

MINUTES
HERITAGE TRUST ADVISORY BOARD
MAY 14, 1992, COLUMBIA, S. C.

Members Present

Mr. Ed Drane, Chairman
Dr. Whit Gibbons (Vice-Chairman)
Mr. Marion Burnside
Dr. Jim Timmerman
Ms. Isabel Hill
Dr. Bruce RippetEAU
Ms. Windy Parks
Mr. Tony Merck
Dr. George Vogt
Mr. Joe Frank Watson
Dr. Tony Ganong
Mr. Hugh Ryan

Others Present

Mr. John Cely
Mr. Greg Lucas
Ms. Linda Lundquist
Mr. Brock Conrad
Mr. Donnie Barker
Mr. Stuart Greeter
Mr. Pat Morgan
Mr. Jeff McLemore
Mr. Leighton McClendon
Mr. Chris Judge
Ms. Sally Murphy
Mr. Steve Bennett
Mr. Tom Kohlsaatt

Members Absent

Ms. Claudette Cureton
Mr. Jim Crawford

Chairman Drane called the May 14 meeting of the Heritage Trust Advisory Board to order and recognized guests and new members. A motion was made and adopted to approve the Minutes of the February 20 HTAB meeting.

Comments from the Executive Director

Dr. Timmerman reported that this is a tight budget year and next year will likely be the same. The Tax Commission discovered a mistake which resulted in an overpayment to the Heritage Land Trust Fund during the last four years. As a result, revenues to the Heritage Land Trust Fund have been reduced by 50%. A resolution to excuse our payback has been introduced in the House and Senate. A bill to increase the documentary stamp tax for the Heritage Land Trust Fund has been introduced and is still alive. Dr. Timmerman stated that members should be proud of the broad based support for the Heritage Trust Program that currently exists in the South Carolina House and Senate.

Ed Drane asked Stuart Greeter to explain the current status of the bill to increase the documentary stamp tax for the Heritage Land Trust Fund. Stuart Greeter explained that, as of 15 minutes ago, our amendment to the Housing Trust Fund legislation was tabled. Our bill could conceivably be voted up for special order, but chances of passage during the last three weeks of the legislative session are unlikely.

Local land trusts

Ken Driggers, who is the Executive Director of the Palmetto Conservation Foundation, gave a report on that organization's effort to form local land trusts in South Carolina. The Palmetto Conservation Foundation undertakes conservation projects in South Carolina and usually holds four conferences per year on conservation issues. The group assisted with passage of the conservation easement act last year. They also provide technical assistance to groups who plan development or conservation of property.

Ken Driggers feels that local land trusts fill in a much needed gap in the land protection spectrum. The federal government has land protection programs, state government has land protection programs, but local governments very seldom undertake land protection efforts. A small local property may not be significant to the Heritage Trust Program or The Nature Conservancy, but it may be very significant to a local community. That is where land trusts can fill in the gap.

When the Palmetto Conservation Foundation started, there were six local land trusts in South Carolina. Now there are thirteen local land trusts and their goal is to create twenty-three local land trusts in South Carolina by the end of their next fiscal year. As examples of success, the Natural Land Trust in Greenville has protected 10,000 acres of property and the Low Country Open Land Trust in Charleston has protected thousands of acres of marsh.

Stuart Greeter stated that a local land trust in every county would protect at least 5,000 acres per year. The eleventh-hour article in the South Carolina Wildlife magazine has resulted in a number of inquiries about creating local land trusts. Tony Merck stated that local land trusts are successful because they consist of local people who are dealing with local people.

Other Business

Bruce Rippeteau stated that he had attended the Ways and Means Committee meeting on the HLTF bill. He said that any HTAB members, had they been present, would have been proud of their staff's efforts to support the program and legislation. Chairman Drane stated that even if we are not successful this year, he felt we certainly would be next year.

