



Town of Hilton Head Island

Gullah Geechee Historic Neighborhoods Community Development Corporation Meeting

**Wednesday, May 15, 2024, 10:00 AM
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 February 21, 2024
 - b. Regular Meeting Minutes of March 18, 2024
- 4. Appearance by Citizens**
- 5. Unfinished Business**
 - a. Discussion of the Gullah Geechee Historic Neighborhoods Community Development Corporation's Position on the William Hilton Parkway Gateway Corridor Project - Thomas Boxley, Executive Director for the Gullah Geechee Historic Neighborhoods Community Development Corporation
- 6. New Business**
 - a. Discussion of the William Hilton Parkway Gateway Corridor Project Timeline - Thomas Boxley, Executive Director for the Gullah Geechee Historic Neighborhoods Community Development Corporation
- 7. Adjournment**

FOIA Compliance: Public notification of this workshop 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 HISTORIC
NEIGHBORHOODS COMMUNITY
DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
COMMITTEE MEETING
Wednesday, February 21, 2024 – 10:00 AM
Minutes**

Call to Order

Chair Peterson called the meeting to order at 10:02 am.

Board Members Present: Chair Shirley “Peaches” Peterson; David Ames; Alex Brown, Terry Brubaker (via Microsoft Teams); Pastor Louis Johnson and Andre White

Council Members Present: Tammy Becker, Ward 4

Adoption of the Agenda

Mr. Ames moved to approve the agenda as presented. Mr. Johnson seconded. Motion carried 5-0 (Mr. White was not present at the time of the vote).

Approval of the Minutes

Mr. Ames made a motion to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of November 13, 2023. Mr. Johnson seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0 (Mr. White was not present at the time of the vote).

Mr. Ames made a motion to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of November 30, 2023. Mr. Johnson seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0 (Mr. White was not present at the time of the vote).

Appearance by Citizens

There were no comments made.

Unfinished Business

Review, Consideration, and Approve the Fiscal Year 2024-2026 Gullah Geechee Historic Neighborhoods Community Development Corporation Strategic Plan – Thomas Boxley, Executive Director for the Gullah Geechee Historic Neighborhoods Community Development Corporation

Thomas Boxley, Executive Director, presented the Board with proposed revisions to the strategic plan discussed at the previous meeting, tailored for both the Board and the community in attendance. Mr. Boxley emphasized his commitment to ensuring that the Strategic Plan remains in line with the purpose and mission outlined in the organizing documents of the Gullah Geechee Historic Neighborhoods Community Development Corporation (GGHNCD), as well as with the Town’s Fiscal Year 2023-2025 Strategic Plan.

The Board and members of the public expressed positive feedback on the fiscal year 2024-2026 Strategic

Plan. David Ames, Board Member, noted that he had numerous discussions with Mr. Boxley regarding the plan and appreciated that his input had been incorporated. He expressed his support and comfort in approving the plan. Other Board Members echoed sentiments of support for the Gullah Geechee Historic Neighborhoods Community Development Corporation's Strategic Plan, recognizing it as a valuable tool for achieving the organization's mission and better serving the community. They highlighted the collaborative effort during the drafting phase, which set a positive tone for the final version. The comprehensive nature of the plan, which reflects extensive collaboration and consideration of the organization's strengths, weaknesses, threats, and opportunities, was also acknowledged.

The Board commended Mr. Boxley for his dedication and vision in crafting a plan that aligns with the core values of the organization and empowers meaningful impact. With the strategic plan as a guide, Mr. Boxley expressed confidence in the organization's ability to navigate future endeavors, foster sustainable growth, and advocate for the preservation and advancement of Gullah Geechee heritage and communities.

Mr. Ames made a motion to approve the Fiscal Year 2024-2026 Gullah Geechee Historic Neighborhoods Community Development Corporation Strategic Plan as presented. Mr. Brubaker seconded the motion. Motion carried 6-0.

Chair Peterson asked for public comment.

No citizens chose to speak at that time.

Mr. Ames inquired about Mr. Boxley providing an update to the Board regarding the Gullah Geechee Historic Neighborhoods Community Development Corporation's (GGHNCD) involvement in the William Hilton Parkway Gateway Corridor Project. Mr. Boxley informed the Board that he had been actively engaging with property owners along the corridor to understand their needs and concerns about the project. These discussions have been conducted privately to facilitate a comprehensive understanding of the various perspectives involved.

