Pin Point

Blueprints for Successful Communities

Fall 2009

Georgia CONSERVANCY

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U.S. Green Building Council—Atlanta Chapter

Pin Point Blueprints Sponsor:

The Home Depot Foundation

Prepared on behalf of
The Pin Point Betterment Association
Hanif Herman Haynes, President

The community wishes to offer this report in memory and special recognition of Bo Bowens (1942-2008) for his efforts on behalf of Pin Point.

Cover watercolor and watercolors in this report courtesy of Christian Sottile.
Photos on the back cover:
Three children (November 2009); DuShauna Anderson-Cooksey, Leslie Weeks & De'Lon Anderson-Cooksey.
Historic photo (1932): Theresa and William Haynes (age 6) on his first day of kindergarten in Pin Point.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

For over a century Pin Point has been a self-sustaining community of close knit families whose lives were closely intertwined with the health of the marsh and the waterways just steps off their yards. Neighbors hollered at each other from their porches. Parents allowed children to play freely in the streets and to explore the surrounding woods, assured of their safety in the peaceful community. Most livelihoods depended on the crab and oyster factories located in the neighborhood. "If you did did not work at the factory, you made cash making nets, traps, or deviled crab because of the factory," recalled one resident. Everyone walked to church on Sunday and gathered for funerals in the community cemetery. By tradition, everyone knew everything about everybody.

Today Pin Point residents are learning more about their heritage, but they are feeling less and less certain about the future of their community. It is hard on a community that prides itself on communication to be at a point where too many unknowns put them in the dark about the future of their community.

The old Varn seafood factory property has been sold and while past owners assure the community that it will be preserved as a historic resource and used as an educational resource where future generations can see how people lived in Pin Point, there have been no published plans for its future. The trailer park has been sold over and over again. Fishing is down and recreational boating traffic is up. Private fences cut across old walking paths along the marsh. Drivers cut through the neighborhood and dealers sell recreational drugs in the community parks. Too many family members share ownership of heritage properties. Too easily long-held properties can be sold to outsiders with unknown plans and outside ideas. Even the new local Historic District poses untested questions about how it will be applied.

Pin Point's cultural and historical significance make it vulnerable to outside pressures while providing opportunity for economic growth and community enhancement. The recent Johnny Mercer anniversary and the achievements of U.S. Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas remind the world that Pin Point is a quiet semi-rural community on valuable marsh-front property just south of one of America's top destination towns. The Gullah-Geechee National Heritage Corridor designated by Congress offers Pin Point national recognition and kinship with other coastal African American communities established by former slaves. Yet, despite the potential for development and change, Pin Point residents are dedicated to preserving their community fabric and way of life. However, the desire in the community to keep the look and lifestyle "the way it's always been," carries an underlying compassion for neighbors and respect for their privacy and property.

Blueprints for Successful Communities provided Pin Point a chance to confirm assets, to acknowledge challenges, and to create a vision which brings together the past and the future. As a result of the public meetings and the community design workshop, Blueprints stakeholders developed a number of recommendations which can allow the community to take several steps:

- **to preserve its look** (tree canopy, roads with vegetation close to the roads);
- **to bring back activities they miss** (walking trail along the marsh, rehabilitated park, better fishing holes);
- **to get recognition it deserves** (historical markers and community entrance), and

- **to bring into the community new sources of income** such as historical tours, community garden, heritage classes, or a heritage festival.

We thank all the stakeholders who participated in this project. We especially appreciated the participation of Pin Point's younger residents and their grandparents who contributed so much to every meeting. Through the wisdom of the older generations, the commitment and hard work of the current generations, and the enthusiasm of the future generations, Pin Point will continue to be a successful community.

A note about the community's name. Both "Pinpoint" and "Pin Point" have been used by the community. In this report, the older use of the name, as two words, is used.

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

2.0 STATEMENT OF PURPOSE: A CALL FOR ASSISTANCE

2.1 CALL FOR ASSISTANCE

Pin Point is a historic African American residential community located in Southeast Chatham County, on the outskirts of Savannah, Georgia. It sits on Shipyard Creek just south of the Diamond Causeway, the road that leads to Skidaway Island.

Like many small historical communities of African Americans, Pin Point is struggling to preserve its heritage and lifestyle. Pin Point is one of the last mainland waterfront communities where the descendants of the original African-American families still own land. As older residents die and youth relocate, the fabric of their heritage is disintegrating. According to the U.S. Census, there are fewer than ten residents remaining in Pin Point who are under the age of 35.

The land fronts valuable marsh and is highly desirable real estate. Therefore, Pin Point is experiencing pressures that can threaten to overtake the community. Community leaders fear that individual apathy among residents makes the community vulnerable to outside pressures. According to the 2000 U.S. Census 64.7 percent of the population lives in the low to moderate income bracket. The median income for the area is only $17,140.

Determined to have a voice in their destiny, Pin Point residents have mounted a campaign to preserve their heritage and keep their community intact. It is important to note that the community realizes that growth will come to the area, but they would like growth to enhance rather than degrade the quality of life they have enjoyed and seek to pass on to future generations.

Community efforts to date are laudable:

Both the Pinpoint Betterment Association and Ossabaw Heritage, Inc. have received 501(c)3 status under the Internal Revenue Service Code through Georgia Legal Services.

Pin Point has been designated a “local historic district” by the Chatham County Savannah Metropolitan Planning Commission (MPC). Pin Point is the first community in Chatham County to be recognized by the county’s new preservation commission.

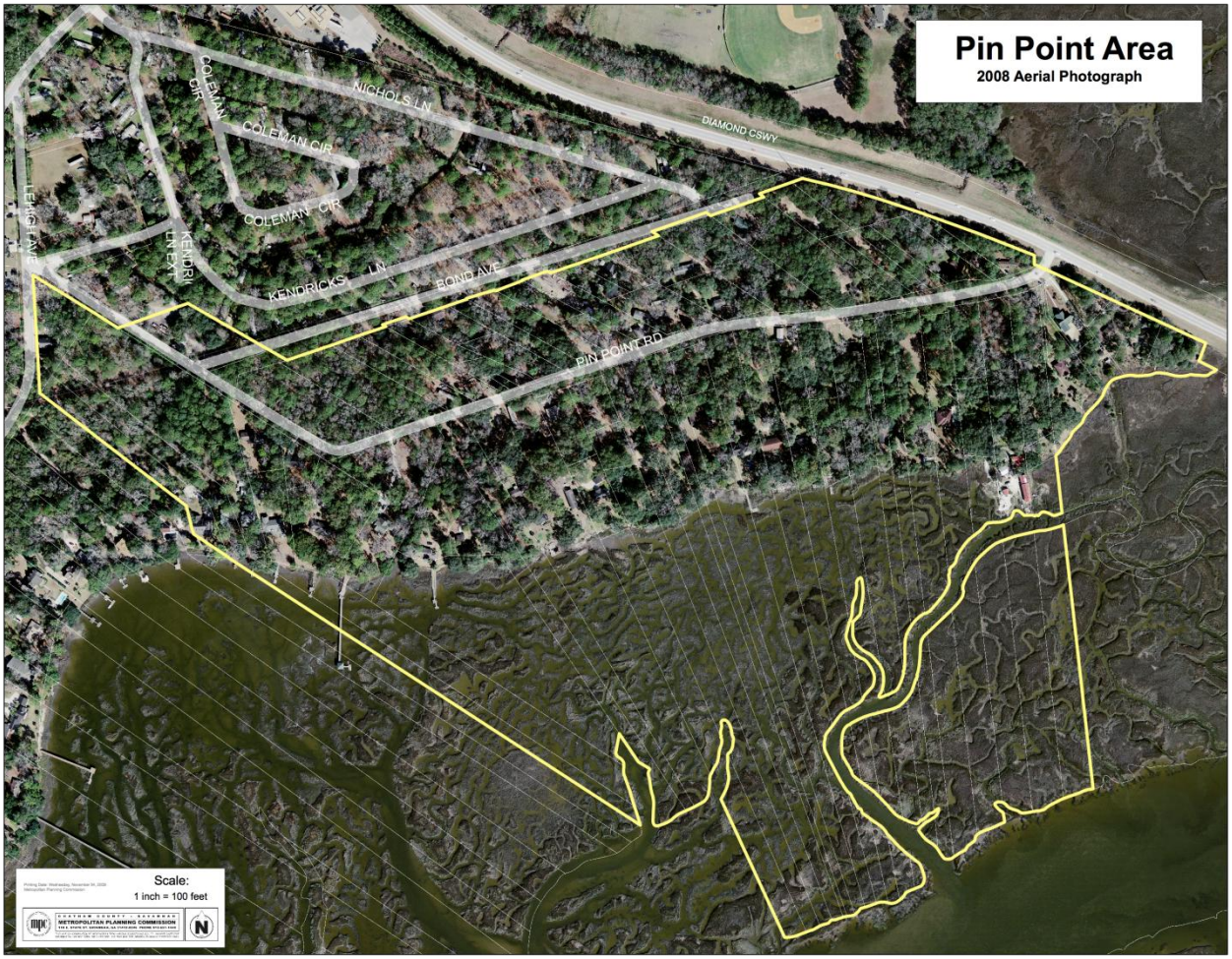
* The first edition of a new community newsletter highlights historical information and current events.

