



# STAFF REPORT

## MORGAN COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

### PETITION FOR: VARIANCE

Property location: 1600 Athens Highway, Madison  
Property tax parcel: M15-006  
Acreage: 3.86 acres  
Applicant: Youngblood Investments  
Applicant's Agent: Todd Peaster  
Property Owner: Youngblood Investments, 1600 Athens Highway, Madison  
Existing Use: Empty portion of commercial lot

### Summary

Todd Peaster of Georgia Civil, on behalf of Youngblood Investments, is seeking a variance to the paving and curbing requirements in the Morgan County Zoning Ordinance for property at 1600 Athens Highway. The applicant intends to construct mini storage warehouses on the same property with the repair garage for the Youngblood automobile sales business. The area is delineated by a white fence, which is visible on the aerial. The property is located south of Unique Treasures flea market near the intersection of Athens Highway (North Main Street) and the Highway 441 by-pass.





The property is zoned Heavy Commercial and the mini warehouse use is permitted. An access driveway is already present and currently ends in the field, which has been used as a cattle pasture.

The site plan submitted by the applicant shows three rows of storage buildings, two of which have access on both sides. The variance request is to allow gravel surface instead of the required hard surface on approximately half of the access drives, with the use of curbing only on the entrance and front paved area. The applicant's letter states that this will provide a hard surface on the most visible areas.

The site plan shows a 60 foot setback on the right side (as the drawing is presented), which is correct as the Zoning Ordinance requires a larger setback when commercial property is adjacent to residential property. The front setback is 50 feet and the rear setback is 15 feet. There is no setback between commercial uses on the same property, although Staff did advise that enough room be left to accommodate the appropriate setback should the property ever be divided.

The text in the lower right corner of the site plan provides a list of site requirements. Please note that the property area and zoning is correctly listed, but the setbacks, lot area, etc. is shown for AR zoning.

From the Morgan County Zoning Ordinance:

## **Chapter 10.8 Improvement of Parking Areas**

### **Section 10.8.1 Surfacing and Curbing**

All off-street parking areas and access drives for uses other than single-family and two-family dwellings shall be improved with a permanent dust free surface consisting of a minimum of a 6 inch graded aggregate base overlaid with a 2 inch Type B binder and a 1.5 inch Type F asphalt surface.

In the I1 and I2 Industrial zoning districts, the above type of surface is required for customer, visitor and employee automobile parking. In the I1 and I2 Industrial zoning districts, the following surface will be required in areas of loading docks and parking of commercial trucks and other commercial equipment:

- 8 inch graded aggregate base, overlaid with a 3 inch Type B binder and a 2 inch Type F asphalt surface; or,
- 10 inch graded aggregate base, overlaid with a 12 inch course of 3,000 PSI concrete.

Curb and gutter meeting County specifications for standard or roll back curbing shall be installed around the periphery of every parking lot and loading area, and extend along both sides of every access drive between the parking lot or loading area and the street or another parking lot or loading area, as applicable

### **Criteria for Consideration**

From the Morgan County Zoning Ordinance. Section 20.3.1, Required Findings for Variance Approval:

1. There are extraordinary and exceptional conditions pertaining to the property because of size, shape and topography;
2. The literal application of this Ordinance would create an unnecessary hardship;
3. A variance would not cause substantial detriment to public good and impair the purposes and intent of this Ordinance;
4. A variance would not confer upon the property of the applicant any special privilege denied to other properties in the district;
5. The special circumstances surrounding the request for the variance are not the result of acts of the applicant;
6. The variance is not a request to permit a use of land, buildings, or structures which is not permitted by right or by conditional use in the district;
7. The zoning proposal is consistent with all standards and criteria adopted by Morgan County;
8. The variance is the minimum variance that will make possible an economically viable use of the land, building or structure.

## Staff Comments

The applicant states in his letter that the request is due to an expected lack of traffic and because other mini storage warehouses in the county have gravel surfaces. The Zoning Ordinance does not differentiate between high or low traffic areas with regard to paving and curbing requirements. There are currently four mini warehouse storage facilities in Morgan County. Two are located in the City of Madison: Robert Pennington's facility on Fairgrounds Road and Mike Nabor's facility on Eatonton Road (across from Ingles gas station). Nabor's is completely paved and the first phase of Pennington's is paved. The city allowed the second phase of Pennington's to remain gravel. Jay Moss has a facility in the City of Rutledge, which is completely gravel. The only mini warehouse storage in the unincorporated county is West Morgan Storage, located at 6360 Dixie Highway, behind the old Cowboys. That facility, constructed in 2005, is also completely gravel. Staff can find no evidence that a variance was given for West Morgan Storage.

It is the opinion of Staff that the criteria has not been met.



May 9, 2016

Morgan County Planning & Development  
P. O. Box 1357  
150 East Washington Street, Suite 200  
Madison, Georgia 30650

Re: Youngblood Mini Storage  
Variance Application

Dear Commissioners:

Please find attached an Application for Variance from Youngblood Investments. Todd Youngblood, of Youngblood Investments, is requesting a zoning variance to pavement and curb requirements. The enclosed site plan shows a proposed mini storage facility that is to be located on 3.86 acres, at 1600 Athens Highway, Madison, Georgia 30650.

The conceptual site plan shows curb and gutter at the entrance of North Main Street, continuing into the site and ending at the limits of asphalt pavement. Asphalt pavement is shown along the most visible portion of the property- the property frontage, and down the center aisle of the development where the majority of traffic will occur.

The applicant requests that the Commissioners allow the secondary access drives and the rear drive to be gravel in-keeping with the lack of traffic received, visibility from the street, and commensurate with other similar developments in the City and County. Likewise, the applicant requests that curb and gutter only be required along the property frontage and in those areas necessary to capture and convey storm water.

Please do not hesitate to call me with any questions you may have about this application.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

Todd M. Peaster, Partner

c: Todd Youngblood



