

**CITY OF SUWANEE  
VARIANCE ANALYSIS**

**CASE NUMBER:** V-2008-003  
**REQUESTS:** ADDITIONAL WALL SIGN  
**APPLICABLE SECTION:** SECTION 1612.C.2  
**LOCATION:** LAWRENCEVILLE-SUWANEE ROAD AND  
SUWANEE AVENUE  
**DISTRICT/LAND LOT:** 7-212-001  
**ZONING:** OTCD (OLD TOWN COMMERCIAL DISTRICT)  
**DEVELOPMENT:** BANK

**APPLICANT / OWNER:** GWINNETT COMMUNITY BANK  
2775 BUFORD HIGHWAY  
DULUTH, GA

**CONTACT:** ANN MARSHALL                      **PHONE:** 770-476-7885

**RECOMMENDATION:**     **DENIAL**

**ANALYSIS:**

The applicant seeks a variance from Section 1612 of the City of Suwanee Zoning Ordinance to allow for an additional ground sign for an individual establishment on an individual lot. The applicant is seeking to locate a small ground sign near an entrance along Lawrenceville-Suwanee Road and a second ground site on a required retaining/screening wall. The subject property is located at the intersection of Suwanee Avenue and Lawrenceville-Suwanee Road and is currently under development for an approximately 3,560 square foot bank. The applicant indicates they intend to subdivide the property and develop the remainder of the property, located directly on the corner, in the future. Access is proposed via a right-in/right-out drive off Lawrenceville-Suwanee Road and a full access drive off Suwanee Avenue.

Section 1612.C.2 of the Zoning Ordinance regulates ground signage individual establishments on individual lots. An individual establishment on an individual lot is limited to one sign per road frontage. For a site containing a building between 0 and 10,000 square feet in size, the ground signs are limited to 40 square feet of copy area, 64 square feet of sign area, and 6 to 8 feet of height depending on the setback of the sign. The applicant is proposing one 5 foot tall monument sign with a copy area of approximately 11 square feet and a sign area of approximately 30 square feet and a second ground sign with 40 square feet of copy area located on a required wall. Both signs are located on Lawrenceville-Suwanee Road, therefore a variance is required.

The subject property is located within the Old Town Commercial District. To the north of the subject property, along Lawrenceville-Suwanee Road are a mixture of residential and commercial uses. To the south and east of the subject property is the Suwanee Lake Estates neighborhood (zoned R-100). West of the subject property, across Lawrenceville-Suwanee

Road, is a mixed-use development including townhouses, single family residences and commercial buildings, all zoned PMUD.

Across Lawrenceville-Suwanee Road are several business located in a shopping center that has one ground sign and approximately 388 linear feet of road frontage. The subject property has approximately 300 linear feet of road frontage along Lawrenceville-Suwanee Road and is requesting two ground signs. Both properties are at the intersection of Lawrenceville-Suwanee Road and Suwanee Avenue. The bank has frontage along Suwanee Avenue and therefore can have a ground sign on Suwanee Avenue.

The applicant notes that they are currently proposing two wall signs and a ground sign that are considerably smaller than they would normally be allowed, in an effort to be sensitive to the surrounding area. They note that even with the additional sign, the total signage is less square footage of copy area than they would otherwise be allowed by the Zoning Ordinance.

The City's Zoning Ordinance grants the Zoning Board of Appeals the authority to grant variances. According to Section 2006 of the Ordinance, the Board is authorized to grant variances when literal enforcement of the Ordinance will result in unnecessary hardship to a property owner. The zoning ordinance also states that variances may be granted when conditions are peculiar to the piece of property, or when relief, if granted, would not cause substantial detriment to the public good nor impair the purposes or intent of the Zoning Ordinance.

Although, the applicant has attempted to be sensitive to the context of the Town Center area by using smaller externally illuminated signs, the subject property does not appear to have a situation that rises to the level of hardship as defined by the Zoning Ordinance. Directly across the street is a shopping center with more frontage and two buildings, but only one ground sign. Therefore, staff recommends **DENIAL** of V-2008-003.

