

**BOARD OF ZONING ADJUSTMENT
STAFF REPORT****Date: May 6, 2013****CASE NUMBER**

5825/5722/5644/4775/4631/1836

APPLICANT NAME

Knight Sign Industries (Sandi Gaddy, Agent)

LOCATION107 St Francis Street
(South side of St Francis Street, extending from North
Royal Street to St Joseph Street)**VARIANCE REQUEST****SIGN:** Sign Variance to amend a previously approved Sign Variance to allow a total of 568.33 square feet of wall signs on two facades of a multi-tenant building in a B-4, General Business District, and also within the Lower Dauphin Historic District.**ZONING ORDINANCE
REQUIREMENT****SIGN:** The Zoning Ordinance allows a maximum total of 64 square feet of signage per tenant in a B-4, General Business District, within the Lower Dauphin Historic District.**ZONING**

B-4, General Business

AREA OF PROPERTY

1.0± Acre

**TRAFFIC ENGINEERING
COMMENTS**

No comments.

**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 568.33 square feet of wall signs on two facades of a multi-tenant building in a B-4, General Business District, and also within the Lower Dauphin Historic District; Zoning Ordinance allows a maximum total of 64 square feet of signage per tenant in a B-4, General Business District, within the Lower Dauphin Historic District.

The subject site was last granted a Sign Variance in December, 2010, which allowed a multitude of signage for the Bank Trust Bank on the site. The existing wall signs on the upper portion of the tower were part of that variance which allowed a total of 842 square feet of signage apportioned among three walls. The bank has since changed names to Trustmark Bank and desires to re-brand the signage. The proposed total square footage and number of signs would decrease, but the configuration and graphics would change from the previously approved, hence this request. A Sign Variance request to increase the size of the upper tower signage was submitted for the November, 2011, Board meeting, but was withdrawn prior to being heard.

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.

Variances 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 applicant's justification for hardship regarding the size and number of signs is the unique building height and size in correlation with visible roadways in appropriately identifying the corporate symbol. It is pointed out that the property is different from neighboring properties as the top of the building can be seen from the Interstate and other main thoroughfares.

The Board has, with other applications, approved sign variances for the larger buildings in the downtown area, and allowed a wall sign for the major tenant for each street frontage as well as the associated ground signage for ground-level identification. This signage request falls within the range of Sign Variances previously approved by the Board for large and high buildings within the downtown area. Regarding the size of the signs, the massive size of the building requires larger signs in order to be seen in the same scale as the building and from greater distances from the building.

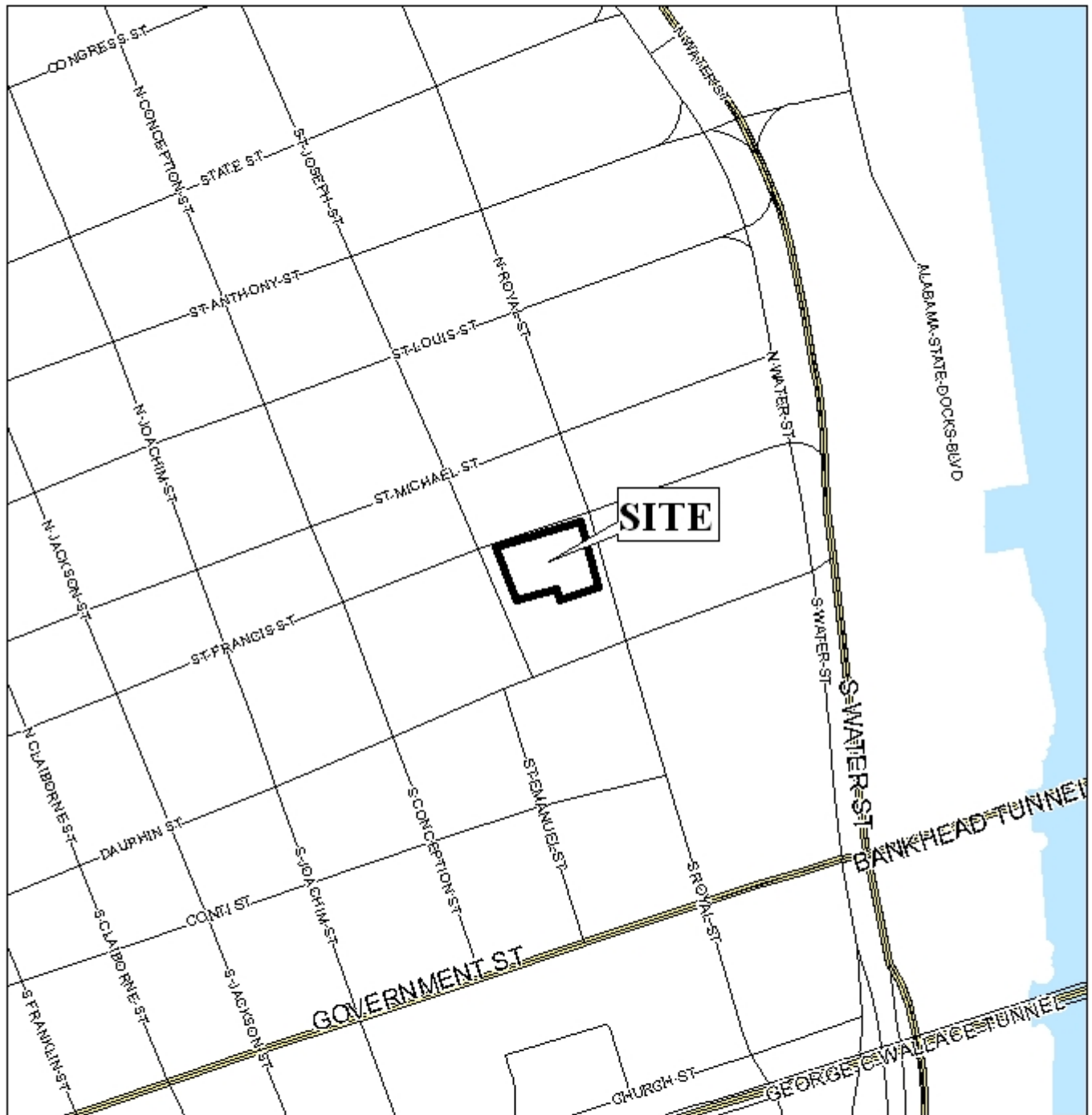
It should be noted that because the site is located within a Historic District, if this request is approved, the signage must also be approved by the Architectural Review Board of the Mobile Historic Development Commission and any Board approval should be contingent upon Historic approvals.

The applicant has illustrated that a hardship exists with the signage limitations of the Ordinance in relation to the size and height of the building, and the Board should consider this application for approval, subject to conditions.

RECOMMENDATION: Based on the preceding, this application is recommended for approval, subject to the following conditions:

- 1) approval of the Architectural Review Board; and
- 2) full compliance with all other municipal codes and ordinances.

LOCATOR MAP



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APPLICANT Knight Sign Industries
REQUEST Sign Variance



BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT VICINITY MAP - EXISTING ZONING



Commercial land use is located to the north, east, and south of the site. Bienville Square is located to the west of the site.

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LEGEND NTS

BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT VICINITY MAP - EXISTING ZONING



Commercial land use is located to the north, east, and south of the site. Bienville Square is located to the west of the site.

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N
NTS

PROPOSED SIGN DETAIL



WEST SIDE VIEW



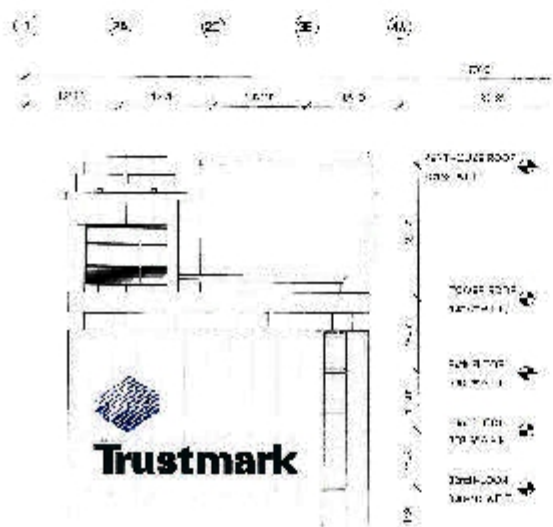
SOUTH SIDE VIEW

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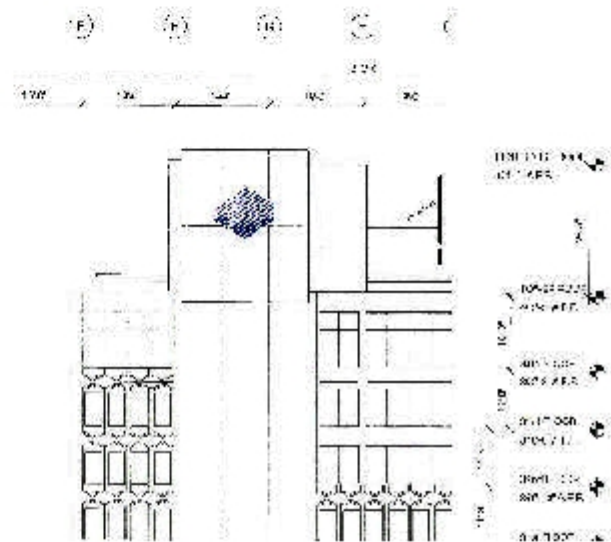
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NTS

PROPOSED SIGN DETAIL

West Elevation



South Elevation



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