

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION



STAFF REPORT Department of Growth Management

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| MEETING DATE: | January 5, 2022 |
| PROJECT: | 202 Bluffton Road (Lot 9), Calhoun Street Promenade – New Construction |
| APPLICANT: | Pearce Scott Architects |
| PROJECT MANAGER: | Katie Peterson, AICP, Senior Planner |

APPLICATION REQUEST: The Applicant, Pearce Scott Architects on behalf of Gerry and Amy Healy, requests that the Historic Preservation Commission approve the following application:

1. **COFA-10-21-015944.** A Certificate of Appropriateness to allow the construction of a new 3-story mixed-use building of approximately 4,360 SF located at 202 Bluffton Road, identified as Lot 9 of the Calhoun Street Promenade Development, in the Old Town Bluffton Historic District and zoned Neighborhood Core-HD.

INTRODUCTION: The Applicant is proposing the construction of a 3-story mixed-use building located in the Calhoun Street Promenade development in the Old Town Bluffton Historic District. The proposed building, of approximately 4,360 SF, is designed as a Mainstreet Building Type. The building features a low sloped forward facing hip roof on the main mass with a rear addition under a lateral gable roof. The front portion of the building has Hardie siding on the first floor with shopfront windows and an open colonnade on the front elevation. The second and third stories are done in brick with traditional brick headers and sills at the windows. The rear addition is horizontal Hardie siding on all three stories and appears to have an enclosed louvered porch similar to the Charleston Sleeping Porch.

This lot was previously approved on the September 1, 2010, development plan for the Calhoun Street Promenade which was most recently amended November 6, 2018. The 2018 amendment to the development plan did not impact this lot.

This project was presented to the Historic Preservation Review Committee for conceptual review at the November 1, 2021 meeting and comments were provided to the Applicant (See Attachment 6).

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 UDO is to 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 Unified Development Ordinance in assessing an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness – Historic District (HD). These criteria are provided below followed by a Staff Finding(s) 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 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 construct a new structure within the Old Town Bluffton Historic District, a locally and nationally designated historic district. The building has been designed to be sympathetic to the architectural character of the adjacent historic structures in both scale and architectural form, so the addition to the site and the neighborhood’s architectural diorama will both protect and enhance the neighboring historic structures.
 - b. *Finding.* The Old Town Master Plan initiatives also included 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 Unified Development Ordinance. The new 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.
2. Section 3.18.3.C. The application must be in conformance with applicable provisions provided in Article 5, Design Standards.
 - a. *Finding.* As the project is located within the Calhoun Street Promenade development, the site is required to meet the front, rear, and side setbacks prescribed by the Calhoun Street Promenade Development Plan.

b. *Finding.* Town Staff finds that if the condition noted below is met, the design of the proposed structure will be in conformance with the other applicable provisions provided in Article 5:

- 1) Section 5.3.3. Tree Conservation During Site Planning. During the site planning for any property, consideration shall be given to the existing tree canopy and every reasonable effort made to maximize the preservation of the existing canopy. The Landscape Plan proposes the removal of five trees located outside the lot. The Landscape Plan must be revised to retain the existing canopy.
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 that nature and character of the new construction 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 detail is 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. The Applicant seeks approval for the construction of a new structure in the Old Town Bluffton Historic District. The proposed plans are sympathetic in design to the neighboring historic resources; therefore, the structure, as proposed, 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 application has been reviewed by Town Staff and has been determined to be complete.

As the project is located within the Calhoun Street Promenade Development, a letter of approval from the Promenade POA is required prior to approval. Preliminary approval was provided with the conceptual application, however, as the colonnade and service yard extend beyond the property line, an updated letter of approval addressing these items is required.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: It is the charge of the HPC to assess and interpret the standards and guidelines set forth in the Unified Development Ordinance as they pertain to applications using the criteria described in the previous sections 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. Per Section 5.3.3., the Landscape Plan must be revised to retain the existing canopy.
2. Per the Applications Manual, provide a letter of approval from the Promenade POA, specifically regarding the service yard and colonnade which extend into the development's common space.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Location Map
2. Zoning Map
3. Application and Narrative
4. Site Plan and Elevations
5. Landscape Plan
6. HPRC Comments