Effingham County Georgia
Planning and Zoning Services

Staff Report

Subject:	Variance
Author:	Tianchi Xu, Planner I
Department:	Development Services
Application:	VAR-26-32
Meeting Date:	10/6/2026
Existing Zoning:	AR-1 (Agricultural Residential 5 acres or more)
Map & Parcel(s):	296A-23
Total Acreage Affected:	± 0.51
Location:	120 Second Street, Guyton, GA 31312
Commissioner District:	First District
Applicant/Owner:	Betty Crosby 120 2nd Street, Guyton, GA 31312

Variance Summary:

Item	Description
Request	Rear setback variance from 50 feet to 25 feet for mobile home
Proposed Use	Residential
Existing Use	Residential
Future Land Use	Agricultural-Residential
Utilities	
Access	Second Street

Project Summary:

The applicant is requesting a rear setback variance from 50 feet to 25 feet due to the lot's nonconforming status. The purpose of the request is to allow a proposed 16' x 76' mobile home to be placed on the site of a previously demolished residence. The mobile home would be occupied by the applicant's renter, Ruth Bell, allowing her to reside on the property in close proximity to the applicant and provide assistance as needed.

Zoning History

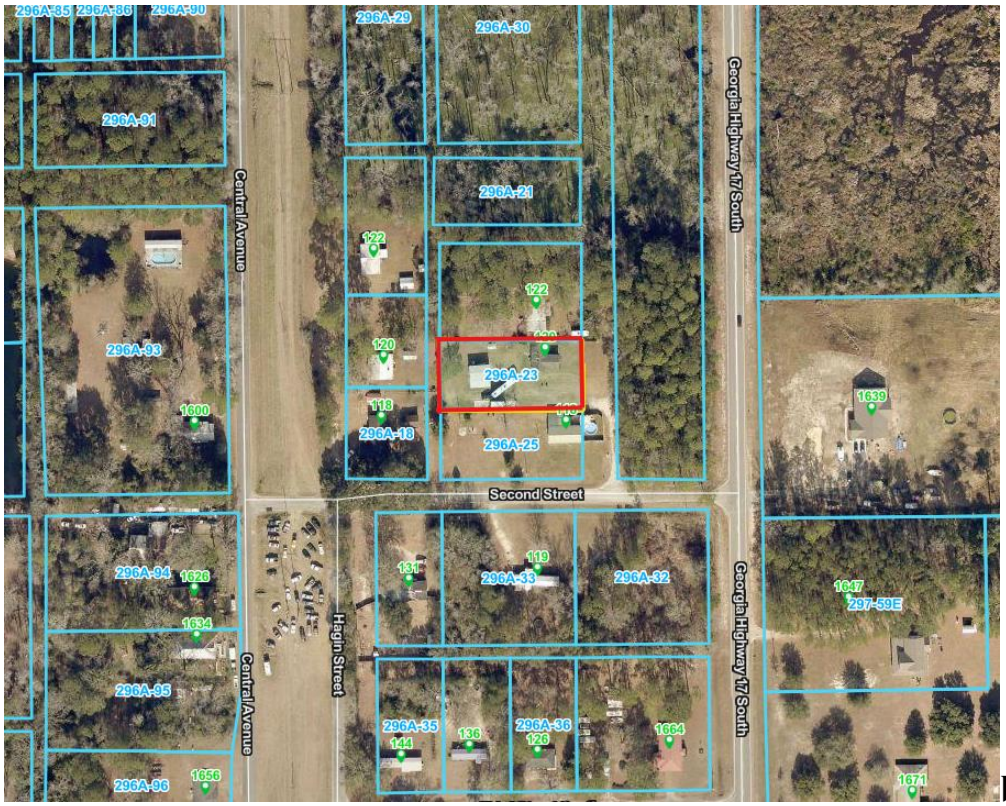
The subject properties are currently zoned **AR-1 (Agricultural Residential).** No prior zoning cases are on record for either subject parcel.

Existing Site Condition

The subject properties consist of **Parcel 296A-23 is a legal nonconforming lot of record**, containing approximately **0.51 acres**, Parcel 296A-23 contains an existing Handi house, a Shop and accessory structure. Access to the property is provided via a 64-foot access easement off Second Street.

The parcel is zoned **AR-1 (Agricultural Residential),** which requires a minimum lot size of five (5) acres**.** Surrounding properties are similarly zoned and developed in a rural residential pattern characterized by large lots, low-density housing, and agricultural land uses.

