



**Town of Sullivan's Island, South Carolina
Board of Zoning Appeals
Meeting Minutes
Thursday, May 14, 2026**

A Board of Zoning Appeals Meeting was held on the above date at 4:04 p.m., all requirements of the Freedom of Information Act having been satisfied.

Present were:

Elizabeth Tezza, Chair
James Elliott, Board Member
Jeremy Graves, Board Member
Arthur Hanlon, Board Member
Cindy Kirkland, Board Member
Michael Scruggs, Board Member

Charles Drayton, Director of Planning and Zoning
Rebecca Fanning, Director of Resilience and Natural Resource Management
Bridget Welch, Staff Member

I. Freedom of Information Act Requirements

Chair Elizabeth Tezza called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. and stated the press and public had been notified in accordance with State Law. There were thirty-five (35) members of the public present and no members of the media present.

II. Approval of Minutes-March 12, 2026

Motion was made by Michael Scruggs, seconded by Jeremy Graves, to approve the Board of Zoning Appeals Meeting Minutes of March 12, 2026, passed unanimously.

III. Moment of Silence in honor of the life and dedication to service on Sullivan's Island of former BZA Chairman Thomas Hiers

IV. Special Exception Requests

- A. Salty Blonde Coffee at ABOVO (2216 Middle Street) (Application):** Kasey Dameo, applicant/business owner, is requesting a special exception to operate a coffee shop use in the Community Commercial Zoning District in accordance with §21-50.C (2) & §21-178 of the Zoning Ordinance. (TMS# 529-05-00-094)

Charles Drayton stated the applicant would like a special exception, which would allow a coffee shop at the current shop, specifically from the seating requirements. He reviewed the regulations for a coffee shop use. There is a license opportunity from a vacated license at 2213 Middle St, previously granted to businesses that have since closed. She seeks relief from §21-50 C (3) because applicant is proposing to have all 24 seats, covering a total area of 356 SF, with no interior seats and 0 SF of the interior floor space devoted to patron seating. All of the patron seating would be outside. Staff recommends to ensure compliance with the four findings of hardship for granting variances §21-179 for the variance. For the special exception, the recommendation is to ensure compliance with standards for granting special exceptions §21-178 and the various conditions for operating Coffee Shops §21-50. C (2), excluding §21-50. C (2) ©, should the Board favor granting a variance from that subsection. He then took questions from the Board.

The applicant, Kasey Dameo, then presented, giving reasons for her request and how she envisions the space working to enhance the business and community that currently exists at ABOVO. She then took questions from the Board.

Public Comment:

- Madeline McGee, town resident – feels the coffee shop will add more traffic and parking problems. She does not think there is sufficient parking to support the project.

The Board then discussed the variance and feels it does not meet the requirements of a hardship. The lack of a barrier between the seating and the sidewalk, making pedestrian traffic a concern. They do not want to deny the application but requested she withdraw her application and work the Town to update her application to meet the hardship requirements. Ms. Dameo agreed and Chair Tezza accepted her withdrawal.

- B. 2412 & 2413 Quarter Street (Application):** Tommy and Julie Dees, applicant/owners, are requesting approval of a special exception for a historic structure (2413 Quarter Street) on the property to be used as an accessory dwelling unit, in accordance with §21-20 C. (2) & §21-178 of the Zoning Ordinance. (PIN# 529-06-00-015)

Mr. Drayton presented an overview of the properties, which are both on one parcel of land. They are both recognized as Traditional Island Resources and are located within the Atlanticville Local and National Register Historic Districts. He showed the applicants plans and recommends the Board consider the unusual circumstances regarding this property and the DRB's approval in order to make findings of fact that the property complies with the standards for granting special exceptions, found in §21-178. He also reviewed ownership requirements and other considerations.

Heather Wilson was there on behalf of the applicants to answer questions and addressed relocating the structures.

Public Comment:

- Dolly Droze, town resident – lives next door and asked about the setbacks and how close it would make the moved structure to her house.

