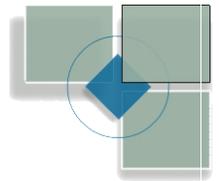




DeKalb County Department of Planning & Sustainability

Lee May
Interim Chief Executive Officer

Andrew Baker, AICP
Director



ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS APPLICATION FOR PUBLIC HEARING (VARIANCES, SPECIAL EXCEPTIONS, APPEALS OF ADMINISTRATIVE DECISIONS)

BOA No. _____

Applicant and/or
Authorized Representative _____

Mailing Address: _____

City/State/Zip Code: _____

Email: _____

Telephone Home: _____ Business: _____ Fax No.: _____

OWNER OF RECORD OF SUBJECT PROPERTY

Owner: _____

Address (Mailing): _____

City/State/Zip Code: _____

Email: _____

Telephone Home: _____ Business: _____ Fax No.: _____

ADDRESS/LOCATION OF SUBJECT PROPERTY

Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

District(s): _____ Land Lot(s): _____ Block: _____ Parcel: _____

District(s): _____ Land Lot(s): _____ Block: _____ Parcel: _____

District(s): _____ Land Lot(s): _____ Block: _____ Parcel: _____

Zoning Classification: _____ Commission District & Super District: _____

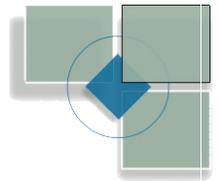
CIRCLE TYPE OF HEARING REQUESTED

- VARIANCE (From Development Standards causing undue hardship upon owners of property.)
- SPECIAL EXCEPTIONS (To reduce or waive off-street parking or loading space requirements.)
- OFFICIALS APPEALS OF ADMINISTRATIVE DECISIONS.

TO BE COMPLETED BY PLANNING AND SUSTAINABILITY DEPARTMENT

Date Received: _____

Fee Paid: _____



ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS APPLICATION AUTHORIZATION OF THE PROPERTY OWNER

I hereby authorize the staff and members of the Zoning Board of Appeals
To inspect the premises of the Subject Property

I hereby certify that the information provided in the application is true and correct.

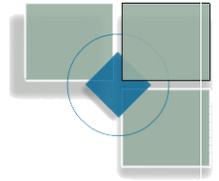
I hereby certify that I am the owner of the property subject to the application.

DATE: _____

Applicant: _____
Signature

DATE: _____

Applicant: _____
Signature



Filing Guidelines for Applications to the DeKalb County, Ga. Board of Appeals

1. Order of Submitted Materials:

- a. Application Form
- b. Signatures and authorization (including permission to go on property)
- c. Letter of Intent
- d. Surveys, site plans.
- e. Other relevant materials (e.g. photographs, letters of support, citation, etc.)
- f. Filing Fee (\$300 payable to "DeKalb County")

2. Application Materials:

- a. Applications must be submitted in complete, collated packets.
- b. All materials must be folded in stacks of 8½ x 11.
- c. Ten copies of all materials are required.
- d. Applicant may want to bring an 11th copy for their records.

3. Surveys or site plans of the Subject Property:

- a. Must be stamped by a professional engineer, surveyor certified by the State of Georgia or a registered Architect.
- b. All plans and/or surveys must include the following information:
 1. Site plan must show all property lines with dimensions.
 2. Must show the location of all existing and proposed buildings, structures, parking and setbacks (their relationship to the property boundaries).
 3. Must show any other features related to the request such as landscaping, outdoor lighting, fences, etc.
 4. Must be to scale
 5. Must show lot area and lot coverage (impervious materials, including paving and structures).
 6. Larger and small scale plans (8½ x 11) are generally required.

4. If property is not located in a platted subdivision, a legal description must be included.

5. Letter of Intent:

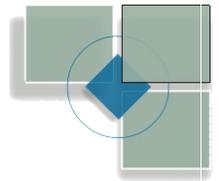
- a. A typed statement indicating the request and clarifying justification for the proposal based on the criteria as indicated in Section 27-916 of the DeKalb County Zoning Ordinance (see attached information).
- b. Reference the section of the code you are requesting to vary and the amount of requested change, such as to reduce the rear yard setback from forty (40) feet to twenty (20) feet to construct an addition

6. Authorization:

- a. If property owner is different from the applicant, the form to authorize the application must be signed by the owner and stamped by a notary.
- b. If property is owned by more than one property owner, all property owners must authorize the request.
- c. Authorize staff and members of the Board of Appeals to go on the property for site analysis and to post signs.

