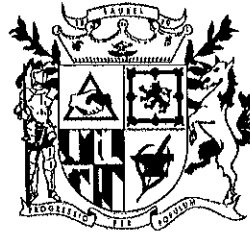


Frederick Smalls, Chairman
Michelle Keating, Vice-chair
David D. Johnston, Esquire
Maria Clifford
Stephen Wallace, Esquire
Karina Rivas, Alternate



Stephanie Anderson
City Solicitor

CITY OF LAUREL BOARD OF APPEALS

8103 Sandy Spring Road • Laurel, MD 20707 • 301-725-5300 • Fax: 410-792-2108

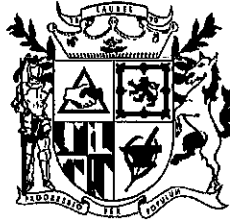
The Board typically Meets the Fourth Thursday of each Month

THREE HUNDRED NINETY THIRD MEETING- REGULAR THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 24, 2026 6:00 P.M. AGENDA

**This meeting will be conducted VIRTUALLY via Zoom. To sign up to speak, please pre-register here: <https://cityoflaurel.org/register-to-speak>. There will be a three (3) minute limit for each speaker. If you cannot attend but wish to submit comments for the record, please email them to ecd@laurel.md.us*

1. Roll Call
2. Approval of Minutes **May 28, 2026**
3. **Appeal Application No. 985, Resolution No. 26-06-BOA, for 7730 Cypress Street** filed by **Temesgen Teketel**. The applicant is appealing the denial of a building permit by the Department of Economic & Community Development. The denial was based on the Director's determination that the proposed deck dimensions do not comply with the requirements of the City of Laurel Unified Land Development Code (ULDC).
 - Public Hearing on Application
 - Final Action
4. Adjourn

The Honorable Frederick Smalls, Chairman
Michelle Keating, Vice-Chair
David Johnston, Esq.
Maria Clifford
Stephen J. Wallace, Esq.
Alternate (Vacant)



Stephanie Anderson
City Solicitor

CITY OF LAUREL BOARD OF APPEALS

8103 Sandy Spring Road • Laurel, MD 20707 • 301-725-5300 • Cityoflaurel.org

Board Meets Fourth Thursday of Each Month

THREE HUNDRED NINETY FIRST MEETING CITY OF LAUREL BOARD OF APPEALS THURSDAY, MAY 28, 2026 – REGULAR MEETING

**This meeting was conducted VIRTUALLY on Zoom*

Convened: 6:05 P.M.

Members' Present (During Roll):

Frederick Smalls, Chair
Michele Keating, Vice-chair
David Johnston, Esq.
Stephen Wallace, Esq.
Maria Clifford

Staff Present:

Raven Nee, ECD Deputy Director
Brooke Herring, ECD Community Development Coordinator
Connor Johnson, ECD Planner III
Nathaniel Forman, Esquire, Counsel to the Board

Citizens Present: Approximately: Three (3)

The minutes of the April 6, 2026, meeting were approved as written on a motion by Ms. Keating, seconded by Ms. Clifford, carried on a roll call vote by all members present.

The minutes of April 23, 2026, meeting were approved as written on a motion by Ms. Clifford, seconded by Mr. Johnston. Motion carried. Ms. Keating abstained from the vote.

The next agenda item was for Special Exception Application No. 981 and Resolution No. 26-04-BOA, for 349 Main Street Laurel, Maryland 20707, filed by Myste Lounge, 349 Main Street Laurel, Maryland 20707.

Chairman Smalls opened the public hearing at 6:05 p.m.

Mr. Johnson, Planner III, presented the staff report stating the applicant, Mr. James Preston, is seeking approval of a Special Exception to amend existing Special Exception No. 953 by increasing the square footage of the approved retail sales with smoking lounge use at 349 Main Street. Mr. Johnson went on to explain the proposed hours of operation are Sunday through Thursday from 12:00 p.m. to 12:00 a.m. and Friday through Saturday from 12:00 p.m. to 2:00 a.m. He stated the proposed floor area of 1,388 square feet requires 14 off-street parking spaces under the Unified Land Development Code. He added that the property provides sufficient parking to satisfy the requirements and comments were received from the Prince George's County Health Department regarding restrictions on smoking and vaping in eating and drinking establishments and the prohibition on serving catered or prepared food in a smoking establishment. Mr. Johnson stated the application satisfies the required Special Exception findings related to consistency with the Master Plan, public health and safety, compatibility with surrounding properties, adequacy of public services, and compliance with applicable code requirements. Mr. Johnson then recommended approval of Special Exception Application No. 981 and Resolution No. 26-04-BOA, subject to applicable code requirements and permitting conditions.

Following the staff report, Chairman Smalls invited questions from Board members. Board members requested clarification regarding the site plan and floor layout.

The applicant, Mr. Tem Popoola, Managing Partner of Myste Lounge, 349 Main Street Laurel, Maryland 20707, explained that the area outlined in red on the submitted plans represents the proposed expansion area. The existing lounge and the adjacent business, Crepes on Main, remain separate tenant spaces within the building. The proposed expansion would reopen access to a previously separated portion of the leased premises. Board members also requested clarification regarding the total floor area, available parking, hours of operation, security measures, and ventilation systems associated with the expansion. Mr. Popoola stated that the expanded lounge area would total approximately 1,100 square feet, and the adequate off-street parking is available to accommodate the use. He added that the proposed hours of operation would remain unchanged, and the business currently employs security personnel and plans to add an additional security officer upon expansion. Mr. Popoola stated additional interior and exterior surveillance cameras have been installed, and the establishment maintains a working relationship with neighboring businesses and addresses concerns related to litter and property maintenance. He added there have been no significant security or noise complaints have been reported since the business opened and no live music is provided at the establishment. Mr. Popoola continued to explain the existing

and proposed ventilation systems include air purification equipment and air circulation measures designed to maintain indoor air quality.

Chairman Smalls inquired about public safety planning and outreach to neighboring businesses.

Mr. Popoola stated that the application had been reviewed by the appropriate City and County agencies and that discussions had been held with neighboring businesses regarding operations and neighborhood concerns.

Board members expressed satisfaction with the responses provided.

Chairman Smalls closed the public hearing at 6:19 p.m. and requested a motion from the Board.

The Board, on motion by Mr. Wallace, seconded by Mr. Johnston, and carried on with a unanimous vote by all members present, voted to **approve** Special Exception Application No. 981 and Resolution No. 26-04-BOA as presented in the Technical Staff Report.

Next on the agenda was Variance Application No. 982, Resolution No. 26-05-BOA, for 113 St. Mary's Place Laurel, Maryland 20707, filed by Mr. Jeffrey Palumbo, St. Vincent Pallotti High School, 113 St. Mary's Place Laurel, Maryland 20707.

Ms. Raven Nee, Deputy Director, presented the staff report and explained that the applicant is requesting a variance from the minimum net lot green area requirements of Section 20-6.16 of the Unified Land Development Code (ULDC). She noted that in 2021 the Board approved construction of a new theater, an outdoor turf field, and an indoor turf field, along with a related variance. The outdoor turf field was completed in 2023; however, due to increased construction costs, the theater project remains unfinished, and the previously approved variance has expired. The applicant is no longer proposing construction of the indoor turf field and is now seeking a new variance to complete the theater project. Ms. Nee reviewed the variance standards set forth in Section 20-5.2 of the ULDC and stated that staff found all required criteria had been satisfied. She reported that the Code requires a minimum net lot green area of 65 percent, while the property currently provides approximately 55.6 percent. The proposed theater would reduce the green area to approximately 44.7 percent. She added that, because of the size and configuration of the property, strict application of the green area requirement would create unusual practical difficulty for the applicant. Staff further found that the requested variance is the minimum necessary to allow completion of the project, would not substantially impair the intent of the Comprehensive Plan or applicable master plans, and would not be detrimental to adjoining or neighboring properties.

Ms. Nee advised that the property is occupied by a private school and is not generally accessible to the public. She also noted that publicly accessible green space

is available immediately adjacent to the site at Alice B. McCullough Field. Further, staff notified all appropriate City departments and external agencies of the application and the Prince George's County Health Department submitted comments encouraging the use of permeable walkways and driveways. She stated no other agency comments were received. Ms. Nee reported that on May 12, 2026, the Planning Commission reviewed the application and voted unanimously to recommend approval of Variance Application No. 982 and the recommendation included applicable code requirements and permitting conditions. She added, based on its findings, staff recommended approval of Variance Application No. 982.

Board members inquired about the proposed theater, including its seating capacity and the status of the previously approved project. Staff referred questions regarding the facility to the applicant and confirmed that the Board had previously approved a variance associated with the project, but the approval had expired before construction could be completed.

