

# HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION



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## STAFF REPORT

### Department of Growth Management

<b>MEETING DATE:</b>	June 11, 2025
<b>PROJECT:</b>	COFA 04-24-019070 42 Wharf Street – New Construction
<b>APPLICANT:</b>	John Montgomery
<b>PROPERTY OWNER:</b>	John Montgomery
<b>PROJECT MANAGER:</b>	Sam Barrow, Senior Planner

**APPLICATION REQUEST:** The Applicant and Owner, John Montgomery, requests the Historic Preservation Commission approve the following application:

A Certificate of Appropriateness-Historic District, to allow construction of a 2-story single family residence of approximately 2,126 square feet (1,733 SF heated) and detached 2-story Carriage House structure of approximately 849 SF (449 SF heated) located at 42 Wharf Street. The property is in Old Town Historic District and is zoned Neighborhood General-Historic District (NG-HD).

**INTRODUCTION:** The proposed main structure has characteristics of a Medium House and Vernacular House building types but exceeds the maximum footprint of 1,300 SF for both by 39 SF. The Vernacular House also requires a full-façade front porch, which the proposed house lacks. Therefore, the main structure is reviewed as an Additional Building Type.

The main structure is narrower at the street than it is long. The house is broken into three masses: the initial mass to be viewed from Wharf Street is located underneath a side-facing gable. This mass connects to a middle mass that serves as a hyphen and connects the third mass, another side-facing gable. The hyphen will include a first-floor side-entry and screened porch located on the Right elevation. At the Front elevation, a second-floor shed dormer is located over a ground-floor covered patio that extends across most of the front façade. The house will be constructed on a concrete foundation coated with tabby stucco. Walls are proposed to be a combination of horizontal Hardie board with a 6" reveal, and vertical Hardie boards with pressure treated wood battens 8" on-center. The roof will be galvanized 5-V crimp. A brick fireplace is proposed with a brick Bishop's cap.

The Carriage House is a 2-story structure with a residential unit on both floors. The second floor will be access via an internal staircase. A carport will be located on the Left elevation underneath a lean-to roof. The carport will be enclosed with vertical hogspen of unknown material spaced 4" on-center. The carport doors include horizontal louvers and transom

windows and are of unspecified material (not shown on door schedule). The ground floor living space will also have the same door design on the front facade. Another residential entry door will be provided on the Right elevation, and doors will be located on the rear to provide access to the storage area. Foundation, wall and roof materials will be identical to the main structure. Two small balconies will be located on the front and right elevations, located underneath a roof extension supported by wood brackets.

The third iteration of this project was presented to the Historic Preservation Review Committee for conceptual review at the April 28, 2025 meeting and comments were provided to the Applicant (See Attachment 6).

**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 consistent development 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 application is consistent with the principles set forth in the Old Town Master Plan. The Old Town Master Plan states that “The built environment, in particular the historic structures scattered throughout Old Town, should be protected and enhanced. While it is of great importance to save and restore historic structures, it is just as important to add to the built environment in a way that makes Old Town more complete.”

Old Town Bluffton Historic District is a locally designated historic district. The proposed new construction has been designed to be sympathetic to the architectural character of the neighboring structures and the Old Town Bluffton Historic District.

- b. *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 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 addition will be in conformance with applicable provisions provided in Article 5:

- 1) **Service Yard:** Service yards are shown but details are not provided. The service yard must be large enough to include HVAC units, utilities and receptacles. Utility meters must be screened from public view. Provide details to show compliance with UDO Sec. 5.15.5.F.
- 2) **Chimney:** The chimney appears too short and exposes the spark arrestor. Revise the chimney to comply with UDO Sec. 5.15.6.E.8.
- 3) **Building Walls:** The hogs pen material to be used on the Carriage House is not identified and must be wood or cementitious fiberboard (UDO Sec. 5.15.6.G.3.).
- 4) **Doors:** The material for doors to be used on the ground floor front façade of the Carriage House is not identified. Permitted materials wood, metal and metal-clad (UDO Sec. 5.15.6.I.2.b.). Additionally, windows appear in the doors on the drawing but not in the door schedule. A slider door is proposed on the second-floor Right elevation of the Carriage House. Slider doors are not permitted by the UDO and must be casement or French (UDO Sec. 5.15.6.I.3.b.)
- 5) **Windows:** The Project Analysis sheet indicates that aluminum windows will be used, but the plans show vinyl.
- 6) **Gutters:** The 6" half-round aluminum gutters must be 14-18 gauge. Downspouts should match gutters in material and finish (UDO Sec. 5.15.6.J.)
- 7) **Fences:** A new 4'-tall wood framed fence with hog wire infill fence is proposed along the southern property line. A 6'-tall horizontal "plank" is proposed on the rear property line. The material for the rear fence has not been identified and must be a material permitted by UDO Sec. 5.15.6.K.3.
- 8) **Shutters:** A closed shutter is proposed on the ground floor Left elevation to suggest the existence of a window. While the suggestion supports the compositional principles of the UDO, its application is not authentic and should be removed. As the interior space behind the wall is a staircase

and a closet, another window configuration does not appear possible. (UDO Sec.5.15.1.D.)

- 9) **Wall Section Details:** Wall sections have been provided but some details are missing, including material to be used for the fascia and soffits. The soffit is identified as “vented soffit panel” only. The soffit material must be identified and should be finished with beaded or v-groove tongue & groove (UDO Sec. 5.15.6.P.5.). Additionally, the soffit should be trimmed with a small crown or bed and cove mold at the frieze.

- 10) **Underpinning:** The louvered skirting must be a minimum of 1-inch behind the face of each pier. Provide a detail to show placement to ensure compliance with UDO Sec. 5.15.6.O.

11) **Trees and Landscaping:**

- a) The Landscape Plan must be updated to match the most recent site plan and footprints of both the main house and Carriage House.
- b) Confirm that a tree canopy of 75% lot coverage, *not including roof tops*, is provided. It appears that rooftops may be include in the coverage cited (UDO Sec. 5.3.7.G.).
- c) A Tree Removal Permit will be required to remove any tree with a 14” or greater diameter at breast height.

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 new construction to be consistent and harmonious with that of the surrounding neighborhood. The mass and scale are appropriate for the 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.* 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 complete except for the applicable items in #2.

**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 service yard details to show compliance with UDO Sec. 5.15.5.F.
2. Revise the chimney to comply with UDO Sec. 5.15.6.E.8.
3. Identify the hogs pen material to be used on the Carriage House to show compliance with UDO Sec. 5.15.6.G.3.
4. Identify the material for doors to be used on the ground floor front façade of the Carriage House that complies with UDO Sec. 5.15.6.I.2.b.). These doors must match the door schedule. Change slider doors to a permitted door operation in UDO Sec. 5.15.6.I.3.b.
5. If the window schedule is to include aluminum windows instead of vinyl, update the window schedule.
6. Identify the gauge of the gutters to show compliance with UDO Sec. 5.15.6.J.
7. Identify the material for the fence proposed on the rear property line to show compliance with UDO Sec. 5.15.6.K.3.
8. Remove the closed shutter from the Left elevation.
9. Provide materials to be used for the fascia and soffits, and ensure soffit configuration complies with the UDO Sec. 5.15.6.P.5., and provide a crow or bed and cove mold at the frieze (UDO Sec. 5.15.6.P.6.).
10. Provide a detail to show that louvered skirting will be placed a minimum of 1” behind the foundation wall to comply with UDO Sec. 5.15.6.O.

11. Update the Landscape Plan to match the most recent site plan and footprints of both the main house and Carriage House.
12. Confirm that a tree canopy of 75% lot coverage, not including roof tops, is provided to comply with UDO Sec. 5.3.7.G.
13. A Tree Removal Permit will be required to remove any tree with a diameter of 14" or more at breast height.

**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. Application
2. Narrative
3. Plans and Survey
4. Landscape Plan
5. Tree Assessment
6. HPRC Comments 04.28.2025