CAROLINA BEACH

Board of Adjustment Meeting Tuesday, December 05, 2023 – 6:00 PM Council Chambers, 1121 N. Lake Park Boulevard, Carolina Beach, NC



AGENDA

CALL TO ORDER

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. July 17th, 2023 – BOA Minutes

PUBLIC DISCUSSION

 2. Variance to the required 25' front yard setback for 311 Spencer Farlow Drive. Deck: 24.56'
Pool: 21'
Applicant: Cory and Lary Ellis

DISCUSSION ITEMS

NON-AGENDA ITEMS

ADJOURNMENT



AGENDA ITEM COVERSHEET

PREPARED BY: Gloria Abbotts, Senior Planner

DEPARTMENT: Planning & Development

MEETING: Board of Adjustment – December 5th, 2023

SUBJECT: July 17th, 2023 – BOA Minutes

Action:

Approve the July 17th, 2023 Minutes

CAROLINA BEACH

Board of Adjustment Meeting Monday, July 17, 2023 - 6:00 PM Council Chambers, 1121 N. Lake Park Boulevard, Carolina Beach, NC



MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

Vice Chairman Boykin called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

PRESENT

Vice Chairman Patrick Boykin Board Member Jullena Shelley Board Member Paul Levy Board Member Ken Thompson Board Member Tim Howard

ABSENT Chairman Wayne Hartsell Board Member David Marshall

ALSO PRESENT Planning Director Jeremy Hardison Senior Planner Gloria Abbotts Planner Haley Moccia

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. June 19, 2023 – Board of Adjustment minutes

ACTION: Motion to approve the minutes

Motion made by Vice Chairman Boykin, seconded by Board Member Howard Voting yea: Vice Chairman Boykin, Board Member Shelley, Board Member Levy, Board Member Thompson, Board Member Howard *Motion passed 5-0*

PUBLIC HEARING

2. Variance to Chapter 40, Article VII Fence Regulations from the required 4-foot height limitation for fences located within the 20-foot front yard setback for 300 South Lake Park Boulevard

Applicant Pleasure Island Holdings LLC is requesting a variance to allow fencing over 4 feet within the 20-foot front yard setback from Sec. 40-204 – Height Restrictions, which requires that no fence shall exceed 4 feet in height when located in the front yard setback. The property is located at 300 South Lake Park Boulevard and is in the MX zoning district. Dry Dock Inn and its pool are located on the property.

Gator Strong Services, a fence contractor, applied for a fence permit on behalf of the property owner in March 2022 to replace the fencing surrounding the pool located on the property. The application and supporting site plan materials proposed a 54-inch fence. Gator Strong Services was advised by the planning reviewer that the fencing within the front setback could not exceed 4 feet. They were told they would need to provide an updated site plan with an adjusted fence height to meet Town ordinance regulations. Danny Vulin of Gator Strong Services inquired about any fence exceptions or variance process. Mr. Hardison and Ms. Moccia advised Mr. Vulin there were no exceptions in the ordinance and spoke to him about the variance process. Mr. Vulin did not indicate a desire to apply for a variance at the time and was told to submit an updated site plan with a conforming fence height for fence permit approval.

No updated site plan was submitted, and the fence permit was left unissued. It was discovered in March 2023, through a code enforcement audit of all unissued and open permit applications, that a fence was installed surrounding the pool at Dry Dock Inn without an issued permit. The fence height surrounding the pool measured 56.5 inches. Town staff contacted Mr. Vulin and Deanna Lanni, the property owner listed on the fence application, to inform them the fence was too tall within the front setback and that it would need to be reduced to 48 inches to meet the Town's 4-foot fence height requirement. Mr. Vulin said the property owner contacted the County and received the N.C. Administrative Code addressing fence requirements surrounding pools. Ms. Lanni said she sent the information from the County to Mr. Vulin and was unaware he proceeded without a permit.

Mr. Vulin and the owner of Dry Dock Inn met on site to determine appropriate avenues to meet the Town ordinance. It was suggested they could alter or replace the section of fencing located within the front setback to meet the fence height requirements.

