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To: Chairman Burdette and Planning and Zoning Commission

From: Joe Boyer, Planning and Zoning Coordinator

Zoning: R-1

Comprehensive Plan: Single and Two-Family Residential

Summary: Steve Graffis is requesting a two-foot fence height variance at 704 Birkett Ct. (PIN 02-02-23-103-006). The property is zoned R-1 (Single Family Residential). The purpose of the variance is to allow for a taller privacy fence than is allowed by City Code. Staff recommends disapproval as indicated below.

Background: Mr. Graffis has a back-yard pool which the proposed fence is designed to screen. Mr. Graffis states the local topography places the neighbor's property higher than his, making it possible to see over a six-foot tall privacy fence. Staff is uncomfortable with the variance as it would tend to "open the floodgates allowing anyone to build beyond the City Code. The property owner also has not demonstrated a verifiable hardship.

Staff recommends disapproval of the two-foot height setback variance request.

A public hearing will be held by the Planning and Zoning Commission at their meeting on July 2, 2025.

Joe Boyer

Building and Zoning Coordinator

CITY OF WASHINGTON, ILLINOIS

APPLICATION FOR VARIANCE

To have a complete application for a variance, you must submit the following:

- Signed and completed application
- Plat showing subject property and proposed site improvements
- Ownership documentation (lease, deed, mortgage, etc.)
- Application fee of \$100 payable to the City of Washington

Name(s) of Applicant(s): STEVE GAFFIS

Phone Number of Applicant: [REDACTED]

Address of Applicant: 704 BIRKETT CT

Owner of Property: _____

Address of Owner: _____

I would like to receive correspondence by: ☒ Mail ☐ Email

Email Address: _____

Property Tax ID (PIN) number: 02 - 02 - 23 - 103 - 000

Current zoning classification of the property: R1

Current use of the property: RESIDENCE

Describe how your property cannot yield a reasonable return, if it is required to be used only under the general conditions of your zoning classification:

HOMEOWNER SEEKS TO INCREASE HEIGHT OF PRIVACY
FENCE FROM 6-FEET TO 8-FEET ABOVE GRADE.

To the best of your knowledge, can you affirm that the hardship described above was not created by an action of anyone having property interests in the land after the Zoning Ordinance became law? Yes ☐ No ☒

If "no," explain why the hardship should not be regarded as self-imposed. (Self-imposed hardships are NOT entitled to variations.)

TOPOGRAPHY PLACES THE NEIGHBORS YARD HIGHER
THAN THE SIX FEET ALLOWED. THIS WOULD PROVIDE
PRIVACY AT THE POOL

Describe how your situation is unique or different from any other property: _____

Describe the alteration or change, if any, in the basic character of the neighborhood the variation, if granted, would make: _____

Describe the nature of the variation you are requesting (attach dimensioned site plan): 2 FOOT HEIGHT

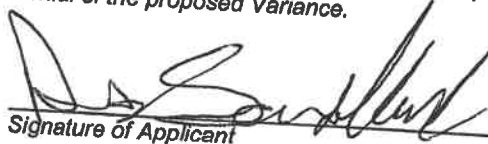
\$100 PAID

4/15/25

PUBLIC HEARING: Your case will be referred with staff's recommendation to the next regularly scheduled Planning and Zoning Commission (PZC) meeting for a public hearing. The PZC meets the first Wednesday of every month at 6:30 p.m. at the Washington District Library meeting room at 380 N. Wilmor Road. At the PZC meeting, you will present your request. A variance cannot be granted by the PZC unless the PZC finds, based upon the application and evidence presented at the public hearing, that a strict application of the terms of the Zoning Ordinance imposes practical difficulties or particular hardship. The following are examples of variances that can be granted:

1. To permit the extension of a district where the boundary line of a district divides a lot in single ownership as shown of record.
2. To permit the reconstruction of a nonconforming building which has been destroyed or damaged to an extent of more than fifty percent (50%) of its value, by fire or act of God, or the public enemy, where the PZC shall find some compelling public necessity requiring a continuance of the nonconforming use, but in no case shall such a permit be issued if its primary function is to continue a monopoly.
3. To make a variance, by reason of exceptional narrowness, shallowness or shape of a specific piece of property of record, or by reason of exceptional topographical conditions the strict application of any provision of this chapter would result in peculiar and exceptional practical difficulties or particular hardship upon the owner of such property, and amount to a practical confiscation of property, as distinguished from a mere inconvenience to such owner, provided such relief can be granted without substantial detriment to the public good and without substantially impairing the general purpose and intent of the comprehensive plan as established by the regulations and provisions contained in the Zoning Ordinance.
4. To interpret the provisions of this chapter where the street layout actually on the ground varies from the street layout as shown on the district map fixing the several districts.
5. To waive the parking requirements in the business or industrial districts whenever the character or use of the building is such as to make unnecessary the full provision of parking facilities or where such regulations would impose an unreasonable hardship upon the use of the lot, as contrasted with merely granting an advantage or convenience.
6. To permit a building to be erected, reconstructed, altered, or enlarged so that the building lines would extend beyond the distance specific in this chapter into side yards or into front yards; provided that such variance may not be granted:
 - a. Unless there is a building in the block that extends beyond the distance from the front street line specified in this chapter, in which case the building line may be permitted to extend as near to the front street line as such nonconforming building;
 - b. Unless the lot is irregular in shape, topography, or size; or
 - c. Unless the street line of the lot is directly opposite the street line of a lot which is irregular in shape, topography, or size.
7. To permit in any district such modifications of the requirements of the regulations of this chapter as the Board may deem necessary to secure all appropriate development of a lot where adjacent to such lot on two or more sides there are buildings that do not conform to the regulations of the district.

Certification: To the best of my knowledge, the information contained herein, and on the attachments, is true, accurate, and correct, and substantially represents the existing features and proposed features. Any error, misstatement, or misrepresentation of material fact or expression of material fact, with or without intention, shall constitute sufficient grounds for the revocation or denial of the proposed Variance.


Signature of Applicant

4/15/25
Date

Signature of Owner

Date

After receiving a completed application, the City Clerk will file notice of your request with the local newspaper and with the adjoining property owners. If you have any questions, please contact Aaron Paque, Planner, at (309) 444-1122.

Property Information

Parcel Number 02-02-23-103-006	Site Address 704 BIRKETT CT WASHINGTON, IL 61571	Owner Name & Address GRAFFIS, STEVEN H & MARY M 704 BIRKETT CT WASHINGTON, IL, 61571-0000
Tax Year 2023 (Payable 2024) ▼		
Sale Status None		
Property Class 0040 - Improved Residential Lot	Tax Code 02027 -	Tax Status Taxable
Net Taxable Value 45,600	Tax Rate 8.548830	Total Tax \$3,898.28
Township WASHINGTON	Acres 0.0000	Mailing Address GRAFFIS, STEVEN H & MARY M 704 BIRKETT CT WASHINGTON, IL, 61571-0000

Legal Description

SEC 23 T26N R3W BIRKETT COURT ADDN LOT 2 NW 1/4

Public Notes

2018-C/E for 2017 Sr Homestead

Assessments

Level	Homesite	Dwelling	Farm Land	Farm Building	Mineral	Total	Partial Building
DOR Equalized	7,910	48,690	0	0	0	56,600	No
Department of Revenue	7,910	48,690	0	0	0	56,600	No
Board of Review Equalized	7,910	48,690	0	0	0	56,600	No
Board of Review	7,910	48,690	0	0	0	56,600	No
S of A Equalized	7,910	48,690	0	0	0	56,600	No
Supervisor of Assessments	7,390	45,490	0	0	0	52,880	No
Township Assessor	7,390	45,490	0	0	0	52,880	No
Prior Year Equalized	7,390	45,490	0	0	0	52,880	No

Final values

Billing

Installment	Date Due	Tax Billed	Penalty Billed	Cost Billed	Drainage Billed	Total Billed	Amount Paid	Date Paid	Total Unpaid
1	06/03/2024	\$1,949.14	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,949.14	\$1,949.14	5/31/2024	\$0.00
2	09/03/2024	\$1,949.14	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,949.14	\$1,949.14	8/16/2024	\$0.00
Total		\$3,898.28	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$3,898.28	\$3,898.28		\$0.00

Exemptions

Exemption Type	Begin Date	End Date	Renewal Date	Prorate Date	Requested Amount	Granted Amount
Owner Occupied	1/1/2023	12/31/2023	1/18/2023		6,000	6,000
Senior Citizen	1/1/2023	12/31/2023	1/18/2023		5,000	5,000

No Farmland Information**No Forfeiture Information****No Genealogy Information****Related Names****Owner**

GRAFFIS, STEVEN H & MARY M
704 BIRKETT CT
WASHINGTON, IL, 61571-0000

Deed Document #

10-8688

Mailing Flags

Tax Bill

Delinquent Notice

Change Notice

Exemption Notice

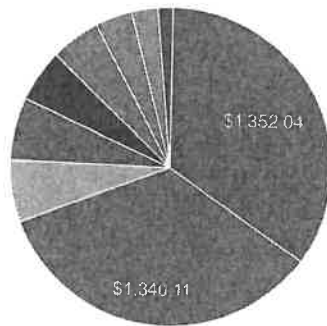
Payment History

Tax Year	Total Billed	Total Paid	Amount Unpaid
2024	\$4,147.64	\$0.00	\$4,147.64
2023	\$3,898.28	\$3,898.28	\$0.00
2022	\$3,668.98	\$3,668.98	\$0.00
2021	\$3,512.94	\$3,512.94	\$0.00
2020	\$3,462.52	\$3,462.52	\$0.00

[Show 19 More \(19\)](#)**No Redemptions****No Sales History Information**

Taxing Bodies

District	Tax Rate	Extension
HIGH SCHOOL 308	2.965000	\$1,352.04
GRADE SCHOOL 52	2.938840	\$1,340.11
TAZEWELL COUNTY	0.538020	\$245.35
WASHINGTON CORP	0.536760	\$244.76
COMMUNITY COLLEGE 514	0.461140	\$210.28
WASHINGTON PARK	0.433420	\$197.64
WASHINGTON RD & BR	0.313610	\$143.01
WSHNGTN DIST LIBRARY	0.226640	\$103.35
WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP	0.135400	\$61.74
WSHNGTN MASS TRANS	0.000000	\$0.00
TOTAL	8.548830	\$3,898.28



- HIGH SCHOOL 308
- GRADE SCHOOL 52
- TAZEWELL COUNTY
- WASHINGTON CORP
- COMMUNITY COLLEGE 514
- WASHINGTON PARK
- WASHINGTON RD & BR
- WSHNGTN DIST LIBRARY
- WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP

Parcel Map

[View Full Screen](#)

Disclaimer

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