

MINUTES
WORK SESSION
JUNE 24, 2019

6:00PM

YOUNGVILLE COMMUNITY HOUSE

115 E MAIN STREET

**Joint Work Session with the Youngsville Board of
Commissioners, Youngsville Planning Board and
Youngsville ABC Board**

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Mayor Fonzie Flowers called the meeting to order at 6:01pm.

In attendance were Mayor Fonzie Flowers, Commissioners Catherine Redd and Terry Hedlund. Also, in attendance was Donnie Tharrington, Youngsville Planning Board and Todd Casado, Youngsville ABC Board. Members of Staff present included Town Administrator Phillip Cordeiro and Town Clerk Emily Hurd.

Aaron Arnett and Shawn Terpack of Arnett, Muldrow and Associates were also in attendance. Mr. Arnett explained they were here to help Youngsville develop a logo and wayfinding signage. He gave a brief history of his company and noted they have worked with over five hundred municipalities across the country and approximately seventy in North Carolina. Mr. Arnett noted that Youngsville recently participated in Governor Cooper's Downtown Strong Initiative and one of the proposed strategies included branding, logos and wayfinding signage. He explained they would be in town for three days, engaging Staff, local Boards, civic organizations, businesses and others in our community. All this information would help in the creative process. Mr. Arnett stated they would develop a system over these three days.

Mr. Arnett presented a slide show to highlight their process.

Slide 3 showed Brand Objectives. Branding should reinforce the positive attributes of the place; to create a positive narrative. It should have a connected, unified message that is relevant to visitors, has a foundation of local pride, and attracts activity, business and investment. This is something the community can use to help position Youngsville as a place for new investments and new residents. It should be relevant to the people that live here along with being a part of economic development.

Slide 4 showed the Brand Elements. Brand Elements include the branding statement, typeface, color palette, icon, and tagline. Mr. Arnett stated this was more than just a logo and gave some examples. He showed the Boards how the different elements in the logo related to the brand statement. Mr. Arnett

explained brand extension and showed examples of the different variations for departments. He noted that it all connected, including fonts and colors, while still maintaining different identities.

Mr. Arnett stated the branding could be applied to the new website and products that local businesses can sell. This will help to draw attention to Youngsville and bring more people to the area. He showed an example of how other municipalities applied their logo to street furniture. Mr. Arnett stated it ultimately comes down to a system that can extend out to events and products. There is a power in brand identity. Mr. Arnett showed several slides that highlighted webpages, signage, hats and shirts, postcards and flyers, etc. He showed how the town of Travelers Rest used their logo "TR" for advertisement.

As an exercise to gather information about Youngsville and its community, Mr. Arnett asked several questions of the Boards.

"If you were to create a postcard that best describes Youngsville as a place, what ONE image would you put on that postcard". Commissioner Hedlund stated his first thought was the mural on the side of Griffins, as that is represented throughout town. Mr. Arnett agreed the mural has become a de facto brand identity, and noted it was included in the banners. Commissioner Redd stated she thought more of an outdoor gathering space, for example the area outside of the Yacht Club. She felt a gathering of people having a good time best suited Youngsville. Mr. Arnett liked that idea and stated the activity and energy in Youngsville was growing. Member Casado noted how much the town has grown in the three years that he has lived in the area. He suggested creating something new, or maybe historical. With all the new people and businesses in the area, Member Casado stated it was a good opportunity to rebrand and push forward. Mayor Flowers noted a progression of Youngsville, including old pictures of the Boondocks building, to show the transformation and great strides to get things done. Commissioner Redd asked Member Casado how much of a mix between historic and modern should the new logo be. Member Casado stated he didn't want to take away from the history of the town but felt that we can now make what we want from scratch with all the new people in the area. Commissioner Hedlund felt the mix should be 25% history and 75% contemporary. Mr. Arnett stated there were ways to do that and noted the great history of the area. He stated you can see it in the buildings and surrounding area. Mr. Arnett noted the median age for Youngsville is very young and families are moving here. Youngsville's population is approximately 1,340, however the population in the surrounding area is approximately 18,000. This creates an evolving market in the community. Member Tharrington felt this made Youngsville attractive but most people don't know the rich history of the town. He told the story of how Youngsville was a stop on the stagecoach route and noted the house that it stopped at. Member Tharrington stated we needed to pay attention to the history of Youngsville, but we also need to move towards the future and turn Youngsville into a destination if possible. Commissioner Redd stated Youngsville used to have three hotels and was named Pacific before the name was changed to Youngsville in honor of Jack Young. Mr. Arnett stated these were the things that make Youngsville different.

"You are redesigning a gateway sign to be placed as you enter Youngsville, what "tag line" or phrase would you put on the sign to welcome outsiders to the community"? Mayor Flowers noted "living your best life" has been mentioned in previous meetings. Commissioner Redd stated she liked the word "gather". It could mean gather here or a place to gather, though she had concerns that it could be limiting. Mr. Arnett stated they could use the word or sentiment for a tag line. He explained the tag line

is a foot in the door that carries a lot of layers. Member Casado noted it was rare to visit any of the businesses in Youngsville without seeing a group of people, as there were always groups or crowds of people. Mr. Arnett liked the idea that you are never alone in Youngsville and there is a general friendliness. He stated tag lines need to be true to the community; authentic and serious. Mayor Flowers stated “where friends and families come together” could be something worth looking at. Mr. Arnett noted that has been a consistent theme on the meetings today; coming together, gathering, activities. He stated this will help draw people here.

