

TOWN OF BLUFFTON HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
Electronic Meeting

Wednesday, January 6, 2021, Minutes

Present: Bruce Trimbur - Chair; Courtney McNeil; Michael Lovecchio; Jesse Solomon, Mary Vaux Bell, and Kerri Schmelter

Staff: Katie Peterson, Senior Planner; Kevin Icard, Planning and Community Development Manager; Charlotte Moore, Principal Planner; and, Darby McLain, Growth Management Coordinator

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Trimbur called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

All members were present.

III. NOTICE REGARDING ADJOURNMENT

The Historic Preservation Commission will not hear new items after 9:30 P.M. unless authorized by a majority vote of the Commission Members present. Items which have not been heard before 9:30 P.M. may be continued to the next regular meeting or an additional meeting date as determined by the Commission members.

IV. NOTICE REGARDING PUBLIC COMMENTS

Every member of the public who is recognized to speak shall address the Chairman and in speaking, avoid disrespect to the Commission, Town Staff, and other members of the meeting. State your name and address when speaking for the record. **UNLESS OTHERWISE AMENDED BY THE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION, COMMENTS ARE LIMITED TO THREE (3) MINUTES.**

V. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

Commissioner McNeil made a motion to adopt the agenda. Commissioner Solomon seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

VI. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

Commissioner Adams made a motion to adopt the December 2, 2020 Minutes. Commissioner Vaux Bell seconded the motion. All were in favor the motion passed.

VII. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Two officer positions, Vice-Chair, and Historic Preservation Review Committee (HPRC) at large member was vacant.

Chairman Trimbur nominated Commissioner Gallagher-Adams for vice-chair who accepted the nomination. Solomon motioned to approve; McNeil seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

Chairman Trimbur requested nominations for the HPRC at large member.

Solomon asked if it was necessary to attend all Monday HPRC meetings. Peterson said that attendance was encouraged, however, as it is not a voting board and no action may be taken, is not necessary, comments are requested prior to the meeting date via email to the project manager.

Vice-Chair Gallagher-Adams nominated Commissioner Solomon, who accepted the nomination. Commissioner McNeil seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

VIII. PUBLIC COMMENTS FOR ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA

There were no public comments.

IX. OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business.

X. NEW BUSINESS

- A. Certificate of Appropriateness:** A request by Pearce Scott Architects, on behalf of the owners Gerard and Beth Ronski, for approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness to allow the addition of an 85 SF golf cart bay and 600 SF second story addition to the existing one-story 514 SF Carriage House located at 5806 Yaupon Road, Lot 20A in the Stock Farm Development, in the Old Town Bluffton Historic District and zoned Neighborhood General-HD. (COFA-10-20-014698) (Staff – Katie Peterson)

Peterson presented the information to the Commission, which is incorporated into these minutes.

Chairman Trimbur asked Amanda Jackson Denmark, the Applicant, about changes necessary to foundation to support the proposed second story. She stated that any required modifications would be done on the inside and it is in the engineering process now.

Vice-Chair Gallagher-Adams asked about the "bump-out." Denmark explained that there was a desire to not make the main mass larger and taller while still gaining the square footage.

Vice-Chair Gallagher-Adams made a motion to approve the application as submitted. Commissioner Solomon seconded the Motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

- B. Certificate of Appropriateness:** A request by Pearce Scott Architects, on behalf of the owner Kate Eagen, for approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness to allow the construction of a 1.5-story single-family residential structure of approximately 2,117 SF and a 2-story Carriage House of approximately 1,172 SF located at 5718 Guilford Place, Lot 45 in the Stock Farm Development in the Old Town Bluffton Historic District, and zoned Neighborhood General-HD. (COFA-10-20-014673) (Staff – Katie Peterson)

Peterson presented the information to the Commission, which is incorporated into these minutes.

While Peterson was presenting the landscape plan, Commissioner Solomon asked if the dashed line on the plans was for propane. Denmark responded that she did not know what that was. Chairman Trimbur added that the neighborhood has natural gas so it would not be propane.

Commissioner Gallagher-Adams made a motion to approve the application with the following conditions:

1. Per Section 5.3.3.A.1 of the UDO, a Town of Bluffton tree removal permit is required for the removal of any trees over 14" in DBH.
2. Provide clarification on the 6" magnolia shown to stay on the site plan but removed on the landscape plan.
3. The HPC determined the columns may be approved as submitted due to the turn in the porch at the northwest corner and columns at the utility room may stay due to the constraint placed on the porch width clearance necessary for the washer and drier and the building code distance requirement for the locations of the door in proximity to the stairs.
4. Per Section 5.15.6.I. of the UDO, the exterior door style must be specified by owner prior to approval and Note 4 on the door schedule updated.
5. Per Section 3.2.2.E. of the UDO, a Grading Plan for the site is required for review as not enough information was provided at time of submittal.

