



Lorraine Cochran-Johnson

Chief Executive Officer

DeKalb County Zoning Board of Appeals

Department of Planning & Sustainability

178 Sams Street,

Decatur, GA 30030

Wednesday, October 14, 2026

Planning Department Staff Report



Juliana A. Njoku

Director

N3. Case No: A-26-1248241

Parcel ID(s): 15 036 01 192

Commission District 03 Super District 07

Applicant: Robert C. Thomas Sr.

Owner: Robert C. Thomas Sr. and Christine D. Thomas

Project Name: Rear Sunroom Addition on Attached Deck

Location: 4100 Brookside Parkway, Decatur, GA 30034

Requests: Variance from Section 27-2.2.1 to reduce the rear-yard setback from 40 ft to 32 ft to build a 17-foot × 17-foot sunroom on an existing attached deck.

Staff Recommendation: Approval with conditions.

Conditions:

1. The following information about this variance shall be noted on any site plan prepared for the subject property: case number, approval date, type of variance, and condition(s) of approval.
2. Any permit drawings submitted for review shall be substantially consistent with the site layout and improvements presented with this application, including the existing attached deck structure and the approximately 17-foot by 17-foot sunroom addition.

STAFF FINDINGS

The applicant proposes to build a 17-foot by 17-foot sunroom on an attached rear deck at the property located at 4100 Brookside Parkway. The submitted site plan shows a single-family home originally build in 1993 with improvements in approximately 2004. The property is located on Brookside Parkway approximately 451 feet south of the intersection with Brown Drive and contains approximately 0.39 acres.

Staff acknowledges that the proposed residential improvements may be appropriate for the zoning district and that strict application of 75-foot stream buffer requirements along rear of the property would be heavily imposing on the site. Given the property's dimensional constraints, some reduction in applicable stream buffer or dimensional standards may be necessary to allow reasonable use of the property. Staff recommends approval of the application once the applicant obtains a Stream Buffer Variance from the Land Development Division to allow the proposed addition to encroach into the stream buffer that stretches parallel along the rear property line.

1. There is an extraordinary or exceptional physical condition(s) pertaining to the particular piece of property (such as, but not limited to, lot size, lot shape, specimen tree(s), steep slope(s), or preservation of historic characteristics of the property), which was not created by the current owner, previous owner, or applicant; by reason of a clearly demonstrable condition(s), the strict application of the requirements of this chapter would deprive the property owner of rights and privileges enjoyed by other property owners in the same zoning district, as distinguished from a special privilege or convenience sought by the property owner.

The subject parcel is a small lot containing approximately 0.39 acres, with frontage along Brookside Parkway. The subject property exhibits an unusual physical condition due to the lot constraints by a stream along the rear portion of the property. The strict application of 75-foot stream buffers along the rear (west) property lines would consume a substantial portion of the site and severely limit the buildable area. These conditions arise from the size, shape, and slope of the lot, rather than from a self-created hardship by the applicant. Staff finds that the property contains exceptional physical conditions from the stream buffers that justify consideration of zoning variance relief upon approval of a stream buffer variance from the Land Development Division.

2. The requested variance does not go beyond the minimum necessary to afford relief, and does not constitute a grant of special privilege inconsistent with the limitations upon other properties in the zoning district in which the subject property is located:

The submitted request does not appear to go beyond the minimum necessary to afford relief. The requested relief appears limited to facilitating modest residential improvements rather than intensifying the use of the property. Based on the materials submitted, the request appears tied to the unusual site configuration and limited in scale. Although the proposed 17-foot by 17-foot sunroom addition over an existing rear deck reaches towards the rear, will not change the current footprint. The house orientation and does not increase on the sides the east-side wall plane that is set by the currently existing footprint. Staff further acknowledges that strict application of 75-foot stream buffers along rear of the property would heavily imposing on the site and that some reduction may be necessary to allow reasonable improvements to the house.

