

PLANNING COMMISSION

STAFF REPORT

Department of Growth Management



MEETING DATE:	March 26, 2025
PROJECT:	32 Bruin Road Preliminary Development Plan
APPLICANT:	Dan Keefer, Witmer Jones Keefer, Ltd.
PROJECT NUMBER:	DP-12-24-019469
PROJECT MANAGER:	Dan Frazier Planning Manager Department of Growth Management

REQUEST: The Applicant, Dan Keefer of Witmer Jones Keefer, Ltd., on behalf of James Atkins of ABPAL, LLC is requesting approval of a Preliminary Development Plan application. The project proposes two commercial lots, including an existing office and a maximum 1,200 SF accessory structure on Lot 1, and an approximate 3,000 SF two-story office/retail build and maximum 1,200 SF accessory structure on Lot 2, parking and associated infrastructure (Attachment 1).

INTRODUCTION: The property is zoned Neighborhood General – Historic District (NG-HD) and consists of approximately 1.22 acres identified by tax map number R610 039 000 0274 0000 located at the southeast corner of Bruin Road and Pritchard Street within the Town of Bluffton Historic District (Attachment 2).

BACKGROUND: This application is for a Preliminary Development Plan located within the Town of Bluffton Historic District, and as such is subject to the standards set forth in the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO).

The Applicant proposes to subdivide the property into two building lots and construct site infrastructure, which includes internal driveways, access, parking, utilities, and stormwater BMPs. While final uses and tenants are to be determined, the proposed building types and corresponding lot standards meet the requirements of the UDO (Attachment 3).

As reflected in the revised site plan, the proposed subdivision allocates space for future accessory structures for Building 1, the existing office, and Building 2, including a 22-foot access easement to provide parking. Per the proposed buildings square footage and potential uses, a total of 29 parking spaces are required and 45 are proposed. To account for the excess in parking spaces required, the Applicant proposes the conversion of existing impervious parking into pervious hardscape.

Additional Submittal items include an Existing Conditions Sheet and a Tree Removal and Tree Canopy Exhibit (Attachment 4). The Tree Removal and Tree Canopy Exhibit demonstrates compliance with the tree conservation requirements of UDO Section 5.3.3.

Staff comments on the Preliminary Development Plan were reviewed at the January 8, 2025, Development Review Committee meeting (Attachment 5). The Applicant provided a response to comments and revised site plans on February 5, 2025 (Attachment 6).

The subject parcel is within the Old Town Historic District and therefore will require a Certificate of Appropriateness – Historic District 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 proposed site improvements are in conformance with the applicable provisions provided in the Town of Bluffton Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) Article 5, Design Standards.

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 utility connections and 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 for all infrastructure enhancement work. The proposed buildings will each be considered an individual phase and will be constructed based on market demands.

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: Town Staff finds that the requirements of Section 3.10.3.A of the Unified Development Ordinance are met and recommends that the Planning Commission approve the application as submitted.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Application and Project Narrative
2. Vicinity Map
3. Site Plan and Open Space
4. Additional Submittal Items – Existing Conditions and Tree Canopy Exhibit
5. DRC Comments and Original Site Plans 1/8/25
6. Response to DRC Comments 2/5/25