



Town of Hilton Head Island

Gullah Geechee Land & Cultural Preservation Task Force Meeting

Monday, June 6, 2022, 1:00 p.m.

AGENDA

The Gullah Geechee Land & Cultural Preservation Task Force meeting will be held in-person at Town Hall in the Benjamin M. Racusin Council Chambers.

1. Call to Order

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

4. Approval of Agenda

5. Approval of Minutes

a. Regular Meeting of March 7, 2022

b. Regular Meeting of May 2, 2022

6. Appearance by Citizens

Citizens may submit written comments via the [Town's Open Town Hall Portal](#). The portal will close at 4:30 p.m. on Friday, June 3, 2022. Comments submitted through the portal will be provided to the Task Force and made part of the official record.

7. Discussion Items

a. Draft Gullah History and Cultural Education Program for Town Employees and Officials – Recommendation requested

b. Property Development Challenges in the Historic Neighborhoods – Continued discussion

c. Status of the Gullah Geechee Report 16 Top Priority Recommendations

d. Update on Historic Neighborhoods Overlay District

8. Staff Report

9. Adjournment

Please note that a quorum of Town Council may result if four (4) or more of their members attend this meeting.

Please note that a quorum of the Planning Commission may result if five (5) or more of their members attend this meeting.



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

Present from the Task Force: Chairman Lavon Stevens, Vice Chairman Palmer E. Simmons (Joined at 1:15 p.m.), Ibrahim Abdul-Malik, Tom Henz, John Campbell, Shani Green

Absent from the Task Force: None

Present from Town Council: Alex Brown, David Ames, Tamara Becker

Present from Town Staff: Josh Gruber, Deputy Town Manager; Sheryse DuBose, Historic Neighborhoods Preservation Administrator; Anne Cyran, Interim Comprehensive Planning Manager; Teresa Haley, Senior Administrative Assistant

1. Call to Order

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

Chairman Stevens informed the Task Force that Jayme Lopko, Senior Planner for the Town will be leaving the Town for another job opportunity. He acknowledged her hard work and efforts working for the Town and the Task Force. He applauded her expertise and professionalism in working on many projects. Chairman Stevens asked that Ms. Lopko attend the next meeting of the Task Force as they would like to recognize her and thank her for her service.

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

Chairman Stevens asked for a motion to approve the agenda as presented. Mr. Abdul-Malik moved to approve. Mr. Campbell seconded. By way of roll call, the motion passed by a vote of 5-0-0.

5. Approval of Minutes

a. Meeting of January 3, 2022

Chairman Stevens asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the January 3, 2022, regular meeting. Mr. Abdul-Malik moved to approve. Mr. Henz seconded. By way of roll call, the motion passed by a vote of 5-0-0.

b. Meeting of February 7, 2022

Chairman Stevens asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the February 7, 2022, regular meeting. Mr. Abdul-Malik moved to approve. Mr. Campbell seconded. By way of roll call, the motion passed by a vote of 5-0-0.

6. Citizen Comments

Public comments concerning agenda items were submitted electronically via the Open Town Hall HHI portal. There were no comments of 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. Historic Stoney Neighborhood Economic Development Corporation

Mr. Josh Gruber explained that at the meeting of February 15, 2022, Town Council reviewed the possibility of creating a Historic Stoney Neighborhood Economic Development Corporation. He noted the item was identified in the Strategic Action Plan and development of the Corporation was originally earmarked for FY23. He said due to some information received and potential opportunities the item has been accelerated. He explained that a resolution was introduced and when approved would authorize staff to begin the process that is necessary to create a separate non-profit entity. Mr. Gruber stated the mission would be to assist property owners, businesses, and other people within the Stoney Neighborhood Community. He outlined the following areas of focus for the Corporation once created:

- Promotion of Cultural Resources and Protection of Cultural Assets
- Neighborhood Sustainability Quality of Life Enhancements
- Entrepreneurialism
- Business Attraction, Expansion, and Retention
- Land Planning/Development
- Assistance Providing Financial Opportunities

Mr. Gruber explained the items go beyond what would be thought of as traditional functions of an economic development corporation. He said that following the adoption of the resolution they have begun calling it a Community Development Corporation. He detailed the steps that need to be taken to complete the process and bring it back to Town Council for review and consideration of approval. He said that if it is approved, a board will be created to oversee the corporation.

Members of the Task Force and Mr. Gruber discussed the corporation at length and the following items were discussed: the benefits of the corporation for Native Islanders; the creation of new economic opportunities; expectations and goals of the organization; discussion of representatives and number of people that would make up the board; the need for professionals to be a part of the board; the need for Gullah and community representation; discussion regarding the focus of the group; the need to create a business plan for the corporation; the need for input from the community and Task Force; the need to define the by-laws; the need to identify individuals interested in the corporation; the need to build a business plan; inquiry as to the number of businesses currently in the Historic Stoney Neighborhood; the need for local individuals or those with knowledge of

the culture to be on the board; the need to identify and enhance the existing businesses and assist them in thriving; clarification the initial focus will be on the Historic Stoney Neighborhood but the scope will enlarge to cover other neighborhoods as well; the need to make the public aware of the proposed corporation; and encouragement for those that are interested or know someone that would be interested in being on the board to contact Dr. DuBose or Mr. Gruber.

Chairman Stevens thanked Mr. Gruber for the update and stated the Task Force looks forward to him returning with an update. He encouraged members of the Task Force to reach out to Dr. DuBose or Mr. Gruber if they have any additional questions or suggestions regarding membership of the proposed board.

8. Staff Report

Dr. DuBose provided an update regarding the Historic Overlay District stating the work on the District will resume once the Island-Wide Capacity Trends and Assessment has been completed. She stated staff has begun meeting with the consultant to discuss aspects the study needs to address. She said the Task Force will be updated as the study progresses. Dr. DuBose added that the framework of the proposed Overlay will be reworked to address some of the needs of the property owners in Historic Neighborhoods. She stated the Historic Neighborhoods Permitting and Design Studio helps focus on immediate concerns which helps deal with challenges owners' face, with anticipation the Overlay District will address those challenges.

Dr. DuBose informed the Task Force that Links, Inc., is working with the Center for Heirs Property Preservation and there will be a drive through Wills Clinic held on March 12, 2022, at Queens Chapel AME and reviewed the details for participation.

Dr. DuBose reported on two community education programs which were held in February. She stated there was positive feedback and it was a great way to share the services that are provided by the Heritage Library Genealogy Clinic.

Dr. DuBose informed the Task Force there is an Heirs Property Forestry Seminar being held on March 29, 2022, at Oscar Frazier Park in Bluffton. She stated a flier had been distributed to the Task Force and encouraged them to distribute the information, noting the need for at least 25 participants for the event to take place.

Dr. DuBose stated that Palmetto Breeze is looking into expanding services to the airport and other areas and looking for community input. She referenced the survey distributed to the Task Force and encouraged the Task Force to complete the survey and share it with others to complete as well.

9. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 1:46 p.m.

Submitted by: Vicki Pfannenschmidt, Secretary

Approved: [DATE]



The Town of Hilton Head Island
**Gullah Geechee Land & Cultural
Preservation Task Force**
Meeting Minutes
May 2, 2022, 1:00 p.m.

Present from the Task Force: Chairman Lavon Stevens, Vice Chairman Palmer E. Simmons, Tom Henz, John Campbell (joined at 1:18 p.m.)

Absent from the Task Force: Ibrahim Abdul-Malik (excused), Shani Green (excused)

Present from Town Council: Alex Brown, Tamara Becker

Present from Town Staff: Sheryse DuBose, Historic Neighborhoods Preservation Administrator; Anne Cyran, Interim Comprehensive Planning Manager; Karen Knox, Senior 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

As there was not a quorum, no vote was taken.

5. Approval of Minutes

a. Meeting of March 7, 2022

As there was not a quorum, Chairman Stevens tabled the minutes to the next scheduled meeting.

6. Appearance by Citizens

Public comments concerning agenda items were submitted electronically via the Open Town Hall HHI portal. There were no comments of record.

7. Discussion Items

a. Property Development Challenges in the Historic Neighborhoods

Dr. Dubose referenced the list sent to Task Force members concerning property development challenges seen by staff through the Historic Neighborhoods Permitting and Design Studio. She noted the following challenges and staff goals to improve the process:

addressing of properties and the requirement that property owners must pay for street signs that meet Town standards and noted staff is reviewing the issue to improve the addressing process; access to properties and obtaining right-of ways or easements; established access on certain properties has not been recorded on the deed; if the access is recorded, the location is not correct and explained staff is looking creating a Design Studio specifically for access problems; land-locked properties and the problems associated; the loss of Heirs Property and the continued work with the Heritage Library on the Genealogy Clinic; the issue of landscaping requirements and costs associated, explaining staff is looking into alternatives; the fees associated with development and building plans which include surveys and legal costs and informed the Task Force staff is looking into mitigating some of the costs through a concept of designs that can be submitted to a surveyor; and sewer connections and associated costs continue to be an issue. Dr. DuBose further explained staff is in the process of creating a flow chart that better explains the process for various development projects and make them available to the public.

Upon conclusion of the presentation, the Task Force made comments and inquiries regarding: the frustration residents have with navigating through the process; requirements for sewer connection versus septic system; clarification of easement and right-of-way requirements; the complexity of the process and the effects on neighboring properties; the need to address sewer connections, available funding and programs to assist and the need to provide information for such to residents; clarification the landscaping requirement is for all development including family compounds and subdivisions; and the need for the Design Studio to become more intuitive and the need for case studies.

