

**TOWN OF JAMES ISLAND
BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS
Town Hall
1122 Dills Bluff Road, James Island, SC 29412
BZA AGENDA
April 21, 2026
5:00 PM**

NOTICE OF THIS MEETING WAS POSTED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT

(MEETING WILL BE STREAMED ON THE TOWN WEBSITE jamesislandsc.us)

Members of the public addressing the Board in support or opposition of these cases at Town Hall must sign in. The Town invites the public to submit comments on these cases prior to the meeting via email to kcrane@jamesislandsc.us referencing the Case #. Emailed comments not sent to this email address, and comments that do not include a home address for the record, will not be accepted. Emailed comments must be received by noon on April 20th.

- I. CALL TO ORDER
- II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
- III. COMPLIANCE WITH THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT
- IV. INTRODUCTIONS
- V. REVIEW SUMMARY (MINUTES) FROM THE DECEMBER 16th, 2025 BZA MEETING
- VI. BRIEF THE PUBLIC ON THE PROCEDURES OF THE BZA
- VII. ADMINISTER THE OATH TO THOSE PRESENTING TESTIMONY
- VIII. REVIEW OF THE FOLLOWING APPLICATIONS:
 1. **CASE #BZAV-3-26-046** Variance request for the reduction of the required 10' interior side setback for an addition to an existing single-family home in the Low-Density Suburban Residential District (RSL) at 934 Ravenswood Dr. (TMS #428-11-00-028)
 2. **CASE #BZAV-3-26-047** Variance request for the reduction of the required 25' front/streetside setback on a corner lot for an addition to an existing single-family home in the Low-Density Suburban Residential District (RSL) at 1216 Midvale Ave. (TMS #426-09-00-124)
- IX. ADDITIONAL BUSINESS:
 1. Next Meeting Date: May 19th, 2026
- X. ADJOURN

*Full packet available for public review on website, and Monday through Friday during normal business hours.

TOWN OF JAMES ISLAND
BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS
SUMMARY OF DECEMBER 16, 2025

The Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA) held its regularly scheduled meeting on Tuesday, December 16, 2025, at 5:02 p.m. at the James Island Town Hall, 1122 Dills Bluff Road, James Island, SC.

Comm'r present: Schuyler Blair, Joshua Hayes, Massey Yannitell, and Chair David Savage, who presided. Absent: Vice Chair Roy Smith (gave notice). Also: Planning Director, Kristen Crane (via conference call), Mike Hemmer, Finance Director, Brook Lyon, Mayor, Brian Quisenberry, Town Attorney, and Frances Simmons, Town Clerk and Secretary to the BZA.

**Chair Savage asked the audience to please silence their phones.*

Call to Order: Chair Savage called the meeting to order. Comm'r Hayes led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Compliance with the Freedom of Information Act: Chair Savage announced that this meeting was being held in compliance with the SC Freedom of Information Act. Fifteen (15) days prior to this hearing, a public notice was posted in the Post and Courier, a sign was posted on the designated property, and a notice was mailed to the applicant or representative of the property, the property owner, and property owners within 300 feet of the application, and to parties of interest. Persons, organizations, and the news media that have requested declaration of our meetings were also notified. The Freedom of Information Act does not require notification to anyone other than the applicant and parties of interest.

Introductions: Chair Savage introduced himself as Chair, members of the BZA, staff, Mayor, and the Town Attorney. He noted that Vice Chair Roy Smith has recused himself.

Review Summary (Minutes) from the November 18, 2025, BZA Meeting: Motion to approve was made by Comm'r Hayes, seconded by Comm'r Blair. Passed unanimously.

Brief the Public on the Procedures of the Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA): Chair Savage explained that the BZA is a quasi-judicial Board that is empowered to approve, approve with conditions, or to deny requests. The BZA is authorized to defer a case should there be a need to obtain additional information.

Administer the Oath to those Presenting Testimony: Town/BZA Attorney, Brian Quisenberry swore in persons wishing to provide testimony.

Chair Savage introduced Case #BZAV-10-25-045: Variance request for the removal of two grand trees (25.5" DBH Laurel Oak and 27" DBH Laurel Oak) for the proposed construction of a free-standing Emergency Department (Roper St. Francis Healthcare) in the Community Commercial (CC) Zoning District and the Commercial Core of the Folly Road Corridor Overlay (FRC-O) Zoning District at 832 Folly Road, Town of James Island (TMS# 425-08-00-012). This request must meet all the criteria of the Ordinance.

Review of Case# BZAV-10-25-045: Finance Director, Mike Hemmer, provided the Staff Review for Planning Director, Kristen Crane who participated via conference call and answered questions from the Board.

Staff Review:

The applicant, Roper St. Francis Healthcare, represented by Seamon Whiteside, is requesting a Variance for the removal of two grand trees (25.5" DBH Laurel Oak and 27"DBH pecan) at 832 Folly Road (TMS #425-08-00-012). The property is located in the Community Commercial (CC) Zoning District and is in the Commercial Core Area of the Folly Road Corridor Overlay (FRC-O) Zoning District. Adjacent properties to the north, east, and other properties along Folly Road are also located in the CC Zoning District. Property on Highland Avenue is located in the Neighborhood Commercial (CN) Zoning District and the Low-Density Suburban Residential (RSL) Zoning District. Property to the south and west are under the jurisdiction of the City of Charleston in their General Business (GB) Zoning District.

Town of James Island Zoning and Land Development Regulations, §153.334 (E) (2) states that grand trees that do not meet the criteria for tree permits may be removed only where approved by the Board of Zoning Appeals and shall be replaced according to a schedule determined by the Zoning Administrator.

The property is 1.84 acres in size with the subject Laurel Oak trees being situated on the northwest side of the lot. The site is the former location of Wild Blue Ropes Adventure Park, with the modular office building, associated rope climbing structures, and 10 paved parking spots at the rear of the site remaining. The property also seasonally accommodates New River Nursery Christmas Trees and food trucks. The two subject Laurel Oak trees are located on the northwest side of the lot within the footprint of the proposed free-standing Emergency Department building, as depicted on the submitted site plan. The applicant's letter of intent states, "*while we will preserve as many grand trees as possible and remove only those that make the project feasible, approval of this variance is essential to ensure we can continue our legacy of trusted, mission-driven care close to where our neighbors live and work.*"

Findings of Fact:

According to §153.049 F, Zoning Variance Approval Criteria of the Town of James Island Zoning and Land Development Regulations Ordinance (ZLDR), The Board of Zoning Appeals has the authority to hear and decide appeals for a Zoning Variance when strict application of the provisions of this Ordinance would result in unnecessary hardship. A Zoning Variance may be granted in an individual case of unnecessary hardship if the Board of Appeals makes and explains in writing the following findings:

F. (a): *There are extraordinary and exceptional conditions pertaining to the particular piece of property;*
Response: **There may be extraordinary and exceptional conditions pertaining to this piece of property as the commercial site is 1.84 acres in size and contains 21 grand trees that are fairly evenly disseminated. In addition, the prior use, shape, and layout of the property is unusual as the applicant clarifies, "trees have been able to grow and mature into larger canopies throughout the existing development. They are also planted more internally to the site because of the smaller footprint of a ropes course."**

F (b): *These conditions do not generally apply to other property in the vicinity;*
Response: **These conditions do not generally apply to other properties in the vicinity. The location and number of grand trees on surrounding lots varies and commercial properties in the vicinity are developed with building footprints. The letter of intent explains, "while grand trees remain at the periphery of adjacent sites, space was cleared internally for development."**

F (c): *Because of these conditions, the application of this Ordinance to the particular piece of property would effectively prohibit or unreasonably restrict the utilization of the property;*
Response: **The application of this Ordinance, §153.334, *Required Tree Protection* to the subject property, may effectively prohibit or unreasonably restrict the utilization of the property as proposed because of the dispersed location of grand trees. The applicant's letter of intent states that "Given the existing canopy coverage, it would be challenging for most commercial development to fit on this site and include all necessary parking, stormwater requirements, and utilities."**

F (d): *The authorization of a variance will not be of substantial detriment to adjacent property or to the public good, and the character of the zoning district will not be harmed by the granting of the variance;*
Response: **The character of the zoning district should not be harmed and the authorization of the variance should not be of substantial detriment to adjacent properties or to the public good, if adequate tree replacement is provided, the remaining grand trees are sufficiently protected, and additional buffering is installed around the perimeter of the property as required. The letter of intent addresses this: "not only will this development provide a much-needed service to the James Island community, but 17 existing grand trees will remain on site-**

both on the periphery and in the interior of the site. This remaining tree coverage will very much match the character of the neighboring commercial properties that have retained significant canopy coverage on their edges”.

F (e): *The Board of Zoning Appeals shall not grant a variance the effect of which would be to allow the establishment of a use not otherwise permitted in a zoning district, to extend physically a non-conforming use of land or to change the zoning district boundaries shown on the Official Zoning Map;*

Response: **The variance does not allow a use that is not permitted in this zoning district, nor does it extend physically a nonconforming use of land or change the zoning district boundaries.**

F (f): *The need for the variance is not the result of the applicant’s own actions; and*

Response: **The large number and specific locations of grand trees are pre-existing site conditions, therefore the need for the variance may not be the result of the applicant’s own actions. The applicant states that “the site has been studied repeatedly to best understand how to fit the development requirements while minimally impacting the number of grand trees. The proposed layout accommodates the most amount of existing trees and all necessary site and safety functions of the use.”**

F (g): *Granting of the variance does not substantially conflict with the Comprehensive Plan or the purposes of this Ordinance.*

Response: **The Land Use Element of the Comprehensive Plan states a strategy is to “Implement sustainable and flexible development guidelines and integrate development with growth to maintain the suburban character of the Town”. If the removal of the requested grand trees is mitigated and the remaining grand trees are preserved, the granting of the variance may not conflict with Comprehensive Plan or the purposes of this Ordinance.**

In granting a Variance, the Board of Zoning Appeals may attach to it such conditions regarding the location, character, or other features of the proposed building or structure as the Board may consider advisable to protect established property values in the surrounding area or to promote the public health, safety, or general welfare (§153.045 E 2).

Action:

The Board of Zoning Appeals may approve, approve with conditions or deny Case # BZAV-10-25-045 (Variance request for the removal of two grand trees for the proposed construction of a free-standing Emergency Department at 832 Folly Rd.), based on the “Findings of Fact” listed above, unless additional information is deemed necessary to make an informed decision. In the event the Board decides to approve the application, the Board should consider the following conditions:

1. The applicant/owner shall install tree barricades around the grand and protected trees on the property, as described in §153.334 of the *Ordinance*, throughout the duration of construction.
2. Prior to obtaining a Zoning Permit for the proposed site improvements, the applicant/owner shall provide documentation that the grand trees on the subject parcel have been pruned and fertilized as recommended by a Certified Arborist, in order to mitigate any potential damage to the tree caused by construction.
3. The applicant/owner shall mitigate the removal of the grand trees by submitting a mitigation plan to the Zoning Administrator, as described in 153.334 (E) (2) of the Ordinance, that equals inch-per-inch replacement.

Questions from the Board:

After Mr. Hemmer presented the Staff’s Review, Chair Savage asked Ms. Crane if she had anything to add and she answered no.

