DARLINGTON CITY PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, Jan. 17, 2017 – 9 A.M.
Darlington Library, 204 N. Main St.

Present at the meeting

Attending were Planning Commission members Ms. Brown, Ms. Alston, Ms. Byrd, Ms. Nelson, and Ms. Rock, planning and economic development director.

Call to Order

Ms. Brown called the meeting to order at 9:03 a.m.

Approval of the Minutes for the meeting of November

Ms. Brown made a motion to accept the minutes of the November meeting as presented. Ms. Byrd made the second. The motion carried unanimously.

Update on Economic Development Incentives

Ms. Rock gave an update on the package of Economic Development Incentives the commission had been working during the past year. They were presented to City Council in December as information, and Council passed first reading of the incentives in January. Council adjusted the parameters for the incentive for building permit reductions, increasing the investment amount and decreasing the job creation number, and added several assurances into the full text of the ordinance. A public hearing on the incentives ordinance will be held at 6 p.m. Feb. 7, and second and final reading of the ordinance will be at City Council's next regular meeting at 7 p.m. Feb. 7.

Façade Grant Guidelines

Ms. Rock presented the commission with sample guidelines for the Façade Improvement Grant.

> *Complete guidelines for the façade grant will be drafted upon the approval of Council by the full Planning Commission. The will include all forms and a brochure to distribute to businesses.*
>
> Eligible Applicants.
>
> - Applicants may be property owners or business owners. If the business owner does not own the real property to be improved, he must submit a letter in writing from the property owner of approval for the work to be completed.
> - Property must be located within the incorporated City limits *prior* to application or in conjunction with annexation request.
> - Property must be located in the Core Commercial, Limited Commercial, or General Commercial Zoning Districts.
> - Do multiple Projects completed in the same calendar year qualify?
> - Projects shall conform to the City Code of Ordinances and other applicable statutes.
> - No residential properties may be improved with this grant.
> - No member of Council, City employee, or their immediate family may benefit from this program.

Selection Process. A board ("Board") consisting of one (1) member of council chosen annually by a simple majority of council, one (1) member of the planning department, one (1) member of codes enforcement, and one (1) member of the beautification board and the city manager will review the grant applications received and determine those to receive City funds, provided such funds are available in the City's general fund.

Grant Amounts. The Board may allocate up to $5,000 for new and existing businesses that apply for these funds. A match of at least 50 percent of the cost of the project is required. The number of grants distributed by the Board will be limited by the allotment provided in the City's general fund.

Process. Upon written approval by the Board, the applicant may commence the project. After producing a paid invoice and submitting copies of the associated City building permits, Certificate of Occupancy, and City business license, the City will disperse grant funds.

Deadlines. Application period will open annually on _____ and end on _____. The Board will meet the following month to determine grant award selections.

During the discussion, the Commission agreed that the only limits should be one application per property, but an individual owner who owns multiple properties could apply for a separate grant for each of his properties. The Commission discussed the timing, and Ms. Rock suggested a specific application period to help with the City cash flow and with the budget process. If more money was allocated by Council to the grant, the City could advertise it as such. She added that she didn't want to accept an application if no money was available. The Commission agreed that work should be completed by May 1, and the application period should be from July 1 to August 31. Ms. Byrd made the motion. Ms. Nelson made the second. The motion carried unanimously.

Digital Signage

Ms. Rock said that the Codes Enforcement office suggested the Commission look at the City's digital signage rules. She added that the ordinance does not account for the technological advances and variety of digital signs available. We need to clarify about digital billboards too. Ms. Nelson said we need to incorporate the definition of a digital sign as well. The item was placed on the agenda for March, so that a sign expert can attend and explain options.

Director's Report

Ms. Rock reported that the City has received the preliminary site plans for Little Caesars.

Chair's Comments

Ms. Brown said that a realtor in Darlington said, while January was typically slow, this year she had several families, including 19 children moving to Darlington recently because of the City's beautification efforts and Christmas decorations. She said people notice how good it looks, giving Darlington that quaint, hometown feel.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:03 a.m.

DARLINGTON CITY PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, March 21, 2017 – 9 A.M.
Darlington Library, 204 N. Main St.

Present at the meeting

Attending were Planning Commission members Ms. Byrd, Ms. Nelson, Ms. Baccus, and Ms. Page, and Ms. Rock, planning and economic development director, and Mr. Gainey, codes enforcement officer.

