



C I T Y O F S A V A N N A H  
Z O N I N G B O A R D O F A P P E A L S

Arthur A. Mendonsa Hearing Room  
April 24, 2014 10:00 A.M.  
Minutes

**April 24, 2014 Savannah Zoning Board of Appeals**

**Members Present:** Timothy Mackey, Chairman  
Sidney J. Johnson  
Eli P. Karatassos

**Members Not Present:** Brian Reese, Vice Chairman  
William Ronning

**Staff Present:** Jack Butler, Secretary  
Constance Morgan Assistant Secretary

**Advisory Staff Present:** Tom Bolton, City Zoning Inspector

**I. Call to Order and Welcome**

**II. Notices, Proclamations and Acknowledgements**

**III. Approval of Minutes**

1. [Approval of the February 27, 2014 SZBA Meeting Minutes](#)

Attachment: [February 27th.pdf](#)

**Board Action:**

Approval of the minutes as submitted. - PASS

**Vote Results**

Motion: Eli Karatassos

Second: Sidney J Johnson

Sidney J Johnson - Aye

Eli Karatassos - Aye

Timothy Mackey - Aye

Brian Reese - Not Present

2. [Approval of the March 27, 2014 SZBA Meeting Minutes](#)

Attachment: [March27.pdf](#)

**Board Action:**

Approval of the minutes as submitted. - PASS

**Vote Results**

Motion: Sidney J Johnson

Second: Eli Karatassos

Sidney J Johnson - Aye

Eli Karatassos - Aye

Timothy Mackey - Aye

Brian Reese - Not Present

**IV. Approval of Final Agenda**

3. [Items Withdrawn from Agenda](#)

At the petitioner's request, the items listed below were withdrawn from the Agenda;

- 1) 14-000439-ZBA - 911 W. 37th Street - Group Home for the Abused and Mistreated
- 2) 14-000441-ZBA - 913 E. Waldburg Street - Group Home for the Abused and Mistreated
- 3) 14-000442-ZBA - 1501 Ott Street - Group Home for the Abused and Mistreated
- 4) 14-000483-ZBA - 913 W. 37th Street - Group Home for the Abused and Mistreated
- 5) 13-005953-ZBA – 110 W. Broughton St. (Lot Area per Dwelling Unit Variance)
- 6) 13-005954-ZBA – 220 W. Broughton St. (Lot Area per Dwelling Unit Variance)
- 7) 13-006334-ZBA – 216 W. Broughton St. (Lot Area per Dwelling Unit Variance)

**Board Action:**

Approval of the petitioner's request. - PASS

**Vote Results**

Motion: Sidney J Johnson

Second: Eli Karatassos

Sidney J Johnson - Aye

Eli Karatassos	- Aye
Timothy Mackey	- Aye
Brian Reese	- Not Present

4. Items to be Continued to May 22, 2014

The petitioners for the following items have requested a continuance to the May 22, 2014 agenda:

14-000992-ZBA -502&504 EAST HENRY STREET - Parking & Setback Variances

14-001000-ZBA - 536 SELMA STREET - Parking & Lot Coverage Variances

**Board Action:**

Approval of the requested continuances. -

**Vote Results**

Motion: Eli Karatassos

Second: Sidney J Johnson

**The Consent Agenda consists of items for which the applicant is in agreement with the staff recommendation and for which no known objections have been identified nor anticipated by staff. Any objections raised at the meeting will result in the item being moved to the Regular Agenda.**

**V. Consent Agenda**

5. 35 South Parkwood Drive | Lot Coverage Variance | 1467

Attachment: [Staff Report 1467.pdf](#)

Attachment: [Images 1467.pdf](#)

Jack Butler gave the following summary;

The petitioner is requesting a lot coverage variance in order to install a carport. The lot is already paved but since the petitioner would like to add a roof it now counts as lot coverage. This will not change the drainage or the impervious surface. Staff recommends **approval** of the requested variance.

**Board Action:**

Approval of the requested 6 percent lot coverage variance. - PASS

**Vote Results**

Motion: Eli Karatassos

Second: Sidney J Johnson

Sidney J Johnson - Aye

Eli Karatassos - Aye

Timothy Mackey - Aye

Brian Reese - Not Present

6. [522 East Gaston Street | Height Variance | 1409](#)

Attachment: [Staff Report 1409.pdf](#)

Attachment: [Images 1409.pdf](#)

Attachment: [Submittal 1409.pdf](#)

Mr. Jack Butler gave the following summary;

The petitioner is requesting a one -half story variance from the maximum building height of a two and one half stories in order to construct a three-story house. The building design for the proposed residence has been approved by the Historic District Board of Review and a recommendation that the Board of Appeals approve the requested one-half story height variance required to realize the design. He added that there has been no negative comments from the adjoining property owners.