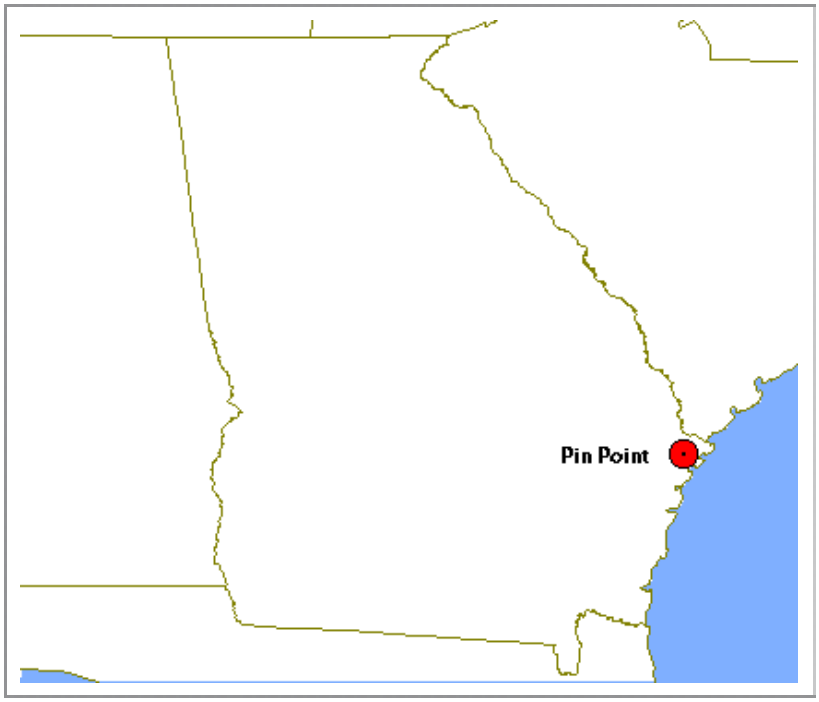
* In late 2008, the Georgia Conservancy was invited by The Pin Point Betterment Neighborhood Association to facilitate discussions through its *Blueprints for Successful Communities* program to assist the community to address key concerns and to develop a vision for its future. *Blueprints* helped Pin Point residents think beyond individual development threats and focus instead on long-range strategies for ensuring sustainable development, preserving community assets, and maintaining community cohesion. With participation from Pin Point residents and neighboring communities, as well as county officials and others, the Georgia Conservancy helped the community to identify community assets, concerns, opportunities and challenges.

* This program was funded by a grant from the Home Depot Foundation.

2.2 IMMEDIATE CONCERNS OF THE COMMUNITY

1. Sale of property within the community for which there are no publicized plans, no community input and no neighborhood say: the Varn seafood land and any heirs properties.
2. Road improvements with no community input on design: repaving Bond Avenue.
3. The threat of higher taxes as a result of improvements such as the paving of Bond Avenue and the Chatham County Historic District designation.
4. Limited ways to make income in the community since the seafood factory closed in the 1980s.




Pin Point

MAPQUEST
Limehouse
Edes
Port Wentworth
Bloomingdale
JASPER
Garden City
Savannah
Daufuskie Island
Silk Hope
Thunderbolt
Wilmington Island
Isle Of Hope-Dutch Island
Vernonburg
Pin Point
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COMMUNITY BACKGROUND

Description of Pin Point in the 1930s

"PIN POINT, A NEGRO COMMUNITY ABOUT NINE MILES southeast of Savannah, is scattered over some twenty or thirty acres on a peninsula overlooking Shipyard Creek. Many of the small wooden cabins are neatly whitewashed and rare half hidden by shrubbery and spreading oaks. Flowers and vegetables are planted in the most advantageous sunny spots near the houses and most of the yards are enclosed by picket fences, giving a cosy and pleasant privacy. The lanes, little more than wagon tracks, twist in and out and across the settlement. The informal and haphazard scattering of the houses, with high shrubbery bordering the lanes, gives an effect that is pleasing and unusual.

"Pin Point has a church, a pavilion on the tidewater creek, and a crab cannery. The men and women who do not work as domestic servants at the nearby country places find employment in the crab cannery or fish and crab and shrimp for themselves. The life is quiet, soothed by these smell of the salt marsh.....

"The people are, almost without exception, black or dark skinned, proud, upstanding and loyal, suspicious of strangers but generous and trusting to friends....The grown people....are still close to the traditions and beliefs in which they have been reared. Firmly believing in the Bible, they re still aware of other beliefs and customs handed down by their parents and grandparents."

<u>Drums & Shadows</u>, c. 1940 (p. 82-82, 1986 Brown Thrasher Edition by UGA Press)

3.0 COMMUNITY BACKGROUND

3.1 HISTORY OF THE COMMUNITY

Pin Point was settled in the 1890s by families of former slaves who worked on Ossabaw and Skidaway Island. In 1896 Henry McAlpin purchased the land (once part of Beaulieu Plantation) and subdivided it to sell as vacation homes to wealthy white Savannahians. As Pin Point was only accessible by a creek, the land there was considered less valuable and McAlpin sold several lots to African Americans.

Bothers William and Benjamin Bond, Ben Dilward, and Janey Baney made the first land purchases in March and April of 1897. The previous year William Bond and Benjamin Dilward had founded the Sweet Field of Eden Church (formerly the Hinder Me Not Church on Ossabaw) at Pin Point. Pin Point was subsequently settled mostly by former slaves and their descendants from Ossabaw Island and nearby plantations. They came to Pin Point because land on the islands was not open for sale to them, and they needed to escape the hurricanes that devastated the barrier islands. Many current residents are descended from those first families: Baney, Bond, Dilward, Bowen, DeVoe, Famble, Wiggins, McKiever, Sams, Mack, Martin, Anderson, and Harris.

Located on Skidaway Narrows and facing east, Pin Point was oriented towards the islands, the waterways, and the marsh. They developed a community based around the maritime industries of crabbing, shrimping and oyster harvesting. Their social and recreational activities also focused on the water. Families enjoyed lawn parties at waterfront gazebos, and children swam at “Butter Bean Beach” a spot now covered by the Diamond Causeway. On the bluffs above the marsh and creeks, families grew vegetables, kept chickens, and enjoyed fruits from trees and berry bushes in the woods. They stayed in touch with other communities by boat, by footpath, and until the 1920s by street cars.

In the 1930s Pin Point children attended the Rosenwald school in the community. This school was one of several schools established throughout the south by the president of Sears, Roebuck & Company to provide education for African Americans within segregated environments. Later children went to Haven Home School and Beech High School with children from Sandfly, Montgomery and other main land Gullah-Geechee communities. The old school building no longer stands. Other historic buildings still in the community include the Sweet Field of Eden Baptist Church and the Brotherhood of Friendship Society Hall. The current hall was built in the 1960s; the society was founded in the 1920s.

For nearly 60 years, the prime source of income and employment in the community came from gathering and processing seafood. Crab, oysters, and shrimp were harvested, prepared, and shipped to local markets by boat and by street car. At least three oyster factories were established at varying points in the history in Pin Point, the most successful of which was the A.S. Varn & Son Oyster Seafood Factory established in 1926 and operated until 1985. While only the foundations of the two earlier factories remain, the Varn Oyster Factory remains largely physically intact.

When Varn set up his oyster house and crab factory In 1926, he created an economic interdependence between the Varns, the only white family in residence, and the rest of the community. Men and women worked in a variety of capacities at Varn’s seafood factory: harvesting and processing oysters in the winter and crabs in the summer. Bateau building, net knitting, and crab trap making were home industries related to the seafood business in Pin Point. Children earned money by scrubbing crab barks and women prepared deviled crabs for area restaurants. The business closed in 1985. The most recent

factory building on the point next to the causeway is in need of stabilization. Within the last year (2008-2009), the property has been sold to an unidentified purchaser who plans to stabilize the structure.

Pin Point is the birthplace and early childhood home of United States Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas (born June 23, 1948), whose sister still resides in the neighborhood. Savannah song writer Johnny Mercer (1909-1976) had a family summer home at nearby Vernon View. During the summer Mercer visited the crab factory and listened to the workers' songs. The Moon River which flows in front of Pinpoint was named after Mercer's song of the same name which won the Oscar for Best Song in 1961.

The Diamond Causeway to Skidaway Island was built between 1965 and 1967. The new road cut off Pin Point from the land at Bethseda Orphanage, and construction affected water flow in the creek and river to Pin Point.

Today, Pin Point represents one of the few traditional Gullah-Geechee communities remaining on the coast of Georgia. According to the 2000 U.S. Census data, approximately 88% of the community's population is African American, of 109 total residents. By the beginning of this century Pin Point has experienced social and economic problems common to many low income communities.

Several local and national efforts have been working over the past few years to preserve the heritage of Pin Point. These include:

The Pin Point Betterment Association
For over fifty years, The Pin Point Betterment Association's purpose has been to do "anything that is needed for the betterment of the community." Past efforts included building playgrounds, outfitting playgrounds, and helping the senior citizens by cutting their grass and repairing their homes. Most recently, the Pin Point Betterment Association led the successful effort to have Pin Point designated as Chatham County's first Historic District, and invited the Georgia Conservancy to undertake this *Blueprints for Successful Communities* study. Pin Point has benefited by the unselfish leadership of past and recent presidents of this organization who came from community families.

The Ossabaw Island Foundation & Ossabaw Heritage, Inc.
The Ossabaw Island Foundation's long-term study of African American life on Ossabaw Island from the 1760s until the latter twentieth century is bringing outstanding scholarship and tremendous resources to researching and preserving the story of Pin Point's ancestors. Working with the Pin Point Betterment Association and the Ossabaw Heritage, Inc., the Foundation has conducted interviews with six residents of Pin Point who grew up in the former slave cabins during the 1940s and has contracted with a professor at Armstrong Atlantic State University (AASU) to conduct additional oral histories within the community. Recently an AASU intern has completed compiling a list of genealogy for Pin Point that links together all the families. When printed out, the list is over ten feet long.

