



VARIANCE APPLICATION SUMMARY



File Number	V-26-6
Property Address	345 INVICTA PL GAHANNA, OH 43230
Parcel ID	025-002240
Zoning District	R-3 - Small Lot Residential
Project/Business Name	Deck Build
Applicant	Jeremy Steckel
Description of Variance Request	We have an extremely small backyard directly behind our house that extends only 15 feet to our property line. Because the majority of our property is on the SIDE of our house, we would like to build a backyard ground level deck that extends all 15 feet to our backyard property line in order for us to be able to easily monitor our children in the side yard. If we were to stay within the normal setback limits of our property (specifically the 15 ft backyard area), it would be extremely difficult to monitor our children.

Requested Variances

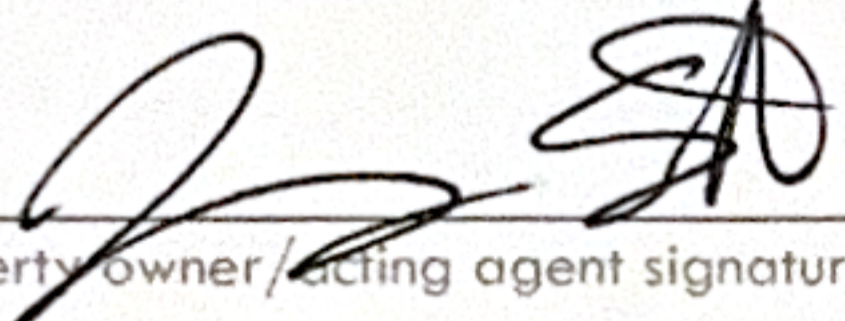

Code Section	Code Title
Ch 1103.07(e)	Large Lot Residential



AUTHORIZATION CONSENT FORM

If you are filling out more than one application for the same project & address, you may submit a copy of this form with each additional application.

As the owner or acting agent for the subject property, I have reviewed the application and hereby authorize the listed applicant to make decisions that may affect my property as it pertains to this application.

 _____ (property owner/acting agent signature)	<u>Jeremy Steckel</u> _____ (printed name)	<u>5/1/2024</u> _____ (date)
 _____ (applicant signature)	<u>Jeremy Steckel</u> _____ (printed name)	<u>5/1/2024</u> _____ (date)

List of contiguous property owners

1) **Linda Snyder and Dwayne Snyder**

**172 Andalus Drive
Gahanna, OH 43230**

2) **Gerald Welch and Janice Welch**

**357 Invicta Place
Gahanna, OH 43230**

Dear Gahanna Planning Commission,

Thank you for taking the time to hear our variance request for our backyard deck build. As you review our request, we would ask that you take the following into consideration:

1. **Range of Vision & Safety:** Our primary motivation for seeking this variance is to ensure our children's safety. As you will see below, if the deck were to begin 5' from the property line, our ability to effectively monitor our children in our yard (their only semi-private outdoor play space) would be severely inhibited. Without this variance, we would not be able to see our children from the deck due to the odd angles of our property. This would drastically reduce the enjoyability and safety of our property. Again, this is the primary reason for our variance request. Please see the picture below for reference.



2. **Unusual Lot Orientation:** Our house is oriented on a corner lot with the house facing the long side, which creates a very shallow "back yard" of only 15 feet. Both streets that touch our property are very busy, and our side yard (next to the proposed deck) is the only safe place for our children to play. This 15-foot patch of ground between the back of our house and the shared fence along the property line is where we would like to build a

deck. This would allow us to comfortably relax and watch our children play in our larger side yard, which serves as the safest play space on our property.

