

**VARIANCE(S):**

**V-2015-001**

**CITY OF SUWANEE  
VARIANCE ANALYSIS**

**CASE NUMBER:** V-2015-001  
**REQUEST:** ACCESSORY STRUCTURE EXCEEDING  
MAXIMUM SQUARE FOOTAGE  
**APPLICABLE SECTION:** SECTION 501A.1.C  
**LOCATION:** 4935 MEADOWBROOK CIRCLE  
**DISTRICT/LAND LOT:** 7-286-017  
**ZONING:** R-140 SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL  
DISTRICT

**APPLICANT/OWNER:** SHANNA BLANKENMEYER  
4935 MEADOWBROOK CIRCLE  
SUWANEE, GA 30024

**CONTACT:** SHANNA BLANKENMEYER  
**PHONE:** 813-904-6051

**RECOMMENDATION:** **APPROVAL WITH CONDITIONS**

**ANALYSIS:**

The applicant seeks a variance from Section 501 of the City of Suwanee Zoning Ordinance to allow for an accessory building exceeding the maximum permitted square footage. The subject property is roughly two acres in size and is located on Meadowbrook Circle. The applicant is requesting an accessory building that has roughly 1,010 square feet of space, which is 210 square feet over the maximum permitted size of 800 square feet. The proposed building is a one story building designed to provide parking for a recreation vehicle and contains a small area (10'x17') for bike parking.

The applicant applied for a building permit for the accessory structure in May 2014. The applicant indicated that the building footprint would be 19.5 feet by 40 to 41 feet, or between 780 and 799.5 square feet. The applicant started construction of the accessory structure in November of 2014. While under construction a neighbor noted that it appeared to be larger than would be allowed under our ordinance. At the next inspection, the City measured the footprint of the accessory structure and determined that it was 20.5 feet by 41 feet, making it 840 square feet, or 40 square feet larger than allowed by the ordinance. The property owner was informed that they would need to either bring it into conformance or apply for a variance. The property owner applied for a variance. Work on the structure has subsequently stopped until the issue is resolved (the property owner has been allowed to finish the structure enough to protect it from the weather, at their own risk).

The applicant has subsequently updated the application to note that the structure is 20.5 feet by 41 feet. Also, the applicant amended the building permit application to include an additional 170 square feet for bike storage to be added onto the south side of the structure. The front corner of

the structure is currently located 15 feet away from the nearest property line, while the rear corner is located 19 feet away. As such, the structure meets the setbacks for an accessory structure. However, if the 10 by 17 foot bike storage is placed on the south side of the structure that would make it very close to the minimum setback.

Like the subject property, the neighboring properties on Meadowbrook Circle are also single family homes that are zoned R-140. R-140 is the City's least dense residential zoning district with the largest lot size requirements. Many of the structures on Meadowbrook Circle were constructed long before the current zoning standards.

There are several other properties on Meadowbrook Circle that have larger accessory structures that do not meet the current standards in terms of size and/or location. Accessory buildings are permitted uses in all of the City's residential zoning districts. All of the residential zoning districts have the same standard for accessory buildings in terms of maximum square footage allowed, which is 800 square feet. Because of the large size of the lots and the age of neighborhood some of the properties have larger barns, multiple accessory structures or other large additions that are connected to the house by a breezeway. The City identified 30 accessory structures on the 23 lots that face Meadowbrook Circle. Three of the nearby structures are larger than 800 square feet including a structure on the lot to the south of the subject property. Five of the accessory structures are improperly located, either too close to a property line or located in the front or side yard. Plus there are an additional 8 additions attached only by a breezeway that are larger than the 800 square feet allowed for a detached accessory structure. As such, the proposed structure would not be exceptional for the area.

The applicant in this case indicates that they were misinformed as to the appropriate measurement of the structure. The applicant indicates that they thought the size limitation applies to the interior space. However, the city measures the footprint of the accessory structure and then adds in any additional square footage from an additional floor, if applicable, in order to determine the square footage. In this case the difference of understanding of how the square footage is measured meant that the structure was 40 square feet larger than allowed.

