

APPLICATION NUMBER

**5340/5310**

A REQUEST FOR

**SIGN VARIANCE TO ALLOW A 100 SQUARE FOOT  
(50 SQUARE FEET PER SIDE), ILLUMINATED,  
DOUBLE-SIDED, MARQUEE PROJECTING SIGN WITH  
CHASING BORDER LIGHTS EXTENDING 10-FEET  
BEYOND THE BUILDING WALL AND OVERHANGING  
THE FULL WIDTH OF THE SIDEWALK; THE ZONING  
ORDINANCE LIMITS PROJECTING SIGNS WITHIN  
HISTORIC DISTRICTS TO A MAXIMUM 40 SQUARE  
FEET, PROHIBITS CHASING LIGHTS, AND NO SIGNS  
NOR SIGN STRUCTURES MAY PROJECT MORE THAN  
TWO-THIRDS OF THE DISTANCE FROM THE  
BUILDING TO THE ROADWAY**

LOCATED AT

**250 CONTI STREET**

(Northwest corner of South Joachim Street and Conti Street)

APPLICANT

**CENTRE FOR THE LIVING ARTS**

OWNER

**CITY OF MOBILE**

**BOARD OF ZONING ADJUSTMENT**

JANUARY 2006

The applicant is requesting a Sign Variance to allow a 100 square foot (50 square foot per side), illuminated, double sided, marquee projecting sign with chasing border lights extending 10-feet beyond the building wall and overhanging the full width of the sidewalk; the Zoning Ordinance limits projecting signs within historic districts to a maximum 40 square feet, prohibits chasing lights, and no signs nor sign structures may project more than two-thirds of the distance from the building to the roadway.

The applicant states that the proposed Saenger Theatre marquee sign is a traditional blade sign that is consistent with Saenger Theatre built between 1925 and 1940. The applicant states that the Saenger Theatre is a historic structure located in the Lower Dauphin Historic District and that the proposed signage is consistent with the marquees located on this theatre in the past, as well as Saenger Theatres in other cities, such as New Orleans, Hattiesburg, and Biloxi. The applicant states that the existing Saenger in Mobile was built as a "Grand Palace" in 1927, and it's only counterpart in the state of Alabama is the Alabama Theater in Birmingham.

The applicant has illustrated that a hardship may exist for the property. The theatre was developed prior to the adoption of the current Zoning Ordinance and the existing building is a historic structure and located in a historic district, thus there is little to no area for a freestanding sign. Additionally, the building is quite large and has frontage on three streets.

The Board approved a similar variance for this site in June 2005. The variance granted by the Board was to allow a vertical 150 square foot (75 square feet per side), illuminated, double-sided, projecting marquee sign extending 7-feet beyond the building wall. The revised sign design proposes a horizontal 10-feet long by 5-feet high with 2-feet high illuminated letters, with chasing lights on the border and on the letters.

The Architectural Review Board (ARB) staff recommends approval of the design of the sign as submitted and stating that the design will not impair the historic integrity of the structure and the district. The ARB staff states that chasing lights are common for Saenger signs, being found on both the Hattiesburg, Mississippi, and New Orleans, Louisiana, Saenger Theater signs.

