



THE PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY GOVERNMENT

BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS

BOARD OF ADMINISTRATIVE APPEALS

WAYNE K. CURRY COUNTY ADMINISTRATION BUILDING, LARGO, MARYLAND 20774
TELEPHONE (301) 952-3220

NOTICE OF FINAL DECISION OF BOARD OF APPEALS

RE: Case No. V-47-25 Sylvia Syphax

Enclosed herewith is a copy of the Board Order setting forth the action taken by the Board of Appeals in your case on the following date: October 22, 2025.

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

This is to certify that on December 19, 2025, the above notice and attached Order of the Board were mailed, postage prepaid, to all persons of record.

Ellis Watson

Ellis Watson
Administrator

cc: Petitioner
Adjoining Property Owners
M-NCPPC, Permit Review Section
Town of Fairmount Heights
DPIE/Building Code Official, Permitting

BEFORE THE BOARD OF APPEALS FOR PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND
Sitting as the Board of Zoning Appeals

Petitioner: Sylvia Syphax

Appeal No.: V-47-25

Subject Property: Lots 6 and 7, Block N, Fairmount Heights Subdivision, being 611 60th Place, Fairmount Heights, Prince George's County, Maryland

Witnesses: Thomas Ahmann, Architect

Andrea Syphax, Daughter

Heard: October 22, 2025 and Decided: October 22, 2025

Board Members Present and Voting: Omar Boulware, Chair
Phillippa Johnston, Vice Chair
Dwayne A. Stanton, Member

RESOLUTION

This appeal is brought before the Board of Appeals, sitting as the Board of Zoning Appeals for the Maryland-Washington Regional District in Prince George's County, Maryland (the "Board"), requesting a variance from the strict application of the provisions of Subtitle 27 of the Prince George's County Code (the "Zoning Ordinance").

In this appeal, a proceeding pursuant to Section 27-3613 of the Zoning Ordinance, Petitioners request that the Board approve a variance from Section 27-4202(e)(2) prescribes that a lot shall have a minimum net lot area of 6,500 square feet, a minimum width of 65 feet measured along the front building line, a minimum front yard depth of 25 feet, a minimum side yard width of 8 feet, and a minimum rear yard depth of 20 feet. Variances of 750 square feet net lot area, 15 feet lot width, 10.25 feet front yard depth, and 4.5 feet side yard width are requested.

Evidence Presented

The following testimony and record evidence were considered by the Board:

1. The property was subdivided in 1900, before the adoption of the *Prince George's County Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations* (Zoning Ordinance), contains 5,750 square feet, is zoned RSF-65 (Residential, Single-Family-65), and is improved with a 2-story dwelling. Exhs 2, 5, 9, 10, and 12.

3. The Petitioner proposes to validate existing conditions (net lot area, lot width, front yard depth, side yard width) and obtain a building permit for the construction of a proposed 13' x 13' screened porch with second-floor addition, a proposed 13' x 14.9' second-floor addition, and a proposed 5.8' x 12' two-story addition. Variances of 750 square feet net lot area, 15 feet lot width, 10.25 feet front yard depth, and 4.5 feet side yard width are requested. Exhs. 1, 2, 3 (A) thru (D), 4, 6 (A) thru (N), and 12.

4. Chair Boulware asked the Petitioner, Ms. Syphax, to explain her need for a variance.

5. In response, Ms. Syphax testified that she purchased the property from her now deceased neighbor, and her brother is moving from Florida. Additionally, she would like to enhance the subject property for her brother's benefit and comfort.

6. Also, Ms. Syphax testified that she has spoken to her neighbors and has enthusiastically received their approval. Ms. Syphax testified that she also spoke to the Town of Fairmount Heights and gained its approval as well. Exh. 16.

7. Further, Ms. Syphax testified that the house is small, and the front porch has rails that are too short and are painted with lead-based paint. Additionally, Ms. Syphax testified that she needs access to the basement from the outside as she plans to install a furnace.

8. Chair Boulware stated that he noticed the subject property has severe sloping. In response, the Architect, Mr. Ahmann, testified that the house was built in the 1930s before the adoption of the Zoning Ordinance, and the historical placement of the house on the subject property makes seeking variances necessary for any improvements. Exhs. 4, 6 (A) thru (N), and 11 (A) thru (F).