Mr. Johnston asked whether the Laurel Arts Council had been consulted regarding the proposed theater.

Ms. Nee responded that the application involved a variance request related to minimum net lot green area requirements and, therefore, staff had not sought comments from the Arts Council.

Chairman Smalls then invited the applicant to address the Board.

Mr. Jeffrey Palumbo, representing St. Vincent Pallotti High School, 113 St. Mary's Place Laurel, Maryland 20707, thanked the Board and staff for their assistance. Mr. Palumbo explained that the theater project had originally been scheduled to begin in 2020 but was delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic and significant increases in construction costs. He stated that the cost of the project had increased by more than \$1.5 million, requiring additional time to secure funding. Mr. Palumbo advised that the proposed theater would contain approximately 208 seats and would function as a flexible black-box style theater supporting the school's educational theater program. He further explained that the facility would include space for dance, vocal music, piano, strings, and other arts-related instruction. Mr. Palumbo stated that representatives of the local Arts Council were aware of the project and that the facility would provide opportunities for broader community use and enjoyment.

Chairman Smalls opened the public hearing at 6:31 p.m.

No members of the public appeared to speak regarding the application.

The public hearing was closed at 6:32 p.m.

The Board, on motion by Ms. Keating, seconded by Mr. Wallace, and carried on with a unanimous vote by all members present, voted to approve Special Exception

Application No. 982 and Resolution No. 26-05-BOA as presented in the Technical Staff Report.

Chairman Smalls introduced the draft Resolution concerning the Board's prior denial of the Appeal related to 325 Gorman Avenue. He noted that, while the Board had previously voted to deny the appeal, a formal resolution had not yet been adopted.

Board Counsel, Nathan Foreman, O'Malley, Miles, Nylén & Gilmore, P.A. 7850 Walker Drive, Suite 310 Greenbelt, Maryland 20770, explained that the Board's earlier action denied the appeal; however, additional time had been needed to prepare a written resolution containing the findings of fact and conclusions of law supporting the Board's decision. He stated that the purpose of the current agenda item was to review and consider adoption of the proposed resolution.

Mr. Johnston inquired about revisions made to the draft resolution since its initial circulation. Mr. Wallace responded that the principal revisions were contained in Section 4 of the document, where additional analysis and statutory reasoning had been included to more fully address the applicant's arguments and explain the basis for the Board's decision.

Board Counsel, Nathaniel Foreman, O'Malley, Miles, Nylén & Gilmore, P.A. 7850 Walker Drive, Suite 310 Greenbelt, Maryland 20770, thanked the Board for their patience and cooperation during preparation of the resolution and expressed appreciation for Ms. Herring, the Board's Secretary.

There were no further comments or proposed amendments.

The Board, on motion by Mr. Wallace, seconded by Ms. Keating, and carried on with a unanimous vote by all members present, voted to approve Resolution No. 26-01-BOA for Appeals Application No. 977 as presented.

Prior to adjournment, Board members expressed appreciation to Ms. Herring for her work in preparing all the meeting minutes and related materials. Ms. Herring thanked the Board for their comments.

There was no further business to discuss.

Adjourn: 6:40 P.M.

APPROVED:

DATE:



**MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL OF LAUREL
DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

8103 Sandy Spring Road • Laurel, Maryland 20707 • (301) 725-5300
Internet Address <http://www.cityoflaurel.org> • E-mail: ecd@laurel.md.us

Date Filed: _____
Energov No.: _____
Application No.: 985
Planner: Jay
Zoning Sign: _____
BOA Hearing: 9/24/20
BOA Decision: _____
Resolution No.: 260080A

APPEAL APPLICATION

APPLICATION MUST BE FILLED OUT IN ITS ENTIRETY.

The City of Laurel Board of Appeals is empowered to hear appeals and render decisions for determinations made by staff, the City of Laurel Planning Commission, and/or the City of Laurel Historic District Commission. Any Board decision may be appealed in Circuit Court.

