



City of Virginia Beach

Board of Zoning Appeals

2024/25 Annual Report to City Council

Chair:	Kevin Newton
Dates:	Distributed to Board -July 2, 2025 (original) -July 15, 2025 (revised) Board Vote -August 6, 2025 (adopted as amended)
Amendment to text:	Request initiating resolution from City Council relating to structure height determination (see page 5 for details)

Executive Summary

The Virginia Beach Board of Zoning Appeals, and staff liaisons, assembled this *FY2024/25 Annual Report* for City Council. The report periods are July 1, 2024, through June 30, 2025, during which, the Board of Zoning Appeals held twelve (12) public hearings.

The Board's most significant accomplishments are noted below.

Application Types

The Board of Zoning Appeals hears and decides appeals from any order, requirement, decision, or determination made by an administrative officer in the administration or enforcement of the Zoning Ordinance. Common examples include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Variances to reduce setback requirements; and,
- Variances to increase allowable building heights; and,
- Variances to increase allowable lot coverage and/or impervious cover; and,
- Appeals of violation notices; and,
- Appeals of Zoning Administrator determinations.

Mission Statement

The mission of the Planning Department is to ensure the economic, social, and physical quality of the community. We accomplish this by:

- *Ensuring that the department is and stays aligned with Council's destination points;*
- *Providing effective planning assistance and support to the City Council, City Manager and various Boards and Commissions;*
- *Formulating with our citizens, and through teamwork with other agencies, a comprehensive plan for the orderly development and regeneration of the City;*
- *Preserving our outstanding environmental resources; and*
- *Providing quality customer service in the plan review, inspection, code enforcement and administration process.*

Accomplishment of Goals and Objectives

Over the past fiscal year, the Board of Zoning Appeals, through its appointed volunteers and liaisons, worked on the following key matters in furtherance of its mission:

1. Board of Zoning Appeals applications considered:

a. The Board considered 72 variance applications

Granted:	67
Denied:	3
Deferred:	15
Withdrawn:	2

b. The Board considered 7 appeal applications

Upheld:	6
Not Upheld:	0
Withdrawn:	1

2. Zoning Administrator modifications considered:

Submitted:	1
Granted:	1

3. Improvements and Training:

a. New BZA Coordinator:

On November 1, 2024, a new BZA Coordinator, Ms. Wilissa Blair-Miller, was hired. She replaced long-time BZA Coordinator Mr. Chris Langaster, who retired.

b. Staff report revision:

The staff report template was revised to address certain information deficiencies pointed out by the 2024 Board Chairman. In addition, the report was formatted to a new look that celebrated recent Virginia Beach branding standards. The

report now contains a more logical arrangement of information, albeit staff is still making small modifications to this based on Board and stakeholder feedback.

- c. Lending library:
A lending library was established, which includes applicable education materials now available for each Board member to borrow and study.
- d. Questionnaire:
Support staff sent a questionnaire to all Board members to get a sense of applicable zoning education needs. The results show a strong desire for applicable continuing education (see goals section of the report for actions taken based on questionnaire).
- e. Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) Land Use Education Program:
One Board member attended the VCU Land Use Education Program (Board of Zoning Appeals option). Support staff sincerely applaud this member, as they attended even after learning that City funds were unavailable to pay tuition costs at the time. This is by no means a singular demonstration of Board member dedication, as each volunteer displays high levels of commitment to their mission at all times.

Membership, Attendance, and Volunteer Hours

BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS MEMBER ROSTER:

1. Kevin Newton (Chairman) - Term expires on 12/31/2027.
2. Robert Thornton (Vice Chairman) - Term expires on 12/31/2028.
3. Myles Pocta (Secretary) - Term expires on 12/31/2029.
4. Janice Anderson - Term expires on 12/31/2029.
5. Harry Purkey, Jr. - Term expires on 12/31/2026.
6. Janice Hall - Term expires on 12/31/2029 (previous alternate, appointed as regular member).
7. George Wall, Jr. – Term expires on 12/31/2029.
8. Eric Cavallo (alternate) – Term expires on 12/31/2029.
9. David Whitley (Ex-Chairman) – Term expired on 12/31/2024.
10. James L. Wood – Term expired on 12/31/2024.
11. Elizabeth Kovner (alternate) – Term expired on 12/31/2024.