Chairman Stevens read comments submitted to him by Tai Scott requesting they be made part of the record. The comments have been captured on audio and are made part of the official record for this meeting.

b. Update on the Historic Neighborhoods Overlay District

Dr. DuBose stated that work on the proposed Overlay District will resume upon completion of the Island-Wide Capacity Trends and Assessments Study. She added the Study is scheduled to be completed by the fourth quarter of 2022. Dr. DuBose informed the Task Force that staff is collecting data on property development challenges which will assist in development of the Overlay District. She said updates will be provided as it moves forward.

Chairman Stevens expressed concern regarding the amount of development on the Island within the Mitchelville area and the need to preserve the Native Island culture. Mr. Henz expressed the need to define the desired future of the Historic Neighborhood Overlay District and create the vision and build on it.

c. Gullah History and Cultural Education Program for Town Employees and Officials

Dr. DuBose referenced the syllabus sent to the Task Force for review and stated it was an actionable item and since there was no quorum it will be placed on the next scheduled meeting agenda. She explained after review and consideration for approval, the item will move on to the Community Services and Public Safety Committee for consideration.

8. Staff Report

Dr. DuBose reminded the Task Force of the Pedestrian and Vehicular Enhancement Project to be held on Tuesday, May 3, 2022, at 6:00 p.m. at Jarvis Community Park. She stated the purpose of the meeting is to discuss the corridor improvements.

Dr. Dubose informed the Task Force there will be an update on the sixteen Top Priority Projects at the May 17, 2022, Town Council Meeting.

Dr. DuBose informed the Task Force of her resignation noting her last day of work will be May 25, 2022. She thanked the Task Force members for all their efforts.

Anne Cyran made comments regarding the work done by Dr. DuBose and expressed her appreciation.

Ms. Cyran informed the Task Force of an upcoming Town Council Workshop regarding the Mid-Island Track and the Mid-Island Redevelopment Area. She said they are looking at scheduling it the latter part of May. She added that after the Town Council Workshop representatives from MKSK will conduct an in-person presentation for the Task Force. She explained Task Force members will be contacted regarding the dates.

9. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 2:02 p.m.

Submitted by: Vicki Pfannenschmidt, Secretary

Approved: [DATE]



TOWN OF HILTON HEAD ISLAND

Memo

TO: Gullah Geechee Land & Cultural Preservation Task Force
FROM: Missy Luick, Principal Planner
VIA: Chris Yates, CFM, Development Services Manager
VIA: Anne Cyran, AICP, Interim Community Planning Manager
DATE: May 27, 2022
SUBJECT: Gullah History and Cultural Education Program for Town Employees and Officials

Recommendation: That the Gullah Geechee Land & Cultural Preservation Task Force review the proposed Draft Gullah History and Cultural Education Program for Town Employees and Officials and recommend the Program for implementation.

Summary: Staff has drafted a program to provide Town employees and officials with an understanding of Hilton Head Island's Gullah history and culture. The program will consist of an hour-long orientation program and quarterly events and presentations for ongoing education and enrichment.

Background: In 2019, Town Council approved 16 Top Priority Projects from the *Gullah Geechee Preservation Project Report* that were identified by the Gullah Geechee Land & Cultural Preservation Task Force. This program aligns with Recommendation CP-7, "To establish a program to educate Town officials, area schoolteachers, and others on Gullah culture so that they can better understand the culture and more effectively interact with the Island's Gullah Citizens."

Attachment:

- A. Draft Gullah History and Cultural Education Program for Town Staff and Officials



DRAFT
TOWN OF HILTON HEAD ISLAND
Gullah History and Cultural Education Program
For Town Employees and Officials

Program Purpose and Description

The purpose of this program is to provide Town of Hilton Head Island employees and officials with an understanding of Hilton Head Island's Gullah history and culture to establish effective communication and service.

The program will consist of an hour-long orientation program, and quarterly events and presentations for ongoing education and enrichment. This program aligns with recommendation CP-7 of the Gullah Geechee Culture Preservation Project Report, which is to, "Establish a program to educate Town officials, area schoolteachers, and others on Gullah culture so that they can better understand the culture and more effectively interact with the Island's Gullah citizens."

Gullah History and Culture Orientation Program

Target Start: 4th Quarter 2022

This introductory program will focus on Gullah history, culture, land use challenges, and policy amendments for Gullah landowners. The program contents will be developed with assistance from community historians Dr. Emory Campbell and Dr. Louise Cohen, as recommended by the Gullah Task Force. The presentation will include audiovisual and interactive elements to engage the audience. Program participants will receive a list of recommended resources for further information.

The one-hour program will be presented quarterly by the Historic Neighborhoods Preservation Administrator. As the program is refined, staff will create a video of the presentation, which will be available to those who cannot attend in person.

