

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION



STAFF REPORT

Department of Growth Management

MEETING DATE:	July 1, 2026
PROJECT:	COFA-03-25-019657 36 Wharf Street Two-story Carriage House – Under Construction
APPLICANT:	Jamie Guscio (Kingfisher Construction)
PROPERTY OWNERS:	Kathy Barbina and Tim Harris
PROJECT MANAGER:	Charlotte Moore, AICP

APPLICATION REQUEST: The Applicant, Jamie Guscio (Kingfisher Construction), on behalf of Kathy Barbina and Tim Harris, Owners, requests that the Historic Preservation Commission approves the following:

An amended Certificate of Appropriateness-HD (COFA-HD) to allow the installation of alternate exterior doors. The property is in Old Town Bluffton Historic District, and zoned Neighborhood General-HD (NG-HD).

BACKGROUND: The Certificate of Appropriateness Final Plan was approved by the HPC on December 10, 2025.

While conducting a rough inspection, Town Staff identified inconsistencies with the approved COFA, including: 1) installation of an unapproved man door opening on the right elevation; 2) installation of a full-lite door with built-in Venetian blinds on the left elevation; and, 3) installation of a full lite 4-lite door at the second-story right elevation. A six-panel door (a square/vertical combination) for the garage man door had not yet been installed at time of inspection.

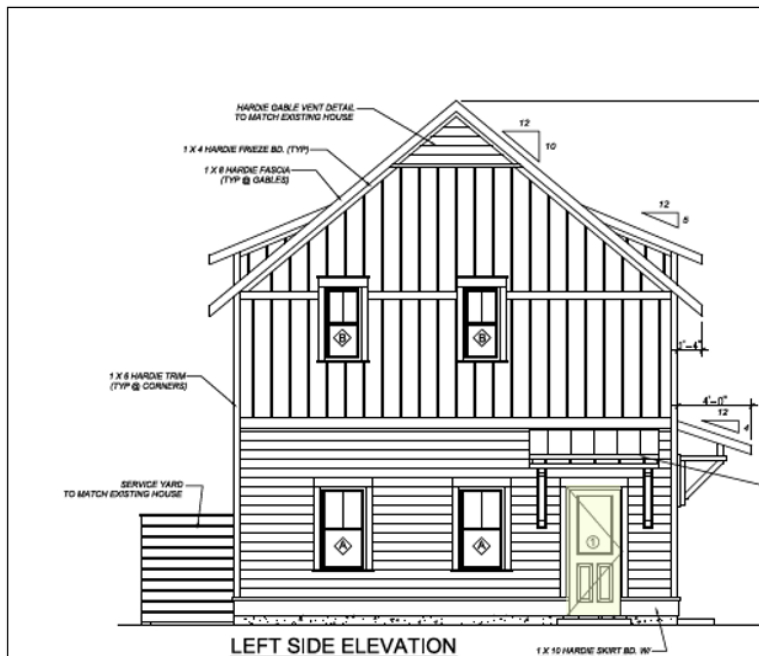
The approved COFA did not include a garage man door opening. The approved door on the left elevation was a metal-clad half-lite door. On the right elevation, the same metal-clad half-lite door was also approved.

The Applicant was contacted regarding the discrepancy and wishes to retain the installed doors, which is an COFA amendment. The UDO Administrator approved the man door opening but deferred the alternate door review to the HPC.

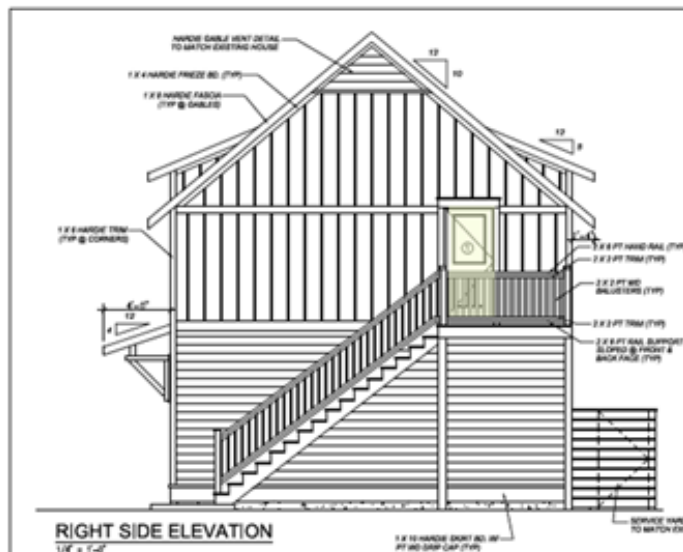
The graphics on the following page show the left and right carriage house elevations and the carriage house with the installed doors (except for the garage man door). These can

also be seen in Attachment 4, along with photos of the doors proposed for the right elevation.

Left Elevation



Right Elevation



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 Old Town Master Plan initiatives included the adoption of a form-based code with architectural standards for structures within the Old Town Bluffton Historic District. These standards are included in Article 5 of the UDO and are intended to ensure the application of traditional architecture and features, as well as authentic materials that are consistent with Old Town's vernacular. The left elevation door with full-lite inset blinds is not a traditional door configuration for Old Town. Further, the second story door is inconsistent and is a full lite door with 4-lites without the traditional panel commonly used in Old Town. For the garage man door, the square/vertical panel combination is also atypical.

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

Finding. UDO Sec. 5.15.6 states that the "primary goal of [the Old Town Bluffton Historic District architectural standards] is authenticity. The standards encourage Bluffton vernacular and construction which is straightforward and functional, and which draws its ornament and variety from traditional assembly of genuine materials." As referenced in Finding #1, the proposed doors suggest configurations that are not common of Old Town's residential doors. Therefore, determinations of appropriateness for these doors are sought from the HPC.

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. This criterion relates to the overall structure and is not applicable.

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. This is not applicable to this criterion.

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 except for 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. The HPC shall determine the appropriateness of the alternate doors and the garage man door and whether they satisfy the requirements of the UDO.

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. Application (Amendment 2) 05.07.2026
3. Approved Final COFA 12.10.2025
4. Elevation Changes and Proposed Doors