



Joint Town Council – Planning Commission Workshop:

Discussion and Direction Regarding Amendments to the Town of Bluffton Unified Development Ordinance

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Department of Growth Management

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Workshop Overview



- To review proposed amendments to the UDO that have been identified by staff, Town boards, commissions, committees and others;
- To identify and discuss any additional issues that may require UDO amendments.
- Continual assessment of the UDO is a **Town Strategic Plan** initiative that supports the Community Quality of Life focus area. This process also supports the **Comprehensive Plan** goal to improve the Town's regulatory framework for alignment with both the Strategic and Comprehensive plans.

Miscellaneous Amendments



Items related to outdated terminology and typos, such as below:

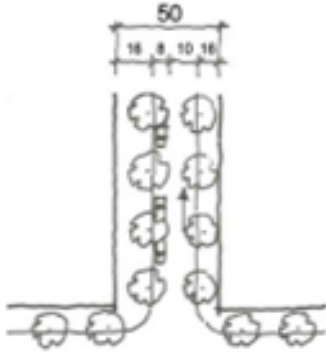
E. Riverfront Edge Historic District (RV-HD)

In the Riverfront Edge **Transect Zone**, the river shall be the focus of each lot abutting it and therefore acts as the “front” of the lot.



Change “Transect Zone” to “Zoning District”

Correct 425 MPH to be 25 MPH

CS-50-22	
	
Commercial Street	
NC, GM	
50 ft.	
22 ft.	
425 MPH	
1 lane	
One side @ 8 ft. marked	
30 feet	
10 ft. sidewalk	
8 ft. continuous planter	
Curb	

Terms and Definitions



Revising and Including
Additional Definitions for the
Following:

- Basement
- Building
- Building, Principal
- Buffer
- Conditional Use
- Easement
- Right-of-way
- Stucco (New)
- Artisan Workshop
- Pet Store (New)

Revising Definitions for Residential
Uses and Family Terms:

- Residential Uses
- Dwelling Unit
- Accessory Dwelling
- Single-family Detached Dwelling
- Single-family Attached Dwelling
- Family
- Single Household Unit

Illegal Nonconformities



Nonconformity definition:

“When a use, structure, lot dimension, or other site improvement was lawfully established previously but does not conform to current Town standards.” “Previously” means prior to adoption of or a change to the zoning ordinance.

- ***What Would the Amendment Do?:*** Remove the requirement that forces the UDO Administrator to determine if a nonconformity is illegal and if its continuance would have an impact on public health, safety and welfare.
- ***Rationale:*** There is no compelling reason legally for the UDO Administrator to make such a determination; could cause difficulties when the Town attempts to abate or remove any illegal nonconformity.

Various Procedures



Includes:

- **Public Notice:** Establishing public notice requirements for appeals to Board of Zoning Appeals, Planning Commission and Preservation Commission
- **Timeline:** Revising the timeline for applicants to submit proof that notification of surrounding property owners has been provided. Presently, notice must be provided within 15 days of application submission; proposed to change to within 15 days of a review board meeting to provide more timely notice.
- **Appeals:** Development of a formal appeals procedure to be undertaken.

Parking



- **Public Parking:** Eliminate public parking within 500 feet of a use from being counted towards the parking requirement.
- **Compact Car Parking:** Reduce the percentage of required parking that is presently allowed for compact cars from 25% to 10% and provide parking space dimensions.
- **Golf Cart Parking:** Eliminate golf cart parking from counting towards required parking spaces and providing parking space dimensions.
- **Electric Vehicles (EV):** Require EV charging stations for certain uses (e.g., large commercial centers)?

Outdoor Sales



- **Reason for Amendments:** UDO requirements are too restrictive. Outdoor sales are permitted as a Conditional Use in nine (9) zoning districts but are limited to agricultural goods, seafood and seasonal sales (e.g., X-mas trees).
- Limitation causes most businesses with outdoor sales to be in violation (nonconforming).
- **Accessory Sales:** Amendments would allow any business to have accessory outdoor sales of items that are of a similar type sold indoors with limitation as to size of sales area, location, hours of display and that comply other UDO requirements, such as parking and buffers.
- **Principal & Temporary Sales:** Some outdoor uses, such as plant nurseries and seasonal sales, are principal and temporary uses—less stringent standards than businesses with accessory outdoor sales are proposed.

Preservation – Large Footprint Buildings

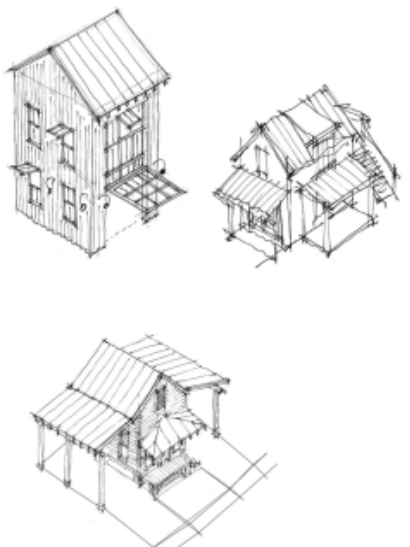


- Removes reference to and standards for “large footprint” buildings, which are permitted only in the Neighborhood Core Historic District (Old Town Bluffton Historic District)
- “Large footprint” not defined; unclear why included in the UDO (form-based code in which permitted building types in the Historic District are identified by zoning district, including maximum footprint).

