

Historic Preservation Commission Meeting

Theodore D. Washington Municipal Building, Henry “Emmett” McCracken Jr. Council Chambers, 20
Bridge Street, Bluffton, SC

September 03, 2025

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Goodwin called the meeting to order at 6pm.

II. ROLL CALL

PRESENT

Chairman Evan Goodwin

Vice Chairman Joe DePauw

Commissioner Carletha Frazier

Commissioner Jim Hess

Commissioner Tim Probst

Commissioner Debbie Wunder

Commissioner Lisa Sulka

III. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

1. August 6, 2025 Minutes

Commissioner Frazier made a motion to adopt the minutes as written.

Seconded by Commissioner Sulka.

Voting Yea: Chairman Goodwin, Vice Chairman DePauw, Commissioner Frazier, Commissioner Hess, Commissioner Probst, Commissioner Wunder, Commissioner Sulka

All were in favor and motion passed.

IV. PUBLIC COMMENT

Nicki Graziani, Historic Bluffton Foundation - Ms. Graziani spoke in favor of the demolition of 34 Thomas Heyward St after the assessment showed the poor condition of the structure.

V. PRESENTATIONS

1. Discussion of Town of Bluffton Historic Resource Survey Update and Presentation by Stantec, Inc. (Staff - Glen Umberger)

Sandy Shannon with Stantec, Inc. presented. The Commission questioned how many participants there are in the survey to date and who would be included in the interview portion. There were questions as to how this survey differed from surveys done in the past.

VI. OLD BUSINESS

- 27 Bridge Street:** A request by Jason Broene (Court Atkins Architects), Applicant, on behalf of Mike Nerhus and Jessical Foley, Owners, for approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness-HD to amend an approved COFA-HD to allow the installed brick foundation to remain for the house under construction at 27 Bridge Street in Old Town Bluffton Historic District, and zoned Neighborhood Conservation-HD. (COFA-05-25-011989) (Staff - Charlotte Moore)

Staff presented. The applicant was present. The commissioners asked for clarification on what was initially approved versus what was constructed. The Commission stated that what is being proposed is not conforming. The Commission clarified that the foundation was installed incorrectly prior to asking for the amendments. There was discussion if the material being used is allowed.

Vice Chairman DePauw to approve the application with the following conditions:

1. The height of the privacy fence must be no taller than 6'-0" and shown as the maximum height on the Landscape Plan.
2. The Town's Stormwater and Watershed Management Division must approve the revised Landscape Plan.

and the following determination,

1. The reconfigured brick foundation as discussed at the meeting, as well as the brick type (the same or similar to the previously installed brick) are appropriate.

Seconded by Chairman Goodwin.

Voting Yea: Chairman Goodwin, Vice Chairman DePauw, Commissioner Hess, Commissioner Probst

Voting Nay: Commissioner Frazier, Commissioner Wunder, Commissioner Sulka

The vote was 4-3 and the motion passed.

- 2. 34 Thomas Heyward Street:** A request by Jason Alexander, Applicant and Property Owner, for review of a Certificate of Appropriateness-Historic District (Demolition), to allow the demolition of an existing house located at 34 Thomas Heyward Street (Parcel R610 039 00A 0023 0000) in the Old Town Bluffton Historic District. The house, known as the Nellie and Leroy Brown Cottage, is a Contributing Resource to the Old Town Bluffton Historic District and is zoned Neighborhood Conservation-Historic District (NCV-HD). (COFA-04-25-019719) (Staff-Glen Umberger)

Staff presented. The applicant was present. There was discussion regarding the possibility of reconstruction of the structure and what materials were salvageable. The commissioners emphasized the importance of preserving Bluffton's history.

Richardson LaBruce, attorney to the Commission, clarified that the application the Commission would be voting on at this time, was only for the demolition of the structure.

Commissioner Sulka made a motion to enter executive session for Legal Matters Relating to the Receipt of Legal Advice Covered by the Attorney-Client Privilege.

Seconded by Commissioner Frazier.

Voting Yea: Chairman Goodwin, Vice Chairman DePauw, Commissioner Frazier, Commissioner Hess, Commissioner Probst, Commissioner Wunder, Commissioner Sulka

The Commission returned to the dais. No action was taken in executive session.

Chairman Goodwin made a motion to deny the application as submitted.

Seconded by Commissioner Frazier.

Voting Yea: Chairman Goodwin, Vice Chairman DePauw, Commissioner Frazier, Commissioner Hess, Commissioner Probst, Commissioner Wunder

All were in favor and the motion passed.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

- 1. 215 Goethe Road:** A request by Phil Madhere, Applicant, on behalf of Miguel Loarca (Leonex Construction Group), Owner, for approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness-HD to allow construction of a three-story mixed use Main Street Building (approximately 2,775 SF) and detached Carriage House (approximately 528 SF) located at 215 Goethe Road, Lot 7. The property is within the Old Town Historic District and is zoned Neighborhood Core-Historic District (NC-HD). (COFA-04-25-019686) (Staff -Charlotte Moore)

Staff presented. The applicant was present. The commissioners questioned if the ARB approval was given and what point that would be needed. There were questions regarding the height of the building in relation to the buildings on the adjacent properties. The Commission asked for clarification on the material being used for the first floor. There was discussion regarding the pitch of the porch shed roof and the windows on the north side elevation of the building.

Vice Chairman DePauw made a motion to approve the application with the following conditions:

1. All service yards, as well as meters visible from the public right-of-way must be screened in compliance with UDO Sec. 5.15.5.F. The screen detail must be revised to show a height no taller than 6'-0".
2. Revise all plans (site, landscape and elevations) to be consistent.
3. Revise applicable plan sheets to show the main structure porch shed roof with a 3/12 pitch.
4. Remove the brackets on the rear elevation of the carriage house to prevent encroachment into the access easement. The scale of this elevation should be re-studied and submitted to HPRC for final approval.
5. Per the Applications Manual, written approval from the Board of Directors of the Goethe Road Association.
6. Per Section 3.19 of the UDO, a Site Feature-HD is required for any signs proposed on the site.

and the following determinations:

1. The use of galvanized wire for the balusters is an acceptable material.
2. The windows on the north elevation of the main structure should have vertical proportionality.
3. At the lower level of the main structure, the wall section detailing must show board and batten instead of brick, where applicable.

Seconded by Commissioner Hess.

Voting Yea: Chairman Goodwin, Vice Chairman DePauw, Commissioner Frazier, Commissioner Hess, Commissioner Probst, Commissioner Wunder, Commissioner Sulka

All were in favor and the motion passed.

VIII. DISCUSSION

- 1. Carport UDO Amendments (WORKSHOP - NO ACTION):** Discussion, Consideration and Direction on Potential Amendments to the Town of Bluffton Code of Ordinances, Chapter 23, Unified Development Ordinance, Article 5 – Design Standards - Accessory Buildings (Staff - Angie Castrillon)

Staff presented. The Commission shared their concerns with allowing more structures on a lot and how scale and size should be addressed. There was discussion regarding what kind of height restrictions should be included.

This was a workshop. No action was taken.

- 2. Historic District Monthly Update. (Staff)**

Staff reviewed the monthly report. The Commissioners had no questions.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Frazier made a motion to adjourn.

Seconded by Vice Chairman DePauw.

Voting Yea: Chairman Goodwin, Vice Chairman DePauw, Commissioner Frazier, Commissioner Hess, Commissioner Probst, Commissioner Wunder, Commissioner Sulka

All were in favor and the motion passed. The meeting adjourned at 8:18pm.