3. The grant of the variance will not be materially detrimental to the public welfare or injurious to the property or improvements in the zoning district in which the subject property is located:

The proposed improvements are residential in nature and are generally compatible with the use of the subject property and surrounding neighborhood context. The application materials show that the improvement support continued residential use of the home are intended to maintain appropriate scale and appearance, avoid negative impacts on neighboring properties. Submitted neighbor support letters indicate affirmative support from nearby property owners who do not believe the improvements will negatively affect the neighborhood. Based on the current record, there may not be a material detriment to the public welfare or injury to nearby property owners. Neighbors confirmed the addition would not intrude on privacy or create additional noise or traffic, and that the reduced setbacks would not pose harm to public welfare or neighboring properties in the R-100 zoning district.

4. The literal interpretation and strict application of the applicable provisions or requirements of this chapter would cause undue and unnecessary hardship:

Based on the placement of the existing house, the remaining rear yard is impacted by a stream along the rear portion of the lot. However, the strict application of the 75-foot stream buffers in the rear yard placement requirements may not be able to accommodate the placement of the sunroom addition over the existing deck cannot be completed without setback relief.

5. The requested variance would be consistent with the spirit and purpose of this Chapter and the DeKalb County Comprehensive Plan Text:

The Comprehensive Plan designates the site within the Suburban (SUB) Character Area, which emphasizes preservation of established neighborhoods, reinvestment in aging housing stock, and maintenance of residential quality. The proposed rear sunroom addition represents a modest reinvestment consistent with those policies.

The spirit and purpose of the zoning ordinance are served when variance relief allows reasonable use of a residential property without undermining neighborhood character or established development patterns. The applicants seek a rear sunroom addition on an existing attached deck, accessory to a single-family residence, rather than a change in use or a substantial intensification of development. The proposal remains subject to applicable zoning and separate stream-buffer approvals.

FINAL STAFF ANALYSIS:

The subject property presents an unusual site condition based on the existing placement of the residence near the rear portion of the lot. The requested relief is tied to modest residential improvements consisting of a 17-foot by 17-foot sunroom on an existing attached rear deck. The record includes written support from neighboring property owners. Staff finds that the application presents sufficient grounds for approval of the requested variance relief, subject to conditions ensuring consistency with the submitted plans and all other applicable stream buffer approvals.

Staff acknowledges that the proposed residential use may be appropriate for the zoning district and that strict application of 75-foot stream buffer requirements along rear of the property would be heavily imposing on the site. Given the property's dimensional constraints, some reduction in applicable stream buffer or dimensional standards may be necessary to allow reasonable use of the property to make the requested minor improvements. Therefore, staff recommends approval.

Staff Recommendation: Approval with conditions.

Conditions:

1. The following information about this variance shall be noted on any site plan prepared for the subject property: case number, approval date, type of variance, and condition(s) of approval.
2. Any permit drawings submitted for review shall be substantially consistent with the site layout and improvements presented with this application, including the existing attached deck structure and the approximately 17-foot by 17-foot sunroom addition.



DeKalb County
GEORGIA

Government Services Center
178 Sams Street
Decatur, GA 30030
www.dekalbcountyga.gov/planning
404-371-2155 (o); 404-371-4556 (f)

Chief Executive Officer
Lorraine Cochran-Johnson

DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING & SUSTAINABILITY

Director
Juliana A. Njoku

ADMINISTRATIVE VARIANCES AND SPECIAL EXCEPTIONS APPLICATION

AV/NO.:

APPLICANT NAME (OWNER/REPRESENTATIVE):

Robert Thomas

ADDRESS:

4100 Brookside Pkwy

EMAIL:

CITY:

Decatur

STATE:

Georgia

ZIP:

30034

TELEPHONE:

HOM:

BUSINESS:

FAX:

OWNER OF RECORD FOR WHICH APPLICATION IS MADE

Name (Print):

Robert Thomas

Name (Signature):

Robert C. Thomas Jr.

E-Mail:

Address:

4100 Brookside Pkwy

City:

Decatur

State:

GA

Zip:

30034

Telephone:

Home:

Business:

Fax:

SUBMITTAL INSTRUCTIONS

Contact Planner, Kyle McLean at kamclean@dekalbcountyga.gov to discuss your application prior to submission.