Comm'r Yannitelli asked where proposed building is on the plan and is there a reason that it has to be in that location; specifically in terms of setbacks and utilities. Ms. Crane said the Overlay states that buildings in the Folly Road Overlay Corridor with parking must be at the side or rear of the building.

Comm'r Yannitelli asked if the square footage of the building would determine the number of parking spaces. Ms. Crane said yes that parking is determined by square footage. Mr. Hemmer added that it is also determined by the Use Ms. Crane said healthcare-related services is one (1) parking space per 200 square feet.

Comm'r Yannitelli said he did not see plans for stormwater and asked if stormwater retention is a part of the plan. Ms. Crane said from a Zoning standpoint the applicants have not applied for stormwater permits, perhaps from not knowing the outcome of their request. She has not seen any stormwater retention on the site, but the applicants could explain that more. Comm'r Yannitelli asked if stormwater retention became necessary for this approval, would the applicants have to come back to the BZA for other trees to be removed. Ms. Crane said the applicants could do an underwater retention or another creative way. If Grand Trees were needed to be taken down, the applicants would have to return to the BZA.

Chair Savage asked about parking in the rear or side (referred to the schematic), he thinks everyone agrees that Folly Road would be the front of the lot. Mr. Hemmer answered yes. Chair Savage said the side/rear would be where the lot comes to sharp point on the bottom right. Mr. Hemmer said the typical definition is the front is front and everything else is side or rear. The front is typically where the address of the building is shown.

Applicant Presentation:

Charles Fletcher, 2788 Latrobe Ct., Mt. Pl. representing Roper St. Francis Healthcare and Colleen Williams, 501 Wando Park Blvd., Suite 200, Mt. Pl. representing Seamon Whiteside

Mr. Fletcher introduced himself as the Vice President of Real Estate Construction at Roper St. Francis Healthcare. He expressed excitement in presenting this project to the Board. He said Ms. Williams would present the technical aspects of the project.

Mr. Fletcher stated that Roper St. Francis Hospital is moving off of the peninsula to North Charleston and because of that, they want to provide James Island residents with emergency services that they currently get at Roper. He said a good many of their patients comes from James Island and moving the downtown Roper Emergency Room further, a lot of services would not be convenient for the people on the island. The "why" of Mr. Fletcher's presentation is that Roper wants to provide emergency and imaging services on the island as a part of optimizing their footprint strategic plan.

Ms. Williams presentation focused on specifics of the site development and the tree planting applications proposed for the site. She stated that the site plan is driven by the Town's Zoning Ordinance and the emergency access requirements of the building. The parcel is located in the commercial core area within the Folly Road Corridor Overlay District. The Zoning Ordinance describes this as a higher intensity commercial use than others found in the corridor and this use is permitted by right. The building is under 11,000 square feet and is intentionally sited to Highland Avenue. It will require a pedestrian access and emergency access for ambulances (both of these accesses are shown in the site plan). The building is required by Ordinance to provide 54 parking spaces, and the plan has three (3) additional spaces for ADA (Americans with Disability Act) parking. The Town's Zoning Ordinance requires off-street parking in Office and Commercial and to provide parking either to the rear or side of the front façade of the building. She noted where the parking is shown on the site plan. She stated that this plan was studied numerous times and in many iterations and what is presented tonight meets the development standards of the Town's code, provides the necessary emergency access, and impacts the least amount of trees.

Ms. Williams stated that the current use of the site makes it unique in nature and the Ropes Course has allowed for many Grand Trees to remain central to the site. The Letter of Intent states that the Grand Trees are somewhat evenly distributed across the site. She noted that in order to meet all development requirements: setbacks, buffers, parking, stormwater, utilities, and emergency access, Grand Trees would be impacted. The intent is to impact the least amount of trees per caliper inches. They are proposing the removal of two (2) Laurel Oaks (25.5" and 27") both Graded B. Seventeen (17) Grand Oak trees will remain on site along the southern border and throughout the center of the site.

The site plan has intentionally worked around the largest trees which are all Live Oaks. The three (3) largest trees on site will remain and are each, if not more, caliper inches than each of the Laurel Oaks combined. Ms. Williams noted that Laurel Oaks have a shorter lifespan than Live Oaks and that is why they favor protecting the Live Oaks. The proposed site plan will exceed the planting required per the Ordinance. The site is proposed to provide 20 trees per acre and 160 inches per acre. The site is 1.4 acres and is required to provide 37 trees and 295 caliper inches along with additional mitigation inches. The site will offer over 650 caliper inches in existing trees; double the amount of inches required per code. 28 trees will remain onsite and with the required buffer landing, there will be a minimum of 41 trees onsite post development.

Questions for the Applicant:

Comm'r Hayes asked for clarification because he did not see trees numbered 4,12,16, 17 or 19. Ms. Williams explained that some of the trees are rated "d" and plans to be removed, but they do not require approval to be removed.

Chair Savage stated that he saw two trees numbered 6 and asked if one of them should be #16. Ms. Williams confirmed. Chair Savage asked the location of trees #17 and #19 and Ms. Williams said they are either offsite or are some of the trees Graded "d" to be removed but do not require a variance.

Comm'r Blair asked about the statement mentioned that "there are other facilities around James Island that provide services that may not be identical to this request". He asked what are those services that the Town does not have. Mr. Fletcher said Roper currently does not have emergency services here. Roper does not have CT, advanced imaging, or emergency services on James Island. Patients addresses and zip codes show that they go for emergency services to Roper downtown. He said by Roper moving off of the peninsula is the crux of why they want to provide this service on James Island. Comm'r Blair asked if there were statistics or utilization trends of the other facilities on James Island. Mr. Fletcher said he did not have that information on the top of his head.

Comm'r Hayes asked what is driving the 10,800? Is there a specific metric for the capability they are trying to provide? What type of trauma center or ER is this supposed to be? Or, is it based off of the square footage? Mr. Fletcher said the square footage is for a typical emergency room. They have a few other free standings i.e., Northwoods. The standard is to have eight (8) exam rooms and coverage for imaging (CT and X-rays and ultrasound machine) having the ambulance entrance, a trauma bay, and some larger exam rooms leads to the square footage being what it is.

Comm'r Blair asked if work were done in terms of what the maximum square footage would be if no trees were removed. Mr. Fletcher said they did not do a study and tried to *push* the building all over the place to not have to remove any trees. He said two different entrances are required for ambulances for certain turn radius and the Zoning Ordinances requires parking in the rear. He gave an example of how the ER would look from Folly Road, but they did not to attempt to do that because of the Live Oaks.

Comm'r Hayes asked if a Traffic Study was done that identified the entrance for the ambulance. He asked if the orientation changes if that would have an impact. Mr. Fletcher said that a Traffic Study was not done. Comm'r Hayes asked and was shown the entrance for the ambulance on the site plan.

Comm'r Yannitelli questioned trees #22, and #21 if the building were reoriented, or if there would not be enough parking spaces. He asked if a variance was asked for to reduce the number of parking spaces to work around the trees. Mr. Fletcher stated in his experience with emergency rooms, parking is needed for patient emergencies and would like to stay with the required parking spaces.

Comm'r Yannitelli asked about a plan for stormwater. Mr. Fletcher said they looked at underground detention and Ms. Williams stated for underground detention chambers under the parking with pervious paving on top.

Chair Savage reiterated the question that Comm'r Blair asked for clarification. He asked Mr. Fletcher if when the facility is built, will all of the offices and rooms be utilized, or are they asking for a variance to build something to grow into. Mr. Fletcher said 10-11,000 square feet is maximizing the requirements because there are certain circulation requirements needed for the building. This would be a hospital-based service and must have 8 ft. hallways. They do not want to go less than eight (8) exam rooms. These are some things that leads to the number of square footages needed. Chair Savage asked if everything the applicant is proposing will be built out when the building becomes

operational. Mr. Fletcher said “absolutely”, there will be no shell space; eight (8) bay ER with trauma bay and imaging to service the emergency room.

Chair Savage stated that the Arborist Report from Natural Directions was made a part of their BZA packet. He asked Mr. Fletcher if he had the chance to review it and saw the recommendations. Mr. Fletcher answered yes. Chair Savage asked if Roper intends to comply with those recommendations. Mr. Fletcher said yes. Chair Savage talked about some letters of opposition that were received. He asked Mr. Fletcher if he reviewed them and he said yes. Chair Savage noted that some letters stated “*not being sure we have a need for this because of other facilities on the island*. He asked Mr. Fletcher if Roper would be the only facility to accept critical care needs or someone transported by ambulance on James Island. Mr. Fletcher said yes, Roper St. Francis. Chair Savage asked what other facilities on James Island has the same capabilities and Mr. Fletcher said Trident. Chair Savage asked about advanced imaging services; i.e., CT scans and MRIs. Mr. Fletcher stated that Roper will provide CT, probably not MRI, but Ultrasound, X-rays, and Outpatient Orders.

Chair Savage questioned Ms. Williams about the Development Summary notes. He said a number of letters in opposition talked about the lack of green space and Ms. Williams talked about increasing the canopy. He asked how many grand trees would remain on the site. Ms. Williams said 17. Chair Savage asked if there would be no objection to making the recommendations in the Arborist Report a condition if the Board were inclined to approve the request. There was no objection. There was discussion about Roper’s plan for inch-by-inch mitigation. Ms. Williams explained it would be the required buffer plantings along Folly Road and Highland Avenue, and the required parking lot plantings, and an additional 53 inches.

Chair Savage asked for clarification on criteria “d” and “f” (Staff Review). He thinks this is where most of the letters of opposition raises issues. Criteria “d” (... *for the public good*) states that we have so many medical providers on the island. He asked Ms. Williams if she could add to what Mr. Fletcher said. Ms. Williams said the intent to the response they gave is the site plan layout will match the conditions of the commercial sites around it and retain the large Live Oaks. There will be significant tree canopy coverage, and it will match the feel of James Island in the Commercial Corridor area. Criteria “f” (... *not the result of the applicant’s own actions*). He had asked if there was flexibility in the movement of the building but learned that parking is required at the sides and back. He is unclear about what the requirements are for the entrance as Folly would be the quickest entrance and exit. He asked if there was discretion for the entrance to be where it is or if the only location where it could be.

Daniel Etheridge, Civil Engineer, Seamon Whiteside, 501 Wando Park Blvd., Mt. Pleasant said that Highland Avenue is a SCDOT Road and Folly Road is a City of Charleston Road and they have certain restrictions on where driveways could be placed. He said SCDOT would not allow multiple driveway access points on Highland Avenue. Chair Savage was given information that an area on the site plan was private property when Folly Road was widened and realigned to the left many years ago.

In Support:

Stephanie Tucker, 923 Stillwater Place: stated that she is a 37-year resident of James Island and trees are important to her. She contracts with an arborist every year to make sure that her trees are healthy and remain an asset to her home and has 10 trees on her property in those 37 years. She is telling the Board this because she appreciates trees, including the two in question for this project. She also knows that when there is a medical emergency minutes counts and can be a matter of life and death. That is not only what you hear on TV, this is true . In 2024 her husband had a fall and was transported to Roper ER on Calhoun Street, less than 10 minutes away. He underwent emergency surgery for traumatic brain injury. Due to the quick response and superior care that he received, he survived that traumatic accident. Roper Hospital has served the Charleston area for over 100 years and she and many on James Islanders have depended on its ER from broken bones to strokes. Roper St. Francis Healthcare wants to continue that accessibility and high standard of care which can only benefit James Island. As she stated, trees matter a great deal to her but two trees, not as much as saving one life. This is not her opinion alone but talking with other people on the island she knows is a matter of concern to many.

In Opposition:

Carolyn Walentisch, 1578 Highland Avenue: stated that the proposed tree removal and the building will be almost directly across from her residence and that would negatively impact her property with the noise, traffic, and flooding. If she were to purchase her home today and this facility was across the street on Highland Avenue she would not purchase it. She is not alone and asked the Board to put themselves in her position. She has had wonderful emergency care at Trident including and having an MRI. She has two small children, and they walk in the area as many others in the neighborhood on Highland, Bayfront and Rivers Point do and use the sidewalks and enjoy the trees and nature. She said some may be surprised, but there is quite a bit of nature in the area including hawks, eagles, and osprey. She hopes her voice as a resident and community member will be directly impacted and carry weight to uphold the protection of our trees and not put community guidelines aside. She stated this is one of the rare parcels of trees on this portion of Folly Road and it would be a shame to lose it to a medical building of which there are several. The proposed plan is not in keeping with the character of her neighborhood and it does not add value. She reiterated that she receives great care at Trident Emergency Services just down the road. She further commented that the parking and property would protrude into the residential area and the plan does not offer something valuable, having four similar facilities. The traffic on Highland Avenue is already a problem combined with cut-thru and a 30-mph speed limit, a stop sign midway down the street that was never replaced, and an awkward angled turn off of Folly Road. With ambulances, it is set for disaster. She makes this turn every day and it is consistently dicey due to the angle and potential for cars not seeing around the corners. The plan adds complexity to additional traffic and simply is dangerous. More walkability is needed, especially near Martins BBQ, which is a wonderful place, but is busy where families gather. The traffic on James Island continues to worsen especially between Camp and the Connector and backups in this area is increasingly common and dangerous for turning. Anyone living in this area can tell that the Highland/Folly area floods at the “drop of a hat” and paving this large parcel and removing trees will exasperate this dangerous flooding. The larger area of the intersection extending through to Martin’s and the Hair Salon will essentially be underwater if it rains. It is not a question that this will be detrimental, the placement of younger trees does little to solve this problem or recover damage from losing an established root system and underbrush. In no way does this plan warrant removing two grand trees and she sees no redeeming quality. She knows that she speaks for several neighbors on Highland Avenue and is grateful to share her thoughts with the Board.

Adam Friend, 448 Woodland Shores Road: stated he has been an advocate in this area since Hugo. He owns a company that staffs positions. He has not looked at the exact plans, but this is being called an emergency room. He knows that since there are no beds for overnight stays (asked the applicant, who said no). An emergency room is only as good as the service it provides at the time. An ambulance going there with someone having an active heart attack is going to be taken from there and we are talking about a facility more in line with what we already have. The fact that Roper is leaving downtown (he would love to have some of their Board here) is the major reason flooding. So they are very well aware of the conditions of the downtown peninsula. He knows the area is prone to flood and to take away any porous surfaces in the low country is incredibly under appreciated. The amount of high density that we have allowed to be put around us has caused exasperation and there are repercussions by continuing to take away porous surfaces, including trees. The amount of absorption a mature tree provides is amazing. You cannot plant a few trees and say tit is an equal tradeoff. You have to wait 50-75 years to recoup the loss. Traffic in that area is at a standstill in both directions. For a facility that wants to offer emergency services, he would encourage them to find another parcel that might be a better location further towards Folly Beach where there is frontage. We are trying to make a square fit into a circle because perhaps the price is right. We need to think twice and not let another open porous surface area go opposite.

Jay Browder, 1532 Highland Avenue: stated that he does not oppose building an emergency room on the island, but the location does not fit the footprint of what he feels an ER would be suited for. Martins BBQ on a Friday night is very busy with a lot of kids playing, and people walking dogs in the area. It is a dangerous area for ambulances. He has been trying to get Town Council to reduce the speed limit from 30 mph which is very excessive on that road. He knows how construction is and once it gets going things change. He knows that two trees would lead to more than just two. He hopes it will not but feels that would be the case. He asked the Board to deny the request.

Victoria Carl, 1551 Highland Avenue: Her contention is not with having emergency services but with the location of the proposed services. She said one of the conditions of the variance is “it does not harm the character of the zoning district” but she firmly believes that it does. Based on what she heard so far, she does not think that Roper has exacerbated their options and think there are some places to explore and what they are counting on is that some voices

not to be raised. She heard a few neighbors say they did not get notification in the mail but happened to scroll across it on Facebook. She is very grateful that she received notice in the mail and had her voice represented. She said one of the conditions of the variance is that notification was made, and she noticed it said that they spoke to many property owners in the area and questions whether than is true. As a new mother living in the area this being a residential area was the primary reason she chose it because the area because the neighborhoods behind her were not heavily populated with traffic. She and her husband walk to Martins BBQ . Her husband has come home at least 3-5 times in the last month and says: *"I almost got hit again" ... I had the stroller this time and the car didn't see me, and I had to step in the middle of the road.* She said already they are experiencing problems and do not feel safe on Highland Avenue. She fears that adding an emergency room will make this worse between ambulances, police cars, firetrucks, and people rushing to get to get services. She asked the Board to consider that James Island is one of the few gems left in Charleston area and is where they chose to raise children; and that puts that directly at risk.

Mike Scharnhorst, 1551 Highland Avenue: stated that Highland Avenue is a highly trafficked area and to remove the trees and put more traffic in the area is not safe. Based on his experience (his spouse was the previous speaker) there have been multiple times that he has walked his son in the stroller and almost hit by a car. This is something that needs to be brought to light. He thinks there is room for emergency services on James Island and there are other locations at this time that are not Roper that people could go to but every option should be exhausted before finalizing this specific location.

Rebuttal: None.

Chair Savage called for a motion to close the Public Hearing at 6:09 p.m. The motion was made by Comm'r Hayes, seconded by Comm'r Yannitelli and passed unanimously.

Chair Savage called for a motion to approve the variance request with the staff's recommendations and make as an additional condition that the recommendations in the Arborist Report be followed. The motion was made by Comm'r Hayes, seconded by Comm'r Blair.

Chair Savage informed the audience that legal counsel has advised the Board that sometimes when we hear information on traffic conditions, or someone's opinion, or when someone has personal experience with what is going on the Courts have often overruled BZA opinions that deny an application based on the fact that traffic will increase. Any development on any property, and any type will increase traffic. If the Board considers traffic we need not only the technical information in the record but also must show that the traffic increase for a Variance or Special Exception would be greater than the traffic increase from a conforming use within the property and that is not to downplay the significance of those concerns.

Comm'r Blair asked to pose a question to the applicant or staff. Chair Savage said in order to do that we would have to reopen the Public Hearing. The motion on the floor was withdrawn by Comm'r Blair and seconded by Comm'r Hayes and passed unanimously.

Motion to re-open the Public Hearing for further questions was made by Comm'r Blair at 6:13 p.m. seconded by Comm'r Hayes.

Comm'r Blair asked if there has been diligence in terms of implementing a sidewalk on Highland Avenue to augment some of the concerns and provide walkability. Ms. Williams spoke that there will be a sidewalk on Highland Avenue; that the Ordinance requires a 12 ft multi-use path along Folly Road as well.

Chair Savage called for a motion to close the Public Hearing at 6:14 p.m. Motion was made by Comm'r Blair, seconded by Comm'r Hayes, and passed unanimously.

Chair Savage called for the motion to approve the variance with the staff's recommendations and make as an additional condition that the recommendations in the Arborist Report be followed. Motion was made by Comm'r Hayes, seconded by Comm'r Blair.

Discussion by the Board:

It was consensus that conditions “d” and “needed further discussion. Comm’r Hayes said he viewed “d” as the public good of weighing the institution going there vs. not going there and how does that make a play? His view is there is not enough data points to showcase that right now.

Chair Savage stated from personal experience he realize there is a Trident facility and this, but those that have the Affordable Care Act (ACA) insurance, him personally they are required to use either MUSC or a Roper facility. Often times the facility where someone can go to is dictated by the insurance. He said someone mentioned getting very good care at Trident and he believes that, but everyone may not have the luxury based upon their insurance to go to Trident.

Comm’r Hayes said the other concern is the public good and he would like to see a traffic study. If Folly Road will be the primary ingress/egress he would like to know what mitigation is being done to insure there are no further incidents. If the road is based on who owns it, i.e., County, State, Town, he would like that data also. He said to simply base the decision off of the trees i.e., for the public good, but he would like to see something more on the aspect of the public good. If we are solely basing the approval on the trees, he already has a decision; if basing on the public good for the entirety of the island, he has another opinion.

Chair Savage stated for the record in the event there is an appeal he said it is not the applicant’s responsibility to show that is for the public good, what they have to show is it is not a detriment to the public good. Comm’r Hayes said he want to showcase that based on the vote showcasing that it is not a detriment.

Comm’r Yannitelli asked if the facility is in the zoning district’s definition and is allowed to be there. The consensus was yes. He asked if we needed to focus on the trees and Chair Savage said he could not say yes, or no because he is the member evaluating those criteria, but he understands what he is saying.

Comm’r Blair commented on trade-off of what would be constructed there. He noted that at the end of the day a something could go there such as a shopping center, bar, or something else. We can never have enough access to healthcare by trading two trees for someone’s life.

In further discussion, the Board discussed that all the criteria of the ordinance were met. Comm’r Yannitelli noted that criteria “f” was addressed if that is the number of parking spaces they are required to have.

Comm’r Hayes asked if a traffic study would be requested. Attorney Quisenberry commented that the trees is the only issue for the variance and the use was not a question.

Chair Savage called for vote on Case #BZAV-10-25-045: Variance request for the removal of two grand trees (25.5” DBH Laurel Oak and 27” DBH Laurel Oak) for the proposed construction of a free-standing Emergency Department (Roper St. Francis Healthcare) in the Community Commercial (CC) Zoning District and the Commercial Core of the Folly Road Corridor Overlay (FRC-O) Zoning District at 832 Folly Road, Town of James Island (TMS# 425-08-00-012). This request must meet all the criteria of the Ordinance.

Conditions:

1. The applicant/owner shall install tree barricades around the grand and protected trees on the property, as described in §153.334 of the *Ordinance*, throughout the duration of construction.
2. Prior to obtaining a Zoning Permit for the proposed site improvements, the applicant/owner shall provide documentation that the grand trees on the subject parcel have been pruned and fertilized as recommended by a Certified Arborist, in order to mitigate any potential damage to the tree caused by construction.
3. The applicant/owner shall mitigate the removal of the grand trees by submitting a mitigation plan to the Zoning Administrator, as described in 153.334 (E) (2) of the Ordinance, that equals inch-per-inch replacement.
4. That each and every suggestion and recommendation contained in the Arborist Report by Natural Directions (attached) be made a condition for the granting of this variance.

Vote:

Comm'r Blair	Aye
Comm'r Hayes	Aye
Comm'r Yannitelli	Aye
Chair Savage	Aye
Unanimous	

Chair Savage stated the approval of the Variance and that the final decision of the Board would be mailed to the applicant within ten (10) working days. The applicant may contact the Planning and Zoning staff with questions regarding the request.

Additional Business:

Next Meeting Date: The next meeting of the Board of Zoning Appeals will be held on January 20, 2026.

Respectfully submitted:

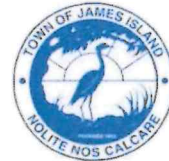
Frances Simmons
Town Clerk and Secretary to the BZA

DRAFT

Variance Application

Town of James Island Board of Zoning Appeals

Town of James Island
Zoning/Planning Department
1122 Dills Bluff Road
James Island, SC 29412
Phone 843-795-4141
Fax 843-795-4878
www.jamesislandsc.us



This application must be complete and submitted in person to the Town of James Island Zoning/Planning Department in order to apply for a Variance. Please read the entire form prior to completing the application. The applicant shall receive a copy of this completed form at the time the application is filed. **This application will be returned to the applicant within fifteen (15) working days if these items are not submitted with the application or if any are found to be inaccurate:**

- 1) Completed Variance application signed by the current property owner(s).
- 2) Copy of **Current Recorded Deed** to the property (Owner's signature must match documentation). If the applicant is not the owner of the property, the **Current Property Owner(s)** must sign and print the **Designation of Agent** found below.
- 3) **Restrictive Covenants & Posted Notice Affidavit(s)** signed by the applicant or current property owner(s).
- 4) A **letter of intent** signed by the applicant or property owner(s) stating the reason for the request that explains why this request should be granted and how it meets the Approval Criteria of §153.049 F. All proposed Variances, except single family, shall satisfy the Site Plan Review process and attend at least one Site Plan Review meeting prior to submitting this application.
- 5) An accurate, legible **Site Plan drawn to Engineers Scale** must be attached. The site plan must show property dimensions, dimensions and locations of all existing and proposed structures and improvements, parking areas, Grand trees(18" DBH or greater, Pine, Sweetgum, SC Invasive Pest Trees are exempt), wetlands(properties containing DHEC-OCRM Critical Line areas must contain an up to date DHEC-OCRM signature on site plan or plat), holding basins and buffers when applicable.
One 24 x 36 copy and one digital copy via email.
- 6) Copy of a legible **Approved and Recorded Plat** showing present boundaries of property.
- 7) **Fee \$250** check made out to "Town of James Island". Grand tree variances add \$50 each additional tree

Applicant Name: Craig Plante
 Mailing Address: 934 Ravenswood Dr.
 City, State, Zip Code: Charleston, SC 29412 Daytime Phone: 843-276-4690
 Email Address: plantec@cofc.edu

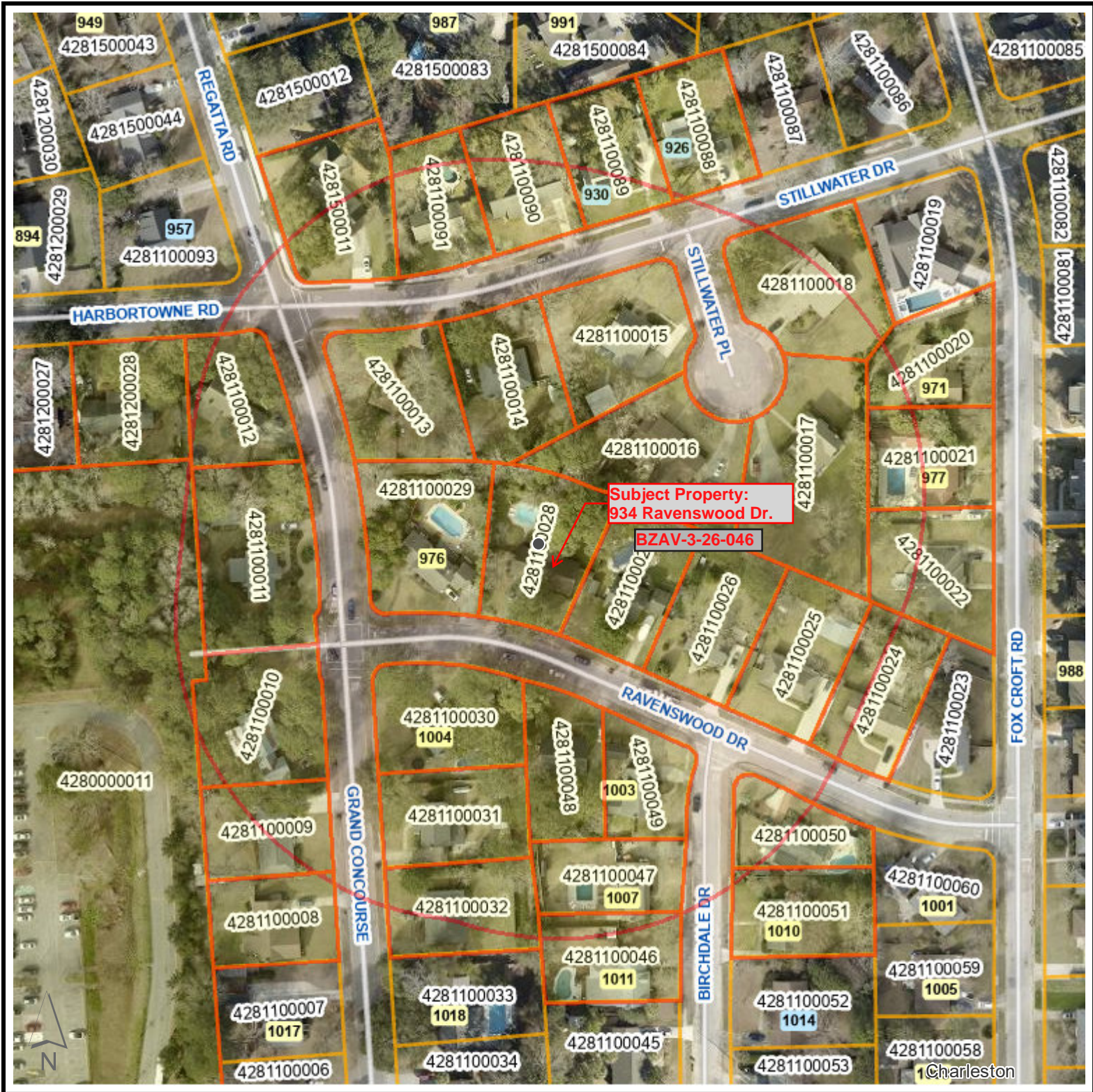
Subject Property Address: 934 Ravenswood Dr, Charleston, SC 29412
 Present Use of Property: single family dwelling
 Variance Description: variance to 10' setback for house renovation

Applicant Signature: [Signature] / Brian Perkins Date: 3-4-26

Designation of Agent (Complete only if owner is not applicant): I hereby appoint the person named as Applicant above as my (our) agent to represent me (us) in this application.

Owner Print Name _____ Date _____ Owner Mailing Address _____
 Owner Signature _____ City, State, Zip Code _____

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY:	
Application #: <u>BZAV-3-26-046</u>	Flood Zone: _____
Zoning District: <u>RSL</u>	Fee Paid (\$250): <u>\$250 ck# 9936</u>
Date Filed: <u>3/12/2026</u>	Zoning Officer: <u>KC</u>
TMS#: <u>428-11-00-028</u>	



Charleston County SC

PID: 4281100028

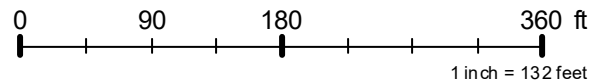
OWNER1: PLANTE CRAIG J

PLAT BOOK PAGE: U-100

DEED BOOK PAGE: S246-035

Jurisdiction: TOWN OF JAMES ISLAND

Note: The Charleston County makes every effort possible to produce the most accurate information. The layers contained in the map service are for information purposes only. The Charleston County makes no warranty, express or implied, nor any guaranty as to the content, sequence, accuracy, timeliness or completeness of any of the information provided. The County explicitly disclaims all representations and warranties. The reader agrees to hold harmless the Charleston County for any cause of action and costs associated with any causes of action which may arise as a consequence of the County providing this information.



Author: Charleston County SC

Date: 3/23/2026



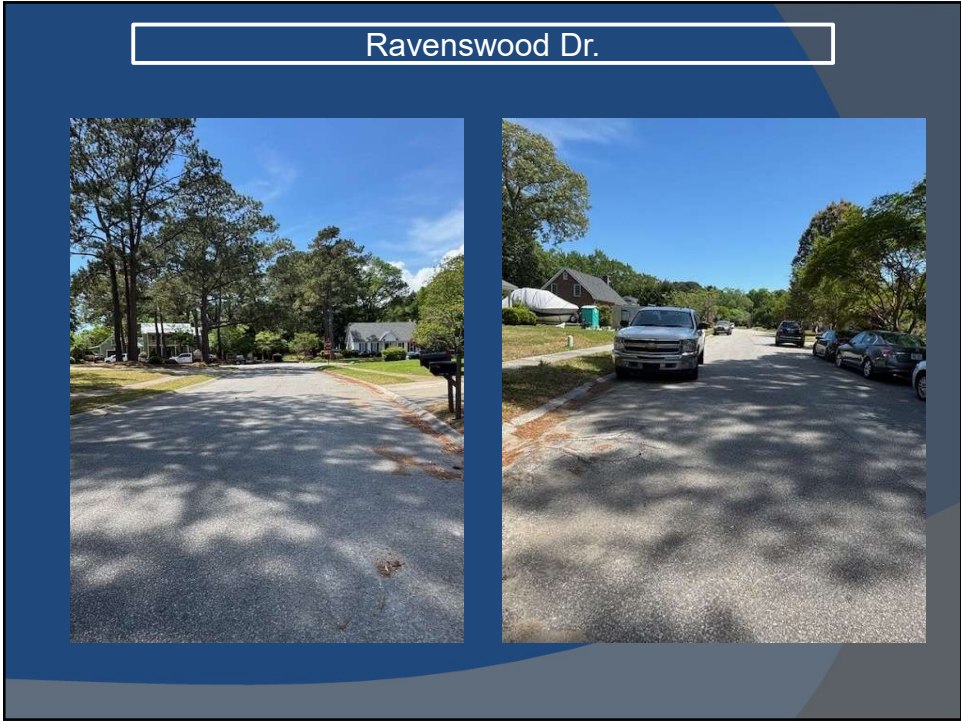
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Staff Review:

The applicant, Mr. Craig Plante, is requesting a Variance for the reduction of the required 10' interior side setback for an addition to an existing single-family home in the Low-Density Suburban Residential (RSL) Zoning District at 934 Ravenswood Drive. All adjacent properties are zoned RSL in the Town of James Island.

