TOWN OF BLUFFTON BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS
Large Meeting Room, Theodore D. Washington Municipal Building
Tuesday, July 18, 2017, Minutes

Present: Sam Brusco, Vice-Chairperson; Carletha Frazier; Jackson Steele; Stephen Halpern

Absent: Julie O’Donnell, Chairperson

Staff: Kevin Icard, Planning & Community Development Manager; Erin Schumacher, Principal Planner - Historical Preservation & Urban Design; Katie Peterson, Planner; Marcia Hunter, Growth Management Coordinator

I. CALL TO ORDER

Brusco called the meeting to order at 6:04 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

III. NOTICE REGARDING ADJOURNMENT

The Board of Zoning Appeals will not hear new items after 9:30 P.M. unless authorized by a majority vote of the Board Members present. Items which have not been heard before 9:30 P.M. may be continued to the next regular meeting or a special meeting date as determined by the Board 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 Board and any personalities. State your name and address when speaking for the record. COMMENTS ARE LIMITED TO THREE (3) MINUTES.

V. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Frazier made a motion to adopt the July 18, 2017, Board of Zoning Appeals Agenda. Halpern seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

VI. ADOPTION OF MINUTES – June 20, 2017

Steele made a motion to adopt the June 20, 2017, meeting minutes. Halpern seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

VII. PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

VIII. OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business.

IX. NEW BUSINESS
1. PUBLIC HEARING - FOR ACTION

A. 134 Bridge Street (Variance Request): A request by Chad and Kelley McRorie from Section 5.5.2 of the Unified Development Ordinance, to allow development to encroach 21 feet into the required River Buffer from the OCRM Critical Line to allow for the construction of a full length front porch and a service yard onto the existing structure. The Applicant is also requesting a variance from Section 5.5.2. of the Unified Development Ordinance, to allow development to encroach approximately 35 feet into the required River Buffer from the OCRM Critical Line to allow for the construction of a fence. The property is identified by Beaufort County Tax Map Number R610 039 00A 198A 0000 and is located at 134 Bridge Street. The property is zoned Neighborhood Conservation – Historic District and therefore, will be reviewed by the Board of Zoning Appeals based on the requirements set forth in the Unified Development Ordinance. (ZONE 05-17-11003)

Presenting Staff – Erin Schumacher – Staff presenting the report provided to the Board and incorporated as part of these minutes.

Chad McRorie Applicant & Amanda Jackson of Pearce Scott Architects presented to the Board requesting the approval.

Due to the complex nature of this request the Board Members have elected to break the approval into three (3) parts: Variance A- Service Yard, Variance B- Porch and Variance C- Living Fence.

**Variance A:** Steele made the motion to approve the variance as submitted.

Halpern seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion was passed.

**Variance B:** Steele made the motion to approve Variance (B) as submitted with the following conditions:

1. Subject to the Historic Preservation Commissions’s (HPC) review and approval of the design, materials, etc.

Frazier seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion was passed.

**Variance C:** Steele made the motion to approve Variance (C) as submitted with the following conditions:

1. That the living fence be a minimum of 10 feet removed from the topo line “Top of Bank” or greater if recommended by the Town of Bluffton’s Watershed Management Department.
Frazier seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion was passed.

B. **131 Pritchard Street (Variance Request):** A variance request by Darlene Heinig from Section 5.5.2 of the Unified Development Ordinance, to allow development to encroach approximately 75 feet into the required River Buffer from the OCRM Critical Line to allow for the construction of a fence. The property is identified by Beaufort County Tax Map Number R610 039 00A 0036 0000 and is located at 131 Pritchard Street. The property is zoned Riverfront Edge – Historic District and therefore, will be reviewed by the Board of Zoning Appeals based on the requirements set forth in the Unified Development Ordinance.

Presenting Staff – Kevin Icard – Staff presenting the report provided to the Board and incorporated as part of these minutes.

George Peter Lamb – Owner of the property, representing applicant presented to the Board requesting the approval.

Board Member Halpern made the motion to deny the application as submitted due to the following findings of fact and conclusions:

1. The placement of the fence in the OCRM River Buffer conflicts with the Comprehensive Plan, Section 4.5 Open Space – Scenic Resource Viewsheds that states that the protection of certain marsh, water and rural views helps preserve Bluffton’s unique environmental heritage and character.

2. The granting of a variance will set a precedent for future fences along the May River which could jeopardize the unique heritage and character in the Riverfront Edge–HD zoning district.

Steel seconded the motion. The board voted 3-0 to deny the application. Board Member Frazier abstained from voting.

X. **DISCUSSION**

There was no further discussion.

XI. **ADJOURNMENT**

Halpern made a motion to adjourn. Frazier seconded the motion. All were in favor and the July 18, 2017, Board of Zoning Appeals meeting adjourned at 7:31 p.m.