

# **CITY OF SMYRNA COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT MEMORANDUM**

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To: License and Variance Board

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

Date: May 12, 2023

**RE: VARIANCE CASE V23- 034**

**2484 Adams Drive – Allow new construction on lot of record below minimum requirements**

**VARIANCE CASE V23- 035**

**2484 Adams Drive – Reduce the northern side setback from 12 feet to 8.3 feet**

**VARIANCE CASE V23- 036**

**2484 Adams Drive – Reduce the southern side setback from 12 feet to 7.9 feet**

**VARIANCE CASE V23- 037**

**2484 Adams Drive – Reduce the driveway setback from 5 feet (Withdrawn)**

**VARIANCE CASE V23- 038**

**2484 Adams Drive – Allow over 25% of the front yard to be impervious surface area**

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## **BACKGROUND**

The applicant is requesting several variances to build a new single-family home at 2484 Adams Drive on a substandard lot. Section 1208 of the Zoning Ordinance requires a variance to build on a lot of record below minimum requirements. Section 801 of the Zoning Ordinance establishes the restrictions for properties in the R-20 zoning district, which requires 12-foot building side setbacks and a maximum of 25% of impervious surface area in the front yard.

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## **ANALYSIS**

The subject parcel is a 0.19-acre lot located on the west side of Adams Drive (see Figure 1). The subject parcel and adjacent parcels to the north and west are zoned R-20 whereas the adjacent parcels to the south and east are zoned RDA; all are occupied by detached single-family homes. The subject parcel is located within the J. H. Taylor Subdivision, which was platted in 1944 in Cobb County, prior to the current Smyrna Zoning Ordinance, which was implemented in 1974.

The subject property was annexed into the City in May 2021 through House Bill 744, which brought several Unincorporated Cobb County islands into the City's jurisdiction. Through the

## VARIANCE CASE V23-034 through 038

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annexation, all annexed properties were brought into the City of Smyrna in the R-20 zoning district, which was Cobb County's equivalent zoning district. However, the subject property is only 8,042 square feet while the R-20 zoning district requires a minimum lot size of 20,000 square feet. Since the subject property is an existing lot of record, originally filed for platting in 1944 in Cobb County and then annexed accordingly into the City, the hardship is not self-created.

The applicant is proposing to demolish the existing 742 square foot ranch house and build a new 3,920 square foot two-story single-family home on the subject property, which will include three bedrooms and three bathrooms. The façade will be a mixture of brick and hardiplank. As mentioned, the existing one-story home is 742 square feet, well below the minimum house size of the R-20 zoning district at 2,100 square feet. With the rebuild, the home will be brought into compliance with the R-20 zoning district floor area requirement.

Due to the property being well below the required 20,000 square feet lot area, the setback requirements create an unfeasible buildable area. The proposed home is centered in the middle of the lot to minimize the scale of the variances needed but due to the constraints of the site, the applicant is requesting to reduce the side setbacks to build the new home. Additionally, to limit land disturbance, the new home is being placed on roughly the same footprint as the previous home, including the front setback encroachment. However, in accordance with Section 1205, since the average front setback for the homes zoned R-20 within 200 feet is 16 feet, no variance is required to allow for a 25-foot front setback.

The existing home has a one-car driveway along the northern property line, which is encroaching into the required 5-foot driveway setback. When the new home is erected, the applicant is proposing to move the driveway to be in line with the new garage, which will be 8.3 feet from the property line. However, due to the narrowness of the lot, the typical standard of a two-car driveway (along with the front setback encroachment) will be more than 25% of the front yard. Since the driveway width is typical of today's homes and will allow additional parking off the narrow road of Adams Drive, staff is supportive of the variance.

The subject property is unique in that it has less square footage than what the R-20 zoning district requires; the hardship is not self-created as the property is an existing lot of record. The setback variances requested are the minimum variances needed to build a new single-family home on the subject property in line with the surrounding neighborhood. Furthermore, variances of this nature have been approved in the past for the property to the north, 2474 Adams Dr (V21-028), so no negative precedent would be set. Community Development has not received any calls in opposition to the request.