The City of Suwanee Zoning Ordinance grants the Zoning Board of Appeals the authority to grant variances. According to Section 2006 of the Ordinance, the Board is authorized to grant variances when literal enforcement of the Ordinance will result in unnecessary hardship to a property owner. A variance may be granted if the conditions are unique to the property and/or are unlikely to cause substantial detriment to the public good or if the variance will not undermine the intent of the zoning ordinance. In this case, it would appear that some miscommunication between the applicant and the City occurred resulting in a discrepancy of 40 square feet above the allowed maximum. Because of the large size of the lot and the minimal amount of the additional square footage, an approval of the variance for a 840 square foot accessory structure would not undermine the intent of the ordinance.

In regard to the additional 170 square feet for the bike storage, it does not appear to rise to the level of hardship. However, if it is properly located in order to minimize impacts to the neighbors it would not necessarily undermine the intent of the ordinance.

In conclusion, while there does not appear to be a hardship, approval of the variance would not be a substantial detriment to the public good. The intent of the zoning ordinance is to limit the size of accessory buildings on smaller lots in order to ensure they are smaller than the primary structures. The size of the lots and the character of the area minimizes the already minimal impact of the requested variance. As such, staff recommends **APPROVAL WITH CONDITIONS** of V-2015-001.

**V-2015-001**

**Planning Department Recommendation:**

Approval of a variance for an accessory structure greater than maximum square footage allowed subject to the following conditions:

1. The accessory building shall be substantially consistent with the architecture design shown in exhibit "D" and the dimensions provided in exhibit "E", except that the portion noted as bike storage shall be constructed on the north side of the structure, in a manner that completely shields it from the view of the property to the south.
2. Prior to issuance of certificate of occupancy for the accessory structure provide a vegetative screen of evergreen trees. The species of said trees shall be approved by the Planning Director, shall be a minimum height of 6 feet tall at the time of planting, and shall be planted on 10 foot centers. A minimum of 6 trees shall be provided.

## Standards for Consideration

Pursuant to Section 2009A of the City of Suwanee Zoning Ordinance, the City finds the following standards are relevant in considering all applications for a Variance.

**A. Will approval of the variance unreasonably increase the congestion in public streets?**

Approval of this variance would not increase the congestion in public streets.

**B. Will approval increase the danger of fire or endanger public safety?**

Approval of this variance would not increase the danger of fire or endanger public safety.

**C. Will approval unreasonably diminish or impair established property values within the surrounding area?**

Approval of the variance would not unreasonably diminish or impair property values within the surrounding area. The size and location of the proposed building is not out of character for the neighborhood.

**D. Will approval in any other aspect impair the public health, safety, comfort, morals or welfare of the inhabitants of the City?**

Approval of this variance, with the appropriate conditions would not impair the public health, safety, comfort, morals, or welfare.

**APPLICATION FOR VARIANCE FROM THE  
CITY OF SUWANEE ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS**

Please complete this application and submit with all necessary attachments as stated on the Variance Information Form (please type or print)

**APPLICANT INFORMATION**

Name: SHANNA BLANKEMEYER  
Address: 4935 MEADOWBROOK CIRCLE  
City: SUWANEE  
State: GA  
Phone: 813-909-6051  
E-mail address: blankemeyers@yahoo.com

**OWNER INFORMATION**

Name MARK & SHANNA BLANKEMEYER  
Address 4935 MEADOWBROOK CIRCLE  
City: SUWANEE  
State GA  
Phone: 813-956-2213 (MARK)

CONTACT PERSON: SHANNA BLANKEMEYER PHONE: 813-909-6051

ADDRESS OF PROPERTY 4935 MEADOWBROOK CIRCLE, GA 30024

LAND DISTRICT 7 LAND LOT 286 PARCEL 017 LOT 6A

SUBDIVISION OR PROJECT NAME (IF APPLICABLE) SUWANEE FARMS

ZONING F-100

VARIANCE REQUESTED DUE TO BEING MISINFORMED ABOUT PROPER SQUARE FOOTAGE  
(as measured on outside = 800 sq. ft.)  
MEASUREMENTS, OUR RV/BOAT STORAGE BUILDING IS 840 SQ. FT (20.5 X 41 ft outside dimensions)

AND THEREFORE NEEDS THIS VARIANCE. PLUS WE ARE ADDING A 10'X17' BIKE STORAGE AREA.

PLEASE SEE SITE PLAN AND BUILDING VIEW SHEETS

NEED FOR VARIANCE DURING 11-24-14 FRAMING INSPECTION, WE WERE INFORMED OUR BUILDING'S  
SQUARE FOOTAGE OF 840 SQ. FT. EXCEEDS MAXIMUM 800 SQ. FT ALLOWED WITHOUT A VARIANCE.