**Board Action:**

**Approval** of the requested one-half story variance as recommended by the Historic District Board of Review. - PASS

**Vote Results**

Motion: Sidney J Johnson

Second: Eli Karatassos

Sidney J Johnson - Aye

Eli Karatassos - Aye

Timothy Mackey - Aye

Brian Reese - Not Present

**VI. Old Business**

**VII. Regular Agenda**

7. [840 Hitch Drive | Setback and Parking Variances | 1499](#)

Attachment: [Staff Report 1499.pdf](#)

Attachment: [Images 1499.pdf](#)

Attachment: [Submittal Exhibits 1499.pdf](#)

Present for the petition was: Michael Hughes, Agent

Jack Butler gave the following summary;

The Housing Authority of Savannah, is requesting approval of variances pursuant to the redevelopment of a portion of Hitch Village. The property is identified as a single lot. A parking study was done a few years ago by Mr. Dennis Hutton, formerly of Comprehensive Planning. Mr. Hutton observed that the parking demand for this type of development is generally less than the ordinance standard one unit per bedroom. He presented the overall plan for the project and stated that keeping in mind that the layout, the parking area, and even the shape of the buildings are subject to change. He explained that this was not a building design or site approval. The petitioner is requesting variance that will allow them to meet the demands of their project's goal which is to allow them to build 72 housing units in this space. They are requesting setback variances on all sides and a parking variance which will reduce the amount of parking from one unit per bedroom to one parking space per unit. This will allow the petitioner to have 72 parking spaces for 72 units. Staff recommends **approval** of the requested variance to permit one parking space per dwelling unit and **approval** of the requested 25-foot setback variance, in accordance with the submitted site drawing.

**Speaking on the petition:** Michael Hughes, agent stated that currently that the only public right of way is Randolph Street. He stated that presently there is dialogue with the City of Savannah to convert other streets into public right of ways. He explained the proposed parking plan.

**Mr. Karatossos** voiced his concerns regarding the allocating of spaces on a public street as a part of an overall parking approach to a development. He explained that it was inappropriate.

**Mr. Hughes** responded that the off street parking is not only for the residents. He added that this project is in walking distance to the downtown area and jobs; this is what he is trying to embrace; to have a positive impact on the downtown area and extend the ability to walk downtown. This would be the live, work, recreate model. He added that he is looking to have people working downtown, living nearby, and participating in the city from a pedestrian standpoint. He stated that this is more compelling to say that a lesser parking requirement is appropriate.

**Board Action:**

**Approval** of the requested variance to permit one parking space per dwelling unit and **approval** of the requested 25-foot setback variance, in accord - PASS  
with the submitted site drawing.

**Vote Results**

Motion: Sidney J Johnson

Second: Eli Karatassos

Sidney J Johnson - Aye

Eli Karatassos - Aye

Timothy Mackey - Aye

Brian Reese - Not Present

8. [3100 Montgomery Street | Appeal of Zoning Admin Decision | 1302](#)

Attachment: [Images 1302.pdf](#)

Attachment: [Submitted Documents 1302.pdf](#)

Attachment: [Staff Report 1302.pdf](#)

Present for the petition was: Major Phil Swyers, Agent

Jack Butler gave the following summary:

The petitioner, Phil Swyers as agent for the Salvation Army, is requesting approval of an appeal of an Administrative Decision by the Zoning Administrator requiring the removal of two container trailers being used as storage buildings on the property. The subject property is located at 3100 Montgomery Street and is zoned B-C (Community Business). This is the Salvation Army headquarters and collection center. Since 2004 containers were positioned on the storage yard and have been used for storage of donated materials. In February 2014, the petitioners were cited by zoning services. Storage units are not permitted under the Zoning Ordinance. The petitioners are appealing the order to be allowed to continue using the trailers until funds can be raised to construct a replacement storage facility on the site. Staff recommends **denial** of the petitioner's appeal.

**Speaking on the petition:** Major Phil Swyers, agent presented photos of the subject property. He explained the purpose of the trailers at the location is to house the donations that are given to the facility. He added that the primary facility can not house the donations and provide the space for the families and persons that need shelter. He continued that he would have to close a dorm in order to house the donations inside the primary facility. This would cause a hardship for the persons seeking needed shelter at the facility. He added that beginning in the fall of this year, Salvation Army will be in the process of starting a capitol campaign to build a new social service building which should provide ample storage. He asked that the board consider withholding its ruling in order to give him the needed time to build a new facility.

**Chairman Mackey** stated to the petitioner that he was non compliant. He informed him that the Board would support the ruling of the zoning administrator.

**Major Swyers** asked if his next step would be to go before City Council.

**Jack Butler** explained the procedure. He stated that if the appeal of the zoning administrator's findings are denied by this Board, this issue would then go to recorder's

court. The Judge here has greater latitude to set compliance standards on this issue than this Board does.

**Board Action:**

The Zoning Inspector's finding is correct.

The use of storage trailers is expressly forbidden under the ordinance. The charitable nature of the petitioner's business is laudable, but there are no provisions for "charity exemptions" from the - PASS ordinance and no grounds for granting the requested appeal of the decision. Staff recommends **denial** of the petitioner's appeal.