**City of Virginia Beach
Board of Zoning Appeals
2024 Attendance Record**

Members Attendance

Name	Term Expires on:	July 17th	Aug 7th	Sep 4th	Oct 2nd	Nov 6th	Dec 4th	Total Present
Anderson, Janice	12/31/2029	P	P	P	P	P	P	6/6
Hall, Janice (alternate)	12/31/2029	N/A	N/A	P	N/A	N/A	P	2/6
Kovner, Elizabeth (alternate)	12/31/2024	P	P	P	N/A	P	N/A	4/6
Newton, Kevin	12/31/2027	P	P	P	P	E	P	5/6
Pocta, Myles	12/31/2029	P	P	P	P	P	P	6/6
Purkey Jr., Harry	12/31/2026	E	P	P	P	P	P	5/6
Thornton, Robert	12/31/2028	P	E	P	P	P	P	5/6
Whitley, David	12/31/2024	P	P	P	P	P	P	6/6
Wood, James L.	12/31/2024	P	E	P	P	E	P	4/6
Total Present		6/7	5/7	7/7	7/7	5/7	7/7	

City Council Liaisons/Department Staff Liaisons

Lynn Roenker, Staff Liaison		P	P	P	P	P	P	6/6
-----------------------------	--	---	---	---	---	---	---	-----

Key: Present (P) Present/Virtually (P/V) Absent (A) Resigned (R) Excused Absence (E) Canceled (C)

**City of Virginia Beach
Board of Zoning Appeals
2025 Attendance Record**

Members Attendance


Name	Term Expires on:	Jan 15th	Feb 5th	Mar 5th	Apr 2nd	May 7th	Jun 4th	Total Present
Anderson, Janice	12/31/2029	E	P	P	P	P	E	4/6
Cavallo, Eric (alternate)	12/31/2029	P	P	N/A	P	N/A	P	4/6
Hall, Janice	12/31/2029	P	P	P	P	P	A	5/6
Newton, Kevin	12/31/2027	P	P	P	P	P	P	6/6
Pocta, Myles	12/31/2029	P	P	P	P	P	A	5/6
Purkey Jr., Harry	12/31/2026	P	E	P	P	P	P	5/6
Thornton, Robert	12/31/2028	P	P	P	P	P	P	6/6
Wall Jr., George	12/31/2029	P	P	P	P	P	E	5/6
Total Present		6/7	6/7	7/7	7/7	7/7	4/7	

City Council Liaisons/Department Staff Liaisons

Lynn Roenker, Staff Liaison		P	P	P	P	P	P	6/6
-----------------------------	--	---	---	---	---	---	---	-----

Key: Present (P) Present/Virtually (P/V) Absent (A) Resigned (R) Excused Absence (E) Canceled (C)

**City of Virginia Beach
Board of Zoning Appeals
FY2024 – 2025 Volunteer Hours Report**

<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;"> <div style="display: flex; align-items: center;">  </div> <div style="text-align: right;"> All Service By Volunteer City of Virginia Beach, Office of Volunteer Resources Planning and Community Development </div> </div>		
Volunteer	FY 24-25 Hours	Total Hours
Anderson, Janice	40:15	40:15
Cavallo, Eric	16:30	16:30
Hall, Janice	30:15	30:15
Kovner, Elizabeth	15:30	15:30
Newton, Kevin	48:15	48:15
Pocta, Myles	37:45	37:45
Purkey, Harry	22:15	22:15
Thornton, Charles (Bob)	39:45	39:45
Wall, George	17:45	17:45
Whitley, David	27:00	27:00
Wood, James L.	14:00	14:00
Grand Total	309:15	309:15

Cases Appealed to Circuit Court

One case was appealed to Circuit Court; however, this appeal has not yet been heard.

Initiating Resolution Request:

The Board respectfully requests that City Council approve an initiating resolution pertaining to height determination regulations. Presently, there is a gap in the City Zoning Ordinance pertaining to such measurements; wherein, the Ordinance only details height measurement instructions in one very limited circumstance. While there is a long-standing Zoning Administration policy used to fill this gap, the Board feels stakeholders would be better served if an amendment to the City Zoning Ordinance was adopted addressing the matter. If City Council chooses to adopt such an initiating resolution, the Board respectfully requests the document provides staff with instructions to analyze any relevant neighboring ordinances, codes, policies, and laws to determine if continuity between localities is warranted.

Goals and Objectives for the Coming Year

- Quarterly continuing education modules for all Board members called *Knowledge Bursts* (short bit sized lessons presented after the information sessions).
- Quarterly continuing information modules for all Board members called *Evening Explorations* (one-hour lessons held virtually after hours).
- Continue to examine areas of the City Zoning Ordinance that may be suitable for revision. Then, provide text amendment recommendations to City Council.

Closing

Should you have any questions or require a formal City Council briefing on the work of this team, please feel free to reach out to Kevin Newton, Board of Zoning Appeals Chair, at knewton214@aol.com or Wilissa Blair, Staff Liaison at wblairmiller@vbgov.com.