

JOHN A. OLSZEWSKI, JR. County Executive

MAUREEN E. MURPHY
Chief Administrative Law Judge
ANDREW M. BELT
Administrative Law Judge
DEREK J. BAUMGARDNER
Administrative Law Judge

January 7, 2025

Jerrod & Aisha Harris — <u>jerrod.r.harris@gmail.com</u> 2121 Holder Avenue Gwynn Oak, MD 21207

RE:

Petition for Special Hearing

Case No. 2024-0241-SPH

Property: 2121 Holder Avenue

Dear Petitioners:

Enclosed please find a copy of the decision rendered in the above-captioned matter.

Pursuant to Baltimore County Code § 32-3-401(a), "a person aggrieved or feeling aggrieved" by this Decision and Order may file an appeal to the County Board of Appeals within thirty (30) days of the date of this Order. For further information on filing an appeal, please contact the Office of Administrative Hearings at 410-887-3868.

Sincerely,

DEREK J. BAUMGARDNER Administrative Law Judge for Baltimore County

DJB:dlm Enclosure

C: Carla Alpheus-Bernard <u>bernardconstinc@yahoo.com</u>
Troy Stokes <u>troystokes.sr@gmail.com</u>
Clyde & Elaine Davis <u>etdavis@verizon.net</u>
Gloria Hartwell <u>gloryreborn07@comcast.net</u>
Rebecca Wheatley <u>rwheatley@baltimorecountymd.gov</u>

IN RE: **PETITION FOR SPECIAL HEARING** * BEFORE THE (2121 Holder Avenue)

2nd Election District * OFFICE OF
2nd Council District

Jerrod and Aisha Harris

* ADMINISTRATIVE HEARINGS

Legal Owners

* FOR BALTIMORE COUNTY

Petitioners * Case No. 2024-0241-SPH

* * * * * * * *

OPINION AND ORDER

This matter comes before the Office of Administrative Hearings ("OAH") for consideration of a Petition for Special Hearing filed on behalf of the legal owners, Jerrod and Aisha Harris ("the Petitioners") for the property at 2121 Holder Avenue, Gwynn Oak, Maryland. The Special Hearing was filed pursuant to § 500.7 of the Baltimore County Zoning Regulations ("BCZR") to use the property for a home-based Federal Fire Arms License ("FFL") business.

A public hearing was conducted on December 17, 2024, using the virtual platform WebEx in lieu of an in-person hearing. The Petition was properly advertised and posted as required by the Baltimore County Zoning Regulations. Several community members attended the hearing including Gloria Hartwell, Carla Alpheus-Bernard, and Troy Stokes, Sr., but there was no testimony indicating opposition to the requested relief.

Petitioner submitted the following exhibits into the record: (1) Letter from Neighbor; (2)-(4) Baltimore County Homebased FFL List(s); (5) Case Precedent #1; (6) Case Precedent #2; (7) Site Plan. The following Zoning Advisory Committee ("ZAC") comments were received from county agencies: (1) Department of Planning ("Planning"); (2) Department of Environmental Protection & Sustainability ("DEPS"); (3) Development Plans Review ("DPR") for

DPR/DPWT/Rec & Parks. People's Counsel noted their appearance for the record and submitted correspondence expressing concerns regarding the proposed use. County Exhibit 4.

Findings of Fact

Petitioner, Mr. Harris, appeared *pro se*. The property is located in the Gwynn Oak area of Baltimore County and is zoned DR 3.5. The property is improved with a single-family dwelling constructed in 1979 and enjoys 1,706 sq. ft. of above-ground living area. The single-family home is located in a predominantly residential community with adjoining homes of similar size and character. Mr. Harris testified regarding his background and his current Federal Firearms License ("FFL") which permits the transfer of firearms, which Mr. Harris currently operates from a non-home-based location. He was advised that he needed zoning approval from Baltimore County before applying for his Type 01 home-based FFL that would enable him to conduct such a business from his home. Mr. Harris explained the transfer license process in which sellers conduct transactions with out of state buyers (usually online) and the transferor holds the firearm until required state background checks are completed, usually within 7-10 days), and buyers are cleared. Buyers are then notified for the pickup of their purchased firearm from the transferor and complete that pickup from the home-based FFL location.

