



METROPOLITAN PLANNING COMMISSION

"Planning the Future - Respecting the Past"

STAFF REPORT

To: The Planning Commission

Through: Melanie Wilson, Executive Director and CEO

From: Ken Gorski, Senior Planner – Development Services
Edward Morrow, Director – Development Services

Date: January 27, 2026

Subject: Variance for Development Plan

Owner: J. Eady Construction LLC

Address: 1623 Staley Avenue

PIN(s): 20643 01035, 20643 01034, 20643 01033 & 20643 01032

Site Area: 0.14 acres each: 0.56 acres total

Alderman District: District 5, Alderman Dr. Estella Shabazz

Chatham County Commission District: District 5, Commissioner Tanya Milton

File Number: 25-005776-ZA

Request

The Petitioner is requesting MPC approval for variances for the four parcels identified as 1623 Staley Ave, 6 Gunnie St, 7 Gunnie St and 0 Gunnie Street. The request seeks to reduce the front and rear setback requirements of the RSF-6 zoning district to create more useful and proportional buildable areas.

The requests are as follows for each of the 4 parcels:

1. Reduce the front setback from 20 feet to 10 feet.
2. Reduce the rear setback from 20 feet to 10 feet.

The petitioner intends to build (4) new single-family houses on these parcels along John Eady Court.

Zoning History

- 1) The subject parcels are adjacent to and proposed to become part of the John Eady Court subdivision which was reviewed and approved by the MPC in 2009 (S-090813-41606-2). The subdivision created 17 single-family detached lots (6,000 sf+) on 4.28 acres, and, per the staff report, was stated to be consistent with a previously approved preliminary plan

(S-020318-49407-2 and S-080612-59364-2). The subdivision required a variance to the minimum required ROW width.

Per the 2009 plat, the subject parcels existed as they are today.

- 2) The parcel identified as 0 Gunnie St (20643 01032) was denied the requested front and rear setback relief on *July 24, 2025* by the ZBA and is **currently ineligible for consideration** under the provisions of Sec. 3.21.14 until at least one year has passed (25-002696-ZBA). The Petition was referred to the Planning Commission at the request of MPC Staff for the Commission to consider all parcels concurrently as a Variance to a General Development Plan.

