

GLPC AGENDA ITEM # 5

AUGUST 31, 2026

Variance request by Terry Belanger

File #: HA-2026-02

Terry Belanger is requesting a Variance from Section 6-1 of the Hahira Zoning Ordinance regarding minimum building setback requirements applicable to properties located within a Single-Family Residential (R-10) zoning district. The subject property is located at 504 Stagecoach Trail in Hahira GA, which is along the west side of the street about 250 feet south of East Grace Street. The property contains an existing single-family residence (1,928-sf). The applicant is proposing a building addition on the rear side of their residence, which would be approximately 10 feet from the rear property line, instead of meeting the minimum required setback distance of 20 feet.

The subject property is a 0.25 acre lot and contains an existing 1,928-square-foot single-family residence. The residence is situated approximately 36 feet from the front yard property line (which has a minimum setback of 25'), resulting in a relatively limited amount of usable area within the rear yard. Due to the existing configuration of the residence on the lot, the applicant will need more than the allowable footage of usable rear-yard area available for this proposed improvement thus triggering a Variance request.

The applicant proposes to construct an addition to the rear of the existing residence by extending the existing roofline to create a screened-in porch area that is approximately 670 square feet. Only 100 square feet of this area will be enclosed and cooled, while the remaining 570 square feet will be an open-air porch that is adjacent to a new in-ground pool & patio area. The proposed improvements are intended to provide an outdoor enclosed porch area that is within a rear yard that is entirely fenced-in with a privacy fence. With the addition of heavy landscaping, all of this will maintain the existing residential character and appearance of the property.

Based on the circumstances presented, the applicant is requesting approval of a variance to allow the proposed rear addition to encroach into the required rear-yard setback, establishing a 10-foot rear setback in lieu of the required 20-foot setback minimum. The request is intended to address the limitations created by the existing lot configuration while allowing for a reasonable expansion of the existing residence. The proposed variance would allow the applicant to make a modest residential improvement while utilizing an area of the property that is currently available for rear-yard use. The proposed screened-in porch would remain associated with the existing single-family residence and is not intended to change the property's residential use or character.

The Hahira ordinances prescribe 4 different Variance criteria items (see page 2), for use when reviewing and evaluating proposed Variances to the development code. These are often referred to as the "Variance hardship criteria". In this particular case, it seems that the request exhibits a legitimate hardship that is peculiar to the current conditions of the lot and configuration of the residence. Therefore, this Variance request should be approved.

Staff Recommendation:

Find consistent with Variance review criteria, and recommend approval to the City Council, with the condition that the Variance be granted for the proposed addition (only) as depicted on the applicant's submitted site plan.

Variance Review Criteria

The following criteria shall be applied in evaluating and deciding any application for a Variance. The Planning Commission may recommend to Hahira City Council in specific cases such Variance from the dimensional standards and development requirements of the Hahira Zoning Ordinance, as will not be contrary to the public interest where, owing to special conditions, a literal enforcement of provisions of the Ordinance will, in an individual case, result in unnecessary hardship, so that the spirit of the Ordinance shall be observed, public safety and welfare secured, and substantial justice done. Variances may be granted by the Hahira City Council in an individual case upon overall finding by the Planning Commission that the following hardships exist:

Recommended findings by staff:

(1) There are extraordinary and exceptional conditions pertaining to the particular piece of property in question because of its size, shape or topography.	
Staff:	Yes. The residence sits beyond the minimum front yard setback of 25', which decreases the usable rear yard footage (which requires a min. 20' setback) for this improvement.
(2) The application of all dimensional standards and development requirements to this particular piece of property would render the particular property unusable.	
Staff:	Yes. Due to the current requirements, the applicant would not be able to make any building improvements to the rear of the home.
(3) Such conditions are peculiar to the particular piece of property involved, or, in the alternative, that such conditions are due to the location of existing utilities, etc...	
Staff:	Yes. This particular property does not have the additional footage necessary to complete this improvement.
(4) Relief, if granted, would not cause substantial detriment to the public good or impair the purposes and intent of this ordinance; requests for rezoning, the authority for such rezoning of property being solely reserved for the Hahira City Council.	
Staff:	No. Should relief be granted, staff does not foresee any substantial detriment to the public good nor the impairment of the intent of this ordinance.