1. SUBJECT PROPERTY

Project Name: Appeal of Denial of Deck Renovation Permit
Street Address: 7730 Cypress Street
Zoning: _____ Lot: _____ Block: _____
Subdivision Name: _____
Tax Identification No.: _____

2. APPLICANT

Name: Temesgen Teketel
Street Address: 7730 Cypress Suite No.: _____
City: Laurel State: Maryland Zip Code: 20707
Work Phone: _____ Home Phone: (703) 622-2757
Email: teme4u@yahoo.com

3. PROPERTY OWNER (IF DIFFERENT FROM APPLICANT)

Name: _____
Street Address: _____ Suite No.: _____
City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____
Work Phone: _____ Home Phone: _____
Email: _____

4. ATTORNEY/LEGAL REPRESENTATION

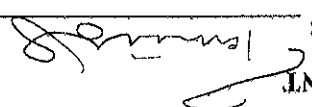
Name: _____
Street Address: _____ Suite No.: _____
City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____
Work Phone: _____ Home Phone: _____
Email: _____

5. APPEAL DESCRIPTION NARRATIVE
Describe the determination or decision being appealed, including the date and type of determination, permit and application numbers, and other pertinent information. If more space is required, attach additional pages or a separate "Statement of Justification" may be submitted with the application. (Sec. 20-5-10 Unified Land Development Code)

To the Honorable Members of the City of Laurel Board of Appeals,
I respectfully submit this letter to appeal the decision denying approval of my deck renovation project. I am the owner of the property and am seeking to rebuild my existing deck in accordance with applicable building and safety requirements. My intention is to improve my property while maintaining the same general design and appearance as the adjoining homes in my neighborhood. The reason provided for the denial was that the proposed deck would exceed the allowable percentage of backyard coverage. I was informed that only 50% of the backyard may be used. While I understand the City's responsibility to enforce zoning regulations, I respectfully request that the Board consider the unique circumstances of my property. Both the neighboring homes attached to mine on the right and left have decks constructed by North American Deck & Patio in the same manner and with similar dimensions in the past year 2021. My proposal is consistent with the existing character of the neighborhood and would not create any additional impact on adjacent properties. Granting this appeal would allow my property to be treated fairly and consistently with similarly situated neighboring homes. This deck is entirely within my property boundaries and is intended to improve the safety, functionality, and value of my home. The proposed renovation will not interfere with neighboring properties, public access, drainage, or public safety. For these reasons, I respectfully request that the Board reverse the denial and approve my deck renovation, or grant any necessary variance or relief that would allow the project to proceed. Thank you for your time and consideration. I appreciate the opportunity to present my appeal and respectfully ask for your favorable decision.

The applicant is responsible for providing a copy of the application and all supporting documents at the time of application submittal

I DO SOLEMNLY DECLARE AND AFFIRM UNDER PENALTIES OF PERJURY THAT THE CONTENTS OF THIS APPLICATION ARE TRUE AND CORRECT TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE AND BELIEF.

APPLICANT: 
Print Name Temesgen Tekele
Date: 07/29/2026

PROPERTY OWNER (Required if different than applicant)
Signature: _____
Print Name: _____
Date: _____

Fees (see separate schedule)	Amount	Account #
Filing Fee		10-43105
Total:		

*Check fee schedule for fee

All materials and fees are due at time of submittal. Once staff reviews all documents, you will be invoiced for payment.

GENERAL NOTES:

- 1) The accuracy of the distances shown from any structure to any apparent property line is $\pm 1'$.
- 2) This drawing does not represent a Boundary Survey. Any property markers labeled hereon are not guaranteed by NTT Associates, Inc.
- 3) This plat is of benefit to a consumer only insofar as it is required by a lender, a title insurance company or its agent in connection with contemplated transfer, financing, or refinancing.
- 4) This plat does not provide for the accurate identification of property boundary lines, but such identification may not be required, for the transfer of title or securing financing or refinancing.
- 5) This plat is not to be relied upon for the establishment or location of fences, garages, buildings, or other existing or future improvements.
- 6) Unless noted on the drawing, no title report was provided. This drawing was prepared by examining the current title deed or record plat. Any easements, restrictions, rights of way, or any other property alterations not referred to in the current title deed may not be shown.
- 7) Unless otherwise noted, the bearings and north arrow shown hereon are in the meridian of the current title deed or record plat.
- 8) Building Restriction Line information, if shown, was obtained from existing records only and is not guaranteed by NTT Associates, Inc.
- 9) Flood Zone Information shown on FIRM maps is subject to interpretation.
- 10) Improvements which in the surveyor's opinion appear to be in a state of disrepair or considered "temporary" may not be shown.
- 11) If it appears encroachments may exist, a Boundary Survey is recommended to determine the exact location of the property boundary lines and improvements.
- 12) The locations of fence lines, if shown, are approximate.
- 13) Area Information, if shown, was obtained from existing records only and is not guaranteed by NTT Associates, Inc.

