

**April 24, 2017**

**Meeting Summary**

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7:00PM

Lonnie Hamilton, III Public Services Building  
Room B – 225, Committee Room

**Committee members in attendance:** David Kent (Chair), Amy Fabri, and Sussan Chavis,

**Planning Commission members in attendance:** Eric Meyer (Commission Chair) and Patrick Bell.

**County staff in attendance:** Joel Evans, Andrea Pietras, Andrea Harris-Long, Dan Frazier, Sally Brooks, Janine Saab and Austin Bruner (Legal).

**ZLDR amendment Consultants in attendance:** Bret Keast (Kendig Keast), David Baird (Kendig Keast), Mark White (White and Smith), and Kelly Cousino (White and Smith)

**Public in attendance:** Thomasena Stokes-Marshall (African American Settlement Community Commission), John Wright (African American Settlement Community Commission), Rodney Mallett (African American Settlement Community Commission), and Jason Crowley (Coastal Conservation League).

**Meeting Presentations:**

The meeting began with brief introductions by the Chair of the Committee Members present and by Joel Evans of the members of staff and Consultant Team present. Joel then briefly summarized the lead up events to the meeting which included the Request For Proposal (RFP) and the project kick off phone conference in March. Bret Keast was invited to begin his presentation to the Committee and public.

Bret explained the 3 phases of the ZLDR amendment process and the work that will be undertaken in each phase. He identified that this trip to the County was a fact finding exercise for the consultants that will help form historic preservation controls. He also illustrated preliminary research that he had done regarding historic preservation in the County, including familiarizing himself with the Historic Resources Survey Update Study 2016, and highlighted what would be required of the County to become a Certified Local Government (CLG).

**Committee Discussion:**

The Committee discussed and sought clarification on the requirements of becoming a CLG and what that entails thereafter. Bret was able to explain the following: -

- If the goal is to become a CLG, part of the requirement is drafting and having in place a Historic Preservation Ordinance. The County's Historic Preservation Ordinance would build on the work and findings of the 2016 study.
- A Design Review Board or Committee which has specified professions represented is required for CLG status. The County can identify and nominate persons for the Board/Committee while the consultant is drafting the new ordinance. Bret said that he would confirm whether a Design Review Board is required to obtain CLG status.
- Who puts properties and how to put properties on the Historic Preservation register will be drafted by the Consultants for County review and direction.
- The public should be made aware that if they want to join any future historic preservations districts, they will have to abide by certain design and development standards.
- Staying a CLG requires constant attention and upkeep which would be the responsibility of the Board/Committee.
- The consultants can provide a list of pros and cons to being in a historic preservation district versus not being in a historic preservation district.

**Public Comments:**

- Ms. Thomasena Stokes-Marshall (African American Settlement Community Commission) – Spoke in favor of creating a Historic Preservation (HP) Ordinance. Stated that the Commission she is part of has applied for 501-3c status, and that the Commission and wider African American community wants to work with the County and Consultants in creating the HP Ordinance. She provided personal experience of traditional African American communities being destroyed by new development and also explained the issue of properties in these communities being either rezoned or annexed into municipalities which takes them and their traditional uses and land patterns out of the community. She also highlighted the fact that historic preservation should be included in the Comprehensive Plan as it would give the issue, and any future ordinance, more weight.
- John Wright (African American Settlement Community Commission) – Spoke in favor of creating a HP Ordinance. Stated that there is an issue with the influx of new development creating rising property taxes and resulting in traditional African American Communities being unable to pay them and being forced out. Brought up the idea of introducing tax exemptions or tax breaks for the people in these communities so they can continue to afford to live there.
- Rodney Mallitt (African American Settlement Community Commission) - Spoke in favor of creating a HP Ordinance. Stated that he is currently a member of the Town of Mt. Pleasant Planning Commission and therefore knows the importance of committing to and enforcing an ordinance and not just introducing general language to address the issue. He also stated that the identified traditional African American communities need a formal design commission/board so that the people in those communities can have a say in what is happening. Raised the issue that there needs to be collaboration amongst the County and municipalities with consistent controls, which can help stop lots being annexed into the municipalities and taken out of the communities to avoid any historic preservation standards that might be applicable.
- Jason Crowley (Coastal Conservation League) – Spoke in favor of creating a HP ordinance. Stated that the patterns of subdivision in the traditional African American communities are unique and any future HP ordinance should look at not only architectural character but land use and land pattern preservation. Offered to assist in this process and stated he has experience drafting historic preservation regulations for similar communities in New York.

**Closing Comments:**

The consultants noted that if a Design Review Board is required for CLG status, it should be focused on preserving land subdivision patterns and not on architectural controls. Joel stated that the Strategic Assessment from the consultants will be ready for review in June and will include a detailed outlined of what is required from the County to be considered for CLG and where a HP Ordinance will fit into the certification process. He also indicated that there will be future public meetings where African American Communities can speak to the Consultants directly or communicate with them through staff.

Joel stated that next up is the Consultant Webex conferences with the Planning Commission, Short Term Rental Committee, and Historic Preservation Committee where they can discuss their progress on this issue.

The meeting adjourned at 8:10 PM.