

**THE TOWN OF HILTON HEAD ISLAND**  
**SPECIAL MEETING/LAND ACQUISITION WORKSHOP**

**Date:** Wednesday, August 31, 2011

**Time:** 2:00 P.M.

**Present from Town Council:** Drew A. Laughlin, *Mayor*; Ken Heitzke, *Mayor Pro-Tem*; Bill Ferguson, George Williams, Bill Harkins, Kim Likins, Lee Edwards, *Council Members*.

**Present from Town Staff:** Stephen G. Riley, *Town Manager*; Greg DeLoach, *Assistant Town Manager*; Charles Cousins, *Director of Community Development*; Scott Liggett, *Director of Public Projects & Facilities*; Susan Simmons, *Director of Finance*; Brian Hulbert, *Staff Attorney*; Shawn Colin, *Comprehensive Planning Manager*; Victoria Shanahan, *Accounting Manager*; Natalie Majorkiewicz, *Systems and Reporting Administrator*; Jeff Buckalew, *Town Engineer*; Vicki Pfannenschmidt, *Executive Assistant*

**Present from Media:** Tom Barton, *Island Packet*

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1. **CALL TO ORDER**
2. **FOIA 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. **Open Session**

- a. Review of Past Efforts

Steve Riley conducted an overview of past efforts. He also reviewed the Power Point presentation done in 2008 concerning the referendum for Land Acquisition.

- b. Review of Land Acquisition Manual

Mr. Riley referred to the Land Acquisition Manual and reviewed the criteria for the program.

These criteria are:

1. Address traffic congestion concerns by reducing development potential in strategic locations;
2. Preserve open space, and thus the aesthetic quality of our community along major roads;
3. Acquire land that provides public access, and/or views to the water;
4. Acquire land which furthers one of the above criteria while also furthering the Town's Comprehensive Plan; and
5. Place restrictive covenants on property or portions of property and resell where appropriate, to facilitate acquisition of other parcels that further the above objectives.

- c. Redevelopment/Economic Development

- Red Fields to Green Fields Overview

Shawn Colin spoke concerning an exercise recently completed with the Town of Hilton Head Island, USC-Beaufort, The Community Foundation and Georgia Tech called Red Fields to Green Fields. He explained it was an exercise to identify a way to address commercial property that would be more beneficial than past efforts. He reviewed five different properties

that were studied. He said the purpose would be for the Town to acquire properties utilizing Federal Assistance obtaining government low interest loans and develop green space and bank the property to sell and attract commercial development in the areas with a public/private partnership. He referred to results of the exercise and stated there were copies of the final report for all Council members to review.

Mr. Colin reviewed various public/private partnerships the City of Greenville has undertaken. He explained they used land acquisition and public holdings for leverage in some of the partnerships and they have some that generate income through leasing the property. Mrs. Likins asked how the City prioritized projects. Mr. Colin explained that at first the primary focus was Main Street but they have expanded on it. He stated Greenville has a local economic development corporation which began with seed money from the City. The development corporation offers loans and grants to assist in development and redevelopment. All projects go through the City's Economic Development Department.

Mayor Laughlin stated the Town of Hilton Head Island's Land Acquisition Program shows what a community is able to do when it embraces an objective. He stated a new case needs to be made and a commitment by all involved in repurposing and continuing the Land Acquisition Program.

Mr. Riley added if that would occur, Town Council should consider amending and reprioritizing the Land Acquisition criteria.

d. Funding Review

Mr. Riley reported the available funds for Land Acquisition were \$2,416,736. He said that in 2008, the voters approved borrowing up to \$17 million for land acquisition purposes and in 2010 the Town issued bonds for \$12 million. He informed Council they do have the authority under the referendum to borrow up to an additional \$5 million.

He added that in July 2010 Council voted to set aside \$2.3 million from prior sales of land for possible use in meeting the Town's debt payments. He said instead of using those funds the Town is using general revenues freed up from the retirement of prior land acquisition bonds. He suggested Council may wish to revisit this reserve.

e. Public Comment

Kumar Viswanathan commented on the success of the Land Acquisition Program pertaining to growth management. He stated he felt there is now a reverse problem of retaining businesses. He encouraged Council to review the program and make changes to draw businesses and residents to Hilton Head Island.

#### **4. Executive Session**

Mr. Riley stated he needed an executive session for the purpose of reviewing specific land parcels.

At 3:40 p.m., Mr. Williams moved to go into Executive Session for the reasons stated by the Town Manager. Mr. Heitzke seconded. The motion was approved by a vote of 7-0.

Mayor Laughlin called the meeting back to order at 5:07 p.m. and stated there was no business to take up as a result of executive session.

**5. Adjournment**

At 5:08 p.m., Mr. Heitzke moved to adjourn. Mr. Williams seconded. The motion was approved by a vote of 7-0.

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Vicki Pfannenschmidt, Secretary

Approved:

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Drew A. Laughlin, Mayor