THIS VARIANCE WOULD ALLOW FOR OUR BUILDING'S ACTUAL SQUARE FOOTAGE TO  
BE ACCEPTED IN ORDER FOR BUILDING COMPLETION TO OCCUR. BECAUSE THIS VARIANCE IS  
NECESSARY, WE ARE ALSO ASKING TO ADD A 10'X17' BIKE STORAGE AREA OFF BASIC  
RIGHT OF BUILDING - PLEASE ADVISE OF PROPER PROCEDURE TO ADD THIS EXTRA AREA.

**\*A VARIANCE FROM A CONDITION OF ZONING CANNOT BE ACCEPTED.**

**SECTION 2007, APPLICANT AND/OR A REPRESENTATIVE.**

**\*\*\*The property owner, applicant and /or a representative thereof shall be present at all meetings of the Zoning Board of Appeals, Planning Commission and/or Mayor and Council at which official action is requested on any variance or application for amendment. The failure of the property owner, applicant and/or a representative to attend such meetings shall result in the denial of said variance or application for amendment.**

**APPLICANT CERTIFICATION**

The undersigned below is authorized to make this application and is aware that an application or re-application for the same type of variance affecting the same land or any portion thereof shall not be acted upon within twelve (12) months from the date of last action by the Board of Appeals, unless waived by the Board of Appeals. An application or reapplication shall not be acted upon in less than (6) months from the date of the last action by the Board of Appeals.



Shanna Blankmeyer 12-2-14  
Signature of Applicant Date

Shanna Blankmeyer, Homeowner  
Typed or Printed Name and Title

A. Phelps 12-2-14  
Signature of Notary Public Date

Notary Seal

**PROPERTY OWNER CERTIFICATION**

The undersigned below, or as attached, is the record owner of the property considered in this application and is aware that an application or reapplication for the same type of Variance affecting the same land or any portion thereof shall not be acted upon within twelve (12) months from the date of last action by the Board of Appeals unless waived by the Board of Appeals. An application or reapplication shall not be acted upon in less than six (6) months from the date of the last action by the Board of Appeals.



Same  
Signature of Applicant Date

Same  
Typed or Printed Name and Title

A. Phelps 12-2-14  
Signature of Notary Public Date

Notary Seal

**DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT USE ONLY**

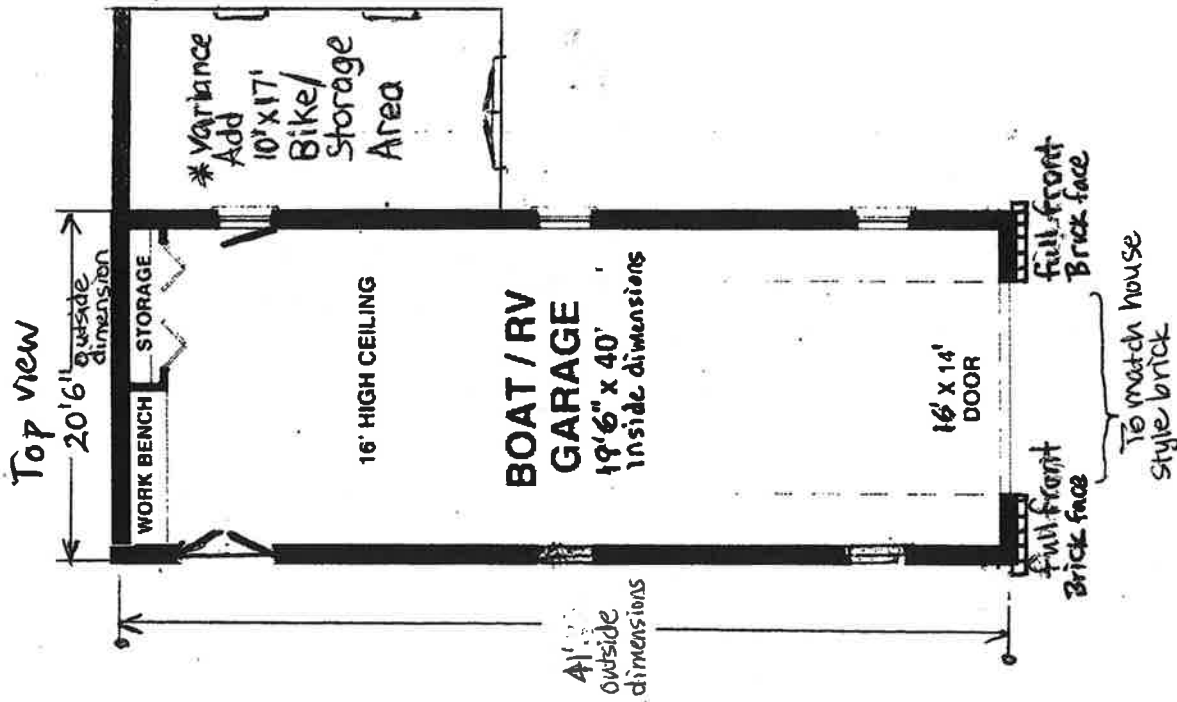
Case Number \_\_\_\_\_ Variance \_\_\_\_\_ Administrative \_\_\_\_\_  
Date Rec'd \_\_\_\_\_ Rec'd By \_\_\_\_\_ Hearing Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Amount Rec'd \_\_\_\_\_ Receipt \_\_\_\_\_