APPARENT ENCROACHMENT NOTES:

- 1) There are no apparent encroachments.

JOB SPECIFIC NOTES:



7730 CYPRESS STREET
LAUREL, MARYLAND 20707

PRINTING INSTRUCTIONS:

- 1) With the drawing open in Adobe Reader, select "Print..." in the "File" menu
- 2) Select the desired printer
- 3) Choose the "All" option under "Pages to Print"
- 4) Choose the "Actual size" option under "Page Sizing & Handling"
- 5) To print in COLOR click "Print", for BLACK & WHITE continue to step 6
- 6) Click the "Properties" button
- 7) Choose the "Imaging" tab
- 8) Check the "Print" text as black" & "Print graphics as black" boxes (this will remain the default until unchecked)
- 9) Click "OK"
- 10) Click "Print"

SURVEYOR LEGEND:

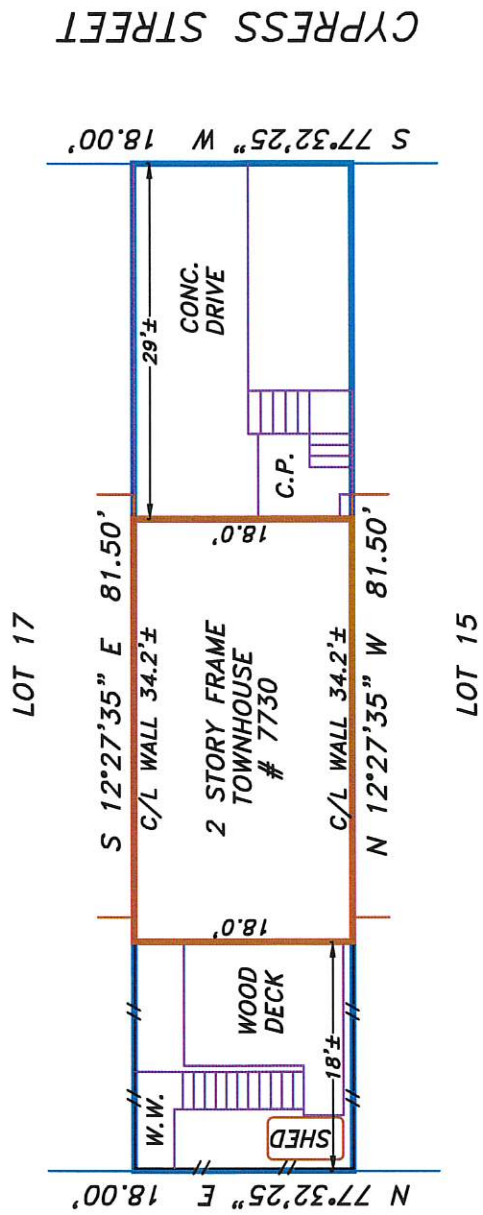
Property Lines:	Fence Line (Metal, Wire):
Buildings:	Fence Line (Wood, Plastic):
Improvements:	Right of Way:
Building Restriction Line:	100 Year Flood Plain:
Easement Lines:	Forest Conservation:
Old Lot Lines:	Septic Reserve Areas:
	Overhangs:

NTT Associates, Inc.

16205 Old Frederick Rd.
Mt. Airy, Maryland 21771
Phone: (410) 442-2031
Fax: (410) 442-1315
www.nttsurveyors.com

Subject property is shown in Zone X
on the FIRM Map of Prince George's County,
Maryland on Community Panel Number
24033C0053 E, effective 9/16/2016

THE GUDE BROTHERS COMPANY
L. 5226 F. 671



The purpose of this drawing is to locate, describe, and represent the positions of buildings and substantial improvements affecting the property shown hereon, being known as:

Lot 16, as shown on the plat entitled "Lots 1 thru 44 and Lots 157 thru 160, Plat 2, Section 2, Laurel Lakes", recorded among the land records of Prince George's County, Maryland in Plat 123, folio 2

This is to certify that I either personally prepared or was in responsible charge over the preparation of this drawing and the surveying work reflected in it, all set forth in Regulation .12 of Chapter 09.13.06 of the Code of Maryland Annotated Regulations.

This is page one of a two page document. The advice found on the affixed page is an integral part of this drawing, and is not valid without all pages.



