



BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS MINUTES

February 6, 2025 - 4:00 P.M.
City Hall, 3rd Floor, Council Chambers, 1737 Main Street, Columbia, S.C.

KATHRYN FENNER • DAVIS WHITTLE • SHERARD DUVALL
JONATHAN VANG • COLTON DRIVER • JOHN GREGORY

In attendance: Kathryn Fenner, Davis Whittle, Sherard Duvall, Colton Driver, John Gregory

Absent: Johnathan Vang

Staff: Andrew Livengood, Erica Jaen, Madelyn Bowden.

I. CALL TO ORDER and DETERMINATION OF QUORUM

Ms. Fenner, chair, called the meeting to order at 4:03 P.M.

Members of the Board of Zoning Appeals (BOZA) were introduced along with staff. Quorum was confirmed. Applicants and others who wished to speak were sworn in.

Andrew Livengood, Zoning Administrator, reviewed the consent agenda.

II. CONSENT AGENDA

A. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. Approve [January 2, 2025 Minutes](#)

B. OLD BUSINESS

NONE

C. NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Gregory made motion to approve the consent agenda and January minutes. Mr. Driver seconded the motion. All aye. Motion passed 4-0.

III. REGULAR AGENDA

A. OLD BUSINESS

NONE

B. NEW BUSINESS

3. 2024-0025-SE [3409 & 3411 Farrow Road \(TMS# 11508-01-04 & -05\)](#) Special exception to permit a convenience store in the NAC district (Sheetal Patel, ESPOT, LLC) (NAC)

Mr. Livengood introduced the special exception request and invited the applicant to the podium to present the case.

Alex Shissias, Applicant's attorney, went over the applicant's history of owning other convenience stores and their reputation as business owners. He specified they will not sell alcohol and will have limited open hours, 6am -10pm.

- Sherard Duvall arrived and is now a part of the voting body.

Discussion ensued between Board members and Mr. Shissias.

Members of the public were invited to speak in favor of or opposition to the request.

Aaron Wallace, member of St. John Baptist Church, spoke in opposition, citing crime would increase with the convenience store business. He then asked the Board if he can direct questions to the business owner in front of the board.

Ms. Fenner, noted that Mr. Shissias consented to the request and made a motion to amend Board procedures to permit Mr. Wallace to question the applicant, Mr. Patel. Motion seconded by Mr. Gregory. Motion passed (4-1) with Mr. Duvall in opposition.

Aaron Wallace proceeded to ask Mr. Patel questions about mitigating crime at the proposed business.

Mr. Patel responded that the presence of an operating business would deter crime more than a vacant building.

Public input continued.

In opposition:

Nathan Robertson, community member
Regina E. Williams, President of Booker Heights Neighborhood Association
Angela Owens, community member
Dr. Jamey O. Graham, Pastor of St. John's Baptist Church
Gentarra Williams, community member
Leon Corley, community member
Diane Wiley, President of Belvedere Neighborhood
Edison Morris, community member
Leon Howard, community member
Tyra Little, Richland County Councilwoman; District 3

William Holbrook, City of Columbia Police Chief, was in attendance and the Board Chair, Kathryn Fenner, invited him to the podium to speak to the presence of crime in the area.

As no one else spoke in favor or opposition to the request, the applicant was allowed time for rebuttal of comments made by the public.

Mr. Shissias, responded and voiced concerns that his clients are being held to the bad reputation of the prior occupants and explained that the standards of the current owners are higher than that of previous owners.

Discussion amongst the board ensued.

Mr. Gregory made a motion to deny the special exception to permit a convenience store in the NAC district on the basis that it fails to meet conditions 7, 8 and 12. Motion seconded by Mr. Duvall. All aye (5-0). Motion to deny the special exception request passed 5-0.

IV. OTHER BUSINESS

NONE

V. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn the meeting by Ms. Fenner.
Motion seconded by Mr. Duvall. All aye. Motion passed (5-0).
Meeting adjourned at 5:22 P.M.