ACTION TAKEN \_\_\_\_\_

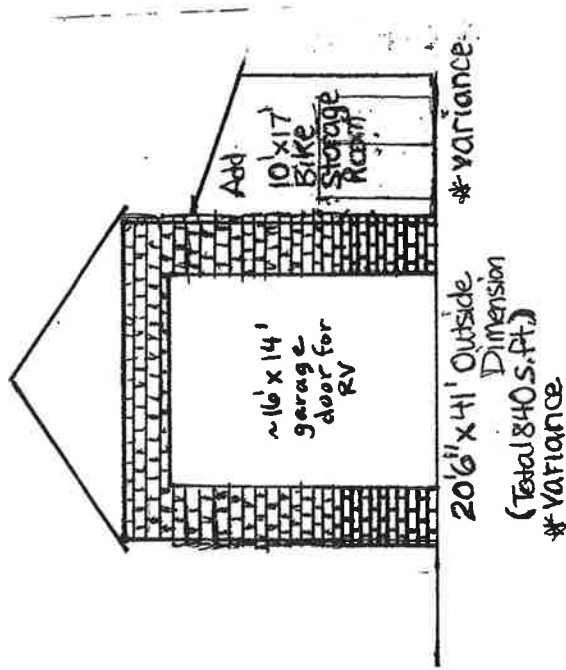
SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_



