



Town of Hilton Head Island  
Planning Commission  
LMO Rewrite Committee Meeting  
March 29, 2012  
1:00 p.m.  
Benjamin M. Racusin Council Chambers

## **AGENDA**

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As a Courtesy to Others Please Turn Off All Cell Phones and Pagers during the Meeting.

- 1. Call to Order**
- 2. Freedom of Information Act Compliance**  
Public notification of this meeting has been published, posted, and mailed in compliance with the Freedom of Information Act and the Town of Hilton Head Island requirements.
- 3. Approval of the Agenda**
- 4. Approval of the Minutes** – March 22, 2012 meeting
- 5. New Business**
  - a. Review of Code Assessment

### **Adjournment**

Please note that a quorum of Town Council may result if four (4) or more of Town Council members attend this meeting.

TOWN OF HILTON HEAD ISLAND  
Planning Commission  
**LMO REWRITE COMMITTEE MEETING**

March 22, 2012 Minutes

1:00p.m. – Benjamin M. Racusin Council Chambers

**DRAFT**

Committee Members Present: Chairman Tom Crews, Vice Chairman Gail Quick, David Ames, David Bachelder, Irv Campbell, Chris Darnell, Jim Gant, Councilwoman Kim Likins, *Ex-Officio*; and Charles Cousins, *Ex-Officio*

Committee Members Absent: Walter Nester

Planning Commissioners Present: Tom Lennox

Town Council Members Present: Bill Harkins

Town Staff Present: Jill Foster, Deputy Director of Community Development  
Teri Lewis, LMO Official  
Tom Fultz, Director of Administrative Services  
Shawn Colin, Comprehensive Planning Division Manager  
Kathleen Carlin, Administrative Assistant

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- 1) **CALL TO ORDER**  
Chairman Crews called the meeting to order at 1:00p.m.
- 2) **FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT**  
Public notification of this meeting has been published, posted and mailed in compliance with the Freedom of Information Act and Town of Hilton Head Island requirements.
- 3) **APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**  
The agenda was **approved** as presented by general consent.
- 4) **APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**  
The minutes of the January 31, 2012 meeting were **approved** as presented by general consent.

5) **NEW BUSINESS**  
**Update on Consultant Work for Economic Evaluation of Coligny Project**

Mr. Shawn Colin presented the status update on behalf of staff. Mr. Colin stated that the Town recently contracted with Genesis Consulting Group to do an economic evaluation of the Coligny proposals. Two development scenarios were included in the RFP; one scenario focused primarily on redevelopment of Town-owned property. The other scenario was full redevelopment and includes Heritage Plaza and Coligny Plaza. The staff has shared a great deal of data with the consultant including traffic impacts, sewer, parking, landscaping, etc., to determine the cost. Mr. Colin stated that Miley & Associates will develop the financial model. Staff will have additional

information in the next month or so. The staff and the committee briefly discussed the financial model, private sector involvement, and the evaluation process. The committee thanked Mr. Colin for the update; the committee looks forward to receiving future updates when they are available.

### **Review of and Discussion on Code Assessment and Annotated Outline**

Chairman Crews presented introductory statements regarding the committee's review of the Code Assessment and the Annotated Outline. The report is very lengthy and the committee may need to meet again to sufficiently cover all of the findings. Chairman Crews stated concern with a number of issues including the consultant's lack of understanding of core values critical to Hilton Head Island. The consultant needs to have a much better understanding of Island Character. Chairman Crews then requested input from the rest of the committee.

Mr. Chris Darnell stated that the consultant lacks an understanding of Island character and Core Values. The Island's different characteristics and different geographical needs have not been addressed in the report. Mr. Darnell discussed several examples including the CCW district. Mr. Darnell stated concern with a lack of understanding of water quality (which was a big part of the committee's earlier discussion.) The report provided very little attention to this very important issue. There are several instances in the report where the consultant does not understand what is going on in the LMO. The consultant does not seem to understand where we are today. The report does not recognize the uniqueness of Hilton Head Island. The report is too generic and not specific enough.

Mr. Bachelder stated concern that the consultants seems to have their own agenda. Mr. Bachelder discussed Form Based Codes (as related to high density areas such as Coligny; and also perhaps an Overlay Zone at some time in the future.) Mr. Bachelder commented on the amount of commercial land and stated that the consultant seems to have difficulty reconciling the two. We value our environment and natural resources. The consultant needs to spend some more time here so that they can gain a better understanding of the needs of this community. It would be extremely difficult for anyone to capture the essence of the Island in a tour lasting just a few hours. The committee needs to help the consultant stay on track.

Mr. David Ames stated that the role of the LMO is to stimulate, encourage and to guide us towards the community's objectives. Central to a successful outcome is that we differentiate the characteristics of different parts of the Island; and the consultant's report does not do that. The report needs a 20-year view instead of a short term view. Is this (report) stimulating investment and sparking redevelopment decisions? The answer is probably no. The protection of the Island's primary edge conditions is paramount – the beach, Broad Creek, Skull Creek, Port Royal, Calibogue, etc. These areas are sacrosanct and absolutely need to be protected. Such things as height limits, vegetation and ground cover are all very important in those areas and should be highlighted in the report. The consultant needs to give Island edge conditions the emphasis that they deserve.