Significant precedent exists in Baltimore County to support denial for the manufacture or customization of firearms as failing to satisfy the definitional requirements of "home based business" permitted under the BCZR. See 2015-0277-SPH; See also 3C-96-9060. While OAH notes and considered People's Counsel's concern regarding the scope of the application, these prior cases pertained to firearm assembly or manufacture where machinery was used to produce inventory for sale. Mr. Harris's explanation of the FFL process, also illustrated by other properties in Baltimore County that currently possess FFL licenses (see Pet. Exhibits 2-4), is an altogether

different home-based business. Mr. Harris explained that the transfer process involves holding and temporarily storing firearms in a locked safe while state background checks are completed and purchasers are cleared for firearm possession under state law. Once notified by state authorities of a transferee's clearance for possession of a firearm, the purchaser is notified for pickup. If a purchaser fails a state background check, the firearm is returned to the seller. No inventory, manufacture, or assembly of firearms is conducted as part of the FFL process. Mr. Harris further stated that this business is a limited one, in that he anticipates only an average of 8-10 transfers will occur on the premises per month.

Conclusions of Law

Pursuant to BCZR §1.B.01.1.A.18.C, home occupations are permitted accessory uses to single-family dwellings so long as the proposed home occupation qualifies under BCZR §101.1. BCZR §101.1 defines home occupation as "any use conducted entirely within a dwelling which is incidental to the main use of the building for dwelling purposes and does not have any exterior evidence, other than a permitted sign, as stated in Section 450.4, to indicate that the building is being utilized for any purpose other than that of a dwelling; and in connection with which no commodity is kept for sale on the premises, not more than one person per dwelling is employed on the premises other than domestic servants or members of the immediate family, and no mechanical equipment, other than computers, printers, fax machines, modems, standard office copy machines and similar office equipment, is used except such as may be used for domestic purposes." BCZR §101.1.

Based upon this record and the testimony of Mr. Harris, I find that the proposed home-based FFL satisfies the definition of "home occupation" as contained under BCZR §101.1. The home-based FFL is conducted entirely within the dwelling which remains incidental to the main

use of the building as a dwelling and does not have any exterior evidence, other than a permitted sign, as stated in Section 450.4, to indicate that the building is being utilized for any other purpose. No commodity is kept for sale on the premises, not more than one person is employed on the premises, and "no mechanical equipment, other than computers, printers, fax machines, modems, standard office copy machines and similar office equipment, is used except such as may be used for domestic purposes." For these reasons, the proposed home-based FFL satisfies BCZR §101.1 and can be distinguished from the assembly or manufacture or firearms or firearm accessories and denied under other prior petitions. Further, I find that the proposed home occupation of a Type 01 FFL qualifies as an accessory use as it remains incidental to the principle use of the property as a single-family dwelling.

SPECIAL HEARING

A hearing to request special zoning relief is proper under BCZR, §500.7 as follows:

The said Zoning Commissioner shall have the power to conduct such other hearings and pass such orders thereon as shall, in his discretion, be necessary for the proper enforcement of all zoning regulations, subject to the right of appeal to the County Board of Appeals as hereinafter provided. The power given hereunder shall include the right of any interested person to petition the Zoning Commissioner for a public hearing after advertisement and notice to determine the existence of any purported nonconforming use on any premises or to determine any rights whatsoever of such person in any property in Baltimore County insofar as they are affected by these regulations.

"A request for special hearing is, in legal effect, a request for a declaratory judgment." *Antwerpen v. Baltimore County*, 163 Md. App. 194, 877 A.2d 1166, 1175 (2005). And, "the administrative practice in Baltimore County has been to determine whether the proposed Special Hearing would be compatible with the community and generally consistent with the spirit and intent of the regulations." *Kiesling v. Long*, Unreported Opinion, No. 1485, Md. App. (Sept. Term 2016).

