



Town of Hilton Head Island

Gullah Geechee Land and Cultural Preservation Task Force Meeting

Monday, May 6, 2024, 1:00 PM
1 Town Center Court, Hilton Head Island, SC
Benjamin M. Racusin Council Chambers

The meeting can be viewed on the [Town's YouTube Channel](#), the [Beaufort County Channel](#), and Spectrum Channel 1304.

- 1. Call to Order**
- 2. Adoption of the Agenda**
- 3. Approval of the Minutes**
 - a. Regular Meeting Minutes of March 4, 2024
- 4. Appearance by Citizens**
- 5. Staff Report**
 - a. Introduction of Principal Planner for Historic Neighborhoods – Sharonica Gavin, Principal Planner
 - b. General Staff Updates – LMO/ Districts – Aaron Rucker, Community Planning Manager
 - c. Historic Neighborhood Permitting & Design Studio Report – Alexis Cook, Principal Planner
 - d. Home Safety and Repair Program Update – Nicté Barrientos, Planner – Economic Development
 - e. Sewer Connection Program Update – Nicté Barrientos, Planner – Economic Development
 - f. Gullah Geechee Historic Neighborhood CDC Update – Thomas Boxley, Executive Director Gullah Geechee Historic Neighborhood CDC
 - g. Bridge Project Status; Stoney Neighborhood – Thomas Boxley, Executive

6. Discussion Items

- a.** Land Preservation Update – Luana Graves Sellars, Lowcountry Gullah Foundation

7. Adjournment

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.

In accordance with the requirements of Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 ("ADA"), the Town of Hilton Head Island will not discriminate against qualified individuals with disabilities on the basis of disability in its services, programs, or activities. Auditory accommodations are available. Any person requiring further accommodation should contact the Town of Hilton Head Island ADA Coordinator as soon as possible but no later than 48 hours before the scheduled event.

Municipal Association of South Carolina (MASC) Civility Pledge:

"I pledge to build a stronger and more prosperous community by advocating for civil engagement, respecting others and their viewpoints, and finding solutions for the betterment of my city or town."



Town of Hilton Head Island GULLAH GEECHEE LAND AND CULTURAL PRESERVATION TASK FORCE MEETING Monday, March 4, 2024, 1:00 PM Minutes

1. Call to Order

Chairman Stevens called the meeting to order at 1:02 PM.

2. Adoption of the Agenda

A motion to adopt the Agenda as presented was made by Mr. Simmons and seconded by Mr. Campbell. The motion passed unanimously.

3. Approval of the Minutes

a. Regular Meeting Minutes of Monday December 4, 2023

A motion to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes as presented from the December 4th, 2024, meeting was made by Mr. Henz and seconded by Mr. Simmons. The motion passed unanimously.

4. Appearance by Citizens

Public comments concerning Agenda items were to be submitted electronically via the Open Town Hall Portal. No comments were received, and no citizens appeared to speak.

5. Staff Report

a. 2024 Gullah Geechee Task Force Goals - Aaron Rucker, Community Planning Manager

Mr. Rucker gave a brief high-level overview of the current state of the districts and LMO, as well as the goals for the Task Force moving forward.

Mr. Rucker stated that Skull Creek and Parkway Arts are in development and explained Staff's goal to have all eight districts completed this year. He updated the Task Force on last month's kickoff with the LMO code writers from Code Studio stating that the two main objectives for this initiative are priority amendments and overhauling the remaining code in which the Task Force will be responsible for reviewing changes impacting historic neighborhoods. Mr. Rucker touched on several Task Force goals, including Public Policy, Cultural Preservation Priority, as well as continued efforts in refinement of implemented recommendations.

Mr. Rucker also shared that the Community Planning Department has received a signed

offer for the position of Principal Planner of Historic Neighborhoods from their preferred candidate.

b. Historic Neighborhood Permitting & Design Studio Report - Alexis Cook, Principal Planner

Alexis Cook, Principal Planner, gave reports on various working projects, including a new Family Compound Application stating that the applicant has completed the Design Studio portion of the process and Staff is now working with the applicant through the remaining steps. Ms. Cook also reported on three new cases for Design Studio, one of those three being a Historical Cemetery case.

