

Joint Appearance Commission

2018 Annual Report for the Fayetteville City Council

(To Be Presented to City Council on January 14, 2019)

Introduction

This report provides background on the Joint Appearance Commission (JAC), it explains the relationship of the JAC to the Fayetteville Tree Board, it provides information on the Community Appearance Awards Program, it provides a summary of activities during calendar year 2018, and it provides a list of initiatives for calendar year 2019.

Background

What Is the Purpose of the Joint Appearance Commission? The purpose is promote the enhancement of the appearance of the community.

Why Is There a Joint Appearance Commission? Prior to 2004, the City of Fayetteville had its own Appearance Commission. Around 2003, the members of the Fayetteville Appearance Commission recognized a need to create a joint commission. This need was based on the fact that many community gateways leading in and out of Fayetteville straddle the Fayetteville city limits; this meant that responsibility for regulation, improvements and maintenance was split between the City and the County. The members of the Fayetteville Appearance Commission felt the commission could be more effective in improving the appearance of gateways if the commission included members appointed by the county and the small towns in the county. The members also felt that appearance was an important issue that needed to be promoted county-wide. The City asked the County and the small towns to consider forming a joint commission in 2003-2004.

Establishment-The Joint Appearance Commission was established in 2004 when the various jurisdictions adopted an interlocal agreement. The interlocal agreement was based on enabling legislation enacted by the NC General Assembly. After members were appointed, they adopted their own Bylaws.

Duties-The following duties are outlined in the interlocal agreement: To initiate, promote and assist in the implementation of programs of general community beautification; to review and make recommendations regarding the aesthetic suitability of public buildings, facilities, or projects; to recommend ordinances; to direct local officials toward needed enforcement actions; and to prepare, publish, and distribute studies and reports which will advance the cause of improved community appearance.

Membership-The Joint Appearance Commission is made up of members appointed by Cumberland County and the nine towns in Cumberland County. The City of Fayetteville appoints 4 members, the Board of County Commissioners appoints 4 members, and the governing boards of the other eight towns appoint one member each. Currently, all towns are represented on the commission, except for the Towns of Falcon, Godwin, and Linden.

Qualifications for Membership-Members are supposed to be a resident of the jurisdiction making the appointment. Where possible, appointments are to be made in order to maintain a majority of members

who have had special training or experience in a design field, such as architecture, landscape design, horticulture, city planning, or a closely related field.

Meetings and Staff Support-The commission normally meets on the second Monday of each month in the Fayetteville City Hall. The staff of the City Development Services Department provides primary staff support. A member of the Cumberland County Planning Department also provides staff support.

Relationship to the Fayetteville Tree Board

The four Joint Appearance Commission members appointed by the Fayetteville City Council also serve as the Fayetteville Tree Board. The Tree Board promotes public tree protection measures within the City of Fayetteville, and it helps the City maintain its designation as a Tree City USA.

Community Appearance Awards Program

In 2008-2009, the commission began sponsoring a Community Appearance Awards Program. The purpose of this program is to recognize properties in Cumberland County that are improving the appearance of the community. The attached chart shows how the program has grown since 2009.

Summary of Activities During 2018

- Number of Meetings in 2018

	Regular Meetings (1 per month)	Special Meetings (as needed)	Total Meetings
Potential # of Mtgs	12		
# Mtgs Cancelled	3		
# Mtgs Held	9	1 (awards ceremony)	10
# Held-No Quorum	1		1
# Held-With Quorum	8	1	9

- Reviewed plans for 6 projects in Downtown Fayetteville: the baseball stadium; the plaza area (which will be a walkable street between the Festival Park building, the stadium, and Hay Street); the new structure near the Amtrak station (consisting of 3 projects: parking deck, hotel, residential units); and the remodeling of the Prince Charles Hotel into apartments (January 16, 2018).
- Received copy of report from American Planning Association on Measuring Community Character (February 20, 2018).
- Partnered with the Cumberland County Schools, Cumberland County, and the Cooperative Extension Service in holding an Arbor Day ceremony at E.E. Miller Elementary School; this helped the City maintain its designation as a Tree City USA (March 15, 2018).
- Sponsored the tenth annual Community Appearance Awards Program (April-August). Awards Ceremony was held at Highland Country Club on August 9, 2018. Ceremony was co-hosted by Fayetteville Area Apartment Association.
- After-action review of appearance awards program (August 21, 2018).
- Received information on need for clarifying City’s current banner policy (prompted by inquiry from Cool Springs Downtown Development group). Heard report from PWC staff on current banner policy (August 21, 2018).

- Voted to amend Bylaws regarding meeting dates (changed from third Tuesday to second Monday) (August 21, 2018).
- On behalf of Fayetteville Tree Board, staff researched background on large tree located on corner of Hay Street and Hillsboro Street in Downtown Fayetteville (October 2018).
- On behalf of Fayetteville Tree Board, staff submitted Tree City USA recertification materials to NC Forest Service and Arbor Day Foundation (December 2018).

Initiatives for 2019

Monitor the Work of and Assist the City Council’s Gateway Committee- The JAC realizes that the Gateway Committee has taken the lead on developing ideas for gateways. In 2019, the JAC hopes to monitor these efforts and it stands ready to help in any way possible.

Fayetteville Tree Board Activities-In its function as the Fayetteville Tree Board, the commission expects to again partner with the Cumberland County Schools, Cumberland County, and the Cooperative Extension Service in sponsoring an annual Arbor Day celebration as part of the Tree City USA program. Other objectives include: encouraging the planting of more public trees; drawing attention to the economic value of trees by placing a sign on selected trees, showing their value; and promoting the Tree City USA designation for other towns in the County.

Continue the Community Appearance Awards Program-The JAC hopes to sponsor the eleventh annual Community Appearance Awards Program in 2019. The JAC will consider some revisions in the categories in 2019. It will also continue to partner with other organizations willing to co-sponsor the program. Significant cost-savings have resulted in the past through these partnerships.

Strengthen Relationships with Other Organizations-The JAC will work with other organizations, such as Fayetteville Beautiful, this coming year.

Conduct a Survey of Community Appearance-In the past, the JAC has considered ways of conducting a survey of community appearance. In 2019, the JAC will look into the possibility of using an online survey.

Fill Several Vacancies on the JAC-Several seats on the JAC have been vacant for some time. The JAC will encourage the governing boards of these jurisdictions to appoint members for these vacant seats.

Encourage Governing Boards of Other Jurisdictions to Adopt Attendance Requirements-Currently, only the City of Fayetteville members of the JAC are required to attend a certain number of meetings. If other jurisdictions would adopt similar requirements, it might result in better attendance at meetings.

Attract Members from the Various Design Fields-The commission reminds the jurisdictions who have the authority to appoint members that, when possible, a majority of the members of the commission should have special training or experience in a design field (such as architecture, landscape design, horticulture, city planning, or closely related fields). This is suggested in the interlocal agreement which created the commission.

Review of Public Buildings-The commission reminds the various jurisdictions in the County that it is authorized to review and make recommendations regarding the aesthetic suitability of public buildings, facilities, and projects.

Summary Data for the Community Appearance Awards Program 2009-2018

