

**TOWN OF HILTON HEAD ISLAND  
Public Planning Committee  
Special Meeting**

**Friday, February 12, 2016  
10:00a.m. – Benjamin M. Racusin Council Chambers**

Committee Members Present: Chairman Tom Lennox, Kim Likins, John McCann, Lee Edwards

Committee Members Absent: None

Town Council Present: Mayor David Bennett, Mayor Pro Tem Bill Harkins

Town Staff Present: Jill Foster, Deputy CD Director; Eileen Wilson, Administrative Assistant

**1. Call to Order**

**2. Freedom of Information Act Compliance**

Public notification of this meeting has been published and posted in compliance with the Freedom of Information Act and Town of Hilton Head Island requirements.

**3. New Business**

a. **Wrap Up by Steven Ames, Consultant, on Visioning Process**

Mr. Steven Ames, of Steven Ames Consulting, described the past 2 ½ days, which included 14 meetings and over 60 people for interviews. Many of the people he interviewed stated that Hilton Head Island is very unique because of its people, and he agreed with that finding. Mr. Ames emphasized that we are living in a time of change, so we need to plan for it, and preserve what we have. The challenge is change to accommodate what we don't have and preserve what we want to keep. He emphasized we need to look long term in this effort, but include both long term and short term strategies.

Mr. Ames supports the process of community planning by engaging all groups in the community to participate in order to capture broad-based input. To do this, he suggests meeting with them in their own neighborhoods. The Town should take stock of changes since our original development and look at the larger context (mainland relationship, economic impact of Jasper County Port, needs of our work force, lack of affordable housing). The Town should make a decision to either building on what we have done for visioning; start over with a new visioning process; or take an assessment phase with all stakeholders. Then the Town can determine how to do the process. Mr. Ames recommended the first: build on what has been done for visioning.

He indicated he will draft a memo for Town Council that details his findings.

Council members asked questions of Mr. Ames:

- Should the Town stop major projects until the Visioning process is completed? Mr. Ames suggested the Council consider holding off on some projects, such as the Comprehensive Plan Update, to allow Council to provide more specific decisions based on the Visioning process. He indicated that all essential functions should continue. He emphasized the need to seek public priorities in the Visioning process, and capture input from the younger generations and non-vocal residents. He mentioned technology and social media should be used for input (Facebook, etc.), and we should discuss how it currently is being used as well as how to plan for future technology that has not been invented, released or made widely available.
- What are the next steps? Mr. Ames indicated his forthcoming memo will touch on that, but emphasized the need to touch base with all stakeholders. Our branding, or marketing of the process, should be considered to encourage people to participate. He also described ways to involve middle school children in the Visioning process.
- What are the pitfalls? Mr. Ames said the biggest mistake other communities do is regress back to the way it was always done after the Visioning process is completed. The Town has to make the effort meaningful to the public to ensure their continued participation and interest.

Public comment included the need to go back to previous efforts to utilize them; include religious institutions in the Visioning process; the need to change public's attitudes; our ability and need to promote our educational system as a positive reason why people live here; find ways to encourage our graduating students to stay on the Island; and the need to encourage PUD residents to take interest in what is happening outside their gated communities.

Mr. Ames concluded the discussion by stating his goal is to finish the memo for the March 3<sup>rd</sup> Town Council meeting.

#### **4. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 11:10 a.m.

Submitted By:

Approved By: March 3, 2016

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Jill Foster  
Deputy Director

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Tom Lennox  
Chairman