

**Town of Smithfield  
Board of Adjustment  
Thursday, December 18th, 2025  
6:00 P.M. Town Hall,  
Council Chambers**

Members Present:

Sarah Edwards, Chairman  
Jeremy Pearce, Vice Chairman  
Thomas Bell  
Jason Evans

Members Absent:

Monique Austin

Staff Present:

Micah Woodard, Planner I  
Julie Edmonds, Admin Support Specialist

Staff Absent:

Stephen Wensman, Planning Director

**CALL TO ORDER**

**Approval of minutes from October 30th, 2025**

Jeremy Pearce made a motion, seconded by Jason Evans to approve the minutes as written. Unanimously approved

**New Business**

**Open Public Hearing**

Tom Bell made a motion to open the public hearing; seconded by Jason Evans. Unanimously approved.

Oath was administered by Sarah Edwards to all individuals wishing to speak.

**BA-25-06: Clarius Partners, LLC:** Clarius Partners, LLC is requesting a variance from Unified Development Ordinance (UDO): Section 10.111.18, the maximum length of cul-de-sac allowed is 750 feet. This regulation is derived from the length of roadway that can reasonably be protected from fire in the event the cul-de-sac is blocked. The proposed private cul-de-sac is 1,585 feet long and the applicant is seeking an 835 lineal foot variance.

Planner Micah Woodard stated Clarius Partners, LLC is requesting a variance to subdivide and develop their property. The requested deviation pertains to cul-de-sac length. The parcel considered for the variance is located along the east side of US 70 Business West, Clayton near St. Ann Catholic Church, further identified by Johnston County Tax ID 17J07032. Micah went on to say this site will be served by a single private cul-de-sac that exceeds the maximum length for cul-de-sacs with no lateral road connections because of the adjacent residential land developments (to the north and east) and wetlands to the south. In the UDO, the maximum length of cul-de-sac is allowed is 750 feet. This regulation is derived from the length of roadway that can reasonably be protected from fire in the event the cul-de-sac is blocked. The proposed private cul-de-sac is 1,585 feet long and the applicant is seeking an 835 lineal foot variance.

**FINDING OF FACT FOR VARIANCE (STAFF FINDINGS):**

To approve a variance, the Board of Adjustments shall find all of the following provisions can be met (Staff's finding are in bold/ italic) (the applicant's finding are in the report packet):

1. Unnecessary hardship would result from the strict application of the Ordinance. It shall not be necessary to demonstrate that, in the absence of the variance, no reasonable use can be made of the property. **Strict adherence to the maximum length of a cul-de-sac presents a hardship for development of this site. The depth of the development lot requires a road to service each lot and developable area. Lateral connections to the north and east are not recommended because of the desire to keep truck traffic away from the adjacent residential land uses. Lateral connection to the south isn't feasible because of the wetlands on the site in that area. strict**

**adherence to the maximum length of street before a cul-de-sac would negatively impact the site's circulation and significantly decrease available site parking and building footprint.**

2. The hardship results from conditions that are peculiar to the property, such as location, size, or topography. Hardships resulting from personal circumstances, as well as hardships resulting from conditions that are common to the neighborhood or the general public, may not be the basis for granting a variance. **The subject property is a large singular property. It totals over 60 acres and extends between 1500' and 2000' away from US-70. Within the large footprint there is a significant quantity of jurisdictional wetlands and intermittent, buffered streams. These environmental features heavily influence the developable area of the project and where building footprint, circulation, and parking are capable of being located. These existing environmental features are also the location of available low elevations on-site where stormwater control measures need to be located for the project.**

3. The hardship did not result from actions taken by the applicant or the property owner. The act of purchasing property with knowledge that circumstances exist that may justify the granting of a variance shall not be regarded as a self-created hardship. **In this instance, strict adherence to the UDO would result in hardships to the project driven by the demands of the site's developable footprint and environmental constraints. The applicant/owner hasn't created these hardships, as they result from the property's existing size and configuration, as well as impacts from naturally-occurring vegetative and topographical constraints.**

4. The requested variance is consistent with the spirit, purpose, and intent of the Ordinance, such that public safety is secured, and substantial justice is achieved. **The request of this variance to allow a greater street length towards a cul-de-sac is consistent with the spirit, purpose, and intent of the UDO. Stated previously, the cul-de-sac is intended to allow truck drivers to turn around more easily without having to navigate the site's building circulation routes and other truck courts. Related to life safety, the cul-de-sac as proposed does not function as a true dead end; routes off of the cul-de-sac are available to circulate the site for truck traffic and other users including fire trucks and other life-safety needs. The site's geometry, which is designed to accommodate tractor trailers, will allow for successful fire truck aerial apparatus turning movements through the proposed site. This variance being granted still meets the intent of the UDO while also maintaining health and life safety standards.**

Sarah Edwards mentioned the applicant could've possibly created a T shaped intersection.

Micah Woodard explained where the road would end and stated the street exceeds the required length. He said cul-de-sac or not the issue is distance not necessarily the shape or geometry.

Sarah Edwards asked the reasoning behind the road length standard?

Micah Woodard stated so firetrucks can easily access the road in case of an emergency and adequately fight fire in the event that all accesses are blocked.

Tom Bell stated there seemed to be an error in the UDO

Sidney Wiswell of Smith Anderson Law Firm came forward to represent the applicant. She stated the purpose of the variance and offered to answer any questions the board members may have.

Jeremy Pearce made a motion to close BA-25-06; seconded by Jason Evans. Unanimously approved.

Sarah Edwards read each finding of fact and the board voted as follows.

- 1) The motion to adopt Finding of Fact #1 passed with BOA Members Edwards, Pearce, Evans and Bell voting in favor.
- 2) The motion to adopt Finding of Fact #2 passed with BOA Members Edwards, Pearce, Evans and Bell voting in favor.
- 3) The motion to adopt Finding of Fact #3 passed with BOA Members Edwards, Pearce, Evans and Bell voting in favor.

4) The motion to adopt Finding of Fact #4 passed with BOA Members Edwards, Pearce, Evans and Bell voting in favor.

Tom Bell made a motion to approve BA-25-06 granting an 835' ft variance from UDO Sections 10.111.18 Maximum length of cul-de-sac based on the four finding of fact; seconded by Jeremy Pearce. Unanimously approved.

**Old Business.**

**None**

**Adjournment.**

Jason Evans made a motion to adjourn; seconded by Jeremy Pearce. Unanimously approved.

Julie Edmonds

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Julie Edmonds". The script is cursive and fluid.

Administrative Support Specialist  
Town of Smithfield  
Planning Department