Please create an account or open a new application through an existing account using the following portal:
<https://epermits.dekalbcountyga.gov>

Once you've created or updated an existing account, please send your application number (1246XXX) to kamclean@dekalbcountyga.gov stating your request.

To Be Completed by Planning & Development Department

Date Received:

Fee Paid:

Receipt No:

Section 27-922 Administrative Variances and Special Exceptions

- A. The Director of Planning is hereby authorized to consider and grant or deny, pursuant to the procedures and standards contained in this Section, a variance or a special exception from the following regulations:
1. Reduce by variance any front, side or rear yard setback by an amount not to exceed ten percent (10%) of the district requirement, but not including any transitional buffer zone or any setback which is a condition of zoning or special land use permit, pursuant to the standards specified in Section 27-916.
 2. Reduce by variance the required spacing between buildings in districts where multiple buildings are authorized on a single lot in an amount not to exceed 10% of the requirement, but not in an amount which is less than the minimum requirement imposed by Chapter 7 of the DeKalb County Code of Ordinances, pursuant to the standards specified in Section 27-916.
 3. Reduce by special exception the off-street parking or loading requirements imposed by this Chapter in an amount not to exceed ten percent (10%) of the district requirement, pursuant to the standards specified in Section 27-913.A.
 4. Reduce by special exception the off-street parking requirements imposed by this Chapter for any lot which is located 1,000 feet of the boundary of a Marta Rapid Transit Station in an amount not to exceed 25 percent of the district requirement, pursuant to the standards specified in Section 27-913.B.
- B. Any request for administrative variance or special exception permitted by this Section shall be filed with the Director of Planning. The Director shall review and decide upon each such application pursuant to the applicable standards referred to in each subsection above and shall make a written decision on each such application no later than 30 days from the date such application was filed. **No administrative variance or special exception shall be authorized to delete, modify or change in any manner any condition imposed by the Board of County Commissioners or the Zoning Board of Appeals.**

SUBMITTAL CHECKLIST
for
ADMINISTRATIVE VARIANCES/SPECIAL EXCEPTION



1. One (1) full scale site plan indicating the following:

- a. All property lines with dimensions;
- b. Location of all existing and proposed buildings & their relation to all property lines, structures, driveways, parking areas, easements;
- c. Any other features of the site related to the request, such as outdoor lighting, fences, landscaping, etc.; and



2. A Letter of Intent (LOI) indicating the request and clarifying justification(s) for the proposal, based on Section 27-922 of the DeKalb County Zoning Ordinance:

- a. There is an extraordinary or exceptional physical condition(s) pertaining to the particular piece of property(such as, but not limited to, lot size, lot shape, specimen tree(s), steep slope(s), or preservation of historic characteristics of the property), which was not created by the current owner, previous owner, or applicant; by reason of a clearly demonstrable condition(s), the strict application of the requirements of this chapter would deprive the property owner of rights and privileges enjoyed by other property owners in the same zoning district, as distinguished from a special privilege or convenience sought by the property owner.
- b. The requested variance does not go beyond the minimum necessary to afford relief and does not constitute a grant of special privilege inconsistent with the limitations upon other properties in the zoning district in which the subject property is located.
- c. The grant of the variance will not be materially detrimental to the public welfare or injurious to the property or improvements in the zoning district in which the subject property is located.
- d. The literal interpretation and strict application of the applicable provisions or requirements of this chapter would cause undue and unnecessary hardship.
- e. The requested variance would be consistent with the spirit and purpose of this chapter and the DeKalb County Comprehensive Plan text



3. Notarized authorization form.



4. \$200 processing fee.

Note: A Planner will contact you with instructions about posting the sign(s). You must e-mail a photo or photos of the posted sign(s). Public notice signs must be posted for thirty (30) days prior to issuance of Administrative Variance Approval Letter.



DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING & SUSTAINABILITY

ADMINISTRATIVE VARIANCE APPLICATION AUTHORIZATION

(Completion of this form is required if the individual making the request is not the owner of the property.)

