

**Town of Smithfield  
Board of Adjustment  
Thursday, October 30th, 2025  
6:00 P.M. Town Hall,  
Council Chambers**

Members Present:

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

Members Absent:

Staff Present:

Micah Woodard, Planner I  
Julie Edmonds, Admin Support Specialist

Staff Absent:

Stephen Wensman, Planning Director

**CALL TO ORDER**

**Approval of minutes from July 31st, 2025**

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

**New Business**

**Open Public Hearing**

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

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

Jason Evans made a motion to open the evidentiary hearing for case BA-25-05; seconded by Monique Austin.

**BA-25-05: Carolina Premium Outlets Signs:** Simon Property Group DBA Carolina Premium Outlets, LLC is requesting a variance to refurbish two existing nonconforming signs. The Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) Section 9.9. outlines the restrictions for nonconforming signs. UDO Sections 10.22.1.1.6., 10.24.4., 10.25.3.1., and 10.25.3.2.5. regulate setbacks, maximum sign height, and allowable square footage for sign faces. The signs considered for the variance are located along Outlet Center Drive, further identified by Johnston County Tax ID 15074012Q and 15074012A.

Planner, Micah Woodard stated Simon Property Group DBA Carolina Premium Outlets, LLC is requesting a variance to refurbish two existing nonconforming signs. The Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) Section 9.9. outlines the restrictions for nonconforming signs. UDO Sections 10.22.1.1.6., 10.24.4., 10.25.3.1., and 10.25.3.2.5. regulate setbacks, maximum sign height, and allowable square footage for sign faces. The signs considered for the variance are located along Outlet Center Drive, further identified by Johnston County Tax ID 15074012Q and 15074012A.

**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. **If the applicant were to be required to comply with the current code obligations, the sign foundation and structure would require a complete removal and reconstruction. This is a financial hardship for the maintenance project. There is no location for Sign B that would meet the 10' required setback.**

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. **Advertising and branding are essential to a successful business, Outlet Center Drive and I-95 have large trees all along their frontage. Because of the location, signs of substantial size are needed in order to be well seen. The proposed signs will not stand out any more than what is already existing.**

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. **The existing signs were previously approved based on the code requirements of the time. Due to a natural event, Sign A was damaged and needs replacement. Being a business branding is important and the need for consistency is imperative.**

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 proposed variance keeps the existing height requirements within the range of what was originally approved for Sign A and close for Sign B. The sign face square footages for Sign A have been reduced to be closer to the existing signage ordinance. And Sign B is within the allowable sign square footage. It is staff opinion that these requests are within the scope of reason and close to the set parameters outlined in the UDO.**

Jeremy Pearce made a motion to close BA-25-05; seconded by Jason Evans. Unanimously approved.

**Old Business.**

**None**

**Adjournment.**

Jason Evans made a motion to adjourn; seconded by Monique Austin. Unanimously approved.

Julie Edmonds



Administrative Support Specialist  
Town of Smithfield  
Planning Department