

Building and Construction Advisory Committee

The Building and Construction Advisory Committee met in regular session on **Wednesday, April 8, 2026**, at **1:00 p.m.**, in the Space Coast Room, Building C, Brevard County Government Center, 2725 Judge Fran Jamieson Way, Viera, Florida.

The meeting was called to order at 1:00 p.m.

Board members present: Ralph Durham, Vice Chair (D4); Rick Cofer (D2), Debbie Thomas (D3), and Mike Williams (D1)

Staff members present: Billy Prasad, Director (Planning and Development); Terry Talbert, Chief Building Official (Planning and Development); Trina Gilliam, Planning and Zoning Manager (Planning and Development); Derrick Hughey, Associate Planner (Planning and Development); Desiree Jackson, Planner I; and Jordan Sagosz, Operations Support Specialist (Planning and Development).

Approval of the October 8, 2025, BCAC Minutes

Motion to approve the BCAC minutes of October 8, 2025, by Debbie Thomas, seconded by Rick Cofer. The motion passed unanimously 3:0 with Mike Williams abstaining because he wasn't present for that meeting.

Item 1. Adoption of Chapter 62, Article VI, Section 62-1835.3.5, "Farm animals and Fowl" and amendment to Chapter 62, Article VI, Section 62-1927, "Farm animal and Fowl" to allow up to six chickens within certain single-family detached residential zoning classifications. Those respective zoning classifications are amended to include "farm animals and fowl" as a permitted use with conditions.

Trina Gilliam spoke to the item. She introduced the staff who spent months working on this, Derrick and Desiree. She explained what they're proposing is a new code section, Section 62-1835.3.5 for farm animals and fowl and we would amend Section 62-1927 to allow six chickens in certain single-family detached residential zoning classifications. We would also amend respective zoning classifications to include farm animals and fowl as permitted with conditions. Last year, July 22, 2025, Commissioner Delaney brought before the board this idea, intent to advertise to amend our code to allow more chickens. She said they're looking for residents to have six chickens, right now we allow four chickens if you have half an acre in any single-family zoning classification. If you have less than half an acre, you can only have one chicken. There are some agricultural zoning classifications that would allow for as many chickens as you want, you just have to apply for a conditional use permit. With this, it doesn't take away from any of the other options that you have, 62-2108, 62-1927, this is just an additional alternative option for people who may be on smaller lot sizes under half an acre and want to have six chickens. She explained what they're looking for today is input and recommendation for what's proposed.

Mike Williams asked how many eggs do chickens lay per day.

Terry Talbert said one egg typically.

Rick Cofer asked where six chickens came from.

Ms. Gilliam said there was some conversation that you couldn't buy just four chickens, you can only buy six. As staff did research, they found you can buy four chickens or less if you wanted depending on who you're buying from.

RJ Durham said you can go to the feed store and you can buy as many as you want. He said one thing he thought was interesting was getting a signed affidavit signed by the property's neighbors. You have to think about it, these are 65 x 80-85 lot size, 20 feet clearance from neighbors, a fixed building... a lot of people roll those around so there's less impact on the physical property. He explained his thoughts are they should do a certified letter to neighbors and let them take the initiative to contact a County number to voice their disapproval. It's a big burden for someone to have to get the signature of adjacent property owners and they may not get along with those property owners. If they take enough of an interest, they will contact the County.

Ms. Gilliam asked what that looks like. How would the adjacent neighbor know that this neighbor is proposing six chickens.

Mr. Durham said a certified letter sent by the homeowner. They could go to the Property Appraiser's website and get names and mailing addresses, then it's in the hands of the other property owners if they're interested enough. If you don't hear anything, the process goes on.

Mr. Williams said he wouldn't want six chickens next to him if I had a 65 ft. wide lot.

Mr. Durham asked about the structural part of all this.

Mr. Cofer said it states you'll have to meet all building code requirements.

Mr. Durham asked how that's measured, is it pouring slabs?

Mr. Cofer said he didn't know, what is exactly a chicken coop?

Ms. Gilliam said a chicken coop is over 100 sq. ft., it needs to be anchored to the ground I'm assuming...

Mr. Talbert said if they want to. He explained chicken coops have wire, mesh wire and the wind just blows right through it.

Mr. Cofer said he's seen some extravagant coops.

