

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION



STAFF REPORT

Department of Growth Management

MEETING DATE:	September 7, 2022
PROJECT:	3 Wharf Street – Renovation and Reconstruction of Contributing Resource
APPLICANT:	Pearce Scott Architects
PROJECT MANAGER:	Glen Umberger, Historic Preservationist

APPLICATION REQUEST: The Applicant, Pearce Scott Architects, on behalf of the owner, Keshanya Cleveland, requests that the Historic Preservation Commission approve the following application:

1. **COFA-05-22-016741.** A Certificate of Appropriateness to allow the renovation and reconstruction of the 546 SF Contributing Resource, a single-family residence known as the Corinne Heyward Home, identified as 3 Wharf Street (Tax Parcel R610-039-00A-0149-0000) in the Old Town Bluffton Historic District and zoned Neighborhood General-HD.

INTRODUCTION: The Applicant has proposed the renovation and reconstruction of the existing “Little Green House,” a Contributing Resource also known as the Corrine Heyward Home on its current site. The Resource was first surveyed in August 1994 as part of the South Carolina Statewide Historic Resources Survey (Site #046-0096), and subsequently surveyed in 2001 and again in 2008 when it was listed as “Contributing” to the Old Town Bluffton Historic District. In 2019, the Resource was surveyed as part of the *Town of Bluffton Historic Resources Update*.

The subject is located on the southeast corner of Wharf Street and May River Road. It is a one-story, wood frame, rectangular plan, single-family residence, approximately 546 square feet in area with pyramidal roof and enclosed eaves, wood lap siding painted greenish blue in color, double hung windows, and a corrugated metal roof. The structure has an elevated foundation supported by brick block piers. On the western (Wharf Street) elevation, there is a full-width, one-story screened front porch with a knee wall clad in wood lap siding painted white and concrete entry steps; the northern (May River Road) elevation has two double-hung windows; the eastern elevation (rear) has an exterior door (currently sealed with plywood) flanked by a double hung window to the north and another double-hung window (currently sealed with plywood) to the south. A partially completed addition on this rear elevation was begun without building permits and is not historically significant. The southern elevation matches the northern elevation with two double-hung windows). See Attachment 6 for photos.

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.

It is important to note that the intent of Section 5.15 Old Town Bluffton Historic District of the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) is that the Section be user friendly and informative to the residents and the members of HPC and is not intended to discourage creativity or force the replication of historic models. Rather, it is to set forth a framework in which the diversity that has always characterized Bluffton can continue to grow. The Section also defines guidelines for design and materials similar to that used on structures within the Old Town, and it is the charge of the HPC to assess the interpretation of these guidelines as they pertain to applications using the established review criteria.

REVIEW CRITERIA & ANALYSIS: Town Staff and the Historic Preservation Commission are required to consider the criteria set forth in Section 3.18.3 of the UDO in assessing an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness – Historic District (HD). The applicable criteria are provided below followed by a Staff Finding(s) based upon review of the application submittals to date.

1. Section 3.18.3.A. Consistency with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Structures.
 - A. The following ten (10) Standards are to be applied to specific rehabilitation projects in a reasonable manner, taking into consideration economic and technical feasibility:
 1. *A property shall be used for its historic purpose or be placed in a new use that requires minimal change to the defining characteristics of the building and its site and environment.*
- Finding.* Based on the information and materials submitted, Staff believes this Standard has been met as the renovation and reconstruction of the existing house will have all of the defining characteristics of the Contributing Structure.
2. *The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.*

Finding. Based on the information and materials submitted, Staff believes the proposal meets this Standard as all materials will be evaluated and repaired or replaced with like in-kind as needed. Any materials which require replacement will need to be identified in the Building Permit drawings for compliance should this Application be approved. Also, the renovation and reconstruction will retain the

defining features and spaces that characterize the Contributing Resource.

3. *Each property shall be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or architectural elements from other buildings, shall not be undertaken.*

Finding. Based on the information and materials submitted, Staff believes the proposal meets this Standard as the Applicant proposes to recreate the look of the existing Contributing Structure, where renovation is not possible, and does not propose to add conjectural features or architectural elements from other buildings.

4. *Most properties change over time; those changes that have acquired historic significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved.*

Finding. There are no changes to the property that have acquired historic significance. As such, this Standard does not apply.