DATE: 06/26/2026

CHECK TYPE OF APPLICATION:

- ☐ ADMINISTRATIVE APPEAL
☐ VARIANCE
☒ SPECIAL EXCEPTION

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

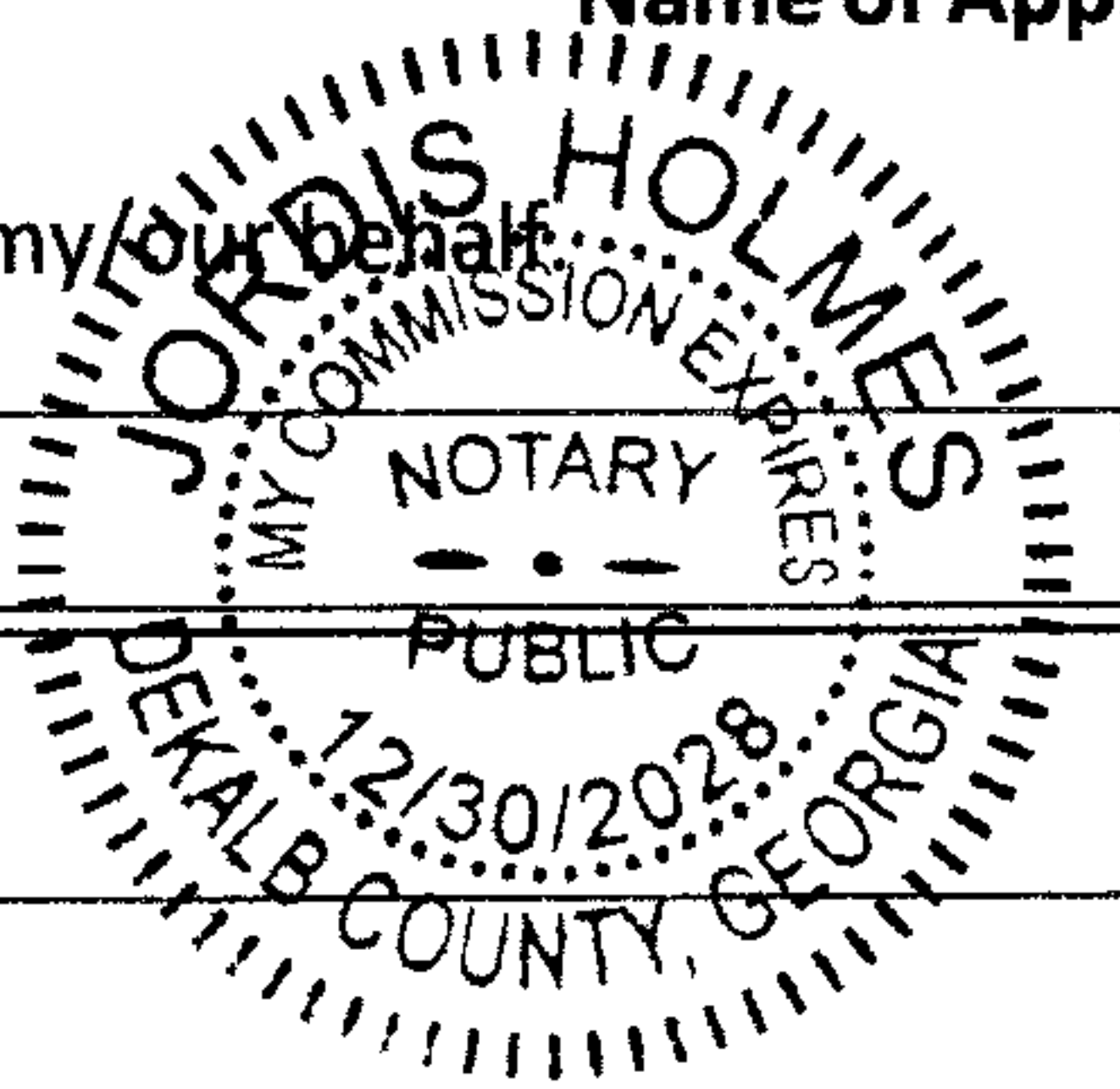
(I) / (WE): Robert Thomas
Name of owner(s)

being owner(s) of the property described below or attached hereby delegate authority to:

Robert Thomas
Name of Applicant or Representative(s)

to file an application on my/our behalf:

Jordan Holmes
Notary Public



Notary Public

Notary Public

Robert C. Thomas
Owner

Owner

Owner

I hereby authorize the staff of the DeKalb County Planning Department to inspect the premises of the above-described property.