Commissioner Solomon seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

- C. Certificate of Appropriateness - HD:** A request by Webb Construction, on behalf of the owner Ernie Suozzi, for approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness to allow the construction of a 1.5-story-single-family

residential structure of approximately 1,954 SF and a 1-story Carriage House of approximately 352 SF located at 20 Meriwether Court, Lot 3 in the Landen Oaks Development in the Old Town Bluffton Historic District, and zoned Neighborhood General-HD. (COFA-10-20-014694) (Staff- Katie Peterson)

Peterson presented the information to the Commission, which is incorporated into these minutes.

Chairman Trimbur asked if this structure could be a 2-story building. Peterson responded that as an Additional Building Type, it would not be permitted to be a two-story structure, it would be a Village House Building Type, which has increased setbacks. Peterson explained that while it may still classify as a 1.5-story structure, not enough information was provided by the Applicant to calculate the area which would have a possible head room of at least 5 feet. If the Applicant wishes to main the setbacks as shown on the Site Plan, the second story must not exceed 70% of the story beneath it.

Westmark, as the representative of the Applicant, stated that the conceptual application submitted was a Village House, but has since revised the application to be an Additional Building Type to be able to meet the setback requirements. Peterson noted that the conceptual application did not meet the setbacks for either building type.

Commissioner Solomon made a motion to approve the application with the following conditions:

1. Per Section 5.15.6.H. of the UDO, an additional column must be added to the to be spaced no farther apart than they are tall on the second-story porch, at the back of the house on the left elevation.
2. Per Section 5.15.5.C. The second-floor square footage must be updated, to be no more than 1.5 stories as defined by the UDO, and additional information must be provided regarding the possible floor area with head room of 5 feet or more.
3. The HPC determined that per Section 5.15.6.A the round window was appropriate for the gable, in conjunction with the rest of the detailing in the eaves, as a substitution for the window shapes listed in Section 5.15.6.I. of the UDO.

Vice-Chair Gallagher-Adams seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

XI. DISCUSSION

1. Discussion Regarding Building Size in Old Town Bluffton Historic District.

Moore presented information to the Commission, which is incorporated into these minutes.

Moore spoke about proposed amendments to the Main Street and Additional Building Types within the Neighborhood Center-HD zoning district (NCE-HD). The amendments are a response to Town Council's concern that certain building types in the NCE-HD district may be too large and are incompatible with the character of Old Town.

For the Main Street Building Type, the amendments included establishing differing building size ranges, square footages and heights (in stories) for the NCE-HD district and the Neighborhood Core-HD zoning district (NC-HD). Moore stated this was proposed as the character of the NCE-HD district was different than the NC-HD District, which includes developments like Promenade.

Moore also discussed proposed amendments to the Front Build-to Zone and Side Setback for the Main Street and Additional Building Types. The Front Build-to Zone for both building types is proposed to a minimum of 10 feet and a maximum of 25 feet. This would allow larger buildings to be set back from the public right-of-way and be less overwhelming to the adjacent streetscape. The area in front of the building may serve as seating or outdoor dining areas. Additionally, Moore said the amendment proposed the Side Setback for the Additional Building Type be increased from a minimum of five feet to a minimum of eight feet, consistent with the Main Street Building Type.

Amendments to the building footprint and size for Additional Building Types in all -HD zoning districts were also proposed to prevent the maximum size from exceeding the greatest maximum building size and footprint allowed by any of the other permitted building types in the same zoning district.

Commissioner Gallagher-Adams stated that the building size range was decreased too substantially given the proposed footprint, and said that changing the permitted number of stories won't make much of a difference as the limits on stories are broad. The proposed setback for the front build-to zone seems too substantial and suburban for a Main Street setting, like Calhoun Street, and the maximum depth of the Front Build-to Zone should be no more than 10 feet.

Commissioner Solomon expressed concern with the current Front Build-to Zone with regards to the proximity of buildings to the sidewalks on Calhoun Street, which are no more than five feet. The amount of space does not provide enough room for pedestrians. An increased setback would allow the area to be used for other activities. Mt. Pleasant as an "activation" requirement for this space, as do other communities. He also mentioned that staff should look at buildings

“that work” and determine their square footages. It was also suggested that height could be measured to the ridgeline.

Chairman Trimbur asked about flat walls. Peterson replied that the UDO has requirements to prevent unarticulated blank facades.

Vice-Chair Gallagher-Adams suggested the building at Calhoun Street and Bridge Street is an ideal height, with a reduction of two feet, to use as the maximum height. Commissioner Vaux-Bell felt that the newest buildings should not be used as precedent.

There was agreement among the Commission that additional work is necessary with regards to building size.

No action was taken as this item was for information only.

XII. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner McNeil made a motion to adjourn the January 6, 2021 Historic Preservation Commission meeting. Vice Chair, Gallagher-Adams, seconded the motion, and all were in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 8:13 p.m.