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Southern Living Magazine Awards Town Of Bluffton “Best Community Revitalization” Award For Wharf Street Redevelopment Project/Article & Photos Featured in August Issues

The Town of Bluffton is pleased to announce its Wharf Street Redevelopment Project is featured as a *Southern Living* “Best Community Revitalization” award-winning neighborhood in the magazine’s August issue.

“The Town couldn’t be more pleased to be featured as an example of what is right about government initiatives,” Mayor Lisa Sulka said. “The Town took a risk which was worth taking and proves a marriage between affordable housing projects and a historic district can work and work well.”

The Town of Bluffton submitted the application for the award a year ago and *Southern Living* announced the award for the Wharf Street Redevelopment Project in the August issue.

Sulka said this project, which involved partnerships with state and federal agencies, took patience, perseverance and a lot of paperwork.

“This is confirmation that if we take one step at a time and focus on the end-goal; our Town can accomplish a lot,” Sulka said. “Having *Southern Living* acknowledge us is fantastic however; the biggest reward is the transformation of a neighborhood and providing beautiful, affordable homes for our neighbors.”

The Wharf Street Redevelopment Project has won the following awards:

- *Southern Living* Magazine, “Best Community Revitalization” Award/August 2014 Issue.
- Municipal Association of South Carolina (MASC)/Achievement Award- category of municipalities with 10,001- 20,000 residents/July 2013/ MASC recognized the Town’s efforts in successfully implementing an affordable housing project within the Old Town Bluffton Historic District as it cleaned up blighted areas and helped diversify a community.
- South Carolina State Housing, Finance and Development Authority awarded Bluffton the “Palmetto Forum Affordable Housing Achievement Award” for making a significant impact on the affordable housing industry in South Carolina/2012.

August’s *Southern Living* Magazine also features the *Southern Living* 2014 Idea House, which is located in Palmetto Bluff; also within the Town of Bluffton.

About Wharf Street Redevelopment Project:

The Wharf Street Redevelopment Project consists of six affordable, energy-efficient cottages built on more than half acre of land between Wharf and Roberson Streets. This project replaced two vacant, unmaintained structures with a coastal cottage neighborhood. The \$1.2 million grant-funded project features homes ranging from 330 square feet to 1,551 square feet.

The houses were available to families with household incomes less than 80 percent of the Beaufort County median income and who met other eligibility requirements. The County’s median income is \$67,000. Eighty percent of that equates to \$37,550 for a one-person household and \$53,600 for a four-person household.

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P. 134

OUR ANNUAL HOME AWARDS

Best Makeover → Best Kitchen → Best Community

AUGUST 2014

COMMUNITY REVITALIZATION

The successful **Wharf Street** project in Bluffton, South Carolina, proves to local governments everywhere that affordable housing can be beautiful, smart, and right in the heart of town



BY
JESSICA CAMPBELL
PHOTOGRAPHS BY
CHRISTOPHER SHANE
STYLING BY
ELIZABETH DEMOS



WHAT MAKES THIS A WINNER

LOCATION, LOCATION, LOCATION

The original block on Wharf Street was wasting prime real estate on empty lots and vacant buildings. Within sight of the May River, in a historic district with an exploding population, the corner of Wharf and Robertson streets could have been a cookie-cutter developer's dream come true. Instead, the town joined with architects and builders to create livable, stylish spaces in the city center.

AFFORDABILITY + SUSTAINABILITY

"These houses offer a fresh take on colorful, low-cost living while keeping their Southern bones," says Elly Poston. However, the homes please not only the eye

but also the earth: They were built in an eco-friendly way using prefabricated materials. Inside, each one has energy-saving elements. It's a winning combination for build-

ing sturdy homes that will hold their value over time.

LASTING RESULTS

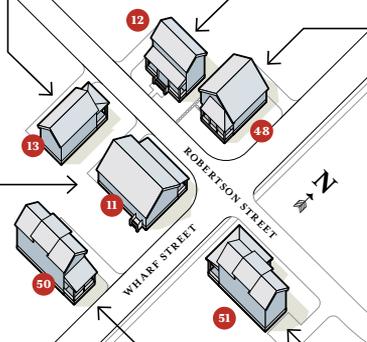
With a grant from the state and the plan put in place by local officials,

this is a case of a town recognizing and solving a problem. "It's heartwarming to see these families living in their new neighborhood," says councilman Fred Hamilton. 🏡

13 ROBERTSON STREET



12 ROBERTSON STREET



11 ROBERTSON STREET



50 WHARF STREET



48 WHARF STREET



51 WHARF STREET

WHARF STREET AT A GLANCE

Neighborhood: Old Town Bluffton; oldtownbluffton.com
Location: Bluffton, South Carolina
Built in: 2011-2012
Number of homes: 6
Average home price: \$78,500
Average square footage: 906
Architectural style: Lowcountry cottage



MEET THE WINNERS

Counterclockwise from top left: Thomas Viljac, chairman, planning commission; Fred Hamilton, town councilman; Lisa Sulka, Bluffton mayor; James Atkins, architect; Joe Hall, architect; Randolph Stewart, designer; Eric Walsnovich, landscape architect; Jeff Wiggins, Wharf Street construction manager; Marc Orlando, Wharf Street project executive; Anthony Barrett, town manager











