

How the Variance Process Works

1. Submit your project for a permit (unless it's "early")

Submitting for a permit will officially verify if your project requires variances as it goes under county review. If need for a variance is found, you will be notified to contact Mr. Variance for a pre-application meeting. If you are "early" in your project, you may skip to the next step.

2. Book a pre-application meeting

Staff will help identify the exact variances needed and flag potential issues. This pre-application meeting is virtual, takes under an hour, and will walk you through the variance process and how to make your best application.

3. Prepare your application and submit

Submit plans, justification, and supporting materials. More details included with the application form.

4. Public notice The State of Georgia requires a minimum 30-day public notice in the form of an on-property sign posting & legal ad displayed in a geographically relevant newspaper.

The newspaper:

Staff takes care of this by publishing the full meeting agenda in *The DeKalb Champion*.

The sign posting:

Planning staff will email you ahead of time with a PDF file of the sign itself and instructions on ordering & posting. (See: Sign Instructions File). Failure to post the sign in time will result in a 60-day deferral of the case.

5. Staff review

Staff evaluates the request against variance criteria and prepares a staff report. These reports are distributed one week before the hearing. They include a recommendation for the Zoning Board of Appeals to consider.

7. ZBA hearing

The Zoning Board of Appeals hears the case and takes public comment. This includes an open discussion in which they will be asking questions to the applicant to ensure that the proposal meets all five criteria. A decision is made at the hearing which may include approval, approval with conditions, denial, defer, or allow withdrawal.

8. Permitting

Depending on the outcome of the ZBA cycle, you will then proceed back with permitting for your project.