3. **Reason for proposed west-facing location of deck:** Per our earlier comment about the unusual lot orientation, we would like to build the deck behind our house (west-facing) rather than on the north side. If we were to build the deck on the north side of our house where the large yard is, we would have zero privacy since there is no fence. This is the yard that faces most of our neighbor's houses, as well as the main road through our neighborhood (Invicta Place). Privacy is a major factor for us in this deck build.
4. **Property Value:** We feel that this deck would add significant value to our property.
5. **Unbothersome to Neighbors:** We strongly believe that this variance will have absolutely no negative effect on the surrounding area. We have come to understand after discussing our plans with our neighbors that the deck would not be a nuisance to anyone around us. It would be a discreet deck that is barely visible from the street.
6. **Foster Community with Neighbors:** We feel that this variance is essential for the full enjoyment of our property. We value our home in Gahanna tremendously, and plan to be here long-term. Our house has become the de facto gathering place for several of the children in the neighborhood, and this deck would allow the parents to share in a sense of community while we watch our children play and grow.
7. **Replacing Features that Existed at the Time of Purchase:** Previous to our purchase of the house, the back of the house had been used for a paver patio with a fence and pergola. We purchased the house and demolished the old patio, fence and pergola because it was rotten, infested with bees and was beyond salvaging. We have always intended to build a new deck that would serve us (or a future property owner) well over the next several decades.

8. **To Avoid an Awkwardly Shallow Deck:** It is also worth noting that because the back side of our house is only 15 feet away from the property line, with the current zoning rule of needing to have a 5 foot setback, our deck would only be able to realistically be 9-10 feet deep, which would frankly be a bizarrely small deck with a 5 foot mud pit area behind the deck, extending to our property line. This would not only stymie the use of a deck by making it very difficult to set up any real furniture or tables due to the small depth of the deck, but it also would leave 5 feet of completely unusable ground between the deck and our property line. This area isn't able to grow any grass because of the previously built patio and all the paver base/prep work done by the last homeowner. All of these factors would seriously inhibit the full enjoyment of the space behind our home.

On a personal note, we have our third child due in mid-May, and have very much been looking forward to enjoying a summer of sitting out on a new deck and watching our kids play while we spend time with our new baby boy.

We would ask that the Gahanna Planning Commission please grant us this variance request, as it would have no negative impact on anyone around us and would bring so much joy and privacy to our family.

