



**Analysis – Public Input Survey for 2008 Comprehensive Plan
May 26, 2009 Public Hearing – June 15, 2009**

June 15, 2009

Background:

At the Town Council Public Hearing/Special Meeting for the draft Comprehensive Plan on Tuesday, May 26, 2009, the Town solicited public feedback and comments on the draft Plan. Nine different surveys, targeting specific questions for the nine Comprehensive Plan Elements, were distributed at the meeting and posted on the Town's website. The specific questions were based upon the Needs & Goals identified in the draft 2008 Comprehensive Plan. With the surveys, citizens were provided reference material, namely the Needs & Goals section of the 1998 Comprehensive Plan and draft 2008 Comprehensive Plan (March 10, 2009 draft version).

The public was asked to return completed surveys by/before Wednesday, June 10, 2009 for compilation into a report to Council at its June 16, 2009 regular meeting. The following analysis incorporates surveys received by Town Hall by 2:00PM on Monday, June 15, 2009.

Survey Summary:

68 surveys were received by the Town as follows:

Element #1 – Population:	9
Element #2 – Economic	10
Element #3 – Cultural Resources	8
Element #4 – Natural Resources	8
Element #5 – Community Facilities & Services	6
Element #6 - Housing	8
Element #7 - Land Use	7
Element #8 - Transportation	7
Element #9 - Priority Investment	5

Not all respondents answered every question on the surveys.

Survey results suggest that, generally, residents were supportive of the following concepts: *preserving residential nature of island; addressing parking concerns; addressing community commercial district, commercial growth and size/scale of future businesses; preservation of historic structures and landmarks, preservation of natural resources; protecting green spaces and developing a plan for open spaces.*

Alternatively, residents repeatedly expressed concern with: *how to deal with noise and parking issues; treatment of split zone lots (commercial district); how Town will deal with accreted land and trimming/pruning of trees in protected areas.*

NOTES: No demographic information can be gleaned from the surveys as information such as age, race, gender, economic situation, etc were not requested. Citizens were not required to provide their name or address on the surveys, so the Town cannot determine trends by Town geographic areas.

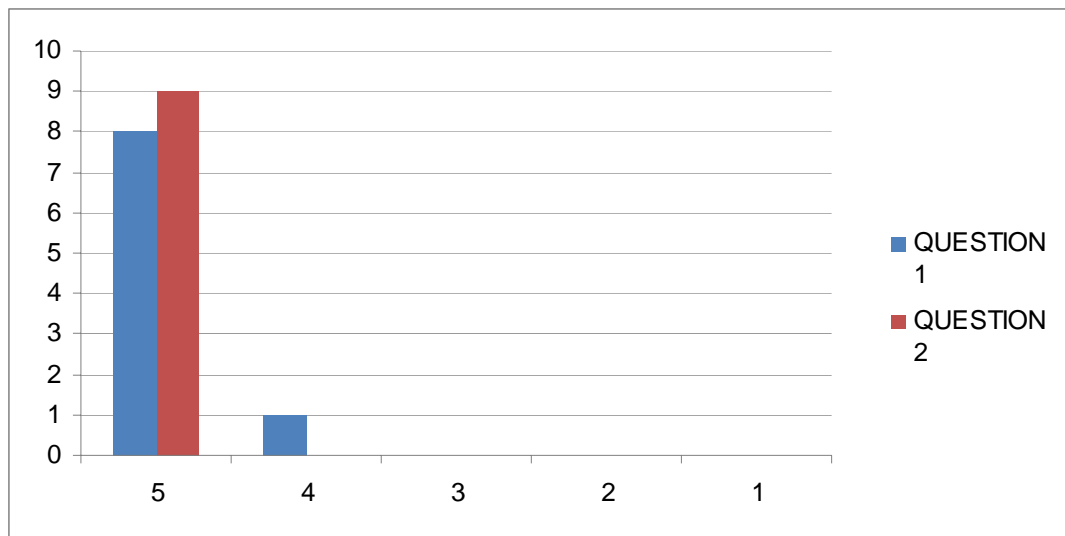
Survey Specifics:

Specific narrative comments were solicited from residents. Comments received are outlined separately in the “Comments” report at the end of this document.

The following graphs illustrate respondents’ level of interest to individual Needs & Goals articulated in each Element.

Answers to Questions: Established with a range of 5 to 1 for each question:
 Very important = 5
 Not important at all = 1
 Neutral opinion would statistically be a 3

Element #1 – Population (9 surveys received)



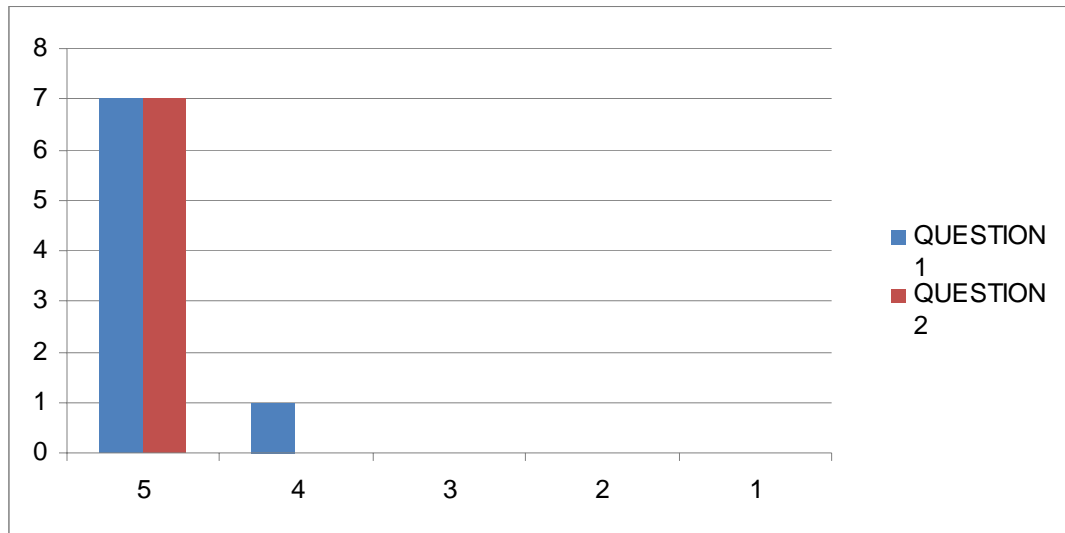
Question #1: Continue to promote sense of community among residents.

Question #2: Continue to foster the view that Sullivan’s Island is a family oriented Island.

Element #2 – Economic (10 surveys received*)

1 citizen only answered question #1

2 citizens chose to make narrative comments only

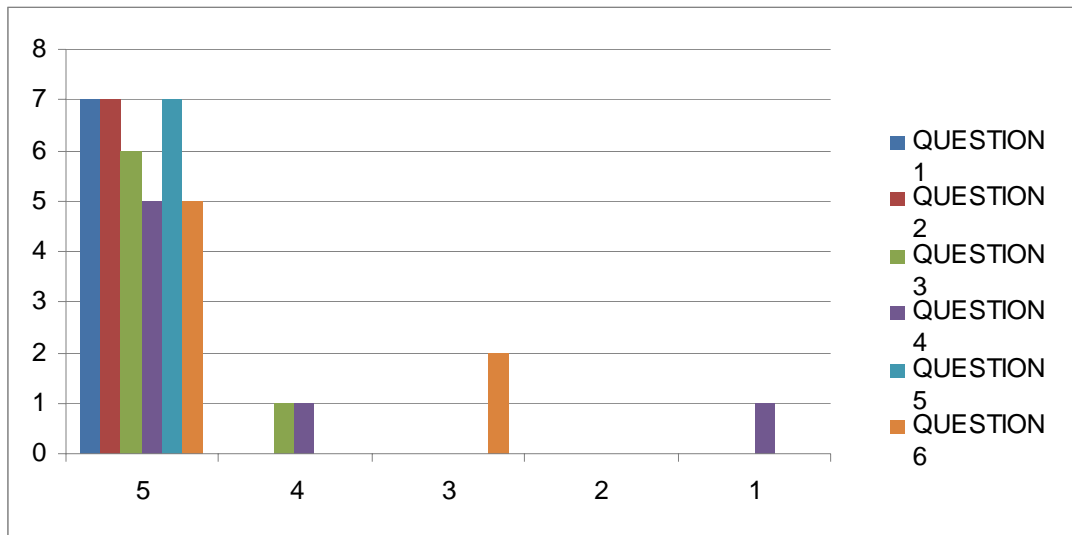


Question #1: Land Use regulations and zoning ordinances should provide for a commercial district consistent with the scale and family atmosphere of the Island and provide for a constrained by sustainable economic base.

Question #2: The development of vacant commercial property (including renovations and replacement) should have a positive impact on the Island overall.

Element #3 – Natural Resources (8 surveys received*)

***1 citizen chose to make narrative comments only**



Question #1: In an effort to protect the dunes and the dune vegetation, best management practices should be employed.

Question #2: Complete the study of the Accreted Land Management Plan with the broadest possible community participation and input.

Question #3: Encourage the use of native vegetation on public and private property.

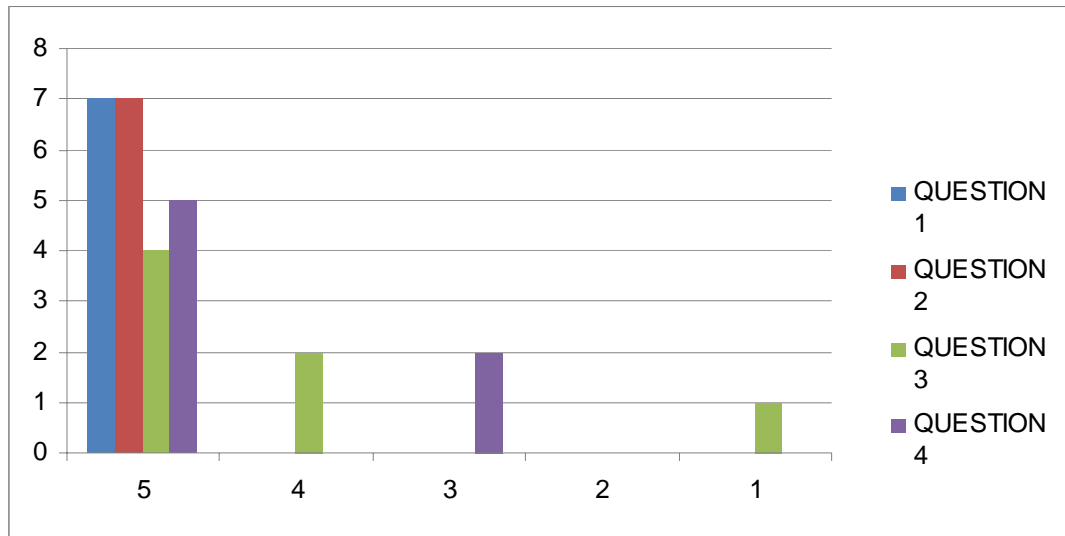
Question #4: Continue to protect the existing trees on the Island.

Question #5: Continue to recognize that the marshes, beaches and waterways on and adjacent to the Island are critical habitats that require special protection.

Question #6: The Town recognizes that Sullivan’s Island is a major nesting and hatching site for migratory sea turtles and birds, and thus special protection efforts are required.

Element #4 Cultural Resources (8 surveys received*)

***1 citizen chose to make narrative comments only**



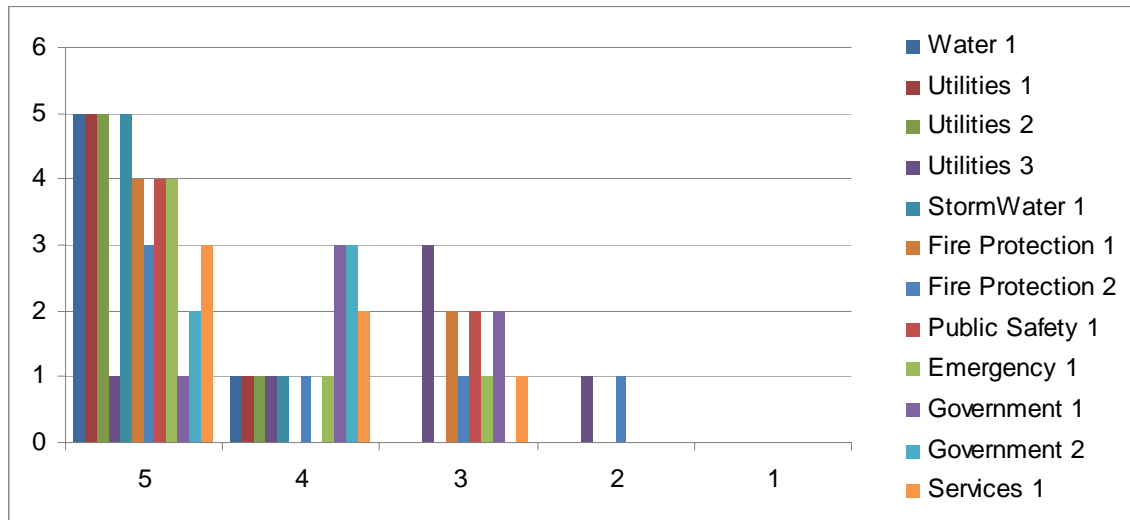
Question #1: The Town should focus its efforts on protecting site that are significant to the Town's history, uniqueness and natural beauty.

Question #2: Encourage the preservation and restoration of all Island batteries, including Batteries Capron and Butler.

Question #3: Continue to organize family-oriented activities for the residents.

Question #4: Continue the mutually beneficial and supporting relationships with the United States National Park Service, Fort Moultrie.

Element #5 Community Facilities and Services (6 surveys received)



Question #1 (Water 1): Maintain and improve the existing water distribution and wastewater collection systems.

Question #2 (Utilities 1): Pursue island-wide underground wiring.

Question #3 (Utilities 2): Continue oversight of street lighting services to include provisions for turtle protection, assessment of areas needing additional lighting and enhanced appearances of lights (high-pressure sodium and metal halide fixtures) and poles where possible.

Question #4 (Utilities 3): Continue maintenance and continuous upgrade of telecommunications infrastructure.

Question #5 (Stormwater 1): Identify and implement measures to improve stormwater management. Continue to recognize that the marshes, beaches and waterways on and adjacent to the Island are critical habitats that require special protection.

Question #6 (Fire Protection 1): The Town should continue to have an excellent Fire Department & Volunteer Fire and Rescue Squad and ensure the Department is maintained in accordance with Federal and State regulations, available technology and staffing requirements.

Question #7 (Fire Protection 2): The Town should establish basic levels of capabilities in the areas of fire, rescue and emergency medical response. This should take into consideration providing the equipment, staff and training to meet these basic level requirements.

Question #8 (Public Safety 1): The Town should continue to have an excellent Police Department providing a full array of law enforcement capabilities appropriate to the Town's size and popularity with beachgoers.

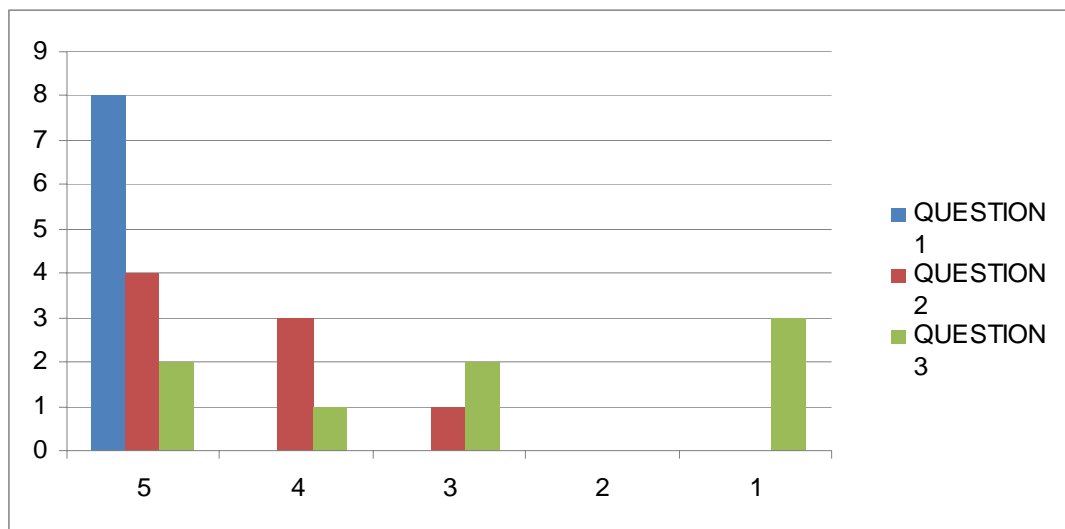
Question #9 (Emergency 1): Enhance the existing community-wide emergency reaction training program and communication system.

Question #10 (Government 1): The Town should strive to provide government owned facilities for its leadership, work force and residents consistent with the highest standards of safety, security, functional efficiency and quality of life.

Question #11 (Government #2): Continue to assess Town-owned property, determining parcels for sale, exchange or for use as passive parks or natural areas, consistent with acceptable growth and the ability of the Town to maintain and support such growth.

Question #12 (Services 1): The Town is committed to providing services that will provide a safe and clean community; maintaining a fully-staffed, capable and professional work force; and sustaining an outreach program to its citizens that will keep them as informed as possible.

Element #6 Housing (8 surveys received)

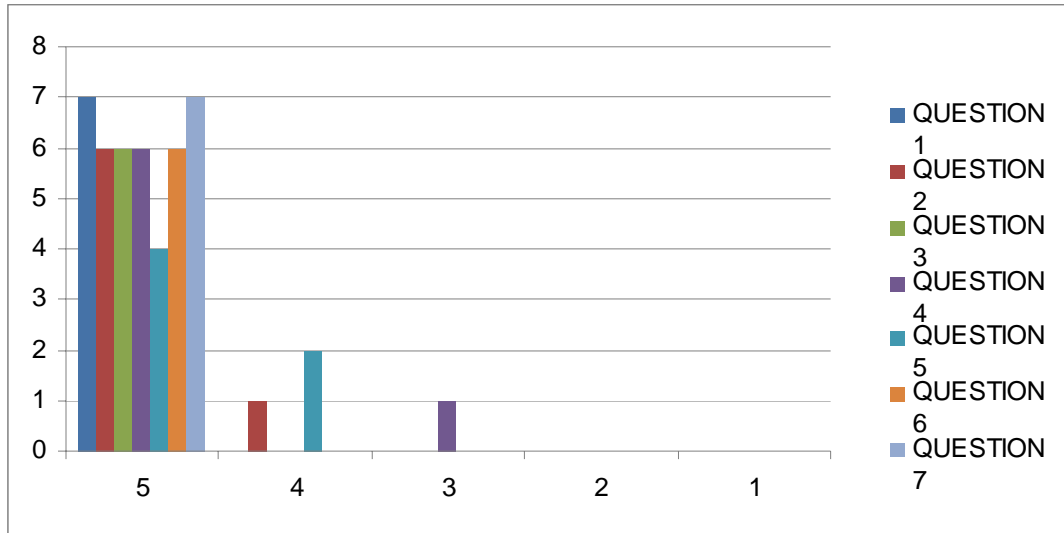


Question #1: Preserve the residential character of the Island.

Question #2: Maximize Insurance Service Organization’s (ISO) rating for the Town through its Community Rating System (CRS) Program. Pursue island-wide underground wiring.

Question #3: In compliance with South Carolina Legislative directions for the 2008 Comprehensive Plan review, address the issue of affordable housing.

Element #7 Land Use (7surveys received)



Question #1: Preserve the residential character of the Island.

Question #2: Protect and preserve the integrity of the historic elements of the Island.

Question #3: Preserve and maintain the eclectic nature of the Island architecture.

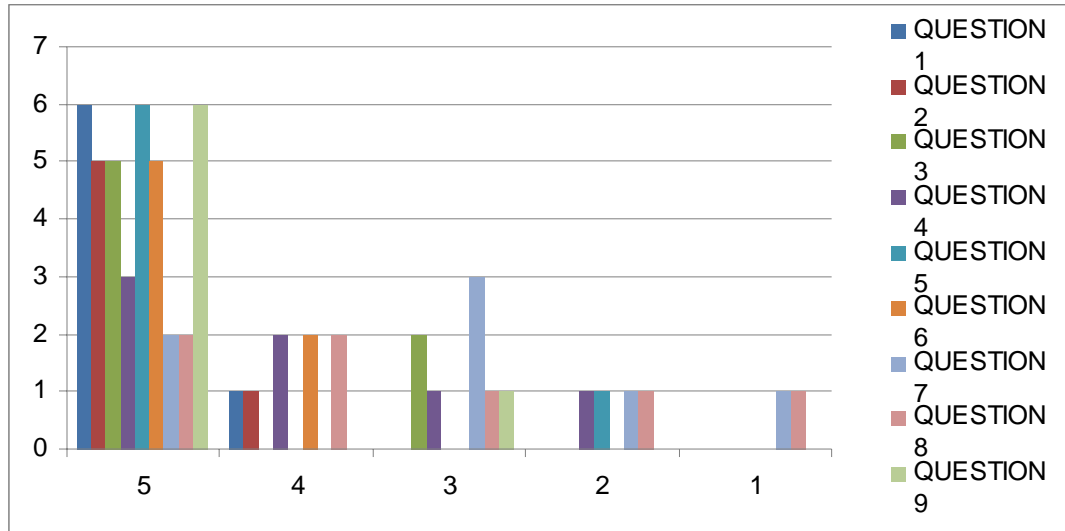
Question #4: Balance the viability of the commercial district with the residential nature of the Island

Question #5: Discourage loss of historic commercial structures not located within the commercial district due to inability to use the structures because of zoning restrictions and maintenance requirements.

Question #6: Enhance and increase public and protected open space whenever possible.

Question #7: Address neighborhood and community design concerns regarding sense of place on the Island.

Element #8 Transportation (7 surveys received)



Question #1: Continue to keep processes in place that ensure that Sullivan’s Island receives its fair share of federal, state and county funding to enhance the roadway and pedestrian systems.

Question #2: Support the rebuilding of the Ben Sawyer Bridge.

Question #3: Support community efforts to receive the designation of the Town as a Bicycle Friendly Community.

Question #4: Continue to support the development of the East Coast Greenway Trail System.

Question #5: Develop a community-wide educational program regarding the rules and regulations for operating golf carts on Town streets.

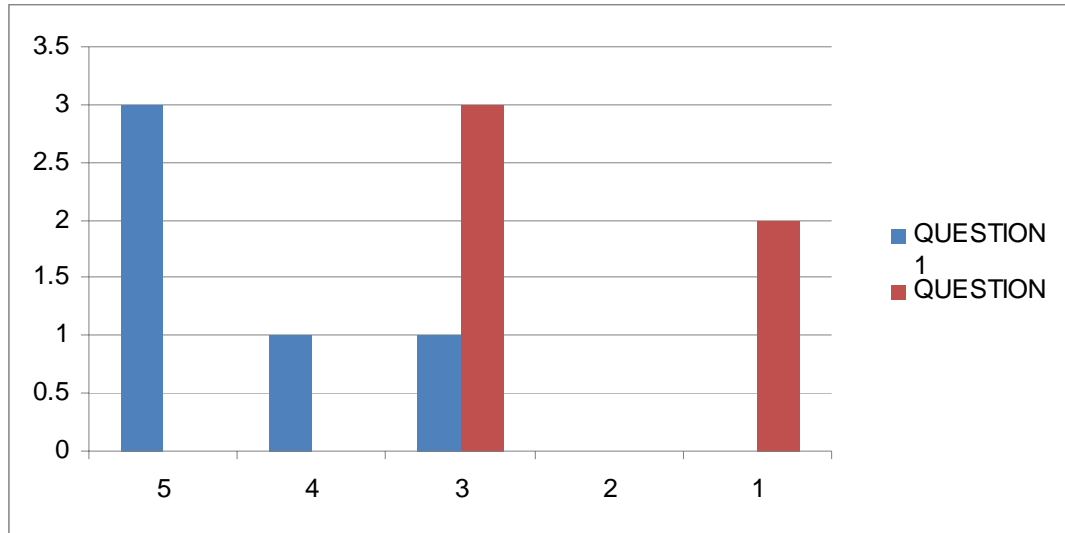
Question #6: Continue repaving and maintenance of street programs.

Question #7: Continue participation in all opportunities for Public Transportation.

Question #8: Enhance streetscapes on the island.

Question #9: Review site plans for traffic access/impacts and drainage impacts.

Element #9 Priority Investment (5 surveys received)



Question #1: The Town of Sullivan’s Island should participate in ongoing dialogue and coordination with neighboring jurisdictions, agencies, and public service authorities in an effort to promote and sustain the quality of life enjoyed and shared by the residents of the Town of Sullivan’s Island.

Question #2: The Town of Sullivan’s Island should address housing affordability issues by coordinating with the regional planning agency and adjacent jurisdictions to review options for encouraging a variety of housing opportunities for existing and future residents with varying income levels.



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SURVEY COMMENTS

Citizens were encouraged to provide general comments on each of the 9 surveys distributed. Below are the general comments received as of June 15, 2009 for each of the 9 Elements with notations for those remarks repeated.

Population
(9 surveys received):

Community Commercial District

“Within the sense of a ‘residential quality’ that is most desired for Sullivan’s Island, the lots designated as ‘residential’ within the commercial district should remain so.”

“We enjoy all the restaurants and bars on the Island. We love Seels/Of the Hook for family breakfast on weekend in the morning and parent’s night out for dancing too.”

“Limit downtown late night business” (from Housing surveys)

NOISE: “Consider signage in residential areas similar to what is done in downtown Charleston saying noise ordinance enforced.” (From Housing Survey)

Parking and Traffic Enforcement:

“Parking lots are no what the residents of this Island want.” “Don’t pave paradise and put up a parking lot.” [2]

“Enforce parking restrictions and speed limits.”

“Provide a parking lot in the business district.”

Community Events:

“Love all the family friendly events on the Island. Maybe we can connect family event to St. Patty’s Day and Polar Bear.”

Vacation Rentals:

“Continue to restrict and enforce short-term rentals, especially large weekend house parties.”

“Short-term rentals can *add* flavor, tax base and money flow. Good families rent, not all party people.”

Economic
(10 surveys received):

Business (general):

“I do not favor much more business at Sullivan’s Island, particularly office.”

Business & CC District:

“Maintain current commercial area but do not let it creep into residential area by allowing overlay district.”

“Help prevent the restaurants from being the tail that wags the dog. They are nice to have but often negatively impact the Island’s ‘family atmosphere.’”

“I am opposed to commercial development beyond the need of Island residents. Perhaps establish what residents think is necessary.”

“Maintain family atmosphere by limiting hours of music and outdoor bar and food service.”

Split Lots:

“The ½ [*split*] lots in commercial district zoned as ‘residential’ should not be rezoned as parking lots for this district. It is not ‘family-residential’ oriented to have to solve a parking problem for expanding businesses.”

Similar to previous comment: “Maintain residential zoning and restricted residential use where it exists on split zone lots.” [2]

Building Size (Commercial):

“Put more emphasis on ‘constrained’ in developing a constrained and sustainable economic base (i.e. no more oversized buildings like ‘Marsh Winds’)

“Better control (i.e. new building [Marsh Winds] is out of scale).”

Cultural Resources
(8 surveys received):

Protecting Historic Homes:

“I hope Sullivan’s Island can stringently protect historic homes.”

Use of Batteries/Open Space:

“Address Battery Gadsden and the cultural resources there. ‘The Sullivan’s Islanders’ are willing to step in and assist in this project.”

Natural Resources
(8 surveys received):

Tree Ordinance:

“Tree ordinance should be maintained and very strictly **enforced.** Tree Commission should have a larger role in scouting and marking trees over the 6” diameter designated in the ordinance.”

Restrictive Pruning & Cutting (in protected areas):

“The fine for cutting in the protected areas should be **increased!** Public awareness is important. Signs were designed by Randy Robinson and brought forward months ago at the Tree Commission meeting. These signs warned against unauthorized cutting, within protected lands. They were to be placed paths and in strategic areas....Good idea, no signs yet. We need them.”

Similar comment to above:

“I feel most strongly about protecting natural resources, particularly the Land Trust area. In particular, I do not want more cutting or clearing of trees than is already done. [2]

“Loss views = loss of property value and tax revenue.”

