THE MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE

COMMUNITY APPEARANCE COMMISSION

August 7, 2018

The Community Appearance Commission held a regular meeting on August 7, 2018, at 5:30 P.M. in the conference room at City Hall.

Members present: Faye Shelton

 Frank Reid

 Cathy Carter

 Raven Brown

 Michael Hutchinson

Members absent: Leslie Cassell

 Jackie Joyce

 Diane Hale

Staff present: Debbie Galloway, Planner

 Randy Hunt, Main Street Director

The meeting was called to order by Chair Shelton.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

The minutes of the regular meeting on June 5, 2018 were presented to the Commission. Mrs. Carter made a motion that the minutes be approved. Mr. Hutchinson seconded the motion. All members present voted in favor of the motion. The motion carried.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

COMMUNITY APPEARANCE AWARD – AUGUST.

Mr. Hutchinson noted that Mitchell’s Drug on the Cook Block had made improvements with the help of a façade grant from the city. He made a motion that Mitchell’s Drug be given the award. Mrs. Carter seconded the motion. All members present voted in favor of the motion. The motion carried.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS.

Main Street Manager Randy Hunt spoke to the Commission about various projects in the City. Mr. Hunt said the City had completed a “branding study” to help tie-in various areas of the city. He showed an artist rendering of a new sign to be located in Draper at the corner of Stadium Drive and Fieldcrest Road. He noted that they had done a poll of Draper residents, and that they prefer to be called “Draper” and not “Draper Village”, so the signs would read this way. He also reported that the public space on Fieldcrest Road was nearing completion.

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Mr. Hunt reported that the Bridge Street parking lot had been paved as part of the Strategic Plan. He said the City had applied for a Home Savings Endowment Grant to do the striping of the parking lot and to install landscaping and benches. He said the grant would be awarded by October 15.

Mr. Hunt showed plans for 622 Washington Street. He said the rear of the building had been repaired and they were working on the front wall. He said the interior of the building had been gutted and was being upfitted to be sold as a “vanilla shell”. He also reported that someone had bought the old Leaksville Hardware building and planned to open a restaurant and microbrewery. Mr. Hunt said someone had purchased the old Full Moon Saloon and had plans to open a coffee shop and possibly an Italian restaurant in the former Tiano’s restaurant. He also reported that someone was interested in buying the vacant city lot on Monroe Street, and that the former Barrow building was being renovated for four business spaces.

Mr. Hutchinson said that in traveling to different cities, it seemed that restaurants and bars are key to thriving downtowns. He also discussed the nightlife in downtown Madison and the fact that most businesses in downtown Leaksville are closed after 5:00 p.m.

Mr. Hunt said some places require businesses to be open certain hours in their lease. He also said if one or two businesses start staying open later, it will have a snowball effect. As to “lost” businesses in the downtown areas, he said most of those businesses were not lost, but moved to another location in town. He said they were seeing good things happening and that there had been $1.2 million of investment in the downtown areas, both public and private.

Mrs. Carter noted that we need to encourage people to spend money locally.

**ITEMS FROM STAFF:**

TRAFFIC ISLAND AT TACO BELL.

Mrs. Galloway reported that the traffic island had been removed by City crews.

SURVEYING ON HIGHWAY 14.

Mr. Hunt said he had had some questions about the survey crew working on Highway 14. He said this was an NCDOT crew, and that DOT had longterm plans for improvements to the intersection at Highway 14 and Kings Highway.

INSTAGRAM ACCOUNT.

Mrs. Galloway reported that the account currently had 266 followers.

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**ITEMS FROM THE COMMISSION:**

PARKING LOT MAINTENANCE.

Mrs. Carter asked if there is anything the City can do to require shopping centers, etc. to maintain their parking lots.

Mrs. Galloway said we do not have an ordinance that addresses that, and she did not know how it would be enforced.

Mr. Hutchinson said it could be done in stages, requiring the property owner to fill or patch the holes.

It was noted that businesses with parking lots in disrepair were losing business and that it was also a safety hazard.

Mrs. Galloway said she would check to see how other communities address this issue, and see if it was possible to develop an ordinance that could help with this problem.

UPKEEP OF CITY PROPERTY.

Mr. Hutchinson said he knew that City crews were doing the best they can, but they are understaffed. He said there must be a way to take better care of our city properties. He said we cannot promote our parks and rivers if they do not look good. There was discussion about how to get people to take pride in the appearance of the City. There was discussion about seeing the City from an outsider’s perspective. Mr. Hutchinson suggested recognizing citizens (perhaps at Council meetings) for contributions to improve the appearance of the City.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

There being no further business to come before the Commission, the meeting was adjourned.

 Respectfully submitted,

 Debra W. Galloway, Administrative Assistant

 to the Community Appearance Commission

Attest:

Faye Shelton, Chair