



VALDOSTA-LOWNDES COUNTY ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS
Staff Report - MEETING DATE: May 1, 2018

VAR-2018-10
Loch Laurel Club
Loch Laurel Road, Valdosta, Georgia

This is a request for Variances to the Lowndes County Unified Land Development Code (ULDC) Supplemental Standards for Outdoor Recreation Facilities – specifically, the standards for Minimum Setbacks and Minimum Buffer Yards. A Variance is also being requested to the provisions for Expiration of Variance Approvals. The subject property consists of ~328 acres, and is located at the intersection of Loch Laurel Road and Dasher Road, in an R-A (Residential Agriculture) zoning district.

Table 4.03.23(D) contained in the ULDC provides Supplemental Standards for Outdoor Recreation Facilities (please see table below). Outdoor Recreation Facilities are permitted within the R-A zoning district with Supplemental Standards. In this case, the current use of the subject property has been deemed a nonconforming use – a land use activity, building or structure legally established prior to the adoption of the ULDC, or subsequent amendment to it, that would not otherwise be permissible under the provisions. Staff has determined that the use was established prior to any Lowndes County adopted land use regulations and may continue to operate under the ULDC provisions for nonconforming uses. Because of the subject property’s requested improvements and the potential for future expansions and/or improvements, staff has advised that they apply for Variances to the applicable Supplemental Standards so that the subject property may be allowed future improvements.

In reviewing the Supplemental Standards, it appears that two (2) Variances are needed. The first requested Variance is to the Minimum Setbacks from any property line for “outdoor recreation areas”. Staff has determined that the lake is one of the primary features to the outdoor recreation facility, and appears that portions of the lake falls within the one hundred fifty (150’) feet setback requirement from the established property lines. **Therefore, a Variance is being requested to the Minimum Setback distance of 150’ from any property line.** The second requested Variance is to the Minimum Buffers for an Outdoor Recreation Facility. According to the Supplemental Standards, Table 4.07.06 is increased in 2 ways. The required minimum buffer yard shall be forty-five (45’) feet wide (in lieu of the standard 30’ wide) to contain a minimum of 6 shade trees and 37 shrubs every 100 linear feet **in addition to** a fence or wall. Because of the existing mature vegetation, the applicant is requesting a Variance in its entirety. **Therefore, a Variance is being requested to the Minimum Buffer standard.** The final requested Variance is to Section 9.02.05 (C) that provides the following “any variance authorized by the ZBA, for which construction has not commenced within one (1) year from the date on which the decision of the ZBA becomes final, shall be deemed abandoned and be void and of no further force and effect.” **Therefore, a Variance is being requested to the provision contained in Chapter 9.05.05 (C) in its entirety.**

ULDC - Table 4.03.23(D). Standards for Outdoor Recreation Facilities.

Development Feature	Standard
Minimum land area	2 acres
Minimum setback for buildings Abutting residential zoning districts Abutting nonresidential zoning districts	200 feet 100 feet
Minimum setback for parking lots and access drives, when abutting residential zoning districts	200 feet
Outdoor recreation areas	Setback a minimum of 150 feet from any property line.
Minimum buffer	1.5 times the buffer specified in Section 4.07.06 plus a fence or wall
Lighting	No exterior lighting shall shine or cause glare on any abutting property