

Minutes
Regular Meeting of the Florence County Board of Zoning Appeals
Tuesday, July 15, 2025
Florence County Complex, Room 803
180 N. Irby St., Florence, South Carolina 29501

Florence County Planning Department staff posted the agenda for the meeting at the following locations:

- The County's Website
- Information Board / Main Entrance of the County Complex (180 N Irby St, Florence)
- Information Board / Main Lobby of the County Planning & Building Dept (518 S Irby St, Florence)
- Elevator Landings / 1st Floor and 8th Floor of the County Complex
- The agenda was also mailed to the media.

I. Call to Order

Chairman Brian Casey called the meeting to order at 6:30PM.

II. Attendance:

Board Members Present: Chairman Brian Casey
Vice-Chairman Brenda Deas
Craig Floyd
Wesley Martin
Kenneth Muldrow

Board Members Absent: Jessica Wright
Louie Hopkins

Staff Present: Mr. J. Shawn Brashear, Planning Director
Ms. Lisa Becoat, Administrative Assistance
Ms. Holly Smith, Secretary
Ms. Caroline Dunlap, Planner III
Patrick Ward, IT Dept Staff

Staff Absent: Mr. Ethan Brown, Deputy Director
Mr. Malloy McEachin, County Attorney

Public Attendance: See sign-in sheet on file at the Florence County Planning Department.

III. Review and motion of the minutes:

- Minutes of the BZA Meeting of March 18th, 2025

Motion to approve the minutes as presented was made by Vice-Chairman Brenda Deas/
Mr. Kenneth Muldrow **Seconded** the Motion. All were in favor.
The minutes of the March 18th, 2025 BZA Meeting were unanimously approved 5 to 0.

IV. Public Hearing:

BZA#2025-06

A variance requested by Brandon Catoe and Whitnie Avant from requirements of the Florence County Code of Ordinances, Chapter 30 – ZONING ORDINANCE, ARTICLE VII. – GENERAL AND ANCILLARY REGULATIONS, Sec. 30-249. – Nonconformities. for property located at 602 Linwood Street, Timmons ville, SC 29161, as shown on Florence County Tax Map No. 00017, Block 04, Parcel 047.

Chairman Brian Casey invited Mr. Shawn Brashear to the podium to present the staff report for this item to the Board. A copy of the report and presentation are available at the Florence County Planning Department and on the Florence County website at: <http://florenceco.org/planning/bza/archives.php/>.

Mr. Brashear stated to the Board that the requested variance was for property located at 602 Linwood St and was within the municipal limits of Timmons ville. He noted the variance request was for the property bearing the tax map number 00017-04-047. The owner of record being Mr. Robert Avant, Jr. which Mr. Brashear explained to the Board that Mr. Avant had authorized this variance request and his signature was on file within the Planning Department's records. Mr. Brashear stated the applicants of the request were a Mr. Brandon Catoe and Whitnie Avant and the total approximate acreage of the property was 1.71 acres.

Mr. Brashear went on to explain that the variance requested by the applicants was for the expansion of a legally nonconforming structure. He explained the legally nonconforming single-wide manufactured home currently set up on the property had been used as a residence well before the R-1 zoning was applied to the area. He described the applicants' desire to upgrade the existing nonconforming structure, a single-wide manufactured home to another nonconforming structure, a double-wide manufactured home. He stated this would be considered an expansion of a nonconforming structure and explained that §30-249 of the Code of Ordinances, as written, only allows for a 10% expansion of a nonconforming structure and the expansion requested by the applicants was well over the 10% maximum. Mr. Brashear stated that because the proposed expansion was over 10%, this item could not be approved by staff and needed to come before the Board.

Mr. Brashear further explained that the applicants had procured a letter of approval for the proposed expansion from the Mayor and City Council of Timmons ville as well as from all of the surrounding property owners. Mr. Brashear also directed the board to specific pages in their meeting packets showing the applicant submitted details and specifications as well a picture, site-plan, and a layout of the proposed double-wide manufactured home they intended to purchase and place on the property.

Mr. Brashear then went over the maps prepared by staff located within the staff report showing the general location of the property, the current zoning of the property and surrounding properties (all designated as R-1, Single Family, Large Lots), and finally a 2024 aerial image of the property and the surrounding properties. He also provided site photos taken by staff of the current legally nonconforming single-wide manufactured home setup on the property as well as views of adjacent properties from the subject property. Images of the posted BZA Meeting notice on the property as required by the Code of Ordinances were also presented. Lastly, Mr. Brashear read aloud the applicant's submitted questions on the Variance Application [Form 3] supplied by the Planning Department.

