

**BOARD OF ZONING ADJUSTMENT
STAFF REPORT**

Date: January 9, 2017

CASE NUMBER

6078/6030

APPLICANT NAME

Knight Sign Industries, Inc.

LOCATION

2 North Royal Street
(Northeast corner of North Royal Street and Dauphin Street)

VARIANCE REQUEST

SIGN: Sign Variance to amend a previously approved Sign Variance to allow a total of two individual storefront signs, two wall plaques, and three traffic directional signs for a business in a T-6 Sub-District within the Downtown Development District.

ZONING ORDINANCE REQUIREMENT

SIGN: The Zoning Ordinance allows one individual storefront sign, no wall plaques, and does not address traffic directional signs for a business in a T-6 Sub-District within the Downtown Development District.

ZONING

Form Based Code T-6

AREA OF PROPERTY

0.24± Acre

ENGINEERING COMMENTS

No comments

TRAFFIC ENGINEERING COMMENTS

No comments.

CITY COUNCIL DISTRICT

District 2

ANALYSIS

The applicant is requesting a Sign Variance to amend a previously approved Sign Variance to allow a total of two individual storefront signs, two wall plaques, and three traffic directional signs for a business in a T-6 Sub-District within the Downtown Development District; the Zoning Ordinance allows one individual storefront sign, no wall plaques, and does not address traffic directional signs for a business in a T-6 Sub-District within the Downtown Development District.

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.

Variations are not intended to be granted frequently. The applicant must clearly show the Board that the request is due to very unusual characteristics of the property and that it satisfies the variance standards. What constitutes unnecessary hardship and substantial justice is a matter to be determined from the facts and circumstances of each application.

The purpose of the Sign Regulation Provisions is to promote the economic well-being of the entire Mobile community by creating a favorable physical image, to afford the business community an equal and fair opportunity to advertise and promote products and services, and to protect the right of the citizens to enjoy Mobile's natural scenic beauty.

The proposed signage is for the existing Servis 1st Bank at the subject location. A Sign Variance was approved by the Board at its March 7, 2016 meeting, to allow two individual storefront signs, one wall plaque, and three traffic directional signs. The applicant now proposes two individual storefront signs and two wall plaques for the bank. Two of the previously approved individual storefront signs are proposed to be removed. The three traffic directional signs approved by the previous Variance would not change and would remain.

The applicant states:

“Servis 1st Bank to have one set of back-lit letters over their main entrance, two sets of non-lit gold plate letters (one on each street facing façade), and one non-lit panel with plate letters over the existing “Drive-Thru” letters. It is our understanding that a variance is required due to the amount of signage we are requesting.

The design of the building made the option of a corner sign unattractive therefore the bank feels that the back-lit letterset is necessary so that they are noticeable to their clients and can easily be found. They are also requesting that they are allowed to install two non-lit gold lettersets that are existing and are being brought from another location. They would put one set on each building frontage so they are identifiable. The bank is also requesting that they install a panel with plate letters that identifies the bank over the existing “Drive-Thru” letters because this area is not near an entrance and not obviously related to Servis 1st Bank.

These occurred due to the request from the bank for their signage to be recognizable. This property is different from the neighboring properties as it is a corner building with a larger amount of street frontage. We, along with the bank, feel that all of the requested signage is necessary in order for clients to easily identify the bank and the areas of which they can access.

We did present our signage request to the CRC Board and they approved the request.”

As the applicant stated, the proposed signage has been reviewed and approved by the Consolidated Review Committee as required within the Downtown Development District (DDD). It should be noted that the two wall plaques will be approximately 7.1 square feet each and were approved by the CRC to be over the allowed 2 square feet each. The subject site is not within a historic district, thus the proposed signage is not subject to Architectural Review Board (ARB) approval.

