

CITY OF SMYRNA

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

MEMORANDUM

To: License and Variance Board

From: Rusty Martin, AICP, Community Development Director
Caitlin Crowe, Planner I

Date: June 2, 2025

RE: VARIANCE CASE V25-056
1379 Belmont Avenue – Reduce the driveway setback from 5 feet to 2.7 feet

BACKGROUND

The applicant is proposing a second driveway near the eastern side property line at 1379 Belmont Avenue. Section 801 sets the driveway setback requirements in the R-15 zoning district.

ANALYSIS

The subject parcel is a 0.46-acre double frontage lot on the north side of Belmont Avenue and south side of Windy Hill Road (see Figure 1). The subject parcel and adjoining parcels to the north, west and east are zoned R-15 and are all occupied by single-family detached residences, with the exception of the parcel to the east, which is occupied by the Fox Creek Golf Club. The property to the south is zoned RDA and is occupied by the Grove at Adam's Pond stormwater detention pond.

The new home, recently completed in April 2025, has an existing one-car driveway that leads to the side-entry garage. The existing driveway meets the required 5-foot driveway setback and is actually 10 feet from the side property line due to an existing drainage easement that runs the length of the western side property line. Note that the driveway could not be expanded to accommodate a standard two-car driveway on the western side of the home due to the drainage easement. The applicant received approval to install a second driveway apron on the eastern side of the property in February 2025 with the condition that it remain 5 feet from the side property line. After the home was completed, the applicant went outside the scope of the driveway and installed concrete strips alongside the property line to create a ribbon driveway, closer than the approved 5 feet. After being alerted, the applicant quickly submitted for the next available variance meeting.

The applicant is proposing to retain the new ribbon driveway to store the homeowner's work vehicle within the property boundaries instead of within the City right-of-way where it currently resides. The 22-foot truck has a 30-foot gooseneck flatbed trailer attached, which is unable to fit on the existing 81-foot driveway without fully blocking the entrance to the garage. By adding the second ribbon driveway up the length of the house (for a total of 125 feet), the full work vehicle

and trailer can be stored out of the right-of-way and blocked from view for eastward-bound traffic by the existing house.

Many of the driveways in the area are up to the side property line due to the age of the properties (most having been erected in the 1950s), thus the location of the driveway would not be out of character in the neighborhood. Community Development believes the variance is the minimum variance needed to park the trailer out of the roadway and completely within the property boundaries. At the time of this report, Community Development has not received any calls in opposition to the request.

STAFF COMMENTS

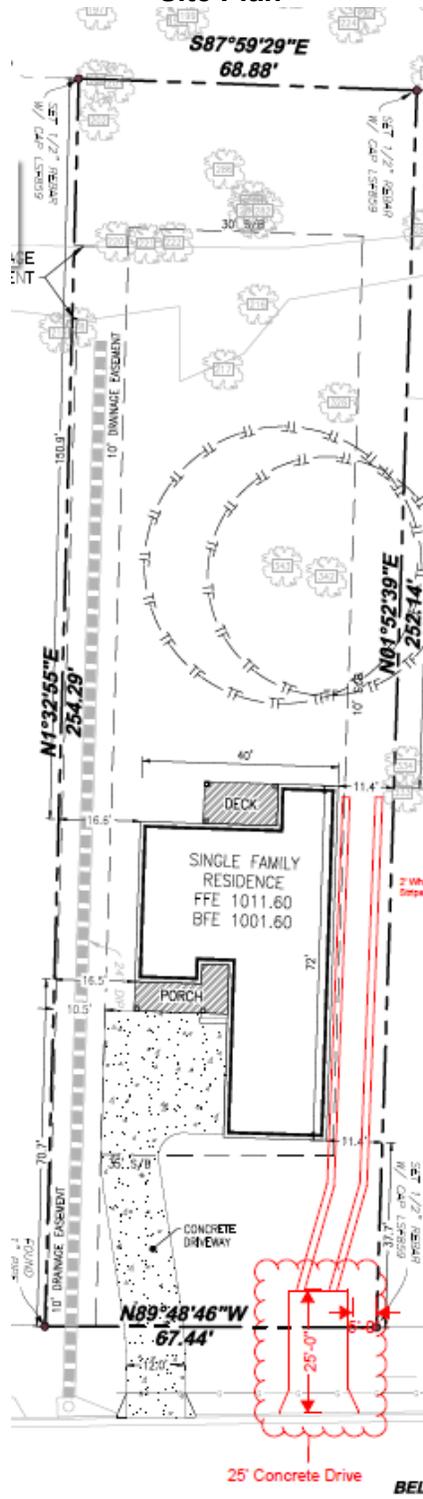
The applicant is requesting to deviate from the development standards established by Section 801, which requires a minimum 5-foot driveway setback in certain residential zoning districts. According to Section 1403 of the Zoning Ordinance, variances must be reviewed under the following standards: (1) Whether there are unique and special or extraordinary circumstances applying to the property; (2) Whether any alleged hardship is self-created by any person having an interest in the property; (3) Whether strict application of the relevant provisions of the code would deprive the applicant of reasonable use of the property; and (4) Whether the variance proposed is the minimum variance needed. After a review of the standards above, Community Development believes that the encroachment will not adversely affect surrounding residents; therefore, staff recommends **approval** of the requested variance with the following condition:

1. Approval of the requested variance shall be conditioned upon substantial compliance with the site plan submitted with the variance application.

Figure – 1



Figure - 2
Site Plan



**Figure – 3
Proposed Driveway**



**Figure – 4
Work Vehicle and Trailer**



**Figure – 5
Subject Property**



**Figure – 6
Location of Proposed Ribbon Driveway**



Figure – 7
Adjacent Property to the East



Figure – 8
Adjacent Property to the West



Figure – 9
Adjacent Property across Belmont Avenue