**V-2008-003**

Planning Department Conditions

The Planning Department recommends denial of the request; however, if the Planning Commission chooses to approve the variance to allow for an additional ground sign, the following conditions are recommended:

1. The subject property shall be limited to no more two ground signs along Lawrenceville-Suwanee Road. One of the ground signs shall be located on the retaining wall approximately as shown in Exhibit 'A'. The other ground shall be constructed approximately as shown on Exhibit 'B' and located approximately as shown on Exhibit 'C'. It should be noted that it is not the intend of this condition to eliminate signage along Suwanee Avenue.
2. If signage on the property is illuminated, external illumination shall be used. No internally illuminated signs shall be allowed. External illumination is subject to the approval of the Inspections Department.

## Standards for Consideration

Pursuant to Section 2009A of the City of Suwanee Zoning Ordinance, the City finds the following standards are relevant in considering all applications for a Variance.

- A. Will approval of the variance unreasonably increase the congestion in public streets?**

Approval of this variance would not increase the congestion in public streets.

- B. Will approval increase the danger of fire or endanger public safety?**

Approval of this variance would not increase the danger of fire or endanger public safety.

- C. Will approval unreasonably diminish or impair established property values within the surrounding area?**

With the appropriate conditions, approval of the variance would not unreasonably diminish or impair property values within the surrounding area.

- D. Will approval in any other aspect impair the public health, safety, comfort, morals or welfare of the inhabitants of the City?**

Excessive signage can impact the aesthetic appearance of the City and reduce the effectiveness of regulatory signage.

**APPLICATION FOR VARIANCE FROM THE  
CITY OF SUWANEE ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS**

Please complete this application and submit with all necessary attachments as stated on the Variance Information Form (please type or print)

**APPLICANT INFORMATION**

Name: Gwinnett Community Bank  
Address: 2775 Buford Highway  
City: Duluth  
State: GA  
Phone: 770476-2775

**OWNER INFORMATION**

Name: Gwinnett Community Bank  
Address: 2775 Buford Highway  
City: Duluth  
State: GA  
Phone: 770476-2775

