



City of Charleston
Committee on Public Works & Utilities
April 21, 2025

A meeting of the Committee on Public Works & Utilities was held this date beginning at 5:00 p.m. over video conference call.

Notice of this meeting was sent to all local news media.

Present: Councilmember Waring, Chair, Councilmember Gregorie, Vice Chair, Mayor Cogswell, Councilmember Parker, and Councilmember Seekings.

Also Present: Matt Alltop, Ron Bucci, Tarleton Cave, Jennifer Cook, Magalie Creech, Melissa Cruthirds, Elizabeth Dieck, Matthew Fountain, Tamika Gadsden, Tim Keane, Kaylan Koszela, Hampton Logan, Sheila Smith, Robbie Somerville, and Dr. Blake Scott, College of Charleston.

Link to meeting: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KheUIOIMXLs>

A. Invocation

The meeting was opened with a moment of silence provided by Vice Chair Gregorie.

B. Approval of Public Works and Utilities Committee Minutes

1. March 24, 2025

On a motion by Mayor Cogswell, seconded by Vice Chair Gregorie, the Committee voted unanimously to approve Item B1.

C. Request to Set a Public Hearing

1. Request for public hearing on the proposed abandonment of Scott Island Court.

Ms. Creech said Ms. Copeland was unavailable, but she would help to explain the Item. She said one property abuts the right-of-way. It was a single parcel on John's Island that the owners would like to make part of their existing parcel. It did not serve any other parcels. It was a single-family residence.

Chair Waring asked the Committee members for questions.

On a motion by Mayor Cogswell, seconded by Vice Chair Gregorie, the Committee voted unanimously to approve Item C1.

D. Old Business

None.

E. Acceptance and Dedication of Rights-of-Way and Easements

1. Cainhoy Del Webb Phase 1 – Wright Brothers Dr. (R/W varies), Cordwood Ct. (50' R/W), Shelterwood Ct. (50' R/W), Bay Strip Dr. (53' R/W), Clements Ridge Dr. (R/W varies), Bark Beetle Circle (50' R/W), Caliper St. (50' R/W)

- a. Title to Real Estate
 - b. Exclusive Stormwater Drainage Easement Agreement
 - c. Affidavit for Taxable or Exempt Transfers
 - d. Plat
2. Daniel Island Northern Parcel FF Phase 2A – Hartley St. (50' R/W)
- a. Title to Real Estate
 - b. Exclusive Stormwater Drainage Easement Agreement
 - c. Affidavit for Taxable or Exempt Transfers
 - d. Plat

Mr. Keane said there were two requests for acceptance and dedication of rights-of-way and easements. Item E1 was on the Cainhoy Peninsula at the northern end of Clements Ferry Road and was for the public infrastructure of the first phase of the Del Webb development, which was under construction and would be 174 lots.

Item E2 was for a second phase on Daniel Island. It was only 10 lots and for the dedication of public infrastructure and association with phase two of a little neighborhood on Daniel Island.

Chair Waring asked if there was anything unusual about these dedications.

Mr. Keane said nothing was unusual.

On a motion by Vice Chair Gregorie, seconded by Mayor Cogswell, the Committee voted unanimously to approve Items E1 and E2.

3. Authorization to notify SCDOT that the City intends to accept maintenance of approximately 660 LF of Granite Curb and 2350 SF of Concrete Sidewalk on King Street (S-104), 190 LF of Granite Curb and 1330 SF of Concrete Sidewalk on St. Philip Street (S-10-106), and 60 LF of Granite Curb and 510 SF of Concrete Sidewalk on Spring Street (S-10-3) in conjunction with the Peninsula of Charleston Project Site.

On a motion by Vice Chair Gregorie, seconded by Mayor Cogswell, the Committee voted unanimously to approve Item E3.

4. Acceptance of a temporary construction easement on TMS No. 358-08-00-067 for the purpose of stabilizing the existing drainage channel.

Chair Waring asked Mr. Fountain to contribute to the Item.

Mr. Fountain said it was for the stability of an easement they had been working on with a few Councilmembers and a State Representative to correct some erosion issues.

On a motion by Vice Chair Gregorie, seconded by Mayor Cogswell. The Committee voted unanimously to approve Item E4.

F. Temporary Encroachments Approved by The Department of Public Services (For information only)

1. 2367 Lenwick Hall Lane. – Installing irrigation encroaching into City right of way. This encroachment is temporary.