Relevant excerpts from the Hahira Zoning Ordinance

Hahira Zoning Ordinance

R-10 Single-Family Residential The purpose of this district is to provide single-family residential areas with minimum lot sizes of 10,000 square feet, said areas being protected from the depreciating effects of smaller lot development and excessive density and from the encroachment of those uses which are incompatible to a desirable residential environment.

Section 6-1 Development Standards. Within the various zoning districts as indicated on the "Zoning Map of the City of Hahira, Georgia," no building or structure, excluding all signs other than separate use advertising signs, shall be constructed or erected except as indicated in the following schedule:

R-10 zoning district: Min. front yard building setback = 25' Min. rear yard building setback= 20'

Section 12-3 Request for Variance. The Planning Commission may recommend to City Council upon appeal in specific cases such variance from the dimensional standards and development requirements of this ordinance as will not be contrary to the public interest where, owing to special conditions, a literal enforcement of provisions of this ordinance will, in an individual case, result in unnecessary hardship, so that the spirit of this ordinance shall be observed, public safety and welfare secured, and substantial justice done. Variance may be granted by the City Council in an individual case upon finding by the Planning Commission that the following exists:

- a. There are extraordinary and exceptional conditions pertaining to the particular piece of property in question because of its size, shape, or topography; and
- b. The application of all dimensional standards and development requirements to this particular piece of property would render the particular property unusable; and,
- c. Such conditions are peculiar to the particular piece of property involved, or, in the alternative, that such conditions are due to the location of existing utilities, etc.; and,
- d. Relief, if granted, would not cause substantial detriment to the public good or impair the purposes and intent of this ordinance; requests for rezoning, the authority for such rezoning of property being solely reserved for the Hahira City Council.
- e. Provided that the Planning Commission may recommend to the City Council such additional restrictions and standards (i.e., increased setbacks, buffer strips, screening, etc.) as may be necessary to protect the health and safety of residents and workers in the community, and to protect the value and use of property in the general neighborhood. Provided that whenever the Planning Commission shall find, in the case of any permit granted pursuant to the provisions of this ordinance that any of the terms, conditions or restrictions upon which such permit was granted are not being complied with, the City Council shall rescind and revoke such permit after giving due notice to all parties concerned and granting full opportunity.

Development Review Comments

Building Plan Review: Inspections has no comments

Hahira Fire: < No comments received >.

Hahira Utilities: < No comments received >

Hahira Engineering: < No comments received >

Attachments:

Zoning Location Map
 Aerial Location Map
 Variance application (5 pages)
 Conceptual site plan & schematics (9 pages)