Alexis Cook and Missy Luick addressed various questions from the Task Force regarding potential LMO Code Writing impacts as well as Family Compound inquiries.

c. Home Safety and Repair Program Update - Nicté Barrientos, Planner - Economic Development

Nicté Barrientos, Planner of Economic Development, updated the Task Force on the six applications that have come in since December for the Home Safety and Repair Program. Ms. Barrientos stated that nine permitted jobs have since been completed, and there are currently twenty-six jobs either pending or under contract. Ms. Barrientos stated that Staff had developed a color-coded map as the Task Force previously requested, in order for them to better identify the work being done as well as their status in the program.

d. Sewer Connection Program Update - Nicté Barrientos, Planner - Economic Development

Nicté Barrientos, Planner of Economic Development, gave updates on the Sewer Connection Program stating that fifteen additional applications have been received, in which two jobs have been completed since December of 2023. Ms. Barrientos stated that eleven of the jobs are pending approval based on site specs and Staff are working with the applicants through the process.

After some discussion, Mr. Henz made a motion to recommend Town Council consider refunding the Sewer Connection Program as well as the Home Safety and Repair Program for the amount of \$900,000. The motion was seconded by Mr. Abdul-Malik. With the approval of Chairman Stevens, the motion passed unanimously.

e. Introduction of Chief Housing Officer - Quincy White, Chief Housing Officer

Quincy White, Chief Housing Officer, introduced himself to the Task Force and gave additional insight into his role as it pertains to Workforce Housing.

The Task Force welcomed Mr. White, and asked various questions regarding the Workforce Housing Framework in which Mr. White expanded on.

6. Discussion Items

a. Fort Howell Conceptual Plan Review - George Banino, President of Hilton Head Island Land Trust

George Banino, President of the Hilton Head Island Land Trust, presented the Fort Howell Conceptual Plan to the Task Force. Mr. Banino first gave an introduction to the Land Trust, which is a non-profit organization that was founded in 1987 with a goal to preserve and protect critical habitats and historic properties, before beginning his presentation of Fort Howell, which is a five and a half acre site adjacent to Beach City Road. The site is a large, defensive earthwork fort that was originally intended to protect Mitchelville specifically.

Mr. Banino disclosed the grants they have received from various outlets which have been used to improve the property. With funding from the state, the organization has now embarked on a planning project to further develop the property in which Mr. Banino states is his reasoning behind presenting to the Task Force today. Mr. Banino expanded further on the history and setting of the property, as well as the organization's intended plan to further preserve the delicate earth and structure as well as to educate visitors about the fort and its purpose and history. The organization plans to add interior pathways for visitors to explore the property as well as create some internal and external viewpoints. Mr. Banino states that he is looking to gain insight from the community on how to tie the Mitchelville and Fort Howell experiences together before finalizing their draft plan.

Mr. Banino addressed various questions from the Task Force regarding this conceptual plan.

7. Adjournment

The meeting was declared adjourned at 2:30 PM.

Approved:

The recording of this Meeting can be found on the Town's website at www.hiltonheadislandsc.gov



TOWN OF HILTON HEAD ISLAND

Gullah Geechee Land & Cultural Preservation Task Force

TO: Gullah Geechee Land and Cultural Preservation Task Force
FROM: Sharonica Gavin, Principal Planner – Historic Neighborhoods
VIA: Aaron Rucker, Community Planning Manager
VIA: Missy Luick, Director of Planning
VIA: Shawn Colin, Assistant Town Manager – Community Development
DATE: May 6, 2024
SUBJECT: Introduction of Principal Planner for Historic Neighborhoods

SUMMARY

In March 2024, Sharonica Gavin assumed the role of Principal Planner for Historic Neighborhoods. With years of experience in the nonprofit sector, Sharonica brings a wealth of expertise to this position.

As Principal Planner for Historic Neighborhoods, Sharonica is implementing the framework for the priority projects from the 2019 Gullah Geechee Preservation Report recommendations as approved by Town Council. Performing advanced planning and analytical tasks, Sharonica will define the critical path for the remaining recommendations.

Sharonica holds a Bachelor of Science in Public Health and has an impressive background in nonprofit development, fundraising, and community service. Most recently, as the Director of Development and Fundraising at Hospice Care of the Lowcountry, she led fundraising initiatives that significantly exceeded goals, developed strategic partnerships, and enhanced community visibility and engagement. Sharonica has excelled in roles that demanded strategic planning, stakeholder engagement, and innovative community outreach programs.

