



**CITY OF MARIANNA**  
**MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT**  
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# Memo

**To:** Planning & Zoning Board  
**From:** Kay Dennis, Director *KD*  
**Date:** 09/26/2022  
**Re** Variance Request for Jackson County School Board -Parking

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**Summary:**

The applicant is requesting a variance from *Marianna City Code, Land Development Code, Sections 4-6.8(3)(e)*, which addresses construction and maintenance of dust-free parking areas.

The applicant has requested approval of a grassed parking area for school bus parking during portions of the year the schools are not in session. The applicant states “it would be a waste of resources to convert the grassed areas on the site to pavement or gravel since the paved parking would not be utilized for vehicle parking for 80% of the time” (see attached request). The applicant further explains that “leaving this area as a naturally grassed area in lieu of impervious pavement will negate contributing to already problematic flooding conditions at the intersection.”

**Nature of  
Variance Requests:**

*Marianna City Code, Land Development Code, Sections 4-6.8(3)(e)* requires developments to const and maintain dust-free off-street parking areas.

**History:**

The site is located on the northwestern corner of the K-8 parcel. Since the construction of the K-8 facility, there has been significant drainage issues.

Staff reviewed google earth images of the current bus parking area. The areas once grassed, currently have dirt. The parking area is not dust-free.

**Determination:**

*Marianna City Code, Land Development Code, Sec. 2-6.6* states “[t]he planning board shall first determine whether the need for the proposed variance arises out of the physical surroundings, shape, topographical condition, or other physical or environmental conditions that are unique to the specific properties involved. If so, the planning board shall make the following required findings based on the granting of the variance for that site alone. If, however, the condition is common to numerous sites so that requests for similar variances are likely to be received, the planning board shall make the required findings based on the cumulative effect of granting the variance to all who may apply. The Planning Board shall not vary the requirements of any provision of this code unless it makes a positive finding, based on substantial competent evidence, on each of the following:

- a. [t]here are extreme practical or economic difficulties in carrying out the strict letter of this code;
- b. [c]onditions for which the variance is being applied are unique or unusual to the site or structure in questions;
- c. [t]he variance request is not based exclusively upon a desire to reduce the cost of developing the site;
- d. [t]he proposed variance will not substantially increase congestion on surrounding public streets, the danger of fire, or other hazard to the public;
- e. [t]he proposed variance will not substantially diminish property values in, nor alter the essential character of, the area surrounding the site;
- f. [t]he proposed variance will not decrease the level of service standards as established in the comprehensive plan; and
- g. [t]he effects of the proposed variance is in harmony with the general intent of the code and the specific intent of the relevant subject area(s) therein.”

Planning staff has reviewed the request and determined that it does not arise out of unique conditions related to the physical surroundings and practical difficulties in placement of the dust-free parking. *Granting the variance could lead to additional variance requests from this requirement.* The request appears to be based primarily on the desire to reduce costs. The request is

not likely to diminish property values in an agricultural and industrial area, but it also will not reduce dust. The request will not likely reduce the level of service requirements on Caverns Road, SR71 North, Wiley Drive or Russell Road, which are approved by the State of Florida for the City of Marianna Comprehensive Plan.

However, staff notes that the site is unique in having extreme drainage problems that need to be addressed.

**Proposed Recommendation:**

Recommend approval of the variance request in an effort to reduce and improve drainage issues on the site and within the rights-of-way, with the understanding that future development will comply with the City of Marianna Code.

