

#### Case # BZA-09-25-00905 Charleston County BZA Meeting of November 3, 2025

Applicant/Property Owner: Louis DiLuna of Edisto Island Youth Recreation

**Representative:** Emma Strong of Davis & Floyd Inc.

**Property Location:** 1642 Clark Road – Edisto Island

**TMS#:** 080-00-00-023

**Zoning District:** Agricultural Preservation (AG-10) Zoning

District

#### Request:

Variance request to allow the removal of a 30" DBH Grand Laurel Oak Tree to accommodate construction of a roadway providing access to the proposed Edisto Youth Recreation Center.

#### Requirement:

The Charleston County Zoning and Land Development Regulations Ordinance (ZLDR), Chapter 9 Development Standards, Sec. 9.2.5.B. Tree Removal states, "Grand Trees and Protected Trees that do not meet the above criteria may be removed only where approved by the Board of Zoning Appeals, and shall be replaced according to a schedule determined by the Board. The Zoning and Planning Director will make recommendations to the Board concerning the number, species, DBH or caliper, and placement of such Trees."



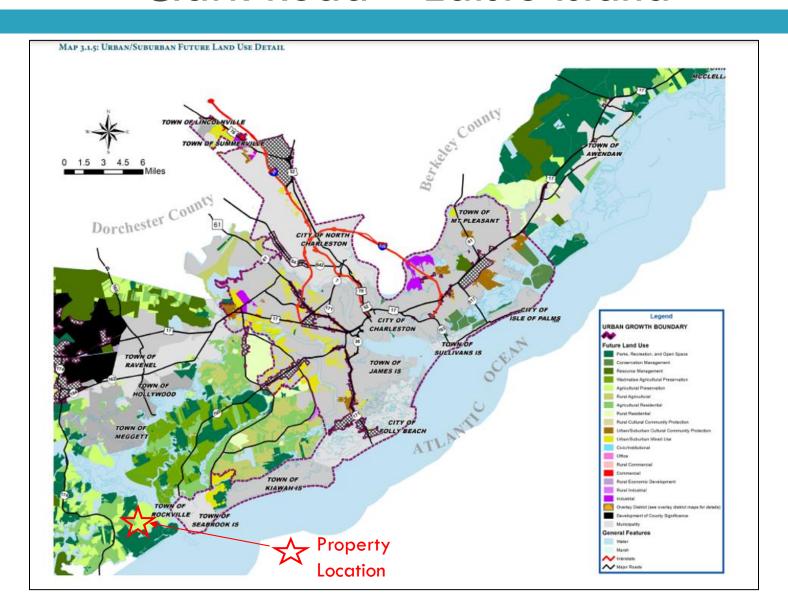
#### **CHAPTER 9 | DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS**