CONTACT PERSON: Ann Marshall

PHONE: 770-476-7885

ADDRESS OF PROPERTY 3893 Lawrenceville-Suwanee Rd. Suwanee, GA 30026

LAND DISTRICT 7<sup>th</sup> LAND LOT 212 PARCEL \_\_\_\_\_ LOT \_\_\_\_\_

SUBDIVISION OR PROJECT NAME (IF APPLICABLE) Branch site

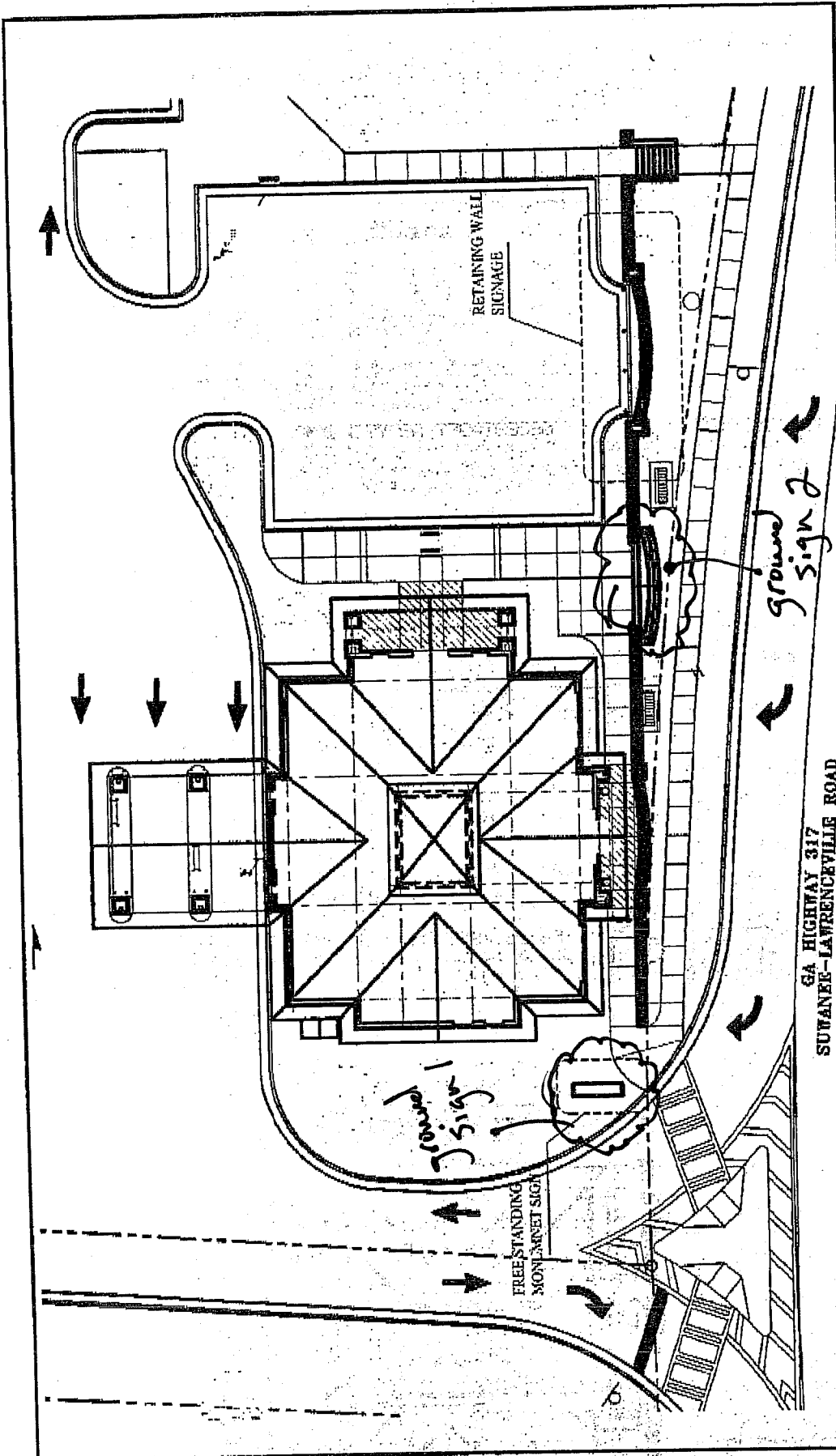
ZONING OTCD

VARIANCE REQUESTED A variance to allow a monument sign on the property as well as a wall sign due to the amount of road frontage. See attached plan.

NEED FOR VARIANCE Monument sign will mark entry designation.

**\*A VARIANCE FROM A CONDITION OF ZONING CANNOT BE ACCEPTED.  
SECTION 2007, APPLICANT AND/OR A REPRESENTATIVE.**

**\*\*\*The property owner, applicant and /or a representative thereof shall be present at all meetings of the Zoning Board of Appeals, Planning Commission and/or Mayor and Council at which official action is requested on any variance or application for amendment. The failure of the property owner, applicant and/or a representative to attend such meetings shall result in the denial of said variance or application for amendment.**