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THE INFORMATION PROVIDED AS A RESULT OF THIS APPLICATION IS TRUE AND CORRECT AND THAT IF AM NOT THE PROPERTY OWNER, I AM AUTHORIZED BY THE SAME TO MAKE SUCH REQUESTS, CLAIMS, AND REPRESENTATIONS AS MAY BE FOUND WITH THIS APPLICATION.

APPLICANT/AGENT SIGNATURE: Robert C. Thomas

Date: 06/26/2026

Letter of Intent

Subject: Variance Request for Rear Yard Setback Reduction - Section 27-2.2.1 – Accessory Structure Construction

Dear Members of the Zoning Board of Appeals,

My name is Robert C. Thomas, and I am writing to formally request a variance from Section 27-2.2.1 of the DeKalb County Zoning Ordinance. My request pertains to the reduction of the rear setback requirement from 36 feet to 32 feet for my property located at 4100 Brookside Parkway; Decatur, Georgia 30034. The purpose of this variance is to build a sunroom on an existing deck that is attached to the house. The dimension of the sunroom will be 17 ft X 17ft and it will be attached to the house and the deck.

1. Physical Conditions of the Site:

The unique physical conditions of my property constitute a special case necessitating this variance. The parcel is characterized by a narrow and irregular shape, making compliance with the 40-foot rear yard setback particularly challenging. Additionally, the presence of a drainpipe and the natural feature of the land, further restricts the feasible location for constructing the sunroom. These conditions are inherent and not a result of any actions taken by me.

2. Minimum Variance Necessary:

I assure you that my request is solely for the minimum variance necessary to render my property usable, the sunroom must be constructed to a specific parameter and size to accommodate the residents who will be residing there. The 32-foot setback is essential for the practical and reasonable placement of the sunroom, ensuring that I can enjoy full use of my property.

3. Public Welfare:

The proposed addition will have a positive impact on the neighborhood and community. I have received letters of support from my neighbors of adjoining properties and adjacent properties. These neighbors do not believe that the addition to my property sunroom would intrude on their privacy nor create additional noise or traffic in the area. The reduced setback will not pose any harm to public welfare, neighboring properties, or the overall improvements in the zoning district. The sunroom will be a modest and tasteful addition, enhancing the property without imposing adverse effects on the surrounding area.

4. Ordinance Hardship:

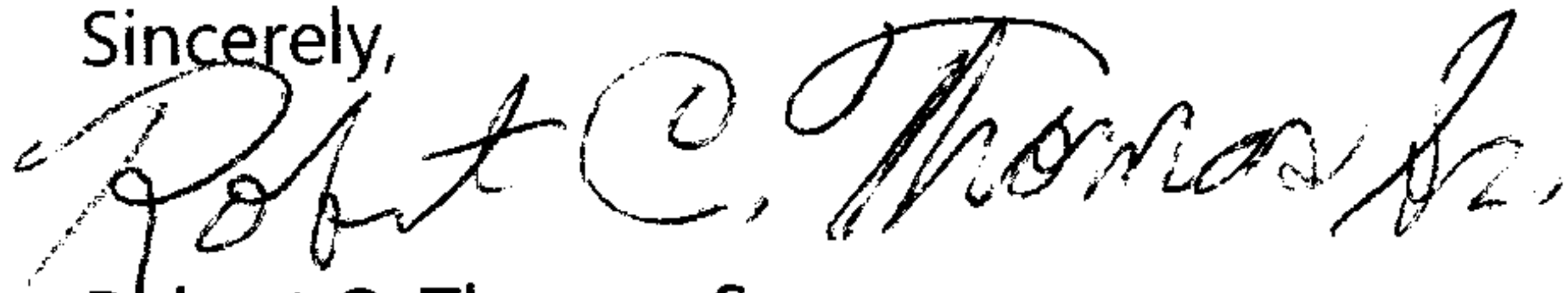
A strict interpretation of the zoning laws, in this case, would cause undue hardship for me. The impracticality of adhering strictly to the 40-foot setback would limit my ability to use the property effectively. The variance is, therefore, essential to prevent unnecessary hardship and allow for a reasonable use of my land.

