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DESIGN EXCELLENCE

Durham Appearance Commission

MEMO

Date: August 17, 2015

To: Members of the Durham City Council

From: Howard R. Holcomb, Chair, Durham City-County Appearance Commission

Subject: 2014 Durham City-County Appearance Commission Annual Report

Introduction. The Durham City-County Appearance Commission is an advisory board whose mission is to improve the aesthetic character 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 5:30 p.m. in Conference Room GA on the ground floor of City Hall. This report provides a summary of the Commission's work in 2014.

General Commission Accomplishments for 2014. The commission has dedicated time to several projects this year including the Gateways and the Golden Leaf Awards. After having not held the awards in 2011 or 2013, the commission was determined to hold a successful event in 2014. The group worked diligently to make that happen. They spent a significant amount of personal time and effort to hold the first ever online voting for the Golden Leaf Awards followed by the actual ceremony in late 2014.

Golden Leaf Awards. The Golden Leaf Awards Program recognizes contributions to the community in the field of design. The focus of the awards can be any form of building design including residential, commercial, industrial or community buildings. It can also apply to parks, open spaces, and the people who contribute to improving our community appearance and making our community a more pleasant place to live.

The commission is proud to have set up a successful website to get the word out about the event which has proven invaluable and will be a great tool for any future events. The commission is pleased to be able to hold the GLA's having not held them in 2013. The event was held at the Full Frame Theatre in the Historic American Tobacco Campus. The event was well attended and the board received many positive responses to it.

Overall Commission Goals for 2014. The Commission plans to continue to hold the Golden Leaf awards as well as provide input on the Central Durham Gateway Plan and Gateways as they come more into focus. We advocate for good design, in both the private and public sectors, and encourage all projects to hold themselves to high standards in creativity, innovation, design and appearance.

The main challenge facing the Commission has been maintaining the membership. However, the commission, the city and county clerks offices, and planning staff have actively been seeking new members and as a result, the commission, as of this report, is currently seating 14 of 15 positions.

In 2015, the Commission intends to:

- Continue to provide input and provide any help possible to the Durham Gateway Plan;
- Work with other groups to find new opportunities to positively influence design in the community.
- Continue presenting the commissions Road Show program, including it's powerpoint presentation, to various local groups and business leaders in an effort to spread the word of the commission's goals
- Update and improve the Golden Leaf Awards program in collaboration with KDB, DCVB, DAAG as well as other groups

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

2015 Durham City County Appearance Commission Members. Anne Abney, Jessica Braverman, Kenny Broadwell, David Davis (Vice-Chair), Doug Dorney, Howard Holcomb (Chair), Fredrick Jernigan, Teddy Maynor, Michael Miller, Faye Paige, Jonathan Dupree, Pamela Porter (Secretary), and Ellen Weinstein

Recommendation. To receive the Annual Report.

Staff Contacts.

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Howard R. Holcomb, Chairman