



Town of Hilton Head Island
Public Planning Committee Special Meeting
January 12, 2021 at 9:00 a.m. Virtual Meeting
MEETING MINUTES

Present from the Committee: Chairman David Ames, Tamara Becker, Alex Brown, Glenn Stanford,

Others Present from Town Council: Tom Lennox

Present from Town Staff: Shawn Colin, Interim Assistant Town Manager; Teri Lewis, Deputy Director of Community Development; Jennifer Ray, Interim Director of Community Development; Jayme Lopko, Senior Planner; Sheryse DuBose, Historic Neighborhoods Preservation Administrator; Teresa Haley, Senior Administrative Assistant, Vicki Pfannenschmidt, Temporary Administrative Assistant

1. Call to Order

Chairman Ames called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

2. Freedom of Information Act Compliance – Public notification of this meeting has been published, posted, and distributed in compliance with the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act and the Town of Hilton Head Island requirements.

3. Roll Call – See as noted above.

4. Approval of Agenda

Chairman Ames asked for a motion to approve the agenda. Mr. Stanford moved to approve. Ms. Becker seconded. By way of roll call, the motion passed with a vote of 4-0-0.

5. Citizen Comments

Public comments concerning agenda items were to be submitted electronically via the Town's Open Town Hall portal. All comments were provided to the Committee for review and made part of the official record. Citizens were also provided the option to comment on agenda items during the meeting by phone.

6. Unfinished Business

a. Review and recommendation on Workforce Housing – Bonus Density LMO Amendments

Ms. Lopko presented the item. Staff recommends the Public Planning Committee (PPC) review the proposed Workforce Housing (WFH) Land Management Ordinance (LMO) amendments related to bonus density and forward a recommendation of approval to Town Council.

The Committee made comments and inquiries regarding: the inclusion of manufactured home parks; number of trailers permitted on a three acre parcel; would more density mean dedicated lots; concern that every effort is made that needs are met; if approved, a request for follow-up reports be presented to Council; can property owners combine land to total three acres and apply; confirmation that this gives incentive to developers to come forward

and apply for the program; discussion of the 9% 2021 Tax Credit Program and eligibility and concern that there are no rules violations; acknowledgement that even with a density bonus program approval it will require some kind of participation beyond the LMO amendments such as waiver of impact fees and housing trusts; acknowledgement that this is a partial step in solving the problem; discussion and concern of dormitory living and group homes being part of the program; expanding the program to include those that are providing affordable housing at this time; adding group living and dormitories as exclusions to the program and a modification of the definition of group living; with approval of this it opens doors for more productive conversation for viable and effective affordable housing.

After lengthy discussion and questions to staff, Mr. Stanford moved to approve the proposed Workforce Housing (WFH) Land Management Ordinance (LMO) amendments related to bonus density and forward a recommendation of approval to Town Council. Mr. Brown seconded. By way of roll call, the motion passed with a vote of 3-1-0. (Roll: Ames, Stanford, Brown – for the motion; Becker against; none abstained.)

Mr. Stanford moved to amend the original motion to modify the definition of group living to include dormitories and add a condition that properties in the RM4 District developed for group living use are not eligible to participate in the Workforce Housing Program. By way of roll call, the motion passed with a vote of 3-1-0. (Roll: Ames, Stanford, Brown – for the motion; Becker against; none abstained.)

b. Review and discussion on Historic Neighborhoods Preservation Overlay (HNP-O) District

Dr. DuBose updated the Committee members on the progress to date. She reviewed the steps completed to date 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 Committee and moved them on to the Planning Commission in October of 2020. She stated the documents included in the packet are the recommendations of the Planning Commission. Dr. DuBose commented on the concern of the size of the focus area and increased density with that in mind requested a recommendation from the Public Planning Committee on how to move forward.

Chair Ames commented he has been working closely with the Native Island Community to create a pathway to economic sustainability. In conjunction with that he feels the need for a broad educational program to bring the entire community up to speed with the goals. He stated the goal discussed is to preserve the presence of Gullah residents on the Island and through them connections to their historic culture.

Mr. Stanford stated he sees the need for this type of amendment but has concerns. He said relaxing density and setbacks may not be the best solution for heir's property issues due to State law requirements.

Mr. Brown noted this project has been a long time coming and pointed out the need to have an attitude of thinking outside of the box to reach the goal. He noted the focus needed to be on parcels owned by Gullah families. He suggested selection of a few prominent Gullah families and try these proposals, make adjustment where needed and then bring back something that can be moved forward.

Ms. Becker commented that preserving the rights of all is important and accommodations should be fair. She noted looking at separate land for specific use is not consistent and spot zoning is not fair. She is in support of a one Island concept stating equal opportunities for development is needed. Ms. Becker stated that singling out people for changes to benefit them is bothersome.

Mr. Ames stated he feels the Gullah/Native Islander populations culture, land ownership and opportunities have been overwhelmed by what the majority population and developers have done. He stated he also recognizes that as population density increases on the Island, choices of the individual become constrained. He commented that we as a community need to come to grips with how to help the Native Islanders so they can sustain living on the Island and do it in a way that meets the broader goals of the Island yet recognizes the individual cases that are before us. He suggested the Committee should ask staff to research a definition of ownership and the legality of such so that Council can consider that as one possible solution. If so, then providing flexibility to Native Islands could be attainable. In addition, he suggested soliciting feedback from a group Native Islanders specific to their properties. Finally, he stated geographic boundaries would need to be defined. Mr. Ames noted that family compound/ownership will come into play after the property is defined. He asked that staff compile acceptable and unacceptable activities on adjacent properties and come back to the Committee with information regarding that list. He emphasized the need for outreach to the community.

Discussion ensued regarding funds available for this project. Dr. DuBose said she would have to look at the budget for available funds.

Mr. Ames suggested Mr. Brown and staff meet to develop a plan to obtain Gullah family involvement and bring it back to the Committee to recommend to Council and Council could review the plan and funding of such.

7. New Business - None

8. Staff Reports - None

9. Committee Business - None

10. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 10:33 a.m.

Submitted by: Vicki Pfannenschmidt, Secretary

Approved: February 25, 2021