

**RALEIGH APPEARANCE COMMISSION**  
**Minutes of the Business Meeting**  
**Thursday, February 18, 2010**

**Members present:** Elizabeth Byrd, Laurent de Comarmond, Mitch Fluhrer, Jim Harris, Tyler Highsmith, John Holmes, Andrew Leager, Julieta Sherk, Tom Skolnicki, Cindy Szwarcop, Ted Van Dyk, Vincent Whitehurst, and Stan Williams.

**Members not present:** Bang Le (*excused*), Omar McCallop (*excused*).

**Visitors & Guests:** Brantley Sniper, Rebecca Elish (NCSU students); Mark Smith (Progress Energy liaison).

**Staff present:** Doug Hill.

**INTRODUCTION OF NEW MEMBER**

Tom Skolnicki welcomed Julieta Sherk to the commission. Ms. Sherk outlined her background and interests; other commission members in turn introduced themselves.

**REVIEW OF JANUARY MINUTES**

Tom Skolnicki called for review of the minutes of the January 21 commission meeting. Laurent de Comarmond moved the minutes be approved. Stan Williams seconded; passed unanimously.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**Development Review Committee**

Vincent Whitehurst reported the committee's February 2 meeting was opened to the full commission in reviewing of the streetscape design for the Falls of Neuse Road widening project. Commission comments, which were forwarded to City Council and City staff in the form a memorandum, focused on the need to enhance pedestrian safety and comfort, particularly in light of related policies in the new Comprehensive Plan. As there were no new site plans ready for committee review at the February 16 meeting, that meeting was cancelled.

**Strategic/ Outreach Committee**

Elizabeth Byrd outlined information contained in a handout, regarding technical requirements and fees related to installing fixed-mount banners on the Wake County Parking Deck. The estimates are from the same firm which installed similar banners at the Durham Performing Arts Center and Crabtree Valley Mall. She noted that the Wake deck walls are larger than those of the arts center deck. She stated that other bids would be sought, and that further discussion will be needed regarding potential sponsors, banner images, etc. In discussion, she noted that maintenance would probably fall to the County, but the banners' expected durability means they could be re-mounted elsewhere in the future. Andrew Leager suggested that, given the cost of the banner frames, opportunities for attached but unframed banners be considered. Vincent Whitehurst and Tyler Highsmith noted they could provide names of other potential vendors. Julieta Sherk suggested that the

banner design, as viewed from the ground, take into account human scale. Regarding design, Elizabeth Byrd stated a design competition had been proposed, but time is a factor. She added, though, that the cost of custom images is not much different from stock graphics. Regarding the 2010 Sir Walter Raleigh Awards, Stan Williams reported that an October date may be a problem for the potential speaker. In discussion, early November was suggested as an alternative, ideally a Wednesday or Thursday.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### **Commission Procedure for Review of Major Projects**

Tom Skolnicki noted the Strategic/ Outreach Committee had crafted amended wording, drawing from the commission's January discussion. After brief discussion, Elizabeth Byrd moved that commission support adoption of the amended procedure. The motion was seconded by Stan Williams, and passed unanimously.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **Unified Development Ordinance Diagnostic and Approach Report**

Cindy Szwarcop, the commission's representative on the UDO Advisory Group, noted the opportunity to comment on the consultants' report will run till mid-March. She asked commission members at minimum to review and provide comments on Chapter 9 (Coding Approach), and the implementation section of the Appendix. Personal comments can be submitted online using the Limehouse software, but the commission as a body should comment through the Advisory Group. With the next Advisory Group meeting set for March 3, Tom Skolnicki called for a special meeting of the commission before then. Ted Van Dyk suggested the meeting be at Cindy Szwarcop's office, if possible, adding his support for seeking broad outreach regarding the commission's points. Tom Skolnicki reiterated the need for design standards to inject greater predictability into the site plan process, toward assuring useable streetscapes, destination open spaces, placemaking, and durable building materials. Ted Van Dyk noted that how the City addresses the automobile defines much of City appearance. As an example, Tyler Highsmith pointed out the proposal to remove parking on Glenwood Avenue in Five Points could increase travel speeds, plus hurt adjacent businesses; Andrew Leager added that it needs to be recognized that sometimes things are not broken. Tom Skolnicki stated he will arrange a meeting in March with Christine Darges to discuss these matters.

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

### **Reports and Requests of Commission Members**

- Tom Skolnicki noted the upcoming unveiling at three wolf sculptures on the NC State campus.
- Stan Williams reported on his conversation with sign makers in Portland, adding he had not received information specific to aesthetic improvements for parking decks.
- Laurent de Comarmond expressed his thanks to the City for covering commission members' registrations for the upcoming Urban Design Forum, March 5 & 6.
- Stan Williams reminded commission members of the on-going Architecture Movies Series at Galaxy Cinema in Cary.

## ADJOURNMENT

There being no further discussion or items of business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:30 PM.

### MARCH 2010 MEETING SCHEDULE

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Special Meetings (full commission)	Mon., March 1 – 11:30 AM; Suite 400, 421 Fayetteville Street
	Wed., March 10 – 4:00 PM; Room 809, OEP
Development Review Committee	<del>Tues., March 2 – 4:00 PM; Room 809, OEP *</del> <del>Tues., March 16 – 4:00 PM; Room 809, OEP *</del>
Strategic/Outreach Committee	Wed., March 10 – 5:00 PM; Room 809, OEP
Appearance Commission	Thurs., March 18 – 5:30 PM; Room 305, RMB

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\* *Cancelled (no agenda items)*