

Case # BZA-07-25-00881 Charleston County BZA Meeting of September 8, 2025

Applicant: Matt McCauley of Permit Expediters of South Carolina, LLC

Property Owner: William H. Branham, III, Trustee of Family Trust

Property Location: 1478 West Deep Creek Overlook – East Area

TMS#: 617-14-00-063

Zoning District: Rural Residential (RR) Zoning District

Request:

Variance request to reduce the required 50' Critical Line setback by 14.6' to 35.4' for a proposed swimming pool and deck and to reduce the required 35' Critical Line buffer by 6' to 29' for a proposed fence.

Requirement:

The Charleston County Zoning and Land Development Regulations Ordinance (ZLDR), Chapter 4 Base Zoning Districts, Article 4.10 RR, Rural Residential District, Sec. 4.10.3 Density/Intensity and Dimensional Standards requires a 50' Critical Line setback and a 35' Critical Line buffer.

Article 4.24 Waterfront Development Standards, Sec. 4.24.7 Prohibited Activities states, "The following activities are specifically prohibited in a buffer area: A. Removal excavation, or disturbance of the soil, except for minimal disturbance associated with the planting of shrubs or trees for landscaping; B. Grassed lawns requiring regular maintenance such as herbicides; pesticides, fertilizers and frequent mowing; C. Gardens, fences, or structures, except for permitted crossings; D. Paved or other impervious surfaces; E. Destruction or addition of plant life that would alter the existing pattern of vegetation; and F. Driveways of any surface type."



CHAPTER 4 | BASE ZONING DISTRICTS

ARTICLE 4.10 RR, RURAL RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT

Sec. 4.10.1 Purpose and Intent

The RR, Rural Residential Zoning District implements the Rural Residential policies of the Comprehensive Plan.

Sec. 4.10.2 Use Regulations

Uses are allowed in the RR District in accordance with the Use Regulations of CHAPTER 6, Use Regulations.

Sec. 4.10.3 Density/Intensity and Dimensional Standards

All Development in the RR District shall be subject to the following Density/Intensity and Dimensional Standards:

Table 4.10.3, RR Density/Intens	ity and Dimensional Standards			
	Non-Waterfront Development Standards	Waterfront Development Standards		
MAXIMUM DENSITY	1 Principal Dwelling Unit per 3 Acres			
MINIMUM LOT AREA	30,000 sq. ft.	1 acre		
MINIMUM LOT WIDTH	100 feet	125 feet		
MINIMUM LOT WIDTH AVERAGE	N/A	135 feet		
MINIMUM SETBACKS				
Front/Street Side	50 feet			
Interior Side	15 feet			
Rear	30 feet			
WETLAND, WATERWAY, AND OCRM CRITICAL LINE SETBACK	N/A	50 feet		
WETLAND, WATERWAY, AND OCRM CRITICAL LINE BUFFER	N/A	35 feet		
MAXIMUM BUILDING COVERAGE [1]	30% of Lot			
MAXIMUM IMPERVIOUS SURFACE COVERAGE [1]	40% of Lot or as allowed by the current edition of the Charleston County Stormwater Manual			
MAXIMUM HEIGHT	35 feet			
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Note: Refer to ARTICLE 8.14, Conservation Subdivisions, for alternative Development standards, where applicable.

Effective on: 9/10/2017, as amended

Sec. 4.10.4 Other Regulations

Development in the RR District shall comply with all other applicable regulations of this Ordinance, including the standards of CHAPTER 9, *Development Standards*.

^[1] Maximum Impervious Surface Coverage applies only to Residential Development on Parcels less than 30,000 square feet in size. When the Maximum Impervious Surface Coverage requirement applies, the Maximum Building Coverage requirement shall not apply.



