

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION



STAFF REPORT

Department of Growth Management

MEETING DATE:	November 6, 2024
PROJECT:	34 Tabby Shell Road, Lot 18 - New Construction: Single-Family and Carriage House
APPLICANT:	Sea Island Construction Group
PROPERTY OWNER:	William Glover
PROJECT MANAGER:	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-05-22-016795. 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.

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 2,874 SF has the characteristics of a Center Hall House which must meet the requirements for the Building Type within the Neighborhood General-HD zoning district; however, the setbacks are determined by the Tabby Roads Development Plan.

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 6). The Tabby Roads Habitat and Architectural Review Board has provided review comments (Attachment 7).

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 a minimum of three (3) feet above average adjacent sidewalk grade. The plans show the height as 30 inches and state that confirmation is needed with site plan. Revise plan accordingly. (UDO Sec. 5.15.5.F.)
 - 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.)

- b. Vertical rhythms should be established in the façade through alignment of windows, openings, pilasters, and columns. On the left elevation of the primary structure, the windows lack vertical rhythm and should be reconfigured. (UDO Sec. 5.15.5.F.4.e.)

The window-sized wall panels are not identified and appear to architectural elements that are not authentic to Bluffton's architecture. These areas should be converted to windows to improve the composition of the second floor left and right-side elevations and to break up a long-expanse of otherwise blank wall. Further, the narrow six (6) inch inset wall on the left elevation is not substantial enough to break up the left elevation.

- c. (UDO Sec. 5.15.5.F.4)

- 3) **Doors.** Provide 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. 5.15.5.G.2.b.)
- 4) **Columns.** Square 10-inch columns are proposed. 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 column detail for a better view. Column trim cannot overhang the porch. (UDO Sec. 5.15.5.H.2.a.)
- 5) **Railings and Balusters.** Powder-coated aluminum metal is proposed. Permitted materials include wood, painted or natural wrought or cast iron. The HPC will need to determine that this is an acceptable material, which has been approved elsewhere in Old Town Bluffton. (UDO Sec. 5.15.5.H.3.)
- 6) **Windows.**
 - a) Windows must be configured to align with the window or door directly below. Areas of the right and left elevations lack window alignment.
 - b) On the left and right elevations, there are wall panels that have not been identified that appear to mimic windows and must be identified. A primary goal of the UDO architectural standards is authenticity and to encourage architecture and construction that is

straightforward and functional. These panels should be windows. (UDO Sec. 5.15.6.A.)

7) **Roofs and Gutters.**

- a. 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. (UDO Sec. 5.15.5.J.2.a.)
- b. 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) **Corners and Water Tables.** Provide detail to demonstrate compliance with UDO Sec. 5.15.5.N.

9) **Corners, Soffits and Friezes.** Provide information to show compliance with UDO Sec. 5.15.5.P. Hardie-panel will be used as the soffit material, which must be beaded or v-groove tongue and groove.

10) **Service Yard.** Provide service yard details to show compliance with UDO Sec. 5.15.5.F.10. Identify the location of electric panels.

11) **Cart Bay / Patio.** On the left elevation there is a Cart Bay shown on Sheet A-100 but shows elsewhere as a patio. Accurately identify this space. If a golf cart bay is proposed, identify whether changes to the foundation will occur.

12) **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. Further, the total lot square footage should be 4,891.6 SF. 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.

13) Provide elevation behind screens as not enough information was provided to complete the review.

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. Provide a finish floor height of at least three feet above average adjacent sidewalk grade.
2. Lower the front door height to be a consistent height with adjacent windows.
3. Remove the four wall panels on the left and right elevations as they are not authentic architectural elements.
4. Create a deeper inset on left elevation to provide more relief for this elevation.
5. The HPC must determine if Hardie-siding is acceptable for the columns. Provide additional column details.
6. The HPC must determine if aluminum is an acceptable material for the porch railings and balustrades. (UDO Sec. 5.15.5.H.3.)
7. Identify the roof material. (UDO Sec. 5.15.5.J.2.a.)
8. Identify the gutter material. (UDO Sec. 5.15.5.J.2.c.)
9. Provide corner and water table details (UDO Sec. 5.15.5.N.)
10. Provide soffit configuration. (UDO Sec. 5.15.5.P.)

11. Provide service yard screening details and show location of electric panels.)
UDO Sec. 5.15.5.F.10)
12. Clarify the cart bay/patio on the plans and whether changes to the foundation are necessary.
13. Demonstrate that 75% tree canopy coverage will be provided. (UDO Sec. 5.3.3.G.)
14. 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.)
15. Provide elevation details for areas shown behind screens.

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. Site Plan & Elevations
4. Tree Removal Narrative
5. Landscape Plan
6. HPRC Comments, April 2024
7. Tabby Road HARB Letter