



**CITY OF SNELLVILLE
PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
BOARD OF APPEALS**

VARIANCE CASE SUMMARY

July 08, 2025

CASE NUMBER:

#BOA 25-02

VARIANCE REQUESTS:

UDO Sec. 201-3.3.E.5 to allow a variance from the requirement that "Garages and Driveways serving single-family (attached) dwellings must be rear-entry with access provided from an alley. Front-entry garages and driveways facing a public or private street are prohibited. Garage doors must observe a minimum 22 feet setback from alley."

UDO Table 207-1.2.B to allow a variance from the vehicle parking requirement for single-family attached dwellings of 2 per garage **+1 per 4 units located in street and/or common area**

LOCATION:

**Dorian Drive at Lenora Church Road
Snellville, Georgia**

TAX PARCEL:

R5028 008

CURRENT ZONING:

RM (Multifamily Residential) District

DEVELOPMENT/PROJECT:

Dorian Drive

APPLICANT:

Dean Conn, Crawford Creek Communities
404-314-4388
Contact Person: Conrad Quinones
678-684-6285, cquinones@pec.plus

PROPERTY OWNER:

David Hunt
Snellville, Georgia 30078

RECOMMENDATION:

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**CITY OF SNELLVILLE
PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
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VARIANCE CASE ANALYSIS

July 08, 2025

TO: Snellville Board of Appeals

REGULAR MEETING DATE: July 08, 2025

FROM: Jason Thompson, Director
Department of Planning and Development

CASE NUMBER: **#BOA 25-02**

REQUEST:

The Department of Planning and Development has received a variance application from Dean Conn (applicant) requesting variances from: a) Sec. 201-3.3.E.5. (Building Facades) to allow front-entry garages and driveways facing a street and; b) Table 207-1.2.B. (Vehicle Parking Requirements) to reduce minimum on-street overflow parking from 10 parking spaces to 3 parking spaces from Articles 3 and 7 Chapter 200 of the Snellville Unified Development Ordinance for a 40-unit single-family (attached) townhome development on an 8.1 acre site, zoned RM (Multifamily Residential) District located in the 2600 Block of Dorian Drive, Snellville, Georgia (Tax Parcel 5026 008).

VARIANCE ANALYSIS:

The proposed development would be accessed through an extension of Dorian Drive, which

intersects the southwest side of Lenora Church Road. Properties along Dorian Drive were developed as part of the Park East subdivision, a multifamily residential development, constructed primarily of duplexes and quad-plexes, zoned RM (Residential Multifamily). The Park East subdivision was developed in 1980 and each multifamily residential building lies within its own separate lot, accessed by shared driveways or parking pads having direct access to Dorian Drive. The project was developed at a time when garages were not a requirement of the particular building type, as none of the Park East units contain garages.

The subject site is 8.41 acres and is proposed to be developed as a 40-unit fee simple townhome project, resulting in a density of 4.91 units per acre. The proposed density is well below the maximum density of 8 units per acre allowed in the RM zoning district. All proposed units would have direct driveway access off the Dorian Drive extension, which would be a singular cul-de-sac road that terminates at the southeast corner of the site. The site plan indicates that the 40-foot exterior property line setback is maintained along all sides of the project. A 15-foot undisturbed buffer is also shown along the southwest and southeast property lines, where the project adjoins the Hickory Hills subdivision and Gwinnett County Water and Sewer Authority property, respectively.

The applicant notes in the letter of intent that the subject site contains certain limiting factors which could inhibit development of the property. Factors include, the irregular shape of the site, the presence of a large portion of floodplain, a portion of No Business Creek intersects the property, which consists of required buffers, and steep topography challenges, illustrated by a grade change of over 65 feet from the highest elevation to the creek. Due to the presence of these factors, over 20 percent of the site is undevelopable.

