Charleston County Resilience and Sustainability Advisory Committee (RSAC) Meeting Minutes
September 1, 2026

RSAC ATTENDEES
Stewart Weinberg, Sally Brooks (Planning and Zoning), Kristin Miguez (BCDCOG), Jacob Gamble (Chamber of Commerce), Adrian Cain (Homebuilders Association), Scott Harris (College of Charleston) Adrian Cain (Homebuilders Association)

COUNTY STAFF
Molly Caggiano, Alexandra Petruch, Walter Smalls, Kristoff Haspel-Talavera, Andrea Melocik-White.

ABSENT
Scott Runyon (Dominion Energy)
Scott Curtis (Citadel)
Rev. Kylon Middleton (County Councilmember)

CALL TO ORDER
Stewart Weinberg called the Charleston County RSAC meeting to order at 9:32am.
FOIA compliance and media acknowledgement announced.

- Approved meeting minutes at 9:33am from June 9, 2026
    - Motion to approve introduced by Stewart Weinberg. Motion was approved unanimously.

PRESENTATION
I. Resilience Key Performance Indicators & Metrics (Stephen Julka, Fernleaf)

Stephen reported that Fernleaf has been developing a structured resilience approach across the county. The Climate Smart Communities Initiative grant enabled the team to advance several resilience strategies, including:

- Flood Mitigation Decision-Making Framework
    - Conducted a flood insurance gap analysis.

    - Developed a structured process to determine which flood-mitigation project types are appropriate for specific areas based on vulnerability and conditions.
- Brownfields Redevelopment Strategy
    - Applied vulnerability data to guide redevelopment decisions.
    - Identified low-vulnerability sites suitable for residential, commercial, or community-node development.
    - Identified high-vulnerability sites more appropriate for open space, flood mitigation, or heat-mitigation uses.

Resilience Collaboration

- Accelerator Workshop Identified regional barriers preventing jurisdictions from establishing and implementing resilience goals.
- Resilience Collaborative Continued refining shared strategies through hands-on training and cross-jurisdictional coordination.

Key Performance Indicator (KPI) Development Process

Stephen emphasized the importance of building structure around the region's unusually strong collaborative momentum. The KPI development process is intended to create clear, shared metrics that guide consistent, data-driven resilience progress across jurisdictions.

He described the process as an hourglass model:

1. Informative Inputs (Top of Hourglass)
    - Countywide vulnerability assessment
    - Preliminary resilience strategies
    - Principles from the Reality Check 2.0 initiative led by BCDCOG
    - Insights from Resilience Collaborative workshops, including barriers, challenges, and opportunities for interjurisdictional cooperation
2. Data Alignment (Center of Hourglass)
    - Identifying relevant asset–hazard pairs for each strategy
    - Determining which strategies are supported by available data
    - Assessing where coordination can help overcome barriers
    - Ensuring data consistency across jurisdictions
3. Metric Development (Bottom of Hourglass)
    - Creating specific, widely applicable KPIs
    - Ensuring all jurisdictions have access to the data needed to track progress
    - Establishing a structured framework for regional resilience action

Stephen noted that the team is currently in the metric-development phase, focusing on broad applicability and data accessibility.

- Comments:

- Stewart Weinberg encouraged members to attend the September 15 session at The Citadel, noting the strong energy and collaboration among jurisdictions. He highlighted how seeing AccelAdapt used in real time demonstrates its potential for Planning Commissions and councils to integrate data into decision-making.
- Adrian Cain (Homebuilders) raised the importance of cross-jurisdictional coordination around maintenance, noting that poor maintenance often drives flooding, especially in rural areas. He emphasized that resilience planning must include shared responsibility for maintaining existing systems.
- Stephen Julka (Fernleaf) agreed, noting that today's presentation covered only the "tip of the iceberg." He emphasized that drainage and stormwater systems cross jurisdictional boundaries, and performance depends on neighboring systems functioning well. Shared data and coordinated maintenance planning can help optimize system performance and avoid inefficiencies.
- Molly Caggiano (Charleston County) added that coordination requires jurisdictions choosing to participate. She noted that continuing to work the way things have always been done is an option but with rapid regional growth, transformational collaboration may be necessary. She emphasized that shared data could help jurisdictions recognize when increased maintenance or new approaches are needed.

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICERS' REMARKS

Resilience Remarks

I. AccelAdapt Rollout & Training Debrief

- Molly Caggiano (Charleston County) explained that AccelAdapt is a data platform, and the goal of the rollout was to help practitioners see how it supports their daily work. Two trainings were held: an in-person session on June 23 and a virtual session on July 23, where participants explored the platform directly.
- Feedback from the platform were; users noted that the tool currently covers only Charleston County and will need Berkeley and Dorchester data for full tri-county usefulness.

