



SAVANNAH ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

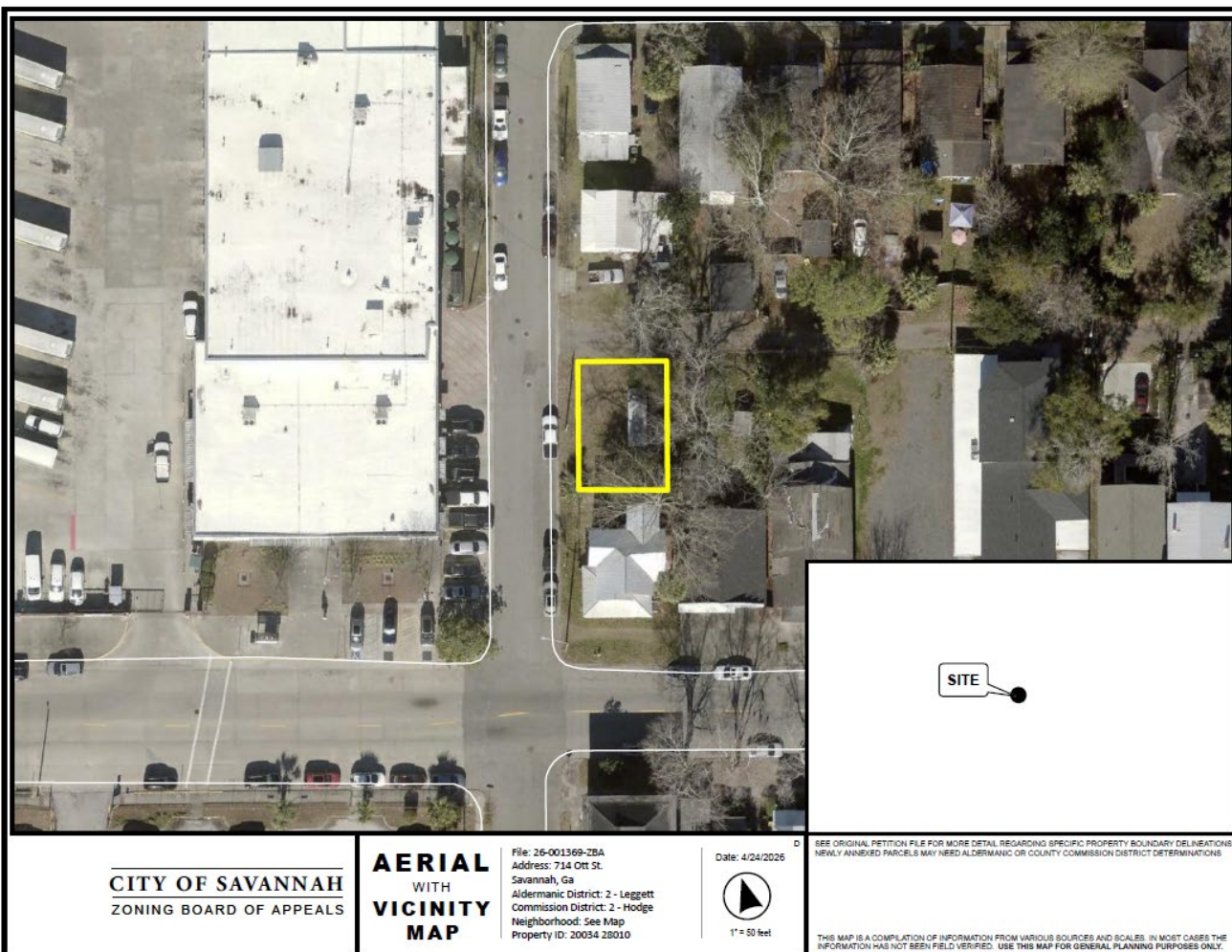
STAFF REPORT

PETITIONER: Timothy Smalls
FILE NO: 26-001369-ZBA
ADDRESS: 714 Ott Street
DATE: May 28, 2026
MPC Staff: Subhashi Karunarathne