Motion was made by James Elliott, seconded by Michael Scruggs, to approve the request for a special exception under §21-20 (C) as much as that it meets the findings that are required under §21-178 (C) as explained by the applicant and the Town that adequate provision is made for such items such as setbacks, fences, and buffered or planting strips to protect adjacent properties from possible adverse influence of the proposed use, such as noise, vibration, dust, glare, odor, traffic congestion, and similar factors; vehicular traffic and pedestrian movement on adjacent roads shall not be hindered or endangered; off-street parking and loading areas and the entrance and exits of these areas shall be adequate in terms of location, amount, design, and construction to serve the proposed use; the proposed use shall be compatible with existing uses to the extent that such use will not adversely affect the level of property values, general character, or general welfare of the nearby area, passed unanimously.

- C. 2730 Brooks Street (Application):** Daniel Beck, applicant/architect, is requesting approval of a special exception for the historic structure on the property to be used as an accessory dwelling unit, in accordance with §21-20 C. (2) & §21-178 of the Zoning Ordinance. (PIN# 529-07-00-049)

Mr. Drayton presented an overview of the request, stating the address is listed as a Traditional Island Resource and is located outside any of the Town's historic districts, but there are a number of historic resource properties nearby. He provided further background on the property and reviewed the reasons for asking for a special exception, as well as ownership requirements and other considerations. Staff recommends the Board consider the DRB's approval of the historic cottage's restoration plans and the proposed new construction plans in order to make findings of fact that the property complies with the standards for granting special exceptions, found in §21-178. He then took questions from the Board.

Daniel Beck then presented for the homeowners, stating they have gone before the DRB twice to ensure they conform. He then took questions from the Board.

Motion was made by Michael Scruggs, seconded by James Elliott, to approve the application based on the following BZA findings; they make adequate provisions is made for such items such as setbacks, fences, and buffered or planting strips to protect adjacent properties from possible adverse influence of the proposed use, such as noise, vibration, dust, glare, odor, traffic congestion, and similar factors; also vehicular traffic and pedestrian movement on adjacent roads shall not be hindered or endangered; off-street parking and loading areas and the entrance and exits of these areas shall be adequate in terms of location, amount, design, and construction, and it will be according to the plans; and that is certainly compatible with the existing use to the extent that it won't adversely affect the level of property values, general character, or general welfare of the nearby area, passed unanimously.

V. Variance Requests

- A. Salty Blonde Coffee at ABOVO (2216 Middle Street) (Application):** Kasey Dameo, applicant/business owner, is requesting a variance from §21-50 C (3) to modify the seating requirements for the coffee shop use in the Community Commercial Zoning District, in accordance with the Zoning Ordinance §21-179. (TMS# 529-05-00-094)

Item was taken for discussion and consideration at the same time as the Special Exception request for this property, and the variance request was also WITHDRAWN by the applicant following the discussion during the Special Exception hearing.

- B. **3016 BROWNELL AVENUE** (*unofficial*) (**APPLICATION**): Ross Ritchie, applicant/architect, requests two (2) variances from the Town's Zoning Ordinance to allow for the single-family residential development of this lot: variance from §21-138 A. to allow an accessory structure that has more square footage than the ordinance allows and a larger footprint than the ordinance allows, and a variance from §21-24 C. to allow for the construction of a building height that exceeds the ordinance limitations for building height, in accordance with the Zoning Ordinance §21-179. (PIN# 529-12-00-091)
- C. **3020 BROWNELL AVENUE** (*unofficial*) (**APPLICATION**): Ross Ritchie, applicant/architect, requests two (2) variances from the Town's Zoning Ordinance to allow for the single-family residential development of this lot: variance from §21-138 A. to allow an accessory structure that has more square footage than the ordinance allows and a larger footprint than the ordinance allows, and a variance from §21-24 C. to allow for the construction of a building height that exceeds the ordinance limitations for building height, in accordance with the Zoning Ordinance §21-179. (PIN# 529-12-00-118)
- D. **3024 BROWNELL AVENUE** (*unofficial*) (**APPLICATION**): Ross Ritchie, applicant/architect, requests two (2) variances from the Town's Zoning Ordinance to allow for the single-family residential development of this lot: variance from §21-138 A. to allow an accessory structure that has more square footage than the ordinance allows and a larger footprint than the ordinance allows, and a variance from §21-24 C. to allow for the construction of a building height that exceeds the ordinance limitations for building height, in accordance with the Zoning Ordinance §21-179. (PIN# 529-12-00-119)

The three applications were presented together. Mr. Drayton reviewed the requirements for the variance request and gave a brief overview of the property, which is a historic bunker. Staff recommends the Board consider the historical nature of the structures on the properties and that they exist as nonconformities to the uses that are allowed on the properties under the current zoning, then use those considerations to ensure compliance with the four finds of hardship for granting variances. He then explained the request for relief to allow the bunker square footage to be considered accessory structure square footage, and in doing so, consider a variance from the regulations which limit the size of accessory structures. The bunkers' square footage needs to be accounted for, and it can either be a principal building square footage or an accessory structure square footage; the current building code regulations make utilizing the space as principal building square footage difficult. He then took questions from the Board.

Ross Ritchie presented on behalf of the applicant and stated they plan to preserve the bunker for this unique request. He then took questions from the Board.

Public Comment:

- Babak Bryan, town resident – lives across the street and supports developing the lot but has concerns about the uses they are requesting.
- Patrick Callahan, town resident – neighbors these properties and asked where access would be located.
- Ralph Byers, town resident – stated there is no detriment.
- Ross Appel, lawyer – is here on behalf of the client and feels this is a rare circumstance.
- Scott Millimet, town resident - questioned if the project would truly enhance and preserve the nature of the bunker.
- Dan Legree, town resident – stated he is trying to understand the statues and what makes an extraordinary condition.
- Patrick Marr, town resident – developer who has property under contract and wants it to be three separate lots with separate owners and would make separate entrances to bunker.
- Patrick Callahan, town resident – asked if the variance could not include the bunker.
- Ross Appel, lawyer – stated the applicant does not want to be limited in square footage.

Motion was made by Michael Scruggs, seconded by James Elliott, to deny the request for all three lots because it does not meet the factors set out as unreasonably restricting or prohibiting the use and it has not been established that these lots, that were purchased with historical bunkers on them, and can have 2500 square foot houses with the exception of the middle lot, which can have an 1100 or 1200 square foot house, that is not an unreasonable restriction when you buy a lot with a historically designated bunker, motion failed 3-3, with Michael Scruggs, James Elliott, and Cindy Kirkland in favor and with Chair Tezza, Arthur Hanlon, and Jeremy Graves not in favor.

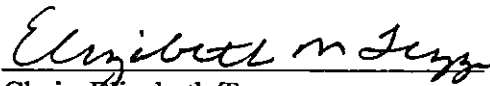
Motion was made by Arthur Hanlon, seconded by Jermey Graves to approve the first variance, which is granting a variance under the terms of the ordinance as it relates to the size of the accessory square footage, I believe there are extraordinary conditions for this property; these conditions do not generally apply to other properties in the vicinity; that the application of the Zoning Ordinance would effectively prohibit or unreasonably restrict the utilization of the property and that it does not create a substantial detriment to adjacent property or to the public good, and the granting of the variance will not harm the character of the district, motion failed 3-3, with Chair Tezza, Arthur Hanlon, and Jeremy Graves in favor and Michael Scruggs, James Elliott, and Cindy Kirkland not in favor.

Applicant asked to withdraw the application for the building height variance request and Chair Tezza accepted.

VI. Adjourn

Motion was made by James Elliott, seconded by Michael Scruggs, to adjourn the Board of Zoning Appeals meeting at 6:22 p.m., passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Bridget Welch
Board of Zoning Appeals Staff


Chair, Elizabeth Tezza