HA-2026-02 Zoning Location Map

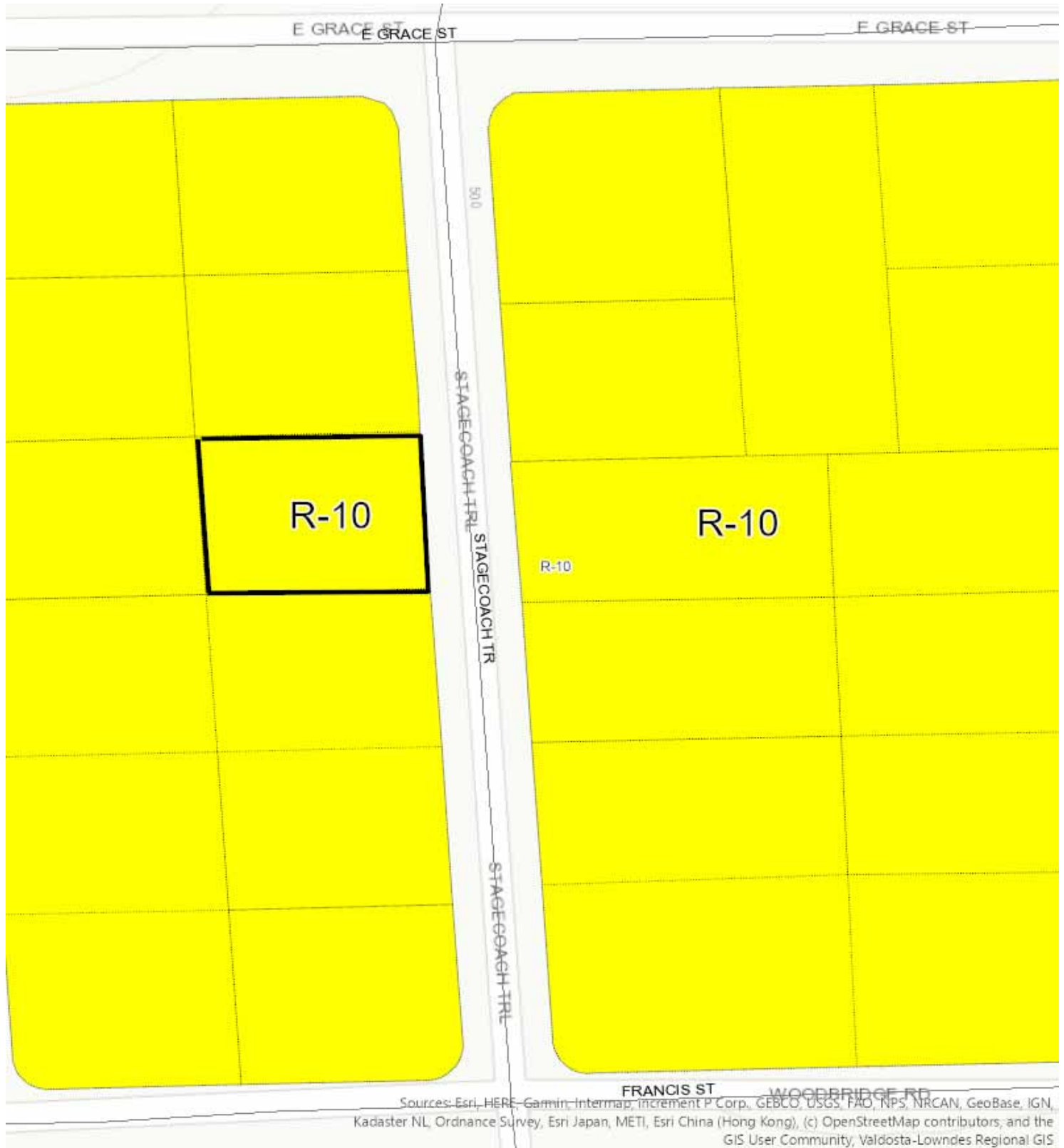


Terry Belanger
Variance Request

504 Stagecoach Trail
Tax Map: # 0046D Parcels: 196

Current Zoning = R-10

** Map NOT to scale Map Data Source: VALOR GIS August 2026



HA-2026-02 Aerial Location Map



Terry Belanger
Variance Request

504 Stagecoach Trail
Tax Map: # 0046D Parcels: 196

~ 2007 Aerial Imagery

** Map NOT to scale Map Data Source: VALOR GIS July 2026



CITY OF HAHIRA VARIANCE APPLICATION

OFFICIAL USE ONLY			
SUBMITTAL DEADLINE: <u>June 15, 2026</u> <u>July 15, 2026</u>		APPLICATION FILING FEE: \$ 975.00	
PUBLIC HEARING DATES		CERTIFIED MAIL: \$ <u>84.00</u> (7x12) (\$ 12.00 x Each Adjacent Property Owner)	
PLANNING COMMISSION: <u>8-31-2026</u>		PUBLIC HEARING SIGNAGE: \$ <u>20.00</u> (\$20.00 X Sign Per Street Frontage)	
HAHIRA CITY COUNCIL: <u>9-3-2026</u>		TOTAL APPLICATION FEE: \$ <u>1,079.00</u>	
Date Received: <u>7-6-2026</u>	Received By: <u>AM</u>	Date Checked For Completeness: <u>7-15-2026</u>	Reviewer's Initials: <u>mm</u>
Property Posted:	Letters Mailed:	Legals:	Decision:

This is an application for a Variance to the City of Hahira Zoning Ordinance. It is submitted and processed through the Planning Division staff of the City of Valdosta, pursuant to an interlocal agreement between the City of Hahira and the City of Valdosta. This completed application, together with all required attachments and fees (payable to the City of Valdosta) must be submitted to the Zoning Division office of the City of Valdosta by one of the established monthly deadlines in order to initiate review and consideration of the variance request. The applicant is responsible for the completeness, accuracy, and timely submittal of this application including all of its attachments and fees. **Unless otherwise stated, please type or neatly print the responses to each of the following:**

1) Applicant Information: (Contact person authorized to receive all communication regarding this application):

Name: Terry Belanger Phone: 229-460-4405
 Mailing Address: 504 Stagecoach Trail Hahira, GA 31632 Email: terry@4himstudios.com
 Has the applicant made any campaign contributions over \$250 to any local government official of the City of Hahira? YES ☒ NO (Circle One)

2) Property Information: Tax Map #: 08-Hahira All / Part (Circle One) of Parcel #: 0046D 196

General Location Description: Residential Home

Existing Use of the Property: Home Proposed Use: Home

Acreage (use square footage if less than 1 acre) 10,890 Current Zoning District: 08-Hahira (District 08)

Has this property been denied a variance during the past 12 months? NO

Has any public hearing been held regarding this property during the past 3 years? NO

(If yes, please describe.) _____

Is the property affected by or in close proximity to any jurisdictional wetlands, designated floodplain, or any other environmentally sensitive lands? YES ☒ NO (Circle One)

(If yes, please describe.) _____



CITY OF HAHIRA VARIANCE APPLICATION

300 North Lee Street * PO Box 1125 * Valdosta, GA 31603-1125
229.259.3563

APPLICATION CHECKLIST

Please use this checklist to ensure that all items required by your application have been included. **Incomplete applications will not be accepted.** Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call the City of Valdosta Zoning Office, at (229) 259-3563. Thank you.

Completed	Description
X	Letter of Intent, as specified on page 3
X	Map and Parcel Number of the Subject Property
X	Current Zoning District of the Subject Property
	If the Applicant is different from the Owner, a Notarized Letter of Authorization from the Property Owner designating the applicant to act on their behalf
5-28-2026	Date of required Pre-Application Meeting with City staff
June 30 2026	Date of required "Preview" presentation to Hahira City Council
X	Conceptual site plan (if applicable) as stated on page 3
X	List of adjacent property owners obtained from Tax Assessor's Office. (Page 5)
X	Signature of Applicant
X	Date
X	Application Fee

I certify that the above items have been completed.

Terry J. Belanger Jr
Signature of Applicant

07-06-2026
Date

- 3) **Owner Information:** If the applicant listed above is **not** the current owner of the property, please list the name and address of all current owners of record of the subject property. (If necessary, attach these sheets) **If the applicant is not the current owner or is one of multiple owners, a notarized Letter of Authorization shall be signed and submitted by the owner(s) authorizing the Applicant to submit and be responsible for this application.**

Map/Parcel NumberOwner of RecordMailing Address

- 4) **Date of REQUIRED Pre-Application Meeting:** 5-28-2026

- 5) **Please fully describe the requested Variance(s), as well as the demonstrated hardship(s) warranting the approval of such Variance(s) as it may pertain to the Subject Property:** (or attach a separate "Letter of Intent" as Attachment # (6)(B) below)

The current setback for Hahira is 20'. Since the house sits further back on the lot, this brings the usable space off the back of the house to 13'. While the roof-line will be extended to cover the porch, the area will be screened in and have dimensions totaling roughly 670 square feet. Roughly 100 square feet will be enclosed and cooled. We are requesting a variance to allow a setback of 10' from the back Property line to allow for the new additions to the house.