“You are giving a tour of Youngsville to someone who has never been here and have just one hour, what places would you make sure to take them to”? Commissioner Hedlund stated he would show people the revitalized buildings. He explained these buildings were abandoned and decimated not that long ago but their renovations ignited a spark in downtown. Commissioner Redd told a story about being recently sick. Not only did the neighbors check on her but they went to get her soup. When Charron’s didn’t have soup, the employees automatically knew what she liked to eat. Commissioner Redd stated the people know each other here and she would take visitors to the local businesses, so they can see how everyone interacts with each other. The businesses work together instead of competing. The buildings and businesses area great but the community shines. Mr. Arnett stated Youngsville has a great mix of quality, active businesses where you can gather at and connect to the citizens. Mayor Flowers stated everything is localized; jobs, restaurants, groceries, etc. He stated there was community on the side streets that gives a “small town USA” vibe. Commissioner Redd stated that it was a community, not just places to eat and drink. She explained several of the local businesses offered opportunities to gather; for example, one of the retail stores offers art classes. Commissioner Redd stated there were so many other activities in the area. Commissioner Hedlund noted there were a lot of new neighborhoods and the growth was exploding. Commissioner Redd stated the younger people like to gather and they are what is moving into the area. They want to be a part of their town. Mr. Arnett stated he loved this narrative and noted it helps him understand what is special about Youngsville. He stated this followed through with what he learned from the Parks and Recreation Director.

“What makes you most proud about being from Youngsville”? Member Tharrington noted the town had dried up in the past but the thing that is most advantageous to Youngsville is that people want to come here. He noted we need the economic base to sustain the growth but are in a good place. Mr. Tharrington agreed with Commissioner Hedlund about the renovations and noted people take care of their properties. There is a community pride here. Commissioner Hedlund noted we are the place to be in Franklin County and Mr. Arnett agreed. Mr. Arnett noted there was a lot of commerce and industries. Commissioner Hedlund stated surrounding municipalities are following our lead and Mayor Flowers agreed. Mayor Flowers stated there was a lot going on in Youngsville for it to be such a small town. He agreed there was a pride associated with folks from this area as they clearly love this place unconditionally. People genuinely care and take care of their neighbors. Commissioner Redd noted people can walk everywhere and get almost everything done; food, hair, flowers, drinking, etc.

“Is Youngsville traditional or contemporary”? Mr. Arnett asked everyone’s opinion on if the graphic they created should be traditional or contemporary. Hurd noted that Mr. Arnett and Mr. Terpack had mentioned earlier about tweaking the current Town Seal while keeping the historic basis. If we keep the Town Seal historic, then the new brand and logo should be more modern / contemporary. Mr. Arnett stated he liked that idea. He mentioned that earlier in the meeting a 25/75 mix had been suggested and this was a strategic way to accomplish that goal and tie them together.

“Travel writer comes to community to highlight Youngsville – What story would you pitch. Mr. Arnett stated the stage coach story from earlier in the meeting, along with local folklore, was a great idea. Member Casado stated the revitalization of the past few years, including how Youngsville is a great family town with a lot for their children to do. There is enough in this area for people to plan a day trip to Youngsville. Commissioner Hedlund noted our transformation has encompassed all of what we have discussed. Commissioner Redd mentioned that a lot of the buildings in town have a history as they have changed uses over the decades. For example, the old Town Hall used to be the Fire Station. Mayor Flowers stated Youngsville is a community and we are doing everything we can to make it better. He stated Youngsville went through a bad time where it almost became a ghost town, but we are now going back to being a community with options for our citizens.

“Family Game”. Mr. Arnett stated he wanted the Boards to describe the neighboring municipalities as a family member. He gave a couple of examples for towns that were located near Greenville, SC.

- 1) Louisburg: Commissioner Redd stated “grandpa”, however Member Casado noted the students at Louisburg College gave it a younger feel during portions of the year. Mr. Arnett stated “professor” would marry the two suggestions.
- 2) Wake Forest: Mayor Flowers stated he saw Wake Forest as hipster, mustache and skinny jeans, creative, like the example for W. Greenville. Commissioner Redd stated she saw Wake Forest as a step-parent. A person who comes in after the fact and just tries to act like they have always been there.
- 3) Franklinton: Hurd stated Franklinton was like a kid brother, always looking up to the older siblings. She noted they had followed Youngsville’s lead on several items.
- 4) Bunn: Plaid uncle
- 5) Raleigh: Commissioner Redd stated it reminded her of people with no kids, people that can go out and do what they want. Member Tharrington stated that Raleigh had advantages, such as hospitals and universities, that our area does not have. Mayor Flowers noted old politics played a roll in Youngsville not getting a hospital and Commissioner Redd agreed, stating the northern part of Franklin County are like the older generation in a family. Commissioner Hedlund stated Raleigh also had a lot of younger adults because of the universities.
- 6) Youngsville: Member Casado stated “caring and safe”. Commissioner Hedlund noted Youngsville was evolving to a younger generation with a lot of energy. Mayor Flowers stated “up and coming” and gave examples of how people want to be involved. He clarified an “up and comer with strong foundation because of the history”. Commissioner Hedlund stated “yuppies” in a good way.

Mr. Arnett stated they would continue meetings on Tuesday morning then delve into the development of a preliminary presentation to the Steering Committee. When asked, Mr. Arnett stated the meetings would be like the focus groups from earlier in the day. He stated they would ask some of the same questions as he did the Boards tonight.

Mr. Arnett thanked the Boards for their help.

The Work Session ended at 7:21pm