



2020 Hampton Street ▪ Room 3063A
 P.O. Box 192 ▪ Columbia, SC 29202
 (803) 576-2080

**Minutes
 October 18, 2021**

Attendance

Commissioner	District	Present
Charles Weber	1	Yes
Tim McSwain	2	Yes
Sam Holland	3	Yes
Glenice Pearson	4	Yes
Vacant	5	--
John Grego	6	Yes
Robert Squirewell	7	Yes
Deborah Depaoli	8	Yes
Vacant	9	--
Darrell Jackson, Jr	10	No
Gail Rodriguez	11	Yes

Staff & Visitors	Affiliation
Quinton Epps	Conservation Division
Aric Jensen	County Administration
Brian Crooks	Planning Services
Beverly Harris	Public Information Office
Mark Ridlehoover	Planning Services

Call to Order

Grego welcomed everyone and began the meeting at 3:40 pm with a quorum.

Approval of Agenda

⇒ Pearson moved to approve the agenda which was seconded by McSwain. The motion passed unanimously.

Approval of July and August Meeting minutes

⇒ Grego moved to approve the August and September meeting minutes with amendments requested by Grego and Pearson which was seconded by Pearson. The motion passed unanimously.

Report of the Chair

- Election of Conservation Committee Chair – action item

⇒ McSwain nominated Weber for Conservation Committee Chair which was seconded by Pearson. The motion passed unanimously.

- **Spring Hill Historic and Conservation Resources Plan – action item**

Grego stated this was brought to our attention by Planning Services and we do provide input into these types of plans related to conservation of historic and natural resources. It's an example of how the Lower Richland Tourism Plan (LRTP) and other plans can work with the Comprehensive and Master Plans.

Crooks explained Mark Ridlehoover is the Project Manager and a Request for Proposals (RFP) has been submitted through Procurement to solicit qualified firms to implement this project. It is an outcome of the Spring Hill Master Plan recommendations to further identify historic and conservation resources in the area and leverage those assets to the communities' benefit much the same as the LRTP. Because of this we would look to the RCCC to provide input for this project as it unfolds as well if the project requires more funding would the RCCC be willing to provide funds for this project.

Pearson questioned the issuance of an RFP from Planning Services and Crooks explained the RFP was issued to implement the Spring Hill Master Plan recommendations using Planning Services funding from a Special Revenue Fund. These funds can be used in any area where Master Plans have been developed which have these recommendations.

⇒ Depaoli moved to endorse the RFP for the Spring Hill Historic and Conservation Resources Plan which was seconded by McSwain.

Weber stated he supported the project but did not understand the overall objective and scope of work for the RFP and whether the contractor is to develop the deliverables during the project. He also stated Spring Hill is a small subset of District 1 and wanted to know if Councilmember Malinowski knows of the project. Crooks explained the selected vendor would look at an inventory of resources and then they could develop strategies to showcase these resources. Councilmember Malinowski will be informed later during the project implementation, and the only project similar to this was the LRTP which was funded largely by the RCCC with some funding from the Planning Services fund. Commissioners had more comments which they were going to discuss with each other and county staff at a later date (e.g., Pearson wanted to know how much in funds Planning Services contributed to the LRTP).

The motion passed unanimously.

- **RCCC/RSWCD Holiday Drop-in for Dec 14, 2021 –action item**

⇒ Weber moved to have an in-person Holiday Drop-in which was seconded by Depaoli.

Commissioners made several suggestions about social distancing, county requirements, eating, and the ability to interact with grantees, County Council and others while following the requirements of the county.

The motion passed unanimously.

- **QuikTrip development (Atlas & Shop Rd) - update**

Grego stated he visited the QuikTrip on Fort Jackson Blvd and at that heavily-forested location all the trees have been cut. We have made recommendations to save some of the trees on these types of developments or participate in a tree bank. He will follow-up with Planning on whether a site plan has been submitted for the new QuikTrip at the intersection of Atlas and Shop Rd although it seems unlikely the trees at the Atlas & Shop Rd location can be saved.

- **Lower Richland Tourism Plan - update**

Grego indicated a motion to hold a workshop was not made at the last County Council meeting. He wants to follow-up with Jackson about his conversation with Councilmember English and would like to see Epps, Jackson, himself, and Rodriguez following up with Councilmembers to get the LRTP on the Council agenda.

- **Land Development Code - update**

Grego declared he and Epps had meet with Crooks to discuss the most recent code. He has prepared a set of comments for presentation during the next opportunity for public comments. Many of the items we have proposed have been adopted and the staff have been responsive although there are several items he would like to have changed.

Crooks added that if anyone had questions about the proposed code to please give him a call and he would be glad to answer them.

- **Advocacy Plan - update**

Grego said we have received 4 responses to the Advocacy Plan.

Epps stated he wanted more responses to the survey before proceeding with an RCCC discussion.

Treasurer's Report

- **FY22 General Budget status- update:**

Squirewell explained there were no significant changes to spending and we are very much on target for the year.

Conservation Committee Report

- **Executive Session – discussion of potential property purchases**

⇒ **Weber moved to go into Executive Session to discuss a potential property purchase contract which was seconded by Pearson. The motion passed unanimously.**

The RCCC entered the Executive Session.

The RCCC returned from Executive Session. Grego stated there were no actions taken during Executive Session.

⇒ **Weber moved to give Epps permission to offer the appraised value of the 60.10 acre tract to the seller, which was seconded by Grego. The motion passed unanimously.**

⇒ **Weber moved not to pursue the 2 acre tract under consideration, which was seconded by Grego. The motion passed unanimously.**

⇒ **Weber moved to grant Epps permission to continue to pursue the purchase of the Mill Creek Mitigation Bank credits, which was seconded by Rodriguez. The motion passed unanimously.**

⇒ **McSwain moved to give Epps permission to continue to discuss the donation of the former lake bed at Lake Elizabeth with the Lake Elizabeth Home Owners Association while expressing some of the concerns of the RCCC to them, which was seconded by Weber. The motion passed unanimously.**

Historic Committee Report

- **Request to modify Blythewood Historical Society and Museum Grant (BHSM) – update:**

Pearson mentioned the BHSM grant request which does not impact the grant funds nor their matching funds and she does not see where this needs RCCC approval as they have the authority to approve these decisions as a non-profit board. Weber asked if they wanted to extend their time and Epps responded that there is no extension of time, no change in funds and he agrees with Pearson's opinion.

- **County webpage – A Brief History of Richland County – discussion**

Harris stated she and Pearson had talked about using the County website as a vehicle to get more information out about historic projects and County history. Several years ago the Public Information Office (PIO) was working on a project to highlight the history of the founding of the County with the Richland County Library. She explained Pearson has pointed out that the information on the website should be expanded and PIO wants to work with the RCCC to update and expand the information on the website as well as other items the RCCC wants to publicize with the help of PIO.

Pearson explained that we need to address that the history was told from a certain point of view and did not address the diversity which exists and we want to address this in future efforts. Harris explained PIO puts out a calendar which will highlight projects the RCCC has funded with the help of Nancy Stone-Collum.

Conservation Manager's Report

- **RCCC Grants – update**

Epps indicated very little activity for the RCCC grants which is very normal for this time of year. We have received Quarterly Reports for all but three grantees who have been reminded of this requirement. One issue we do have is that Congaree Baptist Church has become non-responsive to all communications.

Grego mentioned we could publicize the RCCC grants more; he recently posted photos from the Wateree Passage Trailhead and got 30 likes; he wouldn't mind submitting these for publication. Epps replied we could present items to PIO to put on the County website and when we get more staff we can work on getting more publicity for our grants.

- **Annual Plan for County Council – update**

Epps stated the finishing touches were being added to the Annual Plan with Grego and Jensen and it should be ready later this week for submittal to County Council.

Jensen added that he had spoken with the Columbia Rowing Club and they would be presenting at the next RCCC meeting in November.

- **Hiring of vacant positions – (Land Program Planner, Conservation Program Analyst, and Administrative Assistant):** Epps said the Land Program Planner position will be filled by Walker McDonald on 8 Nov 2021, the Conservation Program Analyst position will be filled by John McKenzie on 22 Nov 2021, and he is still working on the applications for the Administrative Assistant position. He also mentioned these hires are subject to final approval by Human Resources.

Adjournment

⇒ **Pearson moved to adjourn which was seconded by Holland. The motion passed unanimously.**

Meeting adjourned at 5:02 pm.

Respectfully, Quinton Epps