CHAPTER 4 | BASE ZONING DISTRICTS

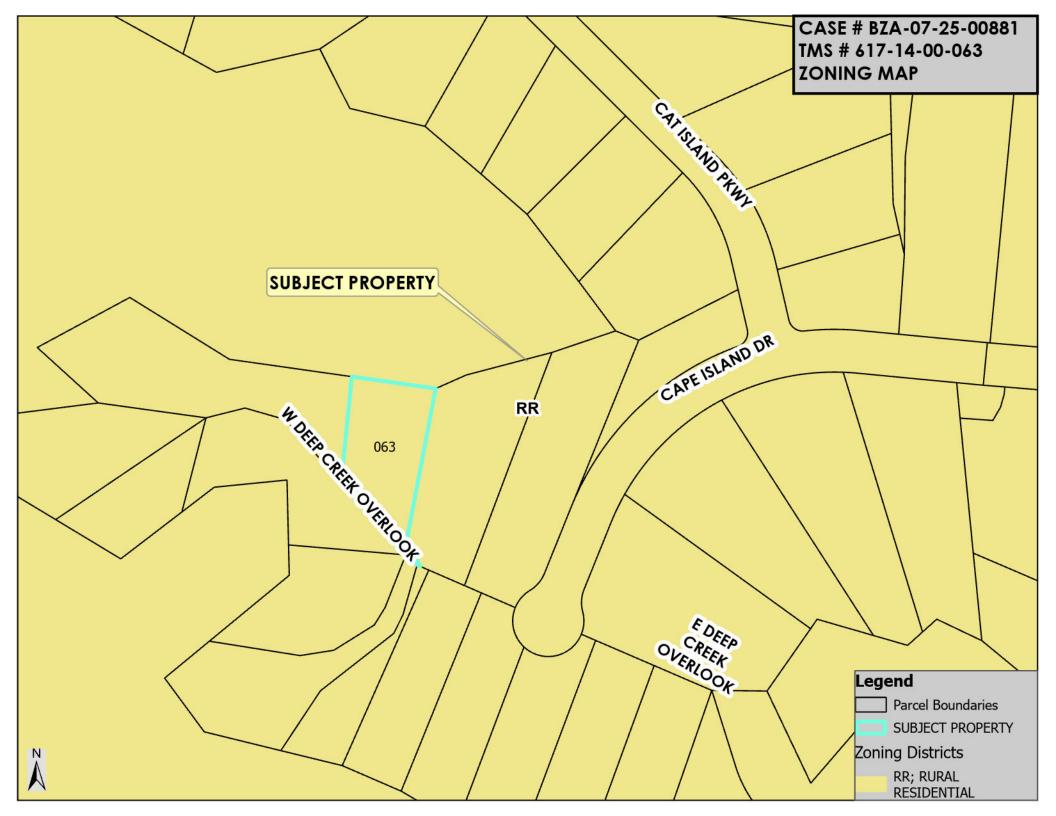
ARTICLE 4.24 WATERFRONT DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

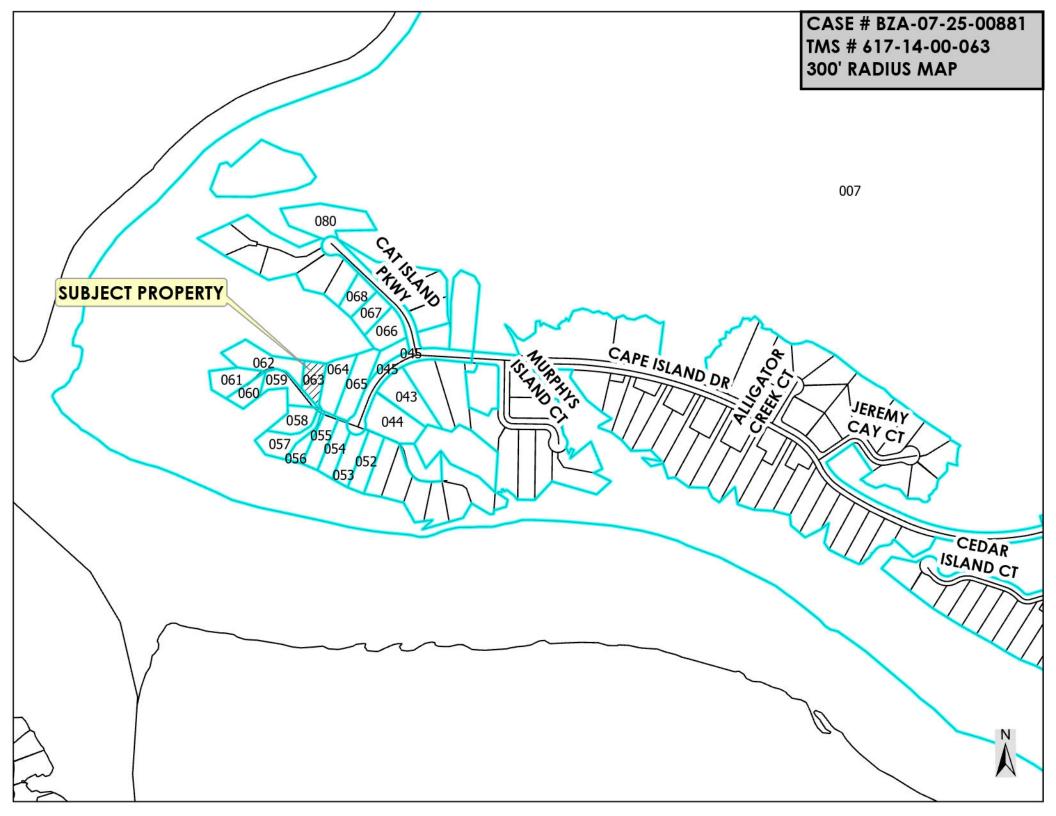
Sec. 4.24.7 Prohibited Activities

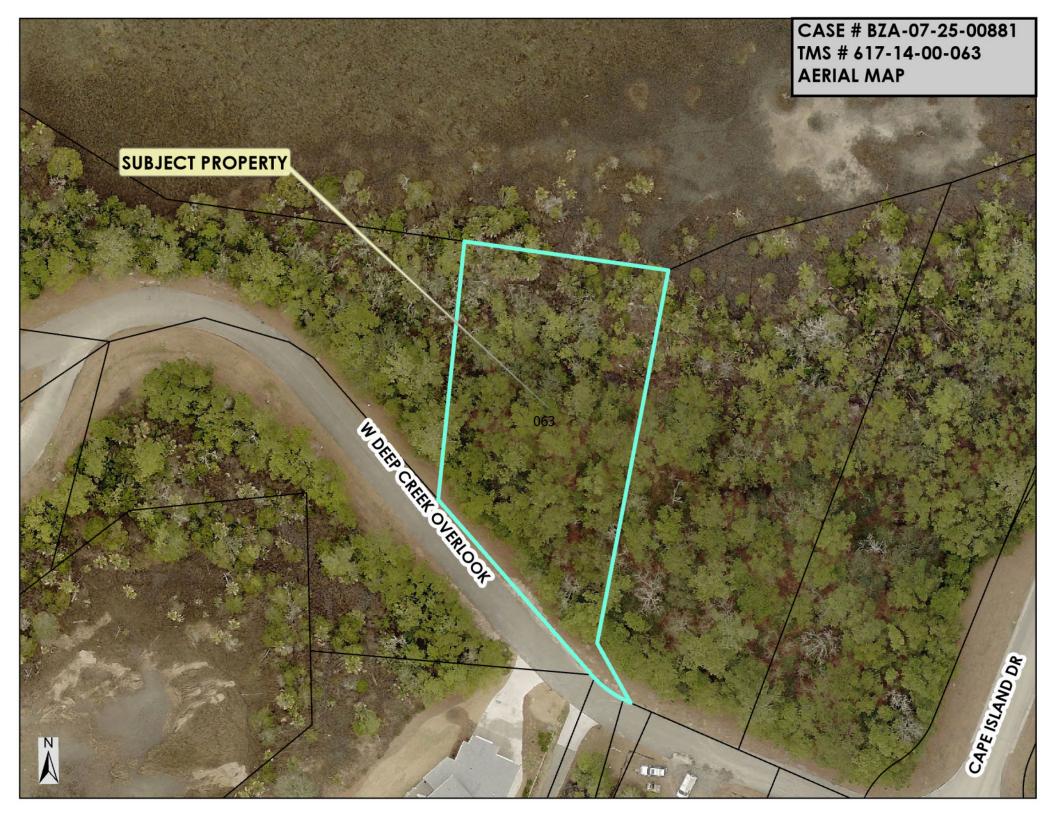
The following activities are specifically prohibited in a buffer area:

- A. Removal, excavation, or disturbance of the soil, except for minimal disturbance associated with the planting of shrubs or trees for landscaping;
- B. Grassed lawns requiring regular maintenance such as herbicides, pesticides, fertilizers, and frequent mowing;
- C. Gardens, fences, or Structures, except for permitted crossings;
- D. Paved or other impervious surfaces;
- E. Destruction or addition of plant life that would alter the existing pattern of vegetation; and
- F. Driveways of any surface type.

Effective on: 12/6/2022, as amended









Case # BZA-07-25-00881
BZA Meeting of September 8, 2025
Subject Property: 1478 West Deep Creek Overlook — East Area

Proposal: Variance request to reduce the required 50' Critical Line setback by 14.6' to 35.4' for a proposed swimming pool and deck and to reduce the required 35' Critical Line buffer

by 6' to 29' for a proposed fence.



Subject Property





Subject Property





Staff Review:

The applicant, Matt McCauley of Permit Expediters of South Carolina, LLC, on behalf of the property owner, William H. Branham, III, Trustee of Family Trust, is requesting a variance to reduce the required 50' Critical Line setback by 14.6' to 35.4' for a proposed swimming pool and deck and to reduce the required 35' Critical Line buffer by 6' to 29' for a proposed fence at 1478 West Deep Creek Overlook (TMS # 617-14-00-063) in the East Area of Charleston County.

The subject property contains 0.69 acres of highland. A single-family residence is currently being constructed on the property. A Zoning Permit for the home was obtained in June 2024. The subject property and adjacent properties are located in the Rural Residential (RR) Zoning District in Phase 2 of the Paradise Island subdivision that was platted in 2004. Charleston County adopted required setbacks and buffers from the Critical Line in 2001. The applicant's letter of intent states, "The project proposal includes a modest in-ground swimming pool with associated decking and fencing, more specifically as shown on the enclosed site plan. Specific variance requests are as follows: Critical Line Setback/Buffer for In-Ground Swimming Pool, Decking, and Fencing: We request approval of the site plan enclosed for a proposed in-ground swimming pool, pool deck, and pool fencing, including a 35.4' critical line setback for the proposed pool/decking in lieu of the 50.0' critical line setback required by the County's ZLDR and a 29.0' critical line buffer for the proposed pool fencing in lieu of the 35.0' critical line buffer required by the County's ZLDR."

Applicable *ZLDR* requirement:

The Charleston County Zoning and Land Development Regulations Ordinance (ZLDR), Chapter 4 Base Zoning Districts, Article 4.10 RR, Rural Residential District, Sec. 4.10.3 Density/Intensity and Dimensional Standards requires a 50' Critical Line setback and a 35' Critical Line buffer.

Article 4.24 Waterfront Development Standards, Sec. 4.24.7 Prohibited Activities states, "The following activities are specifically prohibited in a buffer area: A. Removal excavation, or disturbance of the soil, except for minimal disturbance associated with the planting of shrubs or trees for landscaping; B. Grassed lawns requiring regular maintenance such as herbicides; pesticides, fertilizers and frequent mowing; C. Gardens, fences, or structures, except for permitted crossings; D. Paved or other impervious surfaces; E. Destruction or addition of plant life that would alter the existing pattern of vegetation; and F. Driveways of any surface type."

Staff conducted a site visit of the subject property on August 19, 2025. Please review the attachments for further information regarding this request.

Planning Director Review and Report regarding Approval Criteria of §3.10.6:

§3.10.6(1): There are extraordinary and exceptional conditions pertaining to the particular piece of property;

Response:

There may be extraordinary and exceptional conditions pertaining to the 0.69-acre subject property due to its unique shape and limited buildable area. In addition, the HOA has a minimum square footage requirement for all single-family homes. The applicant's letter of intent states, "At the time Big Paradise Island, Phase 2 was platted, the critical line was certified by SCDHEC-OCRM as the jagged rear property line identified on the enclosed subdivision plat. The critical line as depicted on the subdivision plat is dynamic in nature and subject to a 3-year expiration; accordingly, the critical line certification had expired and needed to be recertified. Upon recent survey of the property, the critical line was determined to be located as shown on the enclosed site plan, significantly landward of the critical line as determined at the time the subdivision was platted. The relocated critical line as currently certified, together with the associated critical line setback and buffer, encumber approximately 0.313 acres of the 0.689-acre lot, while another approximately 0.239 acres is encumbered by front and side minimum setbacks." Therefore, the request may meet this criterion.

§3.10.6(2): These conditions do not generally apply to other property in the vicinity;

Response:

The conditions that exist on the subject property, 1478 West Deep Creek Overlook, may be unique in that it has an irregular shape. The applicant's letter of intent states, "While properties in the vicinity of the subject property are largely encumbered by a critical line with associated setback and buffer requirements, the impacts of these elements to the developable area of the subject property far exceed that which is customary of other parcels in the vicinity." Therefore, the request may meet this criterion.

§3.10.6(3): 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, Article 4.10 RR, Rural Residential District, Sec. 4.10.3 Density/Intensity and Dimensional Standards, and Article 4.24 Waterfront Development Standards, Sec. 4.24.7 Prohibited Activities to 1478 West Deep Creek Overlook, does not unreasonably restrict the utilization of the property. Therefore, the request does not meet this criterion. However, the applicant's letter of intent contends, "The new critical line location, along with its associated setback and buffering requirements, severely and unreasonably restrict the utilization of the proper in that they do not allow for construction of a home consistent with requirements of the development's private restrictions of record and a modest pool with associated improvements. Swimming pools and their appurtenances are

customary and reasonable within the development. Efforts have been made to minimize the variances requested herein by shrinking the size of the pool and relocating the pool side-to-side on the lot front that which was originally contemplated. Additionally, the land disturbance associated with the pool fencing is very minimal, only the necessary post supports sufficient for an approximately 70' length of fence (to be determined by the final fence design, but likely only 10-12 fence posts).

The property owner's spouse (Tracy), who will reside at the home on completion of construction, suffers a multitude of medical conditions and physical ailments...Drs. Haro and Adhikari highly recommend aquatic therapy for long term rehabilitation, therapies which will be required for the remainder of Tracy's life. A pool at the home is a 'reasonable accommodation' to provide for Tracy's ongoing therapy without undue stress and risk of injury.

The following points are also worth noting:

- The proposed in-ground swimming pool and associated pool deck is located wholly outside of the 35' critical line buffer, encroaching only into the 50' critical line setback, which variance could be granted administratively by the Zoning & Planning Director in accordance with ZLDR Ordinance §4.24.4(A); however, it is our understanding that staff will not exercise this authority to accommodate the installation of swimming pools. County Council's willingness to permit staff to exercise discretion in waiving the critical line setback down to meet the critical line buffer demonstrates a much greater importance placed on the 35' critical line buffer rather than the 50' critical setback.
- The barrier surrounding the pool is a requirement of the 2021 International Swimming Pool and Spa Code; while this code has no/ been adopted by the South Carolina Building Code Council or by ordinance of Charleston County, the County's Building Services Department requires a banker be provided in accordance with the 2021 International Swimming Pool and Spa Code. We have decided not to challenge or seek to overturn the requirement for a barrier, as it is a life safety matter in the interest of the subject property owner and the community as a whole."

§3.10.6(4): 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: Authorization of this request may not be of substantial detriment to adjacent properties or to the public good. The applicant's letter of intent states, "The authorization of the requested variances will not be detrimental to adjacent properties or to the public good. Of the 21 built-upon lots within Big Paradise Island, Phase 2, all but 5 lots have swimming pools; accordingly, swimming

pools are customary and reasonable accessory structures to homes within the community." Therefore, the character of the Rural Residential Zoning District may not be harmed by the granting of this variance. Thus, the request may meet this criterion.

§3.10.6(5):

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 nonconforming use of land, or to change the zoning district boundaries shown on the official zoning map. The fact that property may be utilized more profitably, should a variance be granted, may not be considered grounds for a variance;

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. Therefore, the request <u>meets</u> this criterion.

§3.10.6(6):

The need for the variance is not the result of the applicant's own actions;

Response:

The need for the variance may be the result of the applicant's own actions. Therefore, the request <u>may not meet</u> this criterion. However, the applicant's letter of intent contends "The variances requested herein are the result of the substantial movement of the critical area line between July 2, 2002 (the certification in place when Big Paradise Island, Phase 2 was platted) and November 8, 2024 (the certification in place at the time the subject parcel is being developed), not a result of the property owner's actions."

§3.10.6(7):

Granting of the variance does not substantially conflict with the Comprehensive Plan or the purposes of the Ordinance;

Response:

The RR Zoning District implements the Rural Residential, policies of the Comprehensive Plan: LU1. states: "Protect and enhance the environmental quality of natural resources and continue to require restrictive development standards along the Critical Line to protect water quality, wildlife habitat, and scenic vistas." Granting of the variance may not substantially conflict with the Comprehensive Plan or the purposes of the Ordinance if stormwater mitigation measures, such as the use of silt fencing, rain barrels, rain gardens, are used to reduce the flow of stormwater into the marsh. In addition, the applicant's letter of intent states, "The variances requested do not conflict with the intents of the Comprehensive Plan and are not at odds with the Ordinance. The requested variances are minimal in nature, are the minimum necessary to provide relief, and fulfill the intended environmental protections contemplated by the County's ZLDR; that said, the property owner is open to any recommended conditions to approval of the requested variances as the board feels necessary to protect the adjacent critical area." Therefore, the request may meet this criterion.

Board of Zoning Appeals' Action:

According to Article 3.10 Zoning Variances, Section §3.10.6 Approval Criteria of the Charleston County Zoning and Land Development Regulations Ordinance (ZLDR), (adopted July 18, 2006), 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 (§3.10.6A). A Zoning Variance may be granted in an individual case of unnecessary hardship if the Board of Zoning Appeals makes and explains in writing their findings (§3.10.6B Approval Criteria).

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 (§3.10.6C).

The Board of Zoning Appeals may approve, approve with conditions or deny Case # BZA-07-25-00881 [Variance request to reduce the required 50' Critical Line setback by 14.6' to 35.4' for a proposed swimming pool and deck and to reduce the required 35' Critical Line buffer by 6' to 29' for a proposed fence at 1478 West Deep Creek Overlook (TMS # 617-14-00-063) in the East Area of Charleston County] based on the BZA's "Findings of Fact", 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 recommended by Staff:

- 1. Prior to commencing construction, silt fencing shall be installed along the Critical Line. The silt fencing shall be maintained for the duration of the construction.
- 2. The applicant shall use stormwater mitigation measures, such as the use of rain barrels or rain gardens, to reduce the flow of stormwater into the marsh.
- 3. The encroachment areas shall be limited to the footprint areas shown on the submitted site plan.

ZONING VARIANCE APPLICATION Charleston County Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA)

Property Information				
Subject Property Address: 1478 West Deep Creek Overlook, Awendaw, South Carolina 29429				
Tax Map Number(s): 617-14-00-063				
Current Use of Property: single-family residence				
Proposed Use of Property: single-family residence				
Zoning Variance Description:				
Applicant Information (Required)				
Applicant Name (please print): Matt McCauley				
Name of Company (if applicable): Permit Expediters of South Carolina, LLC				
Mailing Address:				
City:	S <u>tate</u> :		Zip Code:	
Email Address:	nail Address: Phone #:			
Applicant Signature: Matt McCauley		Date: May 20, 2025		
Representative Information (Complete only if applicable. Attorney, Builder, Engineer, Surveyor etc.)				
Print Representative Name and Name of Company: Permit Expediters of South Carolina, LLC c/o Matt McCauley				
Mailing Address:				
City:	State:	Zi	p Code:	
Email Address:		Phone #:		
Designation of Agent (Complete only if the Applicant listed above is not the Property Owner.)				
I hereby appoint the person named as Applicant and/or Representative as my (our) agent to represent me (us) in this application.				
Property Owner(s) Name(s) (please print): William H. Branham, III, Trustee				
Name of Company (if applicable, LLC etc.): William H. Branham, III Family Trust				
Property Owner(s) Mailing Address:				
City:	State: Zip Code:		Phone #:	
Property Owner(s) Email Address:				
Property Owner(s) Signature: Wellia & Bulante PE Date: May 20, 2025				
FOR OFFICE USE ONLY:				
Zoning District: R Flood Zone: AE-8 (345k) Date Filed: 729 25 Fee Part:				
Application #: BZ A-07-25-088 TMS #: 617-14-00-063 Staff Initials: yu				



Permit Expediters of South Carolina, LLC

June 29, 2025

Charleston County Zoning & Planning Department Lonnie Hamilton III Public Services Building 4045 Bridge View Drive North Charleston, SC 29405

Attention: Jenny J. Werking, AICP

Dear Ms. Werking:

Letter of intent - setback/buffer variance - 1478 West Deep Creek Overlook, Awendaw, SC 29429

On behalf of William H. Branham, III, Trustee of the William H. Branham, III Family Trust dated June 9, 2022, as owner of Charleston Co. TMS 617-14-00-063, a property addressed at 1478 West Deep Creek Overlook, Awendaw, we respectfully request a variance from the critical line setback and buffer requirements outlined in the Charleston County Zoning and Land Development Regulations. The project proposal includes a modest in-ground swimming pool with associated decking & fencing, more specifically as shown on the enclosed site plan. Specific variance requests are as follows:

Critical Line Setback/Buffer for In-Ground Swimming Pool, Decking, and Fencing:

We request approval of the site plan enclosed for a proposed in-ground swimming pool, pool deck, and pool fencing, including a 35.4' critical line setback for the proposed pool/decking in lieu of the 50.0' critical line setback required by the County's ZLDR and a 29.0' critical line buffer for the proposed pool fencing in lieu of the 35.0' critical line buffer required by the County's ZLDR.

The variances requested above are necessary to accommodate the proposed development on the parcel. The requirements of ZLDR Ordinance §3.10.6 are specifically met as follows:

1. Are there extraordinary and exceptional conditions pertaining to the subject property? Explain:

At the time Big Paradise Island, Phase 2 was platted, the critical line was certified by SCDHEC-OCRM as the jagged rear property line identified on the enclosed subdivision plat. The critical line as depicted on the subdivision plat is dynamic in nature and subject to a 3 year expiration; accordingly the critical line certification had expired and needed to be recertified. Upon recent survey of the property, the critical line was determined to be located as shown on the enclosed site plan, *significantly* landward of the critical line as determined at the time the subdivision was platted. The relocated critical line as currently certified, together with the associated critical line setback and buffer, encumber approximately 0.313 acres of the 0.689 acre lot, while another approximately 0.239 acres is encumbered by front and side minimum setbacks.

2. Do these conditions generally apply to other property in the vicinity or are they unique to the subject property? Explain:

While properties in the vicinity of the subject property are largely encumbered by a critical line with associated setback and buffer requirements, the impacts of these elements to the developable area of the subject property *far exceed* that which is customary of other parcels in the vicinity.

3. Because of these extraordinary and exceptional conditions, would the application of this Ordinance to the subject property effectively prohibit or unreasonably restrict the utilization of the property? Explain:

The new critical line location, along with its associated setback and buffering requirements, severely and unreasonably restrict the utilization of the property in that they do not allow for construction of a home consistent with requirements of the development's private restrictions of record and a modest pool with associated improvements. Swimming pools and their appurtenances are customary and reasonable within the development. Efforts have been made to minimize the variances requested herein by shrinking the size of the pool and relocating the pool side-to-side on the lot from that which was originally contemplated. Additionally, the land disturbance associated with the pool fencing is very minimal, only the necessary post supports sufficient for an approximately 70' length of fence (to be determined by the final fence design, but likely only 10-12 fence posts).