Topics of Focus

- Settlement of Gullah People on Hilton Head Island
Participants will learn about the importance of comparing United States coastal area with West African geography, specific skills of West Africans that led to a thriving South Carolina economy, the Gullah Heritage Corridor, and the Freedmen Settlement of Mitchelville.
- Gullah Culture
Participants will learn about the Gullah cultural connection with the land. Cultural topics that are still celebrated include language, music, spiritual ties, arts and crafts, and local delicacies.



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TOWN OF HILTON HEAD ISLAND
Gullah History and Cultural Education Program
For Town Employees and Officials

- Settlement into Fourteen Historic Communities on Hilton Head Island
Participants will learn how overall Gullah-owned land was acquired, where the Native Islanders settled on Hilton Head Island and the unique aspects of each neighborhood, small businesses established for economic-sustainability, the challenges to retaining Gullah-owned property, and the remaining acreage of Gullah-owned property on Hilton Head Island.
- Challenges to Native Island Land Retention and Sustainability
Participants will learn about the construction of the bridge in 1956, impacts to Gullah property owners with the incorporation of the Town of Hilton Head Island, the influx of development, establishment of a limited-services government, and the loss of Native Island properties.
- Proposed Public Policy Initiatives for Historic Neighborhoods
Participants will learn about the Gullah Geechee Land & Cultural Preservation Task Force, the Gullah Geechee Culture Preservation Project Report, and the Gullah Preservation Initiatives for property protection and cultural preservation. Participants will learn about the policies that have been implemented and their efficacy in resolving challenges that impact the Gullah Community. Policy initiatives include establishing Family Compound and Family Subdivision development options, creating the Family Heritage Research Project, establishing a community education program for Gullah residents, establishing addressing change notification protocol for properties in the Historic Neighborhoods, and establishing connections with other resources that aid the Gullah community.

Ongoing Education and Enrichment Events

Target Start: 4th Quarter 2022

A tour or presentation will be offered at least once a quarter. These events will be scheduled and promoted well in advance to allow as much participation as possible. Presentations will be recorded for those unable to attend in person. Staff will develop additional opportunities such as seasonal or special events and to address emerging topics such as changes to the Land Management Ordinance.

Proposed Tours and Presentations

- Explore Mitchelville
Participants will tour the Historic Mitchelville Freedom Park and learn about the First Settlement for Freedmen in the United States.



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TOWN OF HILTON HEAD ISLAND
Gullah History and Cultural Education Program
For Town Employees and Officials

- Visit the Gullah Museum
Participants will tour the Gullah Museum and attend a lecture by Dr. Louise Cohen, Historian and Gullah Museum founder, on being raised in the Gullah culture on Hilton Head Island.
- Take a Gullah Heritage Mobile Tour
Participants will attend the Gullah Heritage mobile tour and learn about the history and culture of Gullah people on Hilton Head Island, Gullah Families, Gullah neighborhoods, and historical areas such as the one-room schoolhouse and the first Freedman's Village.

Property Development Challenges in the Historic Neighborhoods

Category	Details	Challenges
Addressing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When a new home is built or placed, it is necessary to assign the home an address With addition of more than two homes off an access, the streets must be named. Community Development Department determines if the street name needs to be approved by the Planning Commission. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Address numbers can be out of order and need to be corrected by readdressing already established homes. Address numbers may not be available requiring readdressing of already established homes to accommodate the new home. Property owners have to pay for street sign installation that meets Town Standards.
Access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New homes require access which can be a driveway, easement, or right-of-way. Establishing a right-of-way requires signatures of impacted property owners. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Obtaining signatures from property owners who do not want to dedicate a portion of their property to the Town to maintain a right-of-way. Established driveways to access the property are not legally recorded. Established driveways to access the property are not within the recorded access easement.
Landlocked Properties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Properties are surrounded by other properties with different owners. Permission from surrounding property owners is needed to upgrade portion of access that involves their property. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Landlocked property cannot be developed without proper access. Property owners are unwilling to sell portion of their property to provide proper access to landlocked property.
Heirs' Property	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shares of single parcels have multiple owners. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shareholder of property sells shares resulting in loss of portion or entire parcel.
Landscaping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A landscaping plan and plantings are required for Small Residential Developments, Family Compounds, and Family Subdivisions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Estimated costs of landscaping are estimated to be 10k to 20k.
Fees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fees are associated with the plan approval process, which could include professional services that may entail surveyors, legal fees, and associated costs. Fees are associated with the site development process including mobile home placement; landscaping; all-weather driving surfaces; and water, sewer, and electrical connections. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fees associated with development are expensive.
Sewer Connection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Property owners are encouraged to connect to sewer when building/placing new homes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Connecting to sewer is expensive. Not all residents meet the requirements for Project Safe.