2. **200 Captains Island Dr.– Installing irrigation encroaching into City right of way. This encroachment is temporary.**
3. **2155 Kemmerlin St. – Installing fence encroaching into City maintained drainage easement. This encroachment is temporary.**
4. **23 Dalton St. – Installing fence encroaching into City maintained drainage easement. This encroachment is temporary.**
5. **200 Meeting St., Suite 2 (Thai Zapp) – Installing awning encroaching into City right of way. This encroachment is temporary.**
6. **350 Henslow Drive (The Henslow). – Installing monument signs encroaching into City right of way. This encroachment is temporary.**

Mr. Keane said the Items were standard encroachments and presented for information only.

G. Public Service Department Update

1. Director Updates

Mr. Alltop said he did not have much to report. The department was still working on Rutledge Street repairs. Several garbage trucks would be sent back. The chassis manufacturer went out of business. They had to rebid and return the trucks. This would be submitted to Ways and Means for approval.

Chair Waring thanked Mr. Alltop and his team for getting the job done.

H. Permanent Encroachments:

1. Request for Permanent Encroachment:

111 Beresford Creek St – Garage roof overhang on an addition encroaching over drainage easement by 12". Existing garage roof overhang before addition encroaches over drainage easement by 12". This encroachment is permanent.

Mr. Keane said a garage was built on the property some time ago, and now there was a request to add a second-floor addition to the garage. There was an overhang on the garage that encroached into the drainage easement by 12". An encroachment permit for the garage was never issued and was caught by the DRB on Daniel Island. The City was being asked to issue a permanent encroachment.

On a motion by Mayor Cogswell, seconded by Vice Chair Gregorie, the Committee voted unanimously to approve Item H1.

I. Stormwater Management Department Update

1. MUSC Pump Station Upfit – Design Progress and Next Actions

Mr. Fountain explained the item and gave a presentation.

On a motion by Mayor Cogswell, seconded by Vice Chair Gregorie, the Committee voted unanimously to approve the MUSC Pump Station Upfit Fee Amendment #01 with Hazen and Sawyer.

2. USACE Environmental Infrastructure Funding – Brick Arch and Dupont Wappoo Projects

Mr. Fountain explained the item.

Mayor Cogswell congratulated not only Mr. Fountain and his team, but also Ms. Koszela and her team for helping to secure this, especially in today's money climate.

Chair Waring asked Mr. Fountain about the image of the brick archway and if the cave-in portion on the left had yet to be completed.

Mr. Fountain said the image on the left was an example of what would be seen as work began and, on the right, when work was being completed.

Chair Waring asked what the approximate length was of the finished arches on the right.

Mr. Fountain said the dimensions were about 5 feet tall and 3 feet wide, and the length down the archway was about 100 feet. They had completed approximately one mile working from Murray Boulevard to Calhoun Street along the Logan, Coming, Limehouse corridor as well as some spot repairs in other sections of the City. Another mile needed to be completed with help from the Corps.

Chair Waring asked if that was the City's old sewer system.

Mr. Fountain said it was. The arches were put in around 1870 in response to a yellow fever epidemic to get sewage out of the peninsula and into the harbor on the tidily flushed system. As part of the low battery project and some other work, the check valve project had improved the outfalls and added check valves to control the tide coming in on all of these and they were working to restore the ability for water to flow out into the harbor.

Councilmember Seekings said the completed brick arch work was incredible and getting value for every dollar spent. The relief given from these projects plus help from the Army Corps of Engineers was a bonus. He thanked everyone for what they were doing.

Chair Waring said it was great to have a network underneath the City that could be put back to use.

On a motion by Mayor Cogswell, seconded by Vice Chair Gregorie, the Committee voted unanimously to approve agreement between the Department of the Army and City of Charleston, SC for Design and Construction Assistance for the City of Charleston, SC, Wastewater Infrastructure, Including Stormwater Management Project (Brick Arch Rehabilitation and Dupont Wappoo Drainage Improvement).

3. Church Creek Bridge Pointe Flood Storage Project – Update on Construction Progress

Mr. Fountain said Mr. Charleton Cave, the project manager, would present the update and said it was good to see projects with grant funding that have been completed.

Mr. Cave shared his screen and gave a short presentation on two completed projects, Wolk Drive and Bridge Pointe, which can be viewed in the above link.

Chair Waring said this was a long time coming. He did not know how many times residents were flooded out of their homes. He thanked everyone who played a part in the project's success and said if Councilman Bowen was here, he certainly would have commented as well as Councilman Sheely.