Call to Order

Ms. Rock called the meeting to order at 9:08 a.m.

Approval of the Minutes for the meeting of January

Ms. Nelson made a motion to accept the minutes of the January 17, 2017, meeting as presented. Ms. Baccus made the second. The motion carried unanimously.

Zoning Designation for Property at Cashua Ferry Road and South Myrtle Street

Ms. Rock explained that Mr. Fleming was purchasing property at the corner of Cashua Ferry Road and South Myrtle Street and would like to annex into the City. The Commission needed to designate a zoning district in conjunction with the annexation. Other properties contiguous to the parcel in question are zoned R-10 Low Density Residential. Ms. Page made a motion to zone the property R-10. Ms. Byrd made the second. The motion carried unanimously.

Digital Signage

Mr. Gainey said that the City has had a lot of issues lately regarding digital signage in the recent months. He talked with the owners of Signs Plus in Darlington to find out what all the options are for digital signs. He said the current ordinance is very vague and has no options. With technology advancing, he said he does not feel it is sufficient. He suggested reworking the ordinance to move with the technology and have stipulations to make it more user friendly for businesses. He said we don't want to drive business away and many want to go in the direction of this new technology. He added that we don't want the whole town lit up but the ordinance needs to be revisited to accommodate the needs of businesses. Ms. Rock noted that the ordinance does not even define "digital." Mr. Gainey has arranged for Mrs. Deas with Signs Plus to the May 16 meeting to discuss the options available with technology. Ms. Bacchus said we can't stay behind and that we need to move to the 21st century. Mr. Gainey said we will need to put parameters and specifications in the ordinance too. Ms. Baccus said we need to grow. Ms. Nelson suggested that we have additional meetings to ensure we address the issue quickly enough. Ms. Page made a motion for the Planning Commission to hold a special called meeting at 9 a.m. Tuesday, June 20, at the library if available and at city hall if not to write guidelines for a new digital sign ordinance. Ms. Byrd made the second. The motion carried unanimously. Ms. Rock said she will gather other municipal ordinances that address digital signage.

Director's Report

Ms. Rock distributed an MASC article on breweries in South Carolina for review. Any potential brewery/restaurant would have to locate in an industrial area the way the City ordinance currently stands. Mr. Gainey said the Codes Council will review the regulations on breweries

and have new rules next year. He said it is best for a brewery not to locate near a residential area because of the chemicals used in the process and stored on-site. Ms. Byrd asked about Sunday alcohol sales. Ms. Rock reported that she met with the Hartsville and Darlington Chambers to discuss passing the same thing in the City. She said City Council has to vote to put the alcohol sales referendum on the ballot of a general election and this could be done this year. Ms. Byrd said she is not for alcohol but that such a change could help build Darlington.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:49 a.m.

DARLINGTON CITY PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, May 16, 2017 – 9 A.M.
Darlington Library, 204 N. Main St.

Present at the meeting

Attending were Planning Commission members Ms. Byrd, Ms. Baccus, Ms. Page, and Ms. Brown, and Ms. Rock, planning and economic development director, and Mrs. Angie Deas.

Call to Order

Ms. Brown called the meeting to order at 9:08 a.m.

Approval of the Minutes for the meeting of March

Ms. Byrd made a motion to accept the minutes of the March 21, 2017, meeting as presented. Ms. Baccus made the second. The motion carried unanimously.

