

# HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION



## STAFF REPORT

### Department of Growth Management

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| <b>MEETING DATE:</b>    | January 8, 2025  |
| <b>PROJECT:</b>         | 34 Tabby Shell Road, Lot 18 - New Construction: Single-Family and Carriage House |
| <b>APPLICANT:</b>       | Sea Island Construction Group  |
| <b>PROPERTY OWNER:</b>  | William Glover   |
| <b>PROJECT MANAGER:</b> | Charlotte Moore, AICP, Principal Planner   |

**APPLICATION REQUEST:** The Applicant, Sea Island Construction Group, on behalf of the owner, William Glover, requests that the Historic Preservation Commission approve the following application:

**COFA-03-24-019047.** A Certificate of Appropriateness to allow the construction of a new two-story Single-Family Residential structure of approximately 2,874 SF and an attached Carriage House of approximately 1,100 SF located at 34 Tabby Shell Road, Lot 18 of the Tabby Roads Development, in the Old Town Bluffton Historic District and zoned Neighborhood General-HD.

*Note: This application was initially heard at the November 6, 2024 HPC meeting but continued to allow the Applicant an opportunity to make revisions discussed at the meeting. A letter explaining the changes is provided as Attachment 3. Italicized type is used in this report to distinguish items that the HPC requested to be revised.*

**INTRODUCTION:** The Applicant has proposed the construction of a two-story single-family structure with an attached two-story Carriage House in the Old Town Bluffton Historic District. The proposed primary structure, of approximately 2,324 SF has the characteristics of a Center Hall House which must comply with the requirements for the Building Type within the Neighborhood General-HD zoning district.

The primary structure features a double front porch with a hipped roof. The east side elevation features a partial enclosed, screened porch. The attached Carriage House features a second story rear-facing hipped roof, and a two-bay garage. The structure is proposed to have horizontal Hardie lap siding on the first floor and Hardie shake siding on the second floor.

This project was presented to the Historic Preservation Review Committee for conceptual review at the April 15, 2024 meeting and comments were provided to the Applicant (See

Attachment 7). The Tabby Roads Habitat and Architectural Review Board provided its last review comments in July, 2024 (Attachment 8).

**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.

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. 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 also 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 new construction proposed as part of this request will be in conformance with those standards if the conditions noted in item 2 of this Section are met.
- b. *Finding.* The Old Town Master Plan initiatives also promote preservation and protection of the legacy of the Old Town Bluffton Historic District through additions to the built environment which make Old Town more complete. The addition of a proposed single-family structure and Carriage House add to the district and helps provide completeness to the neighborhood and overall district.

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

- a. *Findings.* Town Staff finds that if the conditions noted below are met, the proposed construction will be in conformance with applicable architectural design provisions provided in Article 5:
  - 1) **Finished Floor Height.** Residential structures must have a first finished floor height raised to a minimum of three (3) feet above average adjacent sidewalk grade (UDO Sec. 5.15.6.F.). *The revision shows compliance with this requirement.* The foundation wall must be tabby stucco (mixed shell size only) or stucco with a sand or steel trowel finish) (UDO Sec. 5.15.6.G.1.a.)

2) **Building Composition.**

- a. Overall building proportions and individual building features shall have a proportional relationship with one another. The door on the front elevation is proportionately taller than the adjacent windows and should be lowered for consistency. (UDO Sec. 5.15.5.F.4.a.) *The revised plan shows consistent door and window header height.*
- b. *The window-sized wall panels were removed from the right and left second-story elevations and adjacent windows reconfigured.*
- c. *On the initial plan, concern was expressed that the narrow six (6) inch inset wall on the left elevation was not substantial enough to break up the left elevation. With the revised plan, the inset was increased to one (1) foot. The Historic Preservation Commission should determine if the revised depth is satisfactory. (UDO Sec. 5.15.5.F.4)*

3) **Chimneys.** *The bishop's arch was changed from the initial plan to face the Bruin Road on the revised plan. UDO Sec. 5.15.6.E.8.e. requires vents to not be visible from the street. The chimney will have a mixed tabby shell finish.*

4) **Doors.** Provide a door schedule, including garage doors, to show compliance with permitted materials (wood, metal and metal-clad). Identify the type of composite material identified for the garage doors. The UDO Administrator may approve the use of wood composite if the doors are consistent with the character of the Historic District and the materials to be used are of equal or better quality than traditional building materials. Show door operation for all doors. (UDO Sec. 5.15.6.I.2.b.)