The subject site is located at a street corner and the DDD signage regulations allow one diagonal corner sign per building at street corners. However, the subject building has balconies along both street frontages which would make such a sign impractical, and this type of sign would encroach into walking space along the balcony level. And due to the balcony and roof overhangs, this type of sign would be somewhat obscured from visibility. Due to the street corner location, the applicant now proposes one individual storefront sign of approximately 17.2 square feet (12'9" wide) to be placed on the balcony fascia over the main entrance facing Royal Street; one individual storefront sign of approximately 8.55 square feet (4-9" wide) to be placed over the existing "Drive-Thru" sign facing Dauphin Street; and two wall plaques of approximately 7.1 square feet each, one facing Royal Street and one facing Dauphin Street. As the DDD signage regulations allow individual storefront signs to be 3' high by the length of the building (74'-4" along the Royal Street front, and 131' along the Dauphin Street front), the proposed individual storefront signs would only be a fraction of what would normally be allowed along each frontage.

The proposed wall plaques would be a re-use of existing plaques at another location of the Servis 1st Bank and one is proposed to be close to the main pedestrian entrance at the middle of the building facing Royal Street, and one is proposed near the street corner facing Dauphin Street. This would be the only identity signage visible to pedestrians within that street block. Wall plaques are not allowed in a T-6 district, but are allowed up to 2 square feet in T-3 and T-4 districts within the DDD. The plaques would not be much different from a painted wall sign which is allowed within T-6 districts with no size restrictions. Therefore, the re-use of existing signs well within the allowable size area of a painted wall sign would not seem to be against the intent of the DDD Signage Standards.

The applicant has illustrated a hardship to justify the request for two individual storefront signs due to the fact that the building is a corner site and the architectural features of the building would make a diagonal corner sign impractical. Also, a hardship has been illustrated for the need of one wall plaque on each street frontage for pedestrian visibility. Therefore, the Board should consider all requested signage for approval, subject to conditions.

RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends to the Board the following findings of facts for approval:

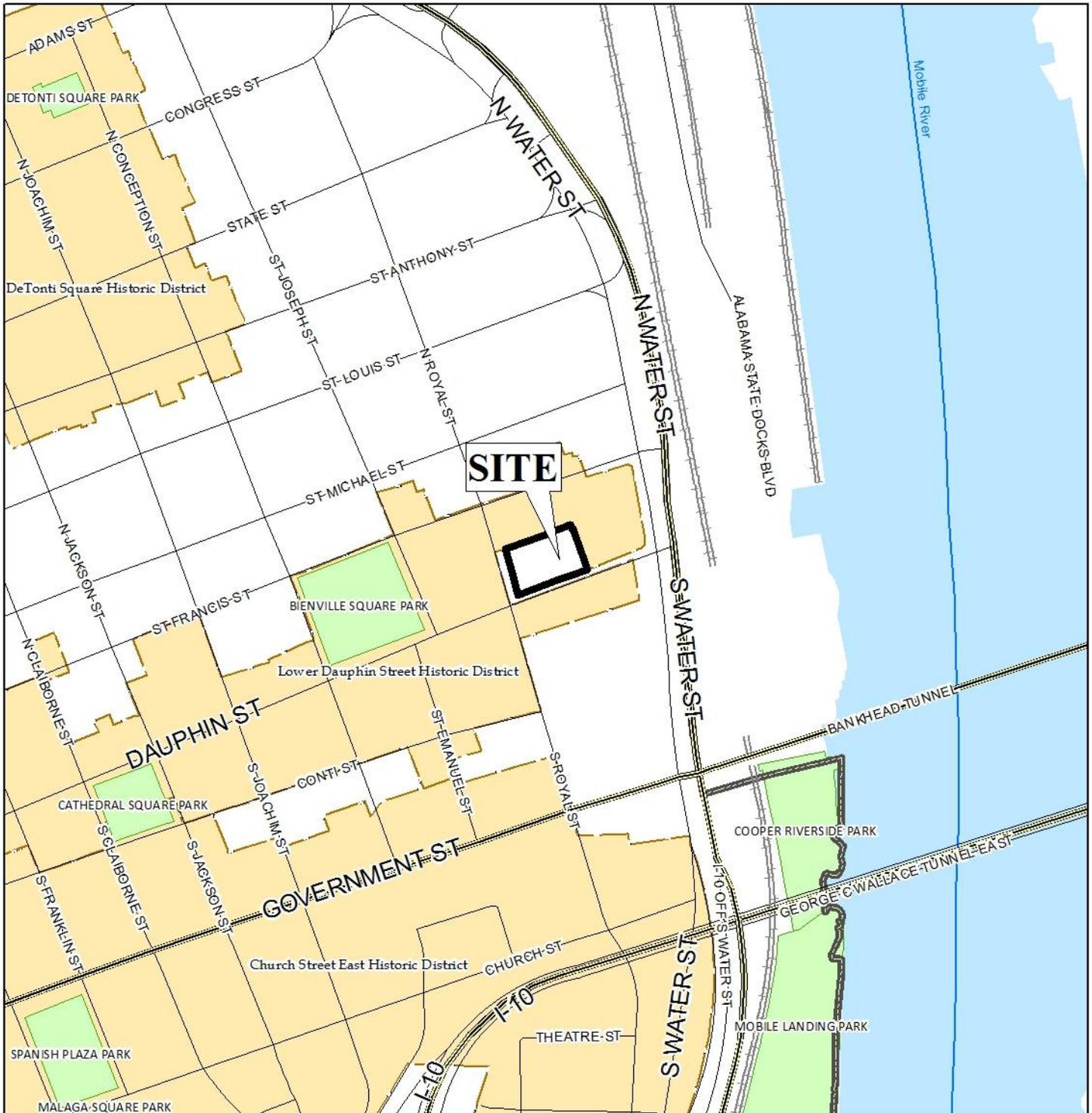
- 1) Based on the fact that the site is at a public street corner and the balcony would make a diagonal corner sign impractical, and since both vehicular and pedestrian visibility is vital to business, the variance will not be contrary to the public interest;