Digital Signage Presentation

Mrs. Angie Deas of Signs Plus of Darlington presented information about digital signage technology available as well as regulations and recommendations based on her experience with the materials. She said the last traffic study done on digital signage in 2013 showed no correlation between accidents and the signs if they were operated properly, i.e. not changing every 2 seconds. She recommends signs stay static at least 30 seconds per message. She said there are full color boards that can play video and pictures. Boards can be run via iPad and have many capabilities, so regulation is important. She would not recommend putting this type of signage near houses. She said it is possible to dim the lights at night, but in practice few do it or keep their word to keep them dim during those hours. She said, for example, the sign near Pizza Hut at Cruizers disturbs her as a sign professional because it is so bright you can't read it and it lights up four blocks. The millimeter size on the sign determines the look, with 16mm looking like a TV and 20 mm having pixels more spread out. Most purchase the 20mm due to cost concerns. She said there is a large cost jump, around $10,000 between the 20mm and the 16mm, which is the better sign. The digital signs often can be changed through a wireless connection. The digital signage does show an increase of traffic to a business between 20% and 30%. She recommended regulating the signage in a smart way. She suggested to keep the historic flavor to make such signs smaller and encased in some type of historical framework or woodwork. **Ms. Brown suggested meeting with the Historic Landmarks Commission to get its input and made a motion to invite them to a joint meeting on this topic June 13 to discuss it. Ms. Byrd made the second. The motion carried unanimously.** Mrs. Deas said you can tell if a sign is too bright because you can't read it well. She recommended only red lights, which are not as bright, if the sign were within 300 feet of a house instead of a full color sign. She said whoever would be enforcing the ordinance may need a meter to read the brightness of the signs if that is how it will be regulated. Ms. Brown said we could take a photo at night upon installation at the correct setting then compare that to a current view to prove if something changed. Mrs. Deas said signs are often set properly at the beginning then increased in brightness over time because they think you are not checking. Ms. Brown said we need to ensure whatever we draft needs to comply with the City's lighting regulations for shielded lighting, etc. Mrs. Deas said there is no way to shield except to put a piece of aluminum four to

five inches sticking out along the top, but that would need to be spelled out in the regulations. Ms. Brown suggested a 6 inch overhang. Mrs. Deas said you could address by stating it had to comply with light pollution regulations. Ms. Brown said we need to work with Codes Enforcement to ensure the new rules do not interfere with the light pollution ordinance. Mrs. Deas said she could bring a board to show how the signs work. She said a 20mm sign 3x6 or 4x8 would not have a lot of problems with nits. She said the problems come with the huge boards, 4x10 or 5x10. She recommended staying with 3x6 or 4x8 to keep the neighborhood happy. Ms. Brown said, if we write the ordinance in foot candles versus nits, the foot candles meter is $100 and more affordable for the City, an inexpensive tool for Codes Enforcement. Mrs. Deas said each board tells you the foot candles per square foot in the manufacturer's paperwork. She recommended requiring the specs from the manufacturer to tell you about this as well as the type of software, etc. She recommended no more than 0.3 foot candles at night. Mrs. Byrd asked about placing these signs downtown. Ms. Rock said the current ordinance does not allow any digital signs in the Core Commercial District. This is something the Commission could consider changing. Mrs. Deas said SignResearch.org is a good website for ordinances and studies from different towns about digital signs. She said the first LED sign she installed in Darlington was around 1991 at the courthouse. Mrs. Byrd said it was helpful. Mrs. Deas said, if brightness is set appropriately, a street over should be ok but across the street would be impacted. Ms. Brown said, if we look at Dixies Federal Credit Union sign, you can see how far the light travels. Ms. Rock said, once the ordinance is rewritten, we can send letter telling businesses they have 12 months from a certain date to comply with the new rules or appeal. Ms. Brown asked if the county had an ordinance on these signs. Mrs. Deas said she had not seen one. Ms. Brown said this stresses the need for annexation of pockets inside the City. Ms. Rock said historically the City has tried to work with the county on zoning and extra-jurisdictional authority to clean up U.S. 52 coming into town, but those efforts were not successful. Mrs. Byrd said we should bring it up again. Ms. Brown agreed since there were new council members with both the county and city. Ms. Bacchus suggested inviting Darlington's representatives to County Council to the June 13 meeting. Ms. Brown said Mr. Kilgo and Mrs. Thomas should hear our concerns and the presentation from the manufacturer.

Director's Report

Ms. Rock reported that Tractor Supply plans to open by October 1. The Sunday Alcohol Sales Referendum passed first reading in May with the second and final reading June 6. This will put the measure to the people on the November ballot. If approved by voters, City Council will then pass an ordinance allowing the sale of alcohol on Sundays for on-premises and off-premises consumption. The Chamber calculated this could mean as much as $75,000 in revenue from the license fee alone to the City. The County is looking to put this to the voters in 2018. Training to be held Monday, May 22, at City Hall at 5:30 p.m. Dinner will be served. Ms. Rock asked Ms. Brown and Ms. Byrd if they would like to be reappointed to the Commission, as their terms expire June 30. Ms. Byrd said yes. Ms. Brown declined and suggested a name for a replacement. Ms. Rock noted that Mr. Brenton Dana is no longer on the commission, and that opens an alternate seat too. She asked for any recommendations for individuals who may wish to serve on the commission.

