

**TOWN OF HILTON HEAD ISLAND**  
**Planning Commission Meeting      APPROVED**  
**Wednesday, November 5, 2014**  
**9:00a.m – Benjamin M. Racusin Council Chambers**

Commissioners Present: Chairman David Bennett, Vice Chairman Alex Brown,  
Judd Carstens, Bryan Hughes, Jim Gant, Peter Kristian,  
Barry Taylor and Todd Theodore

Commissioners Absent: Caroline McVitty

Town Council Present: None

Town Staff Present: Jayme Lopko, Sr. Planner & Planning Commission Coordinator  
Shea Farrar, Senior Planner  
Charles Cousins, Director of Community Development  
Teri Lewis, LMO Official  
Shawn Colin, Deputy Director Community Development  
Kathleen Carlin, Secretary

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**1. Call to Order**

**2. Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag**

**3. Roll Call**

**4. Freedom of Information Act Compliance**

Public notification of this meeting has been published and posted in compliance with the Freedom of Information Act and Town of Hilton Head Island requirements.

**5. Approval of Agenda**

The agenda was **approved** as submitted by general consent.

**6. Approval of Minutes**

Chairman Bennett requested that the draft minutes of the regular October 1, 2014 meeting be amended to better reflect his question to the staff and the developer regarding the issue of affordable housing, as it relates to the Shelter Cove Mall application. The October 1, 2014 draft minutes were **approved** (with the requested revision included) by general consent.

The Planning Commission **approved** the draft minutes of the special meeting held on October 13, 2014 as submitted by general consent.

**7. Appearance by Citizens on Items Unrelated to Today's Agenda**

None

## **8. Unfinished Business**

None

## **9. New Business**

### **a. Recommendation of 2015 Targets for Action to Town Council**

Chairman Bennett introduced the business item and requested that staff present opening comments.

Ms. Shea Farrar presented opening statements on behalf of the staff. Staff requests that the Planning Commission review the recommendations made by the Comprehensive Plan Committee for the 2015 Targets for Action and approve a final list of recommendations to forward to Town Council for their consideration.

Town Council holds an annual retreat at the end of each year for planning the next calendar year's Targets for Action. Each year the Planning Commission submits recommendations on next year's priorities to Town Council for their consideration in advance of their annual retreat.

The Comprehensive Plan Committee (CPC) provides recommended priorities to the Planning Commission. After review and approval by the Planning Commission, the final list of recommendations is forwarded to Town Council. Following these statements, Ms. Farrar requested that Commissioner Judd Carstens, Chairman of the Comprehensive Plan Committee, make his presentation.

Commissioner Carstens stated that the Comprehensive Plan Committee met on September 3, 2014 to begin developing recommendations for Town Council to consider when planning the 2015 Targets for Action. The Committee reviewed Town Council's current Targets for Action and discussed the status of current efforts. The CPC met again on September 17, 2014 to further refine this list.

A final list of recommendations was completed and approved on October 13, 2014 by the Committee to forward to the Planning Commission for review. Once approved by the Planning Commission, the recommendations will be provided to Town Council for their consideration. Commissioner Carstens presented an in-depth discussion of the recommended Targets for Action.

Commissioner Carstens presented in-depth statements regarding the redevelopment of Coligny, the USCB Campus on the island, developing an island-wide traffic study, and implementation of the new LMO (the initiative areas). Commissioner Carstens also discussed plans for updating the Comprehensive Plan.

Commissioner Carstens stated his appreciation to fellow CPC members, Commissioner Gant, Commissioner Kristian, and Commissioner McVitty for their efforts and expertise in developing and refining the list of recommendations. Commissioner Carstens also thanked Ms. Eleanor O'Key, citizen, for her participation at the CPC meetings.

Chairman Bennett expressed his appreciation to the Comprehensive Plan Committee members for their efforts in developing the list of recommendations.

Chairman Bennett requested that the list of recommendations for 2015 Targets for Action be reviewed and discussed on a line-by-line basis by the Planning Commission. The public will be invited to present comments following the review of each individual item.

### **Coligny**

Long overdue improvements to the Town owned Coligny properties, facilitated by TIF monies, will service the community and visitors, improving recreation opportunities, Town brand, and access to our main natural resource, the beach (Natural Resources). The work at Coligny ties directly to Comp Plan elements of Community Facilities and Recreation, while supporting strategies for Land Use, Population and Priority Investment. The development process needs a clear timeline and scope, accessible and readily communicable to the public, ensuring community buy-in and ownership. The work in this area is critical and wide-reaching to the quality of life of locals and visitors, and will encourage additional private district-wide infrastructure and facility improvements long overdue in the aging structures and traffic patterns. The following topics are included: (1) Community Facilities; (2) Population; (3) Land Use; (4) Recreation; (5) Priority Investment; and (6) Natural Resources.

Chairman Bennett invited comments from the Planning Commission and none were received. Chairman Bennett requested public comments and the following were received: Chester C. Williams, Esq., presented brief comments related to Coligny improvements.

### **USCB**

The most vibrant, diverse and culturally active communities across our nation share a common element - sources for higher education that are accessible and provide for multiple connections to community life. Supporting the re-establishment of USCB on the island, coupled with the Osher Life Long Learning Center, will provide year round visitation, participation, and enhancement of the island cultural offerings. Public investment and ownership requires public visibility and participation, essential to community buy-in on any project, especially so on such an impactful site and program. The work with USCB supports Comp Plan strategies for Community Facilities, Recreation, while the re-use of office building site ties into Land Use and Population strategies. Finally, the incorporation of TIF monies is a direct connection to Priority Investment by the Town. The following topics are included: (1) Community Facilities; (2) Population; (3) Land Use; (4) Recreation; and (5) Priority Investment.

Chairman Bennett asked the staff if there is a plan in place to have a Public Project Review (PPR) for this project. It will be important to broadly communicate this project to the public. Mr. Charles Cousins stated that a Public Project Review application will be presented to the Planning Commission (the date is not yet determined). A conceptual plan for the project will be prepared for input from the public. An agreement with USCB will be discussed publically. Mr. Cousins stated that the Town has worked with the school district and the County to acquire TIF funding for the project. Chairman Bennett requested public comments on this item and none were received.

## Island Traffic Study

Understanding the traffic and circulation impacts for current and future projects in a community defined by finite traffic patterns is critical to the long term success of land planning and quality of life for citizens and visitors. The Town regularly performs traffic counts per the Comp Plan, but additional steps need to be taken as areas of the island become newly developed or redeveloped with both public and private funds. The island takes pride in the expansive bike network, but the automobile is still the primary mode of transportation, and with the limited circulation network, in part through natural barriers and gated development, every effort must be made to make systems as efficient as possible. The development of a traffic study supports the Housing, Population and Land Use aspects of the Comp Plan while being impacted by the emphasis on utilizing and celebrating Cultural Resources and Natural Resources. The following topics are included: (1) Housing; (2) Cultural Resources; (3) Natural Resources; (4) Population; (5) and Land Use.

Chairman Bennett invited comments from the Planning Commission and none were received. Chairman Bennett then requested public comments and the following were received: Mr. Frank Babel presented statements regarding the Bike Advisory Committee's efforts to work with Town staff to prepare the application for Bike Friendly Community. The island currently has a Silver status (the highest in the state) and hopes to achieve a Gold status. The traffic study should include bike traffic. Mr. Babel recommended that a Complete Street Study be considered.

Chester C. Williams, Esq., presented statements regarding the Transportation Element. Commissioner Carstens presented statements in support of the need to incorporate biking and pedestrian populations as part of the traffic study. Chairman Bennett recommended that we explore connectivity in general as part of the traffic study. Commissioner Gant presented statements regarding the intent of the traffic study (defining volumes rather than finding solutions).

Mr. Cousins presented statements regarding the staff's efforts to work with SCA traffic committee to craft a south end traffic study. The study is needed to evaluate traffic conditions at build out (at some point in the future).

Mr. Cousins presented statements regarding the many elements of a traffic model. Chairman Bennett presented statements regarding the need for an island wide traffic analysis. Mr. Cousins presented comments regarding the island wide traffic model. The intersections on the south end will be evaluated first, followed by an evaluation of the mid-island intersections. The initiatives areas, located on the north end of the island will be plugged into the model at a later date.

Chester Williams, Esq., presented statements regarding the Town's traffic report, presented annually by Mr. Darrin Shoemaker. Mr. Williams recommended that the Planning Commission take a look the educational process involved in traffic issues.

Mr. Williams stated that the Town's traffic analysis indicates that the intersection of Squire Pope Road and Highway 278 is the only failing intersection on the island. Mr. Williams suggested that the Planning Commission start or renew their education on traffic issues by reviewing the Town's adopted goals for traffic analysis. The Planning Commission should familiarize themselves with the current rules as well as the Town's historic policy on traffic goals.

Mr. Cousins stated that the staff would be happy to set up a special meeting with the Planning Commission to review the Town's adopted goals for traffic analysis. There is a great deal to learn about traffic conditions in years past, volumes to capacity ratios, technical details, etc.

Chairman Bennett inquired about the best place to start (in consideration of the failing intersection at Squire Pope Road and Highway 278 vs. beginning on the south end). How do we prioritize where to start? Mr. Cousins stated that the south end of the island is the area most in need at this time due to the changes to the LMO.

Chairman Bennett agreed that the Planning Commission should meet with the staff in order to achieve a better understanding of how the traffic analysis should work on the island.

Mr. Cousins also recommended that the Planning Commission consider adding discussion of the dealing with the bridge and causeway used for access to the island under the island-wide traffic study. The Planning Commission should begin to study the bridge situation. The Planning Commission agreed that this item should be added as a bullet point.

Commissioner Kristian and Mr. Cousins discussed ownership of this issue (Town, County, and DOT). Mr. Cousins stated that he believes that the Town will need to take the lead on the issue. It will be a very expensive issue and involvement of the County and DOT will be vital.

