

Chatham County Appearance Commission
March 22, 2017
Meeting Minutes — S. Jacobs, Secretary

In attendance for the meeting were:

William “Bill” Causey, Chair
Shelly Jacobs
Davis Andrews
Dan Sundberg
Mary De Angelo

Minutes of January 25, 2017 were unanimously approved by members present.

1st presentation:

2nd Request from Pat Cothren for boat and RV storage facility and landscaping supply contractor’s business, corner of Mt. Gilead Church Rd. and Sugar Lake Rd., Parcel No. 17380

Mr. Cothren brought proper drawings, photos and documents for discussion and approval of his plans to build a boat and RV storage facility. As in the first meeting the commission members all agreed and Mr. Cothren said he would comply with the planting of supplemental Red Cedars along the root line of existing trees and vegetation on the Mt. Gilead Church side of the property. Said cedars are to be no further than 20’ on center, they may be young saplings, as members agreed that they would have the best chance to take root among the established growth.

It was further decided by the commission that although the property on the west side of Mr. Cothren’s property is wooded and undeveloped, even unlikely to be developed, he is still required to plant and maintain a Type A 20’ buffer.

Members all agreed that a variety of deciduous evergreens should be used to create a “wild” look that is native to the Chatham County area. Holly, Red Cedar, Wax Myrtle were just a few ideas for what should be used. It was stressed that common sense planting was a must to create a fully opaque buffer as a result of this variety and that an inspection of said planting was probable. Mr. Cothren agreed to comply with the recommendations and the inspection. It was further asserted that Mr. Cothren’s plans needed to be amended to show the north side property buffer planting.

The buildings, which shall be made of metal were discussed in regards to being the least obtrusive to passersby. Mr. Cothren agreed to use “whatever color” the commission recommends, it was decided unanimously that they should be in the evergreen color family.

The sign submitted for approval was okayed by all members.

Lastly there was discussion about the plan for two commercial driveways shown on the drawing submitted. Mr. Cothren was advised that he needed NCDOT approval for these driveways and that he must submit plans directly to NCDOT.

2nd presentation:

Request by NNP Briar Chapel for review of perimeter landscaping for SD-East commercial area, Parcel No. 18911

Lee Bowman presented plans to the commission for approval that were difficult to decipher. The topography drawing submitted was on a scale so small that it was virtually unreadable. There were no photos of the property as it looks currently, nor plant placement drawings submitted, merely a suggested plant list.

When asked about the intentions in regards to the topography of the area under review, the commission was told by Mr. Bowman that there would be grading, additional to the already extensive grading that has been done on the property.

With regard to the area in discussion for approval it was suggested that a fair amount of the hilliness of the existing land would be graded down to, at or near, street level. Consequently much of the existing tree and vegetative growth would be removed and need to be replanted. A plant and tree list was submitted with no specific placement plans.

Commission members were concerned about changing the existing topography and further removal of trees and other vegetative growth. It was strenuously suggested that **no further grading** be done except that which minimally concerns the road entry points to the property with the goal of **maintaining as much of the existing, natural view shed buffer of this property.**

The commission informed Mr. Bowman that the objective of the Appearance Commission is to **maintain a “wild and natural” look** for the county even where it concerns retail and commercial establishments along 15/501. They asked that Briar Chapel become a leader and example provider of this in their development going forward.

Mr. Bowman agreed to revisit the plans and to produce a more detailed plan that took into consideration **minimal alteration to the existing topography and natural growth of this property.** He agreed to bring photographs of the area under review as it looks currently, and to provide detailed planting plans showing specific placement of supplemental planting for this view shed buffer. Mr. Bowman suggested he would come before the commission next month.