Chair's Comments

Ms. Brown reported that the Darlington Garden Club was recognized on the State and Regional level for its work in the community. She noted that the entrance envisioned years ago by a joint meeting of this Commission and others was taking shape on Lamar Highway near Pate Elementary with brick columns up and plantings in the ground. Ms. Brown said that Mr. Jimmy White, who also serves on the Beautification Board with her, was going to businesses to help fund these entrances with the next one being the 52-52 Bypass at a cost of roughly $15,000 for all the plants, tree removal, sprinkler system, brick work, and signage. She asked for any donations to be directed to the City Beautification fund.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:13 a.m.

DARLINGTON CITY PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, June 13, 2017 – 9 A.M.
Darlington Library, 204 N. Main St.

Present at the meeting

Attending were Planning Commission members Ms. Byrd, Ms. Baccus, Ms. Page, Ms. Nelson, and Ms. Brown; Historic Landmarks Commission members Ms. Pierson, Mrs. Brasington, Mrs. Abbott, and Dr. Taylor; staff Ms. Rock, planning and economic development director, and Mr. Gainey, codes enforcement officer; and guests, Mrs. Angie Deas of Signs Plus and David Bittenbender of Vantage LED.

Call to Order

Ms. Brown called the meeting to order at 9:02 a.m.

Approval of the Minutes for the meeting of May

Ms. Page made a motion to accept the minutes of the May 16, 2017, meeting as presented. Ms. Byrd made the second. The motion carried unanimously.

Digital Signage Presentation

Mr. Bittenbender brought a 4.5-foot high by 9-foot wide LED sign to show members of the Planning and Historic Landmarks Commissions. As a manufacturer, he said he can build custom signs of any size, but the 2-to-1 ratio is most popular, one twice as wide as it is tall, because it allows lots of characters per line. He said there are 281 trillion colors possible, so there is no limit to what the technology can do. It can do something as complicated as video to just a text message. They build for the primary viewing distance and are usually closer to the road in South Carolina. Many businesses and churches have so many things going on a readerboard can't hold it all. This sign is at 100% brightness on a sunny day. The key is to have it bright enough during the day and dim it at night. If it is too bright at night, people want to turn away from it. We include a photocell that detects the light the sign is receiving and automatically dims the sign at night and brightens as the sun rises. This way the sign can be viewed just as well during the day as at night and is not a distraction. It also helps the owner conserve energy and prolongs the longevity of the sign. Out system is a cloud-based software similar to online banking awith a user name and password. You can program from anywhere, adjust messages and brightness. To prove owners are adjusting the brightness as required, cities can get a special username and password to observe the software but not change any settings using our software. The sign he brought is a 16mm one-sided sign. He said the cost would range between $20,000 to $30,000 for this type of model. He said SCDOT allows ads to change on digital billboards along interstate no quicker than every 8 to 10 seconds. This is one of the smaller signs he produces. The signs cost depends on size and distance between the pixels. This 16mm has 16mm between each pixel. When it is spaced out more, less pixels, less costs. For professional sports arenas, they use a very high quality LED sign, 8 to 10 mm because people are so much closer and they show lots of live video on them. For the average school, church, or business, the 20mm is most popular. It is best to use large fonts and letters, nothing too wordy because people have only seconds to look at the advertisement. The 16mm is popular for car dealers and restaurants to show detail and for businesses with customers walking by versus driving. The smallest signs are roughly 1-

