



City of St. George, Louisiana
Board of Adjustment
Minutes

Monday, April 7, 2025 at 5:30pm
St. George City Hall, 14100 Airline Hwy, St. George, LA 70817

1. Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance. Christina Peck called the meeting to order at 5:30pm.

2. Roll Call

Board Member Present

Braden Jones
Christina Peck
Robert Douglas
Sam Speer

Board Member Absent

Sheila Lewis

Others Present

Melissa Guilbeau, Interim
Planning Director
Rachel Zhou, Planner
Mark Balkin, counsel

3. Minutes. Sam Speer moved to approve the March 10, 2025 minutes; Braden Jones seconded. Without objection, the minutes were approved.

4. Public Hearing

- a. **V25-05 Exception for Fence Height:** This 3.66-acre property is located at 11812 Oak Shadow Ave. The applicant requests an exception to Sec. 7:9.5.2.D.2.b to increase the height of a solid wooden fence from 4 ft to 8 ft in the front yard in the A1 Single Family Residential Zoning District. The Board has the authority to permit this exception under Sec. 2.3.3.D.7. (Applicant: Fran Hitt)

Jeff Barbin, attorney representing the applicant, presented the request and argued that the standard fence height restrictions for front yards should not apply to this property due to its irregular shape and lack of direct street frontage.

Christina Peck inquired whether the proposed fence adjoins a common walking trail functioning similarly to a sidewalk in a traditional subdivision, and what the setback is between the fence and the trail. Mr. Barbin asserted that the trail does not function as a typical sidewalk and confirmed a minimum 5 ft setback between the fence and the walking trail.

Sam Speer asked for the rationale behind the proposed 8 ft fence height. Mr. Barbin cited safety and privacy concerns for the property owners, particularly for children and pets.

Braden Jones asked about the Homeowners Association's (HOA) review of the fence. Mr. Barbin responded that the Architectural Control Committee (ACC) did not

approve the fence but contended the ACC was not properly constituted. He also noted that the City of St. George does not enforce HOA covenants.

Christina Peck asked whether the permitted portion of the fence had already been constructed. Mr. Barbin confirmed it had and explained how the front and side yards of the subject property relate to surrounding lots.

Fran Hitt, the applicant, spoke further to emphasize the need for privacy and safety, especially related to the front porch and side yard.

Public Comment in opposition:

- Robert Ainsworth, on behalf of the Oakbrook Civic Association
- Craig and Staci Duhe, residents
- Laurie Adams, Civic Association President, who presented photos of existing fences and neighborhood character along the walking trail
- Scott Deumite, resident, who presented a map and historical context of the neighborhood, raising concerns about obstructed sightlines
- Andy and Kendra Farries, submitted written comments prior to the meeting

In rebuttal, Mr. Barbin disputed the opposition's characterizations, emphasizing that the requested fence would not be visible from the street.

Motion to approve: Sam Speer; seconded by Robert Douglas

Yea: 0

Nay: 4

Motion failed and V25-05 was denied.

- b. **V25-06 Exception for Fence Height:** This 0.37-acre property is located at 9363 Gail Drive. The applicant requests an exception to Sec. 7:9.5.2.D.2.b to increase the height of a solid wooden fence from 4 ft to 6 ft and 8 ft in the corner side yard in the A1 Single Family Residential Zoning District. The Board has the authority to permit this exception under Sec. 2.3.3.D.7. (Applicant: Christina Sharon)

Christina Sharon, the property owner and applicant, presented the request and justification, emphasizing the need for additional privacy without obstructing views of oncoming traffic.

In response to a question from Braden Jones, the applicant confirmed there is no HOA.

Sam Speer inquired whether the plan was to build atop an existing 4 ft fence. Ms. Sharon confirmed that was the case.

Sherri Daigle, a nearby resident, expressed concern about traffic safety at the nearby turn and requested a stop sign for improved safety.

Taylor King, fence contractor for the project, presented photo diagrams to demonstrate that the proposed fence would not restrict sightlines or visibility from the vanishing point.

Motion to approve: Sam Speer; seconded by Robert Douglas

Yea: 2 (Speer, Douglas)

Nay: 2 (Jones, Peck)

Motion failed and V25-06 was denied.

- c. **V25-07 Variance to Reduce Rear Yard Setback:** This 0.18-acre property is located at 9535 Inniswylde Drive. The applicant requests a variance to Sec. 7:11.2.1 to reduce the rear setback from 25 ft to 15 ft for a proposed single-family dwelling in the A2.7 Single Family Residential Zoning District. The Board has the authority to permit the variance under Sec. 7:2.3.3.C. (Applicant: Bardwell Construction)

Jon Demma, representing Bardwell Construction, presented the request and cited the lot's irregular shape and configuration as justification. He stated that the proposed orientation of the dwelling would be more compatible with the surrounding neighborhood character.

Braden Jones inquired about the location of mechanical equipment. Mr. Demma confirmed that there is sufficient space on the lot to accommodate an equipment yard for AC unit or generator.

Traditions Construction, LLC, owner of the abutting Lot 50, submitted a Letter of No Objection prior to the meeting.

Scott Bardwell, Declarant and President of the Inniswylde HOA, submitted written support for the request as part of the application package.

Motion to approve: Sam Speer; seconded by Braden Jones

Yea: 4

Nay: 0

Motion passed and V25-07 was approved.

- d. **V25-08 Variance to Reduce Rear Yard Setback:** This 0.29-acre property is located at 9736 Vouvray Drive. The applicant requests a variance to UDC Sec. 7:11.2.1 to reduce the rear setback from 25 ft to 20'-9" for a proposed building addition in the R Rural Zoning District. The Board has the authority to permit the variance under Sec. 7:2.3.3.C. (Applicant: Ricky Bravata)

Ricky Bravata presented the request, explaining the existing site conditions and emphasizing that the proposed addition would have no adverse impact on adjacent properties.

Christina Peck inquired about exterior finishes and drainage. Mr. Bravata addressed these questions.

Councilmember Max Himmel spoke in support of the request, citing observations made during a personal site visit.

Five signed Letters of Intent from neighboring property owners in support of the request were submitted as part of the application package.

Motion to approve: Braden Jones; seconded by Sam Speer

Yea: 4

Nay: 0

Motion passed and V25-08 was approved.

5. Other Business: None

6. General and Public Comments: None

7. Adjournment. Sam Speer moved to adjourn; Braden Jones seconded. Without objection, the meeting was adjourned at 6:32pm.