The subject property is a 0.35-acre lot and currently has one single-family home built in 1975 per Charleston County records, as well as an inground swimming pool. The applicant is requesting the variance "*as part of a larger renovation to make the house handicapped accessible....The addition would encroach into the 10-foot setback by ~2.6 feet at the front of the house, tapering to zero encroachment by ~21 feet towards the back of the house.*"

Findings of Fact:

According to §153.049 F, Zoning Variance Approval Criteria of the Town of James Island Zoning and Land Development Regulations Ordinance (ZLDR), The Board of Zoning Appeals has the authority to hear and decide appeals for a Zoning Variance when strict application of the provisions of this Ordinance would result in unnecessary hardship. A Zoning Variance may be granted in an individual case of unnecessary hardship if the Board of Appeals makes and explains in writing the following findings:

F. (a): *There are extraordinary and exceptional conditions pertaining to the particular piece of property;*

Response: **There may be extraordinary and exceptional conditions pertaining to this particular piece of property due to the progressive required accessibility, the slightly angled interior-side property lines, and the close proximity of trees in reference to the home.**

F (b): *These conditions do not generally apply to other property in the vicinity;*

Response: **There does not generally appear to be properties in the vicinity with angled property lines and close trees, from an aerial perspective. The location and number of trees on surrounding lots vary, and the need for similar accessibility is unknown.**

F (c): *Because of these conditions, the application of this Ordinance to the particular piece of property would effectively prohibit or unreasonably restrict the utilization of the property;*

Response: **The application of this Ordinance to the subject property would prohibit the construction of the addition in its proposed location and may unreasonably restrict the utilization of the property as the letter of intent states: "*The***

renovation is necessary to make the home safe and usable for homeowner (BP) with progressive disease (Parkinson's).

F (d): *The authorization of a variance will not be of substantial detriment to adjacent property or to the public good, and the character of the zoning district will not be harmed by the granting of the variance;*

Response: **The character of the zoning district should not be harmed, and the authorization of the variance should not be of substantial detriment to adjacent property or to the public good. The applicant states that “*the proposed addition would still be ~29 feet from the adjacent home (and 7.4 ft. rom the fence/property line at the closest). Those neighbors do not perceive harm to their situation and have supplied a letter of support.*”**

F (e): *The Board of Zoning Appeals shall not grant a variance the effect of which would be to allow the establishment of a use not otherwise permitted in a zoning district, to extend physically a non-conforming use of land or to change the zoning district boundaries shown on the Official Zoning Map;*

Response: **The variance does not allow a use that is not permitted in this zoning district, nor does it extend physically a nonconforming use of land or change the zoning district boundaries.**

F (f): *The need for the variance is not the result of the applicant's own actions; and*

Response: **In the letter of intent, the applicant explains that “*alternative plans are not feasible*” and explains the necessity of the addition in its proposed location due to the pre-existing location of the trees and layout of the house. Therefore, the need for the variance is not the result of the applicant's own actions.**

F (g): *Granting of the variance does not substantially conflict with the Comprehensive Plan or the purposes of this Ordinance.*

Response: **The granting of the variance does not substantially conflict with the Comprehensive Plan or the purposes of this Ordinance.**

In granting a Variance, the Board of Zoning Appeals may attach to it such conditions regarding the location, character, or other features of the proposed building or structure as the Board may consider advisable to protect established property values in the surrounding area or to promote the public health, safety, or general welfare (§153.045 E 2).

Action:

The Board of Zoning Appeals may approve, approve with conditions, or deny Case # BZAV-3-26-046 (Variance request for reduction of the required 10' interior side setback for an addition to an existing home in the Low-Density Suburban Residential District) based on the "Findings of Fact" listed above, unless additional information is deemed necessary to make an informed decision. In the event the Board decides to approve the application, the Board should consider the following condition:

1. The applicant shall obtain all required zoning, stormwater, and building permits for the addition.

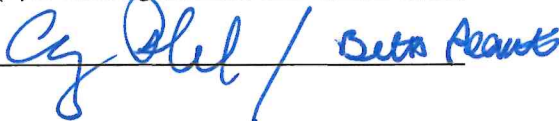
Letter of Intent

Herein we request a variance to the 10-foot side setback requirement to accommodate an addition to our house at 934 Ravenswood Dr., Charleston, SC 29412. The proposed addition is part of a larger renovation to make the house handicapped accessible. Specifically, the addition will allow for a larger Master Bathroom, providing more space for a wheelchair around the toilet and vanity as well as large, roll-in (zero-threshold) shower. The addition will also allow for wider doorways, a slightly larger Master closet, an enlarged second bathroom, and relocation of washer/dryer from the garage into the main house. The proposed addition would extend out 6 feet from the east side of the house for the 31 feet of the length of the house (adding ~ 186 sq ft). The addition would encroach into the 10-foot setback by ~2.6 feet at the front of the house, tapering to zero encroachment by ~ 21 feet towards the back of house (i.e., a tringle shape of ~ 27 sq ft over the 10-foot setback line).

The renovation is necessary to make the home safe and usable for homeowner (BP) with progressive disease (Parkinson’s). Currently BP mainly uses walker but is transitioning to wheelchair. Alternative plans are not feasible. Adding to the rear of the house would require moving HVAC system, lawn well, and replumbing and moving pool pump and filter. It would also require a reshuffling of all bedrooms and bathrooms on that side of the house (i.e., move Master from front to back of house). Placing the addition on the front of the house would require removing two grand trees and/or risk damage to foundation of the addition due to the roots of these very large trees that are already disrupting the adjacent sidewalk and driveway.

The proposed addition would be still be ~ 29 feet from the adjacent home (and 7.4 ft. from fence/property line at the closest). Those neighbors do not perceive harm to their situation and have supplied a letter of support.

Printed Name(s) Craig Plante, Beth Plante

Signature(s) 

Date 3-12-26

To whom it may concern,

We, Jennifer and Will Mitchell, owners of the property at 930 Ravenswood Drive, acknowledge that our neighbors, Beth and Craig Plante plan to build an addition on the side of their house that faces our property. We have reviewed the proposed location and have no objection to the construction of this addition. We support their request and have no objection to their request, and the addition being built on that side of the house adjacent to our property.

This letter serves as our written consent in support of their application and any related zoning or permit approvals.

If additional information is need, please feel free to contact us.


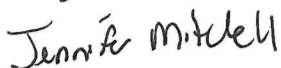
Sincerely,

Jennifer and Will Mitchell

930 Ravenswood drive Charleston SC 29412

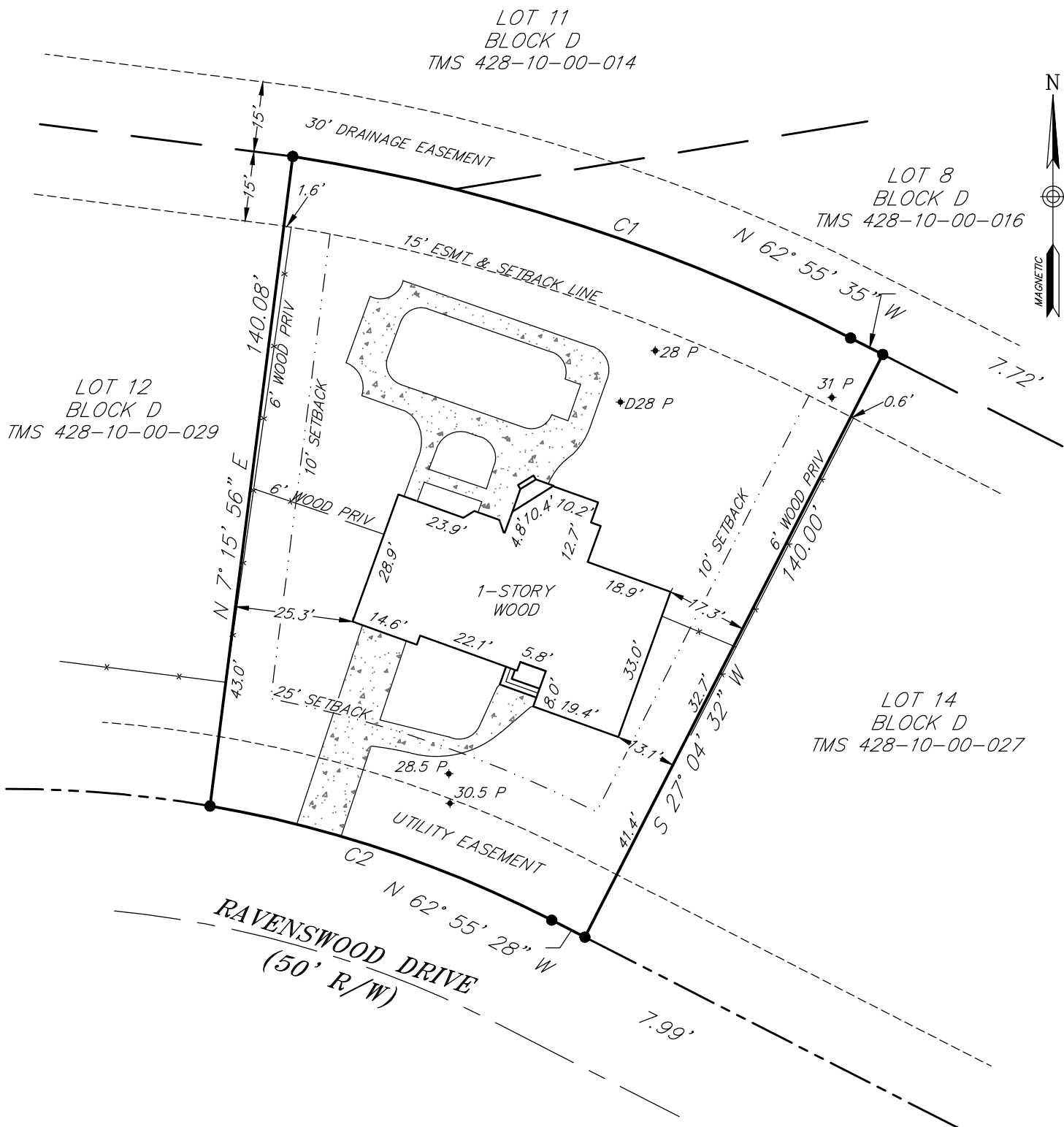
843-452-9089

Blakejb@MUSC.edu or Mitchewi@MUSC.edu

CURVE	LENGTH	RADIUS	CHORD	BEARING
C1	126.07'	394.18'	125.53'	N71° 58' 34"W
C2	77.39'	254.18'	77.09'	N71° 32' 11"W

UTILITY EASEMENT NOTE:
DUE TO STATED WIDTH OF ADJACENT EASEMENT(S), THE UTILITY EASEMENT WAS ASSUMED TO BE 15'. CONSULT FURTHER LEGAL DOCUMENTS IF EASEMENT WIDTH IS IMPORTANT.



PROPERTY INFORMATION

LOT 13
BLOCK D
TMS 428-10-00-028
15,342 sq.ft.
0.35 acre

**CLOSING SURVEY SHOWING 934 RAVENSWOOD DRIVE
ASHCROFT HALL
TOWN OF JAMES ISLAND, CHARLESTON COUNTY, S.C.**

DATE: FEBRUARY 13, 2026 SCALE: 1" = 30'

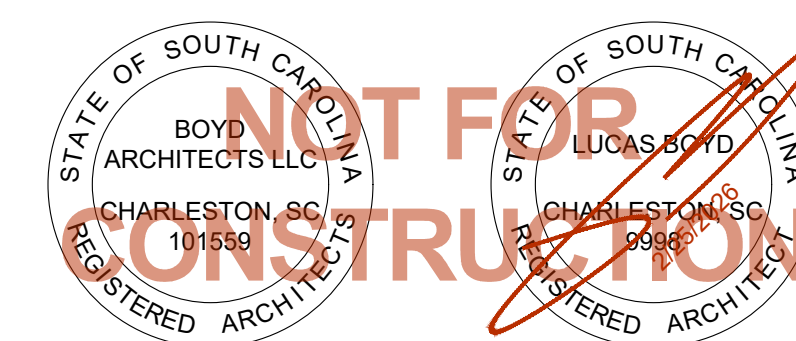
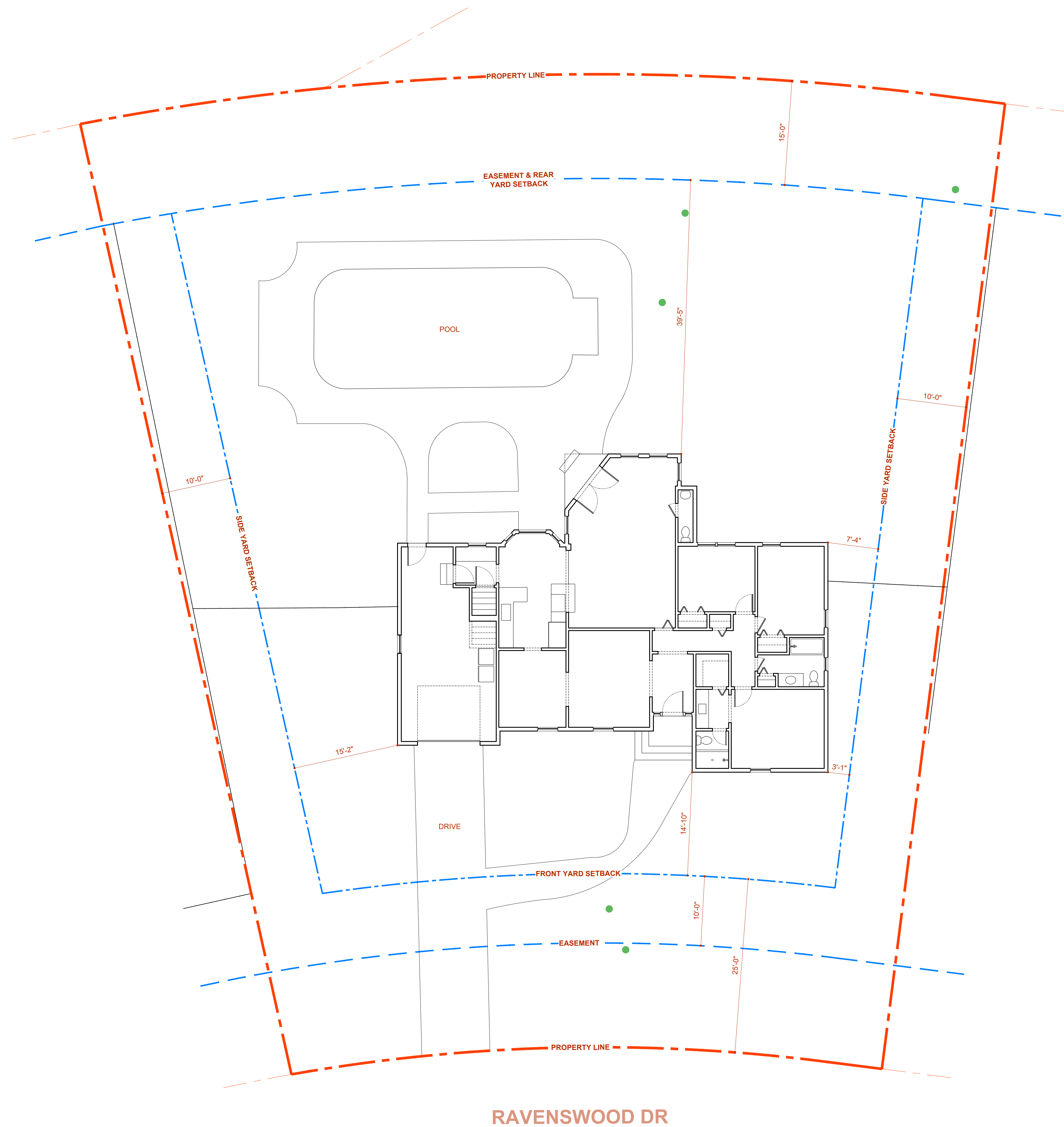
REFERENCE: PLAT BOOK U, PAGE 100
FLOOD ZONE: X FIRM PANEL 45019C 0681 K, EFFECTIVE JANUARY 29, 2021

I HEREBY STATE TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE, INFORMATION AND BELIEF, THE SURVEY SHOWN HEREON WAS MADE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE MINIMUM STANDARDS MANUAL FOR THE PRACTICE OF LAND SURVEYING IN SOUTH CAROLINA, AND MEETS OR EXCEEDS THE REQUIREMENTS FOR A CLASS A SURVEY AS SPECIFIED THEREIN. ALSO, THERE ARE NO VISIBLE ENCROACHMENTS OR PROJECTIONS AFFECTING THE PROPERTY OTHER THAN THOSE SHOWN.

Christopher R. Elmer
CHRISTOPHER R. ELMER SCPLS No. 30759

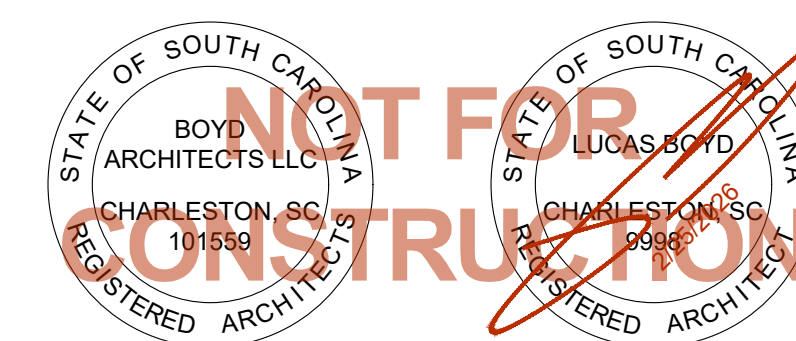
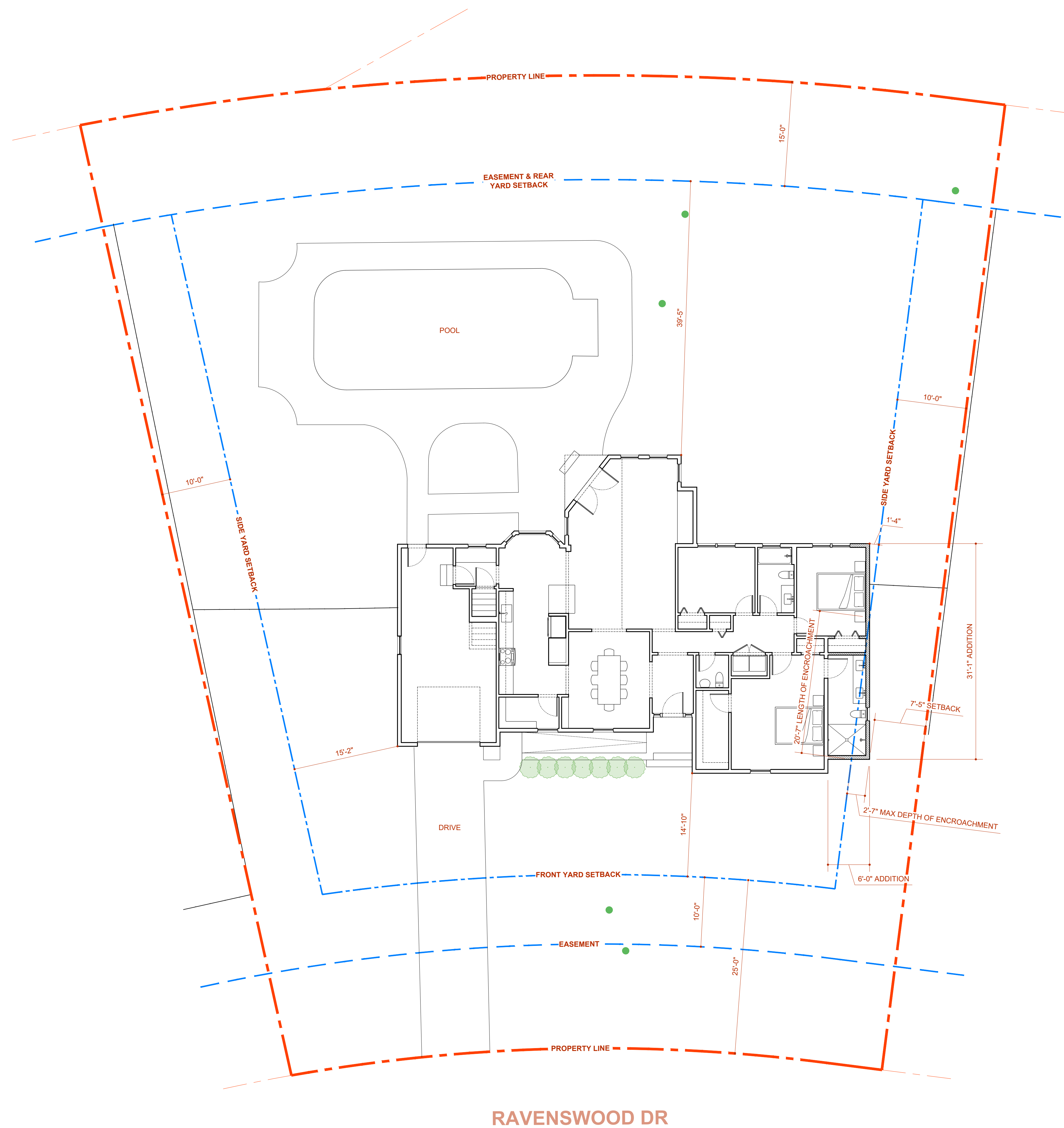
TIM ELMER RLS, LLC. TEL: (843) 482-0795
523 MAN O WAR LANE
MONCK'S CORNER, SC 29461 CEImer.TERLS@gmail.com

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PLANTE RESIDENCE 934 RAVENSWOOD DR CHARLESTON, SC 29412

NO.	ISSUED FOR	DATE
01	CONCEPT DESIGN	02/25/2026



PLANTE RESIDENCE 934 RAVENSWOOD DR
CHARLESTON, SC 29412

NO.	ISSUED FOR	DATE
01	CONCEPT DESIGN	02/25/2026

Variance Application

Town of James Island Board of Zoning Appeals

Town of James Island
Zoning/Planning Department
1122 Dills Bluff Road
James Island, SC 29412
Phone 843-795-4141
Fax 843-795-4878
www.jamesislandsc.us



This application must be complete and submitted in person to the Town of James Island Zoning/Planning Department in order to apply for a Variance. Please read the entire form prior to completing the application. The applicant shall receive a copy of this completed form at the time the application is filed. **This application will be returned to the applicant within fifteen (15) working days if these items are not submitted with the application or if any are found to be inaccurate:**

- 1) Completed Variance application signed by the current property owner(s).
- 2) Copy of **Current Recorded Deed** to the property (Owner's signature must match documentation). If the applicant is not the owner of the property, the **Current Property Owner(s)** must sign and print the **Designation of Agent** found below.
- 3) **Restrictive Covenants & Posted Notice Affidavit(s)** signed by the applicant or current property owner(s).
- 4) A **letter of intent** signed by the applicant or property owner(s) stating the reason for the request that explains why this request should be granted and how it meets the Approval Criteria of §153.049 F. All proposed Variances, except single family, shall satisfy the Site Plan Review process and attend at least one Site Plan Review meeting prior to submitting this application.
- 5) An accurate, legible **Site Plan drawn to Engineers Scale** must be attached. The site plan must show property dimensions, dimensions and locations of all existing and proposed structures and improvements, parking areas, Grand trees(18" DBH or greater, Pine, Sweetgum, SC Invasive Pest Trees are exempt), wetlands(properties containing DHEC-OCRM Critical Line areas must contain an up to date DHEC-OCRM signature on site plan or plat), holding basins and buffers when applicable.
One 24 x 36 copy and one digital copy via email.
- 6) Copy of a legible **Approved and Recorded Plat** showing present boundaries of property.
- 7) **Fee \$250** check made out to "Town of James Island". Grand tree variances add \$50 each additional tree

Applicant Name: Nathan Gifford

Mailing Address: 1216 Midvale Ave.