As previously stated, each unit would be accessed through a private driveway directly off Dorian Drive. Private driveways would lead to a single-car garage located at the front of each unit. Current UDO standards prohibit front-entry garages and driveways facing a public or private street. Garages and Driveways serving single-family (attached) dwellings must be rear-entry with access provided from an alley. The applicant contends that the site's limiting factors would not allow for the additional space needed to install alleys, which would be required for the rear-entry access.

Included in this variance application request is the ability to vary from the parking requirements. On top of the requirement of 2 parking spaces per garage, in this case satisfied by a single car garage and one driveway parking space, developers of single-family attached residential units are required to provide one additional parking space for every 4 units. Supplementary spaces shall be located as on-street parking or in a common area. The applicant requests a variance from the required 10 supplementary parking spaces in order to provide 3 on-street spaces as shown on the site plan in the location of the mail kiosk. The applicant makes the same justification that the site's limiting factors would not allow for the installation of all the required supplementary parking spaces.

STANDARDS FOR CONSIDERATION:

Pursuant to Sec. 103-7.2.B of Chapter 100 of the UDO, the City of Snellville Zoning Ordinance, the City finds the following standards are relevant in considering all applications for a Variance.

1. That special conditions and circumstances exist which are peculiar to the land, structure, or building involved and which are not applicable to other land, structures, or buildings in the same zoning district;

Applicant Response: *Due to the extreme topography and narrow nature of the parcel, proposed grading options are present on this site that are not common to residential lots. Per the plan we wish to have approved, walls are already needed along the north and south side of the development. With the rear entry requirement of the updated ordinance, a combination of more walls and drastically reduced lots would be necessary making the lot infeasible for construction under current zoning. With the development having not amenity other than a mail kiosk, the parking requirement of 1 street/common area parking space per 4 units also is not needed.*

2. That literal interpretation of the provisions of this UDO would deprive the applicant of rights commonly enjoyed by other properties in the same district under the terms of this UDO;

Applicant Response: *With the amount of space being occupied by needing to provide rear entry access to all lots on site, the density would be reduced by 18 lots per the attached plans. For this lots intention and topographical hardships, the lot becomes infeasible to develop for the density that can be provided per updated UDO. As mentioned in #1, the parking requirement of 1 street/common area parking space per 4 units also eats away as density/usable area that is very tight on this site.*

3. That the special conditions and circumstances do not result from the actions of the applicant; and

Applicant Response: *The special conditions proving insurmountable for this site are topographical. With the amount of elevation change on the site, adding additional alleys for rear access as stated in the UDO would occupy too much space/inhibit density tremendously. Same applies for the on-street parking requirement.*

4. That granting the variance requested will not confer on the applicant any special privilege that is denied by this UDO to other lands, structures, or buildings in the same district.

Applicant Response: *It is understood that the granting of these variances are solely to be able to develop the property without the rear load condition and on-street parking in the updated UDO. Standards will be followed for all other stipulations.*

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

The Department of Planning and Development recognizes the unique challenges that are due to the peculiar circumstances of the subject site such as, the location of No Business Creek, presence of floodplain, extreme grade change, and irregular shape of the site. Therefore, the Department of Planning and Development recommends:

- A. **APPROVAL** of variance from UDO Sec. 201-3.3.E.5. (Building Facades) to allow a variance from the requirement that “Garages and Driveways serving single-family (attached) dwellings must be rear-entry with access provided from an alley. Front-entry garages and driveways facing a public or private street are prohibited. Garage doors must observe a minimum 22 feet setback from alley.”
- B. **DENIAL** of variance from UDO Table 207-1.2.B. (Vehicle Parking Requirements) to allow a reduction from the vehicle parking requirement for single-family attached dwellings of 2 per garage **+1 per 4 units located in street and/or common area.** Upon review of the submitted site plan, the Department of Planning and Development does not believe the applicant has provided enough investigation into alternative locations for supplementary parking spaces. Driveway lengths as designed do not provide adequate parking for potential guests to the development and locating the auxiliary parking at the mail kiosk could cause potential problems in regards to accessing the amenity if guests park for an extended period of time.