9. Vice Chair Johnston agreed with Chair Boulware that the subject property is narrow and asked about the requested additions. Mr. Ahmann testified, explaining the additions to the Board. Exhs. 1, 2, 3 (A) thru (D), and 4.

10. Chair Boulware stated that the subject property met the criteria for granting a variance and called for a motion.

11. Vice Chair Johnston made the Motion to Approve V-47-25, and the motion was seconded by Board Member Stanton. Motion carried by a 3-0 vote.

Applicable Code Section and Authority

The Board is authorized to grant the requested variances if it finds that the following provisions of Section 27-3613(d) of the Prince George's County Zoning Ordinance are satisfied:

(d) General Variance Decision Standards

A variance may only be granted when the review board or official, as appropriate, finds that:

- (1) A specific parcel of land is physically unique and unusual in a manner different from the nature of surrounding properties with respect to exceptional narrowness, shallowness, shape, exceptional topographic conditions, or other extraordinary conditions peculiar to the specific parcel (such as historical significance or environmentally sensitive features);
- (2) The particular uniqueness and peculiarity of the specific property causes a zoning provision to impact disproportionately upon that property, such that strict application of the provision will result in peculiar and unusual practical difficulties to the owner of the property.
- (3) Such variance is the minimum reasonably necessary to overcome the exceptional physical conditions.
- (4) Such variance can be granted without substantial impairment to the intent, purpose and integrity of the General Plan or any Functional Master Plan, Area Master Plan, or Sector Plan affecting the subject property.
- (5) Such variance will not substantially impair the use and enjoyment of adjacent properties; and
- (6) A variance may not be granted if the practical difficulty is self-inflicted by the owner of the property.

Findings of the Board


After hearing all the testimony and reviewing the evidence of record, the Board finds that the requested variance complies with the applicable standards set forth in Section 27-3613(d), more specifically:

Constructed in the 1930s before the adoption of the Zoning Ordinance, the subject property is physically unique and unusual in a manner different from the nature of surrounding properties due to its narrowness and severe sloping. *See, North v. Saint Mary's County*, 99 Md. App. 502, 638 A.2d 1175 (1994).

The particular uniqueness and peculiarity of the specific property, if applied, would render the Petitioner unable to construct any improvements to the subject property. Additionally, the Board concluded that these variances are minimally necessary to overcome the exceptional physical conditions found on the property, as the historical placement of the house on the subject property necessitates variances for any modifications. The Board reviewed the record and found that granting the relief requested would not substantially impair the intent, purpose, and integrity of the General Plan or Functional Master Plan, Area Master Plan, or Sector Plan affecting the subject property. Moreover, there is no evidence in the record that the variances would substantially impair the use and enjoyment of the property; to the contrary, evidence was submitted through the approval letter from the Town of Fairmount Heights. Lastly, the Board found that the practical difficulty was not self-inflicted, as the Petitioner had not commenced construction before seeking a permit.

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED, by a 3-0 vote, that variances of 750 square feet net lot area, 15 feet lot width, 10.25 feet front yard depth, and 4.5 feet side yard width on the property located at 611 60th Place, Fairmount Heights, Prince George's County, Maryland, be and are hereby APPROVED. Approval of the variance is contingent upon development in compliance with the approved site plan, Exhibit 2, and approved elevation plans, Exhibit 3 (A) thru (D).

BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS

By: 
Omar Boulware (Dec 18, 2025 01:48:51 EST)
Omar Boulware, Chair

APPROVED FOR LEGAL SUFFICIENCY

By: 
Ellis Watson (Dec 18, 2025 11:26:40 EST)
Ellis F. Watson, Esq.

