



Appearance Commission Agenda

Town of Swansboro

Thursday, June 18, 2026

I. Call to Order

II. Approval of Minutes

a. May 21, 2026, Special Meeting Minutes

III. Business

a. Final Bi-Laws

Presenter: Alissa Fender, MMC – Town Clerk

At the May 21, 2026, special meeting, the Appearance Commission reviewed the draft by-laws and approved them as presented. The by-laws are now being provided in final format for the Commission's consideration and formal vote to recommend approval and forward them to the Board of Commissioners for final adoption.

Recommended Action: Motion to recommended the Appearance Commission Bi-Laws to the Board of Commissioners for final approval.

b. Diagonal Parking on Front Street Consideration

Presenter: Alissa Fender, MMC – Town Clerk

At the May 21, 2026, special meeting, the commission wanted to discuss at a future meeting the possibility of diagonal parking on Front Street. Details related to the option will be provided by staff.

Recommended Action: No action needed

c. Potential Future Projects Discussion

A roundtable discussion and/or update will be provided on the following possible future projects.

- Saltwater Grill Landscape Enhancement
- Holiday Lights
- Solar Lights
- Signs for display on completed projects

Recommended Action: Discuss and/or provide further direction.

d. Future Meeting Agenda Item Discussion

Presenter: Cynthia LaCorte – Chair

Opportunity for commission members to discuss future agenda topics and provide direction to staff regarding items to be included on upcoming agendas.

Recommended Action: Discuss and provide direction to staff.

IV. Chairman/Board Thoughts/Staff Comments

V. Public Comments

VI. Adjournment

Town of Swansboro
Appearance Commission
Special Meeting Minutes
May 21, 2026

Item II - a.

In attendance: Cynthia LaCorte, Kim Kingrey, Claire Cole, Linda Thornley, Doug Rogers, and Nancy Palbicke. Larry Philpott was absent.

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 am.

Approval of Minutes

On a motion by Mr. Rogers, seconded by Mrs. Kingrey, the April 23, 2026, Special Meeting Minutes were unanimously approved.

Business

Adoption of Regular Meeting Schedule

Town Clerk Alissa Fender reviewed that pursuant to North Carolina General Statute 143-318.12, a public body may establish a schedule of regular meetings indicating the time and place of those meetings. At its April 23, 2026, special meeting, the Commission discussed and agreed to a regular meeting schedule of 9:00 a.m. on the third Thursday of each month and a meeting schedule had been established for adoption. Once adopted, the schedule would be filed with the Town Clerk's office and published on the Town's website in accordance with statutory requirements.

On a motion by Mr. Rogers, seconded by Mrs. Palbicke, the regular meeting schedule of the 3rd Thursday of the month at 9am for the Appearance Commissioner from June 2026 to May 2027 was approved unanimously.

Review of Draft By-Laws

Town Clerk Fender reviewed the first draft of the Commission's by-laws for consideration. She stated that at its April 23, 2026, special meeting, the Commission had been tasked with developing by-laws to guide its organization and procedures, with the understanding that multiple drafts may be reviewed before a final version was submitted to the Board of Commissioners for approval. Based on prior research, examples from other municipalities, and input provided by members via email, an initial draft was prepared for the Commission's review. Records considered in preparing the draft included a draft created by Chair LaCorte, as well as by-laws from the Towns of Selma, River Bend, Kernersville, and Wendell. Town Clerk Fender noted that the final by-laws would be provided to the Board of Commissioners for final approval after the commission's approval of the final draft.

The Commission made no edits to the draft. On a motion by Mrs. Kingrey, seconded by Mrs. Palbicke, the draft by-laws were approved to be finalized and presented at the next

meeting for final review by the commission and recommendation to the Board of Commissioners for final approval.

Appearance Project Program

Chair LaCorte introduced the concept of an Appearance Project Program to create a schedule of property enhancement and clean-up projects throughout the year. The discussion centered on how projects would be staffed, with the idea that the Commission would invite other committees, commissions, townspeople, and organizations to volunteer alongside members to accomplish work more efficiently.

Mrs. Thornley suggested identifying project locations before setting dates and noted that materials and efforts would likely need to be funded through donations or similar means. Ward Cemetery was raised as a timely candidate given recent public attention following a storm. Mrs. Thornley cautioned against investing significant effort into a site without having a plan for who would maintain it afterward, noting the risk of completed projects falling into disrepair.

Discussion also touched on the importance of planning not just for the initial project, but for long-term maintenance. The group acknowledged the value of prioritizing both high-visibility and high-impact locations and agreed that a tiered approach—identifying short-term, long-term, and future goals—would be a productive framework for the program.

Potential Project Opportunity

Vice-Chair Rogers presented a potential project opportunity involving the property between Saltwater Grill, the Saltwater Grill parking lot, the gazebo, and the waterfront downtown where four live oak trees were located. Vice-Chair Rogers noted the area had existing hazards including protruding sprinkler heads and light fixtures lying on the ground that he had already begun to address. He reported that the owner, Ms. Anderson, was open to ideas for enhancement but had not committed to any specific course of action.

Town Clerk Fender noted that the property was within a flood zone, meaning any improvements would need to comply with the town's flood ordinance. She further noted the property was also located within a historic district, meaning historic preservation requirements and color restrictions would apply, and that any work affecting the waterway would also need to satisfy CAMA regulations.

The Commission discussed appropriate surface materials and considered whether options such as brick pavers, mulch, or artificial turf would satisfy stormwater and perviousness requirements, with the understanding that any material used would likely need to allow water to pass through it. This waterfront location was identified as

receiving significant foot traffic and tourism, making its appearance a matter of public interest despite being privately owned. Suggestion to consult with a landscape or horticultural professional for informal guidance was made and the commission agreed that one member would continue discussions with the property owner and report back at a future meeting.

On a motion by Mrs. Palbicke, seconded by Mrs. Cole, with unanimous approval, Vice-Chair Rogers was appointed to further explore this project by collaborating with property owner Ms. Anderson and to provide an update at the next regular meeting.

Appearance Commission Project Signs

Chair LaCorte presented a draft signage concept for placement at completed project sites to publicize the Commission's work and support recruitment efforts. The idea was to create a sign that could be temporarily placed at a project site following completion and removed after an agreed-upon period.

Town Clerk Fender clarified the town's sign regulations, noting that wire-frame yard signs were not permitted in Swansboro except for political signs as provided by state law. She indicated that a more substantial sign mounted on a post would be permitted and could be installed at a project site during or after a project's completion. For projects within the historic district, color restrictions and other historic specifications would need to be observed.

The group agreed to revisit the idea at the next meeting with more refined proposals.

Future Meeting Agenda Item Discussion

An opportunity for commission members to discuss future agenda topics and provide direction to staff regarding items to be included on upcoming agendas was provided. The following items were addressed:

- Next meeting format would be roundtable style setup for collaboration
- Further discussion and/or details were to be provided on the following items:
 - o Diagonal parking on Front Street
 - o Enhancement of Holiday Lights
 - o Solar Lights across Front Street from Highway 24 to Church Street

Chairman/Board Thoughts/Staff Comments

Chair LaCorte acknowledged the board's significant potential and the many opportunities within the town and commended the impressive assembly of insightful and skilled individuals on the commission.

Mrs. Kingrey shared that her initial views about this commission had changed significantly and proposed a collaborative effort between the Historical Association and the Towns Historic Preservation Commission.

Mrs. Thornley emphasized the importance of budget awareness, long-term sustainability, alignment with Historic Preservation Commission goals, and a focus on practical improvements that could provide both short-term progress and lasting impact as the commission moves forward.

In response to an inquiry from the board about members meeting downtown to walk around and talk about ideas, Town Clerk Fender explained that any gathering of three or more commission members to discuss town business, whether in person, by phone, or electronically, was considered a meeting and requires public notice under the open meetings law. Two members could meet casually without issue, but if more gather, it violates the law. If the committee as a whole wishes to meet downtown for any reason related to the commission and its business, a 48-hour notice stating the meeting's purpose was required.