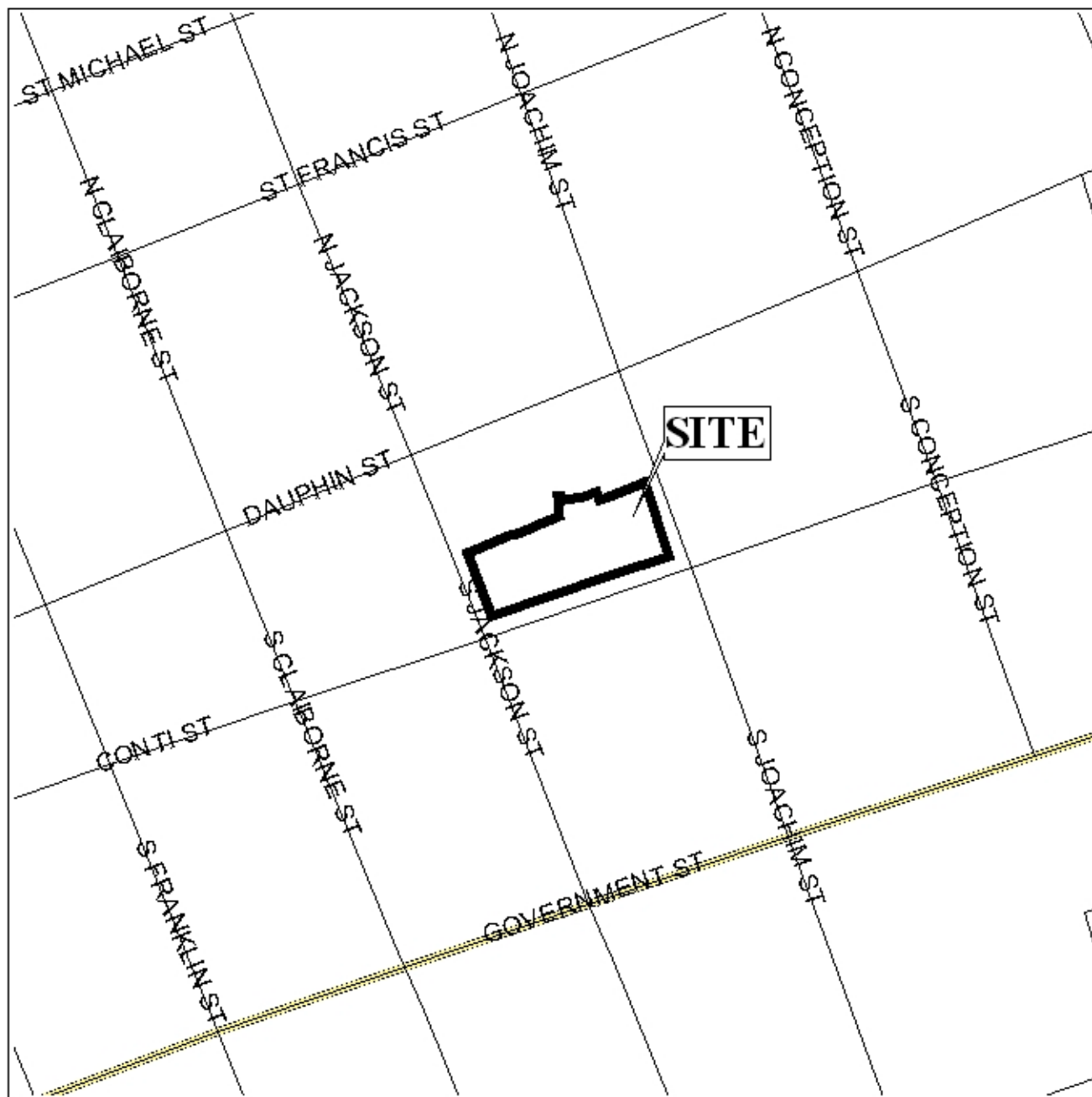
The Zoning Ordinance states that no variance shall be granted where economics are the basis for the application; and, unless the Board is presented with sufficient evidence to find that the variance will not be contrary to the public interest, and that special conditions exist such that a literal enforcement of the Ordinance will result in an unnecessary hardship. The Ordinance also states that a variance should not be approved unless the spirit and intent of the Ordinance is observed and substantial justice done to the applicant and the surrounding neighborhood.

As the existing theatre is a historic structure and located in a historic district; the approval of this application may not be contrary to public interest and special conditions may exist for the property. Based on the fact that the Saenger Theater occupies one half of a city block, has no other signage on the exterior, and is consistent with the historic signage; the amount of signage requested could be considered appropriate for the site.

**RECOMMENDATION 5340/5310****Date: January 9, 2006**

Based on the preceding, this application is recommended for approval.

