

## **MINUTES**

Valdosta-Lowndes Zoning Board of Appeals  
*Valdosta City Hall Annex Multi-Purpose  
Room 300 North Lee Street,  
Valdosta, Georgia*

**Tuesday August 5, 2025, 2:30 p.m.**

### **MEMBERS PRESENT**

John “Mac” McCall  
Keith Godfrey  
Nathan Brantley  
Victoria Copeland  
Marion Ramsey  
John Hogan

### **MEMBERS ABSENT**

Victoria Copeland  
Allan Strickland

### **STAFF PRESENT**

Lauren Hurley  
Margaret Torres  
Trinni Amiot  
J.D. Dillard

### **VISITORS PRESENT**

David Easterling w/ Lamar  
Bill Nijem-Attorney  
Larry Sanders w/ Arrow Engineering  
Rodney Tenery w/ Prime Consulting  
Kevin Hollis w/ Kevin Hollis LLC  
William Holland  
Mitchell Brice  
Lilly Ortiz (representative for Dr McLeish)

### **CALL TO ORDER**

**John “Mac” McCall**

Calling of meeting to order at 2:33 p.m. and explanation of meeting process to all those in attendance.

## **CITY OF VALDOSTA CASES:**

**APP-2025-11-The Lamar Company, LLC** (2012 N. Ashley St) Request for a Variance to LDR 230-9 (E)(6)(f) as it pertains to Variable Message Boards in the C-H (Highway Commercial) Zoning District. The subject property is located on 2012 N. Ashley St. in Valdosta GA (all or part of Tax Parcel 0114C 255).

Lauren Hurley presented case of request for variance for variable message board. She explained that the applicant received a variance in 2011 for 1 sign face to be converted to a variable message board. They are now proposing to convert the opposite static sign face to another variable message board. She explained that in 2011 they only requested a variance for 1 face due to cost restraints at the time, but that now they are not as expensive and would now like to make both sides variable message boards. She explained that regulations state there is a distance restriction between variable message boards of 5000 radial feet. The closest to this location is approximately 6000 radial feet at Beall Optical. She explains that the applicant has removed 4 billboards to be allowed a variable message board as the code states. Staff is recommending a soft denial.

Nancy Hobby asked if in 2011 if they could have removed 4 faces and had a double face.

Lauren Hurley stated that was correct.

Chairman McCall clarifies if the variance is to the entire section (f). He stated that the motion should be specific.

Lauren Hurley stated that it was.

Chairman McCall asked if they had removed the 4 billboards as required.

Lauren showed the board which billboards had been removed on the overhead.

Nancy Hobby asked if this was because the sign faces are back-to-back.

Chairman McCall clarified that the nearest was more than 5000 radial ft. He then asked if there were any further questions for staff. Then he asked if the applicant or applicant's representation would like to address the board.

Bill Nijem stated he is the attorney for the applicant. He stated that the issue is the billboard is a double-sided back-to-back and the applicant would like to make the southside into a variable message board. He stated that the ordinance talks about billboards and not faces. He also stated that he felt the definition in the ordinance was not very clear and he feels that the entire billboard should be considered as 1 sign. He felt that this could make a precedent with other signs. He then gave an example of another double-faced message board billboard at the corner of Bemiss Rd & Inner Perimeter Rd.

Chairman McCall clarified with him that this was a variance application, and they were not there to reinterpret the code or the ordinance itself. He then asks if there is anyone else in support of the case who would like to address the board.

David Easterling with Lamar stepped forward and stated that he believes changing the other face does not go against the code. He stated that they have removed 4 other billboards and is requesting approval.

Chairman McCall asked if there is anyone else in support of the case. Then asked if there was anyone in opposition. He then asked Lauren Hurley if her office was contacted. She stated there was not.

Chairman McCall then asked if anyone would care to make a motion. Nancy Hobby made a motion to approve as requested to the entire section (f). Keith Godfrey seconded the motion. Vote: Unanimous 5-0

**APP-2025-12-Dr. Dwight McLeish** (2920 N. Oak St) Request for a Variance to LDR 222-2 as it pertains to Parking Space Requirements in the R-P (Residential Professional) Zoning District. The subject property is located on 2920 N. Oak St. (all or part of Tax Parcel 0111B 048.)

Lauren Hurley presents case of applicant requesting a variance to the required parking for a doctor's office in R-P zoning district. She explains that the property is currently a vacant lot and the doctor's office would like to build a small practice on the lot. She shows the site plan to the board. The proposed building is approximately 3968 sq ft which would require 4.5 spaces/1000 sq ft of gross floor area. She explains they would need 17.5 parking spaces. They are requesting a variance for 3.5 less spaces. She explained that there is no hardship and that it was discussed in a First Step meeting with them. She stated that suggestions were made at that meeting to contact the medical practice to the North for possible shared parking agreement.

Chairman McCall asked if there are any questions for staff. He then asked if the applicant or applicant's representation would care to address the board.

Lilly Ortiz stepped forward and stated that they are a small office only servicing 3 patients at a time.

Nancy Hobby asked how many employees they would have at that location.

Lilly Ortiz stated that they would have 2 office staff, 1 nurse and 1 doctor.

Nancy Hobby stated that was 4 and not 3.

Lilly Ortiz stated that they never have more than 3 patients at a time.

John Hogan asked if this was just a billing office.

Lilly Ortiz stated that their office only do follow up appointments for patients who have been seen at the hospital to make sure they are following protocol.

Nancy Hobby clarified that they would not have any machines.

Lilly Ortiz stated that there are no machines there and they are not doing dialysis at this location.

John Hogan asked if they were only seeing new patients.

Lilly Ortiz stated that the patients would be leaving the hospital and following up with their office.

Nancy Hobby stated that she had a question for Lauren and asked if they could approve with conditions if someone where to come in after or if they were to sell the property.

Lauren Hurley stated that each time someone applies for a new business at a location that zoning looks at the use and parking requirements for the location.

Nancy Hobby asked again if they could make it conditional.

Lauren Hurley stated that they could, but if another doctor's office were to come in behind them, they may get approved based on use.

Chairman McCall stated that with such a small site and building if the variance could be tied to the business and not the location.

Lauren stated that variances do not move locations and that each business license is reviewed based on the location. She also stated that they are encouraged to tie the site adjacent and have a shared parking agreement with them.

Chairman McCall asked the applicant how many exam rooms they are proposing.

Lilly Ortiz stated that they will have 4

Chairman McCall stated that the size still limits the number of people that can park there at one time. He then asked if there was anyone in support of the case who would like to address the board. He asked if there was anyone in opposition. He asked staff if their office was contacted.

Lauren Hurley stated that just the doctor to the North and he was just asked what the variance request was.

Chairman McCall asked if anyone would care to make a motion.

John Hogan made a motion to accept as presented. Nancy Hobby seconded the motion. Vote: Unanimous 5-0.

### **LOWNDES COUNTY CASES:**

**VAR-2025-11-Hwy 84 Storage (2273 US Hwy 84W)** Request for a Variance to Chapter 4.07.07 (H)(4)(B) of the ULDC as it pertains to Tree and Vegetation Requirements and Chapter 6.03.03 (D) as it pertains to Potable Water System (Lowndes County Connection) requirements and Table 4.03.21 (F) as it pertains to site design standards for self-service storage facilities. The subject property is located at 2273 US Hwy 84 West (all or part of Tax Parcel 0088C-011B).

Trinni Amiot presented case that was table from previous meeting requesting 3 variances on the property. She stated they had received the necessary information that was requested.

Chairman McCall asked to give a summary of the case since he and others were not able to attend the previous meeting.

Trinni Amiot stated that the forester had gone out and done a tree survey to determine the number of trees and how many are in poor health. She stated at the previous meeting the number of trees given was 340. The actual number is 276 and of those, 200 of them are in poor health. That brings their numbers into compliance. She stated that they do have plans to relocate some trees.

Nancy Hobby asked if the plan is to extend the existing storage facility.

Trinni stated that they are not planning to combine the parcels, so they are asking for a variance to the setback requirement.

Chairman McCall asked if there were any questions for staff. He then asked if the applicant or applicant's representation would like to address the board.

Mitchell Brice stated that he is expanding his business. He stated that he wants to make the site look nicer and plans to move trees, so they do not fall on his buildings.

Chairman McCall asked if there was anything on site that would require water.

Mitchell Brice stated that he has a well on site if he needs water

Chairman McCall stated that they have the power to grant a variance, but if the fire marshal comes back and requires connection that they cannot rule on that because it is a state code requirement. He also asked for clarification on the trees.

Mitchell Brice stated that his plan is to move the live oaks and do plantings.

Trinni Amiot stated that they could remove that request because he had met the requirements, they were asking for with the tree survey.

Nancy Hobby asked if the nearest water connection was in front of the Elk's Lodge which is adjacent to this property.

JD Dillard stated that is correct, but it is within the 1000 ft required to connect to County water.

Nancy Hobby asked the applicant if he has water on site.

Mitchell Brice stated that he has a well on site that feeds his business, and he also allows the Elk's Lodge to use his well for theirs also.

Chairman McCall asked if there was anyone in support of the case who would like to address the board.

Larry Sanders stated he is the Engineer on the project. He stated the irregular shape of the lot and the high transmission line going through the property causes an encumbrance to the development of the property. He stated they are requesting a 5ft variance to help the client to be able to expand his business and utilize the property.

Chairman McCall asked if there were any questions. He then asked if there was anyone in opposition of the case who would like to speak. He then asked if anyone would care to make a motion.

John Hogan made a motion to grant the variance for the setbacks and water connection as presented sighting criteria D. Nathan Brantley seconded the motion. Vote: Unanimous 5-0.

### **OTHER BUSINESS:**

### **Meeting Minutes:**

Nathan Brantley made motion to approve meeting minutes as presented. Keith Godfrey seconded motion. Vote: 4 in favor-1 abstain. Motion approved.

**Term Expiration:**

John Hogan stated he knew his seat was up for reappointment and stated that he would still like to hold the seat and asked for consideration for his reinstatement.

**Attendance Review:**

Victoria Copeland-Business (excused)

Allan Strickland-unknown

**Adjournment:**

Meeting adjourned at 3:37 p.m.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "John Mac", is written over a horizontal line.

John "Mac" McCall, Chairman

9-2-25

Date