NOTICE

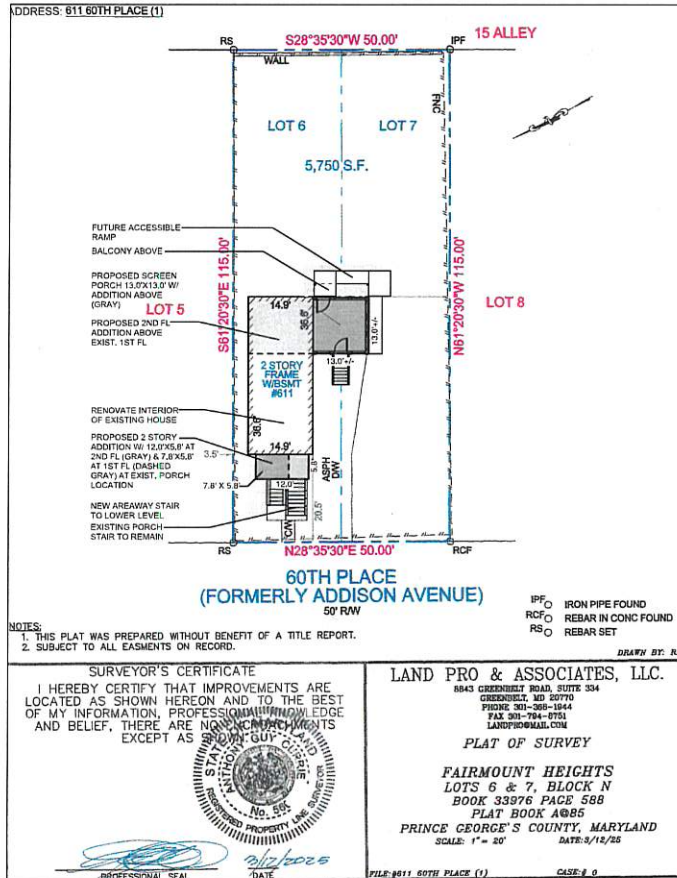
Within thirty (30) days from the date of this decision, any person, firm, corporation, or governmental agency who was a party to the Board's proceedings and is aggrieved by its decision may file an appeal to the Circuit Court of Prince George's County.

Further, Section 27-3613(c)(10)(B) of the Prince George's County Code states:

A decision of the Board, permitting the erection of a building or structure, shall not be valid for more than two (2) years, unless a building permit for the erection is obtained within this period and the construction is started and proceeds to completion in accordance with the terms of the decision and the permit.

SITE DIAGRAM

FROM HOUSE LOCATION DRAWING BY: LAND PRO & ASSOCIATES, GREENBELT, MD MARCH 12TH, 2025
WITH SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION BY: AHMANN LLC, ARCHITECTURAL SERVICES



CODE SUMMARY

ALL CONSTRUCTION SHALL CONFORM TO THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE 2018 INTERNATIONAL RESIDENTIAL CODE (IRC 2018), INCLUDING ALL APPLICABLE PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY AND STATE OF MARYLAND AMENDMENTS & SUPPLEMENTS

CONSTRUCTION SHALL CONFORM TO ALL OTHER APPLICABLE LOCAL, STATE AND NATIONAL CODES, STANDARDS AND ORDINANCES.

GENERAL NOTES

- 1) THE CONTRACTOR SHALL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE COORDINATION OF THE WORK OF ALL SUBCONTRACTORS AS REQUIRED TO COMPLETE THE WORK, AND SHALL VERIFY THAT ALL WORK IS DONE TO THE HIGHEST DEGREE OF CRAFTSMANSHIP BY JOURNEYMEN OF THE RESPECTIVE TRADES.
- 2) THE CONTRACTOR SHALL VERIFY ALL DIMENSIONS, AND SHALL WORK TO CRITICAL ALIGNMENTS AS INDICATED ON THE DRAWINGS, AND SHALL NOT SCALE THE DRAWINGS FOR MEASUREMENTS.
- 3) IF ANY DISCREPANCIES IN DIMENSIONS OR CONDITIONS ARE FOUND, THE CONTRACTOR SHALL CONTACT THE ARCHITECT FOR CLARIFICATION PRIOR TO PROCEEDING WITH THAT PORTION OF THE WORK.
- 4) THE CONTRACTOR SHALL MAINTAIN THE SITE CLEAN AND FREE OF DEBRIS. THE CONTRACTOR SHALL MAINTAIN THE SITE AND JOB CONDITIONS IN SUCH A MANNER AS TO PROTECT FROM INJURY ALL PERSONS AND PROPERTY.
- 5) ALL EXISTING UNDERGROUND UTILITIES SHALL BE PHYSICALLY LOCATED BY THE CONTRACTOR PRIOR TO THE BEGINNING OF ANY CONSTRUCTION IN THE VICINITY OF THESE UTILITIES.
- 6) PROVIDE FOR THE DEMOLITION OF ALL EXISTING ITEMS WHICH WILL INTERFERE WITH THE WORK. PROVIDE MECHANICAL, ELECTRICAL AND PLUMBING DEMOLITION AS MAY BE REQUIRED.
- 7) PROVIDE BRACING AND SHORING AS REQUIRED TO PROTECT EXISTING CONSTRUCTION TO REMAIN FROM DAMAGE, AS WELL AS TO PROTECT PERSONS AND PROPERTY. VERIFY ALL BEARING CONDITIONS PRIOR TO BEGINNING DEMOLITION.

