



The Town of Hilton Head Island
**Gullah Geechee Land & Cultural
Preservation Task Force
Meeting Minutes
February 7, 2022, 1:00 p.m.**

Present from the Task Force: Chairman Lavon Stevens, Vice Chairman Palmer E. Simmons, Ibrahim Abdul-Malik (joined at 1:07 p.m.), Tom Henz (joined at 1:20 p.m.)

Absent from the Task Force: John Campbell, Shani Green

Present from Town Council: Alex Brown, David Ames

Present from Town Staff: Chris Yates, Interim Community Development Director; Sheryse DuBose, Historic Neighborhoods Preservation Administrator; Anne Cyran, Interim Comprehensive Planning Manager; Jeff Netzing, Stormwater Manager; Teri Lewis, Deputy Community Development Director; Teresa Haley, Senior Administrative Assistant; Vicki Pfannenschmidt, Temporary Administrative Assistant

1. Call to Order

Chairman Stevens called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

2. FOIA Compliance – Public notification of this meeting has been published, posted, and distributed in compliance with the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act and the requirements of the Town of Hilton Head Island.

3. Roll Call – See as noted above.

4. Approval of Agenda

Due to a lack of quorum, Chairman Stevens tabled the approval of the agenda.

5. Approval of Minutes

a. Meeting of January 3, 2022

Due to a lack of quorum, Chairman Stevens tabled the approval of the January 3, 2022, minutes until the next meeting of the Task Force.

6. Citizen Comments

Public comments concerning agenda items were submitted electronically via the Open Town Hall HHI portal. The comments were provided to the Task Force for review and made part of the official record. Citizens were provided the option to sign up for public comment participation during the meeting by phone. There were no requests to participate during the meeting by phone.

7. Discussion Items

a. Update of the Gullah Geechee Cultural Preservation Report Top 16 Priority Projects

Dr. Dubose stated a presentation regarding the update was given at the January 18, 2022, Town Council Meeting. She referenced the report was included in the Task Force meeting packet as well as posted on the Town's website for public viewing. She reported that establishing Family Compound/Family Subdivision amendments, fast-tracking completed applications, and promoting the Heritage Library, and establishing the Historic Neighborhoods Permitting and Design Studio have reached completion since the update in October of 2021, which makes 9 out of 16 priorities complete. She said the additional research required for the proposed Historic Neighborhoods Preservation Overlay District will be conducted in coordination with the Island Capacity Study. She introduced Anne Cyran to elaborate on the Island Capacity Study.

Ms. Cyran referenced PP-4 of the report stating the Public Planning Committee requested additional research and revisions to the draft ordinance related to the proposed density increase, proposed land uses, and home occupations. She explained that when staff considered the plan for the research and bringing it back to the Public Planning Committee for review, it made sense to incorporate it into the Island Capacity Baseline Assessment. Ms. Cyran added that it is part of the Strategic Plan and staff is at the beginning phase of that initiative at this time. She said the information gathered in the assessment will guide staff in recommendations for the overlay district. Ms. Cyran reviewed the timeline for the initiative. She stated the path moving forward will dovetail with the existing work program and will be able to provide more details and specific dates when the initiative is underway. She noted additional information will be gathered as part of the capacity assessment on all factors of development on the Island and infrastructure. Ms. Cyran stated some of the information that will be gathered can make decisions outside of the overlay district but can also guide future decisions about investment in the Historic Neighborhoods regarding all sorts of infrastructure improvements, including stormwater.

Dr. Dubose thanked Ms. Cyran for her update. She noted that in reference to CP-14 the air market will be underway when NIBCAA hires the community liaison to run the market. She stated when that occurs staff will present the market plan and proposed location of the market to the Community Services and Public Safety Committee. She reported that in reference to CP-7, when staff receives direction as to when to proceed, employee orientation will be scheduled. Dr. DuBose informed the Task Force that in reference to HP-14, staff is investigating options regarding the establishment of a fund for clearing property titles. She added that new amendments need drafted for PP-14, to make sure the Temporary and Seasonal Signs program is in compliance with the sign ordinance and when completed staff will work with NIBCAA regarding distribution of the signs. Dr. DuBose stated staff will continue to investigate the possibility of opening a Center for Heirs' Property and Preservation on the Island and work on establishing alternatives for satellites for clearing property titles. She added that staff will also explore the possibilities and opportunities for creating the fund for delinquent taxes and making the public aware of the resources currently in place.