# Exhibit "D."



Front view  
Boat/RV Garage

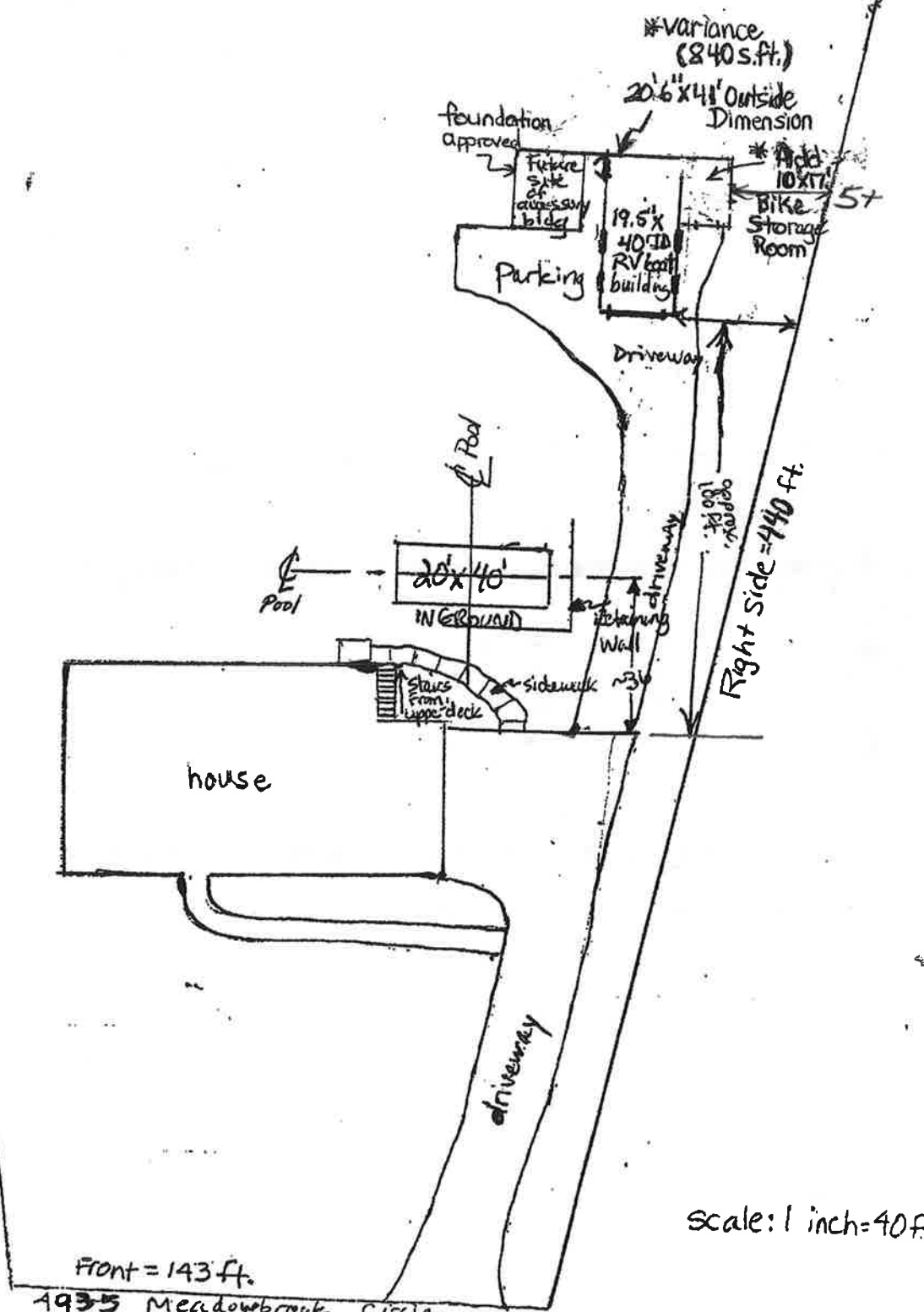


4935 Meadowbrook Circle  
Suwanee, GA 30024

Mark and Shanna Blankmeyer  
blankmeyers@yahoo.com  
713-909-6051

Rear = 287 ft.  
**Exhibit "E"**

Left side = 493 ft



Scale: 1 inch = 40 ft

Front = 143 ft.

4935 Meadowbrook Circle  
Swansea

Mark and Shonna Blankenmeyer 813-909-6051



# Building Permit Application

## Permit Application

Permit Date 5-23-14

Permit Number PB14-0114

New Construction, Remodel/Addition, Demolition

330 Town Center Avenue • Suwanee, GA 30024  
(770)945-8996 • (770)945-2792 (Fax)  
www.suwanee.com

As the owner of record or the authorized agent of the owner of record, I hereby apply for a permit to erect/alter and use the structure(s) as described herein and/or shown on the accompanying plan and specifications. Said structure(s) is to be located as shown on the plot plan. If the permit is granted, I agree to construct same according to the laws and ordinances of the City of Suwanee and to conform to all laws and ordinances regulating same. I also certify authorization to the inspection by the employees of the City of Suwanee of the described premises at any time when work on those premises is ongoing and hereby grant consent. I understand that the structure authorized by this permit shall not be occupied until all inspections have been made and the Certificate of Occupancy has been approved by the Gwinnett County Fire Department, Gwinnett County Environmental Health Department (if applicable) and issued by the City of Suwanee.

Address of Project 4935 Meadowbrook Circle Suite # \_\_\_\_\_ Value of Construction \$ 15,000 + add  
Parcel # 017 Describe Project Add RV/boat accessory building behind house/driveway

### LAND OWNER OF RECORD

Name Mark Blankemeyer Phone 813-909-6051  
Address 4935 Meadowbrook Circle City Suwanee State GA Zip 30024 Email blankmeyers@yahoo.com

### BUILDING CONTRACTOR

Contractor Self - Homeowner 24 hr Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Email \_\_\_\_\_ Ga Contractor's License # \_\_\_\_\_

