



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: May 6, 2024

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