



STAFF REPORT COVER SHEET

March 23, 2026

ATTACHMENT 01

Address:	450 Orchard Street NW	Case Number:	PF-1635414-SP
Meeting Date:	3/23/2026	Applicant:	First Baptist Church of Vienna
Board/Commission:	Town Council	Owners:	First Baptist Church of Vienna TRS
Existing Zoning:	RS-12.5	Existing Land Use:	Institutional
Brief Summary of Request:	Request for modifications of site plan requirements related to lot coverage. (43% approved previously; 48.5% proposed)		
Site Improvements:	The existing church was built in 1957 with an addition completed in 1997. Two sheds and a parking lot are also located on the property. No additional site improvements are proposed at this time.		
Size of Property:	3.0 acres		
Public Notice Requirements:	<p>Each public hearing involving planning and zoning matters before the Town Council and Planning Commission requires notice, as set out in § 15.2-2204 of the Code of Virginia and §18.844 through 849 of the Town Code. The following notifications were prepared related to this application:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two signs were posted on the property, one at the entrance on Nutley Street NW and the other at the entrance on Orchard Street NW, on February 18, 2025, with the date of Planning Commission meeting and updated on March 2, 2026 with the Town Council meeting dates. • Post cards were sent on February 18, 2026, to adjacent, abutting and immediately-across –the-street property owners/agents/occupants and subject property owners notifying them of the Planning Commission meeting. An email was also sent to the applicant and property owner on February 17, 2026. Follow-up letters were sent to adjacent neighbors on March 6, 2026 with the date of the Town Council meeting. • The Town Council public hearing was advertised in the newspaper of general circulation in the Town of Vienna, with the notice appearing twice prior to the public hearing date. 		
Brief Analysis			
PROPERTY HISTORY			
<p>First Baptist Church of Vienna was founded in 1867 and has occupied the subject property since 1957. The existing church building was constructed in 1957 and expanded with a two-story addition in the 1990s pursuant to approved Conditional Use Permit (CUP) approvals. The facility includes a sanctuary with a capacity of approximately 500 seats, educational spaces, and associated parking.</p>			
COMPATIBILITY WITH THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN			
<p>The 2015 Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map (page 38) designates the property as Institutional, which includes public and private schools and similar educational facilities. This designation establishes that the use itself is appropriate for the site.</p>			
COMPATIBILITY WITH THE ZONING ORDINANCE			
<p>The parcel is zoned RS-12.5, a single-unit residential district. Within this zoning district, Religious Assembly uses are permitted if approved for a Conditional Use Permit (CUP). The church operates pursuant to such approvals.</p>			

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The existing church building was originally constructed in 1957, when churches were permitted by right and a Conditional Use Permit was not required. Subsequent expansions and accessory uses have been authorized through CUP approvals.

The Board of Zoning Appeals granted the institution a Conditional Use Permit on September 15, 1993, authorizing construction of a two-story addition that included a 500-seat sanctuary, educational facilities, and expanded parking. Previously, in 1985, the church had received approval for a CUP to operate a before- and after-school program serving up to 20 school-age children from Louise Archer Elementary School.

The applicant has submitted a formal request for a Modification of Requirements under Section 18-830 of the Zoning Ordinance. The requested modification would allow deviation from certain standard site requirements, including increased lot coverage. Approval of this modification would resolve an outstanding zoning violation related to unpermitted site improvements.

Attachments:	01 – Staff Report 02 – Application 03 – 2025 Updated Site Plan 04 – Letter of Request for Modifications of Requirement 05 - 1994 Approved Site Plan 06 – Photos 07 – Historic Aerials	08– Relevant Regulations 09 – Board of Architectural Review Certificate of Approval 10 – Planning Commission Chair Memo 11 – Staff Presentation 12 - Regulatory Requirements 13 – Notification Affidavit
Author:	Kelly O’Brien, AICP, Deputy Director of Planning and Zoning	

Historic aerial imagery included in Attachment 07 indicates that site improvements occurred incrementally over time. Earlier aerials show the original church building and limited parking, while later imagery documents expansion of parking areas and the addition of accessory structures near the rear of the property. These improvements were constructed without formal site plan approval and ultimately resulted in the current nonconforming lot coverage. According to the applicant, the accessory structures are used to store equipment associated with church programs, events, and facility maintenance.