### PROPERTY/STRUCTURE INFORMATION

Use \_\_\_\_\_ Zoning F-100 Subdivision/Business Park Suwanee Farms  
Lot # 6A Width of Lot: 143ft Depth of Lot 440ft Width of Bldg. 80ft # of Stories 1  
# of Rooms \_\_\_\_\_ Heated Floor Area (sq. ft.) 2800 # of Bathrooms 4.5 Basement (sq. ft.) 1000  
Finished Basement?  Yes / No Setbacks from property lines: Left 5ft Right 5ft Front \_\_\_\_\_ Rear \_\_\_\_\_  
Electric Utility Company Georgia Power For apartments: # of Buildings \_\_\_\_\_ # of units \_\_\_\_\_

Note: Complete plans must be furnished on all permit submittals other than single-family detached residential housing. Permit will expire unless work is commenced within 180 days, or if work is suspended or abandoned for a period of 180 days after work has commenced. Erosion control must be installed prior to the commencement of construction and be maintained throughout project until all land is stabilized.

Applicant's Signature Mark Blankemeyer Print Name Shanna Blankemeyer

Personally appeared, the above named applicant, who on oath says that (he) (she) is the owner of record or represents the owner of record of the subject property, and that all the above statements are true to the best of (his) (her) knowledge.  
Sworn to and subscribed before me this 23rd day of May, 2014. (Seal)

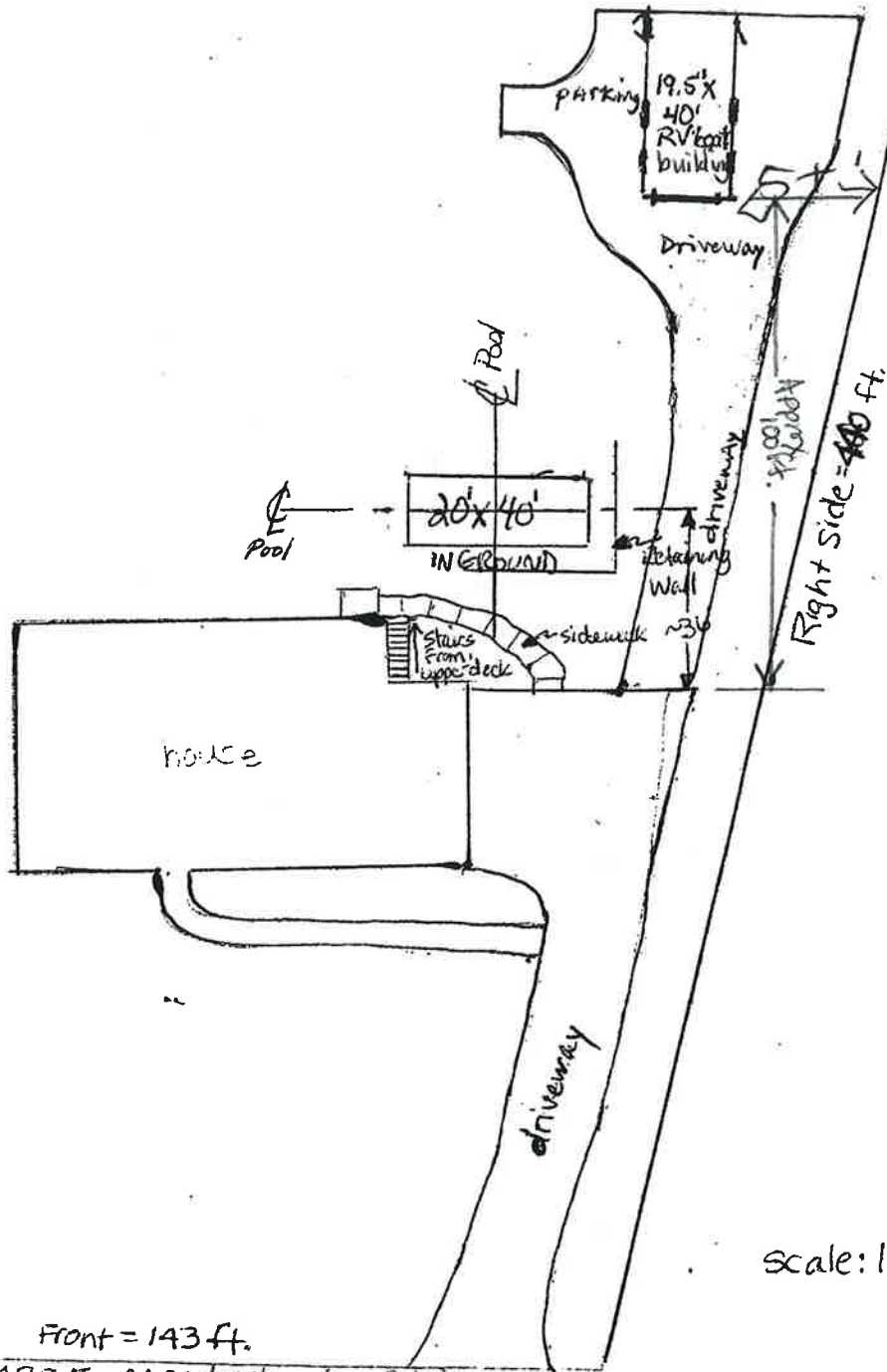
Notary Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Planning Department Approval (if required) \_\_\_\_\_