INDEX OF DRAWINGS

- A-0 COVER SHEET & ZONING
- MD-1 MEASURED PLANS
- MD-2 MEASURED ELEVATIONS
- MD-3 MEASURED ELEVATIONS
- A-1 PROPOSED PLANS
- A-2 PROPOSED ELEVATIONS
- A-3 PROPOSED ELEVATIONS

PROJECT SUMMARY

NEW 2 STORY ADDITION AT EXISTING FRONT PORCH, SCREEN PORCH WITH ADDITION ABOVE, INTERIOR RENOVATIONS

ZONING SUMMARY (CURRENT ORDINANCE)

Subject Property:

611 60th Place, Capitol Heights
Lot: 6 & 7 Block: N Fairmont Hts.
Zone: RSF-65

Exist. Building Use:
Single Family Detached

Exist. Lot Occ. Calculation:

House: 545.34 Sq. Ft.
Front Porch: 70.00 Sq. Ft.
Exist. Total: 615.34 Sq. Ft.

Prop. Building Use:
Single Family Detached

Prop. Lot Occ. Calculation:

House: 545.34 Sq. Ft.
Front Addition: 70.00 Sq. Ft.
Scr. Porch Addition: 168.00 Sq. Ft.
Prop. Total: 784.34 Sq. Ft.

Lot Area: 5,750 Sq. Ft. Exist. Lot Occupancy: 10.70% Prop. Lot Occupancy: 13.60%

RSF-65 ZONE	REGULATION	EXISTING	PROPOSED	RELIEF REQ.
Lot Area Min.	6,500 Sq. Ft.	5,750 Sq. Ft.	5,750 Sq. Ft.	Existing Non-conforming
Lot Width Min.	65 Ft.	50 Ft.	3,824 Sq. Ft.	Existing Non-conforming
Lot Frontage Min.	45 Ft.	50 Ft.	50 Ft.	
Lot Coverage Max.	35%	10.7%	13.6%	
Front Yard Min.	25 Ft.	14.75 Ft.	14.75 Ft.	10.25 Ft. Variance
Side Yard Min.	8 Ft.	3.5 Ft.	3.5 Ft.	4.5 Ft. Variance
Rear Yard Min.	20 Ft.	57.9 ft.	57.9 ft.	
Build. Height Max.	40 Ft.	25.25' +/-	25.25' +/-	
Parking Sp. Min.	2	2	2	

BOARD OF APPEALS

APPROVED OCT 22 2025

Ellis Watson
ADMINISTRATOR

EXHIBIT

2

V-47-25

AHMANN LLC
ARCHITECTURAL SERVICES
4408 BEECHWOOD ROAD UNIVERSITY PARK, MARYLAND 20782
PHONE 301 864 1334
FAX 301 864 6818

