



**Town of Hilton Head Island
Gullah-Geechee Land & Cultural
Preservation Task Force Meeting**

Monday, November 5, 2018 - 1:00p.m.

Benjamin M. Racusin Council Chambers

AGENDA

As a Courtesy to Others Please Turn Off All Cell Phones and Pagers during the Meeting.

- 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**
- 4. Acceptance of Meeting Minutes** – September 25, 2018 Special Meeting & October 1, 2018 Meeting
- 5. Unfinished Business**
 - a) Resource Center Update
 - b) Heirs' Property Identification Progress
 - c) Gullah-Geechee Culture Preservation Project Update
 - d) Historic Neighborhoods Preservation Administrator Update
- 6. New Business**
 - a) 2019 Meeting Schedule
- 7. Appearance by Citizens on Items Unrelated to Today's Agenda**
- 8. Adjournment**

Please note that a quorum of Town Council may result if four or more of their members attend this meeting.

Please note that a quorum of Planning Commission may result if five or more of their members attend this meeting.

Gullah-Geechee Land and Cultural Preservation Task Force
Gullah-Geechee Culture Preservation Consultant Kick-Off Meeting

September 25, 2018 – 2:00 PM

Palmetto Electric – 111 Mathews Drive

Task Force Members present: Lavon Stevens, Joyce Wright, Martha Davis, Palmer Simmons, Caroline McVitty, Todd Theodore, Ibrahim Abdul-Malik

Town Council present: Kim Likins, Marc Grant

Town Staff present: Jayme Lopko, Jennifer Ray, Jenn McEwen

- Chairman Stevens called the meeting to order at 2:06 PM.
- The agenda for today's meeting was approved by consent.
- Chairman Stevens gave opening remarks on the purpose of the meeting and then turned things over to the consultant team. Phil Walker of The Walker Collaborative introduced himself and went through a presentation detailing the Gullah-Geechee Culture Preservation Project. Victoria Smalls and Craig Richardson, who are also part of the consultant team, introduced themselves and went through part of the presentation.
- Following the presentation, the Task Force members were given an opportunity to comment on the Project. The Task Force commented on and discussed the following issues: losing Gullah land following a disaster – how to address this, how much time will be spent on each of the three topics – heirs property, culture preservation, and public policy, tapping into existing resources like the Gullah-Geechee Culture Heritage Corridor Management Plan, balancing preservation and development, legal challenges to the specific culture, culture is tied to the land not the people, there is not a one size fits all solution, past consultants and plans adopted by the Town, we need to look to the past and not repeat it, how will this effort be different from the past, implementation timing, economic opportunities for the Gullah community across the board, current plans just sit on a shelf – provide tools for Town to implement, suggest a matrix at the back of the report to work through implementation, the answer to the trust concern is a transparent process – trust can be earned through and engaged process and giving them ownership in project, and Hilton Head Island is unique – we may not know the answer but we know what it is not.
- Chairman Stevens opened the meeting for public comment and the following were received: US278 is the only way on and off the island, need to balance preserving land and culture with transportation needs, Town needs a communication plan with the community, other studies had recommendations but no implementation plan – crucial that this process and plan have implementation – differentiate this plan from other, communicate small successes, let community know they have been heard, projects lack execution – build measurements at the end of this plan – key to success is in execution, economic development for land – don't see if just see Town buying up the land, Town bought old Gullah Market – can we get it back? – can Town create a market, need interpretation of public art along with being able to get to it and touch it, and there is a disconnect between the Fraser vision and the Gullah culture – need to bridge the disconnect.
- Chairman Stevens adjourned the meeting at 3:23 PM.

