

PLANNING COMMISSION

STAFF REPORT

Department of Growth Management



MEETING DATE:	May 28, 2025
PROJECT:	67-69 Green Street Preliminary Development Plan
APPLICANT:	Randolph Stewart, R. Stewart Design, LLC
PROJECT NUMBER:	DP-01-25-019535
PROJECT MANAGER:	Dan Frazier Planning Manager Department of Growth Management

REQUEST: The Applicant, Randolph Stewart of R. Stewart Design, LLC, on behalf of property owner, Olympia Rymko, is requesting approval of a Preliminary Development Plan application. The project proposes two (2) lots, each with one mixed use building and one carriage house with associated infrastructure (Attachment 1).

INTRODUCTION: The properties are zoned Neighborhood Center – Historic District (NC-HD) and consist of approximately 0.29 acres identified by tax map numbers R610 039 00A 0254 0000 and R610 039 00A 0385 0000 located on the northeast corner of Boundary Street and Green Street (Attachment 2).

BACKGROUND: This application is for a Preliminary Development Plan located within the Neighborhood Center – Historic District (NC-HD) and as such is subject to the standards set forth in the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO). The subject properties are currently vacant and located on the northeast corner of Boundary Street and Green Street east of Martin Family Park.

As reflected in the revised site plan, the Applicant proposes two (2) two-story mixed-use buildings, totaling approximately 1,333 SF commercial and 1535 residential each, and two carriage houses, totaling approximately 918 SF each, with associated parking, utilities, and stormwater infrastructure. The site will be accessible from Green Street, an unpaved road, with pedestrian access across Boundary Street. The Applicant is not currently proposing improvements to Green Street (Attachment 3).

Per UDO Section 5.15.7, based on the proposed site plan, ten (10) parking spaces are required, which includes four (4) total spaces for residential dwelling units, two (2) total spaces for the accessory dwelling units and four (4) total spaces for the commercial units. The Applicant is proposing ten (10) parking spaces. A twenty-two (22) foot access easement is being proposed, providing a twenty (20) foot drive lane (Attachment 3, pg. C-4).

The Applicant has also included an automobile turn exhibit, however, the exhibit demonstrates that a vehicle is unable to execute a turnaround without encroaching

outside of the drive lane (Attachment 3, pg. C-6). Additionally, the dumpster located in the northeast of Lot 1A should be relocated as it is too close to the adjacent residential dwelling unit located at 1 Hickory Trace.

Staff also has concerns regarding the consideration that was given to the existing tree canopy and whether every reasonable effort was made to maximize the preservation of the existing canopy (UDO 5.3.3.C). The comment at DRC was not addressed in the Applicant's resubmittal.

The site plan includes the removal of several significant trees including one (1) Live Oak (30" DBH), and four (4) Laurel Oak (25", 25", 24", 24" and 36" DBH). An Arborist Report, dated February 28, 2022, was provided with the submittal (Attachment 4). The Arborist recommends that the Property Owner considers retaining the 30" Live Oak, however, the Applicant is proposing the removal of the tree. According to the Landscape Plan, the total required tree canopy coverage is approximately 3,042 SF and the Applicant is proposing 3,201 SF (Attachment 5).

The Town is currently finalizing the Boundary Street Streetscape Public Project. The proposed crosswalk at Hickory Trace and Boundary Street is not recommended as there is no receiving walk connection on the west side of the street. Coordination with the Town with regard to curbing, stormwater drainage, underground power, sewer, and encroachment permits will be required at time of Final Development Plan submittal.

Staff comments on the Preliminary Development Plan were reviewed at the February 19, 2025, Development Review Committee meeting (Attachment 6). The Applicant provided a response to comments and revised site plans on April 15, 2024 (Attachment 7).

The Applicant has provided additional submittal items including a Tree and Topography

The subject property is within the Old Town Historic District and will require a Certificate of Appropriateness – Historic District (COFA-HD) reviewing landscaping, lighting, and architecture at time of Final Development Plan approval.

REVIEW CRITERIA & ANALYSIS: The Planning Commission shall consider the criteria set forth in Section 3.10.3.A of the Unified Development Ordinance in assessing an application for a Preliminary Development Plan. The applicable criteria are provided below followed by Staff Finding(s) based upon review of the application submittals to date.

1. Section 3.10.3.A.1. Conformance with the applicable provisions provided in Article 5, Design Standards.

Finding. The subject property is located within the Old Town Bluffton Historic District and therefore is subject to the standards set forth in the Town's Unified Development Ordinance (UDO).

Finding. The proposed development will undergo further review as part of the Stormwater Permitting process.

2. **Section 3.10.3.A.2. The proposed development shall be in conformance with any approved Development Agreement, PUD Concept Plan, PUD Master Plan, Subdivision Plan, or any other agreements or plans that are applicable.**

Finding. The proposed development is not within any PUD, Development Agreement, or Subdivision Plan.

3. **Section 3.10.3.A.3. If the proposed development is associated with a previously approved Master Plan, then the traffic and access plans shall adhere to the previously approved traffic impact analysis or assessment, where applicable. If an application is not associated with a previously approved PUD Master Plan, then a traffic impact analysis shall be required at final development plan submittal.**

Finding. The proposed development is not within any approved Master Plan or PUD.

4. **Section 3.10.3.A.4. The proposed development must be able to be served by adequate public services, including, but not limited to, water, sanitary sewer, roads, police, fire, and school services. For developments that have the potential for significant impact on infrastructure and services, the applicant shall be required to provide an analysis and mitigation of the impact on transportation, utilities, and community services.**

Finding. The proposed development will utilize existing water main located on Boundary Street. Sewer will be provided by connecting to the Boundary sewer main and future Green Street sewer. The Applicant will coordinate with BJWSA and Bluffton Township Fire District to ensure adequate water and sanitary sewer services in support of the project.

Finding. Letters from the agencies providing public services will be required at time of Final Development Plan submittal per the Applications Manual.

5. **Section 3.10.3.A.5. The phasing plan, if applicable, is logical and is designed in a manner that allows each phase to fully function independently regarding services, utilities, circulation, facilities, and open space, irrespective of the completion of other proposed phases.**

Finding. The project is proposed to be completed in one phase.

6. **Section 3.10.3.A.6. The application must comply with the applicable requirements in the Applications Manual.**

Finding. The application has been reviewed by the Town Staff and has been determined to be complete.

PLANNING COMMISSION ACTIONS: The Planning Commission has the authority to take the following actions with respect to the application as authorized by Section 2.2.6.C.5 of the UDO:

1. Approve the application as submitted;
2. Approve the application with conditions; or
3. Deny the application as submitted.

RECOMMENDATION: Should the Planning Commission choose to approve the application with conditions, Town Staff finds that the following conditions should be met prior to final development plan approval to be in conformance with UDO Section 3.10.3.A:

1. Relocate the dumpster to minimize impact on adjacent residential properties.
2. Revise the site plan to provide adequate vehicle turnaround.
3. Coordinate all utility connections with the Town and utility providers to ensure consistency with ongoing capital improvement projects.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Application and Project Narrative
2. Vicinity Map
3. Civil Plan Set
4. Arborist Report
5. Landscape Plan and Tree and Topography
6. DRC Comments and Original Site Plans 02/19/2025
7. Response to DRC Comments 04/15/2025