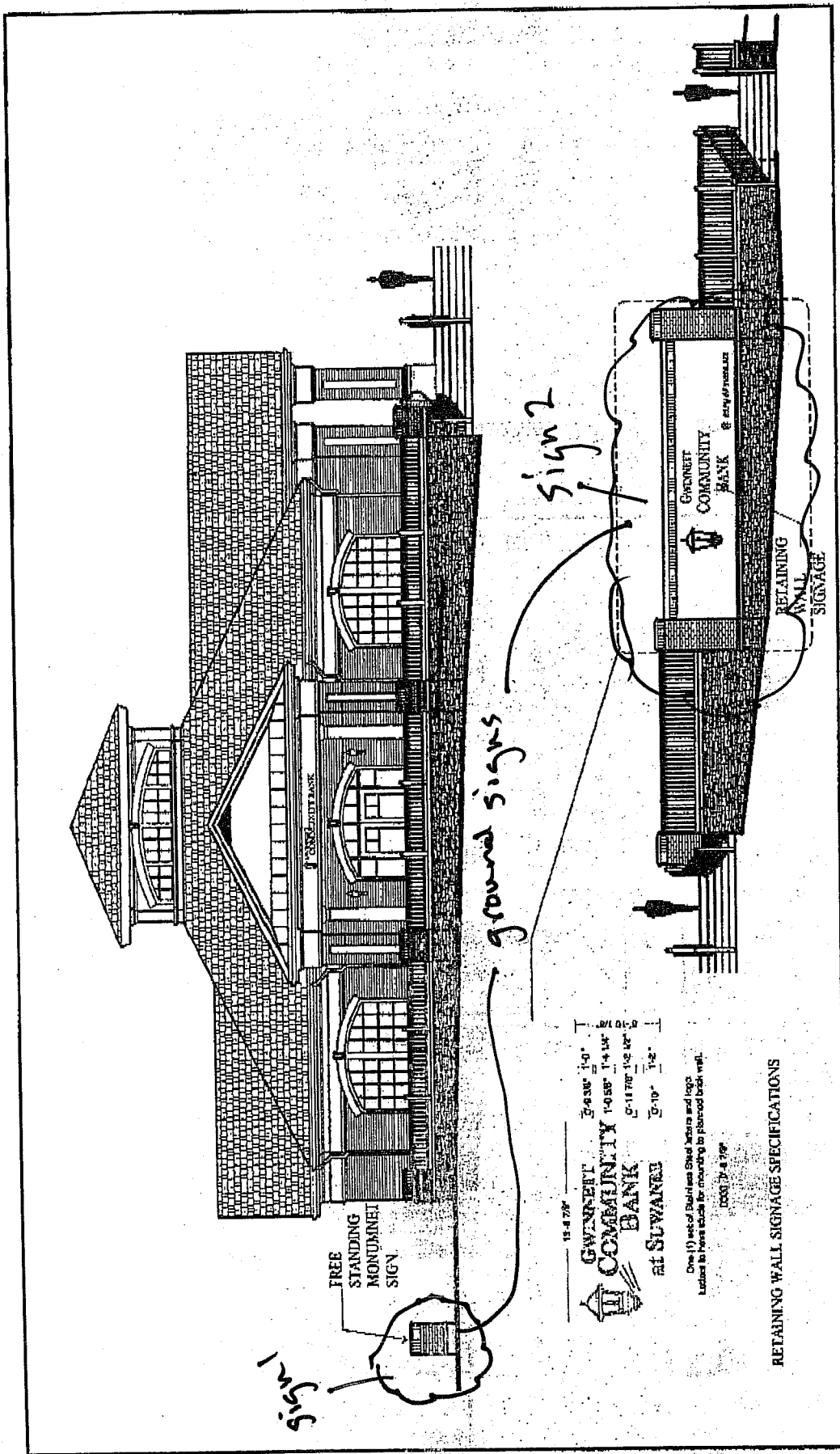
DATE 01/11/2008 JOB NO. 06-282  
 PROJECT GWINNETT COMMUNITY BANK  
 SUBJECT SUNANEER BRANCH  
 SHEET NO. 1 OF 4

**GWINNETT COMMUNITY BANK**  
**SIGNAGE PACKAGE**

SITE PLAN &  
 SIGNAGE LOCATIONS

V-2008-003

Exhibit 'A'



FREE  
STANDING  
MONUMENT  
SIGN

15'-4 7/8"  
 GWINNETT 3'-4 3/8" 1'-0"  
 COMMUNITY 1'-0 5/8" 1'-4 1/4"  
 BANK 0'-11 7/8" 1'-2 1/2"  
 at SUWANEE 0'-10" 1'-2"

One (1) set of Shaded Signs and Logo  
 Located in base of retaining wall for mounting to planned brick wall.

