

**TOWN OF HILTON HEAD ISLAND**  
**Public Planning Committee**  
**Special Meeting**  
**Thursday, February 11, 2016**  
**4:00p.m. – Benjamin M. Racusin Council Chambers**

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

Committee Members Absent: None

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

Town Staff Present: Greg DeLoach, Brian Hulbert, Jill Foster, Susan Simmons,  
Melissa Cope

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**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 the Town of Hilton Head Island requirements.

**3. New Business**

**Presentation by Steven Ames, Consultant, on Visioning Process**

Chairman Lennox announced that this special meeting is to discuss visioning and master planning. He thanked the following Town staff for facilitating and arranging over 12 meetings for 2.5 days involving nearly 60 people: Jill Foster, Tom Fultz, and Lynn Buchman.

Chairman Lennox explained the history of this effort by referring to one of the 2016 Town Council priorities: Create and establish a method by which the Town can vision and master plan for the Island. He indicated that in the last 7 years, the Town revised and updated the Comprehensive Plan; created Vision 2025 (completed by the Mayor's Task Force), and created Hilton Head Vision 2030, which is a document produced by the Mayor and Town Council two years ago. The goals of each of these documents and efforts were somewhat different. The Comprehensive Plan's goal was to create a guide tool for community leaders to strengthen and preserve the Town structure, culture, image and unique sense of place for residents and visitors. The goal of Vision 2025 was to develop core values, vision and key strategies using public input. The goal for Vision 2030 was to create a vision and its guiding principles. The process or methodologies in these past efforts differed somewhat. In the Comprehensive Plan, it critically examined the Island's environment, assets, capabilities, economic engines, images and values. The process for Vision 2025 was to distill hundreds of ideas offered by Island residents, community leaders, workshop participants, and task force members and the many ideas included in the Comprehensive Plan into a short list of priority recommendations having the biggest impact. In Vision 2030, the Mayor and Town Council discussed and defined the long term direction for the Town.

Chairman Lennox explained that it is this Committee's task to determine the answer to one of three questions:

- Should we take what we have and use it or move forward and do nothing?
- Should we abandon what I called a mountain of data and start over anew?
- Should we do some of both?

Meetings held in October and November, 2015, focused on discussions of this Committee and public input and it was decided that the input, discussions, conclusions of the data previously compiled was too valuable to abandon. It was concluded that the Committee needed assistance, as there is a disconnect between those 3 visions and the execution of the strategies and tactics. Someone with experience in municipal planning was identified to assist in formulating a path forward to ensure any visioning done in the future never disconnects from the execution.

Chairman Lennox introduced Mr. Steven Ames, of Steven Ames Consulting. He is described as an architect of public process and is nationally recognized for his work in community planning. His assignment is to define the process and make recommendations going forward. Chairman Lennox emphasized that the Town is not engaging in visioning this week, but rather, in defining what the Town can do going forward in the effort of visioning. By using the discussions and input from selected community leaders over the past two days, Mr. Ames will draw a conclusion and make a recommendation. Specifically we want to answer the questions: How do we get it right? Can we define the purpose? Can we clearly define our objectives? How do we involve the community? How do we gather input? Is all input created equal? How is our existing work to be used? What facilitation method should we use? How are the results and finished product communicated to the community? How do we define the process setting goals, objectives, strategies and tactics, to include and determine accountability and the appropriate method of measurement?

Mr. Steven Ames reiterated that he is to assess options for going forward for planning in a visionary way. He indicated that every community has to decide how it wants to think about and plan for the future, and that a good Vision will reflect our values. During the week, he covered the following three topics:

- Change in vision – be more visionary
- Visioning case study
- Lessons learned.

Mr. Ames indicated that visioning brings communities together, and can promote partnerships and foster new leadership. He stated that he will concentrate on five driving questions:

- Where are we now? – community profile
- Where are we going? – trends analysis, driving forces
- Where do we want to be? – vision statement
- How do we get there? – strategic action plan
- How do we know we are getting there? – targets, measures

**At 5:00 p.m. Mr. Lennox opened the meeting for public comment.**

Questions, comments, and concerns to Mr. Steven Ames were:

- An unfriendly culture from drivers toward bicycles and pedestrians.
- Residents behind plantation gates typically do not concern themselves with what is happening outside their gates and they need to get involved and active in issues.
- We should leave a legacy.
- The vision should have lasting power.
- Our government must have more transparency, accountability and full communication.
- Golf courses are a diminishing force; Hilton Head Island has outgrown what it was.
- We need a transportation system that can handle the traffic.
- The Island is a great family place.
- We need to have a full time government, not a manager-council form.
- There is a tremendous amount of heritage on the Island that should be marketed and preserved.
- We should identify our economic engine that will drive this community besides tourism.
- We are a group of neighborhoods disconnected from each other; we need a community spirit.
- Tourism and its effect on the Town should be taken into consideration in the plan.
- Arts and culture should be included in the vision.
- The visioning process must reach out to the various demographics and have a plan that is truly encompassing of the community, including a way to connect with young families.
- The process should include the Chamber of Commerce Junior Leadership class and get their vision of what they want to see in the future.
- We need to find ways to encourage graduating students to stay on the Island.
- Ensure the vision is fluid enough to take in changing attitudes over the years.

Mr. Steven Ames' final comments included endorsing a broad community conversation to connect with people where they live and to figure out how to connect all these different communities across boundaries, and design a process to fit our community. The Vision and Plan should attach strategic actions to be a living plan that gets renewed and refreshed, evolving over time.

Mr. Lennox thanked everyone for their participation. He indicated that Mr. Ames will submit a memo with his findings and that it will be put on the March 3, 2016 Public Planning Committee agenda for discussion.

#### **4. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 6:03 p.m.

Submitted By:

Approved By: March 3, 2016

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Eileen Wilson, Sr. Administrative Assistant

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Tom Lennox, Chairman