

Media Release



bluffton
HEART OF THE LOWCOUNTRY

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Historic Graves House Stabilization is Complete

The Town, and its Historic Preservation Commission, congratulates the partners involved in completing the first phase of renovating the historic Graves House. Located at 85 Calhoun Street, this century-old house has been moved 16 feet and stabilized by placing it on a new foundation, making way for further rehabilitations and future uses.

The house's owner, the Bluffton United Methodist Church, and its renovation partners, Thomas Viljac of SC Land Development, Inc. and Court Atkins Architects also stabilized the exterior, reconstructed the porches and cleaned up the site as part of this phase of work.

Hank McCracken, chairman of Bluffton's Historic Preservation Commission, said, "We are very happy to see this important contributing structure to our historic district stabilized. This historic house was mistakenly written off as uninhabitable and unsound a few years ago; only to be brought back to life. This project demonstrates how preservation can be accomplished in Old Town. We look forward to future generations enjoying and understanding the Graves House's historical significance."

William Court, chairman of the Bluffton United Methodist Church's Council, said church representatives are excited to move into the next phase of design and construction of the Graves House. That phase which will include continued restoration of the building and its interior. Court said church officials also have plans to expand the house and reuse it as the church pastor's residence. The new addition will be designed in the same architectural style.

Thomas Viljac, general contractor of the project, said the Graves House is historically as well as architecturally significant to the Bluffton Historic District.

"This house was built by a Union soldier after the Civil War therefore the house has a Northeastern design and represents diversity from the Lowcountry barn-style homes which were common in that time," Viljac said. "I am proud to be a part of saving this house and now its story can continue to be told."