With deep roots in our local community and a profound understanding of the historical significance of our neighborhoods, Sharonica brings a unique perspective that will be invaluable in preserving and enhancing the cherished heritage. Having grown up on Hilton Head Island, she has a deep-seated appreciation for the treasures, cultural landmarks, and rich history that define our community.

As Principal Planner for Historic Neighborhoods, Sharonica will lead in the Town's efforts to ensure effective public policies for the Gullah Geechee neighborhoods, implement Gullah history and cultural awareness programs as well as oversee the continued efforts and refinement of implemented recommendations (i.e. Historic Neighborhood Permitting and Design Studios, Family Subdivision and Family Compound implementation, and

Heir's Property and Delinquent Tax support programs). Overall, Sharonica will serve as an important Gullah community liaison.

ATTACHMENTS

No Attachments



TOWN OF HILTON HEAD ISLAND

Gullah Geechee Land & Cultural Preservation Task Force

TO: Gullah Geechee Land and Cultural Preservation Task Force
FROM: Alexis Cook, Principal Planner
VIA: Missy Luick, Director of Planning
VIA: Shawn Colin, Assistant Town Manager – Community Development
DATE: May 6, 2024
SUBJECT: Historic Neighborhood Permitting & Design Studio Report

SUMMARY

Residents Served, October 2021- April 2024

- 70 Total Design Studio requests
 - 38 completed cases thus far
 - 1 new case in progress included in this month's report and 1 completed case that has transitioned and applied for a Family Compound Application.
 - 29 active projects
 - 17 on-hold
 - 13 Waiting on more information from applicant
 - 4 Waiting on Town CIP for program implementation
 - 12 in-progress, active, under review, working with applicant
 - 3 withdrawn projects & 2 duplicate from 2022

Issues Addressed

Staff have assisted residents with a wide range of issues:

- Drafted concept site designs.
- Discussed resolutions to access issues, including access relocation.
- Drafted concept site access designs (to create or relocate access easements or rights-of-way)
- Drafted landscape plans meeting LMO requirements.
- Discussed application requirements for Family Subdivision, Family Compound, Subdivision and Small Residential Plan Review applications.
- Discussed density requirements.
- Assisted with street name applications.
- Discussed property line boundary adjustments and the Plat Stamp application process.
- Discussed conversion of Development Plan Review applications to Family Compound applications and conversion of conventional subdivisions to Family Subdivisions.
- Corrected addresses.
- Discussed flood elevation requirements.

Collaboration

Providing these services required collaboration with Town staff from several departments, including Development Review & Zoning, Urban Design, Stormwater, Engineering, Natural

Resources, Legal, Building Inspections, Capital Improvement Projects Division, and Fire Rescue.

Staff also collaborates with outside agencies and nonprofits, including Palmetto Electric, Hilton Head Public Service District, Deep Well, Heritage Library, Habitat for Humanity, and Lowcountry Gullah Foundation.

Note: To preserve residents' anonymity, details of the services provided are described generally.

Case studies discussion will include a presentation on family compound and family subdivision application.



TOWN OF HILTON HEAD ISLAND

Gullah Geechee Land & Cultural Preservation Task Force

TO: Gullah Geechee Land and Cultural Preservation Task Force
FROM: Chris Yates, Building Official
VIA: Missy Luick, Director of Planning
CC: Shawn Colin, Assistant Town Manager – Community Development
DATE: May 6, 2024
SUBJECT: Home Safety and Repair Program and Sewer Connection Program Update

SUMMARY

As of April 12, 2024, the Home Safety and Repair Program Activity is:

- 134 applications received.
 - 9 applications did not meet the income qualifications.
 - 3 applications were withdrawn.
 - 21 applications need additional information.
 - 4 applications are currently under income verification review.
- 97 completed applications received and approved.
 - 27 permitted jobs have been completed for a total of \$264,375.94.
 - 11 tree-pruning or removal - \$33,475.
 - 16 home repairs - \$230,900.94.
 - 22 jobs pending/under contract for a total estimated value of \$330,522.85.
- Total funding spent or committed to date - \$594,898.79.
- The balance of funding remaining to execute projects is \$5,101.21.
- 55 remaining qualified projects (*Please note this number includes dual applications.*)

As for the Sewer Connection Program Activity there have been:

- 44 applications received.
 - 1 application was withdrawn.
 - 1 application was not qualified.
 - 14 jobs pending approval.
 - 24 jobs have been completed and paid in the total amount of \$242,347.
 - 4 jobs to be scheduled with estimated costs of \$55,960.
- Total funding spent or committed to date - \$298,307.