To resolve the situation, the applicant is seeking a variance to the required 4-foot fence height limitation for fences located within the 20-foot front yard setback for 300 South Lake Park Boulevard. If approved, the fence would not need to be replaced or altered to meet the 4-foot fence requirement.

Individuals planning to speak on the matter were sworn in.

Ms. Moccia presented the details. She reviewed the four required findings the Board must consider in the decision:

- 1. Unnecessary hardship would result from strict application of the ordinance.
- 2. The hardship results from conditions that are peculiar to the property, such as location, size, or topography.
- 3. The hardship did not result from actions taken by the applicant or property owner.
- 4. The requested variance is consistent with the spirit, purpose, and intent of the ordinance, such as that public safety is secured and substantial justice is achieved.

Ms. Moccia also presented a timeline of events as well as past and present photos of the fence. She said if the Board supports the findings, staff recommends the following condition for the variance: The variance is granted for the pool fencing only, and any new structures or redevelopment on the property shall conform to the setback height requirements.

Ladd Gasparovic, representing the applicant as an attorney and part owner, said his group purchased the property in late 2021 to breathe new life into it. He said they found a lot of things that had not been permitted properly in the past, so it was their intent to do everything by the book. Mr. Gasparovic said the fence issue was an honest mistake and not an intentional effort to break the rules. He said they did not see the March 2023 notification from the Town to Gator Strong Services and were unaware the fence was not permitted, instead believing the fence was approved because the County regulated the pool.

Mr. Gasparovic said having to replace or alter the custom fence would result in unnecessary hardship. He said the current fence looks great and is less obstructive than what was there before, plus the height makes it safer, stronger, and better. He said there are many fences along Lake Park Boulevard that are higher. Mr. Gasparovic said the issue is peculiar to the property, which abuts a public street with lots of access to the property. He said he believes the purpose of the ordinance is aesthetics, so the fence is consistent with the spirit, purpose, and intent because it does not obstruct views and enhances safety. He said he thinks this issue checks off all the boxes to be granted a variance.

Board Member Thompson asked what the rationale is for the Town's 48-inch fence height maximum. Mr. Hardison said this is for aesthetics so people don't wall up their front yards. He said once you get beyond the front setback, the fence height may go to 6 feet.

Mr. Vulin said he has been in business for 10 years and deals with the Town regularly. He said he has never had a situation like this in which the County approved something that was not approved by the Town. Mr. Vulin said the standard pool code fence is 54 inches and referenced aluminum fencing directly across the street that is 6 feet tall. He said changing the fence would cost thousands of dollars, and cutting the top will not look good. Mr. Vulin said he hopes common sense will prevail because the current fence looks great, is safe, and meets all pool code requirements.

Vice Chairman Boykin asked if an application was completed when dealing with the County. Mr. Vulin said he didn't have anything to do with that portion of it. He said he received an email response that stated things could proceed.

Ms. Lanni said there was no application but that she emailed Andrea Thomas from the County for feedback and ultimately received the green light to proceed with the pool inspection. She said the pool was inspected by the County on April 22 and passed with the current fence.

Mr. Hardison said reference to the County is specifically the New Hanover County Health Department, which governs commercial pools.

Vice Chairman Boykin said he is trying to understand the miscommunication that led to the taller fence height. Ms. Lanni said they never knew the pool had to go through the Town because they were solely working with the County. She said they assumed taller was better to keep kids from jumping the pool fence, and the wooden fence that was there previously was at least 6 feet tall.

Vice Chairman Boykin asked if the new owners received copies of the 2018 and 2019 fencing permits. Ms. Lanni said they didn't receive any permits or other documents from the old owners.

Mr. Gasparovic clarified that he was aware that the Town has jurisdiction for permitting and there is an overlap with the County's involvement, but he and those from Gator Strong Services thought everything was fine with the pool. He said the new fence had been up for a year when they received a notice of violation from the Town and realized there was a mistake.

Mr. Vulin said the new fence was installed in May or June 2022. He said a 54-inch height is standard and much safer than 48 inches.

Mr. Hardison said the ordinance setting the maximum height of 4 feet at the front setback was adopted in 2009. He said there were fences surrounding this property that had been previously permitted to be 6 feet.