J. Miscellaneous Business

1. Just Corridor Concept – Presentation by Mika Gadsden, Director of Sustainability

Ms. Gadsden said she would like to introduce the framework for an idea her team had been working on for some time and shared her screen. She said this began as an idea started by community stakeholders and the M.A.R.S.H. Project and then matured into something her team was trying to support or trying to find funding sources to use in support. She would like everyone to be familiar with the idea and what "Just Corridor" was as the term was being refined. Ms. Gadsden showed a conceptual map provided by the CDC with tidal creeks and basins, all on the peninsula, with arrows above represented as a boundary, not a finite boundary, but to give a sense where a corridor could begin. It started on the peninsula because the M.A.R.S.H. Project had presented the idea, and her team were stewards of work

in Wagner Terrace and around Halsey Creek. The goal was to replicate it citywide. Ms. Gadsden displayed the draft of a Resolution she hoped to present to City Council for approval. The draft contained a section prepared by the M.A.R.S.H. Project. She said the Resolution showed their commitment to the community-driven initiative and how it would highlight their accomplishments and current work.

Chair Waring said it was a great presentation, and before he recognized Dr. Scott, he asked if the Committee had any questions.

Vice Chair Gregorie said he would like to comment on what a great job Ms. Gadsden was doing with the Halsey Creek approach. Due to her leadership, they met with the Stormwater Director, as well as Josh Robinson, a consultant, who will discuss the stormwater approach to the corridor and build nature-based solutions to existing problems.

Councilmember Parker thanked Ms. Gadsden for her presentation and asked if her role with the City had been changed to the Director of Sustainability.

Mayor Cogswell said a press release was sent out regarding Ms. Gadsden being elevated to the role.

Councilmember Parker said she believed rain gardens were a great idea and wished the project could be expanded to include James Island. Great efforts were made with rain gardens in the past, but projects had been halted, so she agreed with revitalizing efforts but how would it be done? She also asked what the corridor would represent - a sidewalk, a neighborhood planting - she would like a better understanding.

Ms. Gadsden said the City was doing amazing work using nature-based solutions and getting community support to promote ideas. The plan for the rain gardens would be to partner with stakeholders and work with the eco corridor idea and the climate coalition, with whom the City helped secure resources. Funds to expand the program had been set aside. One of the issues she spoke with her predecessor Katie about was how to network the rain gardens to make them more effective and how they could have the most impact. It was important to partner and work with groups like the Clemson extension and the climate coalition and hopefully bring back the rain garden program to the east side as well.

Councilmember Parker asked if the rain garden program was just for the peninsula and asked if the area between the yellow lines on the map represented the corridor and where efforts would be focused.

Ms. Gadsden said the area represented the pilot area and the rust-colored lines were a general boundary for the initial phase that will be rolled out through all of Charleston. The boundaries had yet to be defined because of the pilot area with the work done in several areas by the following: the M.A.R.S.H. Project, the demonstration garden work, and work done with local private property owners.

Councilmember Parker asked if funds had been set aside.

Ms. Gadsden said not yet because they were in the early stages and looking to pursue grants and other types of resources.

Mayor Cogswell said the concept would be piggybacked from a community-driven effort with the M.A.R.S.H. Project. This idea had taken off with many folks interested and where it could expand across the City, and not just the peninsula. The idea would look at possible City-supported efforts, not necessarily financially, but grant writing help or grant capabilities. Bloomberg, for example, expressed interest in it being a program they might support. This community effort was something the City supported, and if funding could be found to expand it and do some proof of concept, it would make sense not just on the peninsula but citywide.

Vice Chair Gregorie said when Dr. Scott speaks, he will connect the dots. This was not new and had been worked on for the past four or five years with volunteers working for some time.

Dr. Scott introduced himself as Blake Scott, a professor at the College of Charleston who teaches International Environmental Studies and was also a community member in Wagner Terrace. He said the M.A.R.S.H. Project was not only a local grassroots project working with the Wagner Terrace Neighborhood Association but was also a research team coming from the College of Charleston and the Clemson Design Center. Dr. Scott continued with a short presentation which can be viewed in the above link.

Chair Waring thanked Dr. Scott for his time and contributing to the conversation.

Dr. Scott said he was happy to address any questions from the Committee.

Vice Chair Gregorie asked Dr. Scott to talk about the volunteers and plantings that were done.

Dr. Scott said with the support of Councilman Gregorie the project had three demonstration gardens in Wagner Terrace. They were currently working with local nurseries, the City, and private property owners. The demonstration gardens contained native plants so that water can be slowed on properties. They also demonstrated that they could bring these plants back and this life back to the neighborhoods with monarch butterflies or migratory birds. They had a historic marker and could make historic storytelling be part of the project documenting the area's history. There was also a membership program that did not cost any money. Members sign up and make a commitment to the program's principles.

