



# Chatham County Zoning Board of Appeals

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Minutes

September 23, 2025, CZBA Meeting 9:00am  
112 East State Street, Arthur Mendonsa Hearing Room

## September 23, 2025, Chatham County Zoning Board of Appeals

Members Present: Robert Vineyard, Chair  
Meredith Stone  
Benjamin Polote  
Keewan Drayton

Member Absent: Jenna Watkins

Others Present: Edward Morrow, Current Planning/Development Services Director  
Sadie Esch-Laurent, Assistant Planner, Development Services/Current Planning  
  
Sally Helm, Administrative Assistant II, Development Services/Current Planning  
Hind Patel, IT Helpdesk & Support  
Jefferson Kirkland, Chatham County

### 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 August 26, 2025, CZBA Meeting Minutes](#)

📎 [august-26-2025-chatham-county-zoning-board-of-appeals-minutes.pdf](#)

#### **Motion**

Approval of the August 26, 2025, meeting minutes.

#### **Vote Results ( Approved )**

Motion: Meredith Stone

Second: Benjamin Polote, Jr.

James Coursey - Not Present

Meredith Stone - Aye

Robert Vinyard - Aye

Benjamin Polote, Jr.	- Aye
Kewaan Drayton	- Aye
Jenna Watkins	- Not Present
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. 209 Battery Way | Variance for relief from encroachment of Chatham County Marsh Buffer and the front yard setback | ZBA-0825-000574](#)

📎 [Application.pdf](#)

📎 [Site Plan.pdf](#)

📎 [revised site plan.pdf](#)

📎 [Staff Report 209 Battery Way.pdf](#)

📎 [public comment, K. Pleau, Environmental Health Specialist.pdf](#)

📎 [public comment J. Torg.pdf](#)

**Ms. Sadie Esch-Laurent, Planner for Development Services**, presented the Staff report. **Ms. Esch-Laurent** stated the Petitioner is requesting the following two variances in association with the construction of a single-family primary dwelling on a vacant lot: To reduce the front yard setback from 25 feet to 10 feet and to reduce Chatham County's 10-foot riparian buffer to 0 feet required by the Environmental Overlay (EO) zoning district. The proposed home design only accounts for the required State riparian buffer of 25 feet. For all properties built near marshland, a 25-foot riparian buffer is required by state law, and an additional 10 feet is required as part of the Chatham County EO Zoning District for a total buffer of 35 feet. The Petitioner, Ramsey Khalidi, with RK Construction, on behalf of the property owner, Marie Elizabeth Reiter, requested to eliminate Chatham County's 10-foot riparian buffer. The marsh jurisdictional line was flagged on June 25, 2025, and is located in the middle of the parcel. The proposed home design, as shown above, has a footprint of 1,008 square feet and extends into the County's 10 feet of required riparian buffer. Additionally, the dwelling encroaches into the 25foot front yard setback by 15 feet. The parcel is 0.23 acres and located within the R-1/EO zoning district. The parcel is 0.23 acre and located within the R-1/EO zoning district. Neighboring parcels to 209 Battery Way range in size from 0.18 to 0.28 acres. Homes subject to the riparian buffer requirements along Battery Way were built from 1985 – 1999. The EO Zoning District Environmental Standards were revised 12/17/2010.

As there is a hardship, MPC Staff recommends approval of the following two variances in association with the construction of a single-family primary dwelling on a vacant lot: To reduce the front yard setback from 25 feet to 10 feet and to reduce Chatham County's 10-foot riparian buffer to 0 feet required by the Environmental Overlay (EO) zoning district. The proposed home design only accounts for the required State riparian buffer of 25 feet.

**Mr. Ramsey Khalidi, Contractor/Agent for petitioner**, stated he is here to answer any questions anyone has.

**Mr. Vinyard, Chairman**, asked what the footprint of the house was.

**Mr. Khalidi** said the footprint is 1,000 square feet. There are two stories with a total of 1,600 total square feet. The house will be raised fifteen feet above sea level.

**Mr. Brian Felder, Architect**, stated the lot is unbuildable without some type of relief. There was a

meeting with Mr. Lotson and others in the neighborhood. The request is small with a smaller floorplan. This will be elevated on woodpiles that are either vibrated or driven in, similar to a dock structure.

**Mr. Vinyard, Chairman**, asked if there was anything on the lower level.

**Mr. Felder** said they are allowed to have three hundred square feet per county ordinance for stairs to land and a small enclosure.

**Mr. Vinyard, Chairman**, asked about a garage being enclosed.

**Mr. Felder** said it will be parked in open air under the house. It will not be enclosed.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

**Mr. Chris Chavers** said he has environmental concerns. They recently put in a new septic drain field. What the applicant is proposing, the septic drain fill would be directly draining into the stormwater drain that goes directly in the marsh. There are environmental rules for a reason. Parking is a concern as well.

**Ms. Laura Mouhot** said she lives next door to the proposed property. There is standing water at high tide which is very visible. This property has been unbuildable for years. Parking is an issue.

**Ms. Stephanie Dietrich** said she lives across the street. Parking is a concern; there are boats and cars already parked on the street. Every year the flood plain changes. Flooding is a concern. Rules are in place for a reason; we would like to see them upheld here.

**Mr. Gregg Dietrich** said the environmental concerns are great. This property is clearly unbuildable. The zoning rules that are in place should be upheld.

**Mr. Felder** said for the parking under the house is eight feet elevated. A standard garage door is seven feet tall. A Suburban SUV with a roof rack will fit under there. A total of four cars will be able to park under the house. A house will not be built without an approved engineered system.

**Mr. Jefferson Kirkland, Environmental Program Manager for Chatham County**, said the concerns regarding the septic and well are addressed by a comment from the Health Department, the authoritative body issuing permits for that. Based on the reduces lot size, it reduces the number of bedrooms the house can have. That was a consideration taken. The Health Department addresses the concerns regarding the soil type and lot area for a well and or septic tank. During the construction there would be no movement through the buffer, no stock piling, no disturbance of any kind. The buffer has to stay in an undisturbed state.

**Mr. Khalidi** said the petitioner just wants to come back home and build a house to be near her daughters. The property has been hers for years now.

**Ms. Marie Reiter, Property Owner**, said her father bought the strip of land years ago. The septic tank will be placed under the home. There is plenty of room for a drainage field on the property as well.

## **Motion**

Approval of the following two variances in association with the construction of a single-family primary dwelling on a vacant lot:

To reduce the front yard setback from 25 feet to 10 feet;

To reduce Chatham County's 10-foot riparian buffer to 0 feet required by the Environmental Overlay (EO) zoning district. The proposed home design only accounts for the required State riparian buffer of 25 feet.

**Vote Results ( Approved )**

Motion: Meredith Stone

Second: Benjamin Polote, Jr.

James Coursey	- Not Present
Meredith Stone	- Aye
Robert Vinyard	- Nay
Benjamin Polote, Jr.	- Aye
Kewaan Drayton	- Aye
Jenna Watkins	- Not Present
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.***