- 2) These special conditions (the site has two public street frontages, limited wall visibility due to the balcony, wall plaques can closely resemble painted wall signs, and vehicular visibility is necessary for the drive-thru facility) exist such that a literal enforcement of the provisions of the chapter will result in unnecessary hardship; and
- 3) That the spirit of the chapter shall be observed and substantial justice done to the applicant and the surrounding neighborhood by granting the variance in that the proposed signs would encompass far less wall space than the maximum allowed and afford the bank better identity at a street corner location.

Therefore, this application is recommended for approval, subject to the following conditions:

- 1) obtaining of sign permits for all four signs; and
- 2) full compliance with all other municipal codes and ordinances.

LOCATOR MAP



APPLICATION NUMBER 6078 DATE January 9, 2017

APPLICANT Knight Sign Industries, Inc.

REQUEST Sign Variance



BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT VICINITY MAP - EXISTING ZONING



The site is surrounded by commercial units.

APPLICATION NUMBER 6078 DATE January 9, 2017

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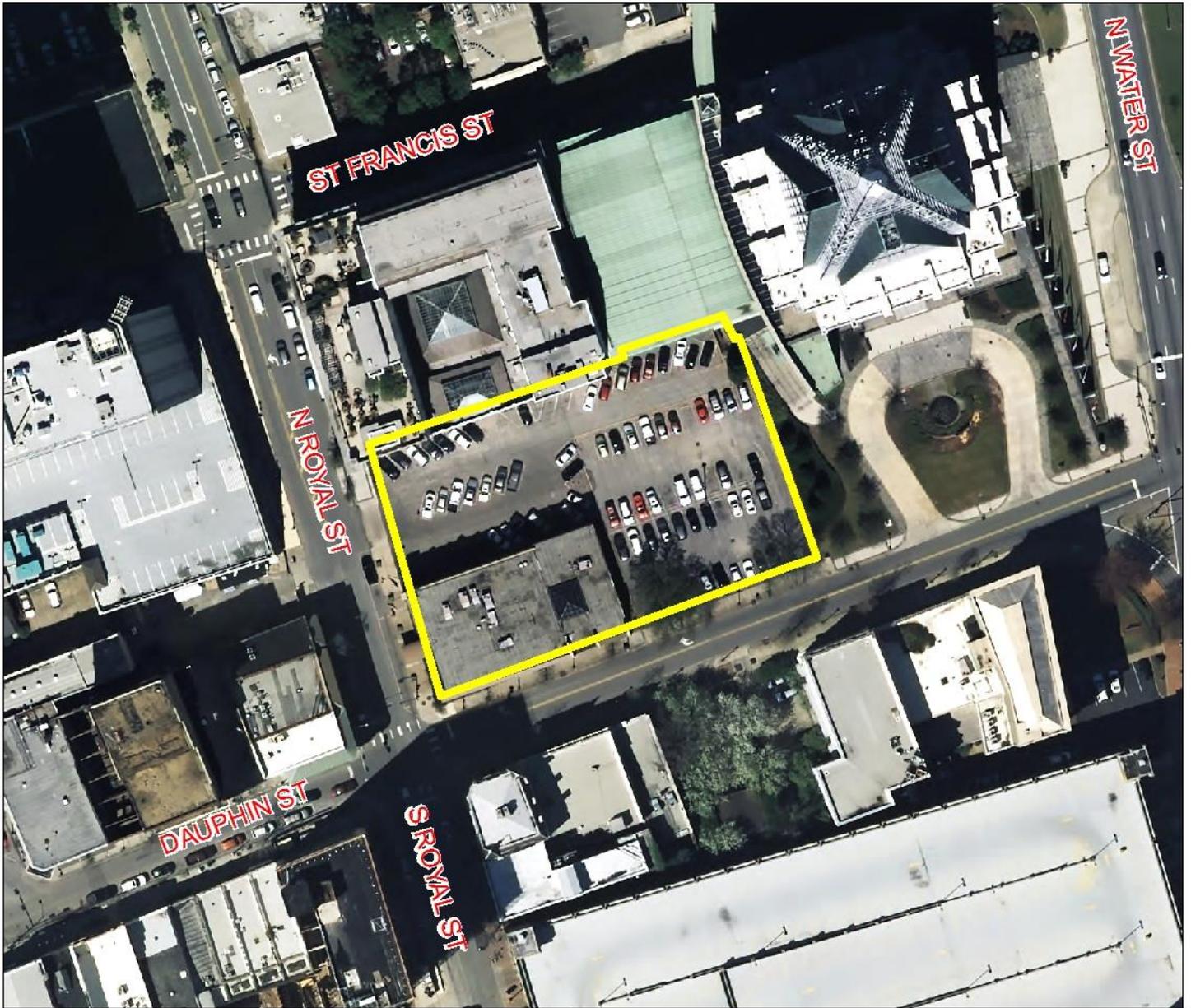
REQUEST Sign Variance

 R-A	 R-3	 T-B	 B-2	 B-5	 MUN	 SD-WH	 T5.1
 R-1	 R-B	 B-1	 B-3	 I-1	 OPEN	 T3	 T5.2
 R-2	 H-B	 LB-2	 B-4	 I-2	 SD	 T4	 T6



NTS

**BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT
VICINITY MAP - EXISTING AERIAL**



The site is surrounded by commercial units.