foot tall by 4-foot wide, which allows roughly two lines of copy and 8 characters like the scrolling signs you see in storefronts. These can still be a few thousand dollars. A lot of technology coming from overseas does not come with any dimming capacity or limited dimming. Over in Asia, he said they have lots of digital signs on top of 30-foot skyscrapers, not delivering a message just attracting attention. Here, we use the signs in a different way. The cost for dimming is anywhere from $200 to $500. Ms. Brown asked who was responsible for the image on the screen. If a sign were approved, it is up to the owner to choose font size, color, etc. Mrs. Deas said you can put something in the ordinance about foul language. Ms. Brown said a ban on inappropriate wording needs to be in there. In some areas, can we view externally the timing? Mrs. Brasington said that inappropriate wording and pictures needs to be included. Mrs. Deas said somebody hacked into the system and showed porn for four minutes in one case. It definitely needs to have something about language because another hacking incident had the f-word up on a sign. Mr. Bittenbender said the City could have its own username and passwordto see what is being played on the sign in real time and how long it is playing. Ms. Brown asked if the content was controlled by the sign owner. Mr. Bittenbender said yes. Ms. Brown said, if someone hacks the system, there should be an emergency contact for 24-hour servicing of the sign. Mr. Bittenbender said that his company monitors every sign in the field. If one is not showing content, we can call the owner. We can see if someone hacked in, and we can make it go blank. Mrs. Brasington asked, how do you define a digital sign? She said one storefront placed a wide-screen TV in the window with a computer attached. Mr. Bittenbender said the diference is in the brightness. Nits measure brightness. The sun is about 4000 nits, so a sign needs to be 10,000 nits to be seen during the day. An indoor TV display or monitor is only 900 to 1,500 nits, so during the day people won't really see the content plus the glare from the window make it even harder to see. Ms. Brown said we needed to include verbiage on that as well as that signs need to conform to the light pollution ordinance in terms of shielding. How wide would it need to be. Mr. Bittenbender said LED diodes on our signs have a 160-degree viewing angle. The canopy you refer to would be dictated by the height of the sign. For every foot tall, you would need to calculate how wide the canopy would need to be. Ms. Brown asked for that formula. She asked how the LED compares to a regular sign in terms of visual distance. Mr. Bittenbender said the digital can be seen much farther away compared to a static sign. The digital is meant to show an image that can be seen much further away. Mrs. Brasington said what is the formula for how far away you'll be able to see it? That is one of my concerns in the historic districts. If digital signs are there, that changes the feel, and distance will be important. Mr. Bittenbender said he sees limited size in historical districts across the country. The quality of the content is important too. Some don't allow full color displays just single color signs with messages, like red, which is much simpler. The size and color play a big part of it, and they all need to be dimmed at night. Some demand the signs be equipeed with automatic photocell within the historic district. Mrs. Deas said the end-user sets the final limit, and the City can require you to set it. City of Greenville just required these signs be turned to 0% between 11 p.m. and 5 a.m. Mr. Bittenbender said that inside each sign is a cooling system that's thermal activated in our signs, so the sign doesn't have to go off just turned down to 0% or black screen programmed. The ordinance could include that signs cannot show content between 11 p.m. and 5 a.m. The signs are manufactured to run 24 hours a day. He said even in New York Times Square the signs go blank after 2 a.m. Mrs. Deas said this adds to longevity of the sign. Mr.

Bittenbender said this helps the user of the sign decrease the power bill and keep everybody in historic community satisfied. Ms. Byrd asked what do you see when a sign goes bad? Mr. Bittenbender said that the technology is advanced so there are more motherboards, which means just large squares of the sign usually will go dark because of a power supply failure. Digitals signs are a large expense used to increase sales. Many companies offer limited parts warranty but not a labor warranty. Our company has seven years on parts and seven years on-site service warranty. We check on the signs. Ones that are not produced in the United States, when produced overseas and the factory goes under, the distributor and end user lost the warranty and can't receive replacement parts. We also offer third party insured, which takes over our warranty if anything happens to our company.

Comments from the Historic Commission

Mrs. Brasington said she is concerned about light pollution. The signs need shields, and, if Greenville is doing, we can do it. She would like to see them turned off at night. Mrs. Deas said Greenville makes them smaller in historic districts. Mrs. Brasington said her concern is how close the signs could be to residential areas, how big of an area are we going to light up. Ms. Pierson said, when night time comes, I'd set a certain time like six or 7 o'clock. Ms. Byrd said 6 o'clock is too early, businesses are still vibrant at that time, maybe 11 o'clock. She suggested changing the time based on Daylight Savings Time too. Mrs. Brasington suggested 10 o'clock.