1000 7'-4 3/4"

RETAINING WALL SIGNAGE SPECIFICATIONS

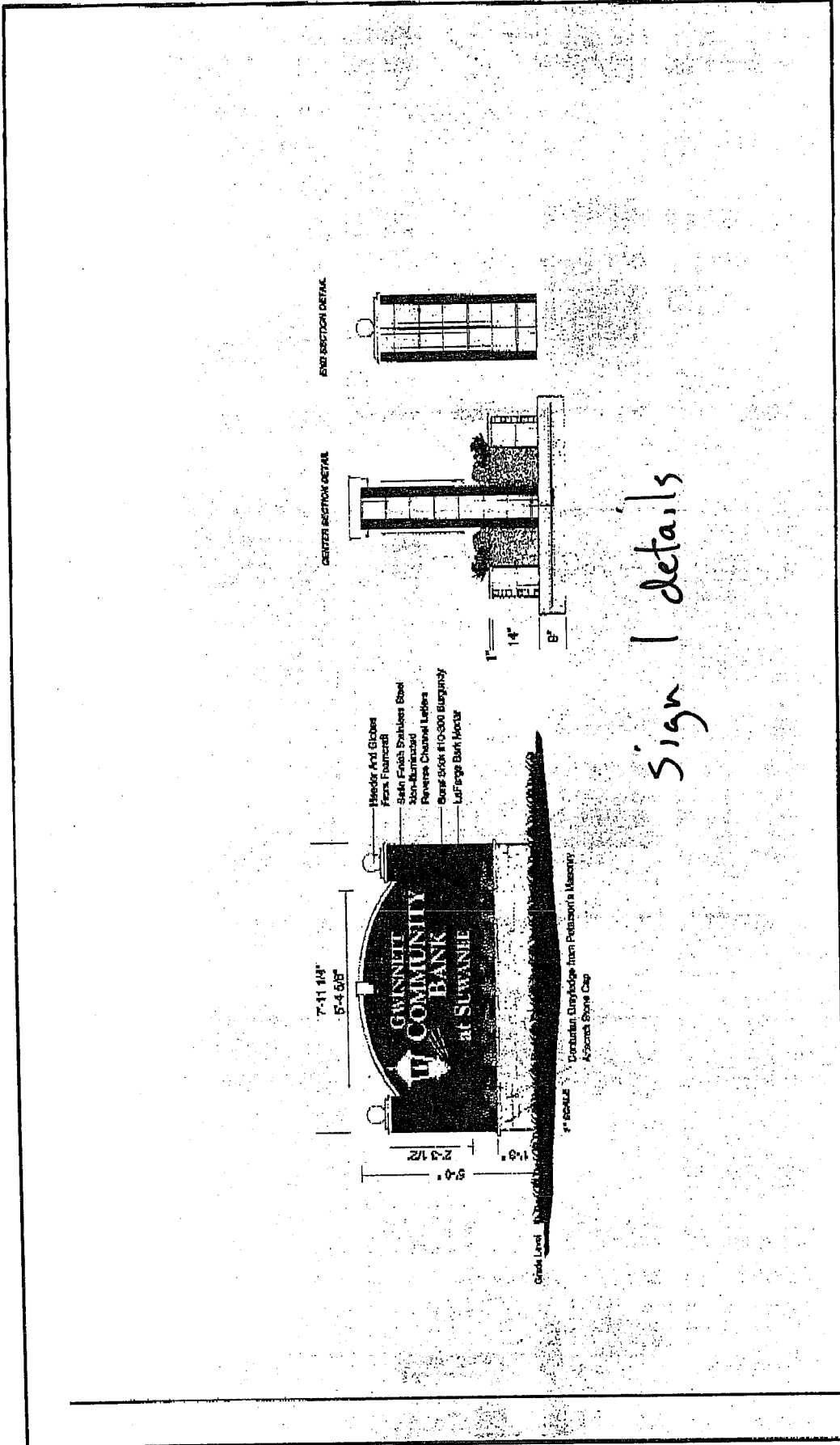
DATE: 01/22/2008 10:00:06-252  
 PROJECT: