



The Town of Hilton Head Island
**Gullah Geechee Land & Cultural
Preservation Task Force
Meeting Minutes
January 3, 2022, 1:00 p.m.**

Present from the Task Force: Chairman Lavon Stevens, Vice Chairman Palmer E. Simmons, Ibrahim Abdul-Malik, John Campbell, Tom Henz

Absent from the Task Force: Shani Green

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

Present from Town Staff: Chris Yates, Interim Community Development Director; Sheryse DuBose, Historic Neighborhoods Preservation Administrator; Anne Cyran, Interim Comprehensive Planning Manager; Brad Tadlock, Fire Chief; Joheida Fister, Deputy Fire Chief – Administration/Fire Marshal; Becky Neugent, E911 Communications Manager; Teresa Haley, Senior Administrative Assistant; Vicki Pfannenschmidt, Temporary 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

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 December 6, 2021

Chairman Stevens asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the December 6, 2021, regular meeting. Mr. Abdul-Malik moved to approve with additions. He requested that his inquiry and Staff response regarding the overlay district during the Staff Report be added to the minutes. Mr. Abdul-Malik also requested that going forward a monthly update regarding the Historic Overlay District be provided to the Task Force. Vice Chairman Simmons seconded. By way of roll call, the motion passed by a vote of 4-0-1. (Mr. Henz abstained as he was not present at the subject meeting.)

6. Citizen Comments

Public comments concerning agenda items were to be 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 by phone.

7. Discussion Items

a. Historic Neighborhoods Permitting and Design Studio

Dr. DuBose stated the Design Studio launched in October of 2021, to implement Project PP-3 from the Gullah Geechee Preservation Project Report and assist property owners with Town regulations. She noted it is a one-step resource for property owners in Historic Neighborhoods who need assistance with development permits, family compounds and family subdivisions, conceptual site designs, addressing, property access, along with assistance in acquiring business licenses. Dr. DuBose explained the Design Studio also assists the public with other resources such as information on heirs' property and taxes. She emphasized that it is more than just providing an application for the owners' needs. She stated that through scheduled meetings with staff and the several departments involved, projects can be completed in a more efficient manner.

Dr. DuBose explained the Design Studio formalized the process to access all needed resources to complete a project. She stated at this time 20 property owners are being assisted. Dr. DuBose clarified that time frames vary for the projects dependent on needs and staff is readily available to assist with the challenges presented.

Dr. DuBose referenced the pamphlets that have been shared via hard copy throughout the community explaining the process and the assistance that can be provided. She asked the Task Force members to further share the information. Dr. DuBose described the project as exciting and stated staff is eager to be helpful to the community.

Members of the Task Force and Dr. DuBose discussed the project at length and the following items were discussed: importance of informing the public through the pamphlet distribution throughout the community, the Town website, and collaboration with churches and organizations; the need for a central focal point; the addition of outside resources being linked to assist; the need for data in the way of charts to track progress and needs; the challenge of LMO compliance; confirmation that the Design Studio assists businesses as well as private property owners; and the need for the Task Force to have full and complete understanding as to what the Design Studio is so they can assist in educating the public.

b. Fire in the Streets Community Initiative

Deputy Chief Fister conducted a presentation regarding Fire in the Streets, a program Fire Rescue put into place in 2015. She explained Fire Rescue reviewed areas where fires were occurring, and they targeted those areas for home visits and fire safety information distribution. She added that they also assist in inspecting, replacing, and installing fire alarms. She said since 2015, they have visited over 500 homes. Deputy Chief Fister stated Fire Rescue has also assisted in posting addresses on homes for better visibility during an emergency. She noted with the new addressing that took place on Chisholm Place, they have assisted in posting them. Deputy Chief Fister explained the focus has been in the Historic Neighborhoods and there is a tracking element in place. She added that the goal is to reach all neighborhoods outside the planned unit developments.

Members of the Task Force and Deputy Chief Fister discussed the initiative and the following items were discussed: the benefit of the program to the community; suggestion

of including CPR training and confirmation that CPR training is implemented and open to the public monthly; suggestion to add the Fire in the Streets information to the Design Studio information; clarification of how locations are determined; plans that the initiative takes place four times a year; a request for an update on fire hydrant placement in the area; the need for volunteers to partner with Fire Rescue and assist with paperwork; the need for notice in advance of arrival in the neighborhood; and the need for training on how to interact with the residents.

Deputy Chief Fister stated it is very rewarding to have this type of interaction in the community and invited all Task Force members to assist with the coordination of efforts. Members of the Task Force were very receptive to the invitation.

c. 2022 Meeting Schedule

Mr. Henz moved to approve as presented. Mr. Abdul-Malik seconded. By way of roll call, the motion passed by a vote of 5-0-0.

8. Staff Report

Dr. DuBose noted that as requested, the Historic Overlay District update will be part of the Staff Report at future Task Force meetings.

Dr. DuBose reported that Jenn McEwen, Director of Cultural Affairs has developed a self-guided Gullah Tour pamphlet with photographs and descriptions of various sites and will send it out this week to members of the Task Force. She requested comments and suggestions from Task Force members regarding the pamphlet by end of week, January 7.

Dr. Dubose reviewed upcoming events planned throughout the community:

Fire in the Streets – TBD - scheduled for the beginning of February on Chisholm Place

Mid-Island Tract Redevelopment Plan Consultant Presentation and Public Input – January 11, 2022, from 5pm-8pm at Hilton Head Public Service District Community Room.

Heirs' Property Workshops – February 15, 2022, from 5pm-7pm at Queen Chapel A.M.E. Church and on February 19, 2022, 10:00am-12noon at Coastal Discovery Museum.

Dr. DuBose requested that Task Force members assist in sharing the information regarding presentation and the workshops.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 2:09 p.m.

Submitted by: Vicki Pfannenschmidt, Secretary

Approved: March 7, 2022