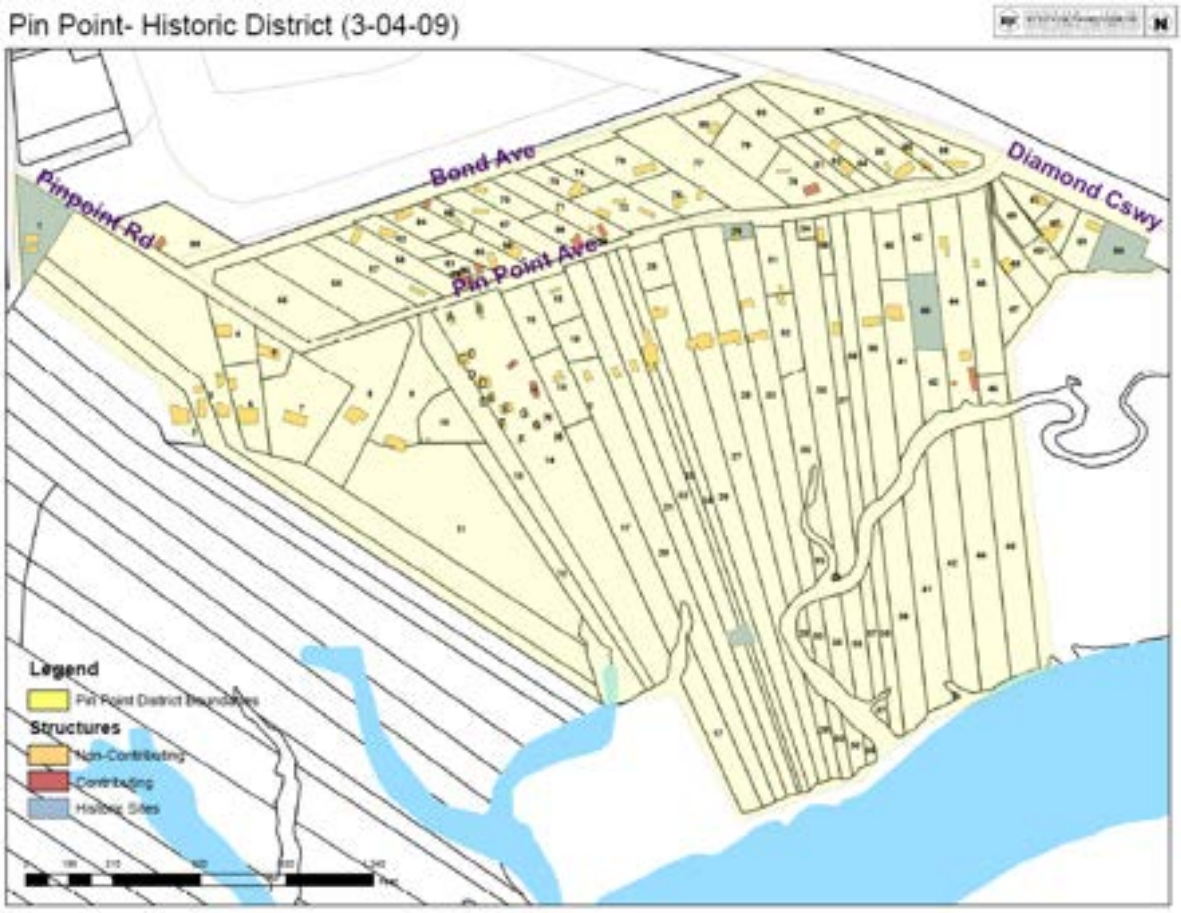
The Gullah-Geechee National Heritage Corridor (2006)
With passage of the National Heritage Areas Act of 2006 (Act), ten new national heritage areas were designated, bringing the national total to 37. One of these new areas was the **Gullah/Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor (Heritage Corridor)** which recognizes an area along the coasts of northern Florida, Georgia, South Carolina and southern North Carolina. The Heritage Corridor was created to:

1. Recognize the important contributions made to American culture and history by Africans and African Americans known as Gullah/Geechee who settled in the coastal counties of Florida (Duval and Nassau), Georgia (Bryan, Camden, Chatham, Glynn, Liberty and McIntosh), North Carolina (Brunswick and New Hanover) and South Carolina (Beaufort, Charleston, Colleton, Georgetown, Horry, Jasper and parts of Berkeley and Dorchester);

2. Assist Federal, State and local governments, grassroots organizations and public and private entities in Florida, Georgia, North Carolina and South Carolina in interpreting the story of the Gullah/Geechee culture and preserving Gullah/Geechee folklore, arts, crafts and music; and

3. Assist in identifying and preserving sites, historical data, artifacts, and objects associated with the Gullah/Geechee culture for the benefit and education of the public.

The **Gullah-Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor Commission** (GGCHCC) was established in October 2007 to develop and implement a management plan for the Heritage Corridor. Pin Point has been identified by the GGCHCC Commission as a community within the corridor. Three GGCHCC commissioners participated in the Pin Point Blueprints. It is hoped that once the GGCHCC completes its management plan, Pin Point will apply to become a partner in the corridor with other renowned communities on the coast such as the Penn Center on St. Helena Island, S.C. and Hog Hammock on Sapelo Island, GA.



Historic photos courtesy of Algernon & Sharon Varn. Top left: Workers in uniforms about the time the new oyster house opened (1930s). Top Right: Helen Johnson (age 80s) picking the old way (1980).

Vernacular Architecture Forum (2007)
Pin Point was featured in tours at the national forum on Vernacular Architecture held in Savannah in 2007 (Savannah). An article on Pin Point by Dr. Barbara Fertig was included in the forum's publication.

African American Life and Culture in the Georgia Low Country Symposium (2008)
In February 2008, the Ossabaw Foundation sponsored a symposium on the topic, "The Atlantic World and African American Life and Culture in the Georgia Lowcountry: 18th to the 20th Century." UGA Press is publishing the research presented by the nine scholars as a book to appear in early 2010. One of the papers highlighted African Americans on Ossabaw after the Civil War and how its residents moved to Pinpoint in the 1890s. Pin Point resident and registered architect William B. Haynes gave the opening welcome at the conference. The cover of the upcoming book features a photograph from the 1930s of Pin Point resident Lewis McIver.

Pin Point: Chatham County's First Designated Historic District (2009)
In early 2009 Pin Point became the first community in Chatham County to be designated an Historic District. Led by The Pin Point Betterment Association and Ossabaw Heritage, Inc., the community's education and preservation association, residents worked for several months with Dr. Barbara Fertig (Armstrong Atlantic State University) and Preservation Planner Ellen Harris (Metropolitan Planning Commission, or MPC) to document and record the community's historic structures. They were assisted by drawings made by students at the Savannah College of Art and Design (SCAD). The boundaries of the historic district are on the north the centerline of Bond Avenue, on the east by the centerline of the Diamond Causeway, on the south by Moon River, and on the west by specified parcels.

An historic preservation ordinance ensures that neighborhood design standards recognize traditional lot sizes and building coverages, height limitations and preserve character-defining features. Additionally it sets limits on the height of new construction that helps encourage appropriate and compatible new development. Finally, it requires that new development be sensitive to the character defining features of a neighborhood. Pin Point's Historic District ordinance outlines standards for additions to existing structures, new construction, relocation or demolition of resources, signage, and site elements including fencing, paving an pools.

The complete ordinance enacted on February 27, 2009 may be read at http://www.thempc.org/documents/CCHPC/Pin%20Point%20Historic%20District%20Ordinance.pdf.

This ordinance reflects the Quality Growth Objectives for Heritage Preservation in The Metropolitan Planning Commission's Study of Historic and Cultural Resources: "to maintain the traditional character of the Chatham-Savannah community through the preservation and revitalization of its historic areas; to encourage new development that is compatible with the traditional features of the community; and to protect other scenic and natural features that are important to defining the community's character."

The MPC study also pointed out the value of historic resources in attracting and encouraging nearby development in non-historic areas and the need for "these developments need to respond in a manner that complements the historic environs, not necessarily in imitation of style, but in quality of construction, accessibility and street connectivity." Protecting natural and scenic features that define rural neighborhoods was listed as an objective for conservation district.

Left to Right:
Varn Seafood factor;
Brotherhood Hall;
Cemetery and sign recognizing Pin Point as the birthplace of U.S. Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas, and Sweet Field of Eden Church.

3.2 THE COMMUNITY TODAY

The community of Pin Point is located about 12 miles from downtown Savannah. The area comprises about 2,000 acres with census boundaries generally at Kendrick Avenue (north), the Diamond Causeway (east), the salt marsh (south), and Pinpoint Road (west).

Access to the community from downtown is by the Truman Parkway which dead-ends at Whitfield Avenue. Surface roads to the community include Whitfield Avenue and Ferguson. The four-lane Diamond Causeway to Skidaway Island parallels the community and crosses the marsh at Pin Point. Recently it was announced that beginning in the summer of 2010 the Truman Parkway will be extended from Whitfield Avenue to Abercorn Street just north of Holland Drive. The impact to Pin Point of this road extension, as well as the construction of a new bridge to Skidaway Island, is unknown, yet not expected to directly affect the community.

Most homes are single family and owner occupied. Tree canopy overhangs the homes, yards, and streets. All houses are on septic; most are connected to city water. A mobile home park exists at the corner of Pin Point Avenue and Lehigh Road. Ownership of the trailer park land changes often.

"I'd rather build a home elsewhere than deal with the whole family about heirs property."