The balance of funding remaining to execute projects is \$1,693.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Home Safety Repair Project Location Map
2. Sewer Connection Project Location Map

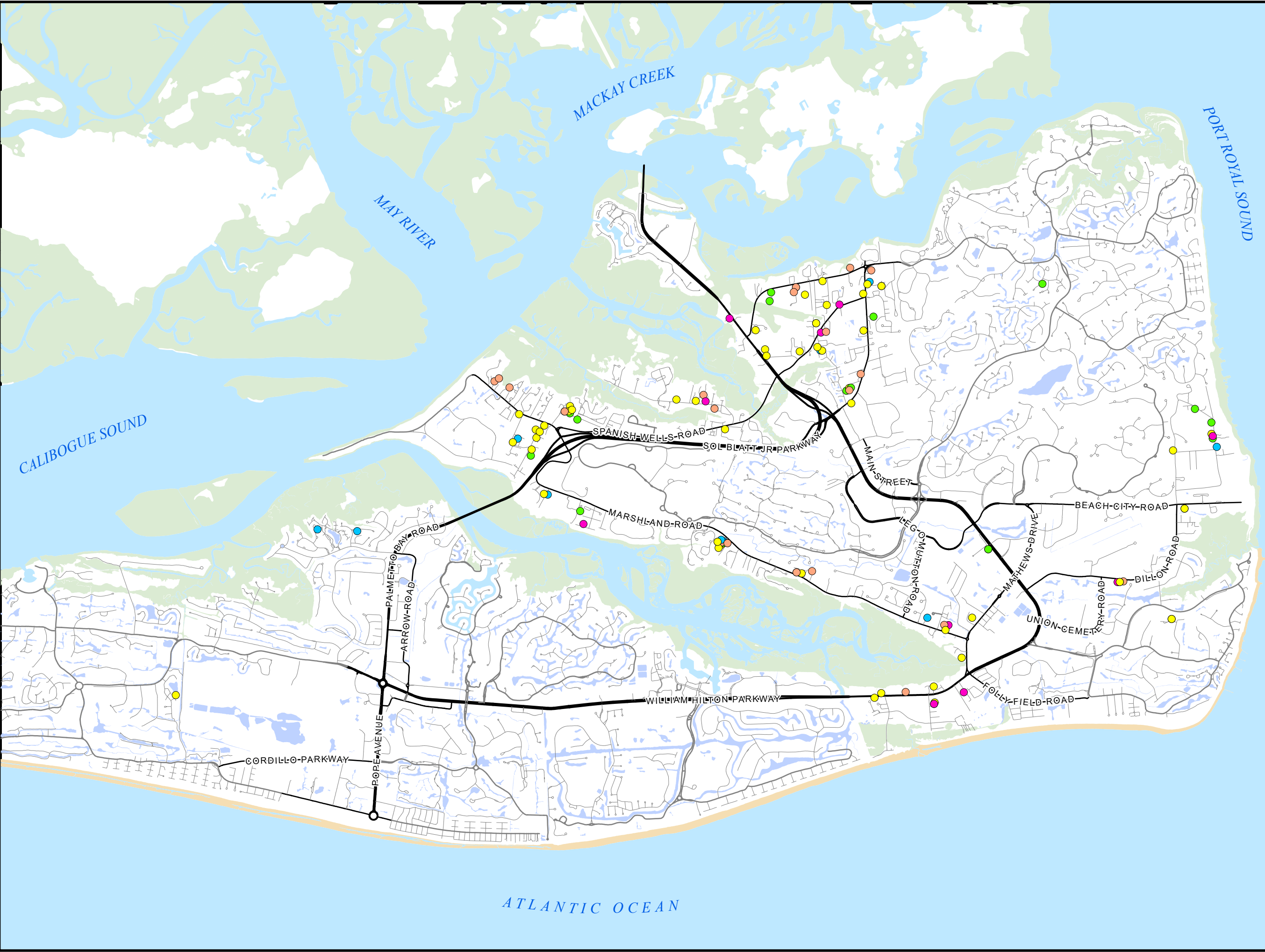
Home Safety Repair
Project Locations

Legend

Application Status

- Complete-27
- Under Contract-20
- Pending-2
- Approved-97
- In Review-4
- Additional Info-21

*Colored markers indicate areas of program utilization, signifying multiple applicants.



TOWN OF HILTON HEAD ISLAND
ONE TOWN CENTER COURT
HILTON HEAD ISLAND, S.C. 29928
PHONE (843) 341- 4600

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TOWN OF HILTON HEAD ISLAND

Gullah Geechee Land & Cultural Preservation Task Force

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2. Sewer Connection Project Location Map

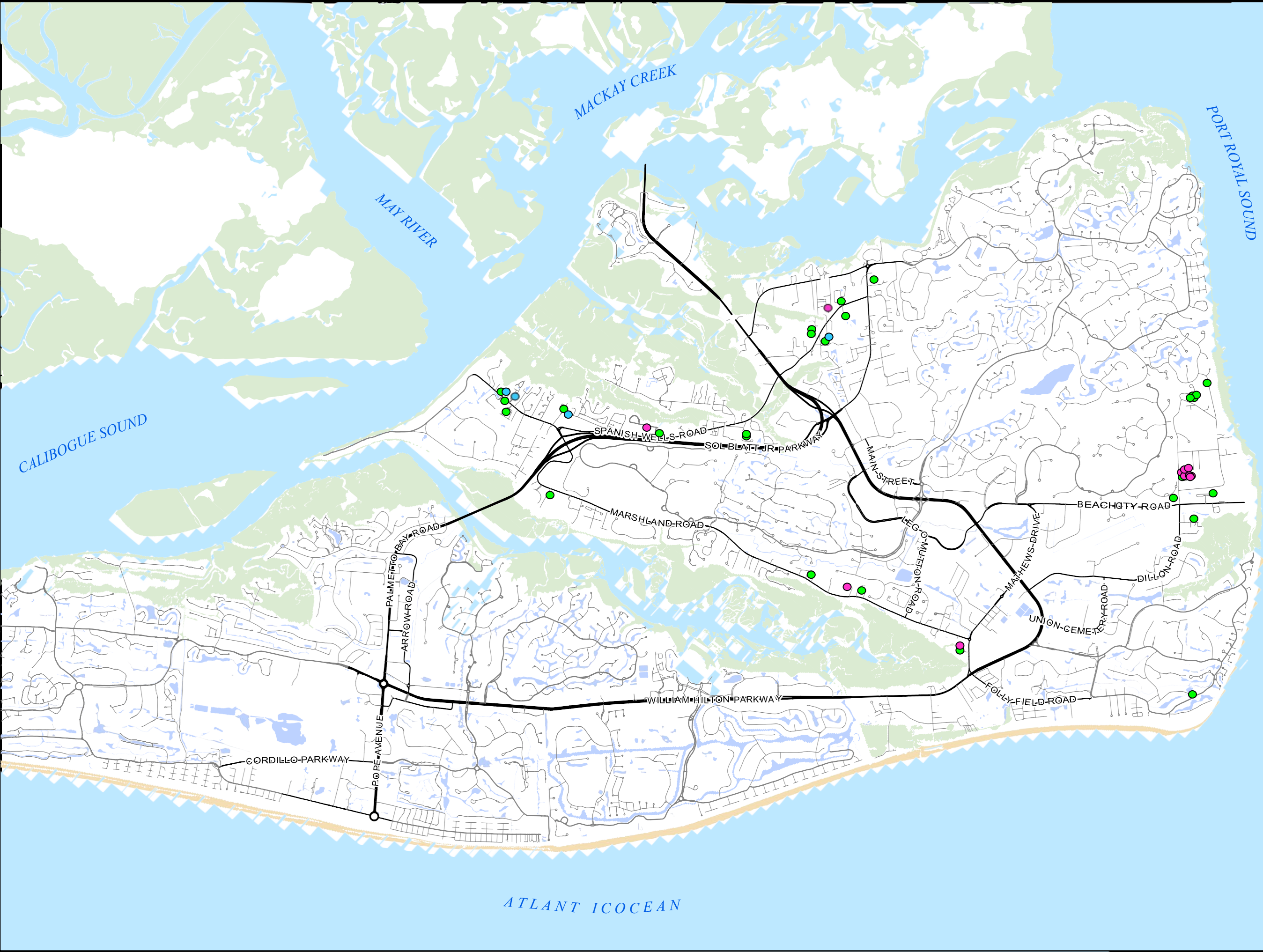
Sewer Connection
Project Locations

Legend

Application Status

- Complete-24
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TOWN OF HILTON HEAD ISLAND

Gullah Geechee Land & Cultural Preservation Task Force

TO: Gullah Geechee Land and Cultural Preservation Task Force
FROM: Thomas Boxley, Executive Director Gullah Geechee Historic Neighborhood CDC
VIA: Missy Luick, Director of Planning
VIA: Shawn Colin, Assistant Town Manager – Community Development
DATE: May 6, 2024
SUBJECT: Gullah Geechee Historic Neighborhood CDC Update

SUMMARY

Thomas Boxley, Executive Director Gullah Geechee Historic Neighborhood CDC, will provide a verbal update during the May 6, 2024, meeting on the Gullah Geechee Historic Neighborhood CDC progress.



TOWN OF HILTON HEAD ISLAND

Gullah Geechee Land & Cultural Preservation Task Force

TO: Gullah Geechee Land and Cultural Preservation Task Force
FROM: Thomas Boxley, Executive Director Gullah Geechee Historic Neighborhood CDC
VIA: Missy Luick, Director of Planning
VIA: Shawn Colin, Assistant Town Manager – Community Development
DATE: May 6, 2024
SUBJECT: Bridge Project Status; Stoney Neighborhood

SUMMARY

Thomas Boxley, Executive Director Gullah Geechee Historic Neighborhood CDC, will provide a verbal update during the May 6, 2024, meeting on the Bridge Project status regarding the Stoney Neighborhood.



TOWN OF HILTON HEAD ISLAND

Gullah Geechee Land & Cultural Preservation Task Force

TO: Gullah Geechee Land and Cultural Preservation Task Force
FROM: Luana Graves Sellars
VIA: Missy Luick, Director of Planning
VIA: Shawn Colin, Assistant Town Manager – Community Development
DATE: May 6, 2024
SUBJECT: Land Preservation Update

SUMMARY

Ms. Luana Graves Sellars, Founder of Lowcountry Gullah Foundation, will give a presentation to the following topics:

1. Upcoming Workshops
 - a. June 8, 2024, Family Tree Research
 - b. July 27, 2024, Free Will Clinic
 - c. August 24, 2024, Beaufort County Treasurer- Maria Walls
 - d. October 19, 2024, Heirs Property/ Forestry
2. Redemption Properties
3. Direct Mail Postcard

ATTACHMENTS

1. HHI Heirs Property Workshops
2. HGLPP Flyer (Direct Mail Postcard)



HILTON HEAD HEIRS PROPERTY WORKSHOPS

Cherry Hill School
209 Dillon Road
Saturday 11 am to 1 pm

APRIL 27 HEIRS PROPERTY / FORESTRY

FAMILY TREE RESEARCH

JUN 8

JULY 27

FREE WILL CLINIC

BEAUFORT COUNTY
TREASURER - MARIA WALLS

AUG 24

OCT 19

HEIRS PROPERTY / FORESTRY

For More Information email gullahland@gmail.com or
Visit our website for additional workshops at Penn Center
WWW.LOWCOUNTRYGULLAHFOUNDATION.ORG

What is Heirs' Property?

Heirs' property is land that has been passed down through generations from family member to family member, often without it being property deeded. The original purchaser, did not have a will or was unable to deed the property to their descendants. The purchaser, any number of years later, might have several, if not hundreds of heirs' who have ownership rights towards the property, but without a clear title or 'fractured' title. The property can be owned or lived on for generations, yet if the land goes up for sale or needs to be divided, the legality of who can do what with the property comes into play.

Example of Descendants



HISTORIC GULLAH LAND PRESERVATION PROGRAM



historicgullahlandpreservation.org



gullahland@gmail.com

HISTORIC GULLAH LAND PRESERVATION PROGRAM



213 William Hilton Parkway
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Strategic Partners

- ✓ The Center for Heirs' Property
- ✓ The Heritage Library Foundation
- ✓ SCORE
- ✓ Heirs' Property Attorneys

For an application or more heirs' property information and resources, visit

www.historicgullahlandpreservation.org

The Lowcountry Gullah Foundation is a nonprofit 501(c)3 organization.