Cultural Areas Committee

Dr. George Vogt introduced Chris Judge who explained some of the survey work he had completed at Fort Lamar in Charleston. Chris showed slides and explained his survey work, which revealed four Confederate encampment sites and one Indian village site at Secessionville.

Dr. Vogt explained that the Fish Haul Creek site had been proposed as a recreational vehicle development. Plans have been finalized for 179 parking pads, 3 comfort stations, a beach pavilion, an administration building, and a clubhouse. The plans were developed with an attempt to preserve the important archaeology. Ed Drane stated that he had been asked by the Historic Land Trust, at Hilton Head Island, if money was still available from the Heritage Trust Program to purchase property there. Ed Drane said that the Historic Land Trust may request assistance from the Heritage Trust Program for purchase of property there in the future.

Stuart Greeter reported that Ms. Legendre's agreement with Presbyterian College on Medway Plantation did not materialize. Thus, her financial situation has changed to the point where she is not currently interested in dedicating a portion of Medway Plantation. We may discuss alternatives with her in the future.

Chris Judge reported that he had conducted a brief survey of the 20,000 acre Britton's Neck property by visiting areas where the soil was exposed at higher elevation points. Everywhere Chris visited, he found artifacts. Twelve woodland period sites and some colonial period sites were found. Dr. Vogt noted that this large area was also valuable for archaeological research.

The potential for donating a waterline easement at Nipper Creek Heritage Preserve was discussed. Cultural Areas Committee members felt it would be in our best interest to give a waterline easement to Richland County. The issue of undedicating heritage preserves was on the agenda to be discussed at this meeting, however, when we changed the meeting date, our Assistant Attorney General was unable to attend. Discussion of this topic was delayed until the August meeting.

Dr. Vogt said that the Cultural Areas Committee was looking into creating a brochure to promote gifts or purchase of archaeological sites to the Heritage Trust Program. The brochure would be jointly funded by Archives and History and the Institute of Archaeology.

Natural Areas Committee

Steve Bennett described a 1,400 acre addition to the existing Lewis Ocean Bay Heritage Preserve. This addition included three separate parcels of property. Bruce Rippeteau made a motion to approve acquisition of those three properties as a protection project. The motion passed.

Whit Gibbons described the current situation with the proposed Mary's Island management plan and a discussion followed. Whit Gibbons made a motion that the Mary's Island complex be dedicated as a heritage preserve with the following four contingencies:

1. That a management plan budget not be submitted at this time and that the Heritage Trust Advisory Board approve the final budget.

2. That the current management practices be continued until another plan is adopted.
3. That management of the property be under joint supervision of both the Game and the Nongame, Heritage Trust Sections of the Department.
4. That the Heritage Trust Advisory Board approve the final management plan.

Ed Drane said that the Heritage Trust Advisory Board had just received copies of the management plan one day before the meeting and there was not time enough for either the Board or the Natural Areas Committee to review and study the document. He indicated that this motion was being made, not necessarily in opposition to the management plan, but in order to give the Board time to review and study the management plan. The motion made by Whit Gibbons passed with Marion Burnside voting in opposition and Jim Timmerman abstaining.

Stuart Greeter described a proposed dedication agreement for Mary's Island Plantation, that was mailed out with the meeting materials. A motion was made by Bruce Rippeteau and seconded by George Vogt to recommend said dedication agreement to the Wildlife Commission, when the management plan is approved by the Advisory Board. The motion passed.

Budget Committee

Hugh Ryan stated that the Budget Committee had several land acquisition projects to discuss and suggested the Board go into executive session for that discussion. The Board voted to go into executive session and upon returning made a motion to approve the Heritage Land Trust Fund budget as presented. Ferguson's Mountain was approved as a new project, funding was changed for Fort Lamar and Stevens Creek addition, and funding was allocated for road work and gates at the Vaughn and McCall tracts.

Adjourn

The next meeting date was set for August 20 and a motion was passed to adjourn the meeting.