II. Inter-Jurisdictional Alignment through Resilience Collaborative

- Molly Caggiano (Charleston County) noted the need for stronger inter-jurisdictional alignment around specific tasks and activities. She highlighted that several priorities have risen to the top such as developing shared risk baselines and integrating plans and policies across jurisdictions. Strengthening this alignment will improve regional planning and enhance grant competitiveness, since funders consistently value collaboration across agencies, sectors, and partners.

III. R&S Strategic Direction

Molly Caggiano (Charleston County): shared that when she and Aly Petruch (Charleston County) first stepped into their roles, they immediately dove into the work in front of them. Now, with more space to pause and reflect, they've taken time to clarify R&S's mission and vision. Molly noted that they would like to share this draft direction with the group for feedback or approval.

Comments on Mission and Vision Statement

- Walter Smalls (Charleston County): Emphasized that nothing should conflict with Council's mission, and alignment must be maintained.
- Stewart Weinberg: Expressed admiration of the mission, vision, and core strategies and called for motion of an approval at 10:25 am.

Sustainability Remarks

I. Energy Efficiency Grant

The team completed the initial 20 residential energy audits and 8 weatherization's under the State Energy Office grant. The grant has been extended, allowing additional homes to be served before the program concludes in December.

Early results from the first 8 weatherized homes show:

- $4,428 total estimated annual utility-bill savings
- Individual household savings ranging from $287 to $1,200 annually
- An estimated 9 metric tons of CO_2-equivalent reduction per year across participating homes
- These savings will be verified through follow-up evaluations one year after completion.

II. Updates to Sustainability Plan and Greenhouse Gas inventory

- The County is preparing a countywide GHG inventory for 2025, analyzing trends from 2020–2025. Updated implementation strategies will be aligned with available resources.
- Due to changes in process to be in alignment with BCDCOG tracking, individual municipalities will need to conduct their own GHG inventories.

III. EV Infrastructure
    - The County is expanding electric vehicle infrastructure:
        - 4 new chargers installed for the County fleet at the Azalea Complex and Teddie Pryor
        - 4 new public chargers added for community use

IV. Community Initiatives

1. Charleston Composts New lock

The County's hauler, Denali, has begun installing a new style of bin lock. To support users, the County will distribute:

- A mass email "how-to" guide
- A video tutorial
- A PDF lock guide covering all lock types currently in circulation

These resources will also be posted online with clickable links to the instructional videos.

2. Circular Economy – County Clothing Swap

The County hosted a highly successful staff clothing swap in partnership with the Greenbelt Department.

Program outcomes:

- 673 lbs of clothing donated
- 554 lbs redistributed to County staff and families
- Remaining items donated to local nonprofits
- Items not suitable for reuse were sent to textile recycling, keeping them out of landfills
- 162 staff members participated over two days

The initiative promoted circular economy principles and encouraged staff to consider reuse before purchasing new items.

3. Upcoming Events & Workshops

The Resilience & Sustainability Division will participate in several upcoming community events:

West Ashley Farmers Market (Tabling with Building Inspections)

- Providing information on composting and FEMA flood-mitigation programs

Repair Café Pop-Up – Bees Ferry West Ashley Library

- October 10 at 2 PM Residents can bring broken household items for expert repair, supporting waste reduction and circular economy practices.

Native Plant Walk – Botany Bay

- In partnership with Greenbelt and the South Carolina Plant Society

PUBLIC COMMENT

Rodly Millet (Lowcountry Alliance for Model Communities) shared experiences working with communities in both the lower and upper ends of Charleston. He emphasized that inter-agency and inter-municipal collaboration is often lacking, especially in areas like Rosemont.

A key example involved the health community during flooding events, where it was unclear which entity was responsible for stormwater management. Agencies frequently redirected inquiries ("not us, maybe them"), making it difficult for residents to identify who oversees specific responsibilities. Rodney recommended that there needs to be a clear, accessible resource identifying agency responsibilities, especially in communities with complex jurisdictional histories.

Sally Brooks (Charleston County): Expressed appreciation for the events, collaborations, and energy invested in community engagement efforts.

Scott Curtis (Citadel): Discussed the importance of improving extreme heat data within the Excel Adapt tool. He noted that:

- July was the hottest month on record in the United States.
- Charleston experienced multiple days over 95°F.
- Current extreme heat data in Excel Adapt is not detailed enough, lacking parcel-level resolution.

He emphasized the strong connections between heat, health and infrastructure and encouraged efforts to obtain better, more specific heat data like flooding data which is already well-documented, but for extreme heat is lacking but equally critical.

NEXT MEETING
October 20, 2026 @ 9:30 AM

ADJOURNMENT
The Chair, Stewart Weinberg, adjourned the meeting at 10:47am with unanimous approval.

Ratified by the Charleston County Resilience and Sustainability Advisory Committee this 20th day of October 2026

(Chair)

Attest:

Administrative Officer- Resilience

Administrative Officer- Sustainability