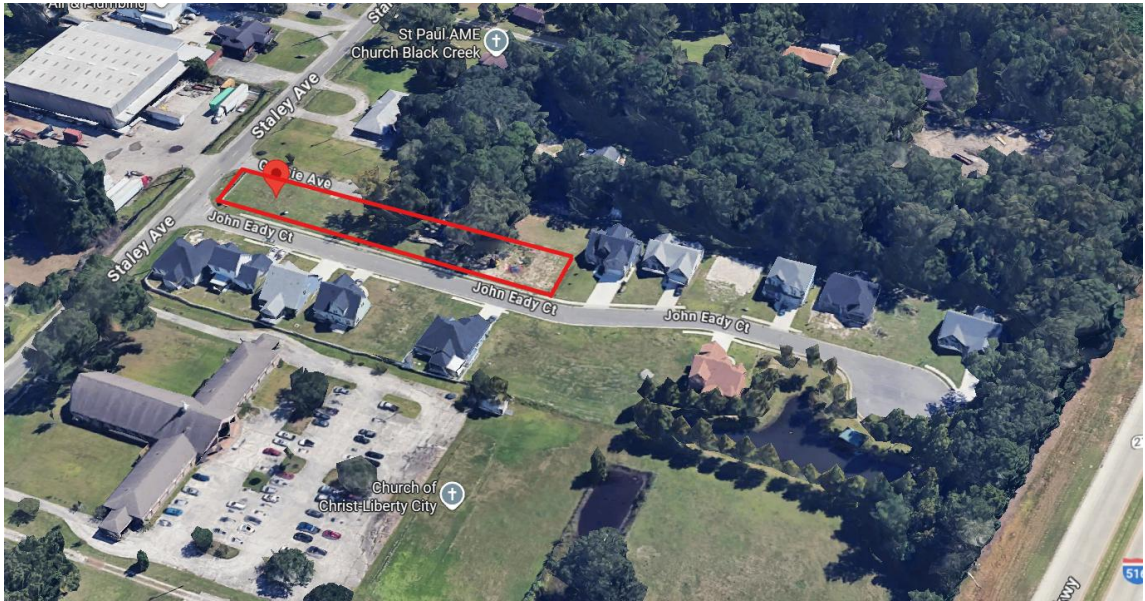
Facts and Findings

- 1) Per 2008 aerial imagery, the parcels at 1623 Staley Avenue and 6 Gunnie Street contained single-family dwellings that predate the dwellings on J Eady Court. By 2011 both dwellings were demolished.



2008 Aerial Imagery per SAGIS

- 2) The four parcels, according to the Chatham County Tax Assessor's records, are 0.14 acres each for a combined total of 0.56 acres in size. Each parcel is an approximately 100' by 60' rectangle fronting on John Eady Court near the intersection of Staley Avenue.