A large percentage of land in Pin Point is termed "Heirs Property," lots that have been passed down through generations with or without filing of deeds or wills and which are now owned jointly by multiple family members. In one case, as many as 439 people are paying taxes on large lots. While family members know that they own a piece of land at Pin Point, they only own a tiny fraction and there is not enough land on which they can build or do anything. There are legal remedies to heirs property, but few residents have pursued them. The community fears that a developer can buy out a few family members and in court force the remaining family members to sell.

"We want to preserve Pin Point alive as a community."

Residents are very proud that their community has been selected as the first to receive Chatham County's Historic District designation. They understand there will be challenges in balancing future improvement with preserving the community's serene historic quality of life. Specifically, they anticipate questions about building styles and restrictions, such as "What kind of home can be built here?" and they wonder what impact the designation may have on taxes and property values.

According to the 2000 U.S. Census 64.7 percent of the population in Pin Point lives in the low to moderate income bracket. The median income for the area is only $17,140. Until 1985 when the Varn oyster and crab factory closed, many residents had jobs related to that labor intensive local industry. Others took jobs as domestics or yard men working for local white families. Beginning in the 1950s and 1960s the younger generations moved away from the seafood jobs. As one resident put it, "Daddy thought he saw 'a crabber coming up' but I knew I had a better place." Children were encouraged by their parents and grandparents to get an education so they would "have a choice" in careers. Military service opened up various careers and when they left the military, the younger generations came back to college and moved on to more technical careers (masons, architects, electricians). Some expanded upon skills they learned in the community and became longshoremen, healthcare workers, or seamstresses.

"Jobs no longer at the back door."

Source both maps and graphs from U.S. Census, 2000, Pin Point. Note some informaton dated 1989.

Households		
Subject	Number	Percent
Total occupied	31	100.0%
Owner-occupied	27	87.1%
Renter-occupied	4	12.9%
* I vacant home		

Race		
Subject	Number	Percent
Total	109	100.0%
White	13	11.9%
Black	96	88.1%
Age		
Subject	Number	Percent
15 to 24 years	2	6.5%
25 to 34 years	3	9.7%
35 to 44 years	5	16.1%
45 to 54 years	11	35.5%
55 to 64 years	4	12.9%
65 years and over	6	19.4%

Income in 1989 (for larger area = 1,128 people)		
Subject	Number	Percent
Total households	467	100.0%
Less than $5,000	70	15.0%
$5,000 to $9,999	44	9.4%
$10,000 to $14,999	63	13.5%
$15,000 to $24,999	125	26.8%
$25,000 to $34,999	76	16.3%
$35,000 to $49,999	65	13.9%
$50,000 to $74,999	24	5.1%
$75,000 to $99,999	0	0.0%
$100,000 to $149,999	0	0.0%
$150,000 or more	0	0.0%
Median household income (dollars)		$17,140

Top to bottom:
Upper Left: typical streetscape.
Upper Right: new repaved streetscape.
MIddle left: entrance Diamond Causeway.
Middle right: yellow lines on street.
Bottom: playground.

A Description of Pin Point in the 1940s

"The coastal environs of Savannah are a labyrinth of rivers, creeks, and streams that feed into the Savannah and the Little Ogeechee Rivers. The waters swirl lazily round fingers of mainland an dozens of islands, large and small, creating an enormous salt marsh rich in seafood and wildlife. At the fingertips of the mainland, hidden behind a tall stand of pine trees, lies the community of Pin Point.

"Freed slaves from the South Carolina and Georgia coast settled Pin Point in the 1880s. They fished the rivers or worked in the large plantation estates up the Moon River, living in small clapboard houses clustered along a vast marsh…

"A dirt road ran the length of the community. Residents drew their water from a common well and used outhouses, living conditions that remained unchanged until the 1950s…..

"'Most of the homes didn't have locks,' recalled Bill Haynes, a contemporary of Leola's [Clarence Thomas's mother] who was born in Pin point in 1926. 'You didn't have to worry about anybody taking anything. We were poor, but I guess we didn't know it."

"Although the Great Depression fell hard on Pin Point, in some ways the community was slightly better off than others in the South. People grew their own vegetables – okra, collard greens, tomatoes, and corn. The men trapped raccoons and opossums. The river was full of croaker, whiting, bass, and flounder, not to mention crabs and oysters. A nearby seafood cannery provided meager income. 'They worked all week and had very little money to show for it,' recalled Haynes.

Description from Judging Thomas, by Ken Foskett, 2004: HarperCollins.

3.3 THE ENVIRONMENT

The name "Pin Point" comes from its environment. Some sources believe that the name is derived from the fact that originally the rivers came together making a point which fenced in the land. Dr. Barbara Fertig, in her essay on Pin Point in the Vernacular Architecture Forum proceedings, claims that the name probably came from a stand of Chinquapin trees in the woods in the community.

"Nothing more beautiful than the sun coming up over the trees, the marsh, and the Moon River."

The soil at Pin Point consists of Leon and Chipley fine sand and Lakeland sand soil series, three of the most common near-coast soil series in Chatham County. Also included are portions of Atlantic Coastal Plain Southern Maritime Forest, Southern Coastal Plain Dry Upland Hardwood Forest, and Southern Coastal Plain Hydric Hammock. Revealed in the 2002 Southeast GAP Land Cover Maps, Pin Point is predominantly (over 50%) in suburban use. Pin Point is surrounded on its eastern border by Atlantic Coastal Plain Salt Marsh.

A heavy tree canopy overhangs the homes, yards, and streets throughout the community. Songbirds and squirrels inhabit the trees. With development in the community the integrity of these forests has been compromised according to the MPC's water and natural resources staff. Neighbors concur that building construction and clearing by property owners have caused the decline of both the number and the variety of trees. Specifically, fruit trees and berries are no longer abundant and the residents believe that there is only one chinquapin tree left in Pin Point.

At one time there were rice fields across from the Varn factory and cotton was grown on the banks of the creek near the pavilion. Today there is no evidence of these fields.

Pin Point is located on Shipyard Creek just south of the Diamond Causeway, on the way to Skidaway Island. There is one deep water dock and other points where at high tide residents gain access to the coastal waterways. The Rodney Hall Boat Ramp on the Diamond Causeway offers easy access to boaters from outside the community and has lead to more recreational boaters on the local waterways.

"You always had a net in your car."

Fishing was always an important part of life at Pin Point. Seafood was a mainstay of the community's economy. From 1926 until 1985 the A.S. Varn and Son Company 's Pin Point factory canned crab and oyster meat and shipped "all over the world." The men of Pin Point harvested the crabs in the summer and oysters in the winter; the women picked, boiled, and canned the seafood. " The founder's grandson Algie III ascribed the decline [in their business] to competition from commercial fishing vessels and more stringent inspection of laws. Many locals also fault the spraying of a chemical called 'mirex' to combat the spread f fire ants, although marine scientists from the University of Georgia suggest that the decreasing crab harvest beginning in the 1970s may have been the product of a natural cycle." (Fertig)

"Not so much fishing now."

The marsh at Pin Point is generally of a "decent integrity" and has not suffered from excessive die back like other areas in Chatham County, according to Bethany Jewell (MPC Water and Natural Resources Planner). Jewell notes that in relation to pollution, the county does not have specific data collection on the Moon River. However, the Vernon River has been listed as an impaired stream and actually was

under a grant for determining further specifics. Non-point source pollution is an issue for all of Chatham County's waterways since the county storm drainage systems empty directly into waterways and do not undergo treatment. Because of cost limitations most outfalls lack a barscreen that works to stop large matter, such as litter, before entering waterways.

Residents state that construction of the Diamond Causeway in the mid 1960s changed the flow of the river and creeks, such as the Jim's Street Creek, and impacted the marine life. The causeway impacted the community in other ways. The current causeway to Skidaway changed the landscape and allowed for a second access to the community from the causeway. Originally there had been only one way into the community which dead ended at one point. Traditionally foot paths traversed the area and connected the community with Bethseda and neighboring communities. The current causeway cut off the connecting footpaths to Bethesda. An old footpath used to run along the creek front connecting all the properties along the water. Today sections of this path are still visible; however it has been blocked and grown over in places.

In 2003 the Chatham County Savannah Metropolitan Planning Commission completed a study for southeastern Chatham County. This area encompasses 79,633 acres, including 13,697 acres of highland. The geography and character of the area is defined by the marsh and estuarine rivers. A representative from Pin Point participated in this study. The report expressed many of the same concerns expressed in Pin Point Including,