5. *Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a historic property shall be preserved.*

Finding. The Applicant proposes to remove and reconstruct the front screened porch. The porch has been inspected and found to be deteriorated beyond repair. Staff finds that based on the information and materials submitted, that the proposed reconstruction of this distinctive feature meets this Standard. In addition, the Applicant proposes to remove and replace all external windows and doors. Based on the information and materials submitted, Staff believes that these proposed replacement elements will meet this Standard.

6. *Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary, physical, or pictorial evidence.*

Finding. According to the narrative provided, the Applicant proposes that every effort will be made to preserve and reuse as much of the original materials as possible. Further, all materials will be evaluated and repaired or replaced with like in-kind as needed. Based on the information and materials submitted, Staff finds that the requirements of this Standard will be met.

Finding. Based on the information and materials submitted, Staff finds that this Standard will be met if the front porch is reconstructed

to designs which have been substantiated by documentary, physical, or pictorial evidence. Any new materials used to replace deteriorated materials or replicate historic features shall match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities.

7. *Chemical or physical treatments, such as sandblasting, that cause damage to historic materials shall not be used. The surface cleaning of structures, if appropriate, shall be undertaken using the gentlest means possible.*

Finding. The narrative does not indicate any surface cleaning of the structure. This Standard, accordingly, does not apply.

8. *Significant archeological resources affected by a project shall be protected and preserved. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures shall be undertaken.*

Finding. No digging beyond that required for the foundation is proposed, should any archeological resources be discovered during the project, proper notifications will need to be made. As currently proposed, this Standard does not apply.

9. *New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.*

Finding. Based on information and materials submitted, Staff finds that the proposed addition of 143 square feet, to contain two bathrooms, is sufficiently differentiated from the old and is compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features of the Contributing Resource.

10. *New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.*

Finding. Based on information and materials submitted, Staff finds that the proposed 143 square-foot addition, if removed in the future, would not impair the essential form and integrity of the Contributing Resource.

2. Section 3.18.3.B. Consistency with the principles set forth in the Old Town Master Plan.

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.”

The Applicant proposes to renovate and reconstruct a single-family Contributing Resource within the Old Town Bluffton Historic District, a locally designated historic district. The renovation and reconstruction, if done in a manner which meets the criteria set forth in Section 3.18 as noted in this report, will enhance the District by protecting the historic structures within the District.

3. Section 3.18.3.C. The application must be in conformance with applicable provisions provided in Article 5, Design Standards.

Finding. Town Staff finds that, if the conditions below are met, the proposed renovation and reconstruction and addition will be in conformance with applicable provisions provided in Article 5:

Per Section 5.15.6.H Columns, Arches, Piers, Railings, Balustrades. Columns are required to be six inches minimum, with or without capitals or bases. The elevations propose four by four porch columns. While this does not meet the requirements of the UDO, Town staff finds that the columns on the existing structure should be replicated as close to provisions allowed in the Building Code. Final determination of the appropriateness of the reduced column size is required by the HPC.

4. 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 renovation and reconstruction to be consistent and harmonious with that of the surrounding neighborhood. The structure is an existing Contributing Resource whose mass and scale are those which most need to be protected. As such, it is appropriate for its location.

5. Section 3.18.3.E. Preservation of the existing building’s historic character and architecture.

Finding. Based on information and materials submitted, Staff finds that the existing building’s historic character and architecture will be preserved in the renovation and reconstruction.

6. 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. Based on information and materials submitted, Staff finds that the historic, architectural, and aesthetic features of the Contributing Resource will be preserved and therefore the reconstruction will not be detrimental to the public interest.

7. Section 3.18.3.G. Criteria for an application to demolish, either in whole or in part, any Contributing Structure.

Finding. The Applicant seeks approval for the renovation and reconstruction of a Contributing Structure. As such, this criterion does not apply.

8. 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.

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 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. Per Section 3.18.3.A., any materials which require replacement will need to be identified in the Building Permit drawings for compliance should this Application be approved.
2. Per Section 5.15.6.H., a final determination of the appropriateness of the reduced porch column size from six-by-six to four-by-four is required by the HPC.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Location Map
2. Zoning Map
3. Application and Narrative
4. Site Plan & Elevations
5. Landscape Plan & Canopy Coverage
6. Structural Report & Photos
7. HPRC Report