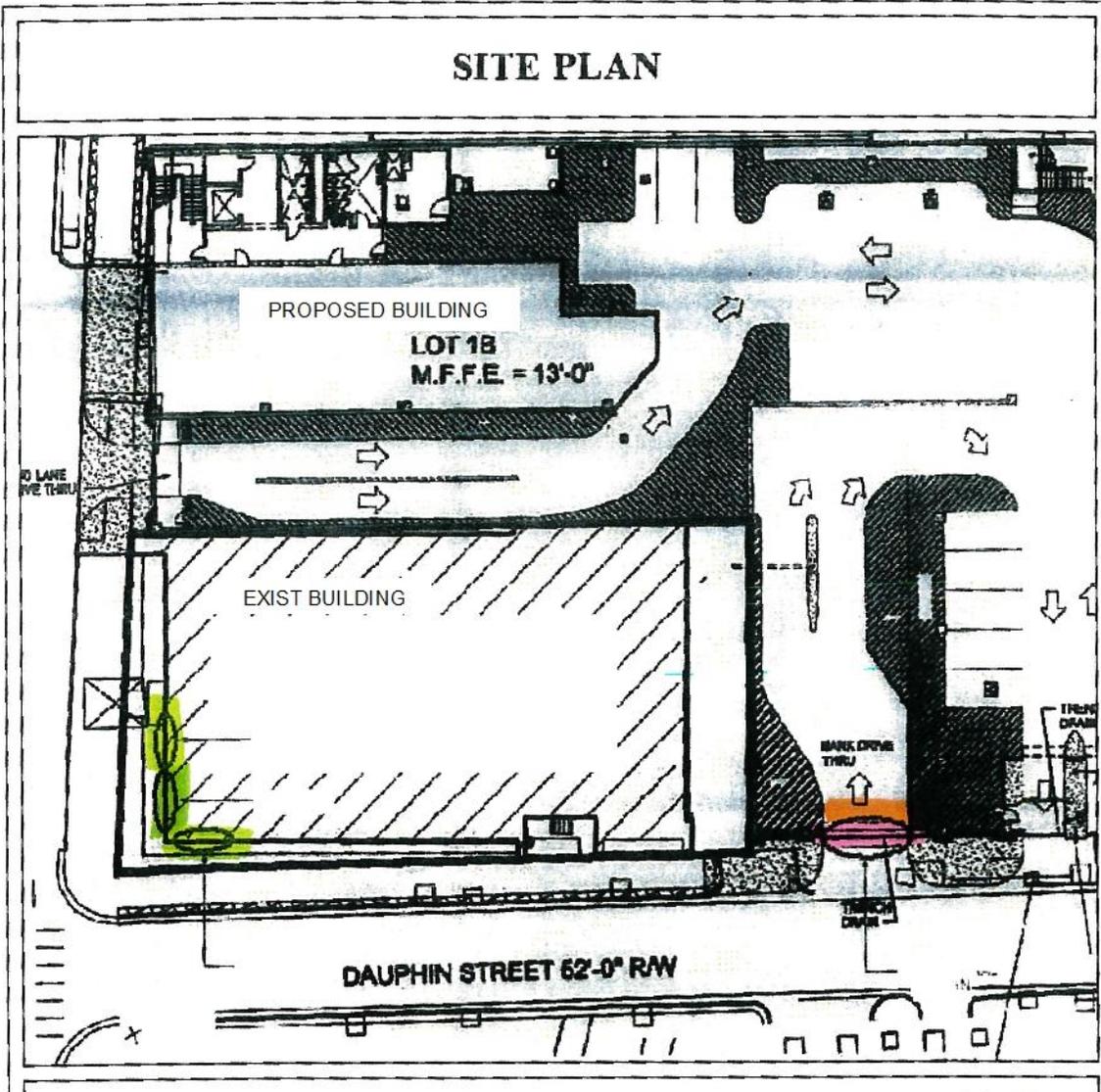
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REQUEST Sign Variance



DETAIL SITE PLAN



-  = BACK-LIT LETTERSET
-  = NON-LIT PANEL W/ PLATE LETTERS
-  = NON-LIT GOLD LOGO/LETTERSETS
-  = EXISTING "DRIVE-THRU" LETTERS