James Carl Hudgins
Property Line Surveyor #96
Expiration Date: 3/11/2028

LOCATION DRAWING
7730 CYPRESS STREET
10th ELECTION DISTRICT
PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND

Scale: 1"= 15'

Date: 5/18/2026

Field By: STP

Drawn By: STP

File No.: MISC 17690

Page No.: 1 of 2

NTT Associates, Inc.
16205 Old Frederick Rd.
Mt. Airy, Maryland 21771
Phone: (410) 442-2031
Fax: (410) 442-1315
www.nttsurveyors.com



PERMIT SNAPSHOT REPORT 20261486 FOR CITY OF LAUREL

Permit Type: Building (Residential) **Project:** **App Date:** 05/27/2026
Work Class: Deck/Patio **District:** Laurel **Exp Date:** NOT AVAILABLE
Status: In Review **Square Feet:** 237.00 **Completed:** NOT COMPLETED
Valuation: \$13,000.00 **Assigned To:** Nee, Raven **Approval Expire Date:**
Description: CONSTRUCT A 13' X 17' DECK W/ 4' X 4' LANDING & STEPS

Parcel: 1039197	Main	Address: 7730 Cypress St Laurel, MD 20707	Main	Zone:
Contractor North American Deck & Patio 312 Highland TER Prince Frederick, MD 20678	Owner TEMESGEN TEKETEL Home: (703) 622-2757	Applicant APPLIED & APPROVED PERMITS POST OFFICE BOX 310 PERRY HALL, MD 21128	Occupant TEMESGEN TEKETEL Home: (703) 622-2757	

Permit Custom Fields

In Floodplain?	NO	Subdivision	LAUREL LAKES PLAT 2	HDC	NO
Attachment File Name	Added On	Added By	Attachment Group	Notes	
TEKETEL- A1.pdf	05/27/2026 11:52	Clancy, Michelle		Structural drawings.	
TEKETEL SITE.pdf	05/27/2026 11:52	Clancy, Michelle		Plat/Site Plan of property clearly indicating the location of the proposed deck or patio including the dimensions, framing, footing details and distance from all structures and property lines is required.	
Signature__5/27/2026.jpg	05/27/2026 11:53	Clancy, Michelle		Uploaded via CSS	

Note	Created By	Date and Time Created
1. The proposed deck exceeds rear yard coverage in PUD-E zone. Rear yard = 327 sf PUD-E zone rear yard coverage = 50% Deck cannot exceed 163.5sf Proposed deck and stairs = 237sf	Alexis Williams	07/01/2026 14:23

Invoice No.	Fee	Fee Amount	Amount Paid
NOT INVOICED	Res Deck/Patio Permit	\$150.00	\$0.00
Total for Invoice NOT INVOICED		\$150.00	\$0.00
Grand Total for Permit		\$150.00	\$0.00

Submittal Name	Status	Received Date	Due Date	Complete Date	Resubmit	Completed
Building (Residential) Deck/Patio Review v.1	In Review	05/27/2026	06/03/2026		No	No
Item Review Name	Department	Assigned User	Status	Assigned Date	Due Date	Completed Date
ECD Planner Approval	Economic and Community Development	Williams, Alexis	In Review	06/01/2026	06/03/2026	
Item Review Name	Department	Assigned User	Status	Assigned Date	Due Date	Completed Date
ECD Director Approval	Economic and Community Development	Meashey, Jay	In Review			
Item Review Name	Department	Assigned User	Status	Assigned Date	Due Date	Completed Date
Building	Building	Hamlett, T'Amani	In Review			
Item Review Name	Department	Assigned User	Status	Assigned Date	Due Date	Completed Date
FMPS Admin	Building	Albert, Brinda	In Review			

Workflow Step / Action Name	Action Type	Start Date	End Date
August 10, 2026	8103 Sandy Spring Road, Laurel, MD 20707		

PERMIT SNAPSHOT REPORT (20261486)

Review v.1

05/27/2026 0:00

Confirm Application Complete v.1

Generic Action

06/01/2026 12:29

Invoice Created and Fees Paid v.1

Generic Action

Building (Residential) Deck/Patio Review v.1

Receive Submittal

05/27/2026 0:00

Issue Permit v.1

Issue Permit v.1

Generic Action

Inspections v.1

Footing v.1

Inspection

Structural Framing/Fire Blocking v.1

Inspection

Miscellaneous Inspection v.1

Inspection

Final Inspections v.1

Final Building v.1

Inspection