

Minutes*
Regular Meeting of the Florence County Board of Zoning Appeals
Tuesday, June 16, 2026 at 6:00 p.m.
County Complex, Council Chambers, Room 803
180 North Irby Street, Florence, South Carolina 29501

The Florence County Planning Department staff posted the agenda for the meeting on the information boards at the main entrance and lobby of the County Complex and on the information board in the lobby of the Planning and Building Inspection Department building.

The agenda was also mailed to the media.

I. Call to Order

Chairman, Brian Casey called the meeting to order at 6:08 p.m.

II. Attendance:

Board Members Present: Chairman Brian Casey
Vice-Chairman Brenda Deas
Louie Hopkins
Jessica Wright
Wesley Martin
Kenneth Muldrow

Board Members Absent: Craig Floyd

Staff Present: J. Shawn Brashear, Planning Director
Holly Smith, Senior Planner
Patrick Ward, IT Dept, A/V Support
Lisa M. Becoat, Executive Assistant/Secretary
Caroline Dunlap, Planner III

Staff Absent: Malloy McEachin, Esq, County Attorney
Ethan Brown, Deputy Planning Director

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

III. Review and motion of the minutes:

• **Meeting of March 17, 2026**

Motion to approve the minutes as presented – Vice-Chairman Brenda Deas / **Second** – Board Member Louie Hopkins / Minutes of March 17, 2026, meeting were unanimously approved 6 to 0.

IV. Public Hearings:

BZA#2026-04 A variance requested by Robert Leroy Moore from requirements of the Florence County Code of Ordinances, Chapter 30 – ZONING ORDINANCE, ARTICLE III. – CONDITIONAL USE REGULATIONS, Sec. 30-117. – Mining and Extraction Operations. For the property located at 2290 Little Fishery Road, Scranton, SC 29591, as shown on Florence County Tax Map No. 00260, Block 03, Parcel 023.

Mr. Brashear introduced the request, summarized the application and requested variance, and presented the staff report to the Board. A complete copy of the staff report and presentation is available for public review at the Florence County Planning Department and online at www.florencecountysc.gov/planning/bza/archives.php.

Property information presented by Mr. Brashear included the subject property's location east of the Town of Scranton and south of the Lynches River. The property is located within County Council District 2, consists of approximately 64 acres, is owned by Robert Leroy Moore, and is identified by Florence County Tax Map Number 00260-03-023.

Mr. Brashear stated that each Board member had been provided an additional map depicting the subject property's location in relation to the FEMA Floodplain. He noted that the map indicated the subject property is located entirely within an "AE" Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA). Mr. Brashear further explained that the "AE" designation identifies areas subject to inundation by the one-percent annual chance flood event for which Base Flood Elevations (BFEs) have been established.

Mr. Brashear next directed the Board's attention to the highlighted mining ordinance provisions included in their meeting packets. Upon presenting the proposed site plan, he explained that the proposed excavation would be regulated by Section 30-117(3), which governs mines five acres or less in size. He stated that the applicant was requesting relief from subsections (a), (b), and (c).

Mr. Brashear stated that the primary request for relief was from subsection (b), which requires a minimum separation distance of 1,000 feet from the nearest residential use. Based upon the submitted site plan, he noted that the proposed mine would be located approximately 283 feet from the residence of Rhonda Gail Gause. He further explained that staff had been informed that the occupant of the residence was a member of the applicant's family and that no objection to the proposed excavation had been expressed.

Mr. Brashear stated that the request for relief from subsection (a) was also associated with this residence, as the proposed excavation would be located less than 150 feet from the same adjoining property. Staff had been informed that the owner and occupant of the adjoining residence was a member of the applicant's family and supported the proposed excavation.

Mr. Brashear stated that the final request for relief was from subsection (c), which addresses required bufferyards. He explained that, in staff's opinion, the natural buffer provided by the Lynches River floodplain to the north of the proposed mine was sufficient to serve in place of the required bufferyard.

Mr. Brashear also noted that the applicant intended for the proposed pit to serve as a water source for agricultural purposes only. He emphasized that the applicant did not intend to conduct commercial mining activities on the property, but rather proposed the excavation for his own agricultural use and benefit.

At this time, Mr. Brashear read aloud to the Board the applicant's responses, verbatim, as provided on Form 3 of the variance application.

To conclude his presentation, Mr. Brashear stated that Planning staff had received no correspondence/comments from the public regarding the request. He further stated that the property had been posted prior to the meeting and that adjacent property owners had been notified in accordance with the requirements of the Florence County Zoning Ordinance.

At the conclusion of staff's presentation, Chairman Casey inquired whether the existing water feature on the property was the result of previous mining activity. Mr. Brashear confirmed that the existing stormwater pond was the result of previous mining activity on the property.

No additional questions were posed by members of the Board.

The applicant, Mr. Robert Leroy Moore, spoke in favor of the request. Mr. Moore stated that his intent was to farm his land and remain active during his retirement years. He noted that the primary objective of the proposed excavation was to raise the elevation of internal roadways to improve access throughout the property, allowing him to travel around the property and support agricultural activities on his farm.

No additional speakers came forward to speak in favor of the request. No one spoke in opposition, and the public hearing was closed.

Board discussion followed. Members noted that the area is agricultural in nature, that excavation activities had previously occurred on the property, that adjacent properties were owned by family members, and that the intended use was primarily for personal and agricultural purposes rather than commercial mining operations.

