

PLANNING COMMISSION

STAFF REPORT

Department of Growth Management



MEETING DATE:	September 24, 2025
PROJECT:	67-69 Green Street Preliminary Development Plan
APPLICANT:	Nathan Sturre, P.E., Sturre Engineering
PROJECT NUMBER:	DP-01-25-019535
PROJECT MANAGER:	Dan Frazier Planning Manager Department of Growth Management

REQUEST: The Applicant, Nathan Sturre of Sturre Engineering, on behalf of property owner, Olympia Rymko, is requesting approval of a Preliminary Development Plan application. The project proposes two (2) mixed use buildings and one carriage house with associated infrastructure (Attachment 1).

INTRODUCTION: The property is zoned Neighborhood Center – Historic District (NC-HD) and consist of approximately 0.29 acres identified by tax map numbers R610 039 00A 0254 0000 and R610 039 00A 0385 0000 located on the northeast corner of Boundary Street and Green Street (Attachment 2).

BACKGROUND: This application is for a Preliminary Development Plan located within the Neighborhood Center – Historic District (NC-HD) and as such is subject to the standards set forth in the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO). The subject properties are currently vacant.

As reflected in the revised site plan, the Applicant proposes two (2) two-story mixed-use buildings, totaling approximately 1,373 SF commercial and 1535 residential each, and one (1) carriage house, totaling approximately 918 SF, with associated parking, utilities, and stormwater infrastructure. The site will be accessible from Green Street, an unpaved road, with pedestrian access across Boundary Street. The Applicant is proposing a concrete apron and paver sidewalk within Green Street right-of-way (Attachment 3).

On May 28, 2025, the Applicant requested to withdraw their application at the Planning Commission (PC) meeting and no action was taken. On June 13, 2025, the Applicant met with two Commission members to discuss PC concerns. The Applicant provided a resubmittal on August 27, 2025, with revised development plans (Attachment 4), addressing Staff comments and PC concerns (Attachment 5).

The revised plans remove one of the previously proposed Carriage Houses. Per UDO Section 5.15.7, based on the proposed site plan, eleven (11) parking spaces are required, which includes four (4) total spaces for residential dwelling units, one (1) total space for the accessory dwelling unit and six (6) total spaces for the commercial units. The

Applicant is proposing eleven (11) parking spaces. PER UDO “along secondary frontages, off-street surface parking lots shall be set back a minimum of 10 feet from property lines along public rights-of-way,” (UDO Section 5.15.7.D.1) A twenty-two (22) foot access easement is being proposed, providing a twenty (20) foot drive lane (Attachment 4, pg. C-4).

The Applicant has also included an updated automobile turn exhibit, which includes dedicated loading space to assist visiting vehicles to execute a turnaround without encroaching outside of the drive lane (Attachment 4, pg. C-8). Additionally, the dumpster has been replaced with roll away dumpsters.

Staff had concerns regarding the consideration that was given to the existing tree canopy and whether every reasonable effort was made to maximize the preservation of the existing canopy (UDO 5.3.3.C). In response, the Applicant proposes to preserve the 30” Live Oak located in the front of the property. However, the 8” Magnolia removal is still required to accommodate the proposed development. The Applicant proposes the mitigation of this tree with a 4” Little Gem Magnolia (Attachment 4).

The Town is finalizing the Boundary Street Streetscape Public Project. The proposed crosswalk at Hickory Trace and Boundary Street previously proposed has been removed. Coordination with the Town regarding curbing, stormwater drainage, underground power, sewer, and encroachment permits will be required at time of Final Development Plan submittal.

The Applicant is also proposing off-site improvements within the Green Street right-of-way, which will require approval of an encroachment permit from the Town. It should be noted that the Applicant is proposing a 2-inch water line to serve the site, while the Town’s Public Project provides only a 1-inch line (Attachment 5). The Applicant must coordinate with the Beaufort Jasper Water and Sewer Authority (BJWSA) to resolve this discrepancy.

The subject property is within the Old Town Historic District and will require a Certificate of Appropriateness – Historic District (COFA-HD) reviewing landscaping, lighting, and architecture at time of Final Development Plan approval.

REVIEW CRITERIA & ANALYSIS: The Planning Commission shall consider the criteria set forth in Section 3.10.3.A of the Unified Development Ordinance in assessing an application for a Preliminary Development Plan. The applicable criteria are provided below followed by Staff Finding(s) based upon review of the application submittals to date.

1. Section 3.10.3.A.1. Conformance with the applicable provisions provided in Article 5, Design Standards.

Finding. The subject property is located within the Old Town Bluffton Historic District and therefore is subject to the standards set forth in the Town’s Unified Development Ordinance (UDO).

Finding. Along secondary frontages, off-street surface parking lots shall be set back a minimum of 10 feet from property lines along public rights-of-way (UDO 5.15.7.D.1).

Finding. The proposed development will undergo further review as part of the Stormwater Permitting process.

2. **Section 3.10.3.A.2.** The proposed development shall be in conformance with any approved Development Agreement, PUD Concept Plan, PUD Master Plan, Subdivision Plan, or any other agreements or plans that are applicable.

Finding. The proposed development is not within any PUD, Development Agreement, or Subdivision Plan.

3. **Section 3.10.3.A.3.** If the proposed development is associated with a previously approved Master Plan, then the traffic and access plans shall adhere to the previously approved traffic impact analysis or assessment, where applicable. If an application is not associated with a previously approved PUD Master Plan, then a traffic impact analysis shall be required at final development plan submittal.

Finding. The proposed development is not within any approved Master Plan or PUD.

4. **Section 3.10.3.A.4.** The proposed development must be able to be served by adequate public services, including, but not limited to, water, sanitary sewer, roads, police, fire, and school services. For developments that have the potential for significant impact on infrastructure and services, the applicant shall be required to provide an analysis and mitigation of the impact on transportation, utilities, and community services.

Finding. The proposed development will utilize existing water main located on Boundary Street. Sewer will be provided by connecting to the Boundary sewer main and future Green Street sewer. The Applicant will coordinate with BJWSA and Bluffton Township Fire District to ensure adequate water and sanitary sewer services in support of the project.

Finding. Letters from the agencies providing public services will be required at time of Final Development Plan submittal per the Applications Manual.

5. **Section 3.10.3.A.5.** The phasing plan, if applicable, is logical and is designed in a manner that allows each phase to fully function independently regarding services, utilities, circulation, facilities, and open space, irrespective of the completion of other proposed phases.

Finding. The project is proposed to be completed in one phase.

6. **Section 3.10.3.A.6.** The application must comply with the applicable requirements in the Applications Manual.

Finding. The application has been reviewed by the Town Staff and has been determined to be complete.

PLANNING COMMISSION ACTIONS: The Planning Commission has the authority to take the following actions with respect to the application as authorized by Section 2.2.6.C.5 of the UDO:

1. Approve the application as submitted;
2. Approve the application with conditions; or
3. Deny the application as submitted.

RECOMMENDATION: Should the Planning Commission choose to approve the application with conditions, Town Staff finds that the following conditions should be met prior to final development plan approval to be in conformance with UDO Section 3.10.3.A:

1. Provide minimum of 10 feet between the parking lot and property lines along secondary frontages (Green Street and Hickory Trace).
2. Coordinate all utility connections with the Town and utility providers to ensure consistency with ongoing capital improvement projects.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Application and Project Narrative
2. Vicinity Map
3. Civil and Landscape Plan Set 02 19 2025
4. Revised Civil and Landscape Plan Set 08 27 2025
5. Response to DRC Comments and Staff Concerns
6. Boundary Street Streetscape Public Project Utility Exhibit