

# HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION



## STAFF REPORT

### Department of Growth Management

<b>MEETING DATE:</b>	June 7, 2023
<b>PROJECT:</b>	99 Pritchard Street – Addition/Remodel: Single-Family
<b>APPLICANT:</b>	DePauw Architects
<b>PROJECT MANAGER:</b>	Katie Peterson, AICP, Senior Planner

**APPLICATION REQUEST:** The Applicant, Joseph DePauw, AIA, on behalf of the owner Marti Golson of Caramar Rentals & Investments LLC, requests that the Historic Preservation Commission approve the following application:

1. **COFA-04-23-017906.** A Certificate of Appropriateness to allow the renovation and repair of the approximately 690 SF Contributing Resource, known as the Walker House, including the removal of the 250 SF attached carport and the addition of 53 square feet to the south elevation located at 99 Pritchard Street, in the Old Town Bluffton Historic District and zoned Neighborhood Conservation-HD.

**INTRODUCTION:** The Applicant has proposed the renovation of the one-story, single-family structure known as the Walker House. The structure is characterized by its forward-facing gable roof, screened porch and metal sheets screening the foundation.

The building was first surveyed in the 1994 Historic Resources Survey of Bluffton (Identified as Bridge Street, Site #046-115), and subsequently resurveyed in the Survey of Historic Properties (July 2008, identified as 19 Pritchard Street, Site #046-115); and the Town of Bluffton Historic Resources Update (July 2019). During this COFA-HD review it was determined the Walker House was inadvertently not included on the Contributing Resources Map approved by Town Council on December 14, 2021; however, this oversight does not affect the building's status as a Contributing Resource to the Old Town Bluffton Historic District.

The Applicant proposes to repair the screen porch as needed, repaint the structure, and replace the non-historic windows and front door. The Applicant also proposes to replace the southernmost window on the west elevation with a wood door and add a small, shed roof overhang to protect the new door from elements. Additionally, the Applicant proposes to remove the shed roofed carport from the south elevation and add a 53 SF portion on the same elevation.

This project was presented to the Historic Preservation Review Committee for conceptual review at the May 8, 2023 meeting and comments were provided to the Applicant (See Attachment 5).

**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 Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings.

a. *Finding.* Town Staff has reviewed the ten Standards are as follows:

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.* The Applicant proposes to retain the residential use of the structure; therefore, this Standard has been met.

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.* Much of the historic material on this home has been covered or removed over time. The windows and doors are not historic to the structure (appear to have been replaced between the

1994 and 2008 surveys), weatherboard siding has been covered and/or replaced with vinyl siding. The 1994 and 2008 Historic Resource Surveys both indicate the open garage with shed roof as an alteration from the original form, and the porch has been indicated as substantially altered (and screened) from the original form.

The Applicant proposes to replace the windows with Sierra Pacific Premium Replacement 8500 Series Double Hung windows (Attachment 6). The carport is proposed to be removed from the south elevation which has been damaged by a tree fall and a portion of this enclosed as a small addition. As it has been noted in the Historic Resource Surveys as a later addition, and the windows and doors are not historic to the structure and are more in line with the historic character of the structure, Town Staff finds this Standard has been met.

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:* The proposed modifications do not create a false sense of historical development, and do not add conjectural features or architectural elements from other buildings. Town Staff finds this Standard has been met.

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

*Finding.* While there have been several changes to the building over time, not every change has acquired historic significance. Staff finds that while the attached carport does not detract from the significance of the structure, it has not acquired historic significance at this time and does not need to be retained and preserved. Town Staff finds this Standard has been met.

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

*Finding.* Town Staff finds that the changes proposed to the structure do not remove distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques and this Standard has been met.

- 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.* The Applicant proposes replace non historic features. The materials proposed on the end addition are proposed to match the existing features. Town Staff finds this Standard to have been met.

- 7. Deteriorated 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.* No chemical or physical treatments which may cause damage to the structure have been proposed. This Standard has been met.

- 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 is proposed. Should any archeological resources be discovered during the project, Town Staff must be notified to determine if any mitigation measures are needed.

- 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.* Town Staff has found that the proposed 53 SF addition is a continuation of the rear of the structure. It is differentiated slightly from the old with the proposed doors on the elevation and is compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features and protects the historic integrity of the property and its environment and, as such, this Standard has been met.

- 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.* Town Staff has found that the removal of historic material is minimal and has designed in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic resource would be unimpaired. The door on the west elevation has been proposed where a window was placed, and as such, this Standard has been met.

2. 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."

The Applicant proposes to replace primarily non-historic material and restore the use of this historic structure. The renovation and remodel have been designed to be sympathetic to the architectural character structure, so the proposed changes will both protect the integrity of the existing historic structures and enhance the neighborhood by allowing it to continue its use as a residential structure.

- 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 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.

3. 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 the structure falls within the category of Cottage Building Type as defined in Section 5.15.5.D.
- b. *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. Section 5.15.6.G. Building Walls. Building walls are permitted to be wood, cement fiber siding, concrete masonry

units with stucco tabby, reinforced concrete with stucco, shingle, and vertical board and batten. The application proposes vinyl siding for the new addition. As this is an existing structure, the materials are proposed to match existing. Town Staff finds this is an appropriate material for the addition due to the existing conditions of the site. The HPC must determine the appropriateness of the use of vinyl siding as a substitute for those listed in the UDO.

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 to be consistent and harmonious with that of the surrounding neighborhood. The mass and scale of the structures are appropriate for their location and the architectural detailing will be sensitive to the neighboring properties.

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

*Finding.* This Standard has been met. See Secretary of Interior Standards above for additional information.

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.* The Applicant seeks approval for the renovation of a Contributing Resource. By renovating the structure to allow for its continued use, using designs sensitive to the character of the structure and district, the proposed plans are sympathetic in design to the neighboring historic and non-historic resources; therefore, the proposed construction will have no adverse effect on the public interest.

7. Section 3.18.3.G. For an application to demolish, either in whole or in part, any Contributing Structure, the Historic Preservation Commission shall consider: 1. The existing and historical ownership and use and reason for requesting demolition; and 2. Information that establishes clear and convincing evidence that: a. The demolition of the structure is necessary to alleviate a threat to public health or public safety; and b. No other reasonable alternatives to demolition exist; and c. The denial of the application, as a result of the regulations and standards of this Section, deprive the Applicant of reasonable economic use of or return on the property;

*Finding.* The Applicant seeks to demolish the enclosed carport addition on the south elevation of the structure. As shown in the Narrative and supported by Beaufort County Tax records, the structure has been in the same family for over 80 years and has just recently been sold to the current owner, who indicates they are of close relation. The portion of the structure which is proposed to be removed is an alteration from the original form of the structure and has been compromised by a tree fall.

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 condition 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 condition:

1. The HPC must determine the appropriateness of the use of vinyl siding as a substitute for those materials listed in the UDO, as it is proposed to match the existing siding on the structure.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

1. Location Map
2. Zoning Map
3. Application and Narrative
4. Site Plan & Elevations
5. HPRC Report
6. Supplemental Pictures