Based upon this record, and noting the lack of evidence to the contrary, I find that the proposed home-based FFL business would be compatible with the community and generally consistent with the spirit and intent of county regulations. Based upon Mr. Harris's testimony, the written testimony offered by Mr. Harris's neighbor, Ms. Byers, and the statements made by community members at the hearing, I find that this home-based business will have no deleterious impacts on the community, is limited in size, scope and scale, and subject to the conditions below, will not present any potential harm to public health or safety.

THEREFORE, IT IS ORDERED this 7th day of January, 2025 by this Administrative Law Judge, that the Petition for Special Hearing pursuant to BCZR. § 500.7 to use the property for a home-based Federal Firearms License ("FFL") as a home occupation, be and is hereby GRANTED.

The relief granted herein shall be subject to the following:

- 1. All firearms shall be properly stored in a lockable firearm safe at all times prior to transfer;
- 2. Prior to final permit, security cameras shall be installed and maintained on the exterior of the property as well as the interior location within the home where the firearms are stored;
- 3. Retail sales of firearms, ammunition, or firearm accessories is strictly prohibited;
- 4. All signage on the property indicating a home-based Federal Firearms License ("FFL") is prohibited;
- 5. Discharge of firearms on the premises is strictly prohibited; and
- 6. Petitioner shall strictly comply with all state and federal laws, regulations, or guidance regarding any Federal Firearms License ("FFL") and this authorization applies to a Type 01 Federal Firearms License ("FFL") only; any modification to any state or federal license

requires modification of this approval.

Any appeal of this decision must be filed within thirty (30) days of the date of this Order.

DEREK J. BAUMGARDNER Administrative Law Judge

for Baltimore County

DJB/dlm

PETITION FOR ZONING HEARING(S)

To be filed with the Department of Permits, Approvals and Inspections To the Office of Administrative Hearings for Baltimore County for the property located at: Gwyno Oak, MD 31301 Currently Zoned 10 Digit Tax Account # Deed Reference Owner(s) Printed Name(s) (SELECT THE HEARING(S) BY MARKING \underline{X} AT THE APPROPRIATE SELECTION(S) AND ADDING THE PETITION REQUEST) The undersigned, who own and occupy the property situate in Baltimore County and which is described in the plan/plat attached hereto and made a part hereof, hereby petition for an: a Special Hearing under Section 500.7 of the Zoning Regulations of Baltimore County, to determine whether or not the Zoning Commissioner should approve SEE ATTACHED a Special Exception under the Zoning Regulations of Baltimore County to use the herein described property for a Variance from Section(s) of the zoning regulations of Baltimore County, to the zoning law of Baltimore County, for the following reasons: (Indicate below your hardship or practical difficulty or indicate below "TO BE PRESENTED AT HEARING". If you need additional space, you may add an attachment to this petition) Property is to be posted and advertised as prescribed by the zoning regulations. I/ we agree to pay expenses of above petition(s), advertising, posting, etc. and further agree to be bound by the zoning regulations and restrictions of Baltimore County adopted pursuant to the zoning law for Baltimore County Legal Owner(s) Affirmation: 1 / we do so solemnly declare and affirm, under the penalties of perjury, that I / We are the legal owner(s) of the property which is the subject of this / these Petition(s). Λ Lawel Owners (Detitioners)

Legal Owners (Fettioners).	
Jerond Harris / Fisher TANVES	
Name #1 Type or Print Name #3 - Type or Print	
Signature #1 Signature #2	
2121 Holder Ave Guyan Oak MD	
Maining radiose	
21207 /443.814.3777 /jerrod-harris@gmail.	Δ.
Zip Code Telephone #'s (Cell and Home) Email Address	
Benzagentative to be contacted:	
Representative to be contacted.	
Name Tupo or Driet	
Name – Type of Pillit	
Signature	
Mailing Address City State	
1	
Zip Code Telephone # Email Address	
(2 / 24 Do Not Schedule Dates Reviewer)5	
	Name #1 Type of Print Signature #2 Dial Holder Ave Guyun Oak Milling Address Zip Code Telephone #'s (Cell and Home) Signature Mailing Address City State City State City State Zip Code Telephone # Email Address

REQUESTED RELIEF

I am requesting a special hearing to allow me to use the property for a home based FFL (Federal Firetims Licence; Dusiness.

Jerrod R. Harris

Property Description

Zoning Property Description for 2121 Holder Ave

Beginning at a point on the east side of Holder Are which is 22ft wide at the distance of 375ft worth east of the Centerline of the nearest improved intersecting street Windsor Mill R which is 26ft wide.

Being Lot #54 in the subdivision of Holder Park recorded in Baltimore County Plat Book #4, Folio #38, containing 16,700 square feet. Located in the 2nd Election District and 2nd Council District.

2024-0241-314

PETITION FOR ZONING HEARING(S)

To be filed with the Department of Permits, Approvals and Inspections To the Office of Administrative Hearings for Baltimore County for the property located at: Gwynn Oak, MD 31201 Currently Zoned 10 Digit Tax Account # Deed Reference Owner(s) Printed Name(s) (SELECT THE HEARING(S) BY MARKING \underline{X} AT THE APPROPRIATE SELECTION(S) AND ADDING THE PETITION REQUEST) The undersigned, who own and occupy the property situate in Baltimore County and which is described in the plan/plat attached hereto and made a part hereof, hereby petition for an: ✓ a Special Hearing under Section 500.7 of the Zoning Regulations of Baltimore County, to determine whether or not the Zoning Commissioner should approve SEE ATTACHED a Special Exception under the Zoning Regulations of Baltimore County to use the herein described property for a Variance from Section(s) of the zoning regulations of Baltimore County, to the zoning law of Baltimore County, for the following reasons: (Indicate below your hardship or practical difficulty or indicate below "TO BE PRESENTED AT HEARING". If you need additional space, you may add an attachment to this petition) Property is to be posted and advertised as prescribed by the zoning regulations. If we agree to pay expenses of above petition(s), advertising, posting, etc. and further agree to be bound by the zoning regulations and restrictions of Baltimore County adopted pursuant to the zoning law for Baltimore County Legal Owner(s) Affirmation: I / we do so solemnly declare and affirm, under the penalties of perjury, that I / We are the legal owner(s) of the property which is the subject of this / these Petition(s). Legal Owners (Petitioners): Contract Purchaser/Lessee: Name - Type or Print Signature #2 Signature Signature # Mailing Address City State Telephone #'s (Cell and Home) Zip Code Telephone # Email Address Zip Code Representative to be contacted: Attorney for Petitioner: Name - Type or Print Name - Type or Print Signature Signature State City Mailing Address City State Mailing Address

Zip Code

6,24

Email Address

Telephone #

2024-0241-514

Email Address

Telephone #

Do Not Schedule Dates

REQUESTED RELIEF

I am requesting a special hearing to allow me to use the property for a home based FFL (Federal FireArms Licence; Disiness.

Jerrod R. Harris

Property Descriptions

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2024-0241-314



Permits, Approvals and Inspections

111 W CHESAPEAKE AVE TOWSON, MD 21204 4108873353 WWW.BALTIMORECOUNTYMD.GO

Cashier: Christina F. 29-Oct-2024 1:28:28P

Transaction 102590

1 Petition Before ALJ

\$75.00

Total

\$75.00

DEBIT CARD SALE VISA 5987 \$75.00

Retain this copy for statement validation

Station: Permit Processing - Mini

29-Oct-2024 1:28:41P \$75.00 | Method: CONTACTLESS US DEBIT XXXXXXXXXXXXX5987 VISA CARDHOLDER Reference ID: 430300572009 Auth ID: 045152 MID: ********2995 AID: A0000000980840 AthNtwkNm: VISA RtInd:CREDIT

Clover ID: 47Q32DD2KXSTW Payment 53QQR6V3BXTT2

> Clover Privacy Policy https://clover.com/privacy

2024-0241-584

DEPARTMENT OF PERMITS, APPROVALS AND INSPECTIONS ZONING REVIEW OFFICE

ADVERTISING REQUIREMENTS AND PROCEDURES FOR ZONING HEARINGS

The Baltimore County Zoning Regulations (BCZR) require that notice be given to the general public/ neighboring property owners relative to property which is the subject of an upcoming zoning hearing. For those petitions which require a public hearing, this notice is accomplished by posting a sign on the property (responsibility of the legal owner/petitioner) and placement of a notice in a newspaper of general circulation in the County, both at least twenty (20) days before the hearing.*

Zoning Review will ensure that the legal requirements for advertising are satisfied. However, the legal owner/petitioner is responsible for the costs associated with these requirements. The newspaper will bill the person listed below for the advertising. This advertising is due upon receipt and should be remitted directly to the newspaper.

OPINIONS MAY NOT BE ISSUED UNTIL ALL ADVERTISING COSTS ARE PAID

For Newspaper Advertising:	
Case Number:	
Property Address: 3121 HeLDEL AVENUE	
Legal Owners (Petitioners): JERROB + AISHA HARRIS	
Contract Purchaser/Lessee:	
PLEASE FORWARD ADVERTISING BILL TO: Name: Company/Firm (if applicable):	
GWYNN OAK, MD 21207	
Telephone Number: 443-814-3777	

*Failure to advertise and/or post a sign on the property within the designated time will result in the Hearing request being delayed. The delayed Hearing Case will be cycled to the end of pending case files and rescheduled in the order that it is received. Also, a \$250.00 rescheduling fee may be required after two failed advertisings and/or postings.



Certificate of Posting

Case# <u>2024-0241-SPH</u> Petitioner/Developer Jerrod & Aisha Harris

Date of Hearing/Closing December 17, 2024

Baltimore County Department of Permits and Management County Office Building Room 111; 111 West Chesapeake Ave. Towson Md. 21204 Attention:

Ladies and Gentlemen:

This is to certify under penalties of perjury that the necessary sign/signs required by law were posted conspicuously on the [property located at 2121 Holder Avenue on November 26, 2024. Signs 1A & 1B

Sincerely, Martin Ogle

yoska gl

Martin Ogle

9912 Maidbrook Road

Parkville, Md. 21234

443-629-3411

BALTIMORE COUNTY, MARYLAND

Inter-Office Correspondence



TO: Hon. Maureen E. Murphy; Chief Administrative Law Judge

Office of Administrative Hearings

FROM: Jeff Livingston, Department of Environmental Protection and

Sustainability (EPS) - Development Coordination

DATE: November 22, 2024

SUBJECT: DEPS Comment for Zoning Item # 2024-0241-SPH

Address: 2121 HOLDER AVENUE Legal Owner: Jerrod & Aisha Harris

Zoning Advisory Committee Meeting of November 26, 2024.

X The Department of Environmental Protection and Sustainability has no comment on the above-referenced zoning item.

Additional Comments:

Reviewer: Earl D. Wrenn

BALTIMORE COUNTY, MARYLAND

INTEROFFICE CORRESPONDENCE

TO: Peter Gutwald, Director DATE: November 16, 2024

Department of Permits, Approvals

FROM: Vishnu Desai, Supervisor

Bureau of Development Plans Review

SUBJECT: Zoning Advisory Committee Meeting

Case 2024-0241-SPH

The Bureau of Development Plans Review has reviewed the subject zoning items and we have the following comments.

DPR: No comment.

DPW-T: No exception taken.

Landscaping: No comment.

Recreations & Parks: No comment LOS & No Greenways affected.

BALTIMORE COUNTY, MARYLAND INTER-OFFICE MEMORANDUM

TO: C. Pete Gutwald DATE: 12/2/2024

Director, Department of Permits, Approvals and Inspections

FROM: Steve Lafferty

Director, Department of Planning

SUBJECT: ZONING ADVISORY COMMITTEE COMMENTS

Case Number: 2024-0241-SPH

INFORMATION:

Property Address: 2121 Holder Avenue **Petitioner:** Jerrod & Aisha Harris

Zoning: DR 3.5

Requested Action: Special Hearing

The Department of Planning has reviewed the petition for the following:

Special Hearing - To allow a home-based FFL (Federal Firearms License) business on a residential property.

The proposed site is a 0.383-acre property zoned DR 3.5. It is surrounded by mostly residential properties and is currently improved with an existing residential dwelling and ancillary structures. The applicant proposes a home-based FFL (Federal Firearms License) business.

The request above is essentially to have a drop shipping business at the residence. Drop shipping is a retail business model where a seller sells products without keeping inventory on hand. Instead, when a customer places an order, the seller purchases the product from a third-party supplier who then ships it directly to the customer. The petitioner will act as the storer of the purchased firearms until the required waiting period passes and will then transfer to the purchaser. The petitioner currently owns a storage space at Fort Mead but is requesting a home-based FFL because the existing situation is inconvenient and not cost effective. The home will have a 190sf commercial storage area where the firearms will be stored inside of a safe. According to the petitioner, there will be a maximum of 8-10 firearms stored at one time. It is understood that the applicant will not be using the site to facilitate any trainings, there will be no firing of any weapons or any activities associated with gun ranges. According to the petitioner, adjacent neighbors are aware of the request and are not in opposition to the proposed use. The request has no adverse impacts on the health, safety and wellness of the community.

The Department has no objections in granting the above requested relief.

For further information concerning the matters stated herein, please contact Brett M. Williams at 410-887-3482.

Prepared by:

Division Chief:

Krystle Patchak

SL/JGN/KP

c: Jerrod Harris Sydnie Cooper, Community Planner Jeff Perlow, Zoning Review Kristen Lewis, Zoning Review Office of Administrative Hearings People's Counsel for Baltimore County

Real Property Data Search () Search Result for BALTIMORE COUNTY

View Map

View GroundRent Redemption

View GroundRent Registration

Special Tax Recapture: None

Account Identifier:

District - 02 Account Number - 1800013336

Owner Information

Owner Name:

HARRIS JERROD

EXEMPT Use:

HARRIS AISHA

Principal Residence:YES

Mailing Address:

2121 HOLDER AVE

Deed Reference: /46683/ 00063

BALTIMORE MD 21207-4424

Location & Structure Information

Premises Address:

2121 HOLDER AVE BALTIMORE 21207-4424

Legal Description: LTS 54-55 VETERAN EXEMPTION

2121 HOLDER AVE HOLDER PARK

Map: Grid: Parcel: Neighborhood: Subdivision: Section: Block: Lot: Assessment Year: Plat No:

0088 0013 0438 2010008.04

0000

54 2025

Plat Ref: 0004/0038

Town: None

Primary Structure Built Above Grade Living Area Finished Basement Area Property Land Area County Use 1979 1 706 SE

520 SF

Exterior Quality Full/Half Bath Garage Last Notice of Major Improvements Stories **Basement Type**

16,700 SF

SPLIT FOYER SIDING/3 Split Foyer YES

1 Attached

Value Information

2 full

Base Value	Value	Phase-in Asses	sments
	As of 01/01/2022	As of 07/01/2024	As of 07/01/2025
76,100	76,100		

Improvements Total:

Land:

225.900 302,000 225,900 302,000

302,000

Preferential Land:

Transfer Information

Seller: HARRIS JERROD R	Date: 04/07/2022	Price: \$0
Type: NON-ARMS LENGTH OTHER	Deed1: /46683/ 00063	Deed2:
Seller: HARRIS JERROD R	Date: 06/12/2001	Price: \$0
Type: NON-ARMS LENGTH OTHER	Deed1: /15287/ 00198	Deed2:
Seller: THOMAS REGINALD A Type: ARMS LENGTH IMPROVED	Date: 01/11/2001 Deed1: /14917/ 00081	Price: \$128,900 Deed2:

Exemption Information

Partial Exempt Assessments: Class		07/01/2024	07/01/2025
County:	020	302,000.00	
State:	020	302,000.00	
Municipal:	020	0.00	0.00

Special Tax Recapture: None

Homestead Application Information

Homestead Application Status: Approved 02/14/2018

Homeowners' Tax Credit Application Information

Homeowners' Tax Credit Application Status: No ApplicationDate:





