



Chatham County Zoning Board of Appeals

Arthur A. Mendonsa Hearing Room
July 25, 2023 - 9:00 A. M.
Meeting Minutes

JULY 25, 2023 CHATHAM COUNTY ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

Members Present: James Coursey, Chairman
Kewaan Drayton
Ashley Field
Coren Ross

Members Absent: Robert Vinyard, Vice Chairman
Benjamin Polote
Meredith Stone

Others Present: Edward Morrow, Interim Development Services Director
Melissa Paul-Leto, Development Services Planner
Mary E. Mitchell, Administrative Assistant
Hind Patel, IT Helpdesk & Support

Virtual Attendance: Pamela Everett, Esq., Assistant Executive Director, Compliance & Operations

Chatham County Staff Present: Jefferson Kirkland, Environmental Program Manager
Yolanda Washington, Zoning Administrator

I. Call to Order and Welcome

[1. Call to Order and Welcome](#)

Mr. Coursey called the meeting to order at 9:08 a.m. He explained that this is a quasi-judicial proceeding. He asked that all those wishing to give testimony during these proceedings please sign in. Witnesses were sworn in prior to giving testimony. All proceedings of the Chatham County Zoning Board of Appeals are recorded. Decisions of the Chatham County Zoning Board of Appeals are final. Challenges to the decisions of the Chatham County Zoning Board of Appeals must be filed through the Superior Court of Chatham County.

II. Pledge of Allegiance

[2. Pledge of Allegiance](#)

The Pledge of Allegiance was cited in unison.

III. Notices, Proclamations and Acknowledgements

IV. Petitions Ready for Hearing

V. Approval of Minutes

[3. Approve June 27, 2023 Meeting Minutes](#)

[June 27, 2023 Meeting Minutes.pdf](#)

Motion

The Chatham County Zoning Board of Appeals does hereby approve the June 27, 2023 Meeting Minutes.

Vote Results (Approved)

Motion: Kewaan Drayton

Second: Ashley Field

James Coursey	- Aye
Coren Ross	- Aye
Meredith Stone	- Not Present
Robert Vinyard	- Not Present
Benjamin Polote, Jr.	- Not Present
Kewaan Drayton	- Aye
Ashley Field	- Aye

VI. Item(s) Requested to be Removed from the Final Agenda

[4. Special Use | 8511 Ferguson Ave | Establish a Package Store Use](#)

- [Staff Report.pdf](#)
- [AERIAL MAP ZBA-0623-000392.pdf](#)
- [VICINITY MAP ZBA-0623-000392.pdf](#)
- [ZONING MAP ZBA-0623-000392.pdf](#)

Motion

The Chatham County Zoning Board of Appeals does hereby approve to remove this petition from the Final Agenda as requested.

Vote Results (Approved)

Motion: Coren Ross

Second: Ashley Field

James Coursey	- Aye
Coren Ross	- Aye
Meredith Stone	- Not Present
Robert Vinyard	- Not Present
Benjamin Polote, Jr.	- Not Present
Kewaan Drayton	- Aye
Ashley Field	- Aye

VII. Consent Agenda

VIII. Old Business

IX. Regular Agenda

[5. Rear Setback Variance | 9 Stargrass Retreat](#)

📎 [9 Stargrass Site Plan, Floor Plan and Elevations.pdf](#)

📎 [map.pdf](#)

📎 [9 Stargrass_original plat.jpg](#)

📎 [Staff report.pdf](#)

📎 [Landings Architectural Guidelines_pg20.pdf](#)

Mr. Edward Morrow gave the staff report. He explained that the Agent/Petitioner is Ms. Joy Reno. Ms. Reno is requesting a 2-foot rear yard variance from the 50-foot requirement for the purpose of constructing a rear home addition in the Landings Subdivision. Because it is in the Landings, it is subject to architectural review by the Landings Architectural Review Committee (ARC). The ARC has reviewed the petition and has submitted its approval to the MPC in support of the 2-foot setback variance.

Mr. Morrow stated that the Petitioner is requesting to construct a 79 foot in length rear addition to their home, which will extend the full length of their home and it would extend about 15 feet westward. It would also encroach into the 50-foot rear yard setback by 2 feet on the southwest corner. The Petitioner is asking for relief to that effect. Because the property [as shown in the photo] is heavily wooded, it is unlikely that should the Board grant this approval, that there will be any sort of negative impacts. However, in reviewing the Ordinance's criteria, there are no extraordinary or exceptional conditions. The hardship is created by the Petitioner. There are no conditions regarding this property. It does have somewhat of an excessive rear setback requirement of 50 feet. But this is likely because it is situated on a golf course.

Mr. Morrow said as he has stated, this is a heavily wooded area, and, therefore, it will probably not be seen. He reported, however, that Staff recommends denial of the request because the hardship is the result of the Petitioner's actions. But as he has said, should the Board choose to grant relief, there is unlikely to be any negative impact. Mr. Morrow entertained questions from the Board.

Mr. Coursey asked if the neighbors have been notified appropriately.

Mr. Morrow answered that the property was posted according to the requirements and public notices were mailed to the abutting property owners within 300 feet

Mr. Coursey asked if Staff received any comments from the adjacent property owners.

Mr. Morrow answered that there are no known comments or letters of support.

PETITIONER COMMENTS

Ms. Joy Reno was sworn in by Mr. Coursey. Ms. Reno explained that she is the Architect for the project. The owner is requesting a 2-foot encroachment within the 50-foot setback of the rear yard. The owners have a lovely home, but the outdoor living space is limited. They want to create an enclosed screened in porch. She explained that what is interesting about this property is it is a 50-foot rear yard setback, which is excessive for the Landings even on the golf course property. Ms. Reno said that she has done dozens of projects on the Landings and typically it is a 30-foot rear yard setback even on the golf course. She explained that she double checked with the Landings' ARC; and she looked at the original survey plat of the property, even though the proposed builder of the project questioned her. He asked her if she was sure that it 50 feet as he believed it was excessive. However, they triple checked it and it is 50 feet. They are only asking for 2 feet of encroachment. The corner that does encroach on it is at an angle; and that area of the terrace and porch that they are expanding, and enclosing is off the living space and kitchen.

Ms. Reno said that the other end of the long screened in porch area that they are doing is private space off the master bedroom. She explained that unfortunately the way the site has been platted, the encroachment happens where the addition is and where the entertainment space is located. Ms. Reno entertained questions from the Board.

Mr. Coursey asked that the site plan be pulled up on the screen.

Ms. Reno stated that if the Board looks at the hatched area, about two-thirds of this exists. They are adding on for symmetry purposes and for additional living space. She said that as the Board can see at the bottom left corner of the property is where the two-foot encroachment occurs.

Mr. Coursey asked if all of this is outdoor living space. Is it covered or it is a deck?

Ms. Reno answered that it is covered.

Ms. Field asked what provisions have been made for water runoff.

Ms. Reno explained that they have a gutter drainage system tied to the existing terrace that is here. She said approximately two-thirds of it exists as what the Board sees now. It is concrete; therefore, it is a solid surface as well. It is a similar drainage situation, but they are going to improve it.

Mr. Coursey asked Mr. Kirkland if he had looked at these issues.

Mr. Jefferson Kirkland, Program Environmental Manager for Chatham County, explained that he has looked at this project. His only comment is the usual standard, which is do not impact any parcels. There is no state water adjacent here. So, there are no buffer issues in terms of environmental buffers that he can see. There is plenty of room to address any additional runoff.

Ms. Field asked Ms. Reno if any indication was given to her why it is a 30-foot setback because according to the document from the Architectural guidelines, it says that the rear setback of 25 feet is planned. If you say 50 feet, did they say why it was so far back in that area?

Ms. Reno stated that this is just how it was platted. She could not get an explanation for it. It is unique. This was done a while ago and she does not remember the exact date of the original plat.

Mr. Coursey asked Ms. Reno if she had an idea whether the other adjacent properties along the golf course are also 50 feet. This seems a little odd.

Ms. Reno looked at the plat and stated that she did not have an answer to Mr. Coursey's question. The plat does not show this.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

BOARD DISCUSSION

The Board had no additional comments. Mr. Coursey entertained a motion.

Motion

The Chatham County Zoning Board of Appeals does hereby approve the rear setback variance request of 2-foot encroachment into the 50-foot rear yard setback to construct a rear addition at 9 Stargrass Retreat.

Vote Results (Approved)

Motion: Kewaan Drayton

Second: Coren Ross

James Coursey	- Aye
Coren Ross	- Aye
Meredith Stone	- Not Present
Robert Vinyard	- Not Present
Benjamin Polote, Jr.	- Not Present

Kewaan Drayton	- Aye
Ashley Field	- Aye

X. Other Business

XI. Adjournment

6. Adjourned

There being no further business to come before the Board, Mr. Coursey adjourned the meeting at approximately. 9:25 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Edward Morrow
Interim Development Services Director

EM/mem

The Chatham County - Savannah Metropolitan Planning Commission provides meeting summary minutes which are adopted by the respective Board. Verbatim transcripts of minutes are the responsibility of the interested party.