Mr. Boxley further mentioned that plans for a larger meeting involving the Town, County, and State were in progress. The objective of this meeting is to provide a platform for all stakeholders to voice their opinions and contribute to the decision-making process. Despite ongoing discussions spanning over six years, Boxley emphasized that the GGHNCD's efforts are part of a collaborative initiative involving multiple entities. He underscored the importance of effective dialogue among all parties involved, highlighting that the GGHNCD is not the sole driving force behind the project. This update underscores the GGHNCD's commitment to inclusive decision-making and collaborative efforts aimed at addressing the needs of the community and stakeholders affected by the William Hilton Parkway Gateway Corridor Project. Mr. Boxley stated that the proposed community meeting will take place within the next two weeks and correspondence will go out about that through the Town's Communications Department. This now is an ongoing conversation that will continue to take place with Mr. Boxley updating the Board as needed.

Chair Peterson asked for public comment on the topic.

Daniel Anthony: Mr. Anthony spoke to the Board regarding helping them get the word out about the community meeting and utilizing the Jonesville Preservation Society to do so.

Dr. Terry Grant Robinson: Mrs. Grant Robinson spoke to the Board about the value of Native Island property, financial planning, and how best to communicate with the older Native Island residents.

Chairman's Report

Chair Peterson commended both Mr. Boxley and Ms. Ervin for their ongoing dedication and efforts. She highlighted the value of their regular meetings, expressing that these sessions have provided valuable insight into the extensive work Mr. Boxley undertakes daily, even extending to weekends, regarding the William Hilton Parkway Gateway Corridor Project. Peterson emphasized that the project is not solely the responsibility of Mr. Boxley but is a collective effort involving all Board Members, the Town Council, and property owners in the Stoney Community.

This acknowledgment underscores the collaborative nature of the project and the importance of active involvement from all stakeholders. It reinforces the notion that successful outcomes are the result of collective commitment and cooperation, with each party contributing their expertise and resources towards a common goal. Chair Peterson's remarks serve to motivate continued engagement and collaboration among all involved parties, fostering a sense of shared responsibility and purpose towards the successful realization of the project's objectives.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 11:01 am.



**Town of Hilton Head Island
GULLAH GEECHEE HISTORIC
NEIGHBORHOODS COMMUNITY
DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
COMMITTEE MEETING
Monday, March 18, 2024 – 2:00 PM
Minutes**

Call to Order

Chair Peterson called the meeting to order at 2:00 pm.

Board Members Present: Chair Shirley “Peaches” Peterson; David Ames; Alex Brown; Pastor Louis Johnson, and Terry Brubaker (via Microsoft Teams)

Board Members Absent: Andre White

Adoption of the Agenda

Mr. Ames moved to approve the agenda as presented. Mr. Brown seconded. Motion carried 5-0.

Approval of the Minutes

Mr. Ames made a motion to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of December 6, 2023. Mr. Brown seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0.

Mr. Ames made a motion to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of January 17, 2024. Mr. Brown seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0.

Appearance by Citizens

There were no comments made.

New Business

Discussion and Review of Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Gullah Geechee Historic Neighborhoods Community Development Corporation Proposed Budget – Thomas Boxley, Executive Director for the Gullah Geechee Historic Neighborhoods Community Development Corporation

Thomas Boxley, the Executive Director, presented the Fiscal Year 2025-2026 operating budget to the Board, emphasizing the grant funding received from the State and Beaufort County, which has thus far remained unused and absorbed by the town. The proposed budget, effective from July 1, includes typical operating line items such as Mr. Boxley’s salary, professional services, and other necessary expenses. Additionally, it allocates a line item to support property owners along the Stoney Corridor in anticipation of the William Hilton Parkway Gateway Corridor Project. Grant and incentive programs related to real estate and small business lending, as outlined in the Fiscal Year 2024-2026 Strategic Plan, are also included.

The budget breakdown consists of Personnel & Benefits, operating expenses, professional services, grant & incentives loans, capital outlay & land acquisition, and project expenses & contingency. The total proposed budget for Fiscal Year 2025 is \$3,405,355.

Chair Peterson invited comments from the Board.