## LOCATOR MAP



APPLICATION NUMBER 5340/5310 DATE January 9, 2006

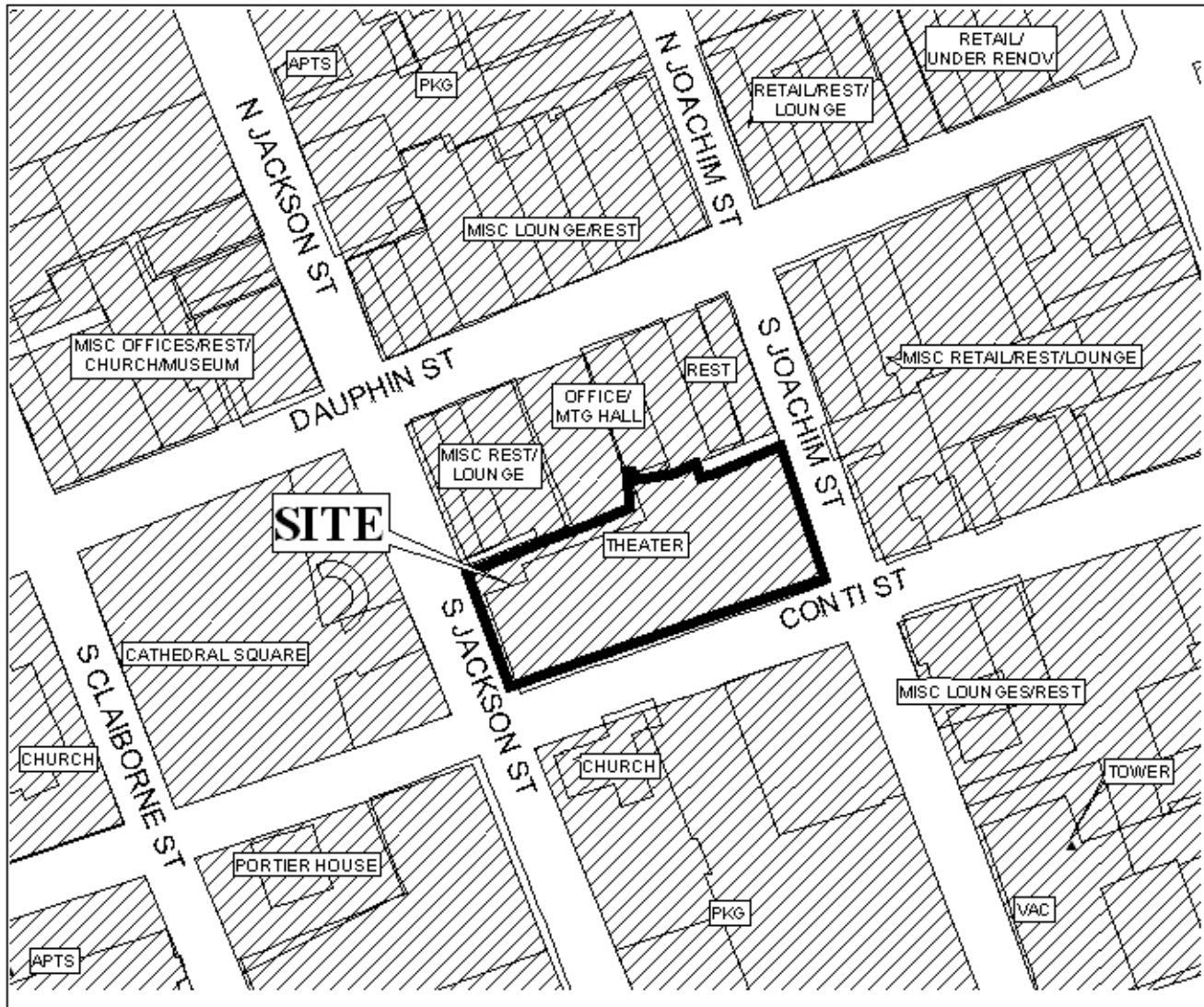
APPLICANT Centre for the Living Arts (City of Mobile)

REQUEST Sign Variance



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# BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT VICINITY MAP - EXISTING ZONING



The site is surrounded by commercial sites with a park and a church located to the east of the site.

