Former Navy base officers’ quarters getting spruced up

The two identical houses are a duplex designed by Charleston architecture Douglass Ellington and the two sides mirror each other, Baxter said.

Work began on one of the two houses in June and has already been completed by South Carolina STRONG and is being occupied by the workers. The restoration of the second house, which is underway, will be completed this coming spring, at which time restoration of the third house will begin. The third project will most likely take a year and a half to two years to complete. Workers from South Carolina STRONG will occupy all three houses, Glemser said.

The restoration work involve woodworking, painting, flooring, plastering, restoring fireplaces to functionality, rescreening windows, replacing moldy and mildew-rotted wood, installing new kitchen appliances and other tasks.

For the first of the 2,700-square-foot homes, the four bathrooms had to be rebuilt, the roof had to be fixed, plumbing had to be replaced and the stairway needed repairing, as did the trim along the walls. The second house requires much the same work, Glemser said.

The third house, built as the base commander’s residence, features spacious verandas, five bedrooms and servants quarters. It is a Southern mansion blending neo-classical and colonial revival architectural styles, according to Baxter.

“Original plans describe a cistern cover, which shows the building was constructed prior to the Navy Yard having a central potable water system,” he added.

The stately houses are being restored to their original look.

“We’re preserving the integrity of the homes,” Glemser said.

In addition to restoring the homes, South Carolina STRONG participants are planting bushes and other shrubbery native to the Lowcountry on the properties, Glemser said.