Alex Brown, Board Member, (Chair of the Finance & Administrative Committee for the Town), shared insights from the committee's review of agencies requesting funding. He mentioned an applicant, Blaquity, focusing on small businesses within the African American community, whose request was denied. However, Mr. Brown suggested that if there are entities in need of such services, the Board could potentially offer assistance in the form of a scholarship. Mr. Boxley noted that this aligns with the grant and loan program line item, wherein the GGHNCDC supports small businesses like Blaquity through properly vetted business plans and loan applications. Moreover, Mr. Brown addressed land acquisition, advocating for the GGHNCDC to be proactive in purchasing land and potentially utilizing funding from the Town for this purpose. Mr. Boxley shared ongoing communication with Gwen Chambers, the Director of Blaquity, regarding potential future projects. These discussions reflect the Board's commitment to strategic planning and resource allocation to support both the organization's mission and the broader community's needs.

David Ames, Board Member, raised concerns about the adequacy of the \$500,000 allocated for incentive loans and grants. Mr. Boxley expressed his belief that this amount would serve as a good starting point for the fiscal year, acknowledging the potential influx of applicants once the programs are advertised. There was also discussion about seeking insights from other local entities that have provided small business loans to inform the GGHNCDC's approach. Chair Peterson suggested consulting with the Community Foundation of the Lowcountry for additional reference and experience.

Other Board Members expressed positive sentiments regarding the initial proposed budget, recognizing its potential to make a significant impact on the Native Island Community. The majority of the budget allocation towards grant & incentives loans, and capital outlay & land acquisition was particularly noted for its potential reach and effectiveness. In response to requests from the Board, Mr. Boxley agreed to provide bi-monthly budgetary updates to ensure transparency and accountability in financial management. These discussions underscore the Board's commitment to prudent financial planning and maximizing the impact of the GGHNCDC's resources on the community. It reflects a collaborative effort to address concerns and explore opportunities for improvement in the organization's financial strategies.

Mr. Ames made a motion to approve the Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Gullah Geechee Historic Neighborhoods Community Development Corporation Proposed Budget totaling \$3,405,355. Mr. Brubaker seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0.

Chair Peterson asked for public comment.

Yolwanda Cohen McKinney: Ms. Cohen Mckinney asked if there was any public input from the Native Island Community regarding the needs of the community at large in regards to the proposed buget.

Louise Cohen: Ms. Cohen asked how she can familiarize herself with the functions of the GGHNCDC and its overall services.

Belinda Stewart Young: Will the GGHNCDC offer grants as an option as opposed to loans and if so what would that consist of?

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 2:41 pm.



TOWN OF HILTON HEAD ISLAND

Gullah Geechee Historic Neighborhoods Community Development Corporation

TO: Gullah Geechee Historic Neighborhoods Community Development Corporation
FROM: Thomas Boxley, Executive Director
CC: Marc Orlando, Town Manager
DATE: May 15, 2024
SUBJECT: Discussion of the Gullah Geechee Historic Neighborhoods Community Development Corporation's Position on the William Hilton Parkway Gateway Corridor Project

RECOMMENDATION:

The Gullah Geechee Historic Neighborhoods Community Development Corporation will develop a position regarding the William Hilton Parkway Gateway Corridor Project that aligns with the property owner's needs. This position will be submitted to Town Council for their consideration in the Municipal Consent process.

BACKGROUND:

The purpose of this discussion regarding the proposed expansion of the William Hilton Parkway Gateway Corridor Project is to present information gathered from impacted property owners in the Stoney Community and to recommend mitigation strategies.

SUMMARY:

Over the past seven months, the Gullah Geechee Historic Neighborhoods Community Development Corporation has been actively engaged in collaborative discussions with property owners in the Stoney Community along the William Hilton Parkway/Highway 278 corridor. The primary objective has been to develop a comprehensive strategy and action plan aimed at mitigating potential adverse impacts. It is imperative to underscore that these discussions with each property owner are treated with the utmost confidentiality and are ongoing. Mitigation approaches are being tailored to each property owner's specific circumstances, reflecting the situation's nuanced nature. For this document, 'mitigation' refers to measures to minimize or alleviate the impact of any adverse events. Attached are the initial general findings resulting from this discussion.

Attachments:

1. William Hilton Parkway Gateway Corridor Project-Mitigation Strategy (Proposed)

Gullah Geechee Historic Neighborhoods Community Development Corporation

William Hilton Parkway Gateway Corridor- Mitigation Strategy (Proposed)

Over the course of the last 7 months the CDC has been working with property owners in the Stoney community along the William Hilton Parkway/Highway 278 corridor to assess needs and the impact of the proposed project. As a result of multiple meetings and discussions with property owners, we have collectively worked to develop a preliminary strategy. It is important to note that discussions with individual property owners are **confidential and are ongoing**. Also, the final plan of action will be determined by the final proposed highway design. Final design information will inform the right-of-way acquisition requirements. Mitigation will look different for each property owner. For purposes of this document, mitigation is defined as reducing and or minimizing the degree of loss or harm from the occurrence of any undesirable event. The following represents general preliminary findings and strategies.