Submitted by: Jayme Lopko

Meeting date: September 25, 2018

Gullah-Geechee Land and Cultural Preservation Task Force

Meeting Minutes

October 1, 2018 – 1:00 PM

Council Chambers – Town Hall

Task Force Members present: Lavon Stevens, Shani Green, Joyce Wright, Martha Davis, Caroline McVitty

Town Council present: David Bennett

Town Staff present: Jayme Lopko, Jennifer Ray, Carolyn Grant, Shawn Colin, Angie Stone, Josh Gruber

- Chairman Stevens called the meeting to order at 1:04 PM.
- The agenda for today's meeting and the minutes from the August 20, 2018 meeting were approved by consent.
- Joyce Wright gave an update on the Gullah Resource Center. A draft of the proposed content of the Gullah Resource webpage was sent via email to the Task Force. Task Force members were asked to review this information and provide any changes/additions to Joyce or Carolyn Grant.
- There is no update on the heirs' property identification. The Task Force discussed a timeline for completing this.
- Jayme Lopko updated the Task Force on the progress of the Gullah-Geechee Culture Preservation Project and discussed the recent visit from The Walker Collaborative team. The Task Force and the public discussed and commented on the following topics from the first visit of the consultant team: scope of the project, resolution of old issues/history, implementing some of what has already been recommended, cannot have culture without land, heirs' property resolution is limited and labor intensive – legal issues, getting feedback from consultant team on key issues based on what they heard, community trust issue, Task Force helping gather information for case studies one-on one, heirs' property identification important and should set a goal of getting one neighborhood done before consultant returns, communication of what Task Force is doing important, some may not have understood their role in stakeholder meetings, time of stakeholder meetings may have impacted ability to participate, implementation concerns – how will this be different, US 278 widening impact on Stoney community – how much is enough, consultant team did not show an understanding of heirs property – seemed unprepared, Gullah culture existed before the Town and the Town infringed on that with rules – this needs to be studied and understood, Town provided a list of materials for the consultant, property taxes go up based on development – need to communicate ways to assist community with taxes, need clear communication with the community and what to expect at the end game, consultant should study the history of the Island all the way back to was to understand how we got here, and no landscape medians in US 278 in Stoney and Chaplin – Gullah continue to be overlooked.
- Angie Stone, the Town's Human Resources Director, updated the Task Force on the Gullah Liaison Job Description. Ms. Stone gave a brief history of how the position came to be and how the job description has evolved. After discussion on the timeline for filling the position, Chairman Stevens asked for a motion from the Task Force. Caroline McVitty made a motion that as a Task Force we support the position now titled Historic Neighborhoods Preservation Administrator, which would allow staff to move forward to advertise the position to fill it. Martha Davis seconded the motion and the motion passed by a vote of 4-1-0.
- Chairman Stevens opened the meeting for public comment on items unrelated to today's agenda and the following was received:

- Shani Green commented that she is excited about the Historic Gullah Neighborhoods signs going up around the island.
- Chairman Stevens adjourned the meeting at 2:41 PM.

Submitted by: Jayme Lopko
Meeting date: October 1, 2018

DRAFT

**Gullah-Geechee Land and Cultural Preservation Task Force
Proposed 2019 Meeting Schedule**

DATE	TIME	LOCATION
January 7	1:00 PM	Council Chambers
February 4	1:00 PM	Council Chambers
February 18	5:30 PM	Council Chambers
March 4	1:00 PM	Council Chambers
March 18	5:30 PM	Council Chambers
April 1	1:00 PM	Council Chambers
April 15	5:30 PM	Council Chambers
May 6	1:00 PM	Council Chambers
May 20	5:30 PM	Council Chambers
June 3	1:00 PM	Council Chambers
June 17	5:30 PM	Council Chambers
July 1	1:00 PM	Council Chambers
July 15	5:30 PM	Council Chambers
August 5	1:00 PM	Council Chambers
August 19	5:30 PM	Council Chambers
September 16	5:30 PM	Council Chambers
October 7	1:00 PM	Council Chambers
October 21	5:30 PM	Council Chambers
November 4	1:00 PM	Council Chambers
November 18	5:30 PM	Council Chambers
December 2	1:00 PM	Council Chambers
December 16	5:30 PM	Council Chambers

*No Meeting on January 21 or September 2 due to holidays.