

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION



STAFF REPORT

Department of Growth Management

MEETING DATE:	October 2, 2024
PROJECT:	COFA-05-24-019119 35C Thomas Heyward Street Renovation of a Single-family Residence
APPLICANT:	Brad Clark
PROPERTY OWNER:	Brad Clark
PROJECT MANAGER:	Charlotte Moore, AICP, Principal Planner

APPLICATION REQUEST: The Applicant, Brad Clark, requests that the Historic Preservation Commission approve the following application:

COFA-05-24-019119. A Certificate of Appropriateness-HD (COFA-HD) to allow the renovation of an existing single-family structure to move the front door and patio stairs to the center of the house, to reconfigure windows on the front and left elevations, and to change the exterior siding, shutters and front door.

INTRODUCTION: The Applicant is proposing the renovation of the existing one-story single family residential structure. The renovation includes: 1) changing the front door location to the center of the house; 2) moving the front porch steps to be centered with the front door; 3) removing the front porch balustrade; 4) changing the window fenestration on the front and left elevations; 5) changing the wall material from vinyl to cement fiber (Hardiplank) with the exception of the chimney; and, 6) changing the shutters.

This project was presented to the Historic Preservation Review Committee for conceptual review at the June 3, 2024 meeting and comments were provided to the Applicant (See Attachment 4).

The Final Plan dated June 27, 2024 (Attachment 3) is a response to the comments. As some details are missing, approval, if granted by the Historic Preservation Commission, must be conditioned to ensure that the required information is provided and satisfies the requirements of the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) and, if applicable, the Historic Preservation Commission.

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, Application Review

Criteria), 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 development consistency without discouraging creativity or forcing the replication of historic models.

The applicable criteria of UDO Sec.3.18.3 are provided below followed by a Staff Finding based upon review of the application submittals to date.

1. **Section 3.18.3.B. Consistency with the principles set forth in the Old Town Master 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 changes proposed as part of this request will be in conformance with those standards if the conditions noted in #2 of this Section are met.

2. **Section 3.18.3.C. The application must be in conformance with applicable provisions provided in Article 5, Design Standards.**

- a. *Finding.* Town Staff finds that if the conditions noted below are met, the proposed changes will be in conformance with applicable provisions provided in Article 5:
- 1) **Doors (UDO Sec. 5.15.5.I.).** New French doors, an allowed configuration, are proposed. In an email to Town Staff dated September 25, the Applicant states that wood will be used. Provide door details on a revised Final Plan.
 - 2) **Shutters (UDO Sec. 5.15.5.M.1.).** Shutters, when proposed, must fit the opening which they cover, be made of durable wood, be operable and be applied to all windows which can accept them. Provide shutter details, including hardware, to show that they will be durable wood and operable. Show shutter details on a revised Final Plan.
 - 3) **Windows (UDO Sec. 5.15.5.I.).** Four new single-hung windows are proposed on the front elevation, with three windows to be reconfigured and one to be added. A window on the left elevation will be removed. The Project Analysis indicates a composite material is proposed; in an email to Town Staff dated September 25, the Applicant states that durable wood will be used. Wood is a permitted window material. Provide window details on a revised Final Plan.
 - 4) **Handrail (UDO Sec. 5.15.5.H.).** The front porch stairs will include a metal handrail, which is shown to be wrought iron in the Project Analysis. Indicate wrought iron on a revised Final Plan.

- 5) **Walls (UDO Sec. 5.15.5.G.).** The existing wall cladding is proposed to change from vinyl to Hardiplank (cement fiber), a permitted material. This would include the dormers but not the chimney as stated in an email to Town staff from the Applicant dated September 25. It is not known if the porch siding will be replaced with Hardiplank. Revise plans to callout all locations where Hardiplank is proposed.

3. **Section 3.18.3.D. Consistency with the nature and character of the surrounding area and consistency of the structure with the scale, form and building proportions of the surrounding neighborhood.**

Finding. Town Staff finds the nature and character of the renovation to be consistent and harmonious with that of the surrounding neighborhood. The mass and scale of the structure is appropriate for their location and the architectural detailing, with revisions to address the items in #2 above, will be sensitive to the neighboring properties.

4. **Section 3.18.3.F. The historic, architectural, and aesthetic features of the structure including the extent to which its alteration or removal would be detrimental to the public interest.**

Finding. The Applicant seeks approval for the renovation of a non-historic structure in the Old Town Bluffton Historic District. If the conditions #2 of this report are met, the proposed plans are sympathetic in design to the neighboring historic and non-historic resources; therefore, the structures, with the revisions noted, will have no adverse effect on the public interest.

5. **Section 3.18.3.H. The application must comply 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 incomplete. The Site Data in the Application needs to be completed prior to issuance of Final Certificate of Appropriateness-HD Approval. As there are no changes to the square footage, conditional approval may be granted as submitted.

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 in Section 2.2.6.E.2. Town Staff finds that with the conditions noted below, 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 with the following conditions:

1. Provide revised application to include all Site Data.

2. Per Section 5.15.5.I., provide confirmation to show that French doors will comply with permitted material.
3. Per Section 5.15.5.M.1., provide confirmation to show that shutters will comply with permitted material, operation, and hardware.
4. Per Section 5.15.5.I, provide confirmation to show that windows will comply with permitted material.
5. Per Section 5.15.5.H., indicate that wrought iron will be used for the front handrail.
6. Per Section 5.15.5.G., indicate where the proposed Hardiplank will replace existing vinyl siding.

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 and Zoning Map
2. Application and Narrative
3. Site Plan & Elevations (06.27.2024)
4. HPRC Report (06.03.2024)