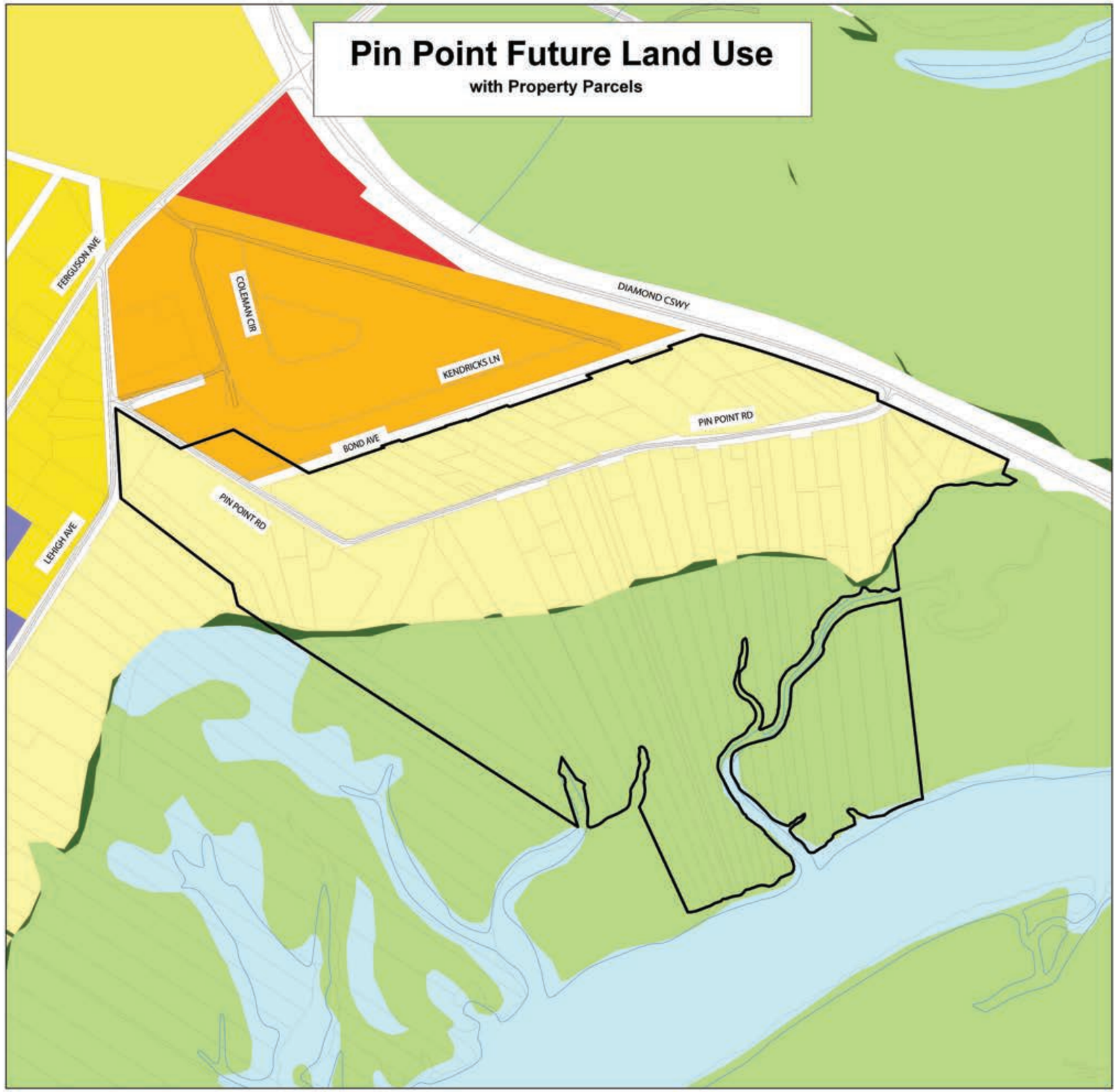
Long-term residents, enjoying the benefits of a relatively bucolic landscape, are concerned about potential development impacts including loss of open space, traffic congestion, commercial intrusion, and encroaching subdivisions.

The SWOT analysis for this Chatham County study in included in the Appendix of this report.

Photo: at Pin Point.

Pin Point Future Land Use

with Property Parcels



Legend

- Pinpoint Area
- Parcels

Future Landuse

- Downtown
- Downtown- Expansion
- Traditional Commercial
- Traditional Neighborhood
- Commercial- Neighborhood
- Commercial- Suburban
- Commercial- Regional
- Commercial- Marine
- Residential- Suburban Single Family
- Residential- Single Family
- Residential- General
- Planned Development
- Planned Campus
- Agriculture/Forestry
- Industry- Light
- Industry- Heavy
- Civic/Institutional
- Transportation/Communication/Utilit
- Parks/Recreation
- Conservation
- Conservation- Residential
- Tidal Marsh
- Open Water
- Transition
- Surface Mine
- Landfill
- Right of Way
- AICO+Marsh
- AICO+Water
- AICO+Industry- Light
- AICO+Right of Way
- AICO+Suburban Single Family Residential

CHATHAM COUNTY - SAVANNAH
METROPOLITAN PLANNING COMMISSION

Description of Pin Point in the 1950s

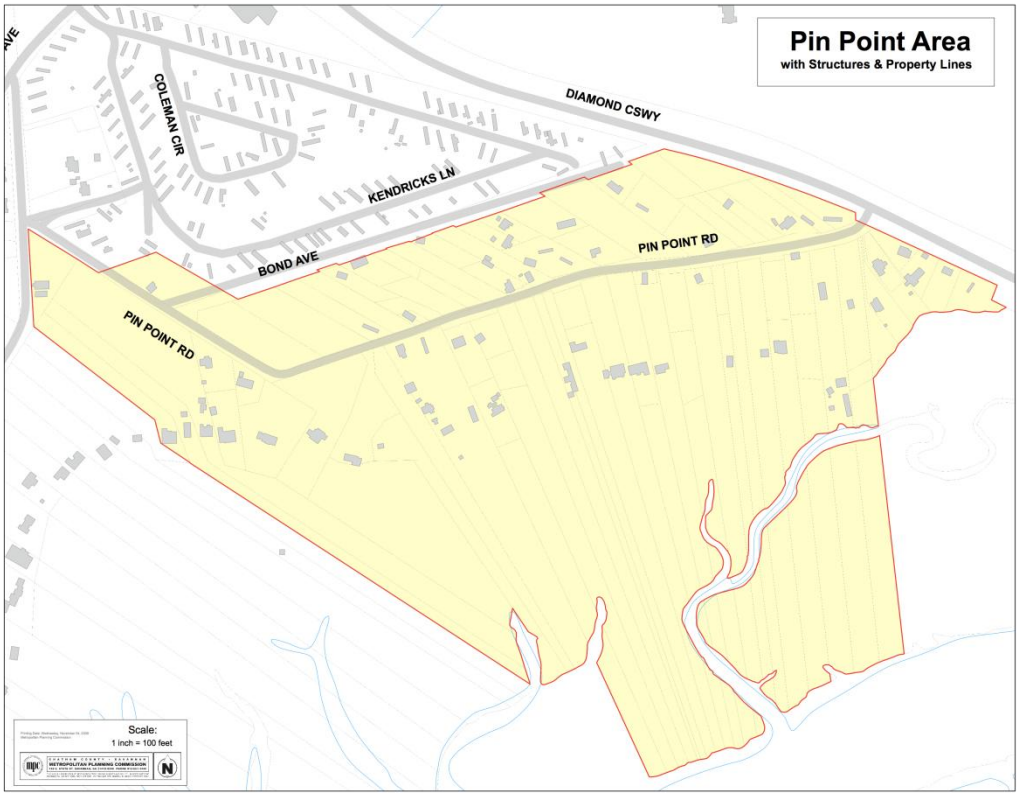
"About 500 people lived in Pin Point, most in small wooden houses with no running water. Each family got water from a common pump in the yard. One outhouse served several families. Most of the houses were raised on red bricks or cinder blocks or – like Annie Graham's – slabs of wood cut from tree trunks. Aunt Annie's windows had no glass, just shutters. Inside, the uninsulated walls were covered with newspapers to keep out the wind….

"The yards of the houses were all neat and clean, bordered by white picket fences and filled with blossoms: hydrangeas, magnolias, azaleas, and big bunches of purple watermelon flowers. Tall pines and short palmettos competed for sunlight beneath a canopy of huge oaks and other trees, all of which were draped with the lacy gray Spanish moss that thrives in the South. Small vegetable gardens sprouted in the sandy soil….

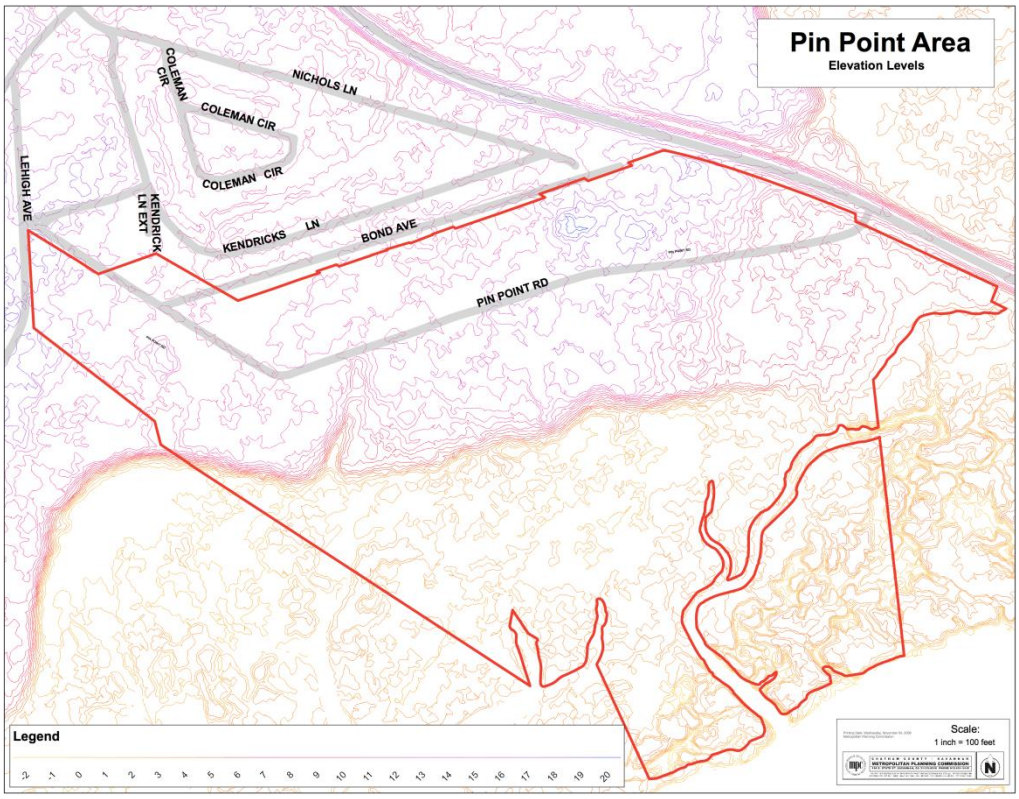
"…Looking back 40 years later, he [Clarence Thomas] said, 'I keep hearing this connection between disorder and poverty. We were poor but proud. You didn't see disorder.'……

" The community's main employer, a crab-and-oyster-packing plant named Varn & Son, stood beside Aunt Annie's house. On the dirt road in back of the house, a small cinder-block building served as a meeting hall for the Brotherhood of Friendship Society….a three-room schoolhouse sat opposite the Sweet Fields of Eden Church…."