<u>ACTION:</u> Motion to open the public hearing Motion made by Vice Chairman Boykin Voting yea: Vice Chairman Boykin, Board Member Shelley, Board Member Levy, Board Member Thompson, Board Member Howard *Motion passed 5-0*

No one requested to speak.

<u>ACTION:</u> Motion to close the public hearing and allow Board discussion Motion made by Vice Chairman Boykin, seconded by Board Member Howard Voting yea: Vice Chairman Boykin, Board Member Shelley, Board Member Levy, Board Member Thompson, Board Member Howard *Motion passed 5-0*

Board Member Levy said he used to work in health care and is aware of how health department and local building codes are not necessarily consistent.

Board Member Thompson said he sees no reason why the fence shouldn't be allowed to stand, and he thinks the Town should change the rule to prioritize safety over aesthetics.

Board Member Levy agreed and asked the Town to review the current ordinance and consider making the rules consistent with pool code. He said he's comfortable with allowing the current fence to remain.

Board Member Shelley agreed that the fence should stay as is.

Board Members went through each required finding.

Regarding finding 1, the following agreed: Board Member Shelley, Board Member Levy, Board Member Howard, and Board Member Thompson. The following disagreed: Vice Chairman Boykin. Therefore, finding 1 passed 4-1.

Vice Chairman Boykin said ignorance of the law is no excuse, so that's why he disagrees with finding 1. Board Member Thompson said he thinks ambiguity between different levels of the law creates uncertainty, and rules should be harmonized across various levels of government.

Regarding finding 2, the following agreed: Vice Chairman Boykin, Board Member Shelley, Board Member Levy, Board Member Howard, and Board Member Thompson. Therefore, finding 2 passed 5-0.

Regarding finding 3, the following agreed: Board Member Shelley, Board Member Levy, Board Member Howard, and Board Member Thompson. The following disagreed: Vice Chairman Boykin. Therefore, finding 3 passed 4-1.

Board Member Levy said he thinks it's confusion between the two sets of rules.

Regarding finding 4, the following agreed: Vice Chairman Boykin, Board Member Shelley, Board Member Levy, Board Member Howard, and Board Member Thompson. Therefore, finding 4 passed 5-0.

Vice Chairman Boykin said with all four of the required findings passing, the variance is approved.

<u>ACTION</u>: Motion to approve a variance of the fence height in Sec. 40-204 from the 4-foot fence height requirement in the front yard setback located at 300 South Lake Park Boulevard and that it meets the four findings of fact Motion made by Vice Chairman Boykin, seconded by Board Member Thompson Voting yea: Vice Chairman Boykin, Board Member Shelley, Board Member Levy, Board Member

Thompson, Board Member Howard Motion passed 5-0

DISCUSSION ITEMS

None

NON-AGENDA ITEMS None

ADJOURNMENT

<u>ACTION:</u> Motion to adjourn Motion made by Vice Chairman Boykin, seconded by Board Member Howard Voting yea: Vice Chairman Boykin, Board Member Shelley, Board Member Levy, Board Member Thompson, Board Member Howard *Motion passed 5-0*

The meeting adjourned at 6:55 PM.



AGENDA ITEM COVERSHEET

PREPARED BY:	Gloria Abbotts, Sr Planner	DEPARTMENT:	Planning & Development
MEETING:	Board of Adjustment – 12/5/2023		
SUBJECT:	Variance to the required 25' front yard Deck: 24.56' Pool: 21'	setback for 311 S	pencer Farlow Drive.

BACKGROUND:

The applicants Lary and Cory Ellis are requesting a variance of up to 4' from Section Sec. 40-74. -Dimensional standards for lots and principal structures, and Sec. 40-75. – Dimensional standards for accessory structures that require a 25' front yard setback. The property is located at 311 Spencer Farlow Drive and is in the R-2 zoning district. The property consists of a 0.171-acre lot, Lot 3B, Block 3, Harbour Point. Two permits were applied for at the property. One for a singlefamily home and a second for a pool. The contractor scheduled a final inspection of the swimming pool and home. A final survey is required for the final zoning inspection. The final survey depicted the front deck and swimming pool encroaching on the minimum 25' front setback (Attachment 2).