7. Application Fee is **\$300**. All checks must be payable to "DeKalb County". **There are no refunds after notice has been sent to the newspaper for advertisement.**

8. For all applications longer than 15 pages, a pdf or word document on a cd or thumb drive must be submitted with the application.



LETTER OF INTENT

Please address the following criteria as appropriate:

Sec. 27-916. Criteria to be used by the board in deciding applications for variances and special exceptions. No relief may be granted or action taken under the terms of this division unless such relief can be granted without substantial detriment to the public good and without substantial impairment of the intent and purpose of this chapter and the comprehensive plan text. The zoning board of appeals shall apply the following criteria to the types of applications specified below as follows:

(a) Variances from the provisions or requirements of this chapter shall be authorized only upon making all of the following findings:

(1) 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;

(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;

(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;

(4) The literal interpretation and strict application of the applicable provisions or requirements of this chapter would cause undue and unnecessary hardship; and

(5) The requested variance would be consistent with the spirit and purpose of this chapter and the DeKalb County Comprehensive Plan text.

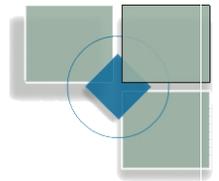
Sec. 27-913. Power and duty of the board to hear applications for special exceptions to reduce or waive off-street parking or loading space requirements. The zoning board of appeals shall hear and decide applications for special exceptions to reduce or waive required off-street parking or loading spaces in accordance with the provisions and standards of this section and without further compliance with the standards set forth in section 27-916(b). All such applications shall be heard and decided based on the notice requirements of section 27-917. The board may waive or reduce the required number of parking spaces or the required number of loading spaces in any district only upon an expressed finding that:

(a) The character of the use of the building(s) is such as to make unnecessary the full provision of parking or loading spaces; or

(b) The lot upon the building(s) is located is within one thousand (1,000) feet of the boundary of a MARTA Rapid Transit Station.

(c) The provision of the full number of parking spaces would have a deleterious effect on a historic building, site, district or archaeological resource.

(Ord. No. 99-11, Pt. 1, 4-13-99)



Section 21-27. Sign Variances.

(a) Where a literal application of this article, due to special circumstances, would result in an unusual hardship in an individual case, a variance may be granted by the zoning board of appeals after receiving evidence that the applicant meets all of the following criteria:

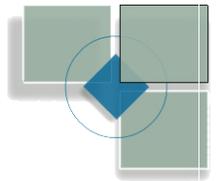
- (1) Exceptional conditions pertaining to the property where the sign is to be located as a result of its size, shape, or topography, which are not applicable to other lands or structures in the area;
 - (2) Granting the variance would not confer on the applicant any significant privileges which are denied to others similarly situated;
 - (3) The exceptional circumstances are not the result of action by the applicant;
 - (4) The requested variance is the minimum variance necessary to allow the applicant to enjoy the rights commonly enjoyed by others similarly situated;
 - (5) Granting of the variance would not violate more than one (1) standard of this article; and
 - (6) Granting the variance would not result in allowing a sign that interferes with road or highway visibility or obstruct or otherwise interfere with the safe and orderly movement of traffic.
- (b) No variance shall be granted to the height of a sign or the aggregate area of signs permitted on a lot.
- (c) No variance shall be granted which increases the size of a sign more than twenty (20) percent of that allowed by this chapter. (Ord. No. 13-03, Pt. I, 6-10-03)



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7

Sec. 27-912. Power and duty of the board to hear appeals of decisions of administrative officials. The zoning board of appeals shall have the power and duty to hear and decide appeals where it is alleged by the appellant that there is error in any final order, requirement, or decision made by an administrative official based on or made in the enforcement of the zoning ordinance. A failure to act shall not be construed to be an order, requirement or decision within the meaning of this division. All such appeals shall be heard and decided following the notice requirements of section 27-917, and pursuant to the following criteria and procedural requirements:

(a) *Appeals of decisions of administrative officials.* Appeals may be filed by any person aggrieved by, or by any county official, department, board or agency affected by, any final order, requirement, or decision of an administrative official, based on or made in the enforcement of the zoning ordinance, by filing with the secretary of the board an application for appeal specifying the grounds thereof, within fifteen (15) days after the action appealed from was taken. A failure to act shall not be construed to be an order, requirement or decision within the meaning of this division. A person shall be considered aggrieved for purposes of this subsection only if:

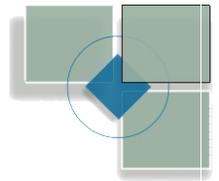
- (1) Said person or said person's property was the subject of the action appealed from; or
- (2) Said person has a substantial interest in the action appealed from that is in danger of suffering special damage or injury not common to all property owners similarly situated.

(b) *Appeal stays all legal proceedings.* An appeal stays all legal proceedings in furtherance of the action appealed from unless the official from whom the appeal is taken certifies to the board, after notice of appeal has been filed, that by reasons of facts stated in the certificate, a stay would, in that official's opinion, cause imminent peril to life and property. In such a case, proceedings shall be stayed only by a restraining order granted by the Superior Court of DeKalb County on notice to the officer from whom the appeal is taken and on due cause shown.

(c) *Time of hearing.* The board shall fix a reasonable time for the hearing of the appeal and give notice thereof pursuant to the requirements of section 27-917 as well as due notice to the parties in interest. Any party may appear at the hearing in person, by an agent, by an attorney or by a written documentation.

(d) *Decision of the board.* Following the consideration of all testimony, documentary evidence, and matters of record, the board shall make a determination on each appeal. The board shall decide the appeal within a reasonable time but in no event more than sixty (60) days from the date of the hearing. An appeal shall be sustained only upon an expressed finding by the board that the administrative official's action was based on an erroneous finding of a material fact, or that the administrative official acted in an arbitrary manner. In exercising its powers, the board may reverse or affirm, wholly or partly, or may modify the order, requirement, decision or determination appealed from, and to that end shall have all the powers of the administrative official from whom the appeal was taken and may issue or direct the issuance of a permit provided all requirements imposed by all other applicable laws are met.

(Ord. No. 99-11, Pt. 1, 4-13-99)



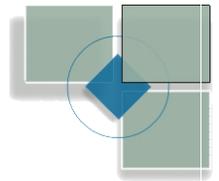
Section 27-915. Power and duty of the board to hear applications for variances; limitations of authority of board.

The zoning board of appeals shall hear and decide applications for variances from the strict application of the regulations of this Chapter 27 and Chapter 21 where the strict application of any regulation enacted under said chapters would result in exceptional and undue hardship upon the owner of such property. In determining whether or not to grant a variance, the board shall apply the criteria specified in section 27-916 below to the facts of each case.

The board may attached reasonable conditions to any approved variance or special exception in accordance with section 27-833(a). Once imposed, conditions shall become an integral part of the approved variance or special exception and shall be enforced as such. No changes to an approved condition attached to a variance or special exception shall be authorized except by re-application to the board in full accordance with the provisions of this division.

No variance shall be granted by the board to:

- (a) Allow a structure or use not authorized in the applicable zoning district or a density of development that is not authorized within such district;
- (b) Allow an increase in maximum height of building;
- (c) Allow any variance which conflicts with or changes any requirement enacted as a condition of zoning or of a special land use permit by the board of commissioners;
- (d) Vary the requirements of Chapter 21 for an off premises sign which decreases the applicable development standard by thirty (30) percent or more, or to grant more than two (2) variances for a specific parcel of property for an off-premises sign during a five-year period of time;
- (e) Reduce, waive or modify in any manner the minimum lot width and minimum lot area where the lot has been conditionally zoned to a specific site plan;
- (f) Reduce, waive or modify in any manner the minimum lot area established by the board of commissioners for any use permitted by special land use permit or by special exception;
- (g) Extend the time period for a temporary outdoor social, religious, entertainment or recreation activity approved by the director of public works;
- (h) Permit the expansion or enlargement of any nonconforming use of land, nonconforming use of land and buildings in combination, nonconforming use of land and structures in combination, or nonconforming use requiring special land use permit;
- (i) Permit the reestablishment of any nonconforming use of land, nonconforming use of land and buildings in combination, nonconforming use of land and structures in combination, or nonconforming use requiring special land use permit where such use has lapsed pursuant to the requirements and limitations of Article IV, Division 5 of this chapter; or
- (j) Permit customer contact for a home occupation authorized by this chapter. (Ord. No. 99-11, Pt. 1, 4-13-99; Ord. No. 00-04, Pt. 1, § XXXII, 1-25-00)