Town staff became aware of unpermitted site modifications following the installation of the access drive in December 2021. The Town issued a Notice of Violation for construction without a permit pursuant to §18-217 of the Town Code. Subsequent coordination between the applicant and Town staff has focused on bringing the property into compliance, including relocation of the accessory sheds to meet setback requirements and submission of the present request for modification of requirements related to lot coverage.

II. PROPOSAL

The applicant requests approval of a Modification of Requirements under Section 18-830 of the Zoning Ordinance related to lot coverage. Specifically, the applicant seeks to increase the maximum permitted lot coverage to 48.5 percent, where 25 percent is permitted by right and 43 percent was previously approved for the site. The requested relief is intended to address existing site conditions that exceed the requirements of the Zoning Ordinance.

III. STAFF ANALYSIS

The requested Modification of Requirements must demonstrate that the alternative design supports compatibility, mitigates impacts, and does not create new adverse conditions.

The accessory structures are located toward the rear of the property and are partially screened by fencing and mature vegetation.

No additional land disturbance or new building floor area is proposed as part of this application.

Consistency with the Comprehensive Plan

The Comprehensive Plan designates the property as Institutional, reflecting its long-standing use as a place of worship serving the community. The proposed modification does not involve expansion of the building footprint or a change in use, but rather seeks to address existing site conditions, including parking areas, accessory storage structures, and internal access improvements.

Institutional uses are expected to accommodate parking, circulation, and operational needs that differ from typical single-family residential development. The additional lot coverage results from site improvements intended to support the church's ongoing operations and does not introduce new land uses or intensify activity beyond what has historically occurred on the site.

Given the established institutional character of the property and the absence of proposed new construction, the requested modification is generally consistent with the Comprehensive Plan designation, provided that site conditions remain compatible with the surrounding residential neighborhood.

Modifications of Requirements

The applicant requests an increase in lot coverage to approximately 48.5 percent, which exceeds both the RS-12.5 district maximum of 25 percent and the previously approved coverage of 43 percent. The additional lot coverage results from expansion of parking areas and the addition of two accessory storage sheds and an access drive connecting the parking lot to the sheds.

No new buildings or expansion of the principal structure are proposed as part of this request. The improvements in question have already been constructed and are associated with the ongoing operation of the church.

The expanded parking area was constructed prior to 2014, when the Town’s current stormwater management regulations were adopted. The accessory sheds and access drive represent less than 2,500 square feet of land disturbance, which is below the regulatory threshold that would require formal stormwater management review.

Staff did not identify any new disturbance or modifications that would create additional stormwater impacts beyond existing conditions. Based on the scale of disturbance and the fact that no new regulated land disturbance is proposed, a formal stormwater management plan or additional stormwater exhibits were not required for this application.

Staff has not identified concerns or negative impacts associated with the requested modification. Approval of the request would bring the property into formal compliance with existing site conditions. In contrast, denial of the request would likely require removal of paved parking areas, which could shift parking demand to surrounding public streets.

IV. REQUIRED COMMISSION/BOARD APPROVALS

The process for review and approval or denial of an application for a Modification of Requirements is outlined in Section 18-830 of the Town Code. After initial staff review, the Planning Commission, per Section 18-830.2.C., reviews the application, taking into account consistency with the Comprehensive Plan and the integrity of the Town code. The Commission then prepares a recommendation to the Town Council, which makes the final decision, taking into account the Planning Commission recommendation.

In accordance with Section 18-830.2.G and Section 18-821 of the Town Code, site plans other than those for single-unit residential properties may require referral to the Board of Architectural Review (BAR) prior to approval.

There is no directed timeline for the Modification of Requirements process.

V. BOARD OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW

On February 19, 2026, the Board of Architectural Review reviewed the application for accessory structures located at 450 Orchard Street NW. The Board voted to approve the application as submitted. A Certificate of Approval was issued on February 20, 2026, and is included in Attachment 09.

VI. PLANNING COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION

On February 25, 2026, the Planning Commission unanimously recommended approval of the requested modification of site plan requirements to permit 48.5% lot coverage for the First Baptist Church of Vienna, located at 450 Orchard Street NW. The Commission determined that approval would bring the property into formal compliance with existing site conditions. The memorandum from the Planning Commission Chair summarizing the discussion and recommendation is included in Attachment 10.