



Chatham County Zoning Board of Appeals

Arthur A. Mendonsa Hearing Room
August 27, 2024 9:00 a.m.
Minutes

AUGUST 27, 2024 CHATHAM COUNTY ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

Members Present: James Coursey, Chair
Robert Vineyard - Vice Chair
Jenna Barzaga
Meredith Stone

Member Absent: Kewaan Drayton
Ben Polote
Tia Acker-Moore

Others Present: Edward Morrow, Current Planning/Development Services Director
Brad Clements, Current Planning/Development Services Senior Planner
Nykobe Richardson, Development Services Intern
Sally Helm, Administrative Assistant II, Development Services/Current Planning
Hind Patel, IT Helpdesk & Support

Chatham County Staff Present: Jefferson Kirkland, Environmental Program Manager

I. Call to Order and Welcome

II. Pledge of Allegiance

III. Notices, Proclamations and Acknowledgements

IV. Petitions Ready for Hearing

V. Approval of Minutes

1. Approval of the July 23, 2024 Meeting Minutes

📎 [july-23-2024-chatham-county-ZBA-minutes.pdf](#)

Motion

Approval of the July 23, 2024 Meeting Minutes.

Vote Results (Approved)

Motion: Meredith Stone

Second: Robert Vinyard

James Coursey - Aye

Meredith Stone - Aye

Robert Vinyard - Aye

Benjamin Polote, Jr. - Not Present

Kewaan Drayton	- Not Present
Jenna Barzaga	- Aye
Tia Acker-Moore	- Not Present

VI. Item(s) Requested to be Removed from the Final Agenda

VII. Consent Agenda

VIII. Old Business

IX. Regular Agenda

2. 1104 Wilmington Island Rd | Variance for reduction of Riparian Buffer | ZBA-0724-000491

🔗 [Site Photo](#)

🔗 [Staff Report_ZBA-0724-000491_abm.pdf](#)

🔗 [1104WilmingtonIsRd_FloodZones.pdf](#)

🔗 [1102 Wilmington Island Rd POOL 5 062724.pdf](#)

🔗 [AERIAL-SITE MAP ZBA-0724-000491.pdf](#)

🔗 [Application.pdf](#)

Mr. Morrow, Director of Development Services / Current Planning presented the Staff Report. **Mr. Morrow** stated that the Petitioner was requesting a 5-foot variance from Chatham County's 10-foot riparian buffer required by the Environmental Overlay district to construct a pool at 1104 Wilmington Island Road. The property is 0.81 acres and located within the R-1-A/EO zoning district. The Petitioners are concerned that the distance of approximately 7 feet 9 inches between the rear door and pool is a safety hazard without the additional 5 feet. For all properties built along marshland, a 25-foot riparian buffer is required by state law and an additional 10 feet are required as part of the Chatham County Environmental Overlay District for a total buffer of 35-feet. The Petitioners, Jonathan and Jennifer Christy, requested to reduce Chatham County's 10-foot riparian buffer by 5 feet to build a pool further from the rear entrance of the home. The Petitioners worked with the Department of Public Health to move their septic field to the front of the home and bring it into compliance with DPH regulations. The parcel is 0.81 acres and located within the R-1-A/EO Zoning Districts. Most of the property is in an X Flood Zone with the portion closest to the marsh in AE Flood Zone. The Petitioner recently relocated two non-compliant septic tanks to meet required DPH setbacks and to provide space to install a pool., The DPH Environmental Health Specialist, talked with the pool contractor to ensure that the septic system remained 15-feet from pool water edge and 10-feet from pool deck. The homeowner may need the extra five feet due to the space required for both the septic and pump tank in that small back yard. The health department has checked off on the construction.

This property has a seawall that acts as a barrier to the marsh and cuts off the natural marsh migration pathway. The portion of the backyard where the pool will be located is approximately 10 feet in elevation and in an X Flood Zone, representing a relatively lower flood risk. The application of this Chapter does not create an unnecessary hardship; however, it does create a safety concern if a pool is located too close to the rear exit of the home. There are approximately 228 square miles of wetlands in Chatham County (Comprehensive Plan 2040, pg. 310). Environmental Overlay Districts throughout the County must consider wetlands for development purposes. Native vegetation and a natural marsh migration path no longer exist due to the seawall and recent clearing and refilling of the backyard. This property possesses a seawall which stabilizes the shoreline and reduces coastal erosion and other typical riparian effects. Based on the EO ordinance and variance criteria, MPC Staff recommends **approval** of the request for a 5-foot variance of the Chatham County Environmental Overlay riparian buffer to construct a pool.

Mr. Jonathan Christy, the Petitioner, had no comments.

BOARD DISCUSSION

None

Motion

Approval of the request for a 5-foot variance of the Chatham County Environmental Overlay riparian buffer to construct a pool. This property possesses a seawall which stabilizes the shoreline and reduces coastal erosion and other typical riparian effects.

Vote Results (Approved)

Motion: Meredith Stone

Second: Robert Vinyard

James Coursey	- Aye
Meredith Stone	- Aye
Robert Vinyard	- Aye
Benjamin Polote, Jr.	- Not Present
Kewaan Drayton	- Not Present
Jenna Barzaga	- Aye
Tia Acker-Moore	- Not Present

X. Other Business

XI. Adjournment

The Chatham County - Savannah Metropolitan Planning Commission provides meeting summary minutes which are adopted by the respective Board. Verbatim transcripts of minutes are the responsibility of the interested party.