Mr. Brashear concluded the staff presentation by stating the requested variance would allow the applicants to expand a nonconforming structure over the allowed 10% as specified in §30-249 of the Florence County Code of Ordinances which would allow applicants to obtain a certificate of zoning compliance for the expanded nonconforming structure. He pointed out that beyond the greater than 10% expansion, the proposed structure would comply with all of the other bulk requirements of the R-1 zoning district designation as set forth in the

Code of Ordinances.

Mr. Brashear presented all information/photos compiled by staff and provided by the applicant. He also noted that public notice of the variance request was posted on the property, letters were mailed to adjacent property owners and notice of the meeting and copies of the agenda were posted in public places per the requirements set forth in the Florence County Code of Ordinances.

At the conclusion of the Staff presentation, there were no questions and no further discussion from the board.

Chairman Brian Casey proceeded to inquire if there was anyone from the public in attendance who desired to speak in favor of the requested variance request.

Mr. Glen Adkins, a salesman at Oakwood Homes, was present and approached the board to speak in favor of the requested variance request. Mr. Adkins explained that his clients were the applicants of the variance request and had approached him a few months prior with intentions of purchasing a new home. He explained that during the initial due diligence phase conducted by Oakwood Homes they discovered the R-1 zoning designation on the property and contacted the Florence County Planning Department upon making that discovery which resulted in the current variance request. He stated the proposed structure is an energy-efficient, multi-section manufactured home and would have brick underpinning. He also explained that his clients were looking to finance their purchase with a 30-year mortgage, which would most likely result in de-titling the new manufactured home which would make it true real estate and permanently tied to the property.

As Mr. Adkins concluded his presentation to the Board and returned to his seat, Mr. Brashear approached the Board stating that he had forgotten to include in his presentation that Planning Staff also keeps a log of public comments made prior to each meeting, he explained that there were no comments or calls made by the public/received by Planning Staff in reference to the variance request. (A copy of comments and inquiries *if received* are maintained at the Florence County Planning and Building Department for inspection during regular business hours.)

Chairman Brian Casey proceeded to inquire if there was anyone else, in attendance, who would like to speak in favor of the variance request. At this time, Mr. Brandon Catoe, one of the applicants, approached the Board to speak in favor of the requested variance.

Mr. Catoe explained to the Board that he and his wife had a baby due in January and were looking to expand and upgrade their existing home. Mr. Catoe provided a few details on the proposed structure and thanked the Board for their consideration.

There were no other members of the public in attendance who spoke in favor of the requested variance request. Chairman Brian Casey inquired if there was anyone in attendance who desired to speak in opposition to the variance request. There were no members of the public in attendance who stood to speak in opposition to the requested variance request.

Chairman Brian Casey, along with the other Board Members in attendance then moved to discussion. There was discussion from the board regarding the clear-cut nature of the request stating that the proposed expansion presented itself as a big improvement over the current structure on the property and noted the approval from the Mayor and City Council as well as all of the surrounding neighbors regarding the expansion showed they were clearly in favor of it. Further discussion by the Board concurred that everyone who would potentially be impacted by the expansion was all in agreement and noted the expansion wouldn't pose any detriment to the neighborhood. At this time, there were no other questions posed; or discussions held by any of the Board Members or Staff in attendance.

Motion – Mr. Wesley Martin made a motion that BZA #2025-06 be approved as presented, granting the expansion of a legally nonconforming structure (greater than 10%) thus allowing applicants to obtain a certificate of zoning compliance for the >10% expansion. / Mr. Kenneth Muldrow seconded the motion to approve. All were in favor. The motion carried with a vote of 5 to 0 to approve BZA #2025-06.

Chairman Brian Casey closed the Public Hearing.

V. Other Business

There was no other business brought before the Board by Staff or any member of the Board in attendance.

VI. Adjournment

There being no other business, questions, or discussion, Chairman Brian Casey adjourned the meeting at 6:43PM.

Holly Smith, *BZA Secretary*

Approved by:

Shawn Brashear, *Director of Planning & Building*

**These minutes reflect only actions taken and do not represent a true verbatim transcript of the meeting.*