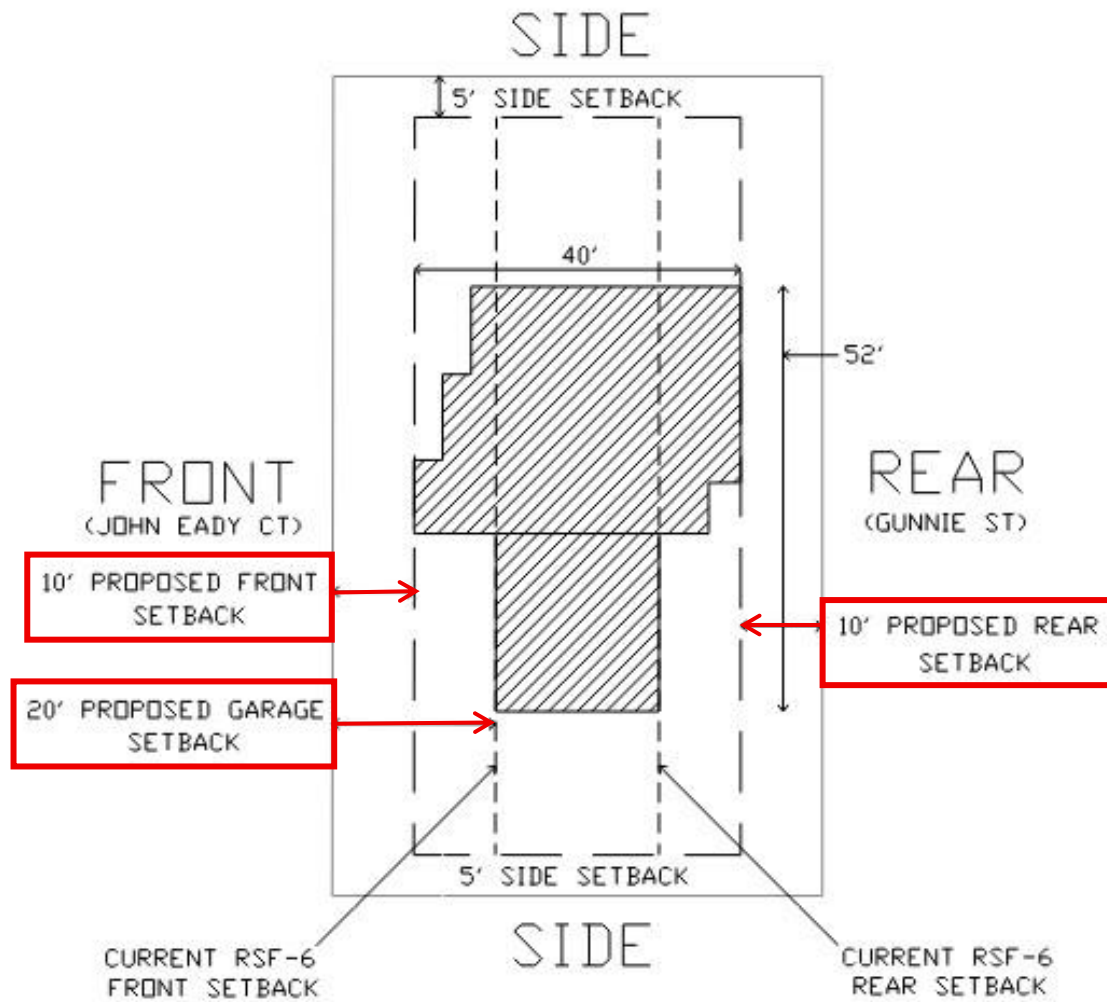


Satellite Imagery of John Eady Court

- 3) The property is zoned as RSF-6 and the Section 5.7.5 Development Standards for Permitted Housing Types are shown in the table below. For this property, the standard setbacks result in a buildable area that is 90-ft wide and 20-ft deep.

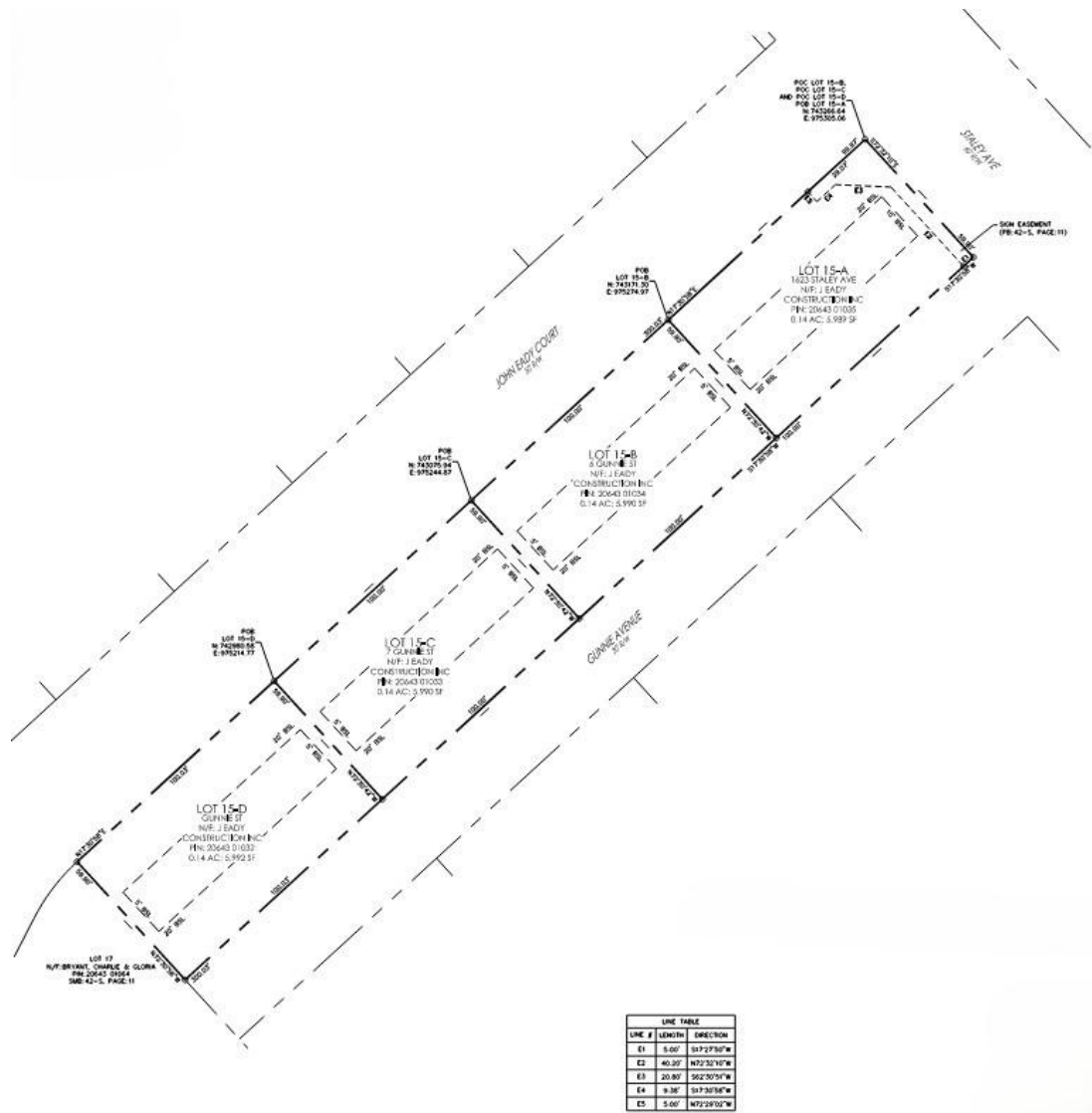
5.7.5 Development Standards for Permitted Housing Types							
Standards	RSF-E	RSF-30	RSF-20	RSF-10	RSF-6	RSF-5	RSF-4
Lot Dimensions							
Street Access							
Lot area (min sq ft) [1]	43,560	30,000	20,000	10,000	6,000	5,000	4,000
Lot width (min. ft.)	120	100	80	70	60	50	40
Lane Access [2]							
Lot area (min sq ft) [1]	--	--	--	--	6,000	4,000 [3]	3,500
Lot width (min ft)	--	--	--	--	60	40 [3]	35
Building Setbacks (min ft)							
Street Access							
Front yard	40	30	30	25	20	20	15
Side (interior) yard	20	10	10	7	5	5	5
Side (street) yard	15	15	15	15	10	10	10
Rear yard	40	30	30	25	20	20	20
From access easement	5	5	5	5	5	5	5