5) **Columns.** Square 10-inch columns were proposed initially. *The revised plan shows 12-inch columns on the first floor and 10-inch columns on the second floor, both with a larger base and smaller cap.* Allowable column materials include wood, cast iron, concrete with smooth finish, stone, steel or tabby. The columns will be “primed [pressure treated] pine and Hardie siding.” The Historic Preservation Commission must determine if Hardie siding is an acceptable finish material. Provide a column detail for a better view. (UDO Sec. 5.15.5.H.2.a.)

6) **Railings and Balusters.** Powder-coated aluminum metal was initially proposed for the second- floor porch railings; *the revision shows powder coated steel.* Permitted materials include wood, painted or natural wrought or cast iron. The Historic Preservation Commission must

determine that steel is an acceptable alternate material. (UDO Sec. 5.15.5.H.3.)

7) **Roofs and Gutters.**

- a. *The Carriage House roof height was decreased by one (1) foot for improved dimension and an eyebrow roof added over the garage doors. Bracket details must be provided, and bracket material must be common to the Bluffton vernacular. (UDO Sec. 5.15.6.A.)*
- b. A standing seam metal roof is proposed but the type of metal has not been identified. Acceptable materials include galvanized, copper, aluminum and zinc-alum and must be identified. (UDO Sec. 5.15.5.J.2.a.)
- c. Metal half-round gutters will be provided but the type of metal material type is not shown. Provide information to show compliance with one of the following permitted material types: copper, galvanized steel, aluminum, 14-18 gauge. Downspouts must match gutters. (UDO Sec. 5.15.5.J.2.c.)

8) **Cornices and Soffits.** *The revision shows that soffits will be a v-groove configuration. Additionally, brackets that were initially proposed on the second-story front elevation have been removed.*

9) **Service Yard.** Provide service yard details to show compliance with UDO Sec. 5.15.5.F.10. Also, identify the location of electric panels, which must be screened from public view.

10) **Landscape Plan.**

- a. A tree canopy with a minimum of 75% lot coverage, not including roof tops shall be provided where land disturbance is proposed for sites less than one (1) acre. The Landscape Plan canopy coverage calculations do not accurately reflect the proposed plantings for the calculations. Provide updated canopy coverage calculations to ensure the 75% lot coverage is met. (UDO Sec. 5.3.3.G.)
- b. Provide a list of all trees to be removed and their diameter at breast height to determine the number of replacement trees required. A Tree Removal Permit will be required.

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.* If the conditions noted in #2 of this report are met, a compatible visual relationship will be demonstrated with surrounding properties, streetscapes and open spaces.

#### **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 except for the applicable items in #2.

*Finding.* The Certificate of Appropriateness Application has been reviewed by Town Staff and has been determined to be complete; however, there are several trees being proposed for removal which require a tree removal permit which must be submitted, reviewed, and approved prior to issuance of a Certificate of Appropriateness.

**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 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. Identify the finish for the foundation wall which must be tabby stucco (mixed shell size only) or stucco with a sand or steel trowel finish (UDO Sec. 5.15.6.G.1.a.).
2. Provide a door schedule, including garage doors, to show compliance with permitted materials (wood, metal and metal-clad). (UDO Sec. 5.15.6.I.2.b.)
3. Provide additional column details.
4. Provide bracket details for the Carriage House eyebrow roof and show that the bracket material is common to the Bluffton vernacular.
5. Identify the type of standing seam metal to be used. (UDO Sec. 5.15.5.J.2.a.)
6. Identify the type of material to be used for the gutters and show consistent materials for the downspouts. (UDO Sec. 5.15.5.J.2.c.)
7. Provide service yard screening details and show location of electric panels.) UDO Sec. 5.15.5.F.10)
8. Demonstrate that 75% tree canopy coverage will be provided. (UDO Sec. 5.3.3.G.)
9. Provide a list of trees to be removed from the lot and their diameter at breast height to determine the number of replacement trees (UDO Table 5.3.3.G.). A Tree Removal Permit will be required.

Further, Town Staff requests a determination by the Historic Preservation Commission regarding the following:

10. That the one (1) foot inset for the wall connecting the main structure to the Carriage House is sufficient depth to break up the left elevation. (UDO Sec. 5.15.5.F.4)
11. That Hardie board is an appropriate cladding material for the columns. (UDO Sec. 5.15.5.H.2.a.)
12. That powder-coated steel is an appropriate material for the second-floor porch railing (top rail and balusters). (UDO Sec. 5.15.6.H.3.)

**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-Updated
3. Explanation of Revisions Letter
4. Revised Drawings – 12.09.2024
5. Tree Removal Narrative
6. Landscape Plan
7. HPRC Comments, April 2024
8. Tabby Road HARB Letter, July 2024