Vice Chair Gregorie said they were trying to present a Resolution, but suggested the Mayor and Chairman look at whether some of it could be codified so it could be institutionalized.

Councilmember Parker thanked Dr. Scott for the explanation and the work being done on the peninsula that she would also like to see on James Island. The City worked on this in the past thanks to Katie Zimmerman and God rest his soul, Dale Morris. They had great ongoing efforts and were pulled back. She asked Dr. Scott if the plan was to do the work in the private sector and present informational sessions on programming and teaching constituents about planting and care.

Dr. Scott said yes, it was part of his research at the College. He received a SC C-Grant grant through NOAA that funded part of it and he had private donor support.

Councilmember Parker asked if all the work downtown was done through private sources or the grant.

Dr. Scott said the work was done through private and university support. There was also a student club and university courses as well as independent studies, with the themes integrated into the curriculum. It was also in partnership with the Wagner Terrace Neighborhood Association.

Councilmember Parker said she always was a staunch supporter of these nature-based solutions and on James Island everyone else was too.

Dr. Scott said part of program was taking all these ideas that have accumulated over time in Charleston and providing a narrative of connectivity across neighborhoods. It was one thing to talk about nature-based solutions from one neighborhood to the next but what links all of us was by using, embracing, and studying this idea of a corridor and each nature-based solution in each community now had a way to connect to each other in terms of the movement of biodiversity but also through people from one neighborhood to another.

Councilmember Parker asked Dr. Scott if he could share the program with the Councilmembers.

Dr. Scott said the membership was found online at themarshproject.com.

Councilmember Parker said it would be great to share the program information and membership.

Chair Waring thanked Councilmember Parker and Dr. Scott. He then said to Ms. Gadsden that the presentation from Mr. Cave and Mr. Fountain with the introduction on what was a flooding area at

Shadowmoss now would be an ecological area even when they removed some trees and kept some for the habitat of ducks, turtles and the like. He did not know if it dovetails or not but said on James Island the City had a drainage project on Central Park Road that will have part of the solution in a collection area that was going to be a natural buffer for the water to flow through and to alleviate some of the drainage on Central Park Road. There was one in Hickory Hills and a couple of them in a Shadowmoss neighborhood. In the Hickory Farms area, the City bought out houses that flooded repeatedly and can't build on anymore but now can be used as an ecological area. Chair Waring asked Mr. Fountain and Ms. Gadsden how this would dovetail in this ecological project.

Vice Chair Gregorie asked if Mr. Robinson was on the line because he could participate in the conversation as well.

Chair Waring said he would recognize Mr. Robinson but thought some of this ecological work was being done already off the peninsula and maybe not being included in the corridor.

Vice Chair Gregorie said he thought he was right.

Mayor Cogswell said he thought Chair Waring was correct, and the point was that Dr. Scott referenced this, and it was connecting those projects together through corridors that not only birds and butterflies could travel through uninterrupted tree canopies and bushes but also greenways for bike and pedestrian movement as well.

Chair Waring said he agreed with the Mayor and that was why some could be dovetailed with Ms. Gadsden's presentation as to what could be done and was done in some cases in West Ashley and on John's Island.

Chair Waring asked Ms. Gadsden and Mr. Fountain if they had been communicating. He thought all of this was great and thanked them for the presentations.

Ms. Gadsden said their teams had not been communicating but she and Mr. Fountain had been collaborating formally in a separate program. She said Mr. Fountain accompanied the M.A.R.S.H. Project, Joshua Robinson, and vice Chair Gregorie on a walk of the Halsey Creek watershed area so that was the beginning of some of this collaboration. She asked Mr. Fountain if he would like to comment on anything.

Mr. Fountain said the SRA department had been working on these ecological style projects, especially in the City's suburban areas, with the most readily implementable approach because of the lower property value, more land to work with, and trying to bring back what makes the lowcountry so special, the beautiful, forested wetland areas. As Councilmember Parker mentioned James Island was a perfect area, there was one in process on John's Island, and Church Creek in West Ashley. He said the peninsula certainly had some areas that Ms. Gadsden was looking at, like New Market Creek that had grant opportunities. The Stormwater Department under the small project allocations area had money for a traditional gray infrastructure outfall cleaning like Wagner Terrace. This was an opportunity to modify this traditional kind of cleaning into being more ecologically friendly and continue to expand out in other areas. Mr. Fountain said that collaboration was certainly something needed to be done citywide.

Vice Chair Gregorie asked if the City already had it within the stormwater manual to do ecological coordination when doing projects?

