

Blowing Rock Appearance Advisory Commission
Minutes
November 3, 2016

BRAAC Members Attending: Curt Andrews, Bo Henderson, Melissa Pickett, Jennifer Chick, Deborah McDowell

Staff Members: Scott Fogleman, Jennifer Brown, Chris Pate, Ricky Hudson and Autumn Goheen

This meeting was called to order by Curt at 5:30 p.m.

Approve October 6, 2016 Minutes: Bo made a motion to approve the minutes, Melissa seconded, and it was a unanimous vote to approve.

321 Median Hydro Seed Update: Since the last BRAAC meeting the board voted to hydro seed the 321 median for an expense of \$1,700 opposed to covering it with sod for an expense of \$10,000. The hydro seeding was completed last week. Curt inquired as to how the hydro seeding will blend into the grass currently growing on the median and how the plants on the median were doing. Chris stated the hydro seeding will blend in seamlessly and there are a few plants on the median in poor condition but they are under warranty and any plant that dies within a year of planting will be replaced at no cost.

Community Foundation Grant: BRAAC was awarded \$2,000 of the \$10,000 grant that they applied for from the Community Foundation. This will be used to assist in covering the expenses of renovations to the Broyhill Park gazebo point and drainage wall. Jennifer Brown stated permit requests have been submitted and construction will begin as soon as the permits are approved by the Division of Water Quality, estimated to be in two to three weeks, and pending Town Council approval. Curt stated the project will cost \$35,000. The Broyhill Foundation awarded a \$30,000 grant for the project leaving \$3,000 deficit after the \$2,000 grant from the Community Foundation and asked the board to cover the remaining \$3,000. Bo made a motion to cover the cost, Deborah seconded, and it was a unanimous vote to approve.

Budget Update/Annual Fundraising Collection/Hanging Basket Collection: Jennifer Brown stated this month \$13,155 had been collected into the general fund, \$2,525 had been collected for hanging baskets, \$675 had been collected for the cemetery. To date, \$19,850 has been collected. There have been expenditures of \$3,026.06 to date for printing of donation letters, landscaping, vehicle repair and PO Box rental fees. Jennifer Brown stated donations were on target based off of giving from FY2015 and FY2014.

Bo asked about the ability of being able to track giving by neighborhoods in order to better target prospective donors. Jennifer Brown and Melissa both discussed the difficulty of that task because the mailers are sent to mailing addresses and not residential addresses. They stated a large portion of donation letters are returned from out of town addresses. Deborah expressed the need to be able to circulate the donation letter to more than just property owners but also to frequent visitors who may want to contribute. She suggested accessing social media and e-commerce sites for more exposure for the donation letter. Scott Fogleman recommended eliciting the guidance of Tracy Brown in this matter.

Deborah stated she had written the newspaper article for recognition of Hanging Basket donations. Curt recommended donations for the cemetery be added to this article as well.

Other Business: Jennifer Brown stated that Tracy Brown approached her with a request to include BRAAC in creation of events leading up to the Mile of Flowers event hosted by the Garden Club. Tracy recommended having Chris and Ricky give seminars on types of flowers planted in Town Gardens and tie in local restaurants. Bo discussed the importance of contacting the Garden Club President to discuss if they would even be interested in the idea.

Chris stated he had been exploring the possibility of purchasing a design software in order to be able to produce conceptual designs for Annie Cannon Gardens and future projects. Landscape Design software costs between \$3,000-\$5,000, would have a lengthy learning curve, and would have to pay for yearly upgrades to the software. It is Chris' opinion that contracting out the conceptual design would be the most cost effective option. A conceptual design for Annie Cannon is estimated to be between \$3,000-\$5,000. It is currently undetermined as to where funds for the conceptual plan and implementation will come from.

Chris passed out photographic concepts of his vision for Annie Cannon gardens. His goal would be to expand the park, add in rock walls, enhance green space and build a pergola creating a premier wedding destination. Curt asked how, after renovations, Annie Cannon would fit with the trail head of the Glen Burney Trail and other places in town. Chris expressed his desire to continue symmetry throughout the town and the concept would match. Curt made the recommendation that Chris and Bo meet with the Cannon Foundation and discuss the changes with Anne Grey before moving forward.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:35 p.m.

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, December 1 at 5:30 p.m.