Deck:

The first site plan that was submitted with the permit application for new construction (Attachment 3) depicted the incorrect front setback. Staff notified the applicant that the minimum front setback in R-2 is 25' and not 20'. An updated site plan was submitted to the permit application (Attachment 4) and the project was approved. The zoning ordinance requires that a foundation survey is submitted prior to the sheathing inspection. A foundation survey was submitted and approved (Attachment 5), but the front deck was not shown and had not been built yet. Upon review of the final survey and during the final zoning inspection, the 3 front deck pilings were shown encroaching into the minimum front setback. The 3 pilings for the front deck were built with setbacks of 24.68', 24.70', and 24.56' from the front property line along Spencer Farlow Drive.

Pool:

In October 2022, the owner applied for a permit for a pool (Attachment 6), but it was never approved. The site plan submitted showed the pool meeting the 25' front setback. The permit application expired in April 2023. A new permit for the pool was applied for in April 2023, the site plan showed the pool on the site plan from the original site plan submittal, with the incorrect 20'

minimum front setback (Attachment 7). The front corner of the pool was built with a setback of 21' (Attachment 2). Pool setbacks are measured to the edge of the water.

To resolve the situation the applicant requests up to a 4' variance to the required 25' front yard setback. The home meets the minimum required side (7.5'), corner side (12.5') and rear (10') yard setbacks. To come into compliance with the ordinance the front deck and pool would have to be rebuilt.

REQUIRED FINDINGS:

When unnecessary hardships would result from carrying out the strict letter of a zoning ordinance, the board of adjustment shall vary any of the provisions of the ordinance upon a showing of all of the following:

- 1. Unnecessary hardship would result from the strict application of the ordinance. It shall not be necessary to demonstrate that, in the absence of the variance, no reasonable use can be made of the property.
- 2. The hardship results from conditions that are peculiar to the property, such as location, size, or topography. Hardships resulting from personal circumstances, as well as hardships resulting from conditions that are common to the neighborhood or the general public, may not be the basis for granting a variance.
- 3. The hardship did not result from actions taken by the applicant or the property owner. The act of purchasing property with knowledge that circumstances exist that may justify the granting of a variance shall not be regarded as a self-created hardship.
- 4. The requested variance is consistent with the spirit, purpose, and intent of the ordinance, such that public safety is secured, and substantial justice is achieved.

CONDITIONS:

In granting any variance, the Board may prescribe reasonable and appropriate conditions and safeguards, in conformity with this ordinance. Violation of any such conditions or safeguards, when made part of the terms under which the variance is granted, shall be deemed a violation of this ordinance and punishable under Article 19 of the Zoning Ordinance:

If the board supports the findings staff recommends the below condition for the variance

The variance is granted for the existing house and pool only and any new structures on the property shall conform to the setback requirements.

ATTACHMENTS:

- 1. Application
- 2. Final As-built Survey November 28, 2023
- 3. Submitted Site Plan submitted with Permit Application June 3, 2023
- 4. Approved Site Plan submitted with Permit Application for New Construction of a Single-Family Home – June 29, 2023
- 5. Foundation Survey January 26, 2023
- 6. Site Plan for First Pool Permit October 18, 2022
- 7. Approved Site Plan submitted with Permit Application for New Construction of a Swimming Pool May 1, 2023
- 8. Photos



Application for Variance TOWN OF CAROLINA BEACH, N.C.

RES22-492

Item 2.

Permit Number: _

Each application must be printed or typewritten and have all information answered. <u>It is strongly recommended</u> <u>that the applicant set up a meeting with Planning Staff prior to the submission deadline to ensure the</u> <u>application is complete</u>. The Town of Carolina Beach requires a <u>licensed attorney</u> to appear in a representative capacity to advocate the legal position of another person, firm, or corporation who is the applicant/owner of record.

Fee: \$500.00 to be submitted with application

This petition will be scheduled for the next possible regular Board of Adjustment meeting. The applicant or a representative should be present at the meeting to answer any questions the Board may have. Board of Adjustment meetings are held on the third (3rd) Monday of each month at 6:00 P.M. in the Council Room at the Municipal Administration Building, 1121 N. Lake Park Boulevard, Carolina Beach, NC 28428. Applicants will be informed of any changes in date, time, or location of meetings. Applications and supplementary time for processing and postings are required by the General Statutes of North Carolina.