Mr. Fountain said yes, wherever the City could and wherever it made sense. A cost benefit evaluation and a quality-of-life evaluation were done as well as research for funding and project opportunities.

Vice Chair Gregorie asked if there was already some codification?

Mr. Fountain said it was baked into our project approach.

Councilmember Parker said she was certain a lot of it was already being done in a lot of our stormwater projects and would like to hear from Mr. Robinson if he was still on the line.

Chair Waring said he would recognize Mr. Robinson after Councilmember Parker finished.

Councilmember Parker continued to say not only would she like to know how this would tie in with new development but with citizens within the City and the private sector as well because of the many moving parts and she would like to know Mr. Robinson's ideas.

Chair Waring said he was familiar with Mr. Robinson's impressive work done in Colombia with a creek that wound through Colombia and was brought back to life. Apparently, Mr. Robinson was not available.

Chair Waring said this had been a wonderful conversation and thanked everyone who participated.

Vice Chair Gregorie asked if all of this was just for information.

Ms. Gadsden said yes, she presented the framework and would be happy to share more information. She said the M.A.R.S.H. Project wanted to share their concepts.

Vice Chair Gregorie said he read the Resolution which was in good shape. It needed to be adjusted before they moved forward and presented it to City Council. Many questions being asked would be answered with the Resolution.

Chair Waring said it needed to be coordinated with the aspects Mr. Fountain spoke of.

Vice Chair Gregorie said correlation or cross referenced to whatever was codified.

Chair Waring said he agreed.

2. HMGP – Flood Communications and Data Grant

Ms. Koszela said the State Emergency Management Department received money from FEMA for storms Helen and Debbie. This was an opportunity for the City to apply for some of the money to purchase instruments to collect flood data in the area. The data would help the City build projects when the Corps of Engineers were approached for funding for grants. A tide gauge could be on the Wahoo Cut or flood sensors could be placed on roads off the Peninsula that were known to flood. Programs already in operation could be enhanced with flood cameras. The deadline to apply was Wednesday and why it had to be expedited.

On a motion by Vice Chair Gregorie, seconded by Mayor Cogswell, the Committee voted unanimously to approve Item J2.

Chair Waring asked Mr. Fountain to provide an update on some old business, the area off Ashley Hall Road, Montclair Drive and the area that was blocked on the opposite side.

Mr. Fountain said an investigation was completed in the area that indicated flooding in the area created a significant sandbar, for lack of a better word, and had accumulated across a portion of the lake where there was a utility connection. One of the easements was cleared so equipment could be moved in to access the area and debris was removed that accumulated against the utility line. This restored the amount of flow, so the lake received most of the storm water instead of just half. The utility line was monitored to remove any debris in advance of storms. They looked for possible options to relocate the line so debris could not recollect. The next step would be small project work to look at the outfall system under the roadway and out into the marsh at the end of this year or beginning of next.

Chair Waring asked what it would entail.

Mr. Fountain said there was a riser structure that acted to prevent the tidal water from coming into the lake. It needed to be determined if the structure and the pipes were big enough to allow the water out while the tide was down. This project will need survey and modeling work.

Chair Waring said what about cleaning out East Oak Forest the drainage headed to Savannah Highway.

Mr. Fountain said that was one of the previously funded small projects East Oak Forest, West Oak Forest. They completed the evaluation and hydrologic modeling to see what the constrictions were in the area. One was that outfall channel and the debris accumulations under 17 as well as the pipes under the greenway and the pipes under Highway 17. They looked for funding sources on long-term capital project wise and submitted them to the Army Corps of Engineers and the State Environmental for permits to be able to clean out that channel section. The Committee approved the gratis dedication of easements from the property owners in that area iwhich included the church, the car wash, and the shopping center. The first round of comments was received from the Corps last week and responded to those comments so looking at that permit over the next few months and able to be cleaned before hurricane season.

Chair Waring thanked him for providing the information at short notice.

Councilmember Parker said she saw where CWS was doing some oyster renourishment work near their plant which was on James Island and asked if the City had a part in that or was it a CWS initiative. The James Island Creek task force had been pushing it, so she was grateful.

Chair Waring said it was CWS and were trying to reestablish the oyster beds to filter water from a natural standpoint. CWS has had great success and thanked her for giving them a shout out.

Councilmember Parker said anything the City could do to support them we should.

Chair Waring said there was a meeting scheduled for Wednesday morning, and they would take the message to them. He asked for any final comments from Committee members.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:08 p.m.

Sheila Smith
Clerk of Council's Office