to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Carl J. Rees
Senior Planner