



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: June 6, 2022