Total Fees Due \$ 90.00 (includes all applicable fees)

Rear = 287 ft.

Building Permit, Exh. bit.

Left side = 493 ft



Scale: 1 inch = 40 ft

Front = 143 ft.

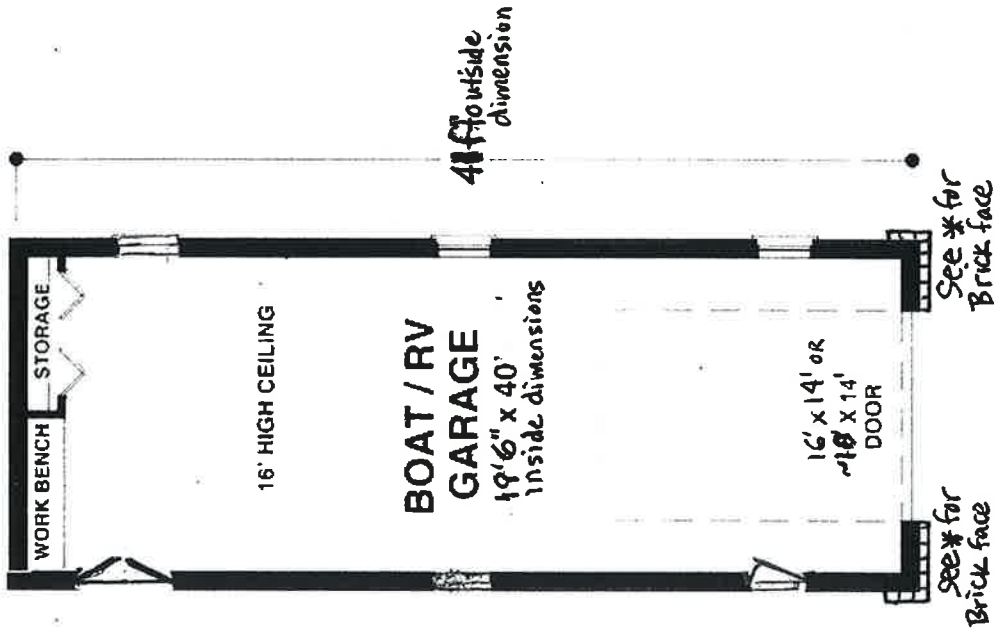
4935 Meadowbrook Circle  
Suwanee

Mark and Shanna Blankmeyer 813-909-6051.