**GENERAL INFORMATION REGARDING APPLICATIONS TO THE
DEKALB COUNTY ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS:**

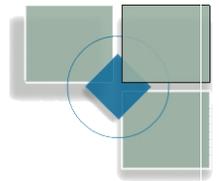
- 1. Monthly Meetings.** The Zoning Board of Appeals meets once a month at 1:00 P.M. in the auditorium of the Manuel J. Maloof Administration Center annex, 1300 Commerce Drive, Decatur, GA (corner of West Trinity Place and Commerce Drive in Downtown Decatur).
- 2. Application Submittals.** All applications are to be submitted to DeKalb County Planning Department, 330 West Ponce de Leon, Suite 500, Decatur, GA 30030. Applications will be reviewed for completeness to the Zoning Board of Appeals. For filing deadlines, hearing dates, and additional information, please contact the Planning Department at (404) 371-2155.
- 3. Pre-application Meetings.** DeKalb County encourages pre-application meetings. Please call (404) 371-2155 to discuss your application and set up an appointment to meet with the Senior Planner assigned to the Board of Appeals.
- 4. Blue Public Hearing Signs.** Public notice signs to advertise the application and date and time of the public hearing are required to be posted along the property frontage by the DeKalb County Zoning Ordinance. **Signs are posted by staff. Signs must remain posted until final Board of Appeals action regarding the request. If application is deferred, please do not remove signs.**
- 5. Staff Report.** Staff prepares reports and recommendations for each application. These recommendations are based on the attached criteria established by the DeKalb County Code. Final staff reports are available to the applicant and the public the Monday prior to the scheduled Board of Appeals meeting. Staff reports can be e-mailed or picked up at the Planning Department (330 W. Ponce de Leon, 5th floor, downtown Decatur). They cannot be faxed.
- 6. Zoning Board of Appeals Actions.** The Board of Appeals is authorized to:
 1. Approve the application as submitted
 2. Approve a revised application
 3. Approve an application with conditions
 4. Deny an application (if an application is denied, no variance can be considered on the same site within 24 months)
 5. Allow an application to be "Withdrawn without Prejudice" at the request of the applicant.
- 7. Public Hearing portion of Meeting.** Applicants and others in favor of an application are given a total of five (5) minutes to present to the Board. Anyone speaking in opposition also has a total of five (5) minutes to address the application.
- 8. Applicant and/or Representative must be Present.** Applicants or their representative must be present at the public hearing to present the request to the Zoning Board of Appeals.
- 9. Executive Session.** After the public hearing, the Board of Appeals will close the public hearing, go into executive session for discussion, and will then take an action on an application. Applicants are not allowed to address the Board of Appeals during Executive Session unless they are asked questions by members of the Board of Appeals.
- 10. Revisions or amendments.** An application must be submitted in writing and must be received ten (10) days before the scheduled meeting to be addressed in the staff report.



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10

- 11. Compliance with standards upon denial.** In such case that a variance request is initiated due to an existing code violation and such application is denied, the violation shall be required to be brought into compliance within thirty (30) days of such denial or as specified by the board if a greater time period is approved.
- 12. Successive applications.** Section 27-920 of the DeKalb County Zoning Ordinance states: An application for a variance or special exception affecting all or a portion of the same property which was denied by the Zoning Board of Appeals shall not be submitted more than once every twenty-four (24) months measured from the date of final decision by the zoning board of appeals. The Zoning Board of Appeals may waive or reduce this twenty-four-month time interval by resolution provided that if the application for a variance or special exception was denied by the Zoning Board of Appeals, the time interval between the date of said denial and any subsequent application or amendment affecting the same property shall be no less than six (6) months.
- 13. Appeals of Decisions.** Any person aggrieved by a final decision of the board, or any officer, department, board or agency affected by such decision, may seek review of such decision by petitioning the Superior Court of DeKalb County for a Writ of Certiorari, setting forth plainly the alleged errors. Such petition shall be filed within 30 days after the final decision of the board is rendered.