It is essential to differentiate different geographic areas on the Island. Those area characteristics reflect the purpose of the area and the economics of the area. For instance, Coligny has a very different purpose and different economics than, for instance, Main Street. If we do not recognize that, we are not stimulating private investment. Coligny area suggests the question is how are we enticing adjacent property owners to get together and plan something that is more efficient (provide incentives). We should be trying to help people to work together to make these kinds of decisions. For instance, what are our community goals for the Stoney area? Does the consultant have a clue what the goals of this area are? The signage and street standards are not included in

the LMO Report (they are going to be staff generated.)

Mr. Ames and the committee discussed the ‘big picture’ and the issue of PUD planning - is there any intent to shift commercial density from a poorly performing area to another area? A long term objective should be to encourage people to see the economic structure. Mr. Ames agreed that the consultant needs to have a much better understanding of the Island’s needs and objectives.

Mr. Irv Campbell stated concern that the consultant’s report lacks an understanding and appreciation of the Island’s history. The report needs to include the history and the contributions of the Island’s native island population. There is much more to the story of Hilton Head Island than the past 50 + years of land development.

Vice Chairman Gail Quick stated concern that there is very little linkage to the Core Values that the committee provided to the consultant. The consultant would make Hilton Head Island look just like everywhere else. Hilton Head Island is unique and we want to remain that way. The consultant should have incorporated some of Todd Ballantine’s recommendations on preservation of natural resources – management of trees, forest management, water protection, etc. The consultant does not give the committee enough options. We do not want to see buildings built right up to the curb. The committee needs to refocus the consultant and needs to educate the consultant. The special character of the Island is not reflected in the consultant’s report as it should be.

Mr. Jim Gant presented statements regarding the overall view of the report. It is often typical of consultants in their initial report to “swing the pendulum too far” in one direction. It will be up to the committee to “bring the consultant back” to where they belong by providing more education and strong communication. The report is actually a pretty good starting point – additional time, additional education, additional “hand holding” will be necessary going forward. The committee needs to focus on the areas of the report that they have the most concern with. Form Based Code is being applied too broadly in the report. Edge conditions were not addressed adequately.

Councilwoman Kim Likins presented comments regarding the strengths of the consultant. A great deal of education will be needed to get the project back on track. Additional time will most likely be needed (beyond 12 + months).

Mr. Charles Cousins and Ms. Teri Lewis presented statements regarding staff’s concerns and staff’s involvement in the past and going forward. Staff is concerned with the report and the consultant’s lack of understanding. The staff needs to educate the consultant – more ‘hand holding’ will be needed. We need to again stress the important areas of the Island, issues and concerns. Unfortunately, the consultant has taken what works elsewhere and has tried to make it work on Hilton Head Island. We need to educate the consultant on Zoning because the consultant has completely missed the mark in this regard. The consultants completely missed the mark on non-conformities. The consultants have worked with Beaufort County; however, what works for Beaufort County will not work for Hilton Head Island. There are some very big issues that need to be addressed in the code in an obvious way – the consultant needs to recognize the different character of various parts of the Island. If this is not addressed in the report, then we are heading in the wrong direction.

The consultant has misidentified several areas of the Island and has completely cast aside Shelter Cove. This is a mistake – Shelter Cove is a huge opportunity for this community and should not be disregarded. The committee discussed the different markets (Coligny, Shelter Cove, Mathews Drive, etc.) Mr. Cousins stated that the consultant misunderstands the role of the Design Review Board. The consultant misunderstands vegetation along the beaches and the view corridors that

people want. Flexibility should be more of a focus. We need incentives to encourage redevelopment. The consultant needs to take the unique geographical areas of the Island and understand what that area is today and how it is regulated today and what are the nature boundaries of that geographical area. What makes it unique? For instance, lumping Mathews Drive and Coligny together is a failure. Core values, edge conditions, and natural resources are very important so a different approach is needed. A productive path forward is needed. The committee discussed the need for a three or four hour workshop session with the consultant. The committee should present the consultant with a list of four or five major items.

The committee discussed the need for the consultant to have a better understanding of the Island's history and Core Values. The committee stated that they need to steer the process in a better way. There needs to be more behind the scenes work. The deadline may not be met; it is more important to do a quality job to ensure the future of the Island. The budget may need to be re-evaluated at some point in the future.

The committee discussed next steps in preparing for the Thursday, March 29<sup>th</sup> committee meeting. The committee decided to assign the following tasks:

1. Mr. Gant will identify the consultant's recommendations (pulling them from the report). The main issues identified today are Zoning Districts, Natural Resources, including edge conditions; separation of Coligny, Mathews Drive, etc., - unique special geographic differences, commercial redevelopment OL districts, incentives, non-conformities, and how they went from too many to too few (lumped together).
2. Mr. Bachelder will identify commercial issues and redevelopment, including non-conformities
3. Mr. Ames will identify individual geographic areas including unique special characteristics
4. Mr. Darnell & Vice Chairman Quick will work on natural environment issues including trees, water, edge conditions)
5. Mr. Campbell will provide a focus on long-term history, culture, and pre-modern day development.
6. Mr. Cousins and Ms. Lewis will provide staff's concerns including Zoning district issues.

Staff will cancel the public forum with Clarion & Associates scheduled on Thursday, March 29<sup>th</sup> and the Joint Town Council-Planning Commission meeting on Friday, March 30<sup>th</sup>.

## 6. ADJOURNMENT

Following final comments, the meeting was adjourned at 2:30pm.

Submitted by:

Approved by:

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Kathleen Carlin  
Administrative Assistant

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Tom Crews  
Chairman