



# **Native Islander Newsletter**

**October 2016  
Edition #2**

## **Land Preservation**

NIBCCA plans to continue to provide you with ongoing details about this topic as information develops and will continue to release newsletters on a monthly basis. If you have questions about this topic or any thing that we can help you with, please feel free to contact our offices.

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## Hilton Head Island Land Preservation Concerns

The importance of our land and being able to keep the land that we have owned for generations is a major concern. Land Preservation is an issue that all of the native islanders have dealt with at one time or another and continue to struggle with. We need to become not only better informed, but also unified in our process as well as proactive in how we work with the town. NIBCCA also believes that there are some initiatives that we can develop that will enable us to create a better working relationship with the town in our efforts to help preserve and keep our land.

NIBCCA and the Native Island Leaders firmly believe that being a native islander provides us with a unique set of issues and necessities that the full or part time residents and tourists are not affected by. With that in mind, we believe that the Town of Hilton Head Inland needs to develop new laws and or regulations that would provide the native island community with certain legal accommodations and flexibility specific to the native islanders, in order to enable us to preserve our property. One of the initiatives that we feel needs to be created is a new town regulation, such as a Special Exception Clause. A Special Exception Clause would come into play in the event that a native islander is in the process of trying to purchase and / or lease land. Based upon how the exception is structured, it could give reduced fees and flexibility to our community in order to make the transaction affordable, with clear terminology and more user friendly. Other issues that we feel need to be addressed between the town and the native islanders are:

- Regarding the need to change density requirements. It's important for the town to become more consistent about what amount of land can be held in terms of units per acre. The unit amounts could be 4, 8 or 16 however, the land could have different zones, i.e. strictly residential or for mixed use. We should be mindful and encouraged to establish long term plans on how we can maintain ownership of our property through proper estate planning.
- The need to create decreased buffers and setback requirements that are specific to native islander properties. The issue of the reduction of setbacks should be important to native islanders because a lot of our lots are either small or neighbor family members. In those cases, 20-50 foot setbacks may not be necessary on our properties.
- To require revisions to current land division rules for native islanders that do not include subdivisions. Currently, the town treats all land divisions as a development which means that it is very costly to divide a parcel among the heirs. Native islander property should be handled the same way that commercial or a developer's land is treated.

The issues addressed in this newsletter are important to all of us and we are working to establish and maintain a level of mutual respect with the town leadership and administration so that living on Hilton Head is something that we can all do if we are all working from a leveled playing field.

### **Save The Dates!**

Join us for the opportunity to meet candidates for the US Senate and our local town council. The Native Island Leaders will host a meet and greet with **US Senate candidate, Pastor Thomas Dixon at the Palmetto Electric Community Room on October 6<sup>th</sup> at 5 pm. On October 27<sup>th</sup> at 6 pm for a Meet the Candidates Forum** where the town council candidates will be debating about island issues that concern us as well as answer questions from the community. The forum will be held at the Historic First African Baptist Church at 70 Beach City Road. Like great **Blues & BBQ? Deaz Guys perform at Mitchelville Park, October 22<sup>nd</sup> from 5-8pm tickets are \$65.**

### **The Mitchelville Minute**

Did you know that a new exhibit was unveiled at the Westin in June? The new exhibit displays several excavated findings of remnants of old homes, wells and garbage pits, in addition to recovering more than 20,000 artifacts from the first town in the US that was self-governed by freed slaves'. Mitchelville is an important part of our history and American history; and it's right here on Hilton Head!