Approximate Cost of Construction Work Involved: \$ \$100,000

- (6) Attachments:** The following items must be submitted in full prior to acceptance of this application

- A) Adjacent Property Owners** (See page 5) Completed listing, on provided form, of all current owners of record for properties located immediately adjacent to, or directly across the street or railroad right-of-way from the subject property. This information may be obtained from the Lowndes County Tax Assessor's Office 229.671.2540. (The accuracy and completeness of this information shall be the responsibility of the applicant.)
- B) Letter of Intent;** stating the request, why the request is being made, and any other specific information pertaining to the request.
- C) Proposed conceptual site plan.** Plan shall include:
- 1) Applicant name, date of drawing and revision dates if applicable
 - 2) The size and location of the lot
 - 3) The dimensions and location of the existing building or structure(s) on the lot in question
 - 4) The dimensions and location of the proposed building, structure, or addition(s) on the lot
 - 5) If applicable, the location of any existing buildings on adjacent lots, and their distance from property lines.
 - 6) Any additional information discussed at the Pre-Application meeting or necessary to allow understanding of the proposed use and property development

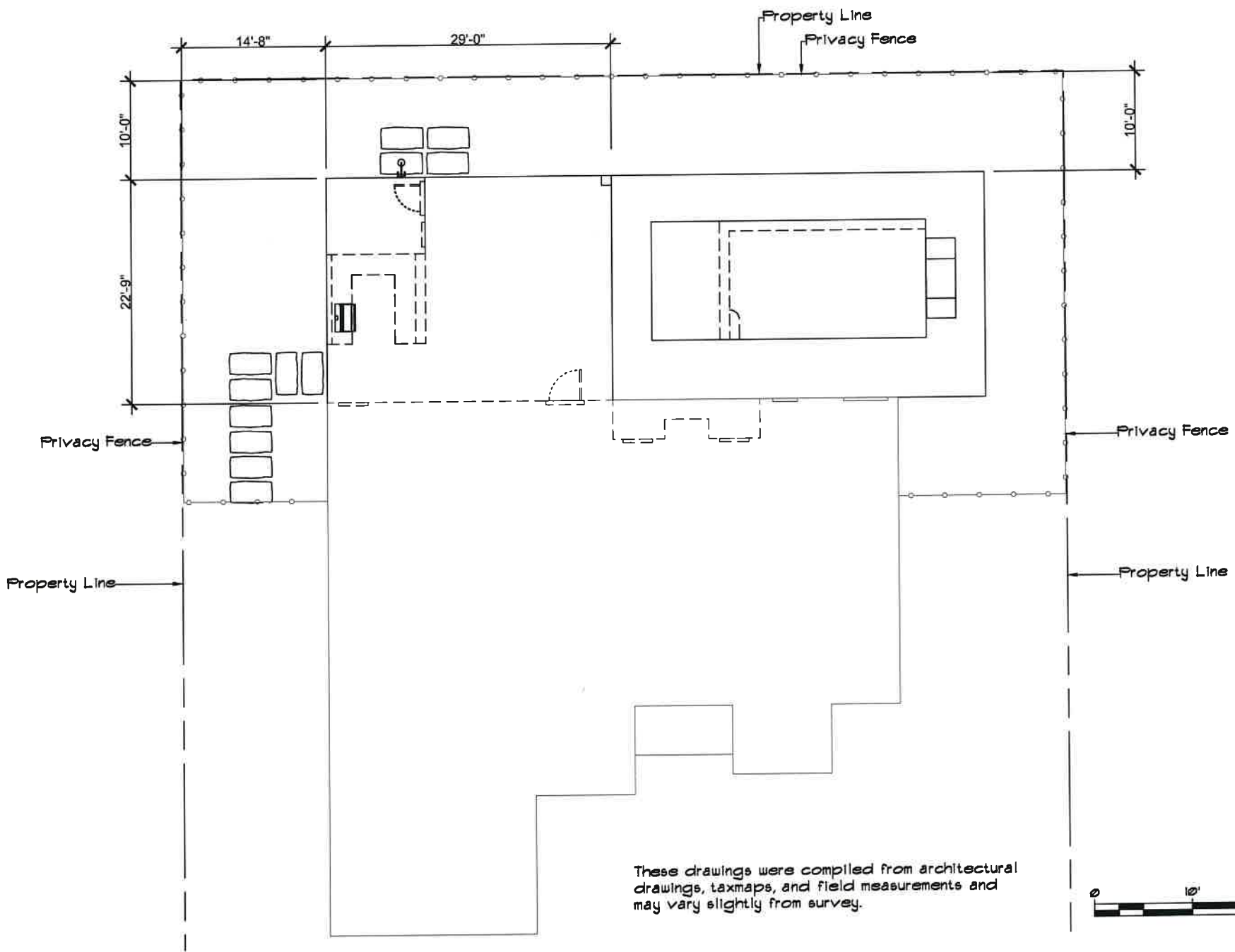
- 7) **Variance Review & Decision Process:** The Greater Lowndes Planning Commission shall review the application for a Variance at a public hearing and shall make a recommendation only to the **Hahira City Council**. At a second public hearing, the Hahira City Council shall hear and decide all requests for Variance. Pursuant to Section 12-3 of the City of Hahira Zoning Ordinance and in each individual case, the Hahira City Council may approve a Variance from the terms of the Zoning Ordinance upon a finding by the Council that the following considerations and criteria exist:
- (a) There are extraordinary and exceptional conditions pertaining to the particular piece of property in question because of its size, shape, or topography; and
 - (b) The application of all dimensional standards and development requirements to this particular piece of property would render the particular property unusable; and,
 - (c) Such conditions are peculiar to the particular piece of property involved, or, in the alternative, that such conditions are due to the location of existing utilities, etc.; and,
 - (d) Relief, if granted, would not cause substantial detriment to the public good or impair the purposes and intent of this ordinance; requests for rezoning, the authority for such rezoning of property being solely reserved for the Hahira City Council.
 - (e) Provided that the Planning Commission may recommend to the City Council such additional restrictions and standards (i.e., increased setbacks, buffer strips, screening, etc.) as may be necessary to protect the health and safety of residents and workers in the community, and to protect the value and use of property in the general neighborhood. Provided, that whenever the Planning Commission shall find, in the case of any permit granted pursuant to the provisions of this ordinance that any of the terms, conditions or restrictions upon which such permit was granted are not being complied with, the City Council shall rescind and revoke such permit after giving due notice to all parties concerned and granting full opportunity.

**** IMPORTANT NOTE:** *The approval of a Variance is for zoning compliance only. To avoid possible building code violation, please contact the Inspections Department at 229.259.3506 concerning building code requirements.*

I do hereby certify that to the best of my knowledge, the above information and attachments are true and correct. I authorize the applicable staff of the City of Hahira or their designees, to enter and inspect the premises which are the subject of this application.

Terry J. Belanger Jr
Signature of Applicant

07-06-2026
Date



These drawings were compiled from architectural drawings, taxmaps, and field measurements and may vary slightly from survey.



Guess
LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT
 Full Service Lawn Care
 Licensed & Insured
229-539-0279

New Addition
 the Belanger Residence

THIS DRAWING IS THE PROPERTY OF THOMAS HUMPHREY, FLA AND MAY NOT BE REPRODUCED OR RELIED UPON WITHOUT PERMISSION AND CREDIT.
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No.	Revision/Issue	Date

THOMAS HUMPHREY, FLA
 5553 WATKINS ROAD
 VALDOSTA, GA 31601
 PHONE: 229.560.7168



Project	Sheet
Date: 5/20/2026	L - 1
Scale: 1" = 10'-0"	



