

**BOARD
OF ADJUSTMENT
DESTIN CITY HALL ANNEX CHAMBERS
WEDNESDAY, JUNE 3, 2026
5:30 P.M.**

1. CALL TO ORDER:

Chairman Weidenhamer called the Board of Adjustment Meeting to order at 5:30 p.m., on Wednesday, June 3, 2026, at Destin City Hall Annex Chambers.

2. ROLL CALL & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

Present:

Tom Weidenhamer
James Moomaw
Lance Johnson
Alan Osbourne
Ross Haynes
Stephanie Rowe

Absent:

Staff Present:

Kim Montgomery, Deputy City Clerk
Jesse Hernandez Senior Planner
Chris Rush Planner
Kim Kopp City Attorney

3. AGENDA APPROVAL:

Chairman Weidenhamer asked if there needed to be any changes to the agenda. With no changes or additions to the agenda, Chairman Weidenhamer approved the agenda as advertised.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

➤ **May 6, 2025 Minutes**

Motion to approve the minutes of the May 6, 2025 meeting as written, was made by Board member Osbourne, with Board member Haynes providing the second. Motion passed 6-0.

5. NEW BUSINESS:

A. PZ-2026-48 - 35000 Emerald Coast Parkway Variance Request

Mr. Rush presented the request for redevelopment of the existing First Security Bank site at 3500 Emerald Coast Parkway.

- Proposal includes:
 - Demolition of the existing building.
 - Construction of a new 3,447-square-foot bank building.

- Drive-through banking facility.
 - On-site parking and vehicle circulation improvements.
- Property is located within the Commercial General (CG) zoning district.
- The site is a corner lot with frontage on:
 - U.S. Highway 98
 - Crystal Beach Drive
- The applicant is requesting relief from setback requirements contained in Land Development Code Section 7.12.08(K)(i).
- Mr. Rush explained that the property is subject to front setback requirements on both street frontages.
- Proposed building location would place the structure approximately 53 feet from the Crystal Beach Drive property line.
- Mr. Rush explained that staff has reviewed the six Variance criteria requirements in the Land Development Code.
 - No public comments have been received as a result of the request.
 - Staff recommends denial of the variance request because the request does not meet all six criterion.

❖ **Applicant Presentation:**

Mr. Dean Burgess, Emerald Coast Associates, spoke on behalf of the applicant and explained the following:

- The request is not related to the Highway 98 setback.
- The issue stems from the setback requirement along Crystal Beach Drive.
- The corner-lot configuration creates practical difficulties in meeting both front setback requirements simultaneously.

He explained how meeting the current code requirements would push the building into the corner of the lot, creating:

- Circulation problems.
- Reduced access around the building.
- Safety concerns for pedestrians.
- Difficulty accommodating drive-through operations.
- Fire Marshal Matt Taylor provided support for the request in order to for their fire engine to have access around the building which would maintain their fire apparatus access with the proposed design.

In reviewing the zoning and lot definitions in the Land Development Code, he realizes how staff arrived at the determination that Crystal Beach Drive must be treated as frontage. However, he presented aerial imagery and surrounding development patterns showing that nearby commercial buildings generally do not meet the current setback standards.

- He Indicated that nearby banks, including Regions, Wells Fargo, Truist, and Vanguard, have layouts inconsistent with the current setback requirements.

- He explained how:
 - The proposed building would be located approximately 26 feet from Highway 98, meeting code requirements.
 - Relief is requested only along Crystal Beach Drive.
- He discussed how a compliant layout would:
 - Force building entrances into undesirable locations.
 - Create conflicts between pedestrians and vehicle circulation.
 - Reduce visibility and functionality of the site.

❖ **Board Discussion**

- Board members questioned:
 - Existing access from Highway 98.
 - Vehicle circulation patterns.
 - Drive-through functionality.
 - Fire truck and service vehicle access.
- Applicant confirmed:
 - Existing Highway 98 access will remain.
 - FDOT-approved right-in access would continue to reduce traffic conflicts.
- Board members discussed:
 - Existing site conditions.
 - Whether the current building already occupies a similar setback position.
 - Whether redevelopment should be treated differently from continued use of the existing building.
- Staff clarified:
 - The existing building is a legal nonconforming structure.
 - Nonconforming structures may continue to exist.
 - Once demolished and rebuilt, the nonconforming status is lost, and current code requirements would apply.
- Board members expressed interest in balancing:
 - Existing property rights.
 - Continued banking use.
 - Public safety and site functionality.
- Discussion occurred regarding limiting any variance approval specifically to bank use.

Motion by Board member Osbourne to approve the variance request for the Crystal Beach Drive setback with the following conditions:

- **The variance remains in effect only while the property continues to operate as a bank.**
- **Any future change in use would eliminate the variance and require compliance with applicable code requirements.**

Board member Johnson provided the second. The motion passed 6-0.

B. PZ 2026-69 Wagner Property Group, LLC – 751 Harbor Boulevard

Mr. Rush presented a request from Wagner Property Group, LLC for redevelopment of the property located at 751 Harbor Boulevard.

- Proposal includes:
 - Demolition of the existing building.
 - Construction of a new 3,333-square-foot JP Morgan Chase Bank building.
 - Drive-through facility.
 - On-site parking and circulation improvements.
- Property characteristics:
 - Approximately 0.97 acres.
 - Zoned Town Center Mixed Use (TCMU).
 - Future Land Use designation: Town Center Mixed Use.
- Applicant requested relief from Land Development Code Section 7.12.08(K)(i), which requires:
 - Minimum front setback of 16 feet.
 - Maximum front setback of 26 feet.
- Staff reviewed:
 - Required variance criteria.
 - Public notice procedures.
- Staff reported:
 - No public comments have been received.
- Staff recommendation:
 - Denial of the variance request.

❖ Applicant Presentation

- The applicant representative participated remotely via Microsoft Teams.
- Explained that the variance was requested to:
 - Accommodate drive-through circulation.
 - Maintain safe distances between drive-through exits and site access points.
 - Promote safe vehicle circulation.
- Proposed setbacks:
 - Approximately 29 feet from Highway 98.
 - Approximately 70.8 feet from Village Center Parkway.
- Representative noted:
 - Existing building currently sits approximately 153 feet from the setback line.
 - Proposed redevelopment would move the building closer to the street than the existing development.

Board member Moomaw questioned the rationale behind maximum setback requirements.

Mr. Rush explained the maximum setbacks originated during implementation of the Multimodal Transportation District (MMTD).

- Purpose was to:
 - Create a pedestrian-oriented streetscape.
 - Position buildings closer to roadways.
 - Move parking areas behind structures.
- Discussion included:
 - Ongoing efforts by City Council to revise or reduce MMTD-related requirements.
 - Consistency of the proposal with the broader goals of Town Center redevelopment in the district.
- Board member Rowe observed how this is moving in the right direction:
 - The site plan places parking behind the building.
 - The design aligns more closely with the intended Town Center development pattern than the existing site.
- Board member Osbourne questioned if there may be any potential issues with:
 - Utility conflicts.
 - Future roadway improvements.

Mr. Hernandez indicated that the Technical Review process is underway, the utility companies are involved in the review process, and that there are not any utility concerns identified.

Motion made by Chairman Weidenhamer to approve the variance request with Board Member Moomaw providing the second. The motion passed with a 6-0 vote to award the Variance PZ-2026-69 - 751 Harbor Blvd.

6. ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:25 p.m.

Adopted and approved this 5th day of July, 2026.

Tom Weidenhamer
Tom Weidenhamer, Chairman

Kim Montgomery
Kim Montgomery, Deputy City Clerk