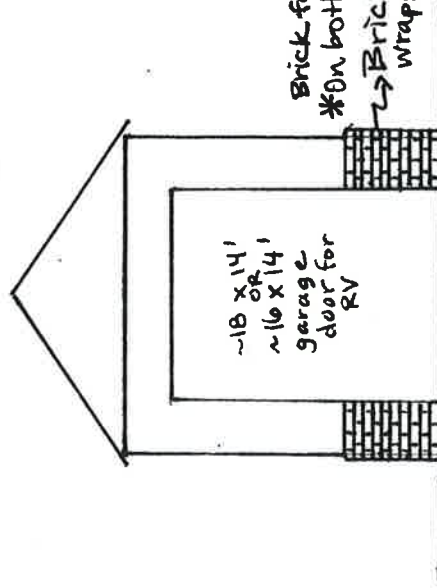
V-2015-001

# Building Permit Exhibit

Top view



Front view  
Boat/RV Garage



~16x14 garage door

4935 Meadowbrook Circle  
Suwanee, GA 30024

Mark and Shanna Blankemeyer  
blankemeyers@yahoo.com  
813-909-6051



# EXHIBIT A V-2015-001

Location Map

## Legend

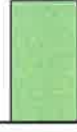


V-2015-001

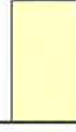
Road



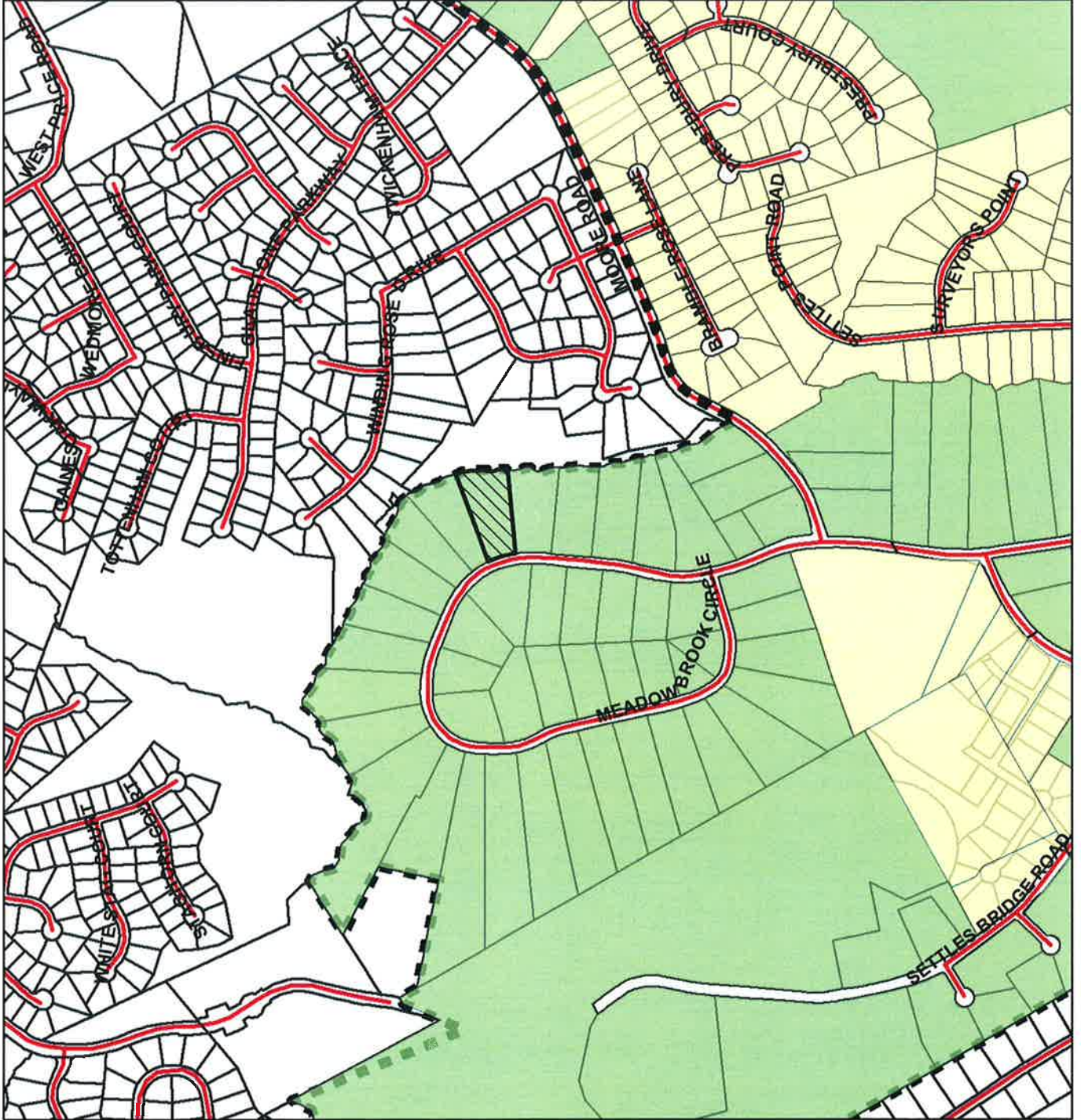
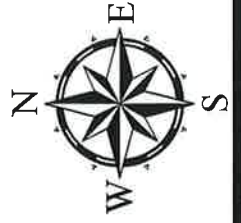
## ZONING



R-140



R-100





# EXHIBIT B

## V-2015-001

Aerial Map

### Legend



V-2015-001

Road