City, State, Zip Code: Charleston, SC 29412 Daytime Phone: 804-938-3066

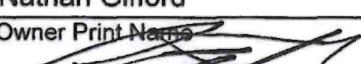
Email Address: dgifford14@gmail.com

Subject Property Address: 1216 Midvale Ave.

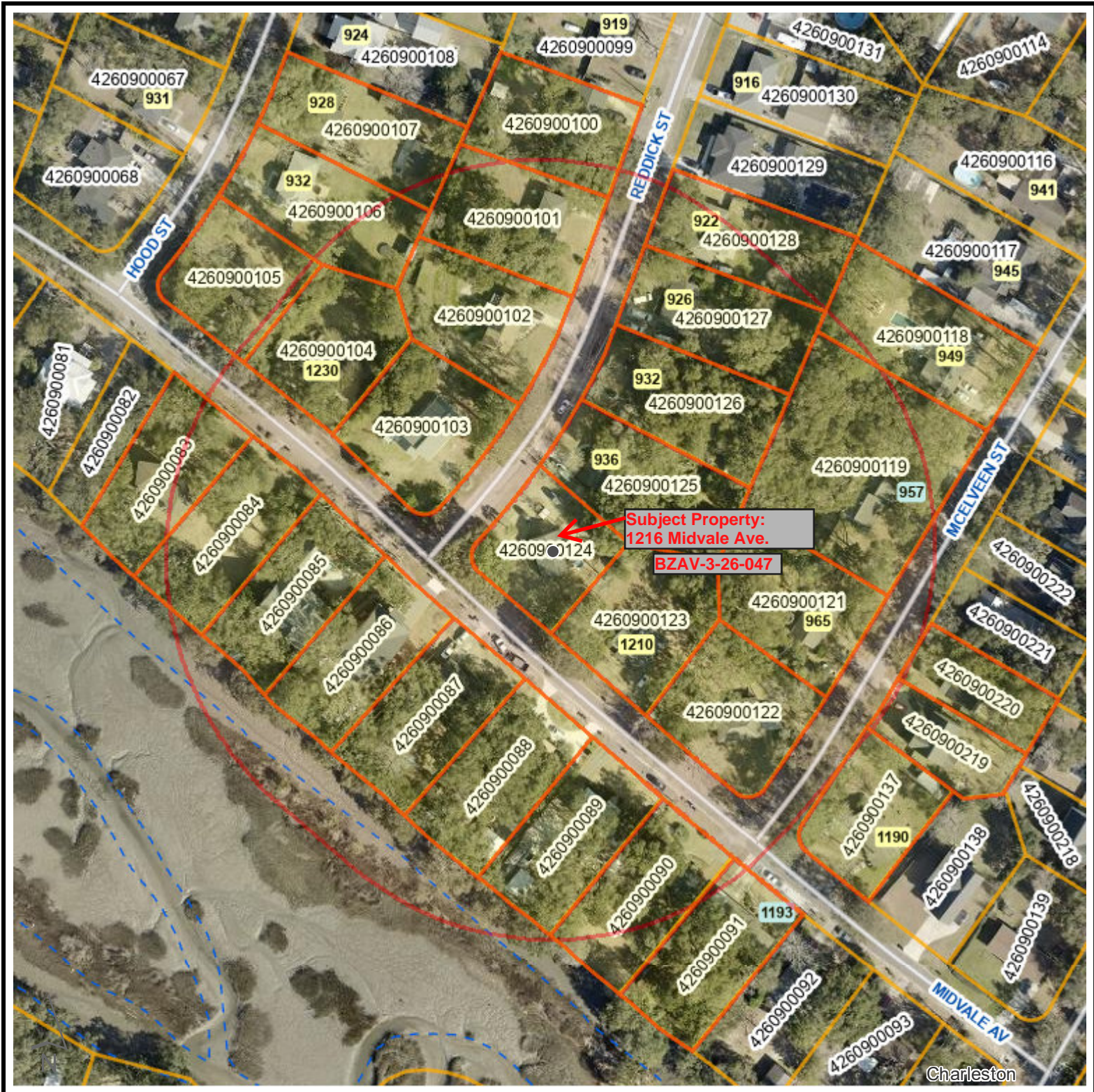
Present Use of Property: Single Family Residence

Variance Description: Ability to built an addition on home that may go past set-backs

Applicant Signature:  Date: 12 MAR 2026

Designation of Agent (Complete only if owner is not applicant): I hereby appoint the person named as Applicant above as my (our) agent to represent me (us) in this application.
 Nathan Gifford 12 MAR 21 1216 Midvale Ave
 Owner Print Name Date Owner Mailing Address
 City, State, Zip Code
 Owner Signature Charleston, SC, 29412

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY:	
Application #: <u>BZAV-3-26-047</u>	Flood Zone: _____
Zoning District: <u>RSL</u>	Fee Paid (\$250): <u>\$250 ck# 134</u>
Date Filed: <u>3/18/2026</u>	Zoning Officer: <u>UC</u>
TMS#: <u>426-09-00-124</u>	



Charleston County SC

PID: 4260900124

OWNER1: GIFFORD DAVID NATHAN

PLAT BOOK PAGE: L-24

DEED BOOK PAGE: 0803-932

Jurisdiction: TOWN OF JAMES ISLAND

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Author: Charleston County SC
Date: 3/23/2026



15



16



17



18

Staff Review:

The applicant, Mr. Nathan Gifford, is requesting a Variance for the reduction of the required 25' front/streetside setback on a corner lot for an addition to an existing single-family home in the Low-Density Suburban Residential (RSL) Zoning District at 1216 Midvale Avenue. All adjacent properties are zoned RSL in the Town of James Island.

The subject property is around 0.3 acres and currently has one single-family home built in 1960 per Charleston County records, as well as a detached garage. The applicant is requesting the variance *“to add an addition consisting of a family room extension and main bedroom/ensuite to our home...to efficiently accommodate our growing family.”*

Findings of Fact:

According to §153.049 F, Zoning Variance Approval Criteria of the Town of James Island Zoning and Land Development Regulations Ordinance (ZLDR), The Board of Zoning Appeals has the authority to hear and decide appeals for a Zoning Variance when strict application of the provisions of this Ordinance would result in unnecessary hardship. A Zoning Variance may be granted in an individual case of unnecessary hardship if the Board of Appeals makes and explains in writing the following findings:

F. (a): *There are extraordinary and exceptional conditions pertaining to the particular piece of property;*

Response: **There may be extraordinary and exceptional conditions pertaining to this particular piece of property due to the location and number of grand live oaks and two front setbacks, combined with the existing floorplan of the home and the need to expand.**

F (b): *These conditions do not generally apply to other property in the vicinity;*

Response: **There does not generally appear to be properties in the vicinity with similar conditions, from an aerial perspective. The location and number of trees on surrounding lots vary, as do size and floorplans of existing homes.**

F (c): *Because of these conditions, the application of this Ordinance to the particular piece of property would effectively prohibit or unreasonably restrict the utilization of the property;*

Response: **The application of this Ordinance to the subject property would prohibit the construction of the addition in its proposed location and may unreasonably restrict the utilization of the property as the letter of intent states: *“the home’s existing layout prevents the addition from being located anywhere else”*. The owner also explains that *“our home has three bedrooms and only one small***

bath, which is typical of homes built in the early 1960s but not ideal for our emerging family.”

F (d): *The authorization of a variance will not be of substantial detriment to adjacent property or to the public good, and the character of the zoning district will not be harmed by the granting of the variance;*

Response: **The character of the zoning district should not be harmed, and the authorization of the variance should not be of substantial detriment to adjacent property or to the public good. The applicant states that they “*have spoken to all our direct and adjacent neighbors, and they are not only ok with the addition, they all overwhelmingly encourage it.*”**

F (e): *The Board of Zoning Appeals shall not grant a variance the effect of which would be to allow the establishment of a use not otherwise permitted in a zoning district, to extend physically a non-conforming use of land or to change the zoning district boundaries shown on the Official Zoning Map;*

Response: **The variance does not allow a use that is not permitted in this zoning district, nor does it extend physically a nonconforming use of land or change the zoning district boundaries.**

F (f): *The need for the variance is not the result of the applicant’s own actions; and*

Response: **In the letter of intent, the applicant explains that “*the selected side is the only location that can support an addition*” and explains the necessity of the addition in its proposed location due to the pre-existing location of grand trees and the layout of the house. Therefore, the need for the variance is not the result of the applicant’s own actions.**

F (g): *Granting of the variance does not substantially conflict with the Comprehensive Plan or the purposes of this Ordinance.*

Response: **The granting of the variance does not substantially conflict with the Comprehensive Plan or the purposes of this Ordinance.**

In granting a Variance, the Board of Zoning Appeals may attach to it such conditions regarding the location, character, or other features of the proposed building or structure as the Board may consider advisable to protect established property values in the surrounding area or to promote the public health, safety, or general welfare (§153.045 E 2).

Action:

The Board of Zoning Appeals may approve, approve with conditions, or deny Case # BZAV-3-26-047 (Variance request for reduction of the required 25' front/streetside setback for an addition to an existing home in the Low-Density Suburban Residential District) based on the "Findings of Fact" listed above, unless additional information is deemed necessary to make an informed decision. In the event the Board decides to approve the application, the Board should consider the following condition:

1. The applicant shall obtain all required zoning, stormwater, and building permits for the addition.
2. Prior to obtaining a Zoning Permit for the proposed site improvements, the applicant/owner shall provide documentation that the grand trees on the subject parcel in the construction area have been pruned and fertilized as recommended by a Certified Arborist, in order to mitigate any potential damage to the trees by construction.