Attachment A

Town of Hilton Head Island Status of the Gullah Geechee Report 16 Top Priority Recommendations



May 2022

Status of the Gullah Geechee Report

16 Top Priority Project Recommendations

May 2022



Page #	Priority #	Title	25%	50%	75%	100%
3	PP-5	Family Compound/Subdivision				
4	PP-6	Allow Site Design Flexibility				
5	PP-2	Fast Track FC/FS Applications				
6	PP-3	Permitting and Design Studio				
7	PP-11	Fund for Delinquent Taxes				
8	PP-12	Educational Meetings/Workshops				
9	CP-1	Promote the Heritage Library				
10	CP-17	Outreach with Gullah Churches				
11	HP-1	Heirs' Property Family Research Project				
12	HP-2	Coordinate with Heirs' Prop. Orgs.				
13	HP-3	CHPP Satellite Office				
14	HP-4	Fund to Clear Property Titles				
15	CP-7	Educate Town Officials and Employees				
16	CP-14	Establish Open-Air Gullah Market				
17	PP-14	Temporary and Seasonal Signs				
18	PP-4	Establish an Overlay District				

PP-5: Family Compound/Family Subdivision



Revise the Land Management Ordinance (LMO) to allow Family Compound and Family Subdivision developments on properties in the Historic Neighborhoods.

Percent Complete

25%

50%

75%

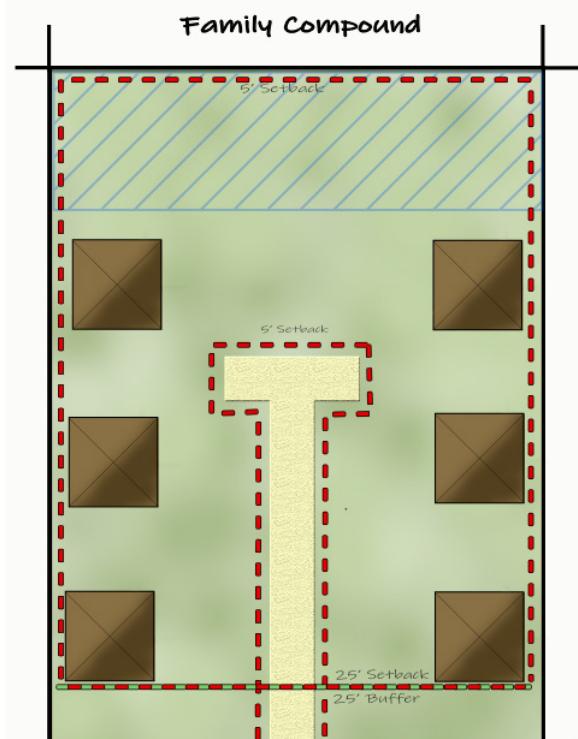
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- Preserve family land for future generations.
- Honor communal living traditions.
- Subdivide without prohibitive expenses.

Overview

- Posted signs, sent letters, and used the Town's website and social media sites to notify stakeholders and the public. Historic Neighborhoods Preservation Administrator discussed the amendments with property owners and families and made presentations to community groups.
- Reviewed and recommended for approval by the Gullah Geechee Task Force, the LMO Committee, the Planning Commission (including two public hearings), and the Public Planning Committee.
- Adopted by Town Council in July 2021.
- Working with families to develop a Family Compound or Family Subdivision.
- Implemented a communication plan to inform stakeholders, churches, and community organizations of the Family Compound/Family Subdivision LMO amendments, including a news release and social media posts.
- Folded into the Town's ongoing operations.





PP-6: Allow Site Design Flexibility

The Family Compound/Family Subdivision and Dirt Road LMO amendments allow flexibility for development in Historic Neighborhoods.

Percent Complete

25%

50%

75%

100%



- Reduces buffer, setback, right-of-way, and access easement minimums.
- Creates rights-of-way without reducing density.
- Applies to properties in Historic Neighborhoods.

Overview

- Wrote the amendments using input from property owners.
- Notified stakeholders and the public. Historic Neighborhoods Preservation Administrator discussed the amendments with property owners and families and made presentations to community groups.
- Reviewed and recommended for approval by Gullah Geechee Task Force, LMO Committee, Planning Commission, and Public Planning Committee.
- Town Council adopted Dirt Road LMO amendments in November 2020.
- Town Council adopted Family Compound/Family Subdivision LMO amendments in July 2021.
- Folded into the Town's ongoing operations.



PP-2: Fast Track Family Compound/Family Subdivision Applications

Town staff prioritizes the review of Family Compound and Family Subdivision applications and related building permits.



Percent Complete

25%

50%

75%

100%

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- Family Compound/Family Subdivision applications are reviewed before other applications.
 - Related building permits are fast tracked.