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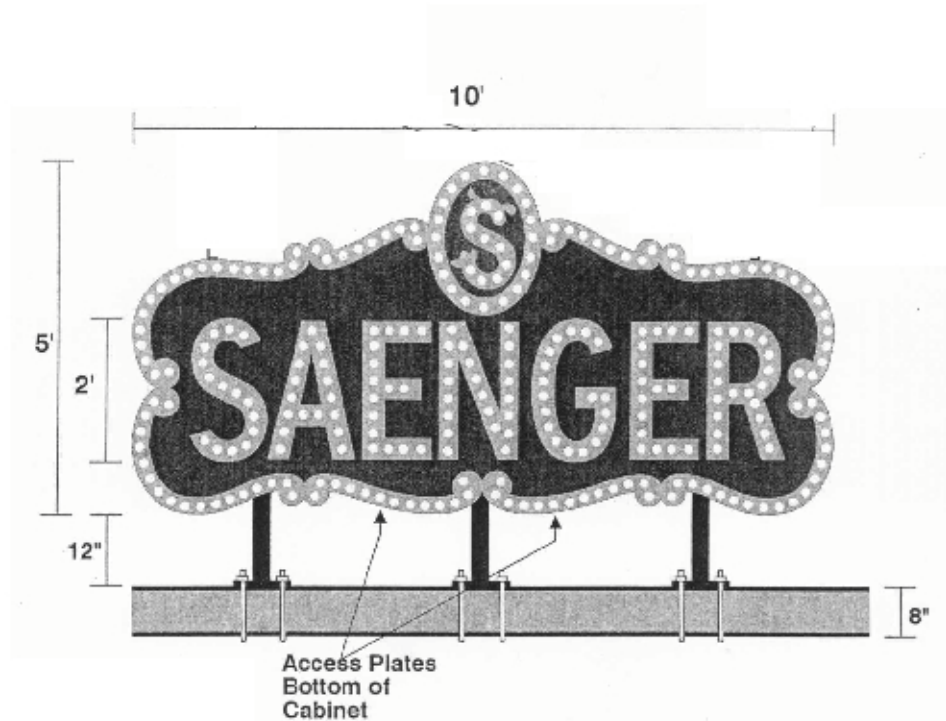
REQUEST Sign Variance

LEGEND



NTS

## SIGN DETAIL



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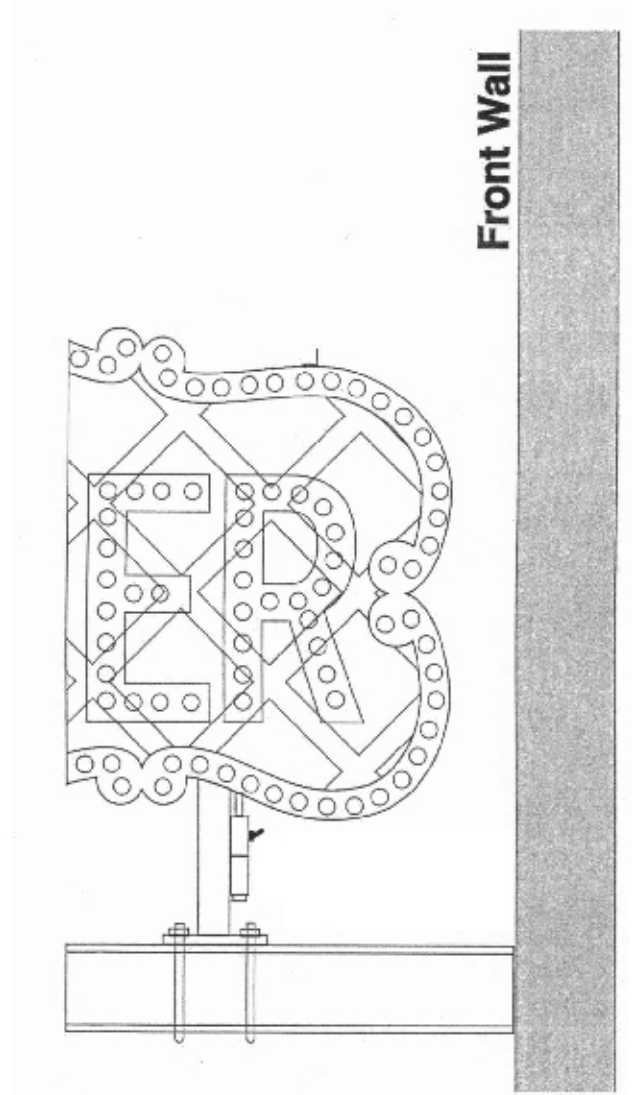
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