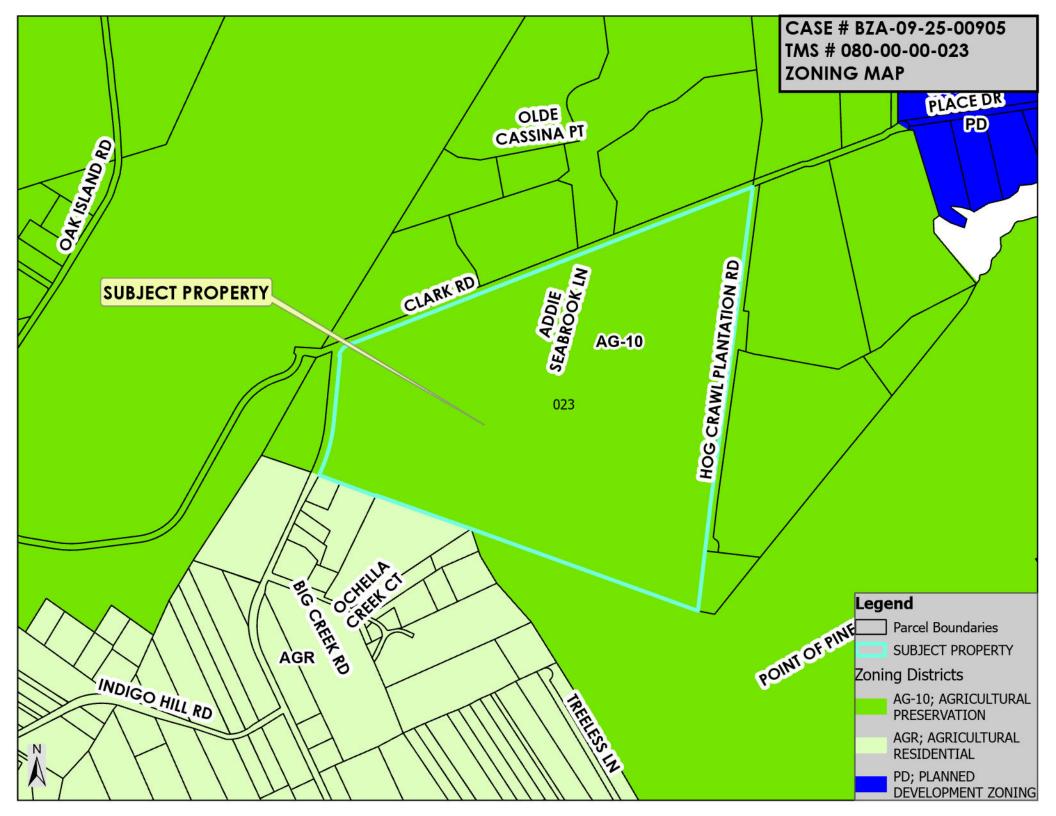
#### ARTICLE 9.2 TREE PROTECTION AND PRESERVATION

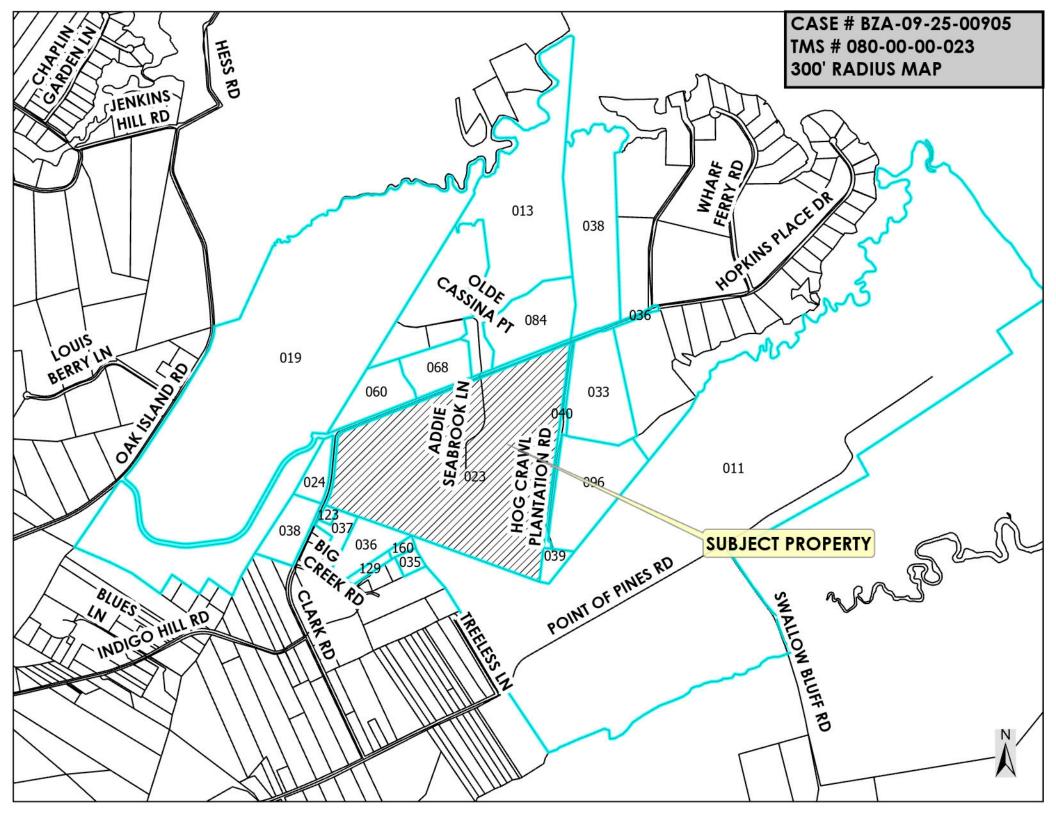
#### Sec. 9.2.5 Tree Removal

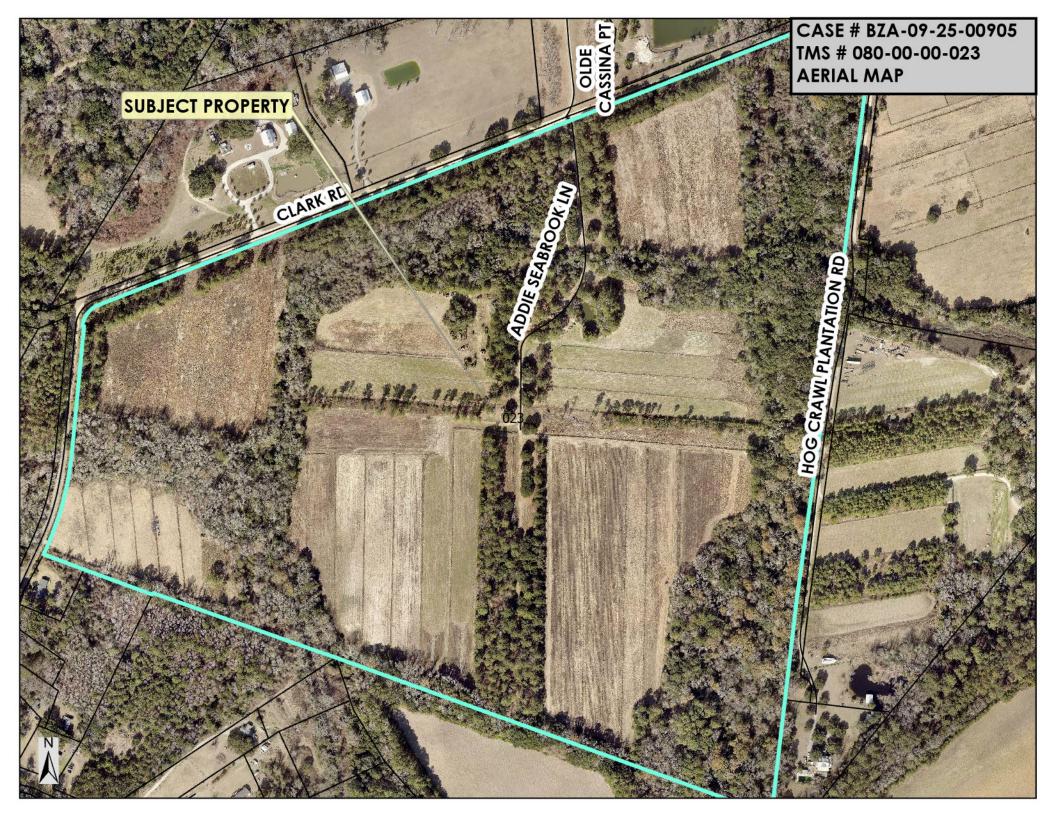
- A. Permits for Tree removal may be approved where one or more of the following conditions are deemed to exist by the Zoning and Planning Director:
  - 1. Trees are not required to be retained by the provisions of this Article.
  - 2. Trees are diseased, dead, or dying. Documentation may be submitted by a qualified tree care professional and approved by the Zoning and Planning Director;
  - 3. Trees pose an imminent safety hazard to nearby Buildings, pedestrian, or vehicular traffic (as determined by the Zoning and Planning Director or a qualified construction professional); or
  - 4. Removal of Required Trees has been approved by the Board of Zoning Appeals.
  - Grand Trees and Protected Trees that do not meet the above criteria may be removed only where approved by the Board of Zoning Appeals, and shall be replaced according to a schedule determined by the Board. The Zoning and Planning Director will make recommendations to the Board concerning the number, species, DBH or caliper, and placement of such Trees.
