




Interoffice Memorandum

DATE: June 17, 2025

TO: Jennifer Lara-Klimetz, Assistant Manager,
Clerk of the Board of County Commissioners,
County Comptroller's Office

THROUGH: Agenda Development

FROM: Jennifer Moreau, AICP
Zoning Manager, Zoning Division 

CONTACT PERSON: Laekin O'Hara
Chief Planner, Zoning Division
(407) 836-5943 or Laekin.O'Hara@ocfl.net

SUBJECT: Request for Public Hearing to consider an Appeal
of the June 5, 2025 Board of Zoning Adjustment
Recommendation for a Special Exception, SE-25-
02-148 Wilma Tompkins for Sanctuary of Praise,
located at 4908 N. Apopka Vineland Rd., Orlando,
FL 32818, Parcel ID # 03-22-28-0000-00-023,
District 2

APPLICANT/APPELLANT: WILMA TOMPKINS FOR SANCTUARY OF
PRAISE

CASE INFORMATION: SE-25-02-148 – June 5, 2025

TYPE OF HEARING: Board of Zoning Adjustment Appeal

**HEARING REQUIRED BY
FL STATUTE OR CODE:** Chapter 30, Orange County Code

**ADVERTISING
REQUIREMENTS:** Publish once in a newspaper of general circulation
in Orange County at least (15) fifteen days prior to
public hearing.

**ADVERTISING
TIMEFRAMES:** At least fifteen (15) days prior to the BCC public
hearing date, publish an advertisement in the legal
notice section of The Orlando Sentinel describing
the particular request, the general location of the
subject property, and the date, time, and place
when the BCC public hearing will be held;

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ADVERTISING	Special Exception in the A-1 zoning district to allow the construction of a religious institution.
NOTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS:	At least 10 days before the BCC hearing date, send notices of the public hearing by U.S. mail to owners of property within 1,500 ft. of the property then expanded to include the entire subdivision.
ESTIMATED TIME REQUIRED:	Two (2) minutes
MUNICIPALITY OR OTHER PUBLIC AGENCY TO BE NOTIFIED:	N/A
HEARING CONTROVERSIAL:	Yes
DISTRICT #:	2

The following materials will be submitted as backup for this public hearing request:

1. Names and known addresses of property owners within 1,500 ft. of the property then expanded to include the entire subdivision (via email from Fiscal and Operational Support Division); and
2. Location map (to be mailed to property owners).

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS TO CLERK:

1. Notify abutters of the public hearing at least two (2) weeks prior to the hearing and copy staff.
2. Please scheduled public hearing on August 5, 2025.

Attachment: Location Map and Appeal Application

cc via email: Jennifer Moreau, AICP, Manager, Zoning Division
Brandy Driggers, Assistant Manager, Zoning Division
Laekin O'Hara, Chief Planner, Zoning Division

