



Town of Vienna

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Vienna, Virginia 22180
p: 703.255.6341
TTY 7111

Meeting Minutes Board of Zoning Appeals

Wednesday, September 17, 2025

7:30 PM

Charles Robinson Jr. Town Hall, 127 Center
St. South

Roll Call:

Mr. Petersen, Mr. Dhanjal, Mr. Creed, Mr. Gadell, Mr. Nash, Mr. Rettinger, and Mr. Lowther were present.

Staff present: Deputy Clerk Kelly O'Brien and Board Clerk Yaska Camacho Castillo.

Chair Lowther announced that out of the three items scheduled on the agenda, two would not be heard. 644 Tazewell Rd NW was postponed, and 404 Welles St was withdrawn.

Public Hearings:

[BZA-25144](#)

Request for approval of a conditional use permit for massage as an accessory use for Heart Tree Yoga & Myofascial Release LLC, in accordance with Section 18-305 of the Town of Vienna Zoning and Subdivision Ordinance, at a residential property located at 605 Upham Place NW, in the RS-10, Residential – Single-Unit, 10,000 sq. ft. zone.

Kelly O'Brien was sworn in for her presentation. She stated she is presenting in place of Zoning Administrator Andrea West. The site is located in a residential neighborhood, surrounded by other residential properties and zoned as low-density residential.

The applicant has been operating a permitted home-based yoga business in her basement since 2013. She is now seeking a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) to expand her services to include massage-like myofascial release, which involves body movement and touch. While not a traditional massage, the local code requires a CUP for this type of accessory use.

Photos show a private entrance to the basement business and recent lighting improvements made based on Planning Commission feedback. The business remains small-scale, one-on-one by appointment, and there have been no complaints or zoning violations.

One neighbor has submitted supportive testimony. The proposal meets conditions for a CUP, ensuring it will not negatively affect the neighborhood or public welfare.

Mr. Dhanjal asked for confirmation that, due to the business serving only one client at a time and relying on street parking, no parking study was conducted, unlike the standard practice for larger facilities such as childcare centers.

Ms. O'Brien responded Yes, he was correct. The property has a concrete driveway that can accommodate visitors, and there is also street parking available. No parking issues have been identified or reported by neighbors.

Mr. Rettinger asked if the yoga studio is a by-right use. Ms. O'Brien confirmed that the yoga studio is a by-right use of the residential property, while the addition of myofascial massage requires a Conditional Use Permit (CUP). In commercial zones, this use is by-right, but in residential zones, it requires special approval.

The applicant, Carolyn Black-Bagdoyan, was sworn in for her testimony. She stated that she is a certified yoga therapist who started her home-based yoga business in 2013. Since then, she has also become a licensed Physical Therapist Assistant and trained in Myofascial Release, a hands-on technique that differs from traditional massage by using sustained pressure on the skin, with clients fully clothed.

Because of its effectiveness in relieving tight tissues, she has integrated Myofascial Release with yoga therapy to help clients not only release tension but also improve their movement habits and posture. This combination supports long-term wellness.

To ensure she could legally offer Myofascial Release, she returned to school to get her massage license. She is now seeking permission to formally include this method in her existing therapeutic practice.

Mr. Petersen asked the applicant to provide details about who issued her certifications and license, and when they were issued. Ms. Black-Bagdoyan responded that she is certified by the International Association of Yoga Therapists, having completed a two-year, 1,000-hour

Functional Synergy yoga therapy program and graduating in 2018. She recently earned her massage license in May 2025 after passing the board exam. Since then, she has been working to integrate this into her practice.

Mr. Creed asked Ms. O'Brien if there were any other massage operators in the residential area in the town, to which Ms. O'Brien responded not to her knowledge and noted that there may be others, but they haven't researched it. In the seven years she has been with the town, this is the only application they've received.

Mr. Lowther thanked the applicant for the clear explanation of her work and asked if she could share for the record how many clients she sees per day, whether she sees multiple clients at once, and what her parking situation is.

The applicant responded that she primarily offers yoga therapy in a one-on-one setting. For the past few years, she had fewer clients because she was attending massage school and working full-time as a physical therapy assistant (PTA), including two years of full-time clinic work. Her long-term goal is to see 4-5 clients per day, up to four days a week, ideally split between morning and afternoon sessions.

Currently, she is seeing a few clients at the Body Grace studio in Vienna, where she has a permit to use a room. However, she hopes to continue seeing clients at home in the future, since it's uncertain how long the studio will be available. The in-home sessions would be similar to their current work, mainly one-on-one and involving hands-on techniques that aren't traditional massage, addressing possible misconceptions people might have.

Mr. Gadell made a motion to close the public hearing, and Mr. Dhanjal seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Mr. Petersen made a motion to approve a Conditional Use Permit for massage as an accessory use for Heart Tree Yoga and Myofascial Release LLC at 605 Upham Pl NW in the RS-10 zoning district described as tax map parcel 0381 06 0095.

