



**BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS**  
**4:00pm, Tuesday, September 9, 2025**  
**1207 Palm Boulevard, Isle of Palms, SC**

**MINUTES**

**1. Call to order**

Present: Glenn Thornburg, Ted McKnight, Ellen Gower, Susie Wheeler, Bob Miller (arrived at 4:15pm), and Administrator Kerr

**2. Approval of Previous Meeting's Minutes**

**MOTION:** Ms. Gower made a motion to approve the minutes of the August 5, 2025 meeting, and Ms. Wheeler seconded the motion. The minutes passed unanimously.

**3. Swearing in of applicants**

Mr. Thornburg swore in the applicant's representative, Megan Finch Stevens.

**4. Variance: 1 Myrtle Avenue**

Administrator Kerr said, "I'll give just a quick update. So this variance was requested and heard last month by the Board of Zoning Appeals. There was a continuance provided at that meeting, to bring it to you tonight, and I'll just kind of go through the request at a high level because you've already kind of heard it once. But the applicant is requesting two variances to allow the construction of a new front entryway and a set of stairs into the front yard setback. The front stairs are required by the code to be at least 25 feet from the front property line, and they are proposed to be as close as 1.73 feet. The front porch is required to be at least 30 feet from the front property line, and it is proposed to be as close, and I don't know that we have an exact dimension, but about 10 feet from the property line. This property is a legal nonconforming structure, so it predates the zoning code, and that is the reason why the existing structure is into the required setbacks. The way the City's code works is, that portion that is into the setback already can be maintained, it can be repaired, it can be updated, but any new footprint is required to be compliant with the current code, which is which is what gives them (INAUDIBLE) There was a discussion last month about the idea of creating a new plan that would be compliant with the 30' setback. I think that the applicant has gone back and done a little bit of work on that and there are at least, there's at least a new letter in your packet as well as some new, I think that I think they're just schematics but they have had an architect submit a letter and I think it's page 35 of your packet indicating, that in his opinion it was it would be, it would have a very negative impact on the interior floor plan of the house."

He added, "If you find that the property is unreasonably restricted by the code, I think the next step for this board would be how little can you make an adjustment to make it reasonable to use the property."

He also pointed out in the attached letter from the architect that the front door cannot be moved as suggested since it is a load-bearing wall.

Ms. Stevens reviewed her client's request and the unique characteristics of the property leading to this request. She argued that the property's unique conditions create an unnecessary hardship, citing specific code sections (5432 and 5547B) and court precedents (Cobert v. Krawcheck and Early Association v. Horry County). She also emphasized that a front entrance is a critical safety feature for both occupants and first responders, as the house currently lacks a street-facing front door.

Administrator Kerr reviewed the criteria the Board must keep in mind while making this decision, noting that the criteria citing that "the application of the ordinance or, resolution of the particular piece of property would effectively prohibit or, unreasonably restrict the utilization of the property" is where the Board usually gets "hung up."

He suggested "if you all say, okay, they cannot make reasonable use of this property, they're entitled to a variance, then I think some additional study would be necessary to figure out how little can you do to make reasonable use" of the property.

Ms. Stevens expressed her understanding that the Board must be careful in granting variances lest a precedent be set. She added that one of her goals is for the record to reflect how different this piece of property is from any other property on the island. She did not believe that another request such as this would come before the Board.

Administrator Kerr said City Code does not require a front door for safety reasons but acknowledged that Ms. Stevens is making the case for something safer than what code requires. Mr. McKnight said he believes the "safety issue wins the day," but the challenge is how to restrict it.

After some discussion, Ms. Stevens was asked to return with a revised design that incorporates the Board's feedback to minimize the structure's encroachment, specifically focusing on an uncovered, minimum-sized, and optimally positioned entrance. For added clarity, Administrator Kerr said to make the porch "uncovered and the minimum landing size possible and that by doing that makes the setback 25' instead of 30'. So that's first. That's reduced the amount of variance that is required. Then take that minimal exit and put it as far from the front property line as possible."

**MOTION: Ms. Gower made a motion to grant a continuance to the next meeting to review revised drawings based on the Board's instruction. Ms. Wheeler seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.**

Administrator Kerr again clarified the instructions to the architect: “Uncovered, code minimum width pushed as far away from that front property line as can be made without getting into adjusting the interior floor plan.”

**6. Adjournment**

Mr. McKnight made a motion to adjourn, and Ms. Gower seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at approximately 4:45pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Nicole DeNeane  
City Clerk