Mr. Durham said the measure of using standard chicken wire mesh isn't allowed in here. 99.9% of chicken coops have that wiring. It might be a little harsh for someone who doesn't have the money to build an advanced coop. Again, they often roll them around so there isn't as much impact on the physical property. You could do anchor points, like sheds, roll it around and re-anchor it.

Ms. Gilliam asked him to repeat about the wiring.

Mr. Durham said they did not allow standard chicken wire he read in there. They want you to use a hardware cloth, a heavier galvanized type of wire. He explained all the farms he was ever around, chicken coops had chicken wire. That would be a burden for someone on a tight budget. He stated he has an employee who has been raising chickens for a long time and it's a nasty chore at times, like Mike was alluding to, it's kind of smelly.

Debbie Thomas said she's never been around chickens. She asked if there was a noise and smell issue with chickens.

Mr. Cofer said yes, there's smell and you can get predators.

Mr. Durham said it can bring rats. The language is in there, there's a requirement to keep a clean and healthy environment. It can be done.

Ms. Gilliam said the most important thing is this would only be in District 1 as of the boundaries on January 1, 2026. This would apply to Viera, anywhere else, just District 1.: Mims, Port St. John area...

Mr. Williams asked if she thinks that'll open a can of worms.

Mr. Cofer said he didn't think this would supersede an HOA requirement.

Ms. Gilliam said that is correct.

Mr. Durham asked if it felt discriminatory.

Mr. Williams said you'll have people in south Brevard County that will want it.

Mr. Cofer said they'll want two more chickens.

Mr. Williams said he didn't understand how one district is doing this.

Mr. Durham said they investigated very well. They looked at all the counties in the state.

Mr. Williams asked if there were any counties that said only some sections of the county could do it, but others couldn't.

Desiree Jackson said not that we could find.

Mr. Cofer said everything he read was countywide.

Mr. Williams said he couldn't believe our county commission is thinking about this.

Mr. Durham said particularly because it's smaller property size.

Mr. Cofer asked about the 21 cases referenced, were they code enforcement or people calling to complain?

Ms. Gilliam said the code enforcement cases stem from someone calling or emailing a complaint.

Mr. Cofer said someone called, no one's checking on the coops.

Ms. Gilliam said correct.

Mr. Williams said but that's on a minimum size of half acre lots that they were calling and complaining about.

Ms. Gilliam said it's possible they may not have met the requirements to have chickens. Maybe they had too many because they have less than a half-acre, but that's a great question.

Mr. Durham said without complaints no one goes after them. He explained he's seen properties with many animals that they probably shouldn't, but the neighbors didn't complain.

Mr. Cofer asked what the populus in District 1 wants, is this something they all want?

Ms. Gilliam said she couldn't answer if it's something everyone in the district wants, there are over 27,000 lots in District 1 that may benefit.

Billy Prasad explained there was discussion at the board level, and they had legislative intent on this. Initially the proposal by the District 1 commissioner that brought it forward was countywide. The board as a whole was not comfortable with that. They only issued legislative intent as to District 1. That's why it was drafted the way it was.

Mr. Durham said that's not to say they won't change in the other districts if pressure occurs.

Mr. Prasad said absolutely. That's not to say that that's necessarily what the board even wants today. That's what they were ruling through legislative intent, they wanted to see what you had to say, what the Planning and Zoning board had to say. He said when it gets back to them he doesn't know if they will be or won't be okay with that.

Mr. Cofer asked if anyone knew why you could only buy four chickens.

Ms. Gilliam said you can buy one or two... as many as you want.

Mr. Durham said it was a belief at the time.

Mr. Cofer said okay.

Ms. Thomas said if she understands correctly, what you're saying is that the other commissioners didn't necessarily want it in their districts but said if you want this in your district we'll move forward.

Mr. Prasad said that's a fair characterization.

Ms. Thomas said if we do that, then that could force the hand of the other commissioners.

Mr. Durham said it isn't a bad thing if that's what the citizens want.

Ms. Thomas said once a precedent is set, it's very hard to...

Mr. Cofer said reverse it.

Ms. Thomas said right. She explained if there's a concern there that these lots are too small, if it was still at the same size we wouldn't even be here. If we set that precedent, are we forcing an issue on county commissioners that don't necessarily want that. If the citizens want that, they can come in and make their case to the commissioners.

Mr. Durham asked if that happened with District 1, did quite a few citizens come in saying they wanted to have chickens.

Ms. Gilliam said there was one resident who spoke at the commission meeting.

Mr. Prasad added that the District 1 commissioner at that meeting said she gets lots of phone calls about it.

