

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION



STAFF REPORT

Department of Growth Management

MEETING DATE:	August 6, 2025
PROJECT:	COFA-05-25-019747 4 Head of the Tide – House Expansion
APPLICANT:	Andrew Brown, Architect
PROPERTY OWNER:	Henry Savage
PROJECT MANAGER:	Charlotte Moore, AICP, Principal Planner

APPLICATION REQUEST: The Applicant, Andrew Brown, on behalf of the owner, Henry Savage, requests that the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) approve the following application:

A Certificate of Appropriateness to enclose a covered porch of approximately 126 square feet to expand a kitchen and to provide a new laundry room and mudroom at 4 Head of the Tide in Old Town Bluffton Historic District and zoned Neighborhood Conservation-HD.

INTRODUCTION: At the time of construction (c. 1996), the existing house was located within unincorporated Beaufort County and approved subject to the County's regulations. The proposed expansion would enclose an existing covered porch on the right side of the house to increase the size of the kitchen and to provide a new laundry room and mud room. All materials to be used will match the existing house, including wood lap siding, wood trim, and a stucco foundation. Three aluminum-clad casement windows and an aluminum-clad casement door with a full-lite are also proposed. Full-lite casement doors exist on the rear elevation of the house.

This project was presented to the Historic Preservation Review Committee for conceptual review at the June 9, 2025 meeting and comments were provided to the Applicant (See Attachment 7). There were no comments from reviewers.

REVIEW CRITERIA & ANALYSIS: In its review of this COFA-HD application, Town Staff and the Historic Preservation Commission are required to consider the criteria set forth in Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) Section 3.18.3 (COFA-HD, New Construction and Alterations), applying the standards and guidelines of UDO Sec. 5.15, Old Town Bluffton Historic District. The intent of the standards and guidelines is, in part, to provide guidance and ensure predictable and compatible development and architecture without discouraging creativity or forcing the replication of historic models.

To maintain the character of Old Town Bluffton Historic District, alterations shall be consistent with the standards, criteria and guidelines developed for the District. Per UDO Sec. 3.18.3.A., the HPC shall consider the criteria below in its consideration of the COFA-HD application. A Staff Finding is provided for each.

1. Consistency with the principles set forth in the Old Town Master Plan and Town of Bluffton Comprehensive Plan.

- a. *Finding.* The Old Town Master Plan initiatives include the adoption of a form-based code that included architectural standards for structures located within the Old Town Bluffton Historic District. These standards are included in Article 5 of the UDO. The addition is in conformance with those standards and is consistent with the architecture and materials of the existing house.

2. The application must be in conformance with applicable provisions provided in Article 5, Design Standards.

- a. *Finding.* The application is in conformance with the applicable provisions of Article 5 of the UDO.

3. Demonstration of a compatible visual relationship between new construction or alterations and existing buildings, streetscapes and open spaces. A compatible visual relationship must be generally of a similar structural mass, scale, height, proportion, directional expression of the principal elevation and rhythm of spacing, as applicable.

Finding. The addition is in conformance with the architecture and materials used in the existing house. Further, the addition will not be seen from the street (Head of the Tide).

4. Compliance with applicable requirements in the Applications Manual.

Finding. The Certificate of Appropriateness Application has been reviewed by Town Staff and has been determined to be complete.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: It is the charge of the HPC to assess and interpret the standards and guidelines set forth in the UDO as they pertain to applications using the review criteria established in the UDO and to take appropriate action as granted by the powers and duties set forth Section 2.2.6.E.2. Town Staff finds that the requirements of Section 3.18.3 of the Unified Development Ordinance have been met and recommends that the Historic Preservation Commission approve the application without any condition(s).

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION ACTIONS: As granted by the powers and duties set forth in Section 2.2.6.E.2, the Historic Preservation Commission has the authority to take the following actions with respect to this application:

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

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Location & Zoning Map
2. Application
3. Narrative
4. Site Plan
5. Photos
6. Plans
7. HPRC Comments – 06.09.2025