Preservation – Accessory Structures



- Updating definitions for Garden Structure (unenclosed site features, such as fences and decks) and for Shed (enclosed structure 120 square feet or less).
- Establishing a definition for “Accessory Structures” that includes Garden Structures, Sheds and Carriage Houses. Such structures are clearly incidental to the principal use of a lot.
- Changing the minimum size range of a Carriage House / Accessory Use from 200 feet to 121 square feet to distinguish the required review type: Site Feature Permit or Certificate of Appropriateness - HD

F. Carriage House		
General: Accessory Structure.		CORE •
Size Range: 200 - 1,200 sq. ft. (per unit).		CENTER •
Maximum Footprint (not including porches): 800 sq. ft.		GENERAL •
Height: 1 – 2 stories.		CONSERVE •
Notes: Must be an accessory structure. Only one permitted per lot, unless otherwise noted. May be used as a garage, living unit or home business (or combination). May function as a small-scale shop, studio or workshop. Garages are limited to 2 cars, with maximum garage door widths of 12' each. Must be of same general character as primary structure. Must be placed behind the primary structure and towards the back of the lot		RIVER EDGE •

Preservation – “DeListing” a Resource



- Establishes a formal process by which the Contributing Resource status may be removed.
- Historic Preservation Commission would make a recommendation to Town Council using the below proposed criteria.
- Proposed Criteria: 1) No longer meets the criteria for designation because the qualities that caused it to be originally designated have been lost or destroyed, or 2) the criteria to designate a Contributing Resource no longer applies (Sec. 3.25.3.A).

Preservation – Relocation of a Resource



- Work underway to develop relocation standards for Contributing Resources, which could vary by resource status.
- Preferred Manner in which Relocation Should Occur:
 1. Structure is fully intact;
 2. Partially disassembled;
 3. Fully disassembled for reassembly in new location
- Disassembly would require detailed drawings, photographs, plan outlining process for disassembly and reassembly to include how materials will be stored, protected and moved.



Reassembly



The small accessory structure above was carefully disassembled to allow for its relocation.



The building was re-assembled on a new site with a brick foundation of similar height to the original foundation.

Demolition



Demolition should be a “last resort” after all efforts have been made to rehabilitate or relocate a Contributing Resource. Deconstruction may be preferable for some resources.



Photo Source: “Chapel Hill Historic Districts Design Principles & Standards”, Town of Chapel Hill, NC, 2021

Deconstruction



In cities such as San Antonio, Portland and Milwaukee, deconstruction of buildings in place of demolition is required to salvage building materials to reduce landfill waste and for reuse in other buildings. Sustainability is the main purpose of deconstruction ordinances.

Typically applies to all buildings built earlier than a specified date regardless of historic status, that are historic or that are within a historic district. Process is by hand, not machine.



Above: Salvaged heart pine flooring and joists for sale



Photo Source: Repurpose Savannah

Selected Items from Comments Received



- Uses by District: Continue to allow residential uses in the Light Industrial district?
- Lot Type Standards: Should maximum height and minimum setbacks be reconsidered for the Large-Mixed Use Lot and Large Commercial Lot Types?

Table 4.3 Uses by District

	Preserve (PR)	Agricultural (AG)	Rural Mixed Use (RMU)	Residential General (RG)	Neighborhood Core (NC)	General Mixed Use (GM)	Light Industrial (LI)	Riverfront Edge Historic District (RV-HD)	Neighborhood Conservation Historic District (NCV-HD)	Neighborhood General Historic District (NG-HD)	Neighborhood Center Historic District (NCE-HD)	Neighborhood Core Historic District (NC-HD)
Residential												
Single-family Detached	-	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Single-family Attached	-	-	P	P	P	P	P	-	-	P	P	P
Multi-Family	-	-	-	-	P	P	P	-	-	-	P	P
Accessory Dwelling Unit	-	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C

Table 5.8.3.B
Lot Standards

Lot Type	Permitted in Districts	Lot Width/Building Width (if specified)	Building Setbacks ²			Lot Coverage (max)	Height (min/max in stories) ⁵
			Front ³	Rear ⁴	Side ^{3,4}		
Large Mixed-Use Lot	GM LI	120 ft. minimum, no maximum, provided that no building may exceed 200 ft. in width.	10 ft. min. 24 ft. max.	10 ft. min.	0 ft. min. 15 ft. min. total	70%	2-4
Small Commercial Lot	RMU NC GM LI	16 ft. min., 199 ft. max.	10 ft. min.	20 ft. min.	5 ft. min.	80%	1-2
Large Commercial Lot	GM LI	200 ft. min., no max.	10 ft. min.	30 ft. min.	10 ft. min.	75%	1-5
Industrial Lot	LI	150 ft. min, no max.	30 ft. min	30 ft. min	20 ft. min.	60%	1-3
Civic Lot	All Non-HD Districts	50 ft. min., no max.	10 ft. min	10 ft. min	10 ft. min.	80%	1-5



QUESTIONS & DISCUSSION