Description from Clarence Thomas: Supreme Court Justice by Norman L. Macht, 1995: Chelsea House Publishers, NY and Philadelphia.



Pin Point Community.
Source Both Maps: Chatham County Metropolitan Planning Commission 2008



THE BLUEPRINTS PROCESS

4.0 THE BLUEPRINTS PROCESS

4.1 OVERVIEW

To develop the Blueprints for Pin Point, four meetings plus a design workshop were held in the community. The first meeting with representative of the Chatham County Metropolitan Planning Commission (CCMPC) gave stakeholders an overview of zoning issues and an opportunity to learn about the county planning processes [elements?] as they pertained to Pin Point. The next three meetings were held in the community to identify Assets, Challenges, Opportunities, Visions and Goals. The final meeting, The Community Design Workshop, was organized by members of the Savannah Chapter of American Institute of Architects (AIA).

Over seventy stakeholders participated in the series of meetings and the workshop. The largest attendance was at the final meeting. Each meeting had an average of twenty-five participating stakeholders. Meetings took place in Pin Point at the Sweet Field of Eden Church sanctuary and church fellowship hall or at the Pin Point Brotherhood of Friendship Society Hall.

Participants included some of Pin Point's oldest residents (age 86) as well as some of the youngest (10 years old). One consistent participant was a 12 year old girl who accompanied her mother and her grandparents. Stakeholders included current property owners who reside in the community; family who own property but reside elsewhere; family who do not own property and who reside elsewhere, but who regularly visit friend and relatives in the community. All of these stakeholders consider themselves members of the Pin Point community.

Additional stakeholder participants included representatives from local and state government, members or employees of non-profit organizations and professionals who are interested in Pin Point, faculty from area universities, and a representative for the new owner of the Varn Factory.

A complete list of stakeholders at all events is included in the Appendix.

The following subsections are summaries of the statements and information collected at the stakeholder meetings.

4.2 STAKEHOLDER MEETINGS: Determining Assets, Challenges & Opportunities

In 2003 the Chatham County Metropolitan Planning Commission (MPC) adopted a community plan for the southeast portions of the county. This study, created over several months with input from all the communities, identified as "desirable and worth protecting" the area's natural setting, the panoramic marsh and river views, as well as a variety of marine-related activities. The salt marshes, estuaries, rivers and hammocks were cited as "valuable natural resources that benefit the entire county." The tree canopy, semi-rural atmosphere and relative remoteness from commercial centers were listed as positive qualities of the area. A representative from Pin Point, Sharon Varn, participated in the county's study. A summary of the SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities & Threats) analysis from this MPC plan is in the Appendix of this report.

The following pages highlight the assets, challenges and opportunities Pin Point stakeholders listed for their community.

Photo: Enjoying the fish fry after the second stakeholder meeting.

4.3 ASSETS

PIN POINT ASSETS	
Natural Environment	1. Natural beauty & serenity of setting. 2. Proximity to marsh and water for food and baptisms. 3. Rich fertile soil. 4. Abundant native plants. 5. Tree canopy.
Physical Environment	1. Homes on septic, not sewer. 2. Unpaved roads
Quality of Life	1. Peace and quiet without city hustle ad bustle. 2. Do not fear crime. 3. Sense of togetherness. 4. Respect taught to younger generation.
Community Spirit	1. Elders teach younger generation. 2. Share catch of fish. 3. Support each other in times of need. 4. Help each other with home repairs. 5. Pride in being from Pin Point. 6. Accept newcomers. 7. Church and religious rituals provide framework for residents.
Community Heritage	1. Gullah-Geechee community based on nature. 2. Many residents are descended from first families who purchased land in the 1890s. 3. Historic structures remain (Sweet Field of Eden Church, cemetery, Brotherhood Hall, Varn oyster factory). 4. Cemetery well tended. 5. Recent designation as Chatham County's first Historic District.

4.4 CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

PIN POINT CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES	
Community Facilities and Infrastructure	1. Drivers do not slow down on neighborhood roads. 2. Drivers use roads as a cut through. 3. Speeding dangerous to children and residents. 4. Roads deteriorating. 5. Community lighting inadequate for pedestrians. 6. Parks in disrepair. 7. Poor drainage after storms. 8. Trees overhanging power lines. 9. Public chlorinator needs maintenance.
Quality of Life	1. Not enough for children to do. 2. Drug dealers in public areas.
Community Economic Development	1. Lack of employment and self-sustaining jobs in the community. 2. Residents no longer make money from their environment. 3. Apprentice training no longer carried on by elders in building or fishing related trades. 4. Residents help each other with repairs, but no longer come together to build structures. 5. Younger generation no longer acquiring a workable knowledge of the marsh and water. 6. Community losing traditional knowledge of skills tied to maritime industries and sustainability. 7. Youth leave the community after college even though they still feel attached to the community.
The Environment	1. Need good water quality for seafood. 2. Velocity and flow of water in creeks and marsh have changed since construction of Diamond Causeway. 3. With closing of seafood factory, refuse no longer baits the creek and attracts fish. 4. Increase in recreational boating on the waterways.
Land Ownership, Zoning and Building Codes	1. Heirs Property. 2. Will improvements (road paving, city water) bring higher costs to residents? 3. How will the new Historic District designation affect property values, building codes & taxes? 4. Future of the Varn Seafood property. 5. Future of the trailer park.

4.5 COMMUNITY VISION

Pin Point residents and descendants envision a future that maintains their community's peaceful, rural residential character, preserves and promotes their community's cultural heritage, natural beauty and unique sense of place, and sustains active, multi-generational family life.

4.6 COMMUNITY GOALS

The following section summarizes the goals which came out of the stakeholder meetings.

Community Facilities and Infrastructure

- Restore connectivity and access to the marsh and waterways.
- Provide safe and adequate pathways to connect residents to community facilities and neighbors.
- Provide recreational facilities and activities for families and children.
- Provide community activity opportunities for older residents.
- Upgrade and better utilize Pinpoint community centers.
- Provide adequate street lighting and traffic calming measures to ensure residents' safety.
- Improve storm drainage and maintenance of local roadways.
- Develop and implement design guidelines for buildings and fixtures (lighting, mailboxes, trash receptacles, etc.) that are modern but reflect Pinpoint's unique cultural heritage and integrity.
- Ensure that restoration and re-use of the Varn seafood factory is consistent with the community's vision and goals, compatible with the community's unique character and sensitive to current residents and Pinpoint descendants.

Land Use, Zoning and Property

"We would like our grands to return, not sell."

- Protect community residents and property owners from tax increases as property values rise.
- Seek means of retaining and developing heirs property in a manner that preserves the community's cultural and natural heritage.
- Protect the community against encroaching development and ensure that any new development is consistent with the community's vision and goals, compatible with the community's unique character and sensitive to current and future residents.
- Encourage retention of current residents and provide incentives for families to return and raise their families in the community.
- Eliminate litter and unwanted junk piles throughout the community.

The Environment & Natural Resources

- Protect the health of the marsh and the creeks and rivers so the wildlife can thrive (fish, shellfish, oysters, birds, etc.).
- Protect the health of the marsh, creeks and rivers as fishing grounds.
- Maintain the natural look of the marsh for scenic value.
- Protect and maintain the trees so they provide historic scenic canopy while at the same time being clear of power lines.
- Encourage neighbors to preserve and restore indigenous or traditional trees and berries (chinquapin, huckleberries, etc.).

Heritage and Historic Preservation

- Protect and preserve the community's natural, cultural and historic resources and unique character.
- Build a sense of pride in the community's heritage for the residents and descendants of Pinpoint.

" We want to preserve Pin Point alive as a community."

Community and Economic Development

- Strengthen participation and build the capacity of the Pinpoint Betterment Association as an active voice and body for creating positive change in the community.
- Create economic development opportunities that highlight the community's cultural heritage without exploiting the people or natural resources.

" We want Pin Point to be more like it used to be."

4.7 COMMUNITY DESIGN WORKSHOP

Stakeholders in Pin Point's Blueprints for a Successful Community came together on Saturday, November 7, for an all-day Community Design Workshop, or charette, with the purpose of putting on paper the key elements that captured the vision and goals expressed in previous meetings.

Community elder and retired architect Bill Haynes opened the workshop with an emotional talk about how he grew up in Pin Point, and when he returned from working professionally in Indiana, how pleased he was that so much had not changed in his community: the trees, the sun rising over the marsh, and the moon high over the marsh. Now at 86 years old, he said, he knows that the future could bring change and he urged the stakeholders to commit to working together to outline what Pin Point should look like in five years. Special guest Emory Campbell, Chairman of the Gullah-Geechee National Heritage Corridor, a board member of the Ossabaw Foundation, and former director at Penn Center on St.Helena Island near Hilton Head, S.C., spoke to the stakeholders on how the Gullah-Geechee (GG) communities on Hilton Head and others along the coast were gone because they did not have this opportunity to look at what they valued and to put on paper what they wanted to save in their community. He commended Pin Point for actively planning for the future of their community.