Ms. Gilliam clarified she said 27,000 earlier but it's 24,737 residents that could benefit from this but there's over 43,000 lots in total in District 1.

Mr. Durham said specifically at smaller lot sizes?

Ms. Gilliam said correct.

Mr. Williams said it's between four eggs or six eggs per day.

Ms. Gilliam mentioned it would allow slaughter as well.

Mr. Durham said appropriate disposal of course.

Ms. Gilliam said yes.

Mr. Durham said he thinks people that use their chickens for eggs don't eat them after.

Mr. Talbert said no, his wife keeps them as pets.

Ms. Thomas asked about the lot size and the difference between an acre and what it is now.

Mr. Durham said it's somewhere like 60 x 80-85 lot sizes...

Ms. Gilliam said there are some lots that only have a 50 ft. wide lot, 75 ft. in depth. It can be a skinny lot.

Ms. Thomas said that's where her problem is.

Mr. Cofer said 60 ft. is not much.

Mr. Durham said they can't be closer than 20 ft. to someone's property anyway. It could be tricky depending on your lot.

Ms. Gilliam said that's why we put regulations there, cleaning and feed, trying to minimize the smell and rodent infestation.

Mr. Cofer asked who checks that? Unless it's somebody calls and then they check.

Ms. Thomas said by the time someone is calling it's too late.

Mr. Durham said there's a lot worse things code enforcement checks on.

Ms. Thomas said she agrees, until you're the neighbor and you have rats.

Mr. Durham said yeah.

Mr. Cofer said there's already a regulation in place for four chickens...

Mr. Durham asked if that classifies with the four at this lot size.

Ms. Gilliam said less than half an acre, you can have one chicken.

Mr. Durham said but not on a small lot size.

Ms. Gilliam said as it stands now, only one on half an acre.

Mr. Cofer said and now you're adding five chickens to less than half an acre.

Mr. Durham said maybe it's too many chickens. It should be less in a small lot size.

Ms. Thomas said she thinks the original intention was to make sure everyone... She said she's not opposed to chickens or people owning chickens... she is opposed to issues that can rise up from neighboring properties. When the lot size is larger, that risk wasn't there or was less. Now there's a much higher risk. She stated as it stands she wouldn't move forward with this.

Mr. Durham asked if they wanted to suggest only four chickens to that lot size.

Ms. Thomas said for her the problem is the lot size.

Motion to recommend denial as stated by Debbie Thomas, seconded by Rick Cofer. The motion passed unanimously 4:0.

Mr. Durham said that takeback to the commissioners would be the impact on neighbors on lots that little.

Ms. Thomas said it's really telling what the other commissioners thought as well.

Building Report

Terry Talbert presented to the Board a copy of the building report. He started with the monthly inspection request and said it's divided between staff, BASS, and virtual inspections. He said you can see that the BASS is working well. Virtual inspections are starting to pickup too. He stated there's a couple new contractors starting who will do virtual inspections. It saves the homeowners time and contractor's time. He spoke about the inspections performed and how it went down this month but housing has slowed down. Commercial is booming right now. Calendar year, new single-family residences compared to 2023 we're really down. He said he spoke to Viera Builders and they said quite a few spec homes sitting, haven't sold yet. He said we haven't had any major storms so there's nothing really special going on with permits.

Ms. Thomas said this is great information.

Mr. Williams asked if he had job openings

Mr. Talbert said yes, two. Two inspector positions and two plans examiner positions. He said it's tough getting people.

Mr. Durham asked if they were under his certifications or have their own.

Mr. Talbert said yes, they have their own certifications.

Mr. Prasad said on April 13th, we're launching a tool called PermitAssist. He explained they've had problems recently where people will use ChatGPT or some AI tool to determine if they need a permit or not and it usually comes up with the wrong information. It'll search Melbourne, West Melbourne, Palm Bay... so this is a tool people can use electronically and it's much more accurate. Behind the scenes of that is a gigantic chart that staff spent many hours on, but it's a user-friendly tool. People can find out what permits they would need, what the cost of that is, find a licensed contractor tool, it also has the zoning element.

Mr. Durham asked if they would be talking with a person or if this is an AI tool.

Mr. Prasad said it's on the computer, it looks like AI but it's not AI. We think it's time to modernize our platform.

Mr. Williams asked if it was for single-family and commercial.

Mr. Prasad said yes.

No public comment.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:31 p.m.

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