- 4) The applicant has provided a variance exhibit showing the current setbacks and proposed setback variances. In addition to reducing the front and rear setbacks to 10', the garage would have its own setbacks of 20-ft front and 20-ft rear. Essentially the attached garage portions of the house would maintain the existing setback guidelines with the Livable Areas benefiting from the setback relief. See the image below.



Variance Exhibit from Applicant

- 5) The Petitioner has also provided a Draft Preliminary Plat showing the four parcels with the current RSF-6 Development Standards setback requirements. See image below.



Portion of Draft Preliminary Plat

Public Notice

Mailed notice of the Planning Commission meeting was sent to all property owners within 300-feet of the subject property, signs were posted on site and required newspaper advertisements were run at least 15 days prior to the meeting. The mailed notice included instructions on how to access the public meeting via the internet.

Standards at Issue

1. Sec. 5.7.5 – Development Standards for Permitted Housing Types

The Petitioner requests relief from the 20-foot front and 20-foot rear setback provisions of this section for development of a single-family detached home on each parcel.

Zoning Ordinance Review

The Planning Commission is authorized to grant variances to the standards of *Article 5, Base Zoning Districts*, upon the basis of the criteria established in Sec. 3.21.10.

The following review criteria for Variances are prescribed in the Savannah Zoning Ordinance:

A. General Consistency

The variance shall be consistent with the intent of this Ordinance and the Comprehensive Plan and shall not be injurious to the neighborhood or otherwise detrimental to the public health, safety, or welfare.

MPC Comment: The Ordinance ordinarily anticipates the creation of lots that are a minimum of 60 feet wide along their frontage and a minimum of 100 feet in depth. The subject parcels were platted in an orientation such that these dimensions are reversed. As a result, the building envelope is too narrow to accommodate a dwelling similar in size to that permitted on a parcel meeting the anticipated orientation.

The request is consistent with the intent of the Ordinance for the purpose of establishing a viable, comparable building envelope.

B. Special Conditions

i. Special conditions and/or circumstances exist which are peculiar to the land, buildings or structures involved and which are not applicable to other lands, buildings or structures in the same zoning district.

MPC Comment: The special condition is the orientation of the lots opposite the standard layout. Typical RSF-6 lots are narrower than they are deep (60' x 100') while these are wide and shallow (100' x 60').

ii. The special conditions and/or circumstances do not result from the actions of the applicant.

MPC Comment: The Petitioner purchased the lots in their current state. They existed in this configuration since at least the 2009 platting of the adjoining J Eady Court subdivision.

iii. The special conditions and/or circumstances are not purely financial in nature so as to allow the applicant to use the land, buildings or structures involved more profitably or to save money.