Overview

- Review Family Compound and Family Subdivision applications and related building permits prior to other submittals, as specified in the LMO amendments.
- Noted on the Town webpage and application forms the applications will be fast tracked.
- Notified applicants that their applications will be prioritized for review.
- Implemented a communication plan to inform stakeholders, churches, and community organizations of the Family Compound/Family Subdivision LMO amendments, including a news release and social media posts.
- Folded into the Town's ongoing operations.



PP-3: Permitting & Design Studio

A one-stop resource to assist property and business owners in navigating the Town's land use and development standards, preparing development applications, and resolving related issues.



Percent Complete

25%

50%

75%

100%



- Provide personalized guidance.
- Current Planning, Urban Design, Fire Rescue, Infrastructure, and Business License assistance.
- Reduce barriers to property preservation and development.

Overview

- Provides assistance to property and business owners in the Historic Neighborhoods on a variety of issues, including subdivisions; buffers and setbacks; easements and rights-of-way; property access; dirt roads; mobile home placements; building permit issues; addressing; fire hydrants; and code enforcement issues.
- Offers conceptual site design services and business license assistance.
- Implemented a communication plan to inform stakeholders, churches, and community organizations of the Historic Neighborhoods Permitting and Design Studio and that staff is available to provide information and assistance.
- Develop case studies on property development challenges to consider new land use policies.
- Folded into Town's ongoing operations.



PP-11: Fund for Delinquent Taxes

Establish a fund to help Heirs' Property owners avoid losing their property to delinquent tax sales.



Percent Complete

25%

50%

75%

100%



- **Recommend the Native Island Business and Community Affairs Association consider creating a fund with the Community Foundation of the Lowcountry.**
- **Coordinate with related organizations to identify at-risk properties.**
- **Prevent properties from becoming delinquent.**

Overview

- Met with the lead organizations – the Community Foundation of the Lowcountry and the Native Island Business and Community Affairs Association (NIBCAA) – to discuss establishing a fund.
- If NIBCAA creates a fund, staff will assist with communications.
- Coordinated with Beaufort County to identify properties that are delinquent and at risk of being lost and provided that information to community organizations that support property owners.
- Promoted Penn Center's Land Preservation Assistance Program.
- Promoted the Pan African Family Empowerment and Land Preservation Network and Lowcountry Gullah, which pay owners' delinquent taxes.
- Promoting these organizations and services is folded into the Town's ongoing operations.



PP-12: Educational Meetings & Workshops

Host educational meetings and workshops on issues that impact Gullah residents, such as Heirs' Property, development standards, and property taxes.



Percent Complete

25%

50%

75%

100%

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- Offer quarterly educational opportunities for Gullah community.
 - Address Town development standards and challenges that impact Historic Neighborhoods.

Overview

- Established educational outreach programs on topics such as Gullah History and Culture, Development Standards in Historic Neighborhoods, Addressing Policies, etc.
- Held Community Education Programs on Family Compounds and Family Subdivisions and Heirs' Properties and Wills.
- Worked with The Links, Inc. to promote education from the Center for Heirs' Property Preservation on Heirs' Property, Forestry, and Wills.
- Held small group meetings to update community members on development standards, including Family Compounds and Family Subdivisions.
- Folded into the Town's ongoing operations.



CP-1: Promote Heritage Library

Promote the use of the Heritage Library's resources for the Island's Gullah people to research their history and genealogy.



Percent Complete

25%

50%

75%

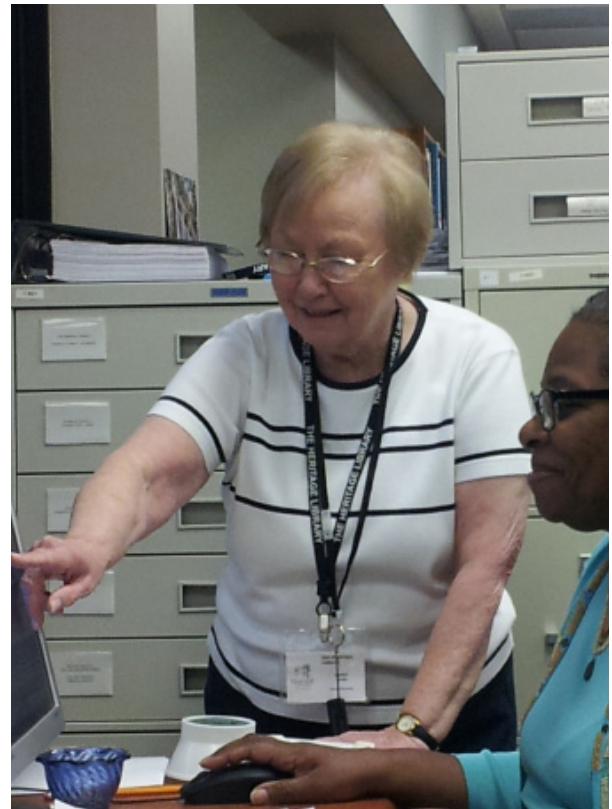
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- Increase awareness of the Heritage Library's resources and services.
- Foster knowledge about Gullah history and genealogy.

Overview

- Promoted Heritage Library on Town's website.
- Notified Gullah community of Heritage Library events.
- Established the Heirs' Property Family Research Project.
- Implemented a sustainable communications plan to inform stakeholders, churches, and community organizations of the Heritage Library's resources and of the Family Research Project.
- Promoting the Heritage Library is folded into the Town's ongoing operations.



CP-17: Outreach with Gullah Churches

Work with Gullah churches to gather information, assess needs, and disseminate information.



Percent Complete

25%

50%

75%

100%

- 
- Update churches, community organizations, and stakeholders on Gullah-related meetings and initiatives.
 - Share vital information, such as Town-led COVID-19 testing and vaccination sites.

Overview

- Established Historic Neighborhoods Preservation Administrator as point of contact for the Town for all Island Gullah churches.
- Communicate regularly on Gullah Geechee initiatives, such as the Family Compound/Family Subdivision LMO amendments.
- Provide updates regarding Town meetings addressing relevant topics.
- Receive referrals from churches of community members who need assistance.
- Folded into the Town's ongoing operations.



HP-1: Heirs' Property Family Research Project

Develop a program with the Heritage Library Foundation to provide genealogy research assistance for Gullah families seeking to clear Heirs' Property titles.



Percent Complete

25%

50%

75%

100%



- Established the Heirs' Property Family Research Project.
- Partnered with Heritage Library and USCB Hilton Head Island.
- Identify heirs using genealogy research.

Overview

- Established with the Heritage Library the criteria to accept client referrals.
- Worked with the Heritage Library to define available services.
- Partnered with USCB Hilton Head Island to create a dedicated office with equipment and software.
- Provided the required equipment and software.
- Held a ribbon cutting ceremony at the Heirs' Property Family Research Project office on the USCB Hilton Head Island campus in August 2021.
- Promoting this service is folded into the Town's ongoing operations.



Sponsored by the Town of Hilton Head Island in partnership with its Black History Culture and Land Preservation Task Force, the Heritage Library and the University of South Carolina Beaufort.

PROJECT PURPOSE:

The project aims to assist families with the documentation necessary for building a family tree that can be used for legal proceedings, and to help heirs, who currently do not have title to land that has been passed down from the original lease holder, to access permanent ownership without benefit of a formal will or probate. Although the family members know they own the land, their claim to it has not been established by the court. This leaves the family without a title and vulnerable to exploitation, no matter who lives there or who pays the taxes, and restricts the land from development.

PROJECT GUIDELINES:

- Projects start with a request for the project based upon a referral from the Office of Historic Neighborhoods Preservation, Town of Hilton Head Island.
- The project is open to Hilton Head Island families that qualify based on their current situation with heirs' property.
- Heritage Library volunteers will be assigned to assist clients with genealogy research.
- Families accepted for the project will be contacted by a Heritage Library volunteer.

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Historic Neighborhoods
Preservation Administrator
Town of Hilton Head Island
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The Heirs' Property Family
Research Project Office
University of South Carolina Beaufort,
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1 Sand Shark Drive, Room 218
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Barbara Callendar
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Heritage Library of Hilton Head Island
(843) 866-4560
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Office hours are by appointment only.
Call (843) 866-4560 to schedule.



HP-2: Coordinate with Heirs' Property Organizations

Connect with organizations that can provide legal assistance and/or education for property owners seeking to clear Heirs' Property.



Percent Complete

25%

50%

75%

100%



- Understand services provided by Heirs' Property organizations.
- Establish relationships with those organizations.
- Direct Heirs' Property owners to the appropriate resources.

Overview

- Established connections with South Carolina Legal Services, South Carolina Appleseed Legal Justice Center, Black Belt Justice Center, Black Family Land Trust, and the Center for Heirs' Property Preservation.
- Created a summary of the services each organization provides for reference and distribution to the Gullah community.
- Continue to refer Heirs' Property owners to the appropriate organization to meet their needs.
- Promoting these services is folded into the Town's ongoing operations.



HP-3: Create Center for Heirs' Property Preservation Satellite Office on Hilton Head Island



Provide information and assistance to Heirs' Property owners regarding the Center for Heirs' Property Preservation. Explore establishing a satellite office on Hilton Head Island.

Percent Complete



- Promote Center for Heirs' Property Preservation services to qualified Heirs' Property owners.
- Facilitate consultations with Center for Heirs' Property Preservation for Island clients.

Overview

- Discussed the possibility of establishing a satellite office with the Center for Heirs' Property Preservation's Chief of Operations.
- The Center is not interested in establishing a satellite office at this time. The Center provides services for 22 counties, and there aren't enough property owners on the Island who need their services to provide a satellite office.
- Staff will revisit the idea of a satellite office with the Center if the need arises.
- Promoted Center for Heirs' Property Preservation services to qualified property owners.
- Promoting these services is folded into the Town's ongoing operations.



HP-4: Fund to Clear Property Titles

Establish a fund to help Heirs' Property owners clear the title to their land.



Percent Complete

25%

50%

75%

100%

- Recommend the Native Island Business and Community Affairs Association consider creating a fund with the Community Foundation of the Lowcountry to clear Heirs' Property titles.
- Preserve family land by preventing sales by non-resident owners.

Overview

- Met with the lead organizations – the Community Foundation of the Lowcountry and the Native Island Business and Community Affairs Association (NIBCAA) – to discuss establishing a fund.
- If NIBCAA creates a fund, staff will assist with communications.
- Held Community Education Programs on Heirs' Property challenges and resources.
- Providing education on Heirs' Property and promoting organizations that can assist Heirs' Property owners is folded into the Town's ongoing operations.



CP-7: Educate Town Officials & Employees



Develop education programs on Gullah history, culture, development standards challenges, and land use policies for Town officials, employees, and Board and Commission members.

Percent Complete



- Provide quarterly orientation on Gullah history and culture.
- Offer engaging, ongoing learning opportunities such as panel discussions, site visits, and mobile tours.

Overview

- Created a draft Gullah History and Cultural Education Program for new hires, newly elected officials, and Board and Commission members.
- Program consists of an initial orientation training with ongoing educational opportunities.
- Received feedback from the Gullah Task Force on the draft Program.
- Need a recommendation from the Gullah Task Force.
- Need review and acceptance from Town Council.
- If approved by Town Council, staff will implement the program with initial events targeted for the 4th Quarter of 2022.
- Program will be folded into the Town's ongoing operations.



CP-14: Establish Open-Air Gullah Market

Work with stakeholders to establish an open-air market to promote Gullah Culture and create economic opportunities.



Percent Complete

25%

50%

75%

100%



- Assist the Native Island Business and Community Affairs Association (NIBCAA) as they establish an open-air Gullah market.
- Promote the market to the Gullah community and the public.
- Consider providing a new location for the market on the north end when the US 278 Gateway Corridor project is complete.

Overview

- Gathered input from local vendors.
- Drafted a business plan.
- Coordinated with NIBCAA, the Gullah Task Force, and Culture HHI to consider Town-owned sites for the market. NIBCAA selected Lowcountry Celebration Park.
- Execute a communications plan to help NIBCAA promote the market.
- Evaluate the success of the market and consider providing an alternative location on the north end of the Island, if desired by NIBCAA.



PP-14: Temporary and Seasonal Signs

Establish a program to provide temporary and seasonal signs for Gullah businesses in Historic Neighborhoods.



Percent Complete

25%

50%

75%

100%



- Identify Gullah businesses with shared signs.
- Expand opportunities for Gullah residents and businesses.

Overview

- Proposed to the Public Planning Committee in June 2021 amending the LMO to allow seasonal and temporary signs with a uniform design to be used within the Historic Neighborhoods to advertise homegrown, freshly caught, and handmade items.
- The Committee expressed concerns about the number of signs that may be displayed since the Historic Neighborhoods cover a large portion of the Island.
- The Gullah Taskforce identified ten Gullah businesses that could potentially benefit from these signs.
- Staff will work with the Native Island Business and Community Affairs Association (NIBCAA) to inform Gullah-owned businesses how they can purchase and display LMO compliant portable signs.
- If the current LMO standards for portable signs don't meet the businesses' needs, staff will recommend amendments.



PP-4: Establish an Overlay District

Establish a Historic Neighborhoods Preservation Overlay District.



Percent Complete

25%

50%

75%

100%



- Preserve the character and integrity of the Historic Neighborhoods.
- Encourage the preservation of Gullah-owned land by amending development standards that limit development, particularly for traditional family living patterns.
- Examine additional development challenges identified by property owners and the Gullah Task Force.

Overview

- Drafted LMO Amendments to establish an overlay district.
- Reviewed by Gullah Geechee Task Force, LMO Committee, Planning Commission, Public Planning Committee, and Town Council.
- Town Council approved elements of the overlay district in July 2021.
- Approved elements: Family Compounds; Family Subdivisions; reduced buffer, setback, right-of-way, and access easement widths; and creating rights-of-way without reducing density.
- Examine additional challenges to development in Historic Neighborhoods and forward any possible solutions to Town Council as soon as possible.
- Revisit additional code modifications upon completion of the Conditions and Trends Assessment and the creation of the Growth Framework and Island Master Plan, to begin in the 4th Quarter of 2022.

