

Ericka McLeod  
1234 St Andrews Lane  
Odenton, MD 21113  
202-497-3331  
erickamcl@gmail.com

Anne Arundel County Office of Planning and Zoning  
2664 Riva Road, MS 6301  
Annapolis, MD 21401

October 22, 2025

**Subject: REVISED Letter of Explanation for Variance Request – 1234 St Andrews Lane – Addressing Intake Deficiencies**

Dear Zoning Administration,

I am writing to resubmit my request for a Zoning Variance concerning the after-the-fact construction of a chicken coop on my property at 1234 St Andrews Lane. This revised letter includes the specific information requested by the Zoning Intake Officer and the required revised site plan.

**1. Variance Requested**

The variance I am seeking is from Article 18-4-501 (Accessory Structures), which requires a minimum 25-foot setback from the side and rear lot lines for the chicken coop/run.

Based on the measurements shown on the revised site plan, the structure encroaches upon the required setbacks as follows:

Property Line	Required Setback	Existing Setback	Variance Requested
<b>Side Lot Line (Nearest)</b>	25.00 ft	<b>2.04 ft (24.5 inches)</b>	<b>22.96 ft</b>
<b>Rear Lot Line (Min.)</b>	25.00 ft	<b>1.67 ft (20 inches)</b>	<b>23.33 ft</b>

**2. Project Details and Use**

The structure is a chicken coop with a run. I plan to keep a total of **4 chickens (hens only)**, which is compliant with the maximum allowance for my lot size of 12,632 square feet..

- The dimensions of the coop are **10 ft 0.5 in x 3 ft 5 in** (41" x 120.5").
- The attached run measures **19 ft 3.5 in x 10 ft 0.5 in**.
- The total structure square footage is **194.47 sq. ft.**
- The height is **7 ft 1 in** at its peak and **6 ft 5 in** at its lowest.
- The distance from the principal dwelling is **16.83 ft (202 inches)**.

**3. Justification for Granting the Variance (Unwarranted Hardship)**

The setback encroachment is the result of after-the-fact construction and the choice of the most practical location on the property. The current site utilizes a pre-existing flat, stable, and previously disturbed area (the site of a former garage), making it the optimal spot to minimize the need for new grading or land disturbance. Moving the fully framed structure now, which has posts cemented in place, would incur significant, unwarranted financial and physical hardship and waste—a hardship that could have been avoided had I known the specific setback requirements beforehand. The current location is superior due to its existing conditions and its ability to minimize visual impact by being naturally screened. The granting of this variance for the structure's existing location is therefore the minimum necessary to afford relief from the hardship created by the current state of construction combined with the site's most practical features.

I have included the required, revised site plan showing all existing structures, all required dimensions, and setbacks, as requested. Thank you for your time and attention to this resubmission.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Ericka McLeod", is written over a circular stamp or seal. The signature is fluid and cursive.

Ericka McLeod

Ericka McLeod  
1234 St Andrews Lane  
Odenton, MD 21113  
202-497-3331  
erickamcl@gmail.com

October 6, 2025

Anne Arundel County Office of Planning and Zoning  
2664 Riva Road, MS 6301  
Annapolis, MD 21401

**Subject: Letter of Explanation for Variance Request – 1234 St Andrews Lane**

Dear Members of the Board of Appeals,

I am writing to request a variance for the construction of a chicken coop on my property, located at **1234 St Andrews Lane, Odenton, MD 21113**. The variance is necessary due to the structure's encroachment on the required setbacks and because construction began prior to obtaining the necessary permits. I am committed to bringing this project into full compliance with all county regulations and appreciate your consideration.

**Project Details & Justification**

The structure is a chicken coop with a run. The dimensions of the coop itself are **10 ft x 3 ft 5 in**, and the attached run measures **19 ft 3.5 in x 10 ft 1 in**, for a total square footage of **194.47**. The height of the structure is **7 ft 1 in at its peak and 6 ft 5 in at its lowest**. There is a slight incline due to where a tree stump is.

Construction began on **April 13, 2025** as a weekend project. I was unaware of the specific permitting requirements for this type of accessory structure at the time. The posts for the coop have been cemented, and approximately 95% of the construction is now complete. Halting construction at this stage would be a significant financial and physical burden, as the structure would need to be dismantled, and the work already done would be wasted. I have now ceased all work and have taken steps to properly apply for the necessary permits and this variance.

**Addressing Variance Requirements (Article 18-16-305(c))**

I have reviewed the requirements for a variance as outlined in Article 18-16-305(c) and offer the following justifications:

- **Exceptional Circumstances:** My lack of knowledge regarding the permitting process for accessory structures is an exceptional circumstance that led to the start of construction without a permit. The extent of the work already completed, including the cemented posts, makes it practically difficult to move the structure to a different location on the property without incurring significant cost and waste.
- **Unique Characteristics of the Subject Property:** Topography/Previous Development (Flat, Stable Base): The current placement of the chicken coop and run is on the exact

location of a former accessory structure (a garage). This area of the property is uniquely characterized by its pre-existing, stable, and level ground, which minimizes the need for extensive grading or land disturbance. By utilizing this previously disturbed, level ground, we are maximizing the beneficial use of the property while minimizing environmental impact. Soil Conditions (Workable Ground): The existing soil composition in this specific area is the most workable and functional on the property, allowing for the planting of edibles and small-scale cultivation necessary to support the small flock. Moving the structure to a compliant setback location would place it in an area of rocky, heavily compacted soil, which would hinder the intended, permitted use of raising chickens and growing feed.

- **Aesthetic and Neighbor Impact (Minimizing Visual Impact):** The selected location is the most discreet spot on the property. It is situated in the rear corner of the lot and is naturally screened by existing fences. Strict adherence to the setback requirements would force the structure into a more prominent area of the yard, which would be more directly visible from the street. The current location is the only placement that truly minimizes visual impact and is the most suitable spot considering the overall property's layout and existing features.
- **Minimal Impact:** The variance will not have an adverse effect on public health, safety, or welfare. The structure is an accessory use to a single-family dwelling and is not intended for commercial purposes. It is well-maintained and will not be a nuisance to my neighbors. The proposed setbacks of **[List your setback measurements from each property line]** are the minimum practical distances given the constraints of my property.
- **Harmony with General Plan:** Granting this variance will not be contrary to the intent of the County's General Development Plan. The structure is a small, non-commercial accessory use that is harmonious with the character of the neighborhood.

I have included the required site plan and photographs showing the current state of construction. I am available to meet with a county official to review the site and answer any further questions you may have. Thank you for your time and attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'E. McLeod', written over a circular stamp or seal.

Ericka McLeod

Setback Location	Your Closest Measurement (Actual)	Conversion to Decimal Feet	Variance Calculation ( 25 ft — Actual)
Side Lot Line	24.5 inches	2.04 ft	22.96 ft
Rear Lot Line (Left)	20 inches	1.67 ft	23.33 ft
Rear Lot Line (Right)	32.5 inches	2.71 ft	22.29 ft