MPC Comment: There are financial implications for the request, though the hardship is more of a functional issue that would prevent the construction of a housing unit that would complement the adjacent properties and overall community.

C. Literal Interpretation

Literal interpretation of the provisions of the regulations would deprive the applicant of rights commonly enjoyed by other properties in the same zoning

district under the terms of the Ordinance and would result in unnecessary and undue hardship on the applicant.

MPC Comment: Literal interpretation would constitute an undue hardship and impede the use of these legal nonconforming parcels. This is particularly true in that at least two of the four parcels contained dwellings as recently as 2008. That 7 Gunnie St is addressed also speaks to the possibility of a third residence having been present at some time prior.

D. Minimum Variance

The variance, if granted, is the minimum variance necessary to make possible the reasonable use of land, buildings, or structures.

MPC Comment: The variance shall be a reasonable compromise to allow for the typical use allowed and intended for properties within this zoning district.

E. Special Privilege Not Granted

The variance would not confer on the applicant any special privilege that is denied by this Ordinance to other lands, buildings, or structures in the same zoning district.

MPC Comment: The variance will not confer applicant a special privilege.

Staff Recommendation

MPC Staff recommends **approval** of front and rear setback relief for lots 15-A, 15-B, and 15-C in accordance with the following stipulations and accompanying *MPC Staff exhibits*:

Setback relief (Lots 15-A, 15-B, 15-C):

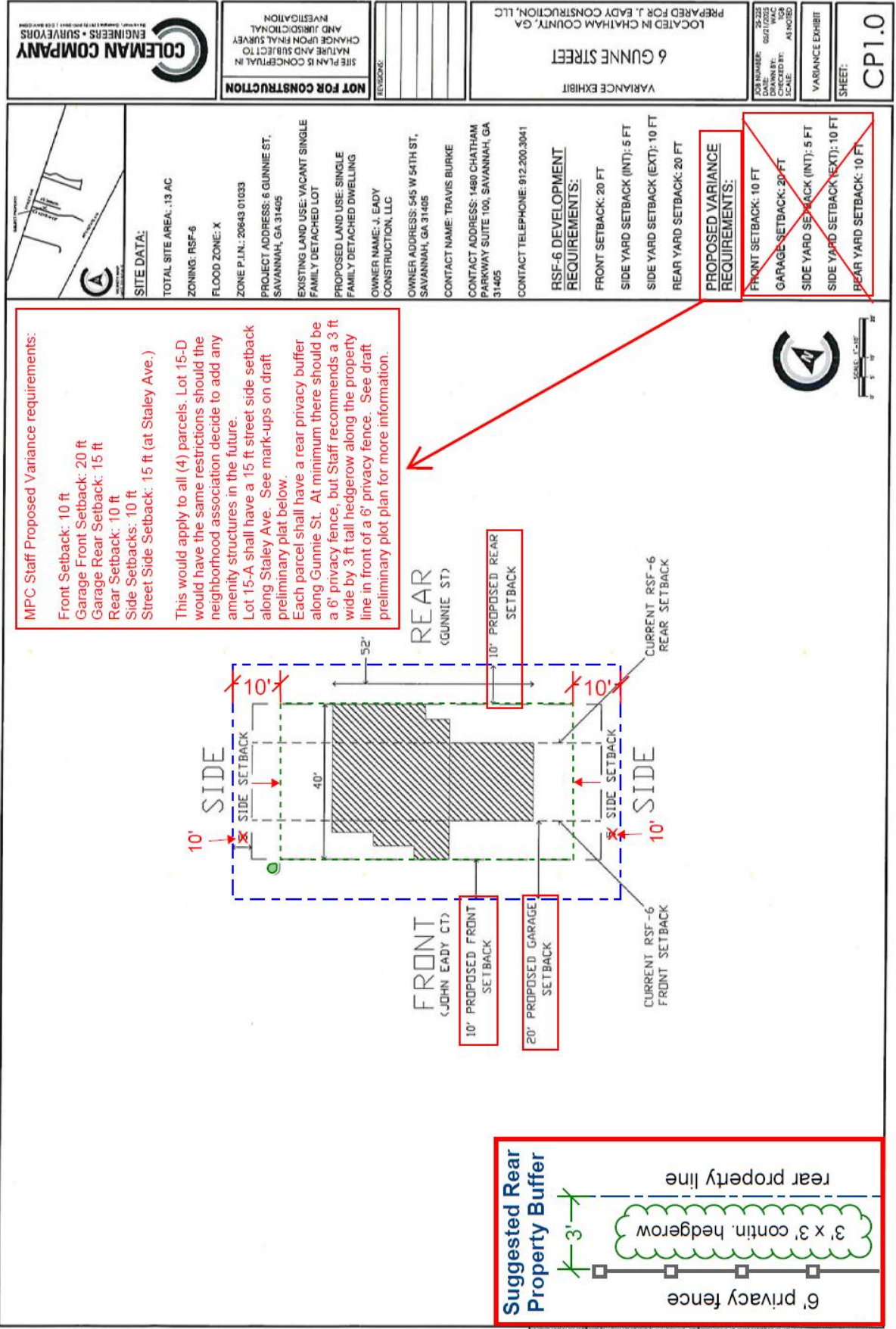
1. Reduce the front setback from 20-foot to 10-foot for habitable areas.
2. Maintain the 20-foot front setback for attached garage areas.
3. Reduce the rear setback from 20-foot to 10-foot for habitable areas.
4. Create a 15-foot rear setback for attached garage areas.
5. For lot Revise the side setbacks to be 10-foot (interior) and 15-foot street (along Staley).