June 17, 2025

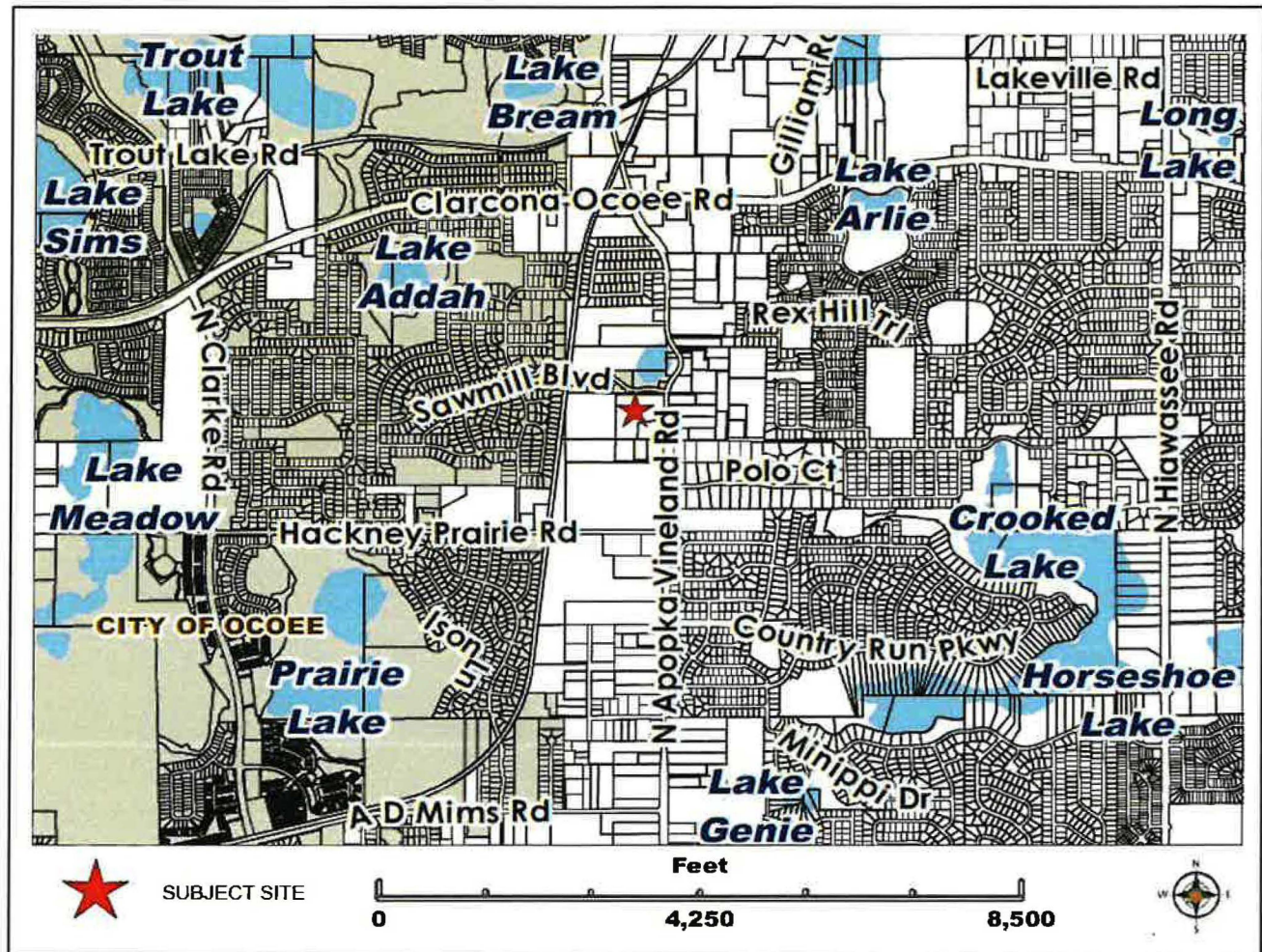
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For any questions regarding this map,
please contact Laekin O'Hara at 407-836-5943.

Location Map



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ORANGE COUNTY ZONING DIVISION

201 North Holland Avenue, 1st Floor, Orlando, Florida

32801 Phone: (407) 836-3111 Email: BZA@ocfl.net

www.orangecountyfl.net

Board of Zoning Adjustment (BZA) Appeal Application

Appellant Information

Name: Wilma Tompkins

Address: 4908 N. Apopka Vineland Rd., Orlando, FL 32818

Email: jill.tompkins@hotmail.com Phone #: 4075383442

BZA Case # and Applicant: SE-25-02-148 and Sanctuary of Praise

Date of BZA Hearing: 06/05/2025

Reason for the Appeal (provide a brief summary or attach additional pages of necessary):

See Attachment

Signature of Appellant: Wilma Tompkins Date: 4/13/25

STATE OF FL
COUNTY OF Orange

The foregoing instrument was acknowledged before me this 13th day of June, 2025, by Wilma Tompkins who is personally known to me or who has produced FL Drivers License as identification and who did/did not take an oath.

[Signature]
Notary Public Signature

Notary Stamp



NOTICE: Per Orange County Code Section 30-45, this form must be submitted within 15 days after the Board of Zoning Adjustment meeting that the application decision was made.

Fee: \$691.00 (payable to the Orange County Board of County Commissioners)

Note: Orange County will notify you of the hearing date of the appeal. If you have any questions, please contact the Zoning Division at (407) 836-3111.

See Page 2 of application for the Appeal Submittal Process.

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ORANGE COUNTY ZONING DIVISION
241 South Main Street, 2nd Floor, Orlando, FL 32801
Phone: 407. 836-3111 Email: Zoning@ocfl.net
www.orangecountyfl.net
Board of Zoning Adjustment (BZA) Appeal Application

Appeal Submittal Process

1. Within 15 calendar days of the decision by the Board of Adjustment, the appellant shall submit the Board of Zoning Adjustment (BZA) Appeal Application to the Zoning Division in person. The application will be processed and payment of \$691.00 shall be due upon submittal. All justification for the appeal shall be submitted with the Appeal Application.
2. Zoning Division staff will request a public hearing for the subject BZA application with the Board of County Commissioners (BCC). The BCC hearing will be scheduled within forty-five (45) days after the filing of the appeal application, or as soon thereafter as the Board's calendar reasonably permits. Once the date of the appeal hearing has been set, County staff will notify the applicant and appellant.
3. The BCC Clerk's Office will provide a mailed public hearing notice of the hearing to property owners at a minimum of 500 feet from the subject property. Area Home Owner Associations (HOA) and neighborhood groups may also be notified. This notice will provide a map of the subject property, as well as a copy of the submitted appeal application.
4. Approximately one week prior to the public hearing, the memo and staff report of the request and appeal will be available for review by the applicant, appellant, and the public.
5. The decision of the BCC is final, unless further appealed to the Circuit Court. That process is detailed in Section 30-46 of the Orange County Code.

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Sanctuary of Praise Fellowship, Inc
4908 N. Apopka Vineland Rd.
Orlando, FL 32818

Friday, June 13, 2025

Orange County Zoning Division
201 South Rosalind Ave 1st Floor
Orlando, FL 32801

To whom this may concern,

We want to appeal the decision of the Orange County Board of Zoning and Adjustments from our hearing back on Thursday, June 5, 2025. Sanctuary of Praise was denied approval of a Special Exemption to build a church on our 7.31-acre piece of land at 4908 N. Apopka Vineland Rd. Orlando, FL 32818. Below you will find our rationale for this appeal.

1. The BZA overturned the conditional approval recommendation from the Planning and Zoning Division and all of the county departments that found no objection.
2. The BZA board illuded to the application being rushed when we were in this process for over 6 months since October 24, 2024, trying to ensure we met every orange county code with required corrections.
3. We met all 6 criteria for Special Exemption under the newly adopted Orange County Codes.

SPECIAL EXCEPTION CRITERIA

➤ **Consistent with the Comprehensive Plan**

MET – The Comprehensive Plan provides that certain uses, such as religious institutions, as conditioned, maybe considered and permitted through the Special Exception process. The Planning Division has indicated the request is consistent with the provisions of Policies FLU 8.1.1, 6.2.13 WAT1.4.3, WAT1.5.1, WAT1.5.2, WAT1.6.1, and WAT1.6.2.

➤ **Similar and Compatible with the Surrounding Area**

MET – The area surrounding this site is primarily used for single-family residential and agricultural purposes. The scale and intensity of the religious uses is compatible with the development pattern of the existing Rural Settlement.



➤ **Shall Not Act as a Detrimental Intrusion into a Surrounding Area**

MET – The proposed use will not act as a detrimental intrusion to the surrounding area as the proposed development provides adequate buffers to the surrounding residential properties.

➤ **Meet the performance standards of the district.**

MET – The development as proposed will meet the performance standards of the district.

➤ **Similar in Noise, Vibration, Dust, Odor, Glare, Heat Producing**

MET – The proposed development will be similar in noise, vibration, dust, odor, glare, heat production to the majority of uses permitted in the A-1 zoning district. The use of the site will be indoors within the proposed building. Additionally, noise and lighting, as conditioned, will comply with all Orange County Code requirements.

➤ **Landscape Buffer Yards Shall be in Accordance with Section 24-5 of the Orange County Code**

MET – The applicant has provided a landscaping plan which addresses landscaping in compliance with Section 24-5 of Orange County Code.

4. The Planning and Zoning Division outlined 11 conditions of approval. One condition #1 we must remove the entrance on Sawmill Blvd based on the city of Ocoee's recommendation we can't use that road as an ingress or egress. One of the BZA's rationales for denial was how do we know you won't access the church from Sawmill. The BZA seemingly failed to read the content of the Staff Booklet.
5. The BZA's rationale for denial is because of a drainage issue from the pond that is allegedly causing flooding on a neighbor's property on the other side of the pond. The church was not aware of the issue because after over 2 years of owning the property that neighbor never contacted us. Our national church organization's headquarters in Jacksonville was contacted by neighbor and the complaint of flooding her property was made. I called the resident and she stated "my husband and I know our home sits 5 feet lower than it should and our insurance won't pay for hurricane damages (Irma and Milton) and proceeded to blame it on the pond. Further, the neighbor stated she was not against the church being build but was concern the impact it would have on the bond. I assured her the part of the land being developed must be over 100 feet from the pond, we were building 2 retention



ponds, and based on EPD we had to unclogged and improve drainage system. We can't confirm that accusation because the home sits in the middle of a wetland with livestock on it, and hurricane force weather caused water damage not the average thunderstorm.

6. The EPD permit required that we have to improve the drainage pipe and added to the most updated detailed site plan with notation and submitted to the EPD prior to receiving the permit which we have received. Based on the Planning and Zoning Recommendation for approval condition #9 stated we have to replace and reconstruct outfall conveyance system (drainage pipe) acceptable to Orange County and may include but not limited to Reinforced Concrete Piping (RCP). The BZA stated how do we know what the pipe will be made of, or how do we know you are actually going to do this? Further, comments of stated "so the only way this gets fixed is if we approve this special exemption, so how about you fix the system first and then we consider giving you the special exemption. This didn't seem justified considering the drainage has to be improved based on condition of approval and EPD permit holding us accountable to having to repair and improve system. In addition, the repair would require additional permitting, approvals, and likely contingent upon an actual development to ensure effective improvement measures work. So, we'd be working backwards and not in appropriate order.
7. The BZA stated the 2 planned dry retention ponds were not sufficient for storm drainage on a 14, 400 sq ft building, and required the presences of county engineers to defend their acceptance of the plan with no factual evidence to challenge the approval of the site plan. The BZA did not formally request their presences after having the Staff Booklet for over a week to study and review. Further, our Civil Engineer was present and these concerns were not given to me to address prior to closing comments. It was asked by applicant was there any questions and the BZA said no and levied these accusations and didn't seek clarification from the applicant and neither the Planning and Zoning Chief that was present.
8. The Traffic Division of Orange County completed a traffic analysis based on the county's current method. The analysis found no objection to the project that would cause serious traffic issues based on the operation hours of the church. The BZA stated they didn't agree with county experts. Further, made accusations the church would park on the sides of the road and park in front of resident's homes. The church does not sit in the middle of the neighboring subdivision of Sawmill and

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sense the church entrance will be over 500 feet away to the closest house in Sawmill. Further, ingress and egress at Sawmill must be removed so parishioners could not reasonably park in Sawmill and walk the length of a football field to the closes entrance. There will be a buffer required around the perimeter of the church as outlined on detailed site plan. One board member stated (Walton) stated that accusation was not fair considering the church is only required to have 105 parking spaces and will provide 125 spaces. It is unfair to project overcrowding when project parking spaces exceed requirement and allude to unquantifiable projection.

9. The BZA board member stated in his closing vote of denial "rural areas need to stay rural areas" the county attorney clarified earlier in the hearing church were allowed to be in rural areas. In fact, we are building 14, 400 sq ft building actually less than allowable 35,000 sq ft as outlined in the new Orange County Codes.

10. There was only 4 out of 7 BZA board members present at the time of voting with a 3 to 1 vote to deny Special Exemption.

Sincerely

Wilma Tompkins
Church Secretary
Sanctuary of Praise Fellowship