



Town of Hilton Head Island
GULLAH GEECHEE LAND AND CULTURAL
PRESERVATION TASK FORCE MEETING
Monday, June 2, 2025, 1:00 PM
Minutes

1. Call to Order

Chairman Stevens called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. Present were: Chairman Stevens, Vice Chair Simmons, Mr. Abdul-Malik and Mr. Campbell.

2. Adoption of the Agenda

Mr. Simmons moved to approve the Agenda as presented. Mr. Campbell seconded. The Agenda was unanimously approved.

3. Approval of the Minutes

a. Regular Meeting Minutes of January 6, 2025.

Mr. Abdul-Malik moved to approve the Minutes of January 6, 2025. Mr. Campbell seconded. The Minutes of January 6, 2025 were unanimously approved.

b. Regular Meeting Minutes of February 3, 2025.

The Minutes of February 3, 2025 were unable to be approved due to today's attendance.

4. Staff Report

a. Historic Neighborhood Permitting & Design Studio Report – Sharonica Stewart, Principal Planner Historic Neighborhoods

Ms. Stewart advised that from the last reporting period (February 2025), nine new requests were received through the Historic Neighborhood Permitting and Design Studio, with four of the cases completed to date. These requests focused on the following topics:

- Density allowances and their impact on proposed development
- Allowances for property development
- Manufactured housing placement process
- Dirt road paving program

These cases included information as well as guidance regarding density allowances and their impact on proposed development, allowances for property development, the manufactured housing placement process, as well as additional information and the status of our road paving program.

To give you a little more insight regarding the program data overall, from the inception of this program, in October 2021 to May 2025, we have had a total of 106 Design Studio

Cases. Of those 106 cases, 71 have been completed, 27 are active projects, of which three are on hold and 24 are in progress, active, under review, working with applicants. Eight are withdrawn or inactive.

Ms. Stewart agreed to provide a report focusing only on the current year's projects to give a more accurate assessment of ongoing work as requested by a Task Force member.

b. Home Safety and Repair Program Update – Sharonica Stewart, Principal Planner Historic Neighborhoods

Ms. Stewart advised that the last reporting period for this project was February 2025 and, since that time, multiple projects have been successfully closed out, positively impacting families here within our community. Our program's team remains focused on completing the remaining projects under contract while, of course, researching funding avenues to ensure the program's sustainability as well as continued success. From the time of the inception of this program, to May of 2025, we have received about 162 applications.

Of those 162 Applications Received:

- 9 Applications did not meet the income qualifications
- 4 Applications were withdrawn
- 19 Applications received currently awaiting funding
- 22 Applications need additional information

108 Approved Projects:

- 105 permitted jobs have been completed for a total of \$1,479,323.52
 - 21 tree pruning or removal - \$60,975.35
 - 84 home repairs - \$1,418,348.17
- 3 permitted jobs currently under contract but not completed for a total of \$20,417.48

The total amount allocated to the program is \$1,499,741.00. Currently, there is no additional funding to execute the program. We are actively attempting to find additional funding.

c. Sewer Connection Program Update – Sharonica Stewart, Principal Planner Historic Neighborhoods

The Lateral Sewer Connection Program has successfully completed 35 connections to date. Town staff continue to actively collaborate with the Hilton Head Island Public Service District (PSD) to complete the remaining projects, ensuring that more residents gain access to essential sewer services.

51 Applications Received

- 35 jobs have been completed and paid in the total amount of \$352,748.08

- 1 job under contract with estimates totaling \$15,640.00
- 4 jobs pending with estimates totaling \$58,560.00 (awaiting additional program funding)
- 4 applications were withdrawn
- 2 applications were not qualified
- 5 applications awaiting funds to request estimates from PSD

The total amount allocated to the program is \$369,417.00. Currently, there is no additional funding to execute the program.

d. Gullah Geechee Land and Cultural Preservation Task Force Recommendations Update – Sharonica Stewart, Principal Planner Historic Neighborhoods

The Gullah Geechee Cultural Preservation Project Report presentation highlighted significant progress with 23 of the 37 recommendations already activated to preserve Gullah Geechee heritage on Hilton Head Island. These actions span cultural preservation, public policy, and heirs' property efforts. Several additional recommendations are actively advancing through the Land Management Ordinance (LMO) rewrite and District Planning initiatives. The remaining items, particularly those tied to cultural tourism, economic empowerment, and landowner support, are being transitioned to the Gullah Geechee Historic Neighborhoods Community Development Corporation to carry forward implementation and sustain momentum.

Chairman Stevens thanked Ms. Stewart for her thorough presentation and mentioned we need to celebrate all the positive achievements and accomplishments we have made to this point.

5. Discussion Items

6. Public Comment - Non Agenda Items

7. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 2:57 p.m.

These meeting minutes were not formally approved due to change in Board membership.

The full recording and a transcript of this meeting can be found on the Town's website at www.hiltonheadislandsc.gov