5. Alignment with the Spirit of the Law:

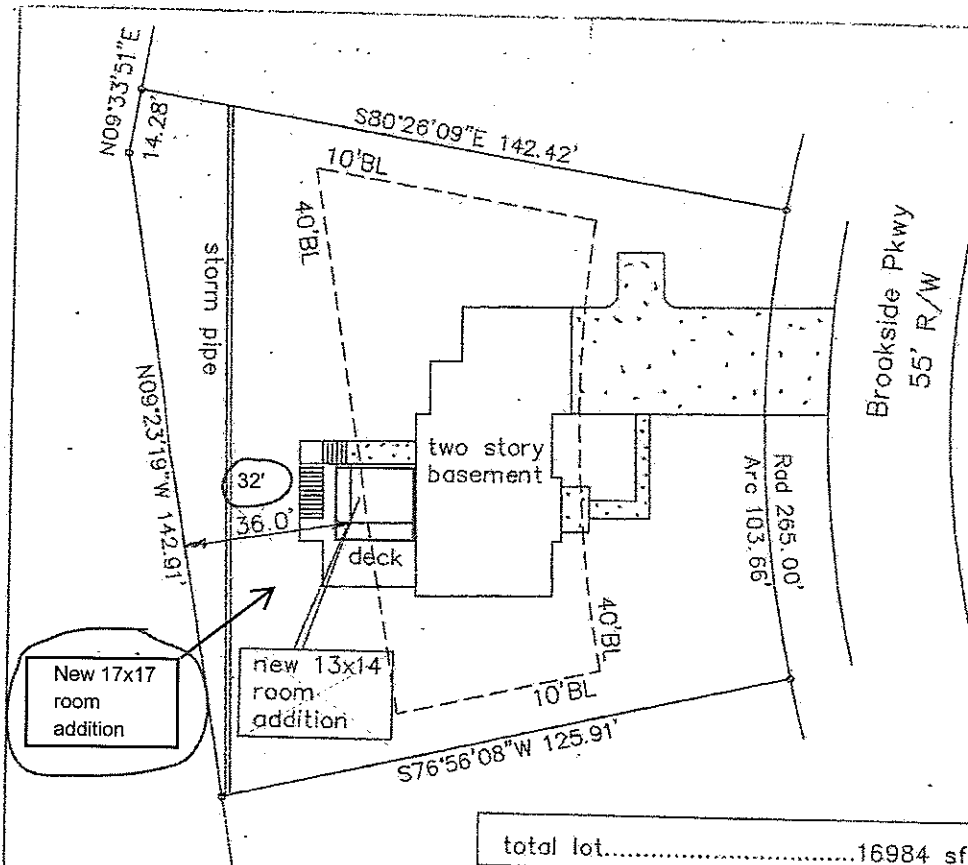
I firmly believe that my variance request aligns with the intent of the Suburban Character Area, as outlined in the DeKalb County Comprehensive Plan. The proposed construction of the sunroom is in line with the goals of recognizing traditional suburban land use patterns while encouraging increased connectivity and accessibility. This development aims to enhance community connectivity, preserve and improve existing greenspace.

In conclusion, I appreciate your time and consideration of my variance request. I am committed to working collaboratively to ensure that my proposed changes align with the broader goals and policies of DeKalb County. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

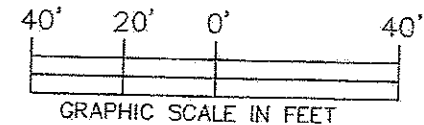
A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Robert C. Thomas Sr." in a cursive script.