Members of the Task Force and Dr. DuBose discussed the project at length and the following items were discussed: inquiry as to the timeline for the overlay district; confirmation the estimated timeline for will be Fall or Winter of 2022; confirmation that stakeholders will be included in the gathering of information for the overlay district; encouragement for communication regarding restricted development; suggestion that PP-6 needs adjusted; the need for site design flexibility outside of Family Compounds/Family Subdivisions; inquiry into the number of residents utilizing the Permitting and Site Design Studio; discussion regarding outreach into the community and building relationships; confirmation resources are listed on the Town website; suggestion of holding a conference to bring parties together to share information and gain insight into creating a source of funding for delinquent taxes; discussion regarding the location of the open air market and the involvement of NIBCAA in hiring someone to run the market; and staff clarification that the creation of family compounds and family subdivisions do not clear heirs properties.

b. Stormwater Management

Jeff Netzinger gave a detailed presentation regarding stormwater management. He described what the stormwater utility is. Mr. Netzinger explained it was formed in collaboration with communities within Beaufort County and a stormwater utility fee was created for a revenue source to address issues regarding drainage. He said it was formed in 2001 with Beaufort County administering the fund. He added that funds collected are reimbursed to the entities that participate. He reviewed the fee structure and how it is determined. At the conclusion of his presentation, he asked for questions.

Members of the Task Force and Dr. DuBose discussed the project at length and the following items were discussed: clarification that the fee is included in the County tax bill but is not a tax; review of the fee structure; confirmation the majority of fees come from commercial properties; how the level of priority is determined; reiteration that people need to report when there are problems so staff can assess; explanation of the notification process; review of the areas that do not qualify for services; confirmation that private communities maintain their systems and the Town does corrective maintenance when needed; the impact of new development on the drainage systems; the need for consideration of drainage issues when developing the historic overlay district; the need to get more comprehensive and complete knowledge of easement acquired and needed for access to repair; and confirmation that when road improvements are done drainage is also addressed.

Mr. Netzinger closed with emphasizing that staff needs to be contacted when problems arise regarding drainage. Chairman Stevens thanked Mr. Netzinger for his presentation.

8. Staff Report

Dr. Dubose reviewed upcoming events planned throughout the community:

Heritage Library in collaboration with the Town is to give two Heirs' Property Workshops on February 15, 2022, from 5-7 at Queen Chapel AME Church and on February 19, 2022, from 10-12 at the Coastal Discovery Museum.

A drive-through wills clinic, sponsor by the Links, Inc. will be given on March 12, 2022, at Queen Chapel AME Church. You must call and schedule an appointment prior to the event.

All throughout the month of February there are Gullah Celebration events. A list of those events in on the Gullah Celebration and NIBCAA websites.

Dr. DuBose also reported that a Fire in the Streets event was held on February 12, 2022, on Chisholm Place and in the areas on and near Jessica Drive. She stated that Fire Rescue was able to update smoke alarms in most of the homes and for those that were not home an information package was left on their door. She stated reflective address number were place for all the homes on the street. She added that on Jessica drive smoke alarms were updated in a few homes and information packets were left on the remainder of homes with contact information in case they want their alarms updated at a later date.

Dr. DuBose informed the Task Force that as a result of the 2020 Census, State legislature and Congressional district lines need to be redrawn. She referenced information sent to the Task regarding the redistricting meetings and encouraged them to share the information with the community.

9. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 3:27 p.m.

Submitted by: Vicki Pfannenschmidt, Secretary

Approved: March 7, 2022