

TOWN OF SOUTH BETHANY
BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT PUBLIC HEARING MINUTES
Friday, November 7, 2025 1:00 p.m.

This meeting/hearing was conducted both in-person and electronically.

PRESENT: Steve Bunoski, Charlene Sturbitts, Jim Oliver, Patty Jaicks, Al Rae, and Barrett Edwards
TOWN STAFF: Joe Hinks, Code Enforcement Officer; and Brittany Hollis, Administrative Assistant
APPLICANT: **Linda J. Murray**, 420 Periwinkle Drive
ATTENDENCE: Catherine Hughes and Susan Lawler

Chairman Steve Bunoski called the Meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. All parties were sworn in who requested testimony during the hearing.

PURSUANT TO 22 DEL.C. SECTION 327 (a) AND ARTICLE XI, Section 145-38(E)(3), of the Zoning Code establishes a maximum footprint of 1,700 square feet. The Applicant is requesting a variance to exceed the maximum footprint by 102 feet to expand the deck and relocate the deck stairway, as more particularly described in the application materials submitted by the Applicant.

Administrative Assistant Brittany Hollis was sworn in and testified that notices for the November 7, 2025 hearing were provided as follows: posted at the property on October 2, 2025; published in the Coastal Point newspaper on October 3, 2025; posted at Town Hall and at 4 other locations within Town on October 2, 2025; and mailed to the property owner and owners of property within a radius of 200 feet of the Property on October 2, 2025.

Building Official Joseph Hinks was sworn in and gave an overview of the application. Testifying that the Applicant would like to do renovations to the existing deck and stairway. Currently the home exceeds the maximum footprint by approximately 18 square feet. With the desired improvements, the footprint would need to be increased over the maximum footprint of about 102 square feet. Said improvements would still be within the required setbacks.

The Applicant, Linda Murray testified that she would like to increase the deck by two feet, pushing the stairway out further from the house. This would add 84 square feet to the existing footprint. Ms. Murray emphasized that the size of the deck is rather small, making it hard to maneuver during daily tasks. With this being the only entrance in and out of the home, in the event of an emergency, it would be almost impossible for anyone to enter or exit at the same time.

Catherine Hughes was sworn in and stated that most of the houses in the area do not have rear exits. She indicated that she was not in favor of nor opposed to the variance request.

Susan Lawler also testified that she felt the variance notice could have been more detailed. Questioning what was meant by footprint and how it is calculated. This was clarified by Mr. Hinks.

No one provided testimony in opposition to the application. However, letters of support from Jocelyn Cenna of 408 Black Gum Drive and Robert and Andrea Sokoloff of 406 Black Gum Drive were received prior to the hearing.

Jim Oliver, Board member, motioned to approve the request for a variance to exceed the maximum building footprint by 102 square feet to allow for the expansion of the deck and relocation of the corresponding stairway.

By vote of 5 yeas and 0 nays, the Board concludes that the Applicant met the standards necessary to demonstrate an exceptional practical difficulty. Therefore, **GRANTING** the Applicant's request for a variance.

The hearing was adjourned at 1:44 p.m.