Robert C. Thomas Sr.



LEGEND

IPS=IRON PIN SET
 IPF=IRON PIN FOUND
 CL=CENTER LINE
 BL=BUILDING LINE
 N/F=NOW OR FORMERLY
 MH=MAN HOLE
 S=SANITARY
 P=POWER
 W=WATER
 G=GAS
 -X--FENCE
 BC=BACK OF CURB
 WM=WATER METER
 WV=WATER VALVE
 PB=POWER BOX
 GM=GAS METER
 SSE=SANITARY SEWER ESM'T
 DE=DRAINAGE ESM'T
 ESM'T=EASEMENT
 CB=CATCH BASIN
 HW=HEAD WALL
 DI=DROP INLET
 JB=JUNCTION BOX
 LLL=LAND LOT LINE



REFERENCE

PLAT BOOK 91 PAGE 107

site survey for

Robert Thomas



IN MY OPINION THIS PLAT IS A
CORRECT REPRESENTATION OF THE
LAND PLATED

Jeffrey J. Johnson

JEFFREY J JOHNSON R.L.S. 2505

total lot.....	16984 sf
house.....	1873 sf
drive, walk.....	1289 sf
rear deck, slab.....	568 sf
new room.....	182 sf
total.....	3912 sf
3912 / 16984 = 23% impervious	

THE FIELD DATA WHICH THIS SURVEY
IS BASED HAS A PRECISION OF ONE
FOOT IN 10000+ FEET AND A ANGULAR
ERROR OF 3" PER ANGLE POINT

THE PLAT CLOSURE IS FOUND TO BE
ACCURATE WITHIN ONE FOOT IN
100000+ FEET

EQUIPMENT USED: Nikon-322

JOHNSON
SURVEYING

Atlanta Ga. 30253
678-557-1449

Land Lot 36
District 15
DeKalb County, Ga.
Brookglenn
Block D
Lot 55
4100 Brookside Pkwy.

DATE: 1-12-2026

SCALE: 1"=40'

JOB NO: 26-03



ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS HEARING

Case #: N3: A-26-1248241

Site: 4100 Brookside Parkway

Request: Variance from Section 27-2.2.1 of the DeKalb County Zoning Ordinance to reduce the rear yard setback to facilitate construction of a sunroom on an existing attached deck in the R-100 (Residential Medium Lot-100) zoning district.

VARIANCE

Contact DeKalb Planning
DeKalbCountyGA.gov
PlanSustain@DeKalbCountyGA.gov
(404) 371-2155

ZBA Hearing
October 14, 2026
1:00 PM
Held virtually via Zoom

Meeting Agenda & Links



tinyurl.com/DeKalbHearings

Letter of Support

August 6, 2026

John Breedlove
4090 Brookside Pkwy Decatur GA 30034
404-207-5237

To: Dekalb County Zoning Board

Letter of Support for Variance Request by Robert C Thomas Sr at 4100 Brookside Pkwy
Decatur GA 30034

Dear Board Members,

I fully support the variance request submitted by my neighbor, Robert C. Thomas Sr, who lives at 4100 Brookside Parkway, Decatur, GA 30034. As the owner and resident of the adjoining property at [REDACTED] I am familiar with the proposed project.

Robert C Thomas Sr is requesting a variance to sunroom on an existing deck. I do not have any objections to the location or design of the proposed improvement.

I believe the project is well-designed, and fits the character of our neighborhood, and will not negatively impact privacy, light, or property values in the area. Instead, it will improve the usability and appearance of their property.

I respectfully ask the board to approve their variance request. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

John Breedlove



Letter of Support

August 6, 2026

Edward Bryant
4077 Brookside Pkwy Decatur GA 30034
404-593-3731

To: Dekalb County Zoning Board

Letter of Support for Variance Request by Robert C Thomas Sr at 4100 Brookside Pkwy
Decatur GA 30034

Dear Board Members,

I fully support the variance request submitted by my neighbor, Robert C. Thomas Sr, who lives at 4100 Brookside Parkway, Decatur, GA 30034. As the owner and resident of the adjacent property at [REDACTED] I am familiar with the proposed project.