**Vote Results**

Motion: Eli Karatassos

Second: Sidney J Johnson

Sidney J Johnson

- Aye

Eli Karatassos

- Aye

Timothy Mackey

- Aye

Brian Reese

- Not Present

9. [103 Scarbrough Street | Lot Coverage & Setback Variances | 1454](#)

Attachment: [Staff Report 1454.pdf](#)

Attachment: [Images 1454.pdf](#)

Present for the petition was: Anthony Wallace, Agent  
Gerald Frazier, Pastor

Jack Butler gave the following summary;

The petitioner, Anthony Wallace, agent for Followers of Christ Baptist Church, is requesting approval of a 16.75 foot front setback variance from the 50 feet from right-of-way centerline required, a variance of 19 feet from the 25-foot street-side yard setback required, and a 47% lot coverage variance from the 35% maximum permitted, in order to construct an addition onto a church. The present building is non-conforming. The petitioner proposes to expand the non-conformity to nearly double the current level. Staff recommends **denial** of the requested variances.

**Speaking on the petition:** Anthony Wallace, agent presented the proposed plans to the Board. He stated that the church is growing and he would like to be able to accommodate the growth in membership.

**Gerald Frazier**, Pastor stated that they had attempted to purchase the adjacent lot from St. Mary's church but they are unwilling to sell at this time. He informed the board that the church is presently leasing property with the intent to purchase in the next few months. He explained the needed updates for the church. He added that though he was seeking a variance it would be in keeping with the neighboring properties. He asked that the petition be approved as submitted.

**Board Action:**

Approval of the petitioner's request. - PASS

**Vote Results**

Motion: Eli Karatassos

Second: Sidney J Johnson

Sidney J Johnson - Aye

Eli Karatassos - Aye

Timothy Mackey - Aye

Brian Reese - Not Present

10. [60 Jasper Street | Use Approval & Variances | 1494](#)

Attachment: [Images 1494.pdf](#)

Attachment: [Staff Report 1494.pdf](#)

Present for the petition was: Jimmy Gulle, Agent

Jack Butler gave the following summary;

The petitioner, Jimmy Gulle as agent for Senior Citizens, Inc., is requesting approval of a use, #61(a) Small Electric Motor Repair. The petitioner seeks variances from the condition that the use shall abut a collector or greater roadway, and that the use shall not be located in a property that abuts a residential property. The proposed use, a small electric motor repair business, has been in operation for a number of months without creating a nuisance. The variances requested will allow the licensing of the business and its continued operation in this location. Staff recommends **approval** of the variance from the standard that such use must be located on a collector street or greater, and **approval** of the variance from the standard that such use may not be located on a property abutting a residential property, with the **condition** that no materials associated with the business be stored outside the structure.

**Speaking on the petition:** Valarian Sottile neighboring property owner voiced concerns regarding the noise levels.



Chairman Mackey assured him that he would have more noise from the neighboring Social Club.

**Board Action:**

The proposed use, a small electric motor repair business, has been in operation for a number of months without creating a nuisance. The variances requested will allow the licensing of the business and its continued operation in this location. Staff recommends **approval** of the variance from the standard that such use must be located on a - PASS collector street or greater, and **approval** of the variance from the standard that such use may not be located on a property abutting a residential property, with the **condition** that no materials associated with the business be stored outside the structure.

**Vote Results**

Motion: Eli Karatassos

Second: Sidney J Johnson

Sidney J Johnson

- Aye

Eli Karatassos

- Aye

Timothy Mackey

- Aye

Brian Reese

- Not Present

11. [704 Wheaton Street | Use Approval \(Caretaker's Quarters | 1477](#)

Attachment: [Staff Report 1477.pdf](#)

Attachment: [Images 1477.pdf](#)

Attachment: [Citizen Comment 1477.pdf](#)

Present for the petition was: Bill Saxman, Agent

Jack Butler gave the following summary;

The petitioner, Bill Saxman, agent for Savannah Baptist Center, is requesting approval of a use, #10a (Caretaker's Quarters) which may be approved by the Zoning Board of Appeals. Staff recommends **approval** of the requested use, "Caretaker Quarters," with the **condition** that the use be limited to a single caretaker/resident.

**Board Action:**

Staff recommends **approval** of the requested use, "Caretaker Quarters," with the **condition** that the - PASS use be limited to a single caretaker/resident.

**Vote Results**

Motion: Eli Karatassos

Second: Sidney J Johnson

Sidney J Johnson - Aye

Eli Karatassos - Aye

Timothy Mackey - Aye

Brian Reese - Not Present

**VIII. Other Business**

**IX. Adjournment**

12. [Adjournment of the April 24, 2014 SZBA Meeting](#)

There being no other business to come before the board, Chairman Mackey declared the April 24, 2014 SZBA meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Jack Butler, Secretary

/cm

**NOTE:** Minutes are not official until signed.

*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.*