Right of Way Acquisition

Based on the initial design concept, right of way acquisition will be required to expand the current roadway by one lane in each direction. The current proposal requires approximately ten acres of total acquisition to complete as designed. The CDC, Town of Hilton Head, and Beaufort County are currently proposing design alternatives that would reduce the amount of right of way required to complete the proposed expansion project.

Cost: TBD

Property Owners Mitigation and Improvements

Some property owners that are subjected to impact desire to maintain ownership of their property. In some instances, there are residential units that are impacted. Funding necessary for sound/noise mitigation to include weatherization, tree planting, building of sound mitigating structures that align with the LMO as well as drainage, grading and property access improvements. The CDC, in collaboration with the Town of Hilton Head Design Studio will work to develop solutions with individual property owners.

Cost: TBD

Property Owner's Safe Access

There are property owners that will need improved safe access to their property. Existing conditions are present unsafe ingress/egress for property owners. The widening of the highway presents increased access safety issues. For these property owners we propose the development of alternative routes of access.

Cost: TBD

Property Acquisition

To achieve the goal of historic neighborhood stabilization and property preservation within the Stoney community it will be necessary for the CDC to acquire property that becomes available for sale. This will allow the CDC to develop an asset base to be utilized for future economic development purposes while securing parcels for future Gullah utilization, business partnerships, joint ventures, and ownership.

Cost: TBD

Economic Sustainability

Mitigation should be considered not in terms of immediate impacts but rather what can be done that positively impacts property owners from both the financial and the quality-of-life perspectives for generations. One component of a comprehensive funding package could be the creation and implementation of a tax increment finance district focused on the Stoney community. This localized tool would provide a 25-year financing model in support of specific development in the defined area.



TOWN OF HILTON HEAD ISLAND

Gullah Geechee Historic Neighborhoods Community Development Corporation

TO: Gullah Geechee Historic Neighborhoods Community Development Corporation
FROM: Thomas Boxley, Executive Director
CC: Marc Orlando, Town Manager
DATE: May 15, 2024
SUBJECT: Discussion of the William Hilton Parkway Gateway Corridor Remaining Project Timeline

RECOMMENDATION:

Based on the discussion of the William Hilton Parkway Gateway Corridor project, it is recommended that the Board review a detailed project timeline outlining the remaining milestones and key deliverables. This timeline incorporates input from relevant stakeholders, including the Town, County, State, and property owners. It was previously recommended that the Gullah Geechee Historic Neighborhoods Community Development Corporation (GGHNCD) provide regular progress updates throughout the remainder of the project. This approach will ensure the successful delivery of a mitigation strategy that will help inform Municipal Consent.

BACKGROUND:

The Town of Hilton Head Island seated the Board of Directors for the GGHNCD and subsequently the Executive Director of the Gullah Geechee Historic Neighborhoods Community Development Corporation in 2023. This organization immediately took on the task of the William Hilton Parkway Gateway Corridor Project. The attached timeline represents the remaining steps in the process that will eventually lead to Town Council's decision regarding Municipal Consent.

SUMMARY:

The following timeline represents the pathway forward leading to Town Council's Municipal Consent decision.

Attachments:

1. William Hilton Parkway Gateway Corridor Project-Critical Path Timeline

Gullah Geechee Historic Neighborhoods Community Development Corporation

William Hilton Parkway Gateway Corridor Project- Critical Path Timeline

The following dates represent the critical path forward to the municipal consent vote by Town Council. These dates are tentative and are subject to change.

May 1, 2024 – Meeting with Beaufort County, State Department of Transportation, Town of Hilton Head Island, GGHNCDC – design alternatives presented

May 8, 2024 – William Hilton Parkway Gateway Corridor Independent Review Advisory Committee Meeting – Presentation of findings by consultant

Week of May 13-17, 2024 – Town of Hilton Head, Gullah Geechee Historic Neighborhoods Community Development Corporation, South Carolina Department of Transportation, Beaufort County – Ongoing communication and discussions

Week of May 20-24, 2024 – Town Council Workshops

June 12, 2024 – William Hilton Parkway Gateway Corridor Independent Review Advisory Committee Meeting

June 2024 (Date/Time yet to be determined) – Town Council Meeting – Possible Municipal Consent and Memorandum of Understanding agenda items