Dedication of Lot 15-D

6. Lot 15-D shall be developed as a community area/green space for the John Eady Court HOA and shall not be developed for any other use. *See attached MPC Staff Exhibits.*

General Conditions:

7. There shall be a continuous rear privacy buffer created and maintained along the rear property line of the four parcels. The rear buffer shall consist of a 6-foot privacy fence and minimum 3' wide hedge row. *See attached MPC Staff Exhibits for plat, sketches and diagrams.*
8. The associated variance petition number and approved MPC conditions shall be added to the final plat and recorded.



[illegible][illegible]

Front Setback: 10 ft
Garage Front Setback: 20 ft
Garage Rear Setback: 15 ft
Rear Setback: 10 ft
Side Setbacks: 10 ft
Street Side Setback: 15 ft (at

This would apply to all (4) parcels. Lot 15-D would have the same restrictions should the neighborhood association decide to add any amenity structures in the future.

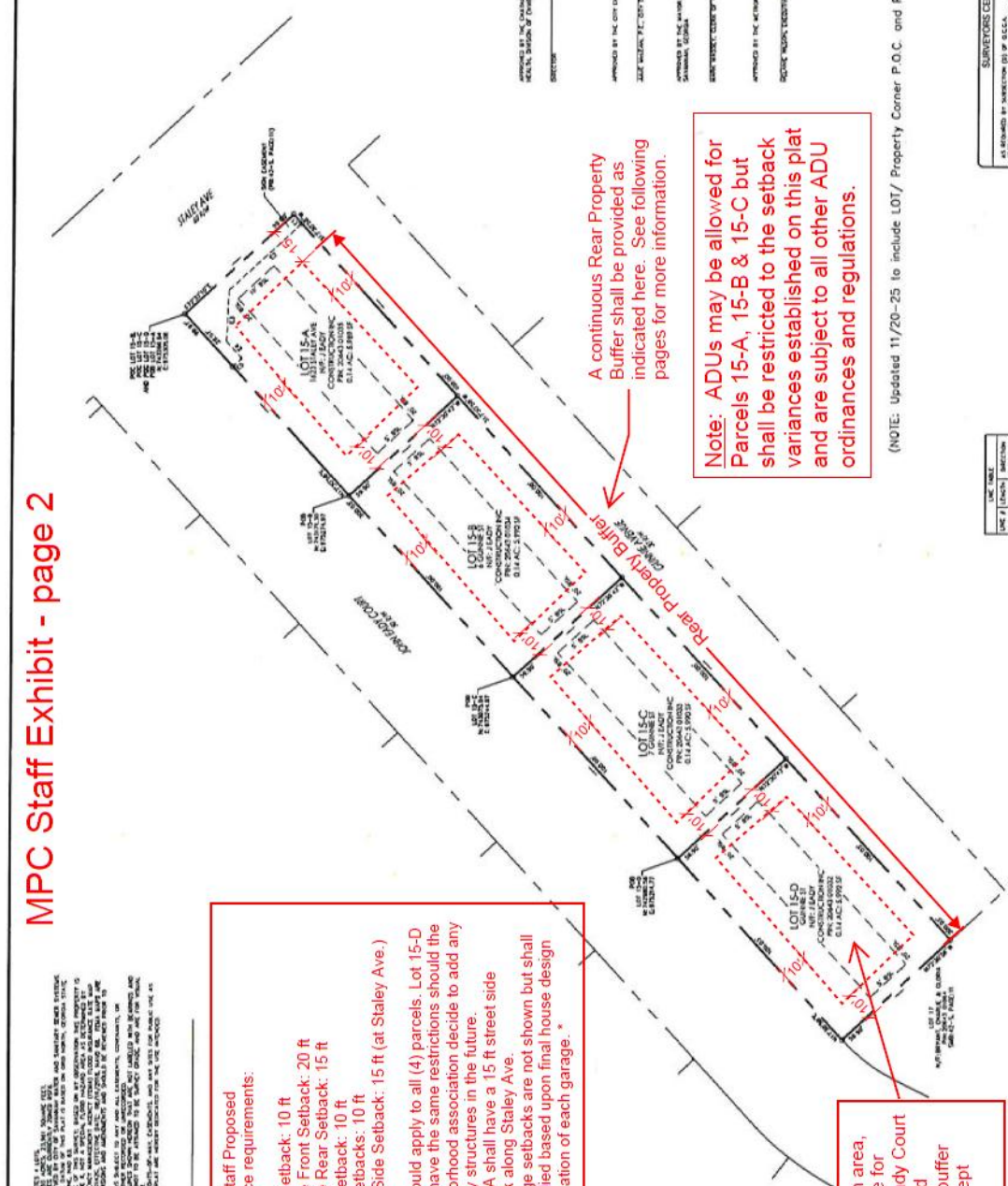
Lot 15-A shall have a 15 ft street side setback along Staley Ave.

Garage setbacks are not shown but shall be applied based upon final house design and location of each garage. *

A continuous Rear Property Buffer shall be provided as indicated here. See following pages for more information.

Note: ADUs may be allowed for Parcels 15-A, 15-B & 15-C but shall be restricted to the setback variances established on this plat and are subject to all other ADU ordinances and regulations.

(NOTE: Updated 11/20-25 to include LOT/ Property Corner P.O.C. and P.O.B. Coordinates)



LWC TABLE		
LWC #	LWC%	WATER LOSS
11	0.00%	0.02232000%
12	0.00%	0.02232000%
13	0.00%	0.02232000%
14	0.00%	0.02232000%
15	0.00%	0.02232000%

Lot 15-D shall be a common area, conservancy or green space for homeowners along John Eady Court and shall be landscaped and maintained consistent with buffer zone regulations. See concept sketch on next page.



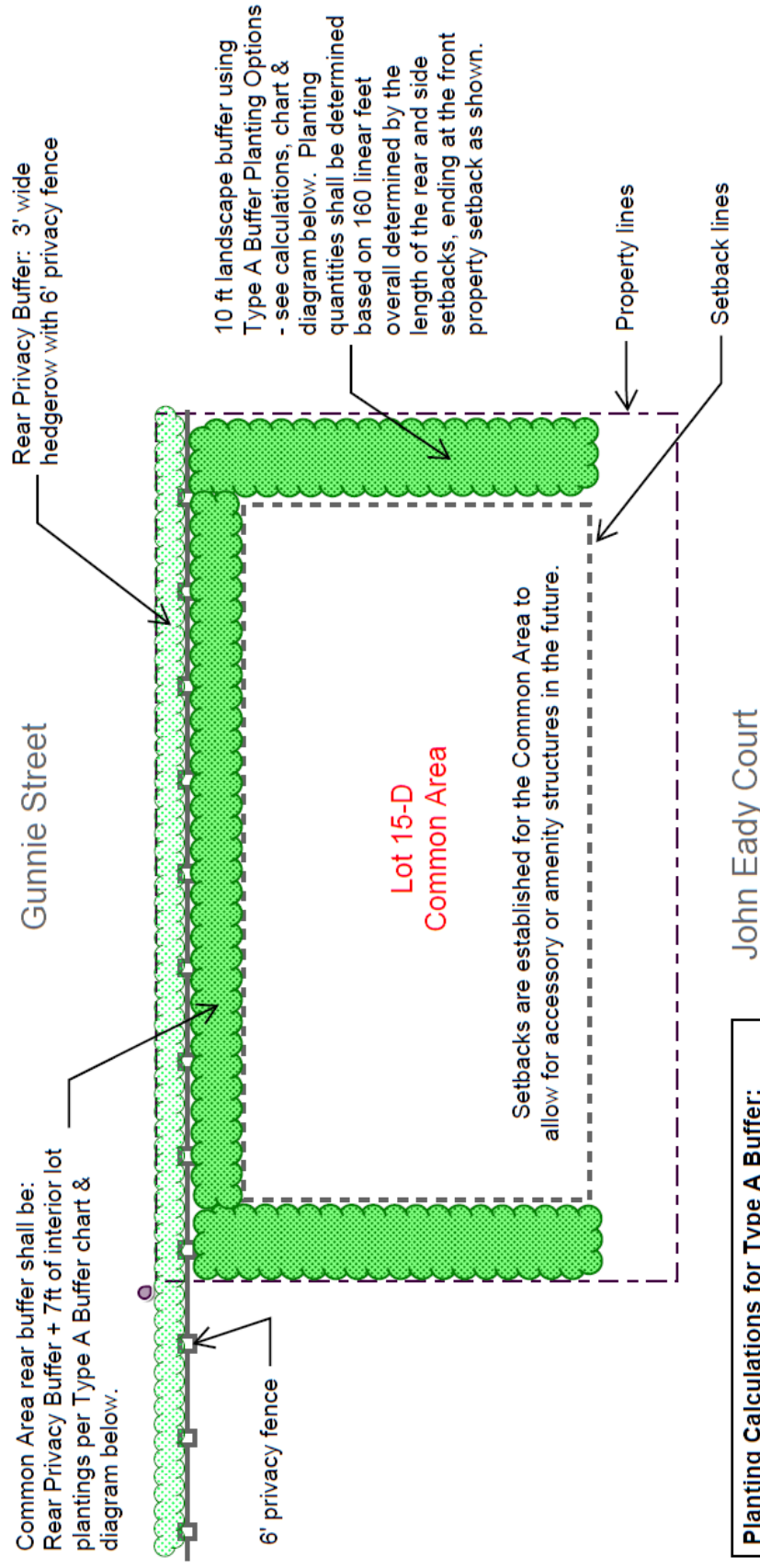
COLEMAN COMPANY
ENGINEERS • SURVEYORS
1400 Chatham Parkway, Suite 100
Savannah, Georgia | (912) 200-3041

A PRELIMINARY PLAT OF THE JOHN EADY COURT PORTION OF LOT 15 OF THE SARAL GARMANY TRACTS,
7TH GM DISTRICT, CITY OF SAVANNAH
CITY OF SAVANNAH, CHATHAM COUNTY, GEORGIA
PREPARED FOR J EADY CONSTRUCTION, LLC

25-25 100-100 50 1" x 3"	PRELIMINARY PLAT	1/1
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MPC Staff Exhibit - page 3



Planting Calculations for Type A Buffer:

Half of the plantings required for the 20 ft buffer with No fence/wall: (see chart/diagrams below)

Per 100 LF:

2 large trees	x 1.6 (for 160 LF) = 3
3 understory trees	x 1.6 (for 160 LF) = 5
20 shrubs	x 1.6 (for 160 LF) = 32

* This does not include the continuous hedgerow for the Rear Privacy Buffer. *