

Letter of Intent: 2453 Wawona Dr NE Brookhaven, GA 30319

City of Brookhaven:

We are writing this letter to request approval for a Zoning Variance to reduce the average front yard setback from 63.7 feet to 39.3 feet to allow for the construction of a small front porch addition. My husband and I are the new owners of the home and we are currently in the process of renovating the existing structure. We believe a front porch makes the house feel more welcoming, promotes neighbor interaction, helps prevent crime, and adds significant curb appeal.

When we purchased the home, we were aware of the current zoning which allows a 35 foot front yard setback. We discovered during the permitting process that there is Zoning Code (Section 27-1463-1) that states the front yard setback is determined by the neighboring properties to the left and to the right. The current average is 63.7 feet and the existing house sits at 49.3 feet. We are proposing an open porch that will extend 10 feet further into the current setback. There is a rule in the Section 27-1463 that allows an open front porch to extend 10 feet into the average setback, but because the current house already intrudes into the setback we are requesting a variance to the rule.

We understand this Zoning Code is to preserve the look and feel of the community, but with the tear down and rebuilding happening around us, we feel preserving this 1950s home and the character of the neighborhood is very important. The variance requested is a result of all the following conditions:

1) The requested variance by reason of exceptional narrowness, shallowness, or shape of a specific lot, or by reason of exceptional topographic conditions, which were not created by the owner or applicant, the strict application of the requirements of this Chapter would deprive the property owner of rights and privileges enjoyed by other property owners in the same zoning district;

The denial of their variance would not create any hardship conditions at the property, but we believe it is important to help preserve the overall character of the neighborhood via the curb appeal of the property. As seen in the pictures attached, our home is located between two properties that are set back farther than the average properties are on the street. We believe this change would not negatively impact the overall look and feel of the other homes in the area.

2) The requested variance does not go beyond the minimum necessary to afford relief, and does not constitute a grant of special privilege inconsistent with the limitations upon other properties in the zoning district in which the subject property is located.

Many homes in the Ashford Park-Drew Valley neighborhood have front porches and we believe that a porch adds to the overall character of the neighborhood, promotes neighbor interaction, and prioritizes safety to reduce crime rates.

3) The grant of the variance will not be materially detrimental to the public welfare or injurious to the property or improvements in the zoning district in which the subject property is located.

The grant of this variance would not be detrimental to public welfare or injurious to the overall improvements in the zoning district. If anything it will help increase safety by promoting overall visibility to the property. We also should note that the lot coverage will not increase to negatively impact storm run-off and the variance approval would still be well distanced given the standard setback rule.

4) The literal interpretation and strict application of the applicable provisions or requirements of this Chapter would cause undue and unnecessary hardship; not merely impose a casual/discretionary inconvenience up the applicant or his assigns.

While the result would be not cause a direct hardship, preserving this existing home and its relevant renovations are important to help maintain the overall character of our neighborhood, especially considering the vast number of tear downs and rebuilds occurring throughout.

5) The requested variance would be consistent with the spirit and purpose of this Chapter and the City of Brookhaven Comprehensive Plan text.

This variance will help preserve the character of the neighborhood and promote neighbor interaction with the home that is already there.

Given the explanation above, we request your approval for the variance to zoning to reduce the average front yard setback for allowance of the small front porch addition. Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Best Regards,

Lauren Knish & Daniel Shaver
2453 Wawona Drive NE
Brookhaven, GA 30319