Nature of Request

The Petitioner requests the following four variances in association with the construction of a primary dwelling in the TR-2 zoning district:

1. To reduce the rear yard setback from 20 feet to 11 feet



Aerial & Site Map for 714 Ott Street

Facts & Findings

1. The property is located at 714 Ott Street, with a PIN of 20034 28010, in the Eastside neighborhood.
2. According to the Chatham County Tax Assessor, the subject property measures approximately 2,090 square feet and is vacant. The lot has a frontage of about 55 feet along Ott Street and a depth of 38 feet. The property is zoned TR-2 (Traditional Residential - 2). It is a non-conforming parcel in this zoning district by lot area for Single-Family Detached use. The parcel only has access.
3. The Petitioner is proposing to build a two story primary dwelling of approximately 606.6 square feet and two porches.
4. Section 11.5.3.b of the Zoning Ordinance discusses that a nonconforming lot (by lot area) that existed before the ordinance may still be used for a single-family home if it has public water and sewer service (or an approved private system). The property has City of Savannah water and sewer service available for connections in the future and will require review by the City of Savannah Water Resources Department.

b. Lot not meeting minimum lot size requirements.

Except as set forth in subsection (a) of this section, in any district in which single-family dwellings are permitted, any lot of record existing at the time of adoption of this Ordinance which has an area or a width which is less than that required by these regulations may be used as a building site for a one-family dwelling, provided such lot is served by public water and public sewers or a private system approved by the City Manager or his or her designee.

5. Section 5.9.5 of the Zoning Ordinance requires a rear yard setback of 20 feet for primary structures. The proposed structure will encroach into the rear-yard setbacks by 9 feet.
6. The northwestern corner of property is within the 500 year flood zone identified.
7. The Zoning Board of Appeals may grant variances to certain development standards.

Per Section 3.21.10, the granting of variances shall be based on the following criteria:

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 requested variances are not consistent with the intent of the Zoning Ordinance. However, the nonconforming lot was created prior to the adoption of the current development standards, and City utility connections are available for the site. Therefore, in accordance with Section 11.5.3.b of the Zoning Ordinance, a nonconforming lot by area that existed before the ordinance may still be used for a single-

family dwelling, provided it has public water and sewer service or an approved private system.

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 subject property contains several special conditions that are unique to the lot:

- The lot is legally nonconforming with respect to minimum lot area requirements.
- In order to establish driveway access consistent with City of Savannah Traffic Engineering standards, vehicular access must be provided from the lane.
- If the single-family dwelling were required to remain entirely within the standard setback limits, the resulting building depth would be approximately 13 feet, which would significantly limit the reasonable development of the property for residential use.

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

MPC Comment: The request is partially the result of the Petitioner's chosen design; however, the existing nonconformity that requires relief is not the result of the Petitioner.

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: The requested variances are likely financially motivated.

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: The literal interpretation of the regulations would deprive the applicant of rights commonly enjoyed by other properties in the same zoning district.

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 variances are not required to make use of the subject property. A conforming single family dwelling can be built within the required setbacks, height limit.

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: Approval of the variances would confer special privilege upon the Petitioner.

Staff Recommendation

Since the lot is legally nonconforming and compliance with the standard setbacks would reduce the building depth to approximately 13 feet, significantly limiting reasonable residential development of the property;

MPC Staff recommends **APPROVAL** of the following variance in association with the construction of a primary dwelling within the TR-2 zoning district:

1. To reduce the required rear yard setback from 20 feet to 11 feet.

Note: This recommendation could change subject to new information provided at the Zoning Board of Appeals meeting. Final decisions will be made by the Zoning Board of Appeals at the public hearing based on information provided at the meeting, as well as information submitted for the staff report.