Following this discussion, Chairman Bennett requested public comments and the following were received: Mr. Frank Babel presented comments regarding the need for connectivity with the mainland. Mr. Babel urged the Planning Commission to add a caveat to add multi-mobile as part of this discussion.

### **LMO Implementation**

The recently rewritten LMO will be in full implementation in 2015, providing opportunities island-wide for redevelopment and emphasis on often overlooked areas. Through the LMO, initiative areas in the northern half of the island will need further consideration and definition, and activity best facilitated through community workshop and discussion. Using the resources and population of each district, greater inter-community connectivity and physical and cultural needs can be achieved. The initiative areas represent underutilized populations, missed cultural enrichment opportunities, and diversification of the overall character of the island. Addressing the LMO and initiative areas, the Comp Plan can support vast strategies in Natural Resources, Cultural Resources, Population, Housing, Land Use, Community Facilities, Recreation and Priority Investment. The following topics are included: (1) Natural Resources; (2) Cultural Resources; (3) Population; (4)

Housing; (5) Community Facilities; (6) Land Use; (7) Recreation; and (8) Priority Investment.

Chairman Bennett presented statements regarding Mitchelville. Commissioner Hughes presented comments in recognition of the need to support the future development of Stoney, Squire Pope, Gum Tree, and the Wild horse areas. Vice Chairman Brown presented statements in clarification of the needs of the initiative areas.

Chairman Bennett then requested public comments and the following were received: Chester C. Williams, Esq., presented statements regarding the Mitchelville Preservation project.

Mr. Cousins recommended that Mitchelville be considered a stand-alone item because there should be more focus given to the Mitchelville area. The Planning Commission agreed with this idea.

### **Comprehensive Plan Update**

2015 represents the 5-year update to the Comprehensive Plan by Town staff. The Comp Plan updates will address the current trends of the Town in regards to island-wide land use and population patterns, while emphasizing the cultural and natural resources that make Hilton Head a unique destination for visitors and home for locals. The Planning Commission recommends special consideration be taken in strategies to address the improvement and preservation of the water and wetland quality of our local waterways, mainly Broad Creek, but also the numerous creeks and marshes that protect and beautify our island. Considering that any area behind the beach dune line along the beach drains to Broad Creek or one of the other numerous tributaries. Their importance to our quality of life should never be overlooked.

Additional consideration should be taken by Town Council in the Comp Plan update to provide improved emergency service access to those parcels accessible by unimproved roads. In the past, the Town has made steps to pave and improve roads to parcels in efforts to support emergency vehicles, and the strategy going forward for these types of parcels needs to be re-addressed and improved. The Comp Plan update will support all eight aspects: Natural Resources, Cultural Resources, Population, Housing, Land Use, Community Facilities, Recreation and Priority Investment. The following items are included: (1) Community Facilities; (2) Population; (3) Land Use; (4) Recreation; (5) Priority Investment; (6) Cultural Resources; (7) Natural Resources; and (8) Housing.

The Planning Commission presented brief comments on this item. Chairman Bennett requested public comments on this item and none were received. Following final comments by the Planning Commission, Chairman Bennett asked if the staff has a good understanding of the Planning Commission's comments and recommendations that were presented today. Mr. Shawn Colin stated that the staff will include the Planning Commission's recommended conditions in the final list. The staff will forward the final recommendations to Commissioner Carstens and Chairman Bennett for review and verification. This will be accomplished within the

next couple of days. Following final comments by the Planning Commission, Chairman Bennett requested that a motion be made.

Commissioner Kristian made a **motion** that the Planning Commission **approves** the recommended Targets for Action as submitted with the following changes included: (1) addition of the Mitchelville Historic Preservation Project as a separate line item; (2) a need to start long-term planning to address traffic issues at the bridge and the causeway; and (3) adding multi-mobile issues to the traffic study. Commissioner Gant **seconded** the motion and the motion **passed** with a vote of 8-0-0.

b. Adoption of the Planning Commission's 2015 Meeting Schedule

Mrs. Lopko made a small correction to the bottom of the schedule (referenced LMO Chapter 2 instead of Chapter 3). The staff and the Planning Commission also discussed the meeting date of April 15, 2015. Based on Heritage Week, the Planning Commission recommended that the meeting date be changed to April 22, 2015 instead. The staff will make the change. Commissioner Gant made a **motion** for the Planning Commission to **approve** the 2015 meeting scheduled as revised. Commissioner Kristian **seconded** the motion and the motion **passed** with a vote of 8-0-0.

**10. Commission Business**

None

**11. Chairman's Report**

None

**12. Committee Reports**

Vice Chairman Brown reported that the Capital Improvement Project Committee (CIP) met on October 22, 2014 to discuss Fiscal Year 2015 Priority Projects. The committee is scheduled to present their report to the Planning Commission on November 19, 2014.

**13. Staff Reports**

None

**14. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 10:20p.m.

Submitted By:

Approved By:

November 19, 2014

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Kathleen Carlin  
Secretary

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David Bennett  
Chairman