Savannah architect Christian Sotille began the charette with an overview of the historic and strategic reasons for Pin Point to develop a community design plan:

- To Record the Community History
- To Identify Community Concerns
- To Develop a Community Vision
- To Outline Development Growth and Preservation Strategies

His photos of the community offered a context for the community design workshop by illustrating Community Landmarks, Community Entrances and the Character of the Roadways in Pin Point.

As soon as Sottile outlined the four steps for the day long workshop -- 1) Group Table Work, 2) Group Report Back, 3) Designers Conclave, and 4) Final Drawing Presentation -- the quiet crowd of stakeholders divided into their tables in the historic Brotherhood Society's concrete building, and, as one participant said later, "the din was thundering." Everyone in the room started talking at once eager to get their ideas on paper.

Community Design Workshop Step 1: Work Group Tables

Participants formed four Work Groups around four tables. With the help of Blueprints facilitators, Concept Illustrators from the Savannah chapter of American Institute of Architects (AIA) drew, discussed and diagrammed answers to their Work Group's choice of four of the six questions below.

Work Groups' task list:
Please focus first on the four most important questions, as determined by group consensus. The remaining two questions may be addressed if time allows. You will have 1 hour to complete the visualization assignment.

1) Are you interested in creating a walking heritage tour in your community? If so, map out that trail's path and relevant stops within Pin Point.

2) Are you interested in organizing a community garden to collectively grow food for family and neighbors while providing a multi-generational recreational activity (and possibly serve as a source of income at area farmers' markets)? If so, locate some potential areas for the garden.

3) Site an area for a community gathering space and identify what amenities should be available (i.e. playground, benches, etc.).

4) Do you have interest in commissioning historical markers in the Pin Point community, with the support of organizations such as the Georgia Historical Society? If so, where should those markers be erected and what should it commemorate?

5) How would you like to improve your streets? Please illustrate the location and your ideas for placing the following (if desired): bike/pedestrian paths, traffic calming measures, lighting, paving, landscaping, etc.

6) Would you like additional access (or community access) to the waterfront? If so, how do you envision that?

Community Design Workshop Step 2:
Work Group Tables Feedback

Feedback from the four Work Group Tables provided common goals:

- Better Entrance to the Community
- Community Garden
- Historical Markers and Trail
- Natural Landscape Look to Streets

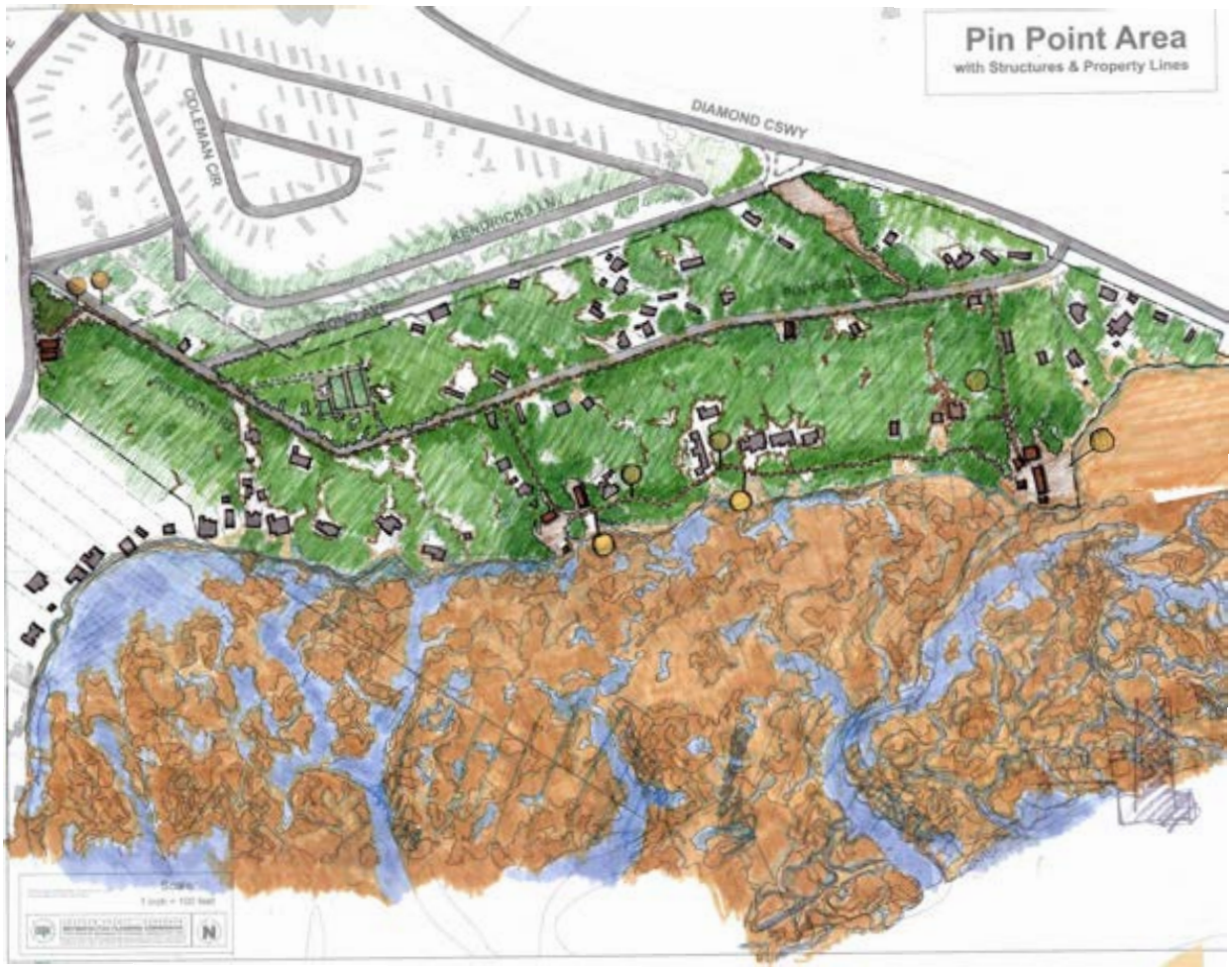
Community Design Workshop Step 3: Drawing the Plan

After lunch, stakeholders went home while the illustrators/architects walked through the community and set up design tables outside to pull together the four Work Group drawings and comments.

Photos of working outside

Community Design Workshop Step 4: Final Community Drawing

At 4 p.m. lead architect Sottile reviewed with stakeholders the key elements of the final drawing below.



A Heritage Trail Highlights Pin Point's Historic Features:

- Sweet Field of Eden Church
- Cemetery
- Site of Rosenwald School
- Brotherhood of Friendship Society Hall
- Early crab factory
- Site of Helen's Dock
- Baptism sites
- Aunt Annie's (lawn parties, gazebo)
- A.S.Varn & Son seafood factory
- Site of birthplace of Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas
- Site of Butter Bean Beach (swimming hole)

Preserving the Character of Pin Point's Roads:

- Vegetation to the edge of the road.
- Tree overhanging road.
- Yellow lines give the impression that drivers can travel the road at a high speed.
- Take away the double yellow lines.

Take Back the Park and Create A Community Entrance:

Drivers use Pin Point Avenue as a cut-through. Drug dealers take over the three community parks.

- Consider blocking off Pin Point Avenue.
- Use the newly paved Bond Avenue as the only access to the Diamond Causeway and as the entry road to the community.
- Create an attractive "Welcome" and landscaped garden.
- Make park more visable and prominent, and less attractive to drug dealers.

Recreate Walking Trail Along the Marsh

- Open to the public only on certain days and hours.
- Open only by guided tours.
- Residents only guides to give tours.
- Allows more control to assuage concerns of private property owners.
- Creates revenue source for community.
- Consider access to residents only at other times.

THE BLUEPRINTS SUMMARY

5.0 THE BLUEPRINTS SUMMARY

5.1 RECOMMENDED ACTION STEPS

This section takes the community goals identified in the Blueprints process and summarizes what can happen next. The action steps include suggested tools and assistance available to the community. Contact information for suggested partners or sources are located in Appendix

Community Facilities and Infrastructure

- Seek **inclusion of the recommendations included in this report in the Southeast Chatham County Community Plan and City of Savannah comprehensive or sub-area plan(s)**.
- Seek assistance from the City, County and Metropolitan Planning Commission to **develop a specific Pin Point community plan** including:
    a. Detailed land use and zoning recommendations consistent with community goals and historic district designations targeted to preserving the community character.
    b. Recommendations for traffic, transportation, parks, community facilities, and infrastructure improvements consistent with community goals and oriented to community needs.
    c. Recommendations for green space and canopy tree protection and preservation.
    d. Design guidelines for street improvements and sidewalks or footpaths and commercial activities consistent with community goals.
    e. Recommendations for coordinating or unifying City of Savannah and Chatham County planning, development and service delivery activities within the Pin Point community.
- Participate in a set of community design workshops (also called charettes) to **identify and map Pin Point's facilities and infrastructure needs.** Led by local architects and planners, these charettes will help residents and participants, alike, to visualize community improvement goals and will produce a map and plan that can serve as a guide to further these objectives.
- Work closely with the Metropolitan Planning Commission (MPC) and District #1 County Commissioner Helen Stone to **upgrade community infrastructure concerns** such as street lights, traffic calming measures, curbs, paving and drainage issues, sidewalks and bike paths.
- Work with local volunteer coordinators to **implement available energy and water efficiency programs** such as Home & Heartwarming, Interfaith Power and Light, and Let's Raise a Million. These programs aim to improve energy and water efficiency in residential homes, are implemented free of charge and can reduce energy and water costs to the homeowner.
- Work with Savannah Chapter of American Institute of Architects (AIA), Historic Savannah, and universities with planning programs such as Savannah College of Art and Design (SCAD), or UGA College of Environmental Design to begin **renovations of historic structures or design a new community entrance**. Work with their local volunteer coordinators to **rebuild the playground and other community structures**.
- Work with county solid waste and recycling and volunteers for **litter clean up**.
- Strengthen **partnerships with adjacent neighborhoods** in addition to Sandfly, Montgomery, Beaulieu, Vernonburg, Isle of Hope , Skidaway Island, and Bethseda in order to create a stronger voice in decision processes.
- Inquire about inclusion in any **Multiple Property listing with the National Register of Historic Places** (i.e. a Gullah-Geechee Corridor). Contact the Historic Preservation Division of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources for compatible listings.

