

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION



STAFF REPORT

Department of Growth Management

MEETING DATE:	January 3, 2024
PROJECT:	213 Goethe Road- New Construction: Mixed-Use, Office and Residential Unit
APPLICANT:	Court Atkins Architects, Inc.
PROJECT MANAGER:	Katie Peterson, AICP, Senior Planner

APPLICATION REQUEST: The Applicant, Court Atkins Architects, Inc., on behalf of the owner, Tidal Creek Investments, LLC, request that the Historic Preservation Commission approve the following application:

1. **COFA-09-23-018463.** A Certificate of Appropriateness- HD to construct a new two and a half-story mixed-use building of approximately 3,717 SF for office use on the first floor and one dwelling unit above, to be located at 213 Goethe Road, in the Old Town Bluffton Historic district and zoned Neighborhood Core - HD zoning District.

INTRODUCTION: The Applicant has proposed the construction of a two and a half-story mixed-use structure with office space on the first floor and a residential unit on the second and third (half) story. The Cart Garage and riser room have been indicated to be for Residential Use on the first floor. The proposed structure, of approximately 3,717 SF has some characteristics of a Main Street Building, but does not have an arcade, colonnade, marque, or awning along the front façade, so it has been classified as an Additional Building Type within the Neighborhood Core-HD zoning district. The 0-foot front, 0-foot rear and 5.5-foot side setbacks are determined by the May River Road, LLC Development Plan, which was approved in 2007.

The main mass of the primary structure is under a side-facing gable roof, with a forward-facing gabled addition to the front and a large shed-roofed dormer to the rear. It features a two-story addition to the rear, which acts as a residential porch on the third (half) floor and houses the rooftop HVAC units for the residential and commercial units. Materials include Hardie Lap Siding with 7" exposure, board and batten siding, asphalt shingle and standing seam metal roofs.

This project was presented to the Historic Preservation Review Committee for conceptual review at the October 2, 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.B. Consistency with the principles set forth in the Old Town Master Plan.
 - a. *Finding.* The Old Town Master Plan initiatives include the adoption of a form-based code that includes architectural standards for structures located within the Old Town Bluffton Historic District. These standards are included in Article 5 of the UDO. 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.
 - b. *Finding.* The Old Town Master Plan initiatives also promote preservation and protection of the legacy of the Old Town Bluffton Historic District through additions to the built environment which make Old Town more complete. The addition of a proposed mixed-use structure will add to the district and help provide completeness to the neighborhood and overall district.
2. 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 if the conditions noted below are met, the proposed addition will be in conformance with applicable provisions provided in Article 5:
 1. Section 5.3.3.G. Replacement of Removed Protected Trees. A tree canopy coverage with a minimum of 75% pf the lot, not including roof tops, shall be provided where land disturbance is proposed for sites less than one (1) acre. Tree canopy is the mature canopy of any existing trees to be saved, including trees

located within a required buffer, together with the mature canopy of proposed replacement trees. Canopy coverage calculations have not been provided. Canopy Coverage plan, including required street tree, must be provided showing the minimum 75% canopy lot coverage has been provided. Further the Live Oak which is proposed in the Access Easement must be relocated to be outside of the Access Easement.

2. Section 5.15.6.M Shutters. Shutters shall be constructed of durable wood. Except in the case of a Contributing Structure, the UDO Administrator may approve of the use of Wood Composite material for shutters provided the UDO Administrator determines that the shutters will be consistent with the character of the Historic District and the materials used are of equal or better quality than traditional building materials. The Applicant has proposed composite shutters. No materials have been provided for UDO Administrator review. Shutter material must be revised to durable wood.

Further, shutter dogs may be the standard "S" hook, rat-tail hooks, generally less decorative iron butterfly, or other style shutter dog typical of the Old Town Bluffton Historic District's period of significance. A shutter dog detail must be provided.

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.
 - a. *Finding.* Town Staff finds that if the architectural and landscaping items in Section 2 have been met, the nature and character of the new construction will be consistent with that of the surrounding neighborhood.
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.
 - a. *Finding.* The Applicant seeks approval for the construction of a new structure in the Old Town Bluffton Historic District. If the conditions in section 2 of this report are met, the proposed plans will be sympathetic in design to the neighboring historic and non-historic resources; therefore, the structure, with the revisions noted, 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.
 - a. *Finding.* The Certificate of Appropriateness Application has been reviewed by Town Staff and has been determined to be incomplete. As the project is located within the May River Road subdivision, a letter

of approval from the Architectural Review Board is required. In addition to the Certificate of Appropriateness-HD, as there are several trees being proposed for removal which require a tree removal permit which must be submitted, reviewed, and approved prior to issuance of a Certificate of Appropriateness. Finally, as this site contains commercial use, no signage may be displayed without a Site Feature – HD approval.

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 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. Update floor plans to specifically indicate residential use only for the Cart Garage, as the square footage is indicated, but not which portions of the floor plan it incorporates. This will ensure it is maintained after the drawings have been separated from the narrative for construction.
2. Per the Applications Manual, a letter of approval from the May River Road subdivision Architectural Review Board is required.
3. Per the Applications Manual, a Town of Bluffton Tree Removal Permit is required.
4. Per the Applications Manual, no signage may be displayed without a Site Feature – HD approval.
5. Per UDO Section 5.3.3.G. a canopy coverage plan, including required street tree, must be provided showing the minimum 75% canopy lot coverage has been provided.
6. Live Oak must be relocated outside of the Access Easement.
7. Per UDO Section 5.15.6.M., shutter material must be revised to durable wood.
8. Per UDO Section 5.15.6.M., a shutter dog detail must be provided to ensure the profile is appropriate.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Location Map and Zoning Maps
2. Application and Narrative
3. Site Plan & Elevations
4. Landscape Plan & Canopy Coverage
5. HPRC Report