Robert C Thomas Sr is requesting a variance to sunroom on an existing deck. I do not have any objections to the location or design of the proposed improvement.

I believe the project is well-designed, and fits the character of our neighborhood, and will not negatively impact privacy, light, or property values in the area. Instead, it will improve the usability and appearance of their property.

I respectfully ask the board to approve their variance request. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,


Edward Bryant

Letter of Support

August 6, 2026

Augustine Johnson
4107 Brookside Pkwy Decatur GA 30034
770-262-4445

To: Dekalb County Zoning Board

Letter of Support for Variance Request by Robert C Thomas Sr at 4100 Brookside Pkwy
Decatur GA 30034

Dear Board Members,

I fully support the variance request submitted by my neighbor, Robert C. Thomas Sr, who lives at 4100 Brookside Parkway, Decatur, GA 30034. As the owner and resident of the adjacent property at [REDACTED] I am familiar with the proposed project.

Robert C Thomas Sr is requesting a variance to sunroom on an existing deck. I do not have any objections to the location or design of the proposed improvement.

I believe the project is well-designed, and fits the character of our neighborhood, and will not negatively impact privacy, light, or property values in the area. Instead, it will improve the usability and appearance of their property.

I respectfully ask the board to approve their variance request. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,


Augustine Johnson

Letter of Support

August 6, 2026

Kenneth Price
4080 Brookside Pkwy Decatur GA 30034
706-299-4594

To: Dekalb County Zoning Board

Letter of Support for Variance Request by Robert C Thomas Sr at 4100 Brookside Pkwy
Decatur GA 30034

Dear Board Members,

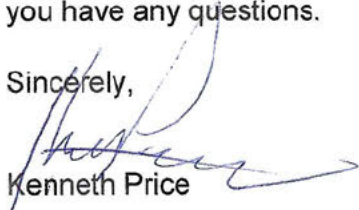
I fully support the variance request submitted by my neighbor, Robert C. Thomas Sr, who lives at 4100 Brookside Parkway, Decatur, GA 30034. As the owner and resident of the adjacent property at [REDACTED] I am familiar with the proposed project.

Robert C Thomas Sr is requesting a variance to sunroom on an existing deck. I do not have any objections to the location or design of the proposed improvement.

I believe the project is well-designed, and fits the character of our neighborhood, and will not negatively impact privacy, light, or property values in the area. Instead, it will improve the usability and appearance of their property.

I respectfully ask the board to approve their variance request. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Kenneth Price

Letter of Support

August 6, 2026

Walton Seabrook
4119 Brookside Pkwy Decatur GA 30034
404-593-3731

To: Dekalb County Zoning Board

Letter of Support for Variance Request by Robert C Thomas Sr at 4100 Brookside Pkwy
Decatur GA 30034

Dear Board Members,

I fully support the variance request submitted by my neighbor, Robert C. Thomas Sr, who lives at 4100 Brookside Parkway, Decatur, GA 30034. As the owner and resident of the adjacent property at [REDACTED] I am familiar with the proposed project.

Robert C Thomas Sr is requesting a variance to sunroom on an existing deck. I do not have any objections to the location or design of the proposed improvement.

I believe the project is well-designed, and fits the character of our neighborhood, and will not negatively impact privacy, light, or property values in the area. Instead, it will improve the usability and appearance of their property.

I respectfully ask the board to approve their variance request. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Walton Seabrook

5:32

5G+ 40



2 People ›

**Dodson Support Letter.pdf**PDF Document ·
594 KB

Please review the attached letter and let us know if it is OK with you. Robert will drop by this later today to get your signature. We truly appreciate your support.

Today 4:01PM

Karen Dodson

My name is Karen Dodson and I am a next door neighbor with **Robert** and **Christine** Thomas. I don't have a problem with that building a sunroom in there existing deck.

Thank you
Karen Dodson