14 April 2026

STATEMENT FROM HOMEOWNER OF 1216 MIDVALE AVE

SUBJECT: Letter of Intent to Build Addition onto Property at 1216 Midvale Ave

RE: Variance to 25' Setback on Reddick Ave

- 1. Overview:** My wife and I intend to add an addition consisting of a family room extension and main bedroom/ensuite to our home. In the last two years, we have grown from a newly married couple to a family of four, with our second son born in March 2026. Our home has three bedrooms and only one small bath, which is typical of homes built in the early 1960s but not ideal for our emerging family. The footprint of the home only allows for an addition on the side that we have selected. Several factors influence this, including, current bedroom location, lot dimensions, and the presence of our three Live Oaks that sit at all corners of the house, except the one we have chosen. We have spoken to all neighbors (12 properties) and none have voiced any objections. We love our house and neighborhood so moving is not an option. This letter serves as a formal request to conduct a variance review and approval of this project.
- 2. Background:** I have owned this home since April 2018. At the time, it had been vacant and neglected for many years, and in need of multiple improvements to include: roof, kitchen upgrade, interior paint, windows, bathroom remodel, and multiple other exterior repairs. Bottom line is that in the eight years that I have owned my house, we have increased the appearance and value of not just our home, but the overall value to my neighbors and neighborhood in general. We are not building this addition in a desire to make any sort of immediate financial gain (e.g. short-term rental or flip) but to efficiently accommodate our growing family.
- 3. Existence of Live Oaks:** There are three beautiful Live Oaks on the South, East and West corners of the house. We are quite partial to our 150-250 year-old trees and do not want to disturb them. We specifically selected the north-west side of the house and tailored the architectural design (~\$9,000 so far) for this location because it will have the least impact to our trees. There is no substantial vegetation on the proposed location so it will cause minimal disturbance to the landscape. If the addition goes to any other location, then it will require disturbance of the trees.
- 4. Impact to Neighbors:** We have spoken to all our direct and adjacent neighbors, and they are not only ok with the addition, they all overwhelmingly encourage it. Most of us on Midvale and Reddick all know each other and have great relationships. They realize this is a net positive for everyone and completely support our project. Several

neighbors have offered to attend the Variance Meeting in person if necessary but I hope that I won't have to inconvenience them.

***Note: Homeowner will supply Additional Memo speaking to this prepared with signatures from all neighbors.*

5. **Setback from Reddick Avenue:** Initial physical measurements of the proposed footprint show that the addition's setback will be ~28' from Reddick Ave which is within the tolerance of 25'. I did not feel that paying \$4000-\$5000 for a professional survey to confirm this was financially responsible or even necessary.
6. **Design Location:** The finalized architectural design location considered multiple factors when selecting where to build on the existing structure. In addition to the previously discussed three grand Live Oaks, the home's existing layout prevents the addition from being located anywhere else. This is the least invasive option that does not require any re-design or structural work to the existing footprint. The selected side is the only location that can support an addition, and it is the only side that makes visual sense, based off the plans and homeowner's needs. The homeowners have already spent over \$9,000 on architectural and structural designs of the proposed plan.
7. Point of Contact for this letter is the undersigned Homeowner, Nathan Gifford, at 804-938-3066 and/or dgifford14@gmail.com

Nathan Gifford
Homeowner
1216 Midvale Ave

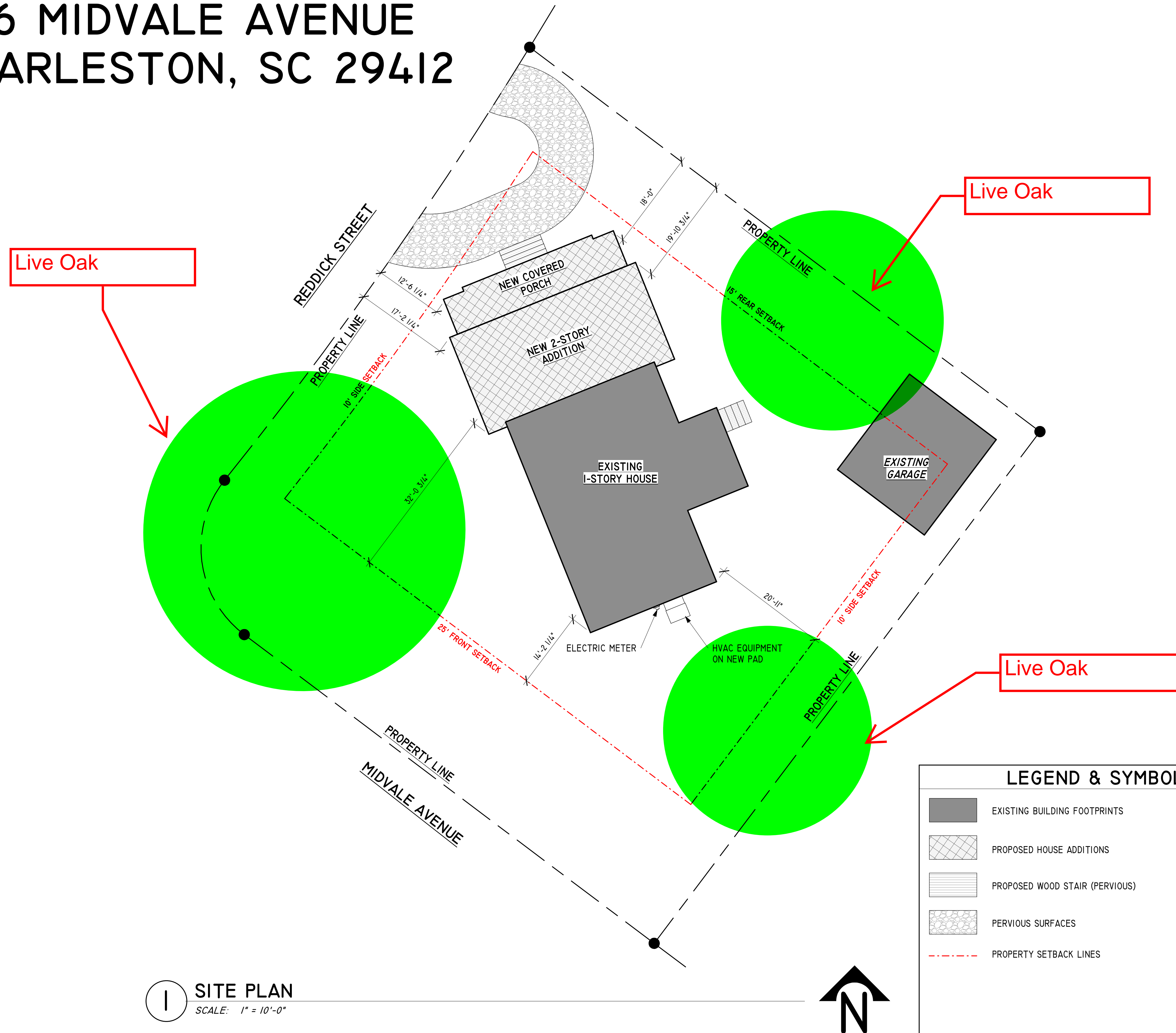
GIFFORD RESIDENCE RENOVATION & ADDITIONS

1216 MIDVALE AVENUE
CHARLESTON, SC 29412

GENERAL PROJECT INFORMATION	
ADDRESS:	1216 MIDVALE AVENUE CHARLESTON, SC 29412
TMS NUMBER:	426-09-00-124
ZONING:	RSL
FEMA FLOOD ZONE:	AE-II' FEMA FIRM PANEL: 45019C0677K
CODE:	2021 INTERNAT'L RESIDENTIAL CODE
EXISTING HOUSE FOOTPRINT:	1,279 SF
PROPOSED HOUSE FOOTPRINT:	2,217 SF
EXISTING HEATED AREA:	1,242 SF
PROPOSED HEATED AREA:	2,330 SF
PROPOSED RIDGE HEIGHT:	26'-10"

SCOPE OF WORK
SELECTIVE INTERIOR RENOVATION PLUS NEW 2-STORY HEATED ADDITION AND NEW COVERED, UNHEATED PORCH TO EXISTING 1-STORY RESIDENCE.

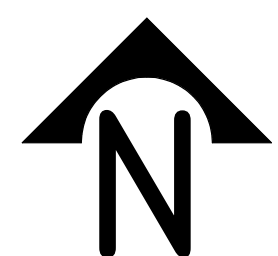
GENERAL PROJECT NOTES	
1	ALL WORK MUST BE DONE IN COMPLIANCE WITH 2021 INTERNATIONAL RESIDENTIAL CODE AS WELL AS ALL LOCAL MODIFICATIONS AND REGULATIONS.
2	CONTRACTOR IS RESPONSIBLE FOR ALL PERMITS.
3	COORDINATE ALL ARCHITECTURAL AND STRUCTURAL DRAWINGS. IN THE EVENT OF A CONFLICT CONTACT ARCHITECT IMMEDIATELY AND AWAIT DIRECTIONS TO PROCEED.
4	ALL WORK IS TO COMPLY WITH CITY OF CHARLESTON ZONING REGULATIONS.
5	DO NOT SCALE ANY DRAWINGS. REFER TO DIMENSIONS ON DRAWINGS OR CONTACT ARCHITECT FOR REQUIRED DIMENSIONS.
6	ANY REQUIRED MODIFICATIONS TO THE HVAC SYSTEM FOR THE ADDED SPACES IS TO BE ENGINEERED AND INSTALLED BY A LICENSED HVAC CONTRACTOR.
7	ALL ELECTRICAL AND PLUMBING WORK IS TO BE PERFORMED BY LICENSED SUBCONTRACTORS AND ALL WORK IS TO BE DONE IN COMPLIANCE WITH ALL CURRENT CODES.



LEGEND & SYMBOLS	
	EXISTING BUILDING FOOTPRINTS
	PROPOSED HOUSE ADDITIONS
	PROPOSED WOOD STAIR (PERVIOUS)
	PERVIOUS SURFACES
	PROPERTY SETBACK LINES

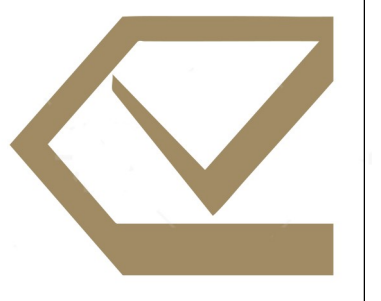
DRAWING INDEX	
GI	COVER SHEET & SITE PLAN
AD1	DEMOLITION PLANS
A1	CONSTRUCTION PLANS
A2	ROOF PLAN
A3	EXTERIOR ELEVATIONS & 3D VIEWS
A4	EXTERIOR ELEVATIONS & 3D VIEWS
A5	SECTIONS & DETAILS
A6	SCHEDULES & DETAILS - WINDOWS & DOORS
S1	FOUNDATION PLAN
S2	FIRST FLOOR FRAMING PLAN
S3	FIRST FLOOR CEILING FRAMING PLAN
S4	SECOND FLOOR CEILING FRAMING PLAN
S5	ROOF FRAMING PLAN
S6	SECTIONS & STRUCTURAL DETAILS
S7	STRUCTURAL DETAILS
NOTES	STRUCTURAL NOTES AND SPECIFICATIONS

1 SITE PLAN
SCALE: 1" = 10'-0"



KRUSKA DESIGN, LLC
MOUNT PLEASANT,
SOUTH CAROLINA
P: 917.734.5641
KRUSKADDESIGN.COM

KRUSKA
Signature
DESIGNS
CUSTOM HOMES



No.	Description	Date

GIFFORD RESIDENCE
RENOVATION & ADDITION
1216 MIDVALE AVENUE
CHARLESTON, SC

COVER SHEET SITE PLAN	
PROJECT NUMBER	25027
DATE	01/19/2026
ISSUE	PERMIT
DRAWN BY	JK
GI	