The board's discussion included the following points:

- The applicant meets all the necessary criteria set by the Board.
- The proposed plan is not seen as harmful to the neighborhood.
- It aligns with the town's business development goals.
- There is no opposition from the neighbors.

Motion: Mr. Petersen

Second: Mr. Dhanjal

Aye: Mr. Petersen, Mr. Dhanjal, Mr. Gadell, Mr. Nash, Mr. Rettinger, and Mr. Lowther.

Nay: Mr. Creed

Motion Carried 6-1

[BZA-25145](#)

POSTPONED Request for approval of a variance from Section 18-219.2. RS-10 Dimensional Standards., Rear Yard, of the Town of Vienna Zoning Code, to construct a covered deck, attached to an existing dwelling located at 644 Tazewell Rd NW, in the RS-10, Single-Unit Detached Residential zone.

[BZA-25143](#)

WITHDRAWN Request for approval of a variance from Section 18-238.4.C.i.b. of the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Areas Overlay (CB-O), Performance Criteria, of the Town of Vienna Zoning Code, to construct a deck, attached to an existing dwelling located at 404 Welles Street SE, in the RS-16, Single-Unit Detached Residential zone.

Regular Business:**Approval of the Minutes**

Mr. Lowther made a motion to approve the meeting minutes for July 16, 2025, and Mr. Petersen seconded the motion. The motion was carried by a roll-call vote of 7-0.

Other Business:

- It was noted for the record that two members (Mr. Nash & Mr. Gadell) will be absent in November.
- Mr. Gadell confirmed his attendance for October.
- Mr. Lowther will be out in October.
- Mr. Lowther talked about having an alternate member and mentioned having asked the mayor to bring it to the town council. Since there's been no update, he plans to follow up.

Meeting Adjournment

Mr. Dhanjal made a motion to close the regular meeting, and Mr. Petersen seconded the motion. The motion was carried.

The meeting adjourned at 7:52 pm.

Yaska Camacho Castillo
Clerk to the Board

THE TOWN OF VIENNA IS COMMITTED TO FULL COMPLIANCE WITH THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT STANDARDS. TRANSLATION SERVICES, ASSISTANCE OR ACCOMMODATION REQUESTS FROM PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES ARE TO BE REQUESTED NOT LESS THAN 3 WORKING DAYS BEFORE THE DAY OF THE EVENT. PLEASE CALL (703) 255-6341, OR 711 VIRGINIA RELAY SERVICE FOR THE HEARING IMPAIRED.

About the Board of Zoning Appeals

About the Board of Zoning Appeals:

The Board of Zoning Appeals is a quasi-judicial board comprised of seven members – all of whom are residents of the Town of Vienna, VA. The Board serves as an arm of the Fairfax County Circuit Court, as all members are appointed to the Board by the Court after receipt of recommendation from the Vienna Mayor and Town Council.

The Board is empowered by the Code of Virginia to:

- Hear and decide appeals from any order, requirement, decision or determination of the Zoning Administrator.
- Grant variances from the Zoning Ordinance – as defined in Section 15.2201 of the Code of Virginia – as will not be contrary to the public interest, when, owing to special conditions, a literal enforcement of the provisions will unreasonably restrict the utilization of the property to a degree that is not shared generally by other properties within the same zone or district, and its authorization will not be of substantial detriment to adjacent properties or change the character of the neighborhood
- Hear and decide applications for interpretation of the Zoning District Map when there is any uncertainty as to the location of the boundary line.
- Grant Conditional Use Permits in accordance with the provisions of Section 18-209 – 216 of the Vienna Town Code.

The Board of Zoning Appeals does not have the power to change the Zoning Ordinance or the rezone property. Those powers rest with the Mayor and Town Council. Please be advised, the Board decides each application on its own merit – there are no precedents.

The Board will first consider each application during the Public Hearing portion of the meeting. As part of the Virginia Court System, the Board of Zoning Appeals takes sworn testimony and each participant will be sworn in prior to offering comments. During the public hearing each agenda shall be closed a decision will be rendered.

The grant of a Conditional Use Permit, Variance, or appeal from a decision by the Town's Zoning Administrator requires an affirmative vote of no less than a majority of membership, of the Board. The Board consists of 7 members and a majority consists 4 members. If the applicant is unable to stay for the Board's decision portion, the applicant may learn the Board's decision by contacting staff.

The second portion of the meeting – the Regular Meeting – is for approval of meeting minutes and new business and will convene after the Public Hearing has been closed.

If any party is not satisfied with the decision of the Board, an appeal may be filed with the Circuit Court of Fairfax County within 30 days after the issuance of the Board's decision on the matter.