The property owner's spouse (Tracy), who will reside at the home on completion of construction, suffers a multitude of medical conditions and physical ailments, including but not limited to:

- (a) a recent massive seizure, resulting in a 6 week hospitalization, loss of such basic skills as chewing, walking, and performing daily tasks. Continual weekly therapy is required.
- (b) a rheumatoid arthritis diagnosis, under the care of Dr. Adhikari of Low Country Rheumatology and required bimonthly infusions.
- (c) a torn knee ligament requiring surgery, under the care of Dr. Haro with Sports Medicine Specialties of Charleston.

Drs. Haro and Adhikari highly recommend aquatic therapy for long term rehabilitation, therapies which will be required for the remainder of Tracy's life. A pool at the home is a "reasonable accommodation" to provide for Tracy's ongoing therapy without undue stress and risk of injury.

The following points are also worth noting:

- (a) The proposed in-ground swimming pool and associated pool deck is located wholly outside of the 35' critical line buffer, encroaching only into the 50' critical line setback, which variance *could* be granted administratively by the Zoning & Planning Director in accordance with ZLDR Ordinance §4.24.4(A); however, it is our understanding that staff will not exercise this authority to accommodate the installation of swimming pools. County Council's willingness to permit staff to exercise discretion in waiving the critical line setback down to meet the critical line buffer demonstrates a much greater importance placed on the 35' critical line buffer rather than the 50' critical setback.
- (b) The barrier surrounding the pool is a requirement of the 2021 International Swimming Pool and Spa Code; while this code has *not* been adopted by the South Carolina Building Code Council or by ordinance of Charleston County, the County's Building Services Department *requires* a barrier be provided in accordance with the 2021 International Swimming Pool and Spa Code. We have decided *not* to challenge or seek to overturn the requirement for a barrier, as it is a life safety matter in the interest of the subject property owner and the community as a whole.
- 4. Will the authorization of a variance be a substantial detriment to adjacent property or to the public good? Will the character of the zoning district be harmed if this variance is granted? Explain:

The authorization of the requested variances will not be detrimental to adjacent properties or to the public good. Of the 21 built-upon lots within Big Paradise Island, Phase 2, all but 5 lots have swimming pools; accordingly, swimming pools are customary and reasonable accessory structures to homes within the community.

5. The BZA 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 Nonconforming Use of land, or to change the zoning district boundaries on the Official Zoning Map. The fact that property may be utilized more profitably if a Zoning Variance is granted shall not be considered grounds for granting a Zoning Variance. Does the variance request meet this criterion?

The requested variances do not involve any of the above referenced prohibited items.

6. Is the need for the variance the result of your own actions? Explain:

The variances requested herein are the result of the substantial movement of the critical area line between July 2, 2002 (the certification in place when Big Paradise Island, Phase 2 was platted) and November 8, 2024 (the certification in place at the time the subject parcel is being developed), *not* a result of the property owner's actions.

7. Does the variance substantially conflict with the Charleston County Comprehensive Plan or the purposes of the Ordinance? Explain:

The variances requested do not conflict with the intents of the Comprehensive Plan and are not at odds with the Ordinance. The requested variances are minimal in nature, are the minimum necessary to provide relief, and fulfill the intended environmental protections contemplated by the County's ZLDR; that said, the property owner is open to any recommended conditions to approval of the requested variances as the board feels necessary to protect the adjacent critical area.

I trust this provides sufficient explanation of the request to vary the critical line setback and buffer outlined above, explanation as to why the variance is necessary, and evidence for why the variance requested is both appropriate and justified. However, please feel free to contact me with questions or should you require anything further.

Respectfully,

Matt McCauley
Matt McCauley

President