Adjournment

On a motion by Mrs. Kingrey, seconded by Mrs. Thornley, the meeting adjourned at 9:49am.



Appearance Commission Meeting Agenda Item Submittal

Item To Be Considered: **Final Bi-Laws**

Board Meeting Date: **June 18, 2026**

Prepared By: **Alissa Fender, MMC – Town Clerk**

Overview: At the May 21, 2026, special meeting, the Appearance Commission reviewed the draft by-laws and approved them as presented. The by-laws are now being provided in final format for the Commission’s consideration and formal vote to recommend approval and forward them to the Board of Commissioners for final adoption.

Background Attachment(s): Appearance Commission Bi-Laws

Recommended Action: Motion to recommended the Appearance Commission Bi-Laws to the Board of Commissioners for final approval.

Action: _____

TOWN OF SWANSBORO
APPEARANCE COMMISSION
BY-LAWS

ARTICLE 1. GENERAL PURPOSE AND MISSION

The Swansboro Appearance Commission shall serve in an advisory capacity to the Board of Commissioners and Town staff on matters related to the visual character, aesthetic quality, and overall appearance of the Town.

The mission of the Appearance Commission is to create an aesthetically enhanced community with a focus on the Town’s renowned charm, rich history, and coastal elements. Through coordination with residents, the business community, organizations, and governmental resources, the Commission strives to improve quality of life, support economic vitality, and promote community pride through beautification and design awareness.

ARTICLE 2. MEMBERSHIP

Membership composition, qualifications, appointment procedures, and term lengths shall be as established by the Town of Swansboro Unified Development Ordinance and applicable law.

Members are expected to actively participate in Commission meetings, projects, and initiatives and to support the mission and work of the Commission through good-faith service.

ARTICLE 3. OFFICERS

- A. CHAIRPERSON – elected annually from among the membership. The Chairperson shall:
 - Preside over meetings
 - Coordinate preparation of agendas with Town staff
 - Call special meetings as necessary
 - Appoint committees or subcommittees as needed
 - Serve as the primary liaison with Town staff and governing bodies
- B. VICE-CHAIRPERSON – elected annually and shall perform the duties of the Chairperson in their absence.
- C. SECRETARY / STAFF SUPPORT – Administrative staff shall provide clerical and administrative support.

ARTICLE 4. MEETINGS AND PROCEDURES

- A. REGULAR MEETINGS
The Commission shall establish a regular meeting schedule consistent with Town policy. Meetings may be held as frequently as necessary to conduct Commission business.
- B. SPECIAL MEETINGS
Special meetings may be called by the Chairperson or a majority of the members. Notice shall be provided in accordance with North Carolina Open Meetings Law.
- C. OPEN MEETINGS
All meetings shall be open to the public and conducted in accordance with applicable state law.
- D. QUORUM
A quorum shall consist of a majority of the currently appointed members.
- E. VOTING
A majority vote of members present and voting, provided a quorum exists, shall be required to take action.

F. AGENDAS AND MINUTES

Agendas shall be prepared in advance of meetings and distributed to members by email. All agendas and minutes shall be recorded and maintained at Town Hall and on the Town Website

G. ORDER OF BUSINESS

The order of business should generally follow:

- 1. Call to Order
- 2. Approval of Minutes
- 3. Business
- 4. Public Comment
- 5. Commission/Staff Comments
- 6. Adjournment

H. CONDUCT OF MEETINGS

Meetings shall be conducted in an orderly manner. The Chairperson may:

- Recognize speakers
- Set reasonable time limits
- Call for motions, discussion, or votes
- Members shall refrain from committing to positions on matters outside of a properly noticed meeting.

ARTICLE 5. ROLE, DUTIES, AND ACTIVITIES

The Appearance Commission is advisory in nature and shall not create binding obligations on behalf of the Town.