Comments from the Planning Commission

Mrs. Page said we have a lot to consider here. Ms. Brown said we need to add to the list price of the permit. Codes would need more than a onetime inspection. Should it be renewed every year for color, brightness, and content? Mr. Gainey said that is like the sign at Dixies Federal. He said he received complaints, and, when he addressed it with the business, they could not control the brightness, just the colors. Mr. Bittenbender said, if it was an overseas built display, the business may not be able to control the brightness because that is done by the software. In Asia, lots of these signs don't have a photocell, and many don't include software. You can put darker backgrounds. Color contrast is key for advertising. Your only hope with that is a dark background and limited contract. Mr. Gainey said it we re-write the ordinance, we need to require it be installed with software to dim it. Mr. Bittenbender said the ones you get overseas are cheaper, but you get what you pay for. Ms. Brown asked if we could request to see the warranty. Ms. Rock said you can ask for the plans. Mr. Gainey said we don't need to just see it on paper. We need to require a demonstration or something. He said he talked with Glenn Willis about video, and the national highway traffic safety said video on a sign is the worst sign by the road. Mr. Bittenbender said some cities have an ordinance that says no motion. For the owner of the sign, you are nto taking away what they purchased the sign for. A static message is more effective. Most DOTs say not motion, only static messages that change every so often. Ms. Pierson said most of our roads are covered by DOT and federal regulations. Ms. Brown said we need to be as specific as possible. Ms. Rock asked every commission member to write down their ideas of what should be included and send them to her for inclusion in a draft ordinance. Ms. Baccus said digital signs need to allow the City to remotely monitor. Mr. Gainey said he did not feel comfortable with that. Ms. Rock said we might run the risk of picking winners nad losers if we require this kind of software and this is the only company using it. Mr. Bittenbender

said cloud-based software is becoming more and more popular. We were one of the firsts. Ms. Brown said she doesn't want it affecting people. If I bought a house behind a commercial area and it's residential, that's what I expect, a residential feel. She said she would like to see limits on motion, height, and brightness. She said she would approve of turning them black 11 p.m. or 10 p.m. She also said the permit cost needs to be high, and it needs to be renewed if the City has to monitor it for years. She would like to look at ordinance in Madison, Mississippi, and how they define the look. She would require a warranty if possible. Ms. Baccus said the size needs to be limited and it should say that the sign must be maintained and include fines. She said it makes sense to remote in to access the details. Mrs. Brasington said she likes the idea of specifying the framework around the sign, that it should have a historic feel. Ms. Baccus said we need to pick a frame style. Mrs. Brasington said that instead of the enamel red frame, maybe black or wood look to keep the historic character of Darlington.

Chair's Comments

Ms. Brown thanked the commission for her time serving as chair, as her term expires June 30. She said, when we started, we worked on sidewalks then temporary signage. We haven't gone back to temporary signage, so she asked the commission to go back and review it again. She said the comprehensive plan for the City was on the horizon as well. Ms. Rock said the entire comprehensive plan had to be redone every 10 years by state law. Ms. Brown suggested looking at it from the point of view of bicyclists and pedestrians.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:31 a.m.

DARLINGTON CITY PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, September 19, 2017 – 9 A.M.
Darlington Library, 204 N. Main St.

Present at the meeting

Attending were Planning Commission members Ms. Page, Ms. Nelson, Ms. Kirchen, Ms. Alston, and Mr. Parnell; staff Ms. Rock, planning and economic development director, and Mr. Gainey, codes enforcement officer; and guests, Ms. Ronda Brown, Mrs. Helen Carroll, and Ms. Giquetta McNeil.

Call to Order

Ms. Rock called the meeting to order at 9:03 a.m.

Approval of the Minutes for the meeting of May

Ms. Nelson made a motion to accept the minutes of the June 13, 2017, meeting as presented. Ms. Page made the second. The motion carried unanimously.

Election of Chair person

Ms. Rock asked for any volunteers or nominations for commission chair, as the previous chair's term on the board had ended. Ms. Page volunteered. The Commission agreed with the selection.

Request to Change Zoning at 201 Cashua Street

Ms. Rock presented the zoning map for 201 Cashua Street. The business at that location, Pee Dee Healthcare, plans to do additional and significant renovations. Currently a portion of the building is in one zoning district, Office & Residential (OR), and other portions of the building are zoned Core Commercial (CC). Ms. Rock said it makes little sense for one part of a structure to follow one set of rules while another part is required to follow different rules. She said making the property one zoning district makes logical sense. Mrs. Carroll, representing Genesis Healthcare, the parent company of Pee Dee Healthcare, said they would like to keep with the existing CC zoning. She noted that the area has some OR and some CC zoning on Cashua and Oak Streets, and all are commercial properties. The former law office of Ben Matthews also sits on the property and would be addressed during the renovations. Ms. Rock said the upcoming renovations precipitate the need for this change. Mr. Gainey said he does not see a problem with the requested change. **Ms. Nelson made a motion to recommend that City Council change the zoning district at 201 Cashua Street from OR to CC. Ms. Kirchen made the second. The motion carried unanimously.**

Request to Change Zoning at 2 Segars Court

Mrs. Carroll addressed 2 Segars Court, also owned by Genesis Healthcare. Currently, the property is used for parking and the house on the property for administrative offices. She said that the renovation plans would allow them to add more services to the community. **Ms. Alston made a motion to recommend that City Council change the zoning district at 2 Segars Court from OR to CC. Ms. Page made the second. The motion carried unanimously.**

Digital Signage

Ms. Rock said the Commission has been researching and working on new proposed rules for digital signage to add flexibility to the City's ordinance and to be more accommodating for our businesses. Ms. Brown suggested that the ordinance should require the signs to be dimmable and maintain and protect the residents because some of the signs can affect people blocks away.

The Commission discussed nearly 30 possible stipulations and rules before agreeing to the following proposed rules for digital signage.

- Signs must be for the business on the property where it is placed.
- Signs must conform to the City of Darlington lighting ordinance.
- Signs must be maintained. Signs must be repaired, removed, replaced, or turned off if more than 25% of the face is not functioning.
- Signs may not display inappropriate words or images.
- Owners must be able to adjust the brightness of the signs. Brightness must be controlled not just the color contrast of the sign.
- Signs may not display video.
- Signs must remain static for a minimum of 10 seconds.
- Signs must be 300 feet from a dwelling.
- Signs are not allowed in a historic district.
- Signs are allowed in the General Commercial (GC), Core Commercial (CC), and Industrial (LI and BI) zoning districts.
- Displays must be cut off or turned to 0% brightness between the hours of 10 p.m. and 6 a.m.
- Signs may be up to 50% of the allowable size for building or freestanding signs but may not exceed 50 square feet.
- Framing on the sign must be a neutral color such as black, brown, or white.
- Motion is not allowed.
- Scrolling text messages are not allowed.
- Automatic photocell is required.
- An annual sign permit and inspection is required.
- The annual fee for a digital sign permit and inspection is $100 and is in addition to any building permits required during installation.
- Brightness may not exceed 4,500 nits.
- Digital billboards are not allowed.

Ms. Rock will format these rules into an ordinance to be approved at the November meeting and the final version sent to City Council thereafter.

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 10:31 a.m.

DARLINGTON CITY PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, November 14, 2017 – 9 A.M.
Darlington Library, 204 N. Main St.

Present at the meeting: Attending were Planning Commission members Ms. Page, Ms. Nelson, Mrs. Kirchen, and Mr. Parnell; staff Ms. Rock, planning and economic development director, and Mr. Gainey, codes enforcement officer; and guest, Ms. Gladys Jules.

Call to Order: Ms. Page called the meeting to order at 9:03 a.m.

Approval of the Minutes for the meeting of September: Ms. Nelson made a motion to accept the minutes of the September 19, 2017, meeting as presented. Ms. Page made the second. The motion carried unanimously.

Digital Signage: Ms. Rock presented the Commission with a draft ordinance for digital signage. Mr. Parnell asked to additional verbiage to Item 17, "At no point on the face of the sign shall the luminance exceed 4500 nits during daylight hours. Signs shall be dimmed automatically from sunset to 10 p.m. and shall not exceed 100 nits when the display is set to show maximum white (100% full white mode)." This is standard wording across the country, he said. The Board would give one year from the time of enactment to comply for existing signs. All new signs must conform to rules, which apply to all digital signs within the City limits. The Board raised a concern about digital billboards and annexation. Mr. Gainey said that there is not enough traffic for the billboard companies to install a digital billboard. Ms. Rock will format these rules into an ordinance to be approved at the November meeting and the final version sent to City Council thereafter. Mr. Parnell made a motion to approve the ordinance as corrected. Ms. Nelson made the second. The motion carried unanimously.

Joint Board Meeting: Ms. Rock said the joint board meeting set for October had to be cancelled due to conflicts. The commission suggested not rescheduling it this year.

Calendar for 2018: Ms. Rock presented a proposed calendar for 2018. Ms. Nelson made a motion to accept the calendar as presented. Ms. Page made the second. The motion carried unanimously.

Director's Report: Ms. Rock said City Council would hold a public hearing at 6 p.m. tonight and then the regular meeting at 6:30 p.m. where Council will take a final vote on the zoning requests for Genesis Healthcare. Mrs. Kirchen asked that the commission look at the maintenance of storefronts, especially vacant ones. She said something needs to be done because that's the first impression for our City. Ms. Rock said she would bring the current code and options for the next meeting.

Adjourn: The meeting adjourned at 9:34 a.m.