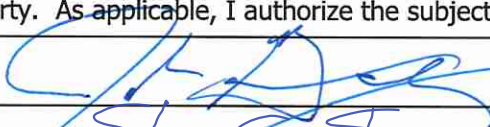
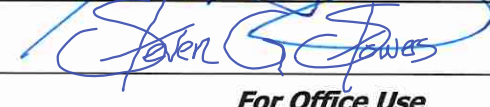


**TOWN OF BLUFFTON
BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS APPLICATION**

Growth Management Customer Service Center
20 Bridge Street
Bluffton, SC 29910
(843)706-4522
www.townofbluffton.sc.gov
applicationfeedback@townofbluffton.com

Applicant		Property Owner	
Name: Steven G. Stowers, AIA		Name: John Gering and Ashley Gering	
Phone: 843.790.4101		Phone: 843.708.4915	
Mailing Address: 23A Market, Suite 1 Beaufort, SC 29906		Mailing Address: N/A	
E-mail: Steve@a101.design		E-mail: geringemail@gmail.com	
Town Business License # (if applicable): 501949 (Architecture 101)			
Project Information			
Project Name: Gering Residence		☒ Variance	☐ Special Exception
Project Location: 36 Tabby Shell Rd. Bluffton, SC		☐ Administrative Appeal	
Zoning District: Neighborhood General		Acreage: 0.10	
Tax Map Number(s): R610 039 000 1199 0000			
Project Description: The project is located within the Historic District and is zoned Neighborhood General. The project includes the development of a main residence and a garage with a living unit above to the rear of the property. The longest facade of the house, which includes a front porch running the entire length, addresses Tabby Shell Road with the narrow facades facing the adjacent property and Burnt Church Road.			
Request: 4'-6" variance from the 5'-0" accessory structure rear setback along Pluff Road Lane in Tabby Roads.			
Minimum Requirements for Submittal			
☒ 1. Two (2) paper copies and digital files of applicable plans and/or documents depicting the subject property.			
☒ 2. Recorded deed and plat showing proof of property ownership.			
☒ 3. Project Narrative describing reason for application and compliance with the criteria in Article 3 of the UDO.			
☒ 4. An Application Review Fee as determined by the Town of Bluffton Master Fee Schedule. Checks made payable to the Town of Bluffton.			
Note: A Pre-Application Meeting is required prior to Application submittal.			
Disclaimer: The Town of Bluffton assumes no legal or financial liability to the applicant or any third party whatsoever by approving the plans associated with this permit.			
I hereby acknowledge by my signature below that the foregoing application is complete and accurate and that I am the owner of the subject property. As applicable, I authorize the subject property to be posted and inspected.			
Property Owner Signature: 		Date: 8/3/26	
Applicant Signature: 		Date: 8/4/26	
For Office Use			
Application Number:		Date Received:	
Received By:		Date Approved:	

August 4, 2026

Bluffton Zoning Board of Appeals
Town of Bluffton
20 Bridge Street
Bluffton, SC 29910



Project: Gering Residence, 36 Tabby Shell Road

Thank you for considering our proposed variance request for the new single-family residence with a carriage house at Lot 19, 36 Tabby Shell Road at Tabby Roads.

NARRATIVE

This project proposes a single-family residence situated at the intersection of 36 Tabby Shell Road and Burnt Church Road. The lot is irregular when compared to its neighboring lots within the Tabby Roads development and the odd shape has forced the proposed residence to conform to the trapezoidal shape. It has also resulted in the carriage house being located closer to Pluff Road Lane than the 5-foot accessory structure setback required by the current Bluffton Unified Development Ordinance permits.

The intent of this variance request is to permit an encroachment into the required 5-foot setback to allow for the reasonable development of the property. The variance would accommodate these site constraints and will allow the residence to be appropriately sited without adversely affecting neighboring properties, public safety, or the overall intent and purpose of the zoning ordinance.

Lot 19 is the last lot on Pluff Road Lane, which dead ends at the rear of the lot and shares the right-of-way with a large Santee Cooper overhead electrical transmission line that feeds the electrical substation across Burnt Church Road from Lot 19. Along Pluff Road Lane there is no consistent façade line created by the carriage houses at the rear of the residences. The carriage houses along Pluff Road Lane step back and forth in a manner that creates a lively rear streetscape and which will make the proposed encroachment feel very natural and not at all out of place. This is recognized in the encroachment variance already approved by the Tabby Roads Architectural Review Committee and included for your reference.