County GIS mapping indicates the subject properties contain no identified **wetlands, FEMA flood hazard areas, or other known environmental constraints.**


296A-85
296A-86
296A-90
296A-29
296A-30
296A-91
Central Avenue
Georgia Highway 17 South
296A-21
122
122
296A-93
120
296A-23
1600
118
296A-18
296A-25
1639
Second Street
296A-94
1628
131
119
296A-33
296A-32
1647
297-59E
1634
Hagin Street
Central Avenue
Georgia Highway 17 South
296A-95
296A-35
144
136
296A-36
126
1664
296A-96
1656
1671

b

296A-22
296A-19
120
120
296A-23
118
118
296A-18
296A-25
Second Street
Second Street
Second Street
Second Street
296A-34
296A-33
296A-32

Surrounding Use and Zoning Pattern

Surrounding Neighborhood
• North: AR-1 (Agricultural Residential 5 acres or more)
• South: AR-1 (Agricultural–Residential, 5 acres or more)
• East: AR-1 (Agricultural–Residential, 5 acres or more)
• West: AR-1 (Agricultural Residential 5 acres or more)

The surrounding area is predominantly agricultural residential in character and consists of a mix of established single-family dwellings and rural residential homesteads. The area has experienced continued residential growth, resulting in a broader range of lot sizes and increased residential density. Surrounding properties generally range from approximately one-quarter-acre parcels to larger rural tracts, reflecting an ongoing transition toward higher-density residential development patterns.

North

- AR-1

East

- AR-1

South

- AR-1

West

- AR-1

Zoning Development Standards for AR-1

Minimum lot area A maximum of two residential units are permitted per lot. These may consist of two principal dwellings, or one principal dwelling, and one accessory dwelling unit (ADU)	5 acres 2 units
Minimum lot road frontage	100 feet
Minimum lot width at building line	150 feet
Minimum front yard setback	50 feet
Minimum rear yard setback	50 feet
Minimum side yard (interior) setback	25 feet
Minimum side yard (street/road easement) setback	50 feet
Minimum side yard (secondary street) setback	25 feet
Maximum building height	40 feet
* Accessory structures used for agricultural purposes are exempt from the height restrictions outlined in this ordinance.	

Zoning Classification

Agricultural Residential 1 (AR-1) is designed to preserve the county's rural character while protecting natural resources and supporting both active and passive recreational uses. This district emphasizes land conservation and resource protection, minimal pedestrian activity, ample open space, and a high degree of separation between structures.

Intensity of Use

The requested variance is limited to a reduction of the rear setback from 50 feet to 25 feet to allow placement of a mobile home for the property owner's renter. The mobile home is proposed to be located on the site of a previously existing structure that has been removed, utilizing the existing developed area of the property. The proposed use is intended solely to provide on-site accommodation for the renter and is not intended as a separate rental or commercial use. Therefore, the requested setback reduction would not substantially increase the intensity of use of the property or alter the residential character of the surrounding area.

Infrastructure

The property is served by **a private well and septic system,** consistent with the surrounding development.

Road Routes: 2nd Street is classified as a Local Road within the City of Guyton.

Public Health, Safety, and Welfare

The requested variance to reduce the required rear setback from 50 feet to 25 feet is not anticipated to adversely affect public health, safety, or welfare. The request is intended to allow the placement of a mobile home for the property owner's renter within a previously developed portion of the property where a structure formerly existed.
The proposed setback reduction is not anticipated to interfere with existing access to the property or create a significant increase in traffic or other activity. Prior to placement and occupancy, the proposed dwelling will be required to comply with all applicable building, Environmental Health, septic, emergency access, and other development requirements. Subject to compliance with these standards, the requested reduction in the rear setback is not expected to create conditions detrimental to the health, safety, or welfare of the surrounding property owners or the general public.

STAFF ANALYSIS

Staff finds that the requested variance to reduce the required rear setback from **50 feet to 25 feet** represents limited dimensional relief to accommodate the proposed residential use. The variance does not alter the underlying **AR-1 (Agricultural Residential)** zoning designation or introduce a use that is inconsistent with the surrounding rural residential character. The proposed reduction is not anticipated to significantly increase development intensity or create adverse impacts on adjacent properties. The request is not anticipated to adversely affect the public health, safety, or welfare of the surrounding community. All other applicable zoning and development standards will remain in effect.