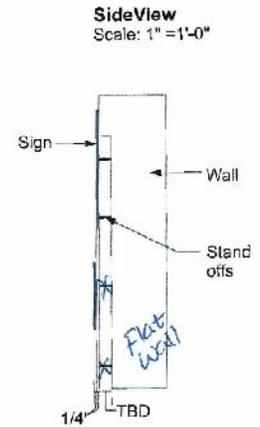
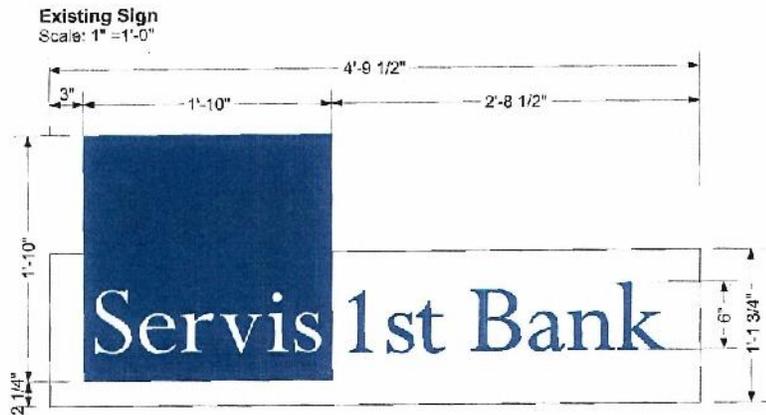
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REQUEST Sign Variance



DETAIL SITE PLAN



Shown on Photos
NTS



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 REQUEST Sign Variance

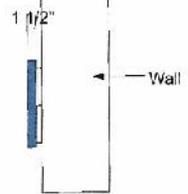


DETAIL SITE PLAN

Lit Reverse Channel Letters
Scale: 1/2" = 1'-0"

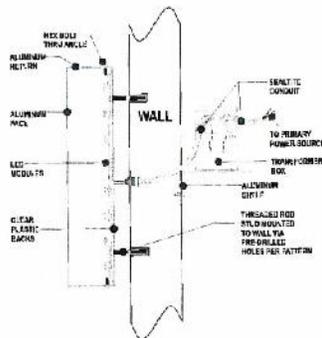


SideView
Scale: 1/2" = 1'-0"



Back-Lit Reverse Channel Letters:
Faces: Aluminum paint PMS 287c blue.
Returns: 1 1/2" deep, paint PMS 287c blue.
Lighting: White LEDs.
Mounting: Stud mount to building with stand offs for halo lighting effect.

Back Lit Reverse Channel Letter Mounting
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Shown on Photo
NTS

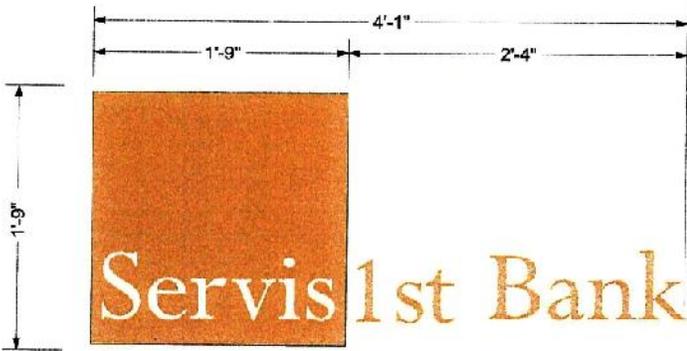


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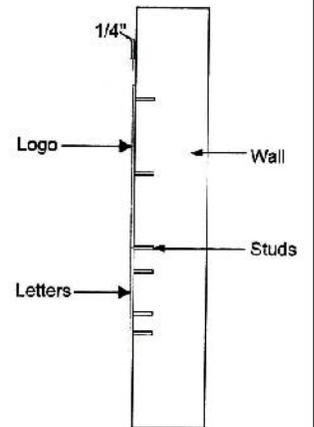
DETAIL SITE PLAN

Front View
Scale: 1" = 1'-0"



q34-2

SideView
Scale: 1" = 1'-0"



Existing Prefinished Gold Metal Logo & Letters:
Relocate from existing entry, to new bank entry.
Mounting: Stud mount flush.

*Polish on site

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DETAIL SITE PLAN



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