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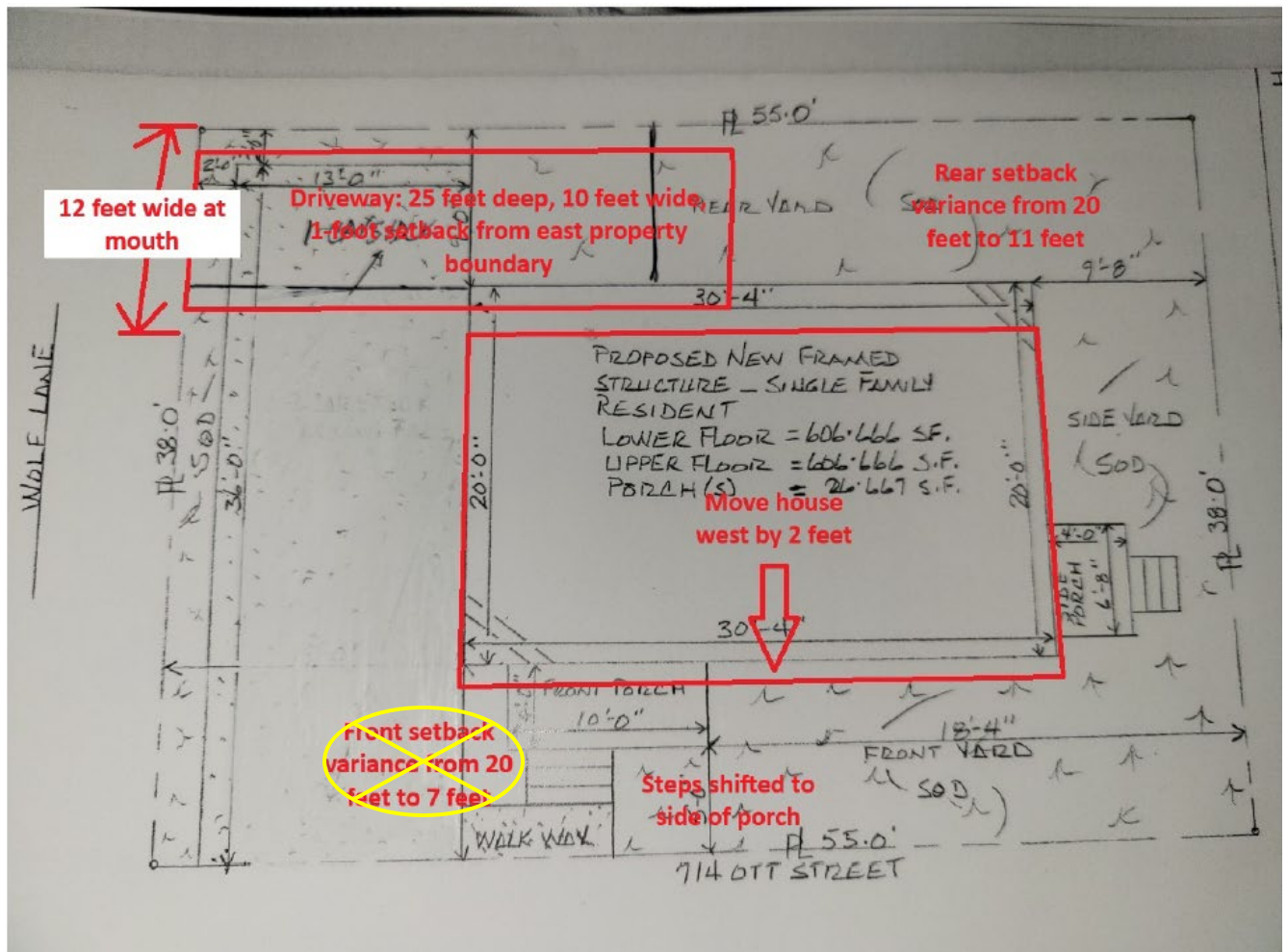


Google street view (2016)



Google aerial view of the neighborhood

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Concept plan of the proposed development at 714 Ott Street