- Talk with landowners about **re-establishing a walking path along the marsh**, and a community center, or gathering place, for lawn parties and access to the marsh and water.
- Apply for a **grant from the parks department for assistance** to rehabilitate the community parks.

Land Use, Zoning and Property

- Participate in zoning and land use presentations by MPC representatives. Neighborhood education on these important topics will help better **protect the community against encroaching development**.
- Seek assistance from the Georgia Appleseed Program or Georgia Legal Services to **learn more about Heirs Property** and to identify the next steps families need to legally take toward securing property ownership and protecting land in Pin Point.
- Continue investigating options for additional cultural resource preservation and natural resource conservation such as the **cultural overlay district** in Beaufort County, S.C. and **conservation easements** in Georgia

Environment and Natural Resources

- Work with **county arborists on how to trim tree canopy**; appoint a community retiree to be their contact/supervisor when they come to cut in the neighborhood.
- Work with UGA's Coastal Georgia Adopt-A-Wetland program to **monitor the health of the water and marshes**.
- Encourage marsh front property owners to **maintain riparian buffers** supported by programs of the MPC and Georgia DNR.
- **Restore, preserve, and enhance local oyster reefs** with UGA Marine Extension Service's G.E.O.R.G.I.A. program for inshore ouster reefs.

Heritage and Historic Preservation

- Continue monitoring the neighborhood under the existing Chatham County **historic district guidelines**. Stress both uniformity and uniqueness (mailboxes, street lighting) and construct modern buildings that respect the heritage.
- Emphasize the **preservation of any historical or culturally significant structures** in the community by working with the Chatham County Historic Preservation Commission and researching options such as the National Register of Historic Places or a cultural overlay.
- With the help of the Georgia Historical Society's historical marker program, **document, map, and mark historical sites** in the community. This is a useful tool for public education, historic preservation and heritage tourism. Make application to the Georgia Historical Society (GHS) to **fund one historical large marker**. Seek design and additional funding for smaller markers to set at additional historic places in the community.
- Continue working with The Ossabaw Island Foundation and Dr. Barbara Fertig (Armstrong Atlantic State University) to **record oral histories, recover family ties to the islands, and preserve the cultural heritage of a traditional African American community**.
- Follow-up with **historical vernacular architecture survey** conducted by SCAD professor Jong Lim and his class.
- **Protect and rehabilitate historic resources** and seek **loan funds for preservation and rehabilitation of historic structures**. Contact organizations such as Historic Savannah for possible funding sources (i.e. their Revolving Fund).
- Develop an **oral history recordings program** (like Foxfire) where younger residents record what their elders say about the old ways (how to clean fish, to can, to sew, to make crab traps).

Working with Story Corps (www.storycorps.org) or Dr. Fertig at Armstrong Atlantic State University, younger residents then save the recordings and publish and **distribute the information on social networks on the internet**.

- Develop a **Pin Point website** related to above.
- Culminate the Blueprints project with a **Pin Point Cultural Heritage Day** to share the community's story with neighboring county residents. Activities could include exhibition of traditional crafts, such as cast net making, cast netting, demonstration of bateau building and children's games and toys (tire swings, pluffers, marbles, and half-rubber), a market selling other traditional arts and crafts and community-grown produce, local musicians, fish-fry, etc. Pin Point Cultural Heritage Day could also tie into an Ossabaw heritage event or a visit to the island led by a Pin Point resident. This could be a yearly event to open Pin Point to visitors and serve as a source of revenue for the community.
- Work with the UGA Marine Extension on Skidaway Island or the Skidaway Institute to **teach others about the Gullah-Geechee kinship to water, land and marsh**.
- Continue **community newsletter** that shares historical info and current events. Develop plan for writing, printing and distribution of newsletter on a regular schedule.
- Develop an **on-line community calendar** so groups do not schedule overlapping events.
- **Partner older residents** who do not have computers with younger computer savvy residents so everyone in the community can be better informed.
- Take advantage of the popularity of network food programs and **host a deviled crab contest** promoting old family recipes.

Community and Economic Development

- Develop a **plan for implementing recommended design and other community improvements** outline in this report. The plan should outline priorities, assess feasibility and costs, set timelines and identify potential funding sources.
- Consider possibilities for **bringing capital into the community**, including proposed ideas of heritage tourism (through walking tours and/or historical markers), community gardening and applying for grants.
- Evaluate the potential for **participation in existing programs of Gullah-Geechee cultural tourism** and for inclusion in the management plan of the Gullah-Geechee National Heritage Corridor Commission.
- Form **partnerships with area businesses** to establish common goals and gain support for community design projects, such as gateway enhancements and local street signs, and support for the historic district design requirements.
- Pursue **public and private funding** for gateways/entrance park and historical markers, signage, plantings, lighting and other community improvements recommended in this report. Possible sources include area businesses, local foundations (e.g Ossabaw Foundation?), and government grants such as Development of Community Affairs Quality Growth grant program or various grants offered by the Georgia Council for the Arts.
- Continue **partnership with the Ossabaw Island Foundation and Ossabaw Heritage Foundation**, Pin Point's incorporated non-profit historical society, to build upon the relationship between the island and the community.
- Engage in discussion with current owners on the **restoration of the Varn Seafood Factory** and share ideas on the re-use of the facility for heritage education purposes.
- Seek assistance and funding to develop a **campaign to educate the public about Pin Point's history and present-day community**. Possible sources of assistance include the Georgia Historical Society, University of Georgia Press, the Georgia African American Historic

Preservation Network (Reflections newsletter), the Ossabaw Foundation and Ossabaw Island Education Alliance, and the Gullah-Geechee National Historical Corridor managed by the National Park Service under the U.S. Department of the Interior

- Research grant possibilities, like the **traditional arts apprenticeship grants** available in the fall through the Georgia Council for the Arts Begin a once-a-month Gullah-Geechee Heritage classes to demonstrate and offer instruction in net casting, net knitting, bateaux building, home economics, home canning, crab trap design, etc.
- Research grant possibilities for programs preserving or bringing back **traditional fishing methods**, like crabbing, shrimping, and oystering. Contact Dionne Hoskins at Savannah State University about her research.
- Consider ways to attract **heritage tourism through walking tours, historical markers and collaboration with organizations** like Coastal Heritage Society in Savannah and with the Sapelo Island Cultural and Revitalization Society (SICARS) along the coast.
- Set a date for an annual **Pin Point Cultural Heritage Day**.
- Identify and **train Pin Point residents who can give historical tours of the community**. Contact Historic Savannah Foundation (or tour company for assistance?)
- Develop a **community garden and related activities** such as a regular farmers market on the southeast side of the county; classes for Master Gardeners and students on sustainable gardens, and knowledge of old seeds or native and wild plants. Work with organic gardeners such as the African American Farmers - Oak Tree Farm or Farmer D; Project Plant a Row (donations to Food Bank)

See APPENDIX for contact information for recommended programs and organizations.

Blueprints for Successful Communities is an education and technical assistance program of the Georgia Conservancy designed to facilitate community-based planning across the state. The program is committed to achieving successful communities by creating sound conservation and growth strategies, and building consensus for action.

Georgia is home to an abundance of natural and cultural resources. Our development patterns over the last 50 years present a very real threat to these resources and to quality of life as a whole. Sprawling, decentralized development, where people must depend on automobiles, is expensive for local governments to serve and has a staggering effect on the environment. Vehicle emissions create toxic air pollution. Stormwater runoff from asphalt poisons rivers and streams. Thousands of acres of farms, woodlands, and open space are lost to wasteful, non-sustainable forms of development.

The Georgia Conservancy partnered with the Urban Land Institute and the Greater Atlanta Homebuilders in 1995 to host its first *Blueprints for Successful Communities* symposium. Currently the Conservancy maintains an active partnership with thirteen organizations. These diverse organizations and their members provide a great deal of understanding and expertise in the relationships that exist between land use, public infrastructure, economic growth, and environmental quality.

Prior to the Pin Point effort, *Blueprints* has addressed multi-jurisdictional watershed planning, heritage corridor preservation, location of commuter rail stations, inner city neighborhood issues, and other planning opportunities all through a collaborative planning process.

BLUEPRINTS PRINCIPLES

- *Maintain and enhance quality of life for residents of the community*
- *Employ regional strategies for transportation, land use, and economic growth*
- *Consider the effect of the built environment on the natural environment as well as history and culture*
- *Employ efficient land uses*

GEORGIA CONSERVANCY'S
BLUEPRINTS
FOR SUCCESSFUL COMMUNITIES

Georgia
CONSERVANCY

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