- C. In the event that a Tree poses a serious and imminent threat to public safety due to death, disease, or damage resulting from emergencies including, but not limited to, fires, flooding, storms, and natural disasters, the Zoning and Planning Director may waive requirements of this Article. Documentation shall later be submitted for review outlining the threat to public safety which initiated the removal. Documentation must include any written findings by a qualified professional and photographs supporting the Tree Removal emergency.
- D. The Zoning and Planning Director may require replacement of Required Trees that are removed where it is determined that death or disease resulted from negligence.
- E. Violations and penalties are specified in CHAPTER 11, Violations, Penalties, and Enforcement, of this Ordinance.

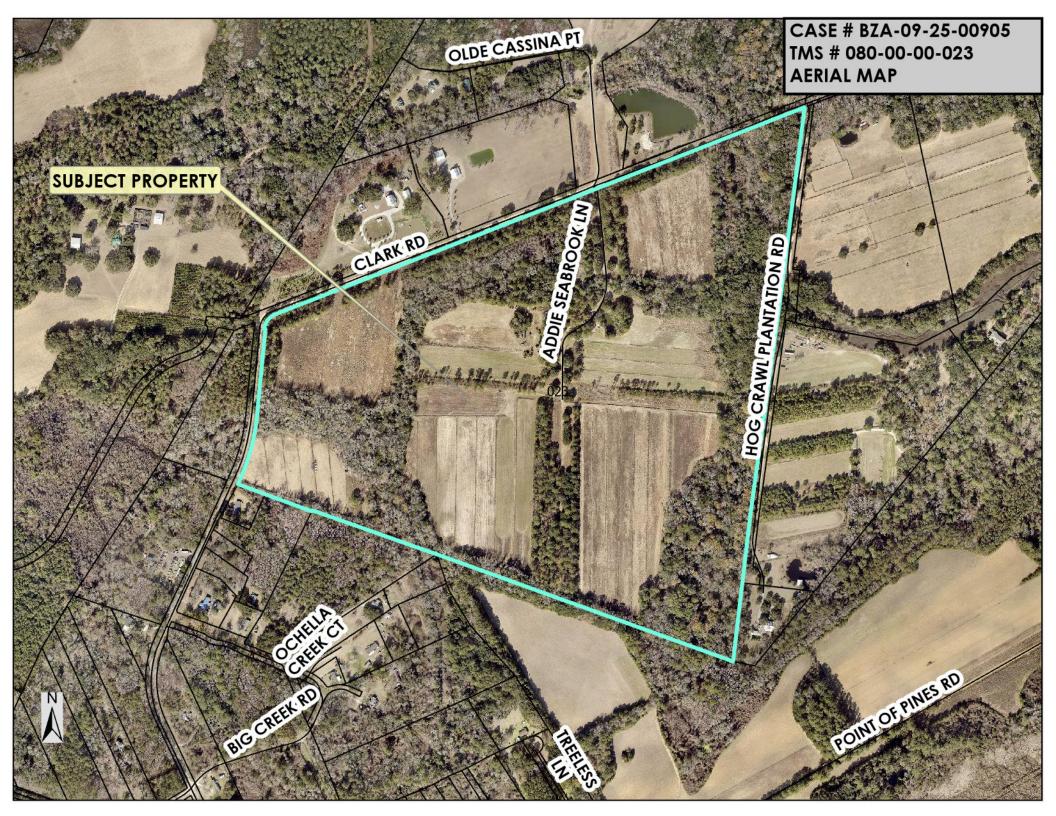
## Location Map Clark Road – Edisto Island











Case # BZA-09-25-00905
BZA Meeting of November 3, 2025
Subject Property: 1642 Clark Road — Edisto Island

Proposal: Variance request to allow the removal of a 30-inch DBH Grand Laurel Oak Tree to accommodate construction of a roadway providing access to the proposed Edisto Youth Recreation Center.



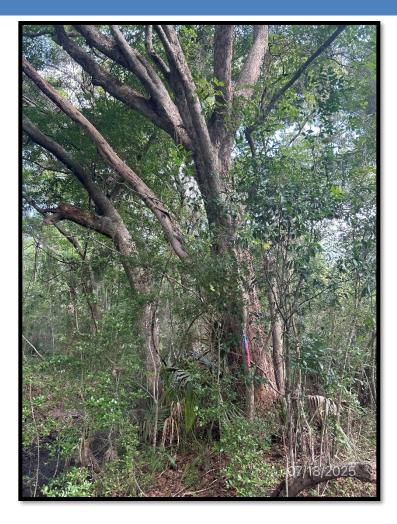
# 30" DBH Laurel Oak - Remove B Grade per Staff Arborist







# 26" DBH American Elm Staff Arborist Approved Removal



C- Grade per Staff Arborist

# 55" DBH Red Maple Staff Arborist Approved Removal



F Grand per Staff Arborist

#### Subject Property





#### Clark Road





#### Hog Crawl Plantation Road





#### **Staff Review:**

The applicant and property owner, Louis DiLuna of Edisto Island Youth Recreation, represented by Emma Strong of Davis & Floyd Inc., requests a Variance to allow the removal of a 30-inch DBH (Diameter at Breast Height) Grand Laurel Oak Tree to accommodate construction of a roadway providing access to the proposed Edisto Youth Recreation Center at 1642 Clark Road (TMS # 080-00-00-023) on Edisto Island in Charleston County. The subject property and adjacent parcels to the north, east, southeast, and west are located within the Agricultural Preservation (AG-10) Zoning District, while adjacent parcels to the south are located in the Agricultural Residential (AGR) Zoning District.

The applicant is currently in the site plan review process (ZSPR-01-25-01112) for the proposed Edisto Youth Recreation Center. The applicant's letter of intent explains, "On this site, the trees that are requested to be removed are a 55" Red Maple, a 30" Laurel Oak, and a 28" American Elm. These trees are located in the path of the Edisto Youth Recreation Center's main road. This Center is a dedicated recreation facility to be managed by the Charleston County Parks and Recreation Commission for youth sports and enrichment. It will be a multi-phase project including a recreation center/gym building, playground, restroom and concession building, outdoor courts and fields. This Center will promote the development of passive activities, outdoor recreation, and outdoor education."

The 55-inch DBH Red Maple and 26-inch DBH American Elm were evaluated by the Staff Arborist and administratively approved for removal due to disease or dying conditions. The 30-inch DBH Grand Laurel Oak Tree was evaluated as Grade B by the Staff Arborist and requires a Variance from the Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA) for removal.

#### Applicable ZLDR requirement:

The Charleston County Zoning and Land Development Regulations Ordinance (ZLDR), Chapter 9 Development Standards, Article 9.2 Tree Protection and Preservation, Sec. 9.2.5.B. Tree Removal states, "Grand Trees and Protected Trees that do not meet the above criteria may be removed only where approved by the Board of Zoning Appeals, and shall be replaced according to a schedule determined by the Board. The Zoning and Planning Director will make recommendations to the Board concerning the number, species, DBH or caliper, and placement of such Trees."

#### Applicable ZLDR Chapter 12 Definitions, Article 12.1 Terms and Uses Defined:

**Arborist, Certified** A Person certified by the International Society of Arboriculture.

**Diameter Breast Height (DBH)** The total diameter, in inches, of a Tree trunk or trunks measured at a point four and one-half feet above existing Grade (at the base of the Tree). In measuring DBH, the circumference of the Tree shall be measured with a standard diameter tape, and the circumference shall be divided by 3.14.

**Grand Tree** Any Tree with a diameter breast height of 24 inches or greater, with the exception of Pine Tree and Sweet Gum Tree (Liquidambar styraciflua) species.

A site visit was conducted by staff on October 14, 2025. Additional information pertaining to this request is provided in the attached materials.

#### Planning Director Review and Report regarding Approval Criteria of §3.10.6:

§3.10.6(1): There are extraordinary and exceptional conditions pertaining to the particular piece of property;

#### Response:

There are extraordinary and exceptional conditions pertaining to the 145.52-acre tract. The applicant's letter of intent states, "Within this property, there is an existing conservation easement with The Edisto Island Open Land Trust. Per Tom Austin, Director of Land Conservation, Edisto Island Open Land Trust (EIOLT): In 2020, he identified the general location for the access road as having the least impact on the existing wetland and vegetation. With the current limitations imposed by the Conservation Easement (CE), a Greenbelt Agreement to use the land for the purpose of passive/active park and agricultural uses and to manage and maintain it as for perpetuate conservation, natural, open space, and/ or recreational uses, and the necessity of having a paved road, there are unfortunately no other options except to remove these trees. Mr. Austin has stated that, the proposed location of the road will minimize the most significant impacts to the conservation values that are protected by the CE held by EIOLT. It also minimizes costs, which thus maximizes public benefit by stretching those funds further and facilitating the larger project as a whole." Therefore, the request meets this criterion.

#### §3.10.6(2):

These conditions do not generally apply to other property in the vicinity;

#### Response:

The extraordinary and exceptional conditions described for the subject 145.52-acre tract are unique to this property due to the presence of a conservation easement and the associated limitations on road placement. The applicant's letter of intent explains that the proposed access road location was specifically selected to minimize impacts to wetlands,

vegetation, and conservation values while meeting the project's operational and safety needs. Other properties in the vicinity do not contain similar conservation easements or site constraints that would necessitate the removal of large, healthy trees for roadway construction. Therefore, the request meets this criterion.

§3.10.6(3): Because of these conditions, the application of this Ordinance to the particular piece of property would effectively prohibit or unreasonably restrict the utilization of the property;

The application of this Ordinance, Chapter 9 Development Standards, Response: Article 9.2 Tree Protection and Preservation, Sec. 9.2.5.B. Tree Removal to 1642 Clark Road may unreasonably restrict the utilization of the property. The applicant's letter of intent states, "Yes, if the trees cannot be removed then the road placement crossing the wetlands to access the property will be impacted. Attempts were made by the owner and design team to shift the road, and it was determined that this location was the best alignment to minimize impacts to the surrounding trees, while also maintaining the shortest wetland crossing to minimize wetland impacts." Therefore, the request meets this criterion.

The authorization of a variance will not be of substantial detriment to §3.10.6(4): adjacent property or to the public good, and the character of the zoning district will not be harmed by the granting of the variance;

Response: Authorization of this variance request may not be of substantial detriment to adjacent properties or to the public good if the 30-inch Grand Laurel Oak Tree removal is mitigated through replanting or other appropriate measures. Accordingly, the character of the Agricultural Preservation (AG-10) Zoning District may not be harmed if this variance is granted. In addition, the applicant's letter of intent states, "The authorization of a variance will be for the good of the public. This site will provide unique benefits to the surrounding community by emphasizing play, passive and active recreational uses. The character of the zoning district will not be harmed." Therefore, the request may meet this criterion.

§3.10.6(5): The Board of Zoning Appeals shall not grant a variance the effect of which would be to allow the establishment of a use not otherwise permitted in a zoning district, to extend physically a nonconforming use of land, or to change the zoning district boundaries shown on the official zoning map. The fact that property may be utilized more profitably, should a variance be granted, may not be considered grounds for a variance;

Response: The variance does not allow a use that is not permitted in this zoning district, nor does it extend physically a nonconforming use of land or change the zoning district boundaries. Therefore, the request <u>meets</u> this criterion.

§3.10.6(6): The need for the variance is not the result of the applicant's own actions;

Response: The need for the variance may not be the result of the applicant's own actions. The applicant's letter of intent states, "The need for the variance is to accommodate access to the Edisto Youth Recreation Center from Clark Road which requires crossing the existing wetlands where the trees in

question exist." Therefore, the request may meet this criterion.

§3.10.6(7): Granting of the variance does not substantially conflict with the

Comprehensive Plan or the purposes of the Ordinance;

Response: Granting of the variance may not substantially conflict with the

Comprehensive Plan or the purposes of the Ordinance if the Board determines that the strict application of the Ordinance provisions results in an unnecessary hardship and if the 30-inch Grand Laurel Oak Tree is mitigated through appropriate measures. Therefore, the request may meet

this criterion.

#### **Board of Zoning Appeals' Action:**

According to Article 3.10 Zoning Variances, Section §3.10.6 Approval Criteria of the Charleston County Zoning and Land Development Regulations Ordinance (ZLDR), (adopted July 18, 2006), The Board of Zoning Appeals has the authority to hear and decide appeals for a Zoning Variance when strict application of the provisions of this Ordinance would result in unnecessary hardship (§3.10.6A). A Zoning Variance may be granted in an individual case of unnecessary hardship if the Board of Zoning Appeals makes and explains in writing their findings (§3.10.6B Approval Criteria).

In granting a variance, the Board of Zoning Appeals may attach to it such conditions regarding the location, character, or other features of the proposed building or structure as the Board may consider advisable to protect established property values in the surrounding area or to promote the public health, safety, or general welfare (§3.10.6C). The Board of Zoning Appeals may approve, approve with conditions or deny Case # BZA-09-25-00905 [Variance to allow the removal of a 30-inch DBH Grand Laurel Oak Tree to accommodate construction of a roadway providing access to the proposed Edisto Youth Recreation Center at 1642 Clark Road (TMS # 080-00-00-023) on Edisto Island in Charleston County] based on the BZA's "Findings of Fact", unless additional information is deemed necessary to make an informed decision.

In the event the BZA decides to approve the application, Staff recommends the following

#### conditions:

- 1. Prior to zoning permit approval, the applicant shall complete the site plan review process.
- 2. The applicant shall mitigate the removal of the 30-inch DBH tree by one of the following methods:
- (a) Submitting a mitigation plan for review and approval indicating the installation of canopy trees no smaller than 2.5 inches in caliper, equaling inchfor-inch replacement;
- (b) Depositing funds into the Charleston County Tree Fund as described in Sec.
   9.2.6 of the ZLDR: or
- (c) A combination of both (a) and (b).
   Mitigation shall be completed prior to tree removal.
- 3. Tree barricades constructed of chain link fencing shall be installed around all protected trees within 40 feet of disturbance prior to any construction, pursuant to Sec. 9.2.4 of the ZLDR.
- 4. The applicant shall retain a Certified Arborist to monitor and treat all Grand Trees within 40 feet of disturbance throughout construction. A copy of the Tree Preservation Plan shall be submitted to Zoning Staff for review and approval prior to Zoning Permit issuance.

#### **Staff Recommendation:**

Based on the analysis of the §3.10.6 variance criteria, staff finds that the request to remove the 30-inch DBH Grand Laurel Oak Tree to accommodate roadway construction for the proposed Edisto Youth Recreation Center meets most of the required standards. The variance may satisfy criteria regarding extraordinary and exceptional conditions (criterion 1 and 2), potential impacts to adjacent properties and the public good (criterion 4), not creating a prohibited use (criterion 5), not resulting from the applicant's own actions (criterion 6), and consistency with the Comprehensive Plan (criterion 7). The request may also meet the criterion regarding unreasonable restriction of property use (criterion 3) due to site constraints imposed by wetlands and the conservation easement. Therefore, staff recommends that if the Board chooses to approve the variance, it should do so with the conditions outlined above, including mitigation of the removed tree, installation of protective tree barricades, oversight by a Certified Arborist, and completion of the site plan review process. These conditions are intended to minimize environmental impacts, preserve adjacent Grand Trees, and ensure the project proceeds in a manner consistent with the AG-10 Zoning District and the public interest.

#### ZONING VARIANCE APPLICATION Charleston County Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA)

Property Information			
Subject Property Address: Clark Road, Edist	o Island, SC 29438		
Tax Map Number(s): 080-00-00-023			
Current Use of Property: AG-10; Agricultura	l Preservation		
Proposed Use of Property: OS; Parks, Recre	ation, and Open Space		
Zoning Variance Description:			
Applicant Information (Required)			
Applicant Name (please print): Louis DiLuna			
Name of Company (if applicable):		e e	
Mailing Address:			
City:	State		Zip Code:
Email Address:		Phone #:	
Applicant Signature:	). L. 1.		Date: 9 18 2026
Representative Information (Complete	e only if applicable. Attorney, Builder	r, Engineer, Sur	rveyor etc.)
Print Representative Name and Name of Con	npany: Emma Strong; Davis & Floyd	I Inc.	
Mailing Address:			
City:	State:	Zip	Code:
Email Address:		Phone #:	
Designation of Agent (Complete only if	the Applicant listed above is not the	Property Own	er.)
I hereby appoint the person named as Applic	ant and/or Representative as my (o	ur) agent to re	present me (us) in this application.
Property Owner(s) Name(s) (please print):	Edisto Island Youth Recreation		
Name of Company (if applicable, LLC etc.):			
Property Owner(s) Mailing Address:			
City:	State: Zip Code:		Phone #:
Property Owner(s) Email Address:			7
Property Owner(s) Signature:	J.W. Kur h	,	Date: 9/8/2025
	FOR OFFICE USE ONLY:		
Zoning District: 46-10 Flood Zor	ne: HE 70 (160K) Dat	te Filed:	29 25 Fee Paid 25 0
Application #: 32A -69-25-0	5905TMS#: 080-00-1	00-02	3 Staff Initials: WW
	-		00

#### **Description of Request**

2.

Please describe your proposal in detail. You may attach a separate sheet if necessary. Additionally, you may provide any supporting materials that are applicable to your request (photographs, letter of support, etc.)

On this site, the trees that are requested to be removed are a 55" Red Maple, a 31" Laurel Oak, and a 28" American Elm. These trees are located in the path of the Edisto Youth Recreation Center's main road. This Center is a dedicated recreation facility to be managed by the Charleston County Parks and Recreation Commission for youth sports and enrichment. It will be a multi-phase project including a recreation center/gym building, playground, restroom and concession building, outdoor courts and fields. This Center will promote the development of passive activities, outdoor recreation, and outdoor education.

#### Applicant's response to Article 3.10 Zoning Variances, §3.10.6 Approval Criteria

Zoning Variances may be approved only if the Board of Zoning Appeals finds that the proposed use meets all 7 of the approval criteria. In evaluating your request, the members of the board will review the answers below as a part of the case record. You may attach a separate sheet if necessary.

1. Are there extraordinary and exceptional conditions pertaining to the subject property? Explain:

Within this property, there is an existing conservation easement with The Edisto Island Open Land Trust. Per Tom Austin, Director of Land Conservation, Edisto Island Open Land Trust (EIOLT): In 2020, he identified the general location for the access road as having the least impact on the existing wetlands and vegetation. With the current limitations imposed by the Conservation Easement (CE), a Greenbelt Agreement to use the land for the purpose of passive/active park and agricultural uses and to manage and maintain it as for perpetuate conservation, natural, open space, and/or recreational uses, and the necessity of having a paved road, there are unfortunately no other options except to remove these trees. Mr. Austin has stated that, "the proposed location of the road will minimize the most significant impacts to the conservation values that are protected by the CE held by EIOLT. It also minimizes costs, which thus maximizes public benefit by stretching those funds further and facilitating the larger project as a whole."

Explain.		
These conditions noted al	pove are unique to this property.	

Do these conditions generally apply to other property in the vicinity or are they unique to the subject property?

3. Because of these extraordinary and exceptional conditions, would the application of this Ordinance to the subject property effectively prohibit or unreasonably restrict the utilization of the property? Explain:

Yes, if the trees cannot be removed then the road placement crossing the wetlands to access the property will be impacted. Attempts were made by the owner and design team to shift the road and it was determined that this location was the best alignment to minimize impacts to the surrounding trees, while also maintaining the shortest wetland crossing to minimize wetland impacts.

	the character of the zoning district be harmed if this variance is granted? Explain:
surre	authorization of a variance will be for the good of the public. This site will provide unique benefits to the bunding community by emphasizing play, passive and active recreational uses. The character of the zoning ict will not be harmed.
5.	The BZA shall not grant a variance the effect of which would be to allow the establishment of a use not otherwise permitted in a zoning district, to extend physically a Nonconforming Use of land, or to change the zoning district boundaries shown on the Official Zoning Map. The fact that property may be utilized more profitably if a Zoning Variance is granted shall not be considered grounds for granting a Zoning Variance. Does the variance request meet this criterion?
Yes.	
6.	Is the need for the variance the result of your own actions? Explain:
The n	need for the variance is to accommodate access to the Edisto Youth Recreation Center from Clark Road which
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Will the authorization of a variance be a substantial detriment to adjacent property or to the public good? Will

4.

In granting a variance, the Board of Zoning Appeals may attach to it such conditions regarding the location, character, or other features of the proposed building or structure as the Board may consider advisable to protect established property values in the surrounding area or to promote the public health, safety, or general welfare.

#### WHALEY'S LANDSCAPING & IRRIGATION, INC PO BOX 758

### EDISTO ISLAND, SC 29438 CERTIFIED ARBOIST # SO-6516A S.C. CERTIFIED PESTICIDE APPLICATOR CLASS 3 #C0014633

December 5, 2024

I have examined the road site for the Edisto Island Youth Recreation Complex. The trees are marked and correctly identified.

There is a multi stem Red Maple in center of road with slightly codominant stem with inclusive bark. Also, a small one growing in between the stem that may force a split in future. There ae some bad limbs. (this tree will need to come out)

There is 31" Laural Oak and 28" Elm in fair condition. They will be in the impact zone and suggest they be taken out as they will have trouble surviving.

The Laural Oak has 2 small cavity holes at base of tree between root flairs. The roots are enlarged and stay above ground in an area because of constant wet soil from ditch. There are some rotten limbs and some are not healthy.

The Elm has some rotten limbs and several cavities up the tree where limbs rotted and fell off. This tree is very close to drainage ditch .

There is a 22" Live Oak in good condition and the impact should be small only close to fill dirt. A short retaining wall is proposed because of fill on that side at edge of canopy. Prior to construction we would like to make this tree as healthy as possible by putting injection implants in the tree with fertilizer, micro nutrients and growth hormones. We also, would like to oversee any root pruning that may or may not take place to properly make sure roots are cut clean and proper back fill.

If you have any questions, you may contact me at 843-810-3239.

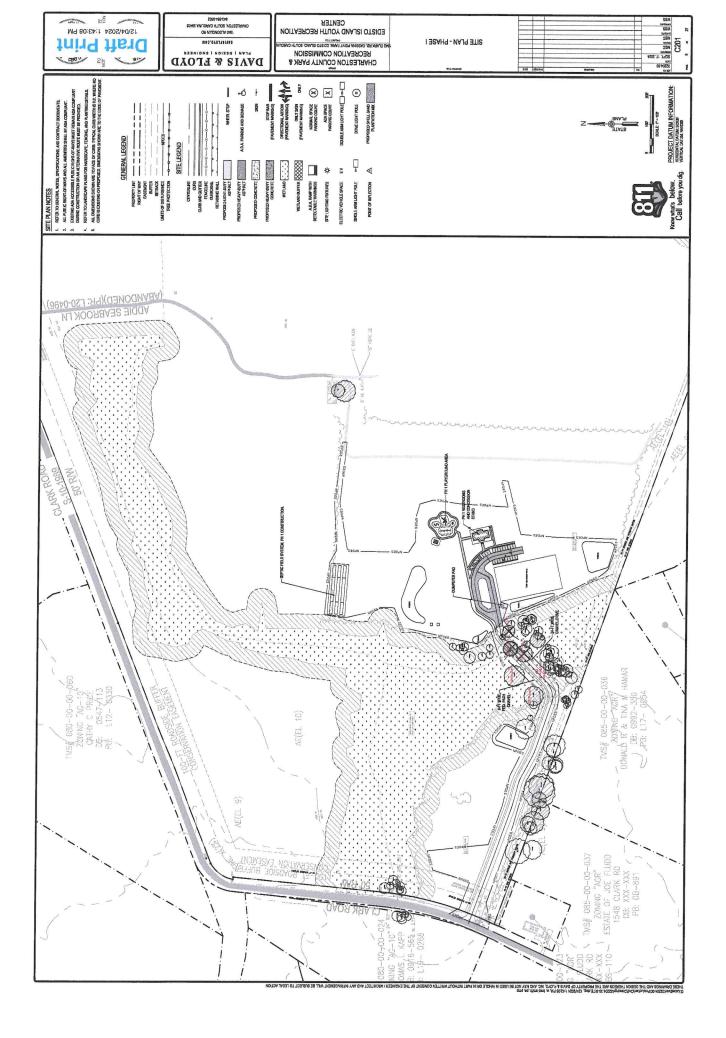
Sincerely,

Marin Ahhhalley

Marion H. Whaley, Jr.

Certified Arborist # SO-6516A

S.C. Certified Pesticide Applicator License "Class 3" # C0014633





# The International Society of Arboriculture

Hereby Announces That

Warion Whaley, Jr.

Has Earned the Credential

# ISA Certified Arborist ®

competencies as supported by the ISA Credentialing Council By successfully meeting ISA Certified Arborist certification requirements through demonstrated attainment of relevant

Carly Belikan

CEO & Executive Director Caitlyn Pollihan

27 January 2011

30 June 2026

Expiration Date

Issue Date

Certification Number







Department of Pesticide Regulation 511 Westinghouse Road Pendleton, South Carolina 29670 Email: dprca@clemson.edu

#### SOUTH CAROLINA

COMMERCIAL

THIS CERTIFICATE EXPIRES:

December 31, 2025

#### CERTIFIED PESTICIDE APPLICATOR LICENSE

**CERTIFIED IN CATEGORIES:** 

03

THIS CERTIFIES THAT:

MARION H WHALEY JR **PO BOX 758 EDISTO ISLAND, SC 29438** 



License Number: C0014633



DIRECTOR, REGULATORY AND DEPUTY DIRECTOR, REGULATORY

IS QUALIFIED AS A CERTIFIED PESTICIDE APPLICATOR AS SPECIFIED IN THE SOUTH CAROLINA PESTICIDE CONTROL ACT

AND PUBLIC SERVICE PROGRAMS PUBLIC SERVICE PROGRAMS

