



The Town of Hilton Head Island  
**Gullah Geechee Land & Cultural  
Preservation Task Force  
Special Meeting Minutes**

February 1, 2021, 9:00 a.m. Virtual Meeting

**Present from the Task Force:** Lavon Stevens, Chairman; Ibrahim Abdul-Malik; Martha Davis; Palmer Simmons; Theresa White (joined the meeting at 9:28 a.m.)

**Absent from the Task Force:** Caroline McVitty; Todd Theodore; Joyce Wright; Shani Green

**Present from Town Council:** Tom Lennox; Alex Brown; Tamara Becker

**Others Present:** Peter Kristian, Planning Commission Chairman

**Present from Town Staff:** Sheryse DuBose, Historic Neighborhoods Preservation Administrator; Jennifer Ray; Interim Community Development Director; Teri Lewis, Deputy Community Development Director; Diane Busch, Staff Attorney; Cindaia Ervin, Finance Assistant; Teresa Haley; Senior Administrative Assistant; Vicki Pfannenschmidt, Temporary Administrative Assistant

---

**1. Call to Order**

Chairman Stevens called the meeting to order at 9:04 a.m.

**2. 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.

**3. Roll Call** – See as noted above.

**4. Approval of Agenda**

Chairman Stevens asked for a motion to approve the agenda as presented. Mr. Abdul-Malik moved to approve. Mr. Simmons seconded. By way of roll call, the motion passed by a vote of 5-0-0.

**5. Approval of Minutes** – July 20, 2020, August 6, 2020, August 24, 2020, and September 1, 2020

Chairman Stevens asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the following meetings: July 20, 2020, August 6, 2020, August 24, 2020, and September 1, 2020. Ms. Davis moved to approve. Mr. Abdul-Malik seconded. By way of roll call, the motion passed by a vote of 5-0-0.

## **6. Citizen Comments**

Public comments concerning agenda items were to be submitted electronically via the Town's Open Town Hall portal. The portal closed at Noon, Friday, January 29, 2021, prior to the scheduled meeting. Comments made by the public were provided to the Task Force and made a part of the official record.

Citizens were provided the option to sign up for public comment participation by phone during the meeting. The public comment period closed at Noon on Friday, January 29, 2021, prior to the scheduled meeting. There were no requests to phone in with public comment.

## **7. Discussion Items**

### **a. Review Progress and Next Steps for Historic Neighborhoods Overlay District LMO Amendments**

Dr. DuBose updated the Task Force members on the progress to date. She reviewed the steps completed regarding the Overlay District. She stated that the Task Force met in July, August and September of 2020 and they voted to move the amendments forward that were associated with the Overlay District. The amendments were presented to the LMO Committee in September, 2020 and recommendations were made by the LMO Committee and moved them on to the Planning Commission in October of 2020. She stated the Public Planning Committee met on January 12, 2021 to review the recommendations of the Planning Commission. She noted the concern of the size of the focus area and increased density. She said staff will provide an update to the Public Planning Committee on February 3, 2021 and discuss flexibility in terms of family compounds and subdivisions and narrowing the focus area. Dr. DuBose added the Public Planning Committee will meet again on February 25, 2021 to define a streamlined plan on how to move forward.

The Task Force made comments and inquiries regarding: narrowing the focus and concern that the project will be piecemealed; where they are in the process to measure progress; the need to continue addressing all issues; findings and challenges throughout the process; the need for case studies for the Task Force to review; education of the Gullah community and public to address issues at hand; and the need for legal language to define the historic neighborhood.

After discussion of the above, Dr. DuBose noted one focus for the Public Planning Committee is the family subdivision and family compound definitions. She stated she will update the Task Force regarding progress.

### **b. Next Top Priority Projects**

Dr. DuBose stated a quarterly review will be provided to the Task Force regarding projects and the status of such. She noted the two determining factors regarding projects as available budget and consideration of safe

distancing. Dr. DuBose informed the Task Force of a few of the upcoming projects such as: education programs for the community; establishing a fund for clearing titles and assisting with property taxes; education of the Gullah residents regarding the Historic Overlay District process and progress; sharing information with the Task Force members and the community at-large; working with the Heritage Library in conducting a virtual genealogy clinic to assist those dealing with heirs property issues. She noted she will provide details to the Task Force as the projects advance and asked that they share the information with the community with the goal of trying to expand outreach.

Mr. Stevens emphasized the need for staff to communicate with the Task Force going forward.

**c. Delinquent Property Taxes for 2021**

Dr. Dubose briefed the Task Force regarding the 2020 delinquent property taxes noting that out of 145 cases, all had been resolved with the exception of three (3). Ms. White stated she thought all were resolved and asked for a list of the three (3) so she can follow up. She noted there were still funds through her agency and, if needed, they could assist. Dr. DuBose said she would provide the information to the Task Force.

Dr. DuBose reported January 15, 2021 was the deadline for taxes due this year. She informed the Task Force she would be working with Beaufort County to generate a list of delinquent property taxes and, when available, she will provide it to the Task Force members.

**d. Adoption of 2021 Meeting Schedule**

Chairman Stevens asked for a motion to approve the 2021 Meeting Schedule as presented. Mr. Abdul-Malik moved to approve. Mr. Simmons seconded. By way of roll call the motion passed with a vote of 4-0-1 (Ms. White abstained).

**8. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 10:52 a.m.

**Submitted by:** Vicki Pfannenschmidt, Secretary

**Approved:** March 1, 2021