The encroachment is also not visible from Tabby Shell Road and does not meaningfully change the appearance of the proposed residence from Burnt Church Road. The only adjacent property, Lot 18 is unaffected by the encroachment and the view from the adjacent school is heavily wooded and not visible from their property.

JUSTIFICATION

Section 3.7.3 of the Bluffton Unified Development Ordinance lists the following Application Review Criteria that the variance must comply with:

- a. There are extraordinary and exceptional conditions pertaining to the particular piece of property;
 - Lot 19 of the Tabby Roads Development is substandard by most if not all criteria and is set aside from its adjoining lots in size, orientation, and arrangement. The acute quadrangle of the parcel unnaturally constricts the siting of a traditional vernacular Bluffton residence, forcing the house design to conform to the angled lot lines and pushing the carriage house beyond the 5' rear setback.
- b. These conditions do not generally apply to other property in the vicinity, particularly those in the same zoning district;
 - As shown in our attached exhibit, Lot 19 is the only lot within Tabby Roads that contains this awkward geometry. Lot 10 suffered a substantial intrusion into their lot to accommodate the community open space easement and was granted a variance to accommodate their carriage house.
- c. Because of these conditions, the application of the Ordinance to the particular piece of property would effectively prohibit or unreasonably restrict the utilization of the property in a manner consistent with others in the zoning district;
 - All other lots along Pluff Mudd Lane have an accessory structure with the exception of Lot 17, and they have received approval of a plan to build a carriage house on their lot.

- d. The need for the Variance is not the result of the Applicant's own actions;
- The applicant did not have any role in creating the substandard lot and has worked tirelessly over the past four years to site a house that meets the strict requirements of the UDO and Tabby Roads ARC. It is a very hard lot to build on.
 - The applicant first communicated with Tabby Roads' ARC in late 2021. From that time, they have been in constant communication with the ARC to determine an appropriate way to develop this unique lot; with their first preliminary submission being in January 2023. There have been several renditions of the plans submitted to the ARC to comply with the requirements, as well as several revisions to satisfy their comments and requests. At this time, the design has received full approval of the Tabby Roads ARC, including the variance.
 - The applicant has encountered several impactful setbacks on this project, including a proposed road widening of Burnt Church Road that delayed the project further by threatening to acquire their property through immanent domain.
- e. The authorization of a Variance does not substantially conflict with the Comprehensive Plan and the purposes of this Ordinance;
- This variance does not conflict with the Comprehensive Plan and the purpose of the ordinance as it merely facilitates a carriage house that is smaller than neighboring carriage houses and will not encroach on any neighbors. Pluff Mudd Lane dead ends at this lot and is primarily occupied overhead by Santee Cooper transmission lines.
- f. The authorization of a Variance will not result in a substantial detriment to adjacent property or the public good, and the character of the District will not be harmed by the granting of the Variance; and
- Authorizing this variance will not result in a substantial detriment to the adjacent property or the public good, as no neighbors are encroached upon and the subject property is at the end of the lane. No views or vistas are blocked by the encroachment, and the encroachment is not visible from Tabby Shell Road.

ATTACHMENT 1

g. The reason for the Variance is more than simply for convenience or to allow the property to be utilized more profitably.

- The reason for the variance is to help the landowners better utilize the awkward lot shape. The lots along Tabby Shell Road are consistently 93-feet plus deep. Lot 19 is 91-feet deep on the long end and only 56-feet deep at Burnt Church Road. This short end forces the development to take advantage of the deeper portion of the lot as much as possible to accommodate the principal structure which forces the carriage house to encroach on the rear setback.



PLUFF MUD LANE



CARRIAGE HOUSE AT 34 TABBY SHELL ROAD (ADJACENT)

ATTACHMENT 1



EXISTING DEAD END AT PLUFF MUD LANE



RENDERING OF CARRIAGE HOUSE FROM DEAD END OF PLUFF ROAD LANE

Sincerely,

Steven G. Stowers, AIA, LEED AP

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