

TOWN OF HILTON HEAD ISLAND
Public Planning Committee Meeting
March 3, 2016
3:00p.m. – Benjamin M. Racusin Council Chambers

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

Committee Members Absent: None

Town Council Present: Bill Harkins

Town Staff Present: Charles Cousins, Director of Community Development
Shawn Colin, Deputy Director of Community Development
Teri Lewis, LMO Official
Jill Foster, Deputy Director of Community Development
Teresa Haley, Secretary

1. Call to Order

2. Freedom of Information Act Compliance

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

3. Approval of Agenda

The Public Planning Committee **approved** the agenda as submitted by general consent.

4. Approval of Regular Meeting Minutes – November 12, 2015

The minutes of the Regular Public Planning Committee Meeting held on November 12, 2015 were **approved** as submitted by general consent.

5. Approval of Special Meeting Minutes – February 10, 2016

The minutes of the Special Public Planning Committee Meeting held on February 10, 2016 were **approved** as submitted by general consent.

6. Approval of Special Meeting Minutes – February 11, 2016

The minutes of the Special Public Planning Committee Meeting held on February 11, 2016 were **approved** as submitted by general consent.

7. Approval of Special Meeting Minutes – February 12, 2016

The minutes of the Special Public Planning Committee Meeting held on February 12, 2016 were **approved** as submitted by general consent.

8. New Business

a) Discussion of Steven Ames Memo on Visioning Process

Chairman Lennox presented a brief summary of the memorandum (“Memo”) submitted by Steven Ames (“Consultant”) as to the findings and recommendations on how the Town might proceed on its Visioning Process. Chairman Lennox indicated that today’s meeting will

involve a preliminary discussion of the Memo and the Key Design Elements (“Elements”) described therein; and further meeting(s) will be held to make recommendations.

Chairman Lennox stated the following three possible options previously identified by the Committee and Town leaders in proceeding with a visioning process for the Town: 1) continue using all existing efforts as a collective guide to the Town’s future; 2) setting existing efforts aside to conduct a completely new, clean-slate planning or visioning exercise; or 3) using existing efforts as a foundation for a comprehensive visioning process that builds on their outputs, but also develops fresh information, insights and community consensus on future directions for the Town. “Option 3” is the preferred course by the Committee, with which the Consultant recommends.

Chairman Lennox described the Consultant’s site visits to and around the Town of Hilton Head Island; his conversations with Mayor David Bennett, the individual members of the Committee, public meetings and in-depth focus group-style meetings with representatives of key Island stakeholder groups and the at-large community stakeholders. Collectively, the feedback from these meetings is viewed as highly consistent with “Option 3.”

Chairman Lennox discussed the Consultant’s assessment as to past Town visioning efforts and their continued use. The Consultant recommended that the Town conduct a “gap analysis” on previously performed planning efforts which include: 1) the Town’s Comprehensive Plan (2012), 2) the Mayor’s Task Force on the Island’s Future – Vision 2025 (2010), and 3) the Hilton Head Island Vision 2030. The Consultant recommended these documents be made available to the public, to which the Committee agreed and further recommended these meetings be televised. Staff will work with the Committee to undertake the “gap analysis”.

The Chairman stated that the Consultant offered a broad framework for the Town’s consideration, which covered a number of Elements for the visioning process and provided a range of options for each Element. The Chairman introduced twelve Elements, and the options and recommendations provided by the Consultant (as further described in the Memo). The Chairman shared further discussions and clarifications with the Consultant regarding the Memo and each Element as follows:

- **Project Ownership: What entity/entities should own/lead the planning process?**
Options:
 - A town-led/owned process;
(Comments from Committee included this choice relies solely on Town resources, i.e., Public Planning Committee, Planning Commission, and Staff; has the most pressure on Staff; is the fastest process).
 - A town-led/community-owned process (partnering with other public/private/civic sponsors);
(Comments from Committee included this was the most effective and inclusive).
 - A process led/owned by a public/private/civic consortium, of which the Town is one of many partners.
(Committee comments included the Town is only a member with less input in this choice; it is a slower process).

- **Project Funding: What entity/entities should fund the planning process?**
Options:
 - A Town-only funded process;
(Committee comments included the Town absorbs all costs with this choice).
 - A Town and other public-private-civic organization-funded process.
(Committee comments included the Town gains funding; has a loss of control; possible “pay to play” sponsorship; has potential partners.)

- **Project Consulting Assistance: What type of arrangement should be used to secure professional/technical assistance for the planning process?**
Options:
 - Staff-driven/no outside consulting assistance;
(Committee comments included that Staff might lack expertise; and there is no strategic guidance).
 - Targeted consulting assistance;
(Committee comments included this choice has the most Town input with guidance; better control; and has majority Staff work).
 - Comprehensive consulting assistance (turnkey project).
(Committee comments included this choice is generic; lacks community connection; has a loss of control; highest cost).

- **Project Staffing: How should the project be managed on a day-to-day basis?**
Options:
 - Town staff;
(Committee comments included this choice has excessive commitment of Town Staff time).
 - Contract project coordinator working closely with the Town;
(Committee comments included that Staff would contract/contact project coordinator as-needed).
 - Outside contract project coordinator working on their own.
(Committee comments included correct skills and experience are needed; loss of Town control).

- **Type of Engagement: Should the process rely more on “representational” or “participatory” forms of public engagement?**
Options:
 - Representational approach to generating content (e.g., steering committee, expert panel or technical advisory committee);
(Committee comments included this was overly exclusive and selective).
 - Combined representational and participatory emphasis (steering committee and community-based based engagement);
(Committee comments included the steering committee should represent key stake holders to make decisions; wide interaction brought to steering committee for analysis; “door flung wide open” style).
 - Participatory emphasis (entirely community-based engagement).
(Committee comments included that interactions/data/input never converges into action).

- **Type of Project Steering Committee: Should a project steering committee be involved in guiding the process only, in the generation of content, or both?**
Options:
 - Process-oriented steering committee;
(Committee comments included this choice drives the project; defines objectives and deadlines; consists of stakeholders, non-voting body to get consensus).
 - Process and content-oriented steering committee;
(Committee comments included this was the most manageable and efficient).
 - Content-oriented steering committee.

- **Level of Civic Engagement: How deeply should the project engage the public-at-large in the process?**
Options:
 - Streamlined public engagement process (shorter timeframe, limited engagement activities);
(Committee comments included this limited community involvement and confidence).
 - Targeted public engagement process (medium timeframe, selected but complementary range of engagement activities);
(Committee comments included this provided better timeline and cost control; must educate the public that forums involve no decision-making, but rather are to share ideas, relate to each other and teach about the different components of the Island; annual celebration event used to define expectations and recognize accomplishments).
 - Comprehensive public engagement process (longer timeframe, full range of engagement activities).

- **Scope of Content: What should be the scope and breadth of the content of the visioning process and its outcomes (i.e., a vision and plan)?**
Options:
 - Narrow content focus (i.e., growth, development/redevelopment, environmental stewardship);
 - Broad, whole-of-community content focus with growth, development/redevelopment, environmental stewardship as a central element of the inquiry;
(Committee comment indicated this could give direction to the Comprehensive Plan).
 - Broad whole-of-community focus without a central element.

- **Local/Regional Focus: How local or regional should the focus of a visioning process be?**
Options:
 - Town/Island-centric focus;
(Committee comments included this was unrealistic and narrow approach).
 - Town/Island-centric focus with an element focused on future regional relationships;
(such as with Bluffton, Beaufort, County, Jasper Port, Okatie).
 - Completely regional centric focus.
(Committee comments included the possibility of the Town getting lost in the process).

- **Plan Ownership: Who will be the ultimate “owner” of an Island “Vision Action Plan”?**
Options:

- Town Vision Action Plan;
(Committee comments included no sense of community participation or ownership; potential community resistance).
- Shared Town and Community Partners Vision Action Plan.
(such as USCB, GIC, County, Chamber of Commerce, Community Foundation).
- **Project Branding/Marketing: How thoroughly should the visioning process be branded and marketed?**
Options:
 - “Good Branding/Marketing (Project Brand/Logo, PSAs);
 - “Better” Branding/Marketing (Project Brand/Logo, PSAs, Communications Plan, Community Outreach)
 - “Best” Branding/Marketing (Project Brand/Logo, PSAs, Communications Plan, Community Outreach, Webpage/Social Media, Community Events and Activities).
- **Project Timeline/Cost: How much should be invested in the visioning process in terms of time and cost?**
Options:
 - Abbreviated timeline and minimal cost;
 - Expanded timeline and moderate cost;
 - Extended timeline and significant cost.
(Mr. Lennox indicated that the Consultant estimated 3 months behind closed doors to plan the project, obtain committees, and build the structure of the process. The Consultant recommended to take a pause in the process for adjustments and transitioning. In the Consultant’s experience, budgeting will require assumptions and estimates, but expenses should be moderate compared to the most comprehensive municipal visioning efforts.)

Chairman Lennox further expressed the overall need for further discussions and clarifications on the Elements prior to the Committee making any recommendations.

Chairman Lennox opened the meeting for public comment. Comments revolved around how the public is to participate in the process; the cost of the undertaking; possible partnerships; updating the Town brand; potential neighborhood meetings during the process; purpose and expectations of the steering committee; and possible financial contributions from the community.

9. Committee Business – None

10. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 4:37 p.m.

Submitted By:

Approved By: March 17, 2016

Teresa Haley
Secretary

Tom Lennox
Chairman