PROJECT NOTES
SITE PLAN & INDEX

SCALE: AS SHOWN

SYPHAX RESIDENCE
611 60TH PLACE
FAIRMOUNT HEIGHTS, MD 20743

PRELIMINARY DRAWINGS

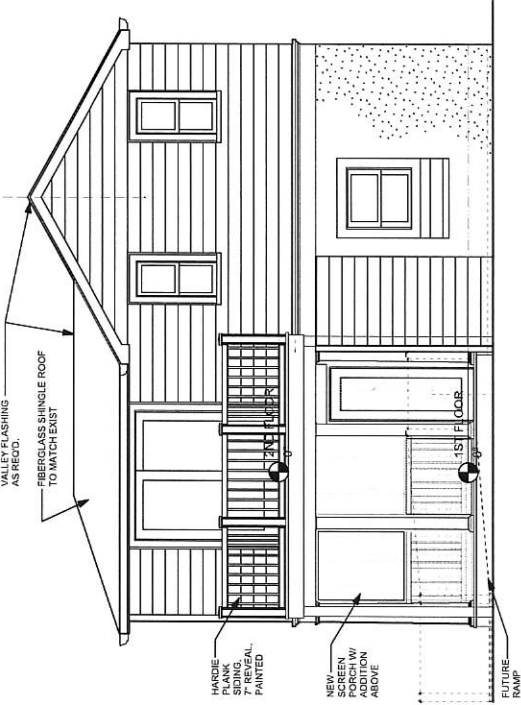
NOT FOR PERMIT OR
CONSTRUCTION

ISSUE DATE
14 MAY 2025

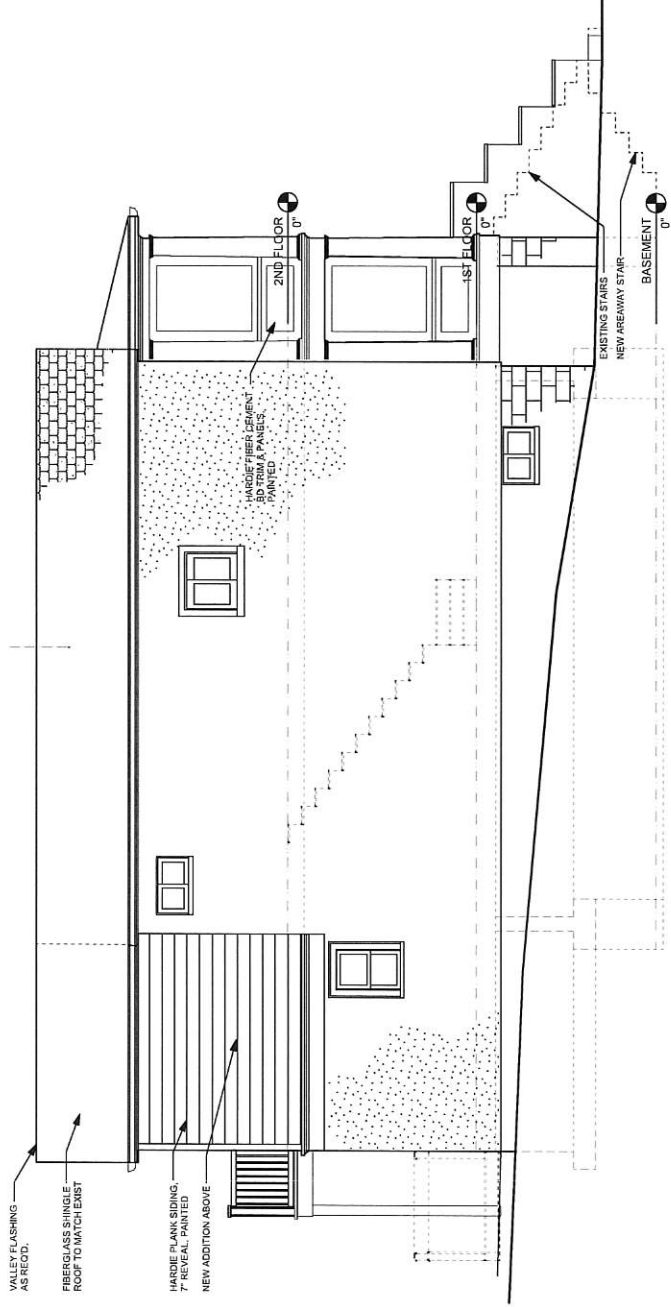
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AHMANN LLC
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AHMANN LLC
ARCHITECTURAL SERVICES
4400 BEECHWOOD ROAD UNIVERSITY PARK, MARYLAND 20782
PHONE: 301 864 1334
FAX: 301 864 6818



1 PROPOSED REAR ELEVATION
Scale: 1/4" = 1'-0"



2 PROPOSED LEFT ELEVATION
Scale: 1/4" = 1'-0"

NOTE:
FLOOR PLAN INTERIOR LAYOUT FROM
OWNER PROVIDED FLOOR PLANS, TO BE
VERIFIED. ALL EXISTING CONDITIONS TO
BE FIELD VERIFIED. INFORM ARCHITECT
OR ENGINEER IF EXISTING CONDITIONS
VARY FROM THAT SHOWN OR ASSUMED.