Motion: A motion to approve BZA Item #2026-04 as submitted was made by Board Member Louie Hopkins, with a second by Vice-Chairperson Brenda Deas. Upon review of the applicable standards, the motion carried unanimously by a vote of 6-0.

BZA#2026-05

A variance requested by Mamie C. McKenzie and Dexter McKenzie from requirements of the Florence County Code of Ordinances, Chapter 30 – ZONING ORDINANCE, ARTICLE II. – ZONING DISTRICT REGULATIONS, DIVISION 1. –

GENERALLY, Sec. 30-30. – Table III: Zoning setbacks. And Chapter 30 – ZONING ORDINANCE, ARTICLE VII. – GENERAL AND ANCILLARY REGULATIONS, Sec. 30-249. – Nonconformities (b) (2). For the property located at 206 E. Main Street, Olanta, SC 29114, as shown on Florence County Tax Map No. 04520, Block 03, Parcel 011.

Mr. Brashear introduced the request, summarized the application and requested variance, and presented the staff report to the Board. A complete copy of the staff report and presentation is available for public review at the Florence County Planning Department and online at www.florencecountysc.gov/planning/bza/archives.php.

Property information presented by Mr. Brashear included the subject property's location in downtown Olanta, on the corner of East Main Street and Welsh Street, more specifically addressed at 206 East Main Street. The property is located within County Council District 1, consists of approximately 0.19 acres, is owned by Mamie C. McKenzie and Dexter McKenzie, and is identified by Florence County Tax Map Number 04520-03-011.

Mr. Brashear stated that the subject property and surrounding properties are zoned B-3, General Commercial. He explained that the applicant had submitted plans to expand the dining room and storage area of an existing restaurant. He noted that the existing structure is nonconforming with respect to current setback requirements and that Sec. 30-249 of the Florence County Zoning Ordinance permits the expansion of a nonconforming structure by no more than ten percent (10%). Mr. Brashear further stated that the existing building is situated on the property line and, therefore, the applicant was requesting relief to allow the proposed addition to encroach into the required setbacks of the B-3 General Commercial District.

Mr. Brashear, while presenting the aerial map, called attention to the observable historic development pattern along Main Street, noting that many of the buildings share common walls and were constructed without setbacks or off-street parking. Mr. Brashear stated that, in staff's opinion, portions of downtown Olanta may be more appropriately zoned B-4, Central Business District. However, any rezoning effort would not address the applicant's immediate request. He explained that the small size and configuration of the subject property limits the ability to reasonably expand the existing structure and that a ten percent (10%) expansion would only permit approximately seventy-two (72) square feet of additional floor area.

Mr. Brashear explained that the applicant proposed to orient the dining room addition toward Welsh Street, which would effectively establish a new front entrance/yard. Under this configuration, the required twenty-foot rear setback within the B-3 District, he explained, could not be met. He noted that dimensional information, elevation drawings, and the proposed site plan were included within the Board's meeting packet. Mr. Brashear also informed the Board that the Mayor of Olanta had reviewed the proposal and expressed support for the expansion and continued investment in downtown businesses.

To conclude the presentation, Mr. Brashear stated that Planning staff had received several inquiries regarding the request from adjacent property owners. He read aloud each record of conversation

and indicated that the inquiries were informational in nature. He further stated that the property had been posted prior to the meeting and surrounding property owners had been notified in accordance with the requirements of the Florence County Zoning Ordinance.

At this time, Mr. Brashear read aloud to the Board the applicant's responses, verbatim, as provided on Form 3 of the variance application.

At the conclusion of staff's presentation, no questions were posed by members of the Board.

The applicant, Ms. Mamie McKenzie, spoke in favor of the request. Ms. McKenzie stated that she was requesting approval to construct an addition to expand the dining area and storage space of the restaurant. She explained that she believed the expansion was needed and would help bring additional activity and investment to downtown Olanta.

There were no questions posed to the applicant by members of the Board.

Ms. Betty McKenzie spoke in favor of the request. Ms. McKenzie stated that she had lived in Olanta her entire life and believed the downtown area had experienced a decline in activity. She noted that her daughter Mamie, the applicant, owns several lots in downtown Olanta and utilizes space on those properties for parking during festivals and community events, and believes that portions of downtown Olanta are not appropriately zoned and should be updated to better reflect the historical development pattern and encourage reinvestment.

No additional speakers came forward to speak in favor of the request. No one spoke in opposition, and the public hearing was closed.

Board discussion followed. Members noted the historic development pattern of downtown Olanta, the unique configuration of the subject property, and the limited opportunity for reasonable expansion under the existing nonconformity provisions. Members further found that granting the request would not alter the essential character of the area or cause substantial detriment to surrounding properties.

Motion: A motion to approve BZA Item #2026-05 as submitted was made by Vice-Chairperson Brenda Deas, with a second by Board Member Kenneth Muldrow. Upon review of the applicable standards, the motion carried unanimously by a vote of 6-0.

VI. Adjournment

There was no further discussion, questions, or business to be addressed by the Board. With that, Chairman Brian Casey asked for a motion to adjourn from the Board members. Board Member Louie Hopkins moved to adjourn the meeting and all were in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 6:37 p.m.

Holly Smith, BZA Secretary

Approved by:

Ethan Brown, Deputy Director of Planning & Building

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