



**Town of Hilton Head Island  
LAND MANAGEMENT ORDINANCE TASK  
FORCE MEETING  
Monday, April 13, 2026, 5:00 PM  
Minutes**

**1. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 5:00 pm.

In attendance: Chair Councilman Steve DeSimone, Vice Chair Councilwoman Tamara Becker, and Task Force Members Town Manager Marc Orlando, Lavon Stevens, Louis Johnson, Gregg Russell, Edwina Dunlap, Ciaran Storan, Lola Campbell, Mike Alsko, James Wedgeworth, Eric Brehm, Ray Warco, Peter Kristian, Courtney Struna, Cliff McMackin, Judd Carstens, Barbara Banaszynski, and Thomas Henz.

**2. Adoption of the Agenda**

Mr. Warco made a motion for the adoption of the agenda. Mr. Kristian seconded. Mr. Wedgeworth was not present for the motion, which passed unanimously, 17-0.

**3. Approval of the Minutes**

**a. Regular Meeting Minutes of March 26, 2026**

Vice Chair Councilwoman Becker motioned to approve the regular meeting minutes of March 26, 2026. Mr. Alsko seconded. Mr. Wedgeworth was not present for the motion, which passed unanimously, 17-0.

**4. Workshop Discussion**

**a. Continued Discussion of Land Management Ordinance Amendments**

Chair Councilman Steve DeSimone opened the discussion by detailing that the meeting would cover potential expansion of the Mitchelville Zoning District to include the section of Mitchelville Road between Baygall and Fish Haul roads, density in the RM-4 (Low to Moderate Density Residential) Zoning District, and further calibration in the Forest Beach Neighborhood Character Overlay District.

Marc Orlando, Town Manager, opened the meeting by outlining the evening's agenda, which focused on continued review of the Land Management Ordinance. Topics included the Mitchellville Zoning District, the RM-4 density framework, input from the Gullah Geechee Historic Neighborhood Community Development Corporation (GGHNCDC), and the Forest Beach Neighborhood Character Overlay District. Trey Lowe, Interim Planning Director, LMO Official, and Development Services Manager, followed with an overview of the staff memo, noting that the amendments under review aim to align development regulations with community priorities, neighborhood character, and long-term resiliency

goals. Staff emphasized that no final recommendations were being requested and that the task force's role was to provide direction and refine concepts.

Regarding the Mitchellville Zoning District, Mr. Lowe presented a proposal to evaluate extending Mitchellville zoning to parcels on both sides of Mitchellville Road between Baygall and Fish Hall Roads. Key differences from the existing RM-8 and RM-12 zoning included increased building height from 45 to 75 feet, maximum impervious coverage from 35% to 50%, and the addition of uses such as hotels, timeshares, mixed use, and various commercial categories. The GGHNCDC memo, submitted by Thomas Boxley, Executive Director, requested that density in historic neighborhoods not fall below six dwelling units per acre and that Mitchellville development components be extended uniformly across the road. Task force members raised concerns about infrastructure capacity, traffic, and the impact of high-intensity commercial uses on a predominantly residential area. A polling exercise showed 71% of members did not support applying the Mitchellville District in its entirety, however, the majority were in favor of evaluating density and uses allowed in the area.

Regarding the RM-4 Zoning District, Shea Farrar, Principal Planner, presented data showing the district encompasses 2,551 properties and approximately 1,588 acres, with 84% of historic neighborhood acreage zoned RM-4 and 65% of parcels under three acres. The existing sliding scale density structure has produced inconsistent development patterns, and the GGHNCDC recommended replacing it with a fixed six dwelling units per net acre. A polling question on this change returned inconclusive results and was deferred for further review. Members noted the tension between increasing land value for property owners and the risk of accelerating land sales away from Native Islander families, and broadly agreed that equity, community input, and intentional master planning were essential to moving forward.

Regarding the Forest Beach Neighborhood Character Overlay District, Mr. Lowe explained that the current 5,000 square foot floor area ratio cap has unintentionally encouraged subdivision of larger parcels, resulting in larger homes on smaller lots and changes to neighborhood character. Staff is seeking direction on recalibrating the standards to better balance building size with lot size. Members noted the importance of coordinating with existing HOA covenants and raised questions about differentiating standards between the oceanside and landside portions of the neighborhood. Short-term rental regulations were briefly raised but confirmed as a topic for a future meeting.

## **5. Public Comment**

Public comment was received from ten speakers. Speakers from the Forest Beach community expressed strong opposition to any restrictions on short-term rental rights, emphasizing concerns about property values and equity relative to other island neighborhoods. A Native Islander spoke in opposition to the proposed zoning changes, citing concerns about displacement, increased property taxes, building height, and cultural erosion. Councilwoman Melinda Turner expressed support for a community meeting prior to any further action on Mitchellville and noted existing infrastructure concerns along Fish Hall Road. Residents of the Estuary community raised concerns about traffic safety and the intensity of potential

development adjacent to their neighborhood. Additional speakers called for staff to respond to outstanding written questions submitted by the Gullah Geechee Legal Defense Fund, and advocated for a density baseline of eight units per acre consistent with prior community studies.

## **6. Adjournment**

Mr. Orlando closed the meeting by confirming that the April 23 meeting is canceled, and that the next meetings are scheduled for May 7 and May 21. The May 7 meeting will revisit the RM-4 discussion and address subdivision regulations. The May 21 meeting will cover timeshares and short-term rentals. Following those meetings, staff will take approximately 60 days to draft code amendments based on task force direction, which will then proceed through the Gullah Geechee Task Force, Planning Commission, the Community Development and Public Services Committee, and Town Council for two readings. Mr. Kristian motioned to adjourn the meeting. Vice Chair Councilwoman Becker seconded. Mr. Russell was not present for the motion, which passed unanimously, 17-0. The meeting was adjourned at 7:30 pm.

**The full recording and a transcript of this meeting can be found on the Town's website at [www.hiltonheadislandsc.gov](http://www.hiltonheadislandsc.gov)**