The Commission may:

- Review and make recommendations on matters affecting community appearance
- Assist in identifying beautification opportunities and priorities
- Coordinate with Town staff, boards, and community groups on appearance-related initiatives
- Support and participate in community beautification programs and projects
- Promote public awareness of aesthetic and design issues
- Assist in the development of plans, studies, or recommendations related to visual quality

The Commission may also be assigned specific projects or tasks by the Board of Commissioners or Town staff and may assist in the implementation of approved initiatives.

ARTICLE 6. PROJECTS, PROGRAMS, AND COMMITTEES

The Commission may establish committees or working groups to assist with specific programs or initiatives.

Members are encouraged to actively participate in Commission-sponsored programs and projects that enhance the Town’s visual character.

Any project, program, or activity involving Town resources or representation shall be coordinated with and approved through appropriate Town administrative processes.

ARTICLE 7. COORDINATION AND REPORTING

The Commission shall coordinate its activities with the Board of Commissioners and Town staff.

Recommendations, reports, or requests for action shall be submitted through appropriate channels, typically via Town staff, for consideration by the Board of Commissioners.

The Commission may periodically provide updates or reports on its activities, projects, and priorities.

ARTICLE 8. ETHICS AND CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Members shall:

- Avoid conflicts of interest
- Abstain from participation in matters where personal or financial interests exist
- Conduct themselves in a professional and ethical manner
- Members shall not use their position for personal gain or to advance private interests.

ARTICLE 9. ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION

Attendance and active participation are essential to the effectiveness of the Commission.

A pattern of excessive unexcused absences may be reported to the Board of Commissioners for consideration of removal or replacement, consistent with Town policy.

Members are also expected to contribute to Commission activities and initiatives.

ARTICLE 10. ANNUAL REPORT AND WORK PROGRAM

The Commission may prepare an annual summary of activities, projects, and priorities for submission to the Board of Commissioners.

The Commission may also develop a work program identifying goals and initiatives for the upcoming year.

ARTICLE 11. AMENDMENTS

These by-laws may be amended by a majority vote of the Commission, provided that proposed amendments are presented in writing at a prior meeting.

All amendments shall be consistent with applicable law and are subject to approval by the Board of Commissioners.

ARTICLE 12. EFFECTIVE DATE

These by-laws shall become effective upon approval by the Board of Commissioners.



Appearance Commission Meeting Agenda Item Submittal

Item To Be Considered: **Diagonal Parking on Front Street Consideration**

Board Meeting Date: **June 18, 2026**

Prepared By: **Alissa Fender, MMC – Town Clerk**

Overview: At the May 21, 2026, special meeting, the commission wanted to discuss at a future meeting the possibility of diagonal parking on Front Street. Details related to the option will be provided by staff.

Staff Overview: The concept had been previously explored when the street was converted to one-way traffic and at that time was determined to be not feasible. Staff confirmed that the limitation was due to the physical dimensions of the roadway. The total width of Front Street is 27 feet. State standards require parking spaces to be 18 to 20 feet in length, and Town Code requires a minimum of 10 feet of unobstructed travel lane width for single-lane vehicular movement.

Based on these requirements, the available width is insufficient to accommodate diagonal parking while maintaining the minimum travel lane. As such, diagonal parking is not a feasible option for Front Street.

Background Attachment(s): None

Recommended Action: No action needed

Action: _____



Appearance Commission Meeting Agenda Item Submittal

Item To Be Considered: **Potential Future Projects Discussion**

Board Meeting Date: **June 18, 2026**

Prepared By: **Alissa Fender MMC – Town Clerk**

Overview: A roundtable discussion and/or update will be provided on the following possible future projects.

- Saltwater Grill Landscape Enhancement
- Holiday Lights
- Solar Lights
- Signs for display on completed projects



Discussion and details related to these project will provide the framework to initiate the creation of the commissions Appearance Project Program.

Background Attachment(s): None

Recommended Action: Discuss and/or provide further direction.

Action: _____