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### STAFF COMMENTS

The applicant is requesting to deviate from the City's minimum lot area, side setbacks, and impervious surface requirements established for the R-20 Zoning District. 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

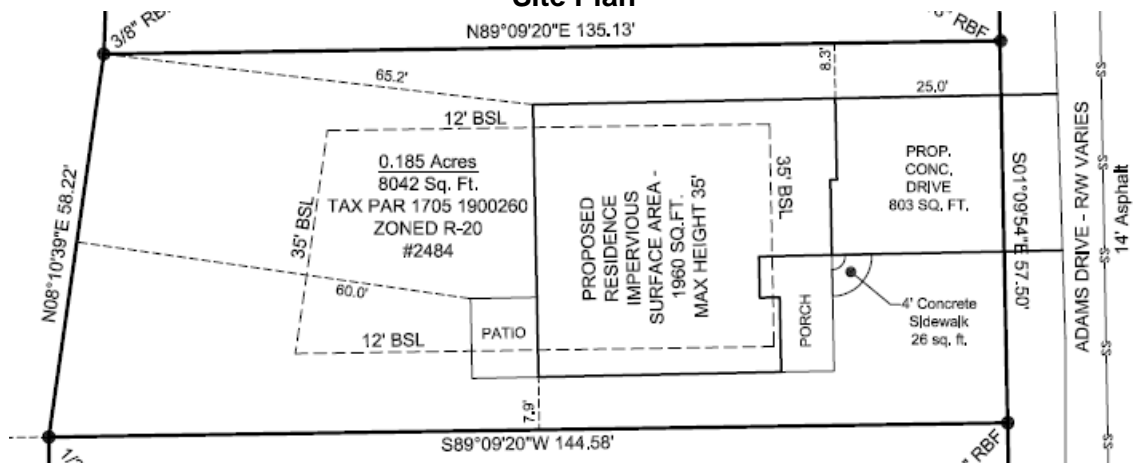
applicant of reasonable use of the property; and (4) Whether the variance proposed is the minimum variance needed. Community Development believes that the requested variances will not adversely affect surrounding properties. Therefore, Community Development recommends **approval** of the requested variances with the following condition:

1. Approval of the requested variances shall be conditioned upon the development of the property in substantial compliance with the site plan and elevations submitted with the variance application.

Figure – 1



Figure – 2  
Site Plan



**Figure – 3**  
**Front Elevation**



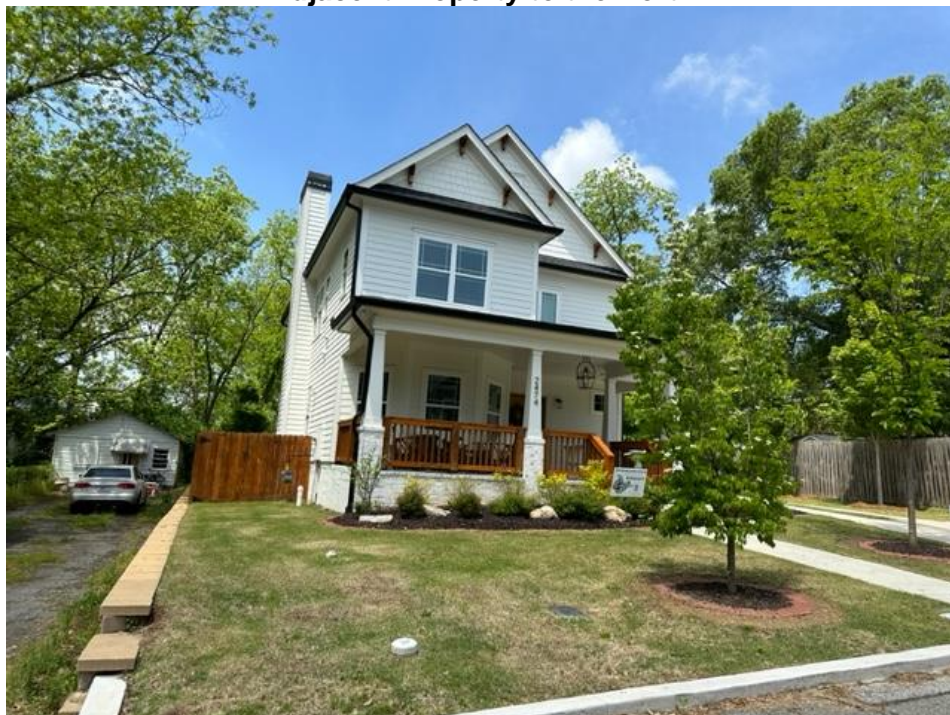
**Figure – 4**  
**Subject Property**



**Figure – 5**  
**Adjacent Property to the South**



**Figure – 6**  
**Adjacent Property to the North**



**Figure – 7**  
**Adjacent Property across Adams Drive**



**Figure – 8**  
**Adjacent Property across Adams Drive**

