

Statement of Hardship – Parking Variance Request

Ark on Lake Lanier – 6250 Old Dawsonville Road, Gainesville, GA (overflow parking at 6255 Old Dawsonville Road)

Ark on Lake Lanier is a large-lot, lakefront property designed to accommodate private, reservation-only group lodging. The need for a parking variance would arise as anticipated only on an infrequent basis—typically once or twice per month—during approved, structured gatherings associated with overnight stays.

A primary hardship associated with this property is the installation of two state-of-the-art septic systems, strategically located on either side of the residence to maximize system performance and environmental protection. Due to health and safety regulations, as well as long-term system integrity requirements, these septic areas cannot support vehicle traffic or be used for parking. As a result, significant portions of otherwise usable land are restricted from vehicle use.

In addition to these constraints, the property is subject to typical lakefront limitations, including sloping topography, tree preservation considerations, and proximity to Lake Lanier. These combined conditions limit the ability to expand traditional paved parking areas. As a result, parking has been thoughtfully designed using gravel surfaces and dispersed areas that work within the existing landscape.

Currently, the property accommodates approximately 25–40 vehicles on-site through designated gravel parking areas located on either side of the residence. The main circular driveway is intentionally kept clear, with a limit of four vehicles at any time, to ensure continuous access for emergency vehicles and to allow safe drop-off for elderly or mobility-limited guests. **At no time is on-street parking permitted or utilized.**

In addition, the owner controls a separate parcel directly across the street, consisting of over an acre of flat, open land. This area can be utilized as overflow parking when needed and provides a safe, well-lit, and easily walkable option for guests. During larger gatherings, parking attendants are present to direct vehicles, ensuring that all parking remains organized, off-road, and respectful of neighboring properties.

The placement and required protection of the septic systems, combined with the lakefront setting, significantly limit where parking can be located.

The requested variance will not create any detriment to public safety or the surrounding community. To the contrary, the current approach enhances safety by preventing roadside parking, maintaining emergency access, and providing managed, off-street parking solutions. The request does not seek to expand use intensity, but rather to accommodate occasional peak demand in a controlled and limited manner.

The hardship is not self-created, but instead results from the inherent physical characteristics of the property. Granting this variance will allow the property to continue operating safely, responsibly, and in harmony with its surroundings.

Site Plan



Overview of Ark requested area for parking variance