Applicant Name: Lary Ellis	3 CoryE	Ellis	
Applicant Mailing Address:			
<u>311 Spencer Farlow</u> Street Address	Dr Carol City	state	<u>28428</u> _{Zip}
Applicant Phone Number: mobile/work/ (circle one): <u>910.905.2955</u>	home (circle one):	0.442.8388 m	obile/work/home
Applicant Email Address:	eteam@g	mail.com	
Property Owner Name: Lary 3	Cory Ell	is	
Property Owner Mailing Address:			
311 Spencer Farlow Street Address	Pr Carolin City	state	28428 Zip
Property address of variance being request	ed:		
311 Spencer Farlow Qr.	CBNCZ	8428	
Property Size: 200 sq. ft.		Zoning Designation:	sidenti al

Please give a brief description of requested action:

Vaniance request for pilings and pool.
Owner Signature:
Date: $11 / 3 / 2023$
Owner Printed Name: Lary CEllis

Variance Requirements

1. The Board of Adjustment conducts a quasi-judicial hearing. You may not contact the Board members once the application has been filed.

2. The Board of Adjustment is not empowered to modify zoning lines or grant a use variance.

3. The Board of Adjustment may attach conditions of approval to a variance to protect surrounding properties.

4. Town Staff will place a public hearing sign on the subject property. The sign must be prominently displayed on the property for at least ten days before the hearing. The property owner is responsible for maintaining the sign during this ten day period.

Item 2.

Variance Considerations

The Board of Adjustment will review all variance requests against the criteria below. In the spaces provided, please indicate the *facts* that you intend to show and the *arguments* that you intend to make to the Board.

1. Unnecessary hardship would result from the strict application of the ordinance. It shall not be necessary to demonstrate that, in the absence of the variance, no reasonable use can be made from the property.

311 Spencer Farlow Drive is a recently completed new home with a swimming pool. The swimming pool was constructed in its permitted location. However, due to a mistake with the builder, the Town's mistake and the unusual shape of the lot, a portion of the pool was constructed in the 25' setback. There is no remedy for this, except tearing the pool out. Additionally, due to an error by the builder, pilings for the front porch are approximately 4" in the front set back.

2. The hardship results from conditions that are peculiar to the property, such as location, size or topography. Hardships resulting from personal circumstances, as well as hardships resulting from conditions that are common to the neighborhood or the general public, may not be the basis for granting a variance.

The lot is unusual in its shape and proximity to the pavement of adjacent roads. See attached survey, with the encroachments highlighted in yellow.

3. The hardship did not result from actions taken by the applicant or the property owner. The act of purchasing property with knowledge that circumstances exist that may justify the granting of a variance shall not be regarded as a self-created hardship.

The hardship did not result from actions taken by the owner, but rather by their builder and permitting staff.

4. The requested variance is consistent with the spirit, purpose and intent of the ordinance, such that public safety is secured and substantial justice is achieved.

The variance is consistent with the spirit, purpose and intent of the ordinance. The slight encroachments create no public safety threat. Given the alternative of tearing out/down new construction substantial justice requires granting the required variance.

13

ATTACHMENT 2



ATTACHMENT 3





ATTACHMENT 5







Pool Site Plan for : Lary & Cory Ellis 311 Spencer Farlow Dr. Carolina Beach, NC 28428 exphometeam@gmail.com 910-442-8388 (Lary cell) 910-405-2455 (Cory cell)



311 SPENCER-FARLOW DRIVE LOT 3B BLOCK 3 HARBOUR POINT PARCEL ID:R08806-004-037-000 DEED BOOK 6464 PAGE 1649 MAP BOOK 35 PAGE 298 TOWN OF CAROLINA BEACH NEW HANOVER COUNTY NORTH CAROLINA

19



FRONT DECK FACING SPENCER FARLOW DRIVE:



SWIMMING POOL:



CORNER SIDE FROM DRILL SHELL LN:

