



Town of Hilton Head Island  
**Our Plan Economy Work Group Meeting**

Wednesday, July 10, 2019 at 2:00 pm

The Living Lab at Town Hall

## **MEETING NOTES**

Work Group:

*Revitalize and Modernize the Economy*

**Present from Work Group:** Suzanne Thompson, Peter Keber, Rod Casavant, Craig Cleveland, Louise Cohen, Carlton Dallas

**Present from Town Council:** None

**Present from Town Staff:** Jayme Lopko, Taylor Ladd, Jennifer Ray

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- The meeting was called to order at 2:05 PM.
  - Jayme Lopko and Taylor Ladd conducted the SOAR activity with group members. This activity was requested by the Development Team in order to better understand where each group is relative to their Core Value. The members were given an opportunity to discuss one of the items they added to the SOAR activity. After the discussion, members voted for which items they felt were important and they included:
    - Strengths:
      - Lots of positive recognition & press (#1 island again – 4<sup>th</sup> time in a row) – Tourist destination promotion (#1 island in US – 4 years straight) – World class amenities – Beach, Sports, People – World class combination of beaches, golf, nature (5)
      - Native Island culture (2)
      - Very talented human capital experience - Wide & deep experience & expertise in retirees living on HHI (1)
      - Stellar organizations like Coastal Discovery Museum, World Affairs Council, Symphony, etc. (1)
      - What makes us unique – many historic sites. The people who are the living history books. Civil & Revolutionary history (1)
      - Good tourist to homeowner/resident pipeline (1)
      - Human Capital – talented residents & experience (1)
      - Controlled Growth
      - Home town atmosphere
      - Safe environment
      - Access by water, land, air
      - Vacation destination
      - USCB HHI campus
      - Natural Environment
      - Beaufort County Economic Development Corporation
      - Hospitality

- Opportunities:
  - Don Ryan Center for Innovations – Bring 21<sup>st</sup> century tech to HHI – BizPitch competition (4)
  - Set & illuminate customer service standard [i.e. British startup] (4)
  - More affordable living for workforce or easier ways for workforce to access the island [i.e. public transportation] (2)
  - Protect the base – tourism, etc. (1)
  - Volunteerism (1)
  - Perception as only a retirement community – how to get young people to stay (1)
  - Intermodal – marine, road, bike air (1)
  - Threats are when we fail to recognize as important, structures in our communities, etc. (1)
  - Set & enforce appearance standards (1)
  - Conduct wage and benefit survey to address
  - Maintain market share from competing destinations
  - Telecommuting success stories – promote, nurture
  - Encore careers
  - Tapping into our residents
  - South Carolina Research Authority (SCRA) investment in startups
  - Continue to increase number of flights/destinations available
  - 300 islands to increase visibility of alternatives
  - Empiricize the human capital as a recruiting tool for business startups
  - Emphasize intracoastal waterway layover
  
- Weaknesses:
  - We are not “tiffany” level (1)
  - Communication and collaboration (1)
  - Only one was on/off the island
  
- Threats:
  - Concern for others and their problems (1)
  - Hurricanes
  - Rising Sea Level – climate change
  
- Aspirations:
  - Living history site [Historic Mitchelville Freedom Park] (3)
  - Revitalize/redevelop some of the vacant spaces around HHI (2)
  - Be passionate about what make HHI stand out from everyone else (2)
  - To again become a leader in development/tourism/sustainability (2)
  - Leverage unique HHI attributes to attract more diverse businesses (outside tourism) – World class in all we do (2)
  - Not forgetting or wiping out the history and sites - Educate the public about the history of the island (2)
  - Seize the emerging niches (1)
  - Making sure we understand the past (1)
  - Market globally, leverage Verona sister city connection (1)
  - Long term investment in technology infrastructure (1)
  - More entrepreneurial – small footprint high intellectual knowledge jobs w/o commute (1)

- Year round destination - Increase should & off season tourism (1)
  - More physical oriented activity
  - Venue space for our world class organizations
  - Become a cross cultural mecca – cultural festivals
  - Traffic control
  - Keep HHI beautiful
  - Close the achievement gap by focusing on cultural hurdles or impediments
- Results:
    - Living history site [Historic Mitchelville Freedom Park] (3)
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  - The group concluded discussions. Jayme Lopko will reach out to members that were not able to attend to give them the opportunity to participate and their responses will be incorporated into the results.
  - The meeting adjourned at 3:10 PM.

**Submitted by:** Jayme Lopko