

# HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION



## STAFF REPORT

### Department of Growth Management

<b>MEETING DATE:</b>	May 7, 2025
<b>PROJECT:</b>	COFA 02-25-019607 1 Head of the Tide - Expansion
<b>APPLICANT:</b>	Robert L. Graves III (Graves Construction)
<b>PROPERTY OWNER:</b>	Jason Alexander
<b>PROJECT MANAGER:</b>	Charlotte Moore, AICP, Principal Planner

**APPLICATION REQUEST:** The Applicant, Robert L. Graves, III on behalf of the owner, Jason Alexander, requests the Historic Preservation Commission approve the following application:

**COFA-02-25-019607.** A Certificate of Appropriateness-HD to allow a second-floor addition to an existing single-family detached residence to be located mostly within the existing hip roof and partially within a rear gable roof addition. Proposed changes also include the partial enclosure of a rear porch, replacing a second-floor vent with an egress window, and adding a side yard stoop. The property is located at 1 Head of Tide in the Old Town Bluffton Historic District and zoned Neighborhood Conservation-Historic District (NCV-HD).

**INTRODUCTION:** The Applicant requests construction of a second-floor expansion to an existing single family detached residence in the Old Town Bluffton Historic District. The existing primary structure, of approximately 1848 SF, is classified as an “Additional House Type” within the NCV-HD. The existing structure was constructed before the Stock Farm Development was annexed into the Town of Bluffton. Therefore, the house is built to conform with setbacks required by Beaufort County at time of construction.

The existing primary structure is a 2-story single family residence with 4-sided hip roof. The front (south) elevation features a porch extending the length of the house with gabled dormer and louvred attic vent. The rear (north) elevation features a small covered porch with hipped roof. Materials include horizontal rough cut cypress lap siding, 5V galvanized roofing, brick foundation and matching chimney.

The Applicant proposes to enlarge usable square footage within the home’s existing footprint by expanding the second floor and converting the existing unfinished upper story into livable space. The expansion would enlarge the heated square footage to approximately 2,635 SF. Proposed exterior changes include removing the existing hipped roof over the back porch and replacing with a gable end roof to accommodate the

expansion, partially enclosing the existing back porch, removing the louvred attic vent and replacing with a window to match existing materials elsewhere on the house. The Applicant will also add an exterior door and stoop on the right (east) elevation.

This project was presented to the Historic Preservation Review Committee for conceptual review at the March 17, 2025 meeting and comments were provided to the Applicant (See 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, 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 addition 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 addition and other changes to the existing structure proposed as part of this request 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) **Roof** (UDO Sec. 5.15.6.J.):

- a. Roofing material and configuration on new dormer roof is proposed to be “standing seam metal roof” to match existing roof material (Elevations A3.3). Existing roof is comprised of 5V Crimp galvanized metal roofing. The UDO allows both standing seam and 5V Crimp. The proposed Galvalume metal roofing is a permitted zinc-aluminum material. The configuration and material must be corrected in the revised Final Plan submission (UDO Sec. 5.15.6.J.3.a.)

2) **Stoops** (UDO Sec. 5.15.6.E.6):

- a. Stoop details construction and material details have not been provided. The Final Plan must provide the following information and ensure compliance with UDO guidelines:
- i. Exterior door. Material may consist of wood, metal or metal-clad. (UDO Sec. 5.15.6.I.2.b).
  - ii. Railing and Balusters. Material may consist of termite-resistant wood, painted or natural wrought or cast iron. (UDO Sec. 5.15.6.H.2.d). Additional building details regarding balusters is required.

3) **Windows and Doors** (UDO Sec. 5.15.6.I.):

- a. Elevations indicate new windows will match existing. New casement windows are proposed, however existing windows appear to be double-hung. Both window operations are permitted but current plans as submitted are contradictory. The Final Plan submission must clarify window operation. (UDO Sec. 5.15.6.I.3.b)
- b. Window materials and specifications have not been provided. Window finish materials may consist of wood, aluminum, copper, steel, vinyl, clad wood or fiberglass. The Final Plan submission must specify window finish materials. (UDO Sec. 5.15.6.I.2.a)
- c. Revise Final Plan submission to ensure new door height on the right (east) elevation matches existing adjacent windows, per Project Narrative (Attachment 3).

- 4) Building details, including materials and configurations, for any new building element, or element to be changed or reconstructed, must be consistent with existing materials and configurations.

- 5) Correct Property Address on Proposed Elevations (Attachment 6).

6) Revise Final Plan submission to reflect service yard location on Proposed Elevations (Attachment 6). (UDO Sec. 5.15.5.F.9)

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 addition to be consistent and harmonious with that of the surrounding neighborhood. The mass and scale of the structure is appropriate for its 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 structure, 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 with the exception of 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. The applicant must provide a Letter of Agency in order to act upon the Property Owner's behalf.
2. Provide accurate current and proposed square footage.
3. Per UDO Section 5.15.6.J, provide updated building elevations that specify use of 5V roofing material to match existing roof.
3. Per UDO Section 5.16.6.E.6, provide updated building elevations that specify stoop materials and details in accordance with applicable guidelines listed above (2.a.2.a).

4. Per UDO Section 5.15.5.I, provide updated building elevations that specify window finish material and operation information.
5. Provide correct Property Address.
6. Per UDO Section 5.15.5.F.9, provide service yard location on updated building elevations.

**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 and Zoning Map
2. Final Application
3. Narrative
4. Site Photos
5. Survey and Existing Elevations
6. Proposed Elevations
7. HPRC Comments