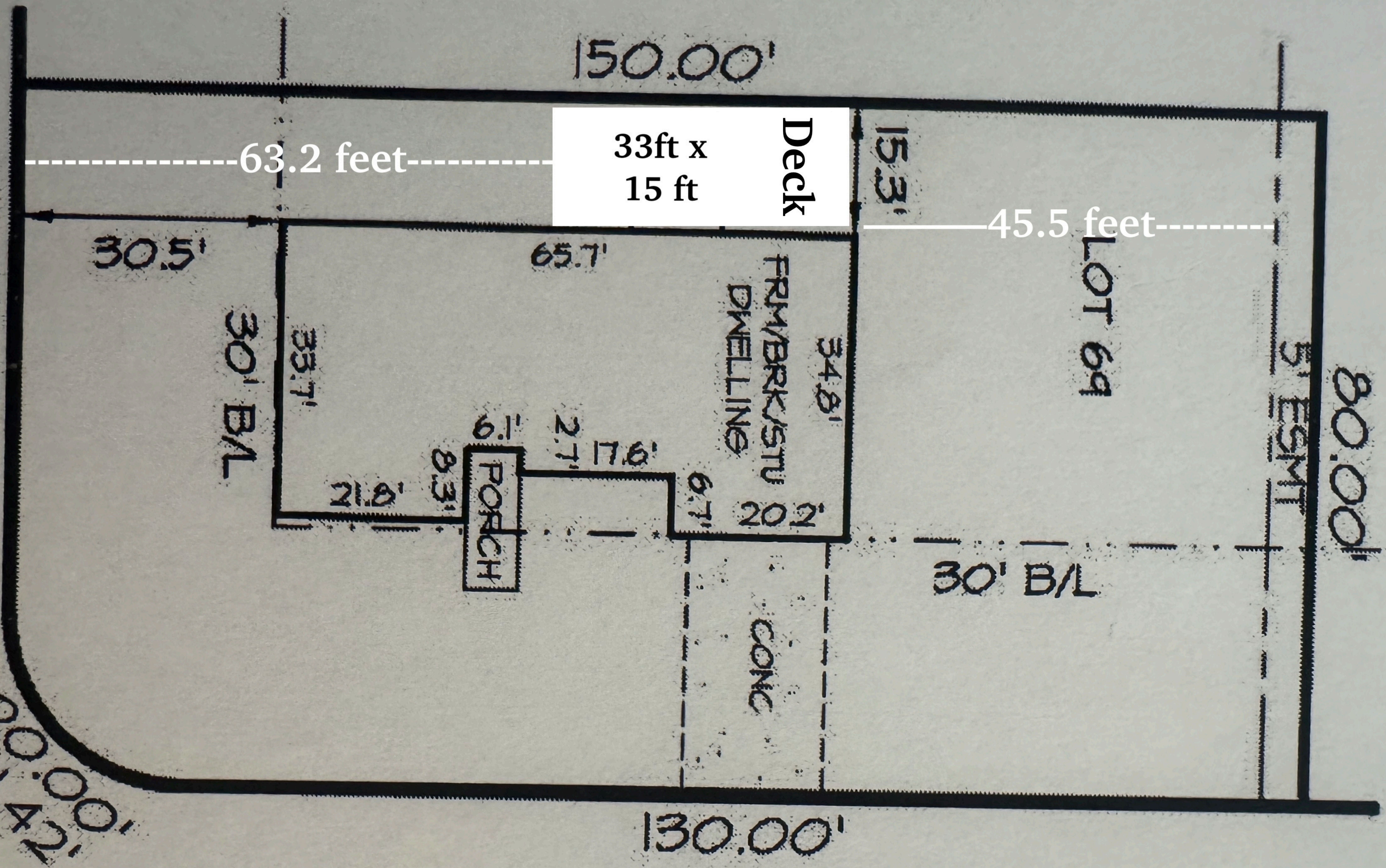
Thanks for your consideration!

-The Steckel family



ANDALUS DR. 60'

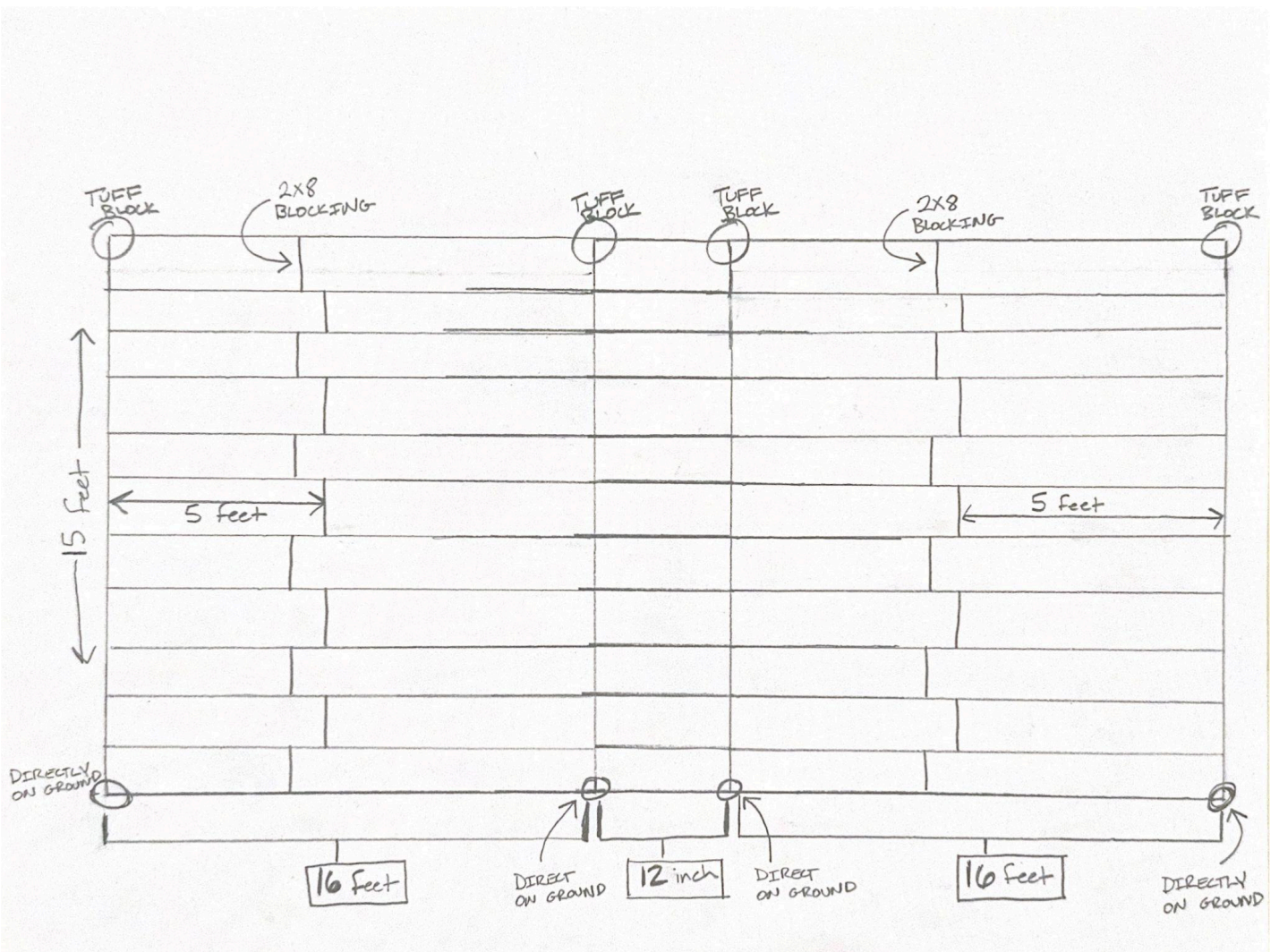
21.3' 10.0' 21.0' 41.0'



INVICTA PLACE 60'

ONE HAVE SURVEY

STECKEL DECK BUILD - FRAMING PLAN



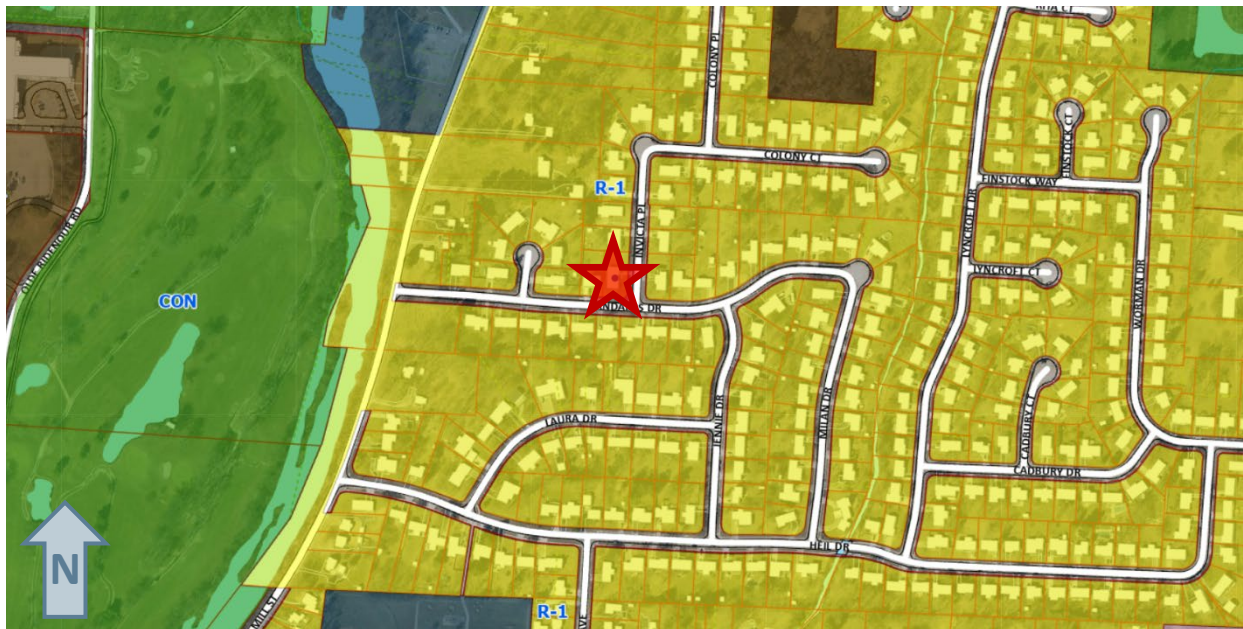
- The deck will not be connected to any structure, it will sit directly on the ground
- Joists to be 2x8 ground contact pressure treated lumber installed 16" O.C.
- Joists to be secured with 3" galvanized ring shank treated nails
- All center blocking secured with 3" galvanized nails and joist hangers
- Decking to be 5/4 x 16 pressure treated southern pine
- All deck hardware to be corrosion resistant, galvanized and installed per manufacturer's instructions
- All corners not directly seated on ground will be supported with Tuff Block support footers
- 60 additional 12" 2x8 pressure treated lumber blocks will be installed between all joists and blocking to add support and leveling, secured with five 3" ring shank galvanized nails per wood block

PLANNING COMMISSION STAFF REPORT

Project Summary – 345 Invicta Place

- Meeting Date:** June 10, 2026
- Zoning:** Large Lot Residential (R-1)
- Application Type(s):** Variance (V)
- Staff Representative:** Maddie Capka, Planner II
- Recommendation:** Staff recommends disapproval of the application.

Location Map:



Staff Review

Overview

The applicant is requesting approval of a variance to allow a 495 SF wooden deck within a rear yard setback. The site is zoned R-1 and zoning code requires a 10 ft setback in this case. Once the new code changes are adopted in June, the required setback will be 5 ft. The deck is around 0 ft from the west property line. The site is a corner lot, meaning it has two front property lines and two rear property lines. Rear yard setbacks apply to both the north and west property lines.

The applicant states that they chose this location for the deck because the previous owners had a deck in the same location, and their backdoor is on the north side of the house. However, it appears there is room to install a deck to the north of the house instead, where it would meet all zoning code requirements.

The deck is already mostly installed prior to receiving a permit. This variance application was filed due to Code Enforcement action.

Review Criteria

Variance (V)

The following variance has been requested:

1. 1103.07(e) – Large Lot Residential
 - a. The deck must be at least 10 ft from the rear property line.
 - b. The deck is 0 ft from the west rear property line.

Before granting a variance, Planning Commission shall find that:

- a) The variance is not likely to result in substantial change to the essential character of the neighborhood;
- b) The variance is not likely to result in damage to adjoining properties;
- c) The variance is not likely to affect the delivery of governmental services (e.g., water, sewer, garbage);
- d) The variance is not likely to result in environmental impacts greater than what is typical for other lots in the neighborhood;
- e) The variance is necessary for the economical use of the property, and such economical use of the property is not easily achieved through some method other than a variance;
- f) The variance is not likely to undermine the objectives of the land use plan;
- g) Whether the variance is substantial and is the minimum necessary to make possible the reasonable use of land or structures; and,
- h) The practical difficulty could be eliminated by some other method, even if the solution is less convenient or more costly to achieve.

Recommendation

Staff recommends disapproval of the variance as submitted. It appears there is room for the deck to be installed north of the house instead of to the west. The north yard is the largest yard on the site. The site is not abnormally small and still has a yard large enough for a deck of this size to meet all setback requirements. However, the backdoor from inside the house is on the west side and the previous property owner had a deck in the same location. The applicant can install steps from the backdoor to outside while meeting zoning requirements.