



Durham Appearance Commission

Cultivate visual appeal & recognize the benefits of good design, which enhance quality of life.

2017 Annual Report

Date: February 1, 2018

To: Joint City-County Planning Committee
Durham City Council
Durham County Board of Commissioners

From: Michael Miller, Chair, Durham City-County Appearance Commission

Subject: 2017 Durham City-County Appearance Commission Annual Report

Introduction. The Durham City-County Appearance Commission is an advisory board whose mission is to *cultivate visual appeal and recognize the benefits of good design, which enhance the quality of life for the residents of the City and County of Durham*. The Commission members are appointed by both the City Council and Board of County Commissioners. Commission members have a variety of backgrounds including architecture, landscape architecture, interior design, development, and real estate, as well as citizens interested in design and appearance issues. The Commission meets the third Wednesday of every month at 6:00 p.m. in Conference Room GA on the ground floor of City Hall. This report provides a summary of the Commission's work in 2017.

General Accomplishments for 2017. The commission had four sub-committees to align our goals for 2017. The committees are Golden Leaf Awards, Uniform Development Ordinance Review, Education and Enhancement, and Mission Statement/Inter-local/By-laws. In addition to these four focus areas we continue efforts to align with other agencies and organizations, private and public, to coordinate the activities and programs that improve the appearance of Durham City and County.

Golden Leaf Awards. The intent of the Golden Leaf Awards is to recognize new developments, buildings, and landscaping in Durham County that provide positive attributes to our built environment. The commission maintains the Golden Leaf Awards website (www.durhamgoldenleaf.com) where all submittals are displayed and voting for People's Choice awards takes place. The 2017 Golden Leaf Awards Program had 19 entries in 6 categories. Eight awards were presented. The Keep Durham Beautiful Award was presented in conjunction with the Keep Durham Beautiful non-profit, volunteer organization working in partnership with the City of Durham General Services Department and Durham County. The Sustainability Award was presented in conjunction with the Durham City-County Environmental Affairs Board. All winners were recognized at an awards reception held at the Durham County Administration Building on April 20, 2017.

UDO Review. The committee has reviewed UDO/Comprehensive Plan updates, discussed with the entire Commission, and prepared a memorandum. We have commented on the following topics: mass

grading, economic incentives for development, and the redevelopment of the current Durham police headquarters site.

Mission Statement/Interlocal Agreement/By-laws. A new mission statement for the Appearance Commission was drafted, agreed to, and is stated in the above Introduction. A new Interlocal Agreement was drafted, sent to County Commissioners and Durham City Council, and approved by these bodies. In 2018 we will revise the By-laws to reflect the changes in the Inter-local agreement.

Education and Engagement. This committee was formed to reach out to the professional design community as well as the community-at-large to engage in discussions about built design issues. In 2017 they hosted a presentation on “Taking Vision to Reality in Downtown Development” at 2016 Golden Leaf Award winner Ponysaurus Brewing Company. They are targeting to do two events a year.

Overall Commission Goals for 2017-2018.

- Host the 2018 Golden Leaf Awards on April 19, 2018
- Host 2 educational events
- Standardize UDO review process and respond to UDO related requests
- Proactively identify UDO updates
- Finalize a mission statement and draft a new Inter-local Agreement for the Commission
- Update Commission By-laws
- Increase the Commission’s presence at community events, public meetings, and professional design events.

The Appearance Commission looks forward to another year helping to make Durham a better and more beautiful place to live and work.

Durham City-County Appearance Commission members (as of 12/31/2017). Jessica Braverman, Rick Crawford, Miguel Jackson, Fredrick Jernigan (Vice-chair), Teddy Maynor, Lyn McClay, Erik Mehlman (Secretary), Michael Miller (Chair), Pamela Porter, Alvaro Quintana, Marc Reibold, Stephanie Strickland, Mitch Tuchman and Ellen Weinstein.

Recommendation. To receive the Annual Report.

Staff Contacts. Matthew Filter, Senior Planner, Durham City-County Planning Department

Sincerely,

Michael Miller, Chair