Tree Pruning & Cutting (general):

“Trees can be a hazard in a storm or a fire. Suggest cutting and pruning before storm season. According to the report they provide zero help in storm surge.”

Native Vegetation:

“Use residents to conduct workshops on native vegetation and encourage sharing of seeds and clippings to promote native vegetation.”

Stormwater Run-Off & Pollutants:

“The chemicals and pesticides that people are using on their property is frightening – it affects the ground water as well as some very important wildlife. I think this needs to be addressed and people need to be made more aware. Most residents have yard crews and do not even know what is being put on their property.”

General Comment:

“Best management plan for natural resources [as noted in Needs & Goals Item #1) needs to be more clearly defined “best management.” The original regulations emphasized ‘natural state.’ I believe this should be noted in the Plan.”

“More shade trees in landscaping.” (From Transportation Element survey)

Community Facilities & Services
(6 surveys received):

Fire Safety:

“How do we evacuate for forest fires like Myrtle Beach? Need control and access to beach accreted lands.”

Public Communication/Outreach:

“Consider ways to inform residents, visitors and business owners of Island ordinances.”

Stormwater Management:

“Insure that work to improve stormwater management does not adversely affect streets as it has on Station 25 on the marsh side of Jasper Blvd.”

Underground Wiring:

“SCE&G has become less concerned with the looks of the their tree trimming efforts --- I would love to see this stopped.”

“Yes – support island-wide underground wiring.” [from Housing survey]

Town Owned Property:

“Convert as much undeveloped property as possible to passive park status. Protect these areas from single-family use.”

“Use as much property as possible for passive parks.”

“Educate staff as to the correct maintenance of paths and green space. Monitoring the use of equipment for maintaining paths, etc is necessary. Some paths to the beach have been bulldozed to look like wide highways. Yes, we need emergency access; however, more care should be taken.”

Housing
(8 surveys received):

Lot Development

“Do not allow more than one home per lot.”

“Keep limits on house sizes”

“Preserve our lot size”

Vacation rentals: “Decrease rentals”

“Change minimum rent days from 15 to 14 or eliminate requirement.”

“Preserve residential use [on Island]”

Parking on Lots:

“Control abuse of parking on private property (blocking driveways, etc).”

Insurance: “Work with Joe Bustos on wind & hail pool problem.”

Land Use
(7 surveys received):

Green Spaces:

“It think our green spaces are very important. Some should remain passive parks where children can play and local people can walk dogs without having to worry about the hours for off-leash [on the beach]. Each area of the Island should have a green space of this sort.”

“Save as much green space as possible and place it under protection.”

“Add third implementation strategy to Item 6 of Needs & Goal:

Goal: Enhance and increase public and protected open space wherever possible. Third Implementation Strategy: Protect and enhance using best management practices the view corridors across the Island, including station rights-of-way to the marsh. Change this Implementation strategy to read: Develop an Open Space Plan.”

Bobby Thompson provided, along with above recommendation, a copy of the City of Beaufort Open Space Master Plan.

Commercial District: “Do not expand commercial district.”

Revamping the commercial district (Master CC District Plan):

“So many projects involve removing hardwood trees and planting rows of palms. What we need is shade! Plant more shade trees.”

“Sidewalks, although aesthetically desirable, will be up to the TOWN to maintain.”

“The correct lighting and the turning off of lights in this district at the appropriate times would be a very good step toward making Sullivan’s Island a “Green” community – a good and positive image and position for us.

Noise & Parking: “Enforce parking & noise ordinances.”

Business & Residential Areas: “There should be no commercial activity in residential areas, except uses such as church, daycare, medical doctor’s office under existing special use ordinances. Do not broaden this.”

“Adaptive reuse of historic commercial structures is good but not for reuse as commercial.”

Historic Preservation:

“Historic houses and structures are always under pressure to be altered or destroyed. Holding onto these properties, and to the integrity of these properties, is critical for such an historic island.”

Transportation
(7 surveys received):

Parking on Island:

“Parking kiosk option for revenue and control [of parking].”

Bicycles: “Bicycle paths on causeway”

Golf Carts: “No kids driving golf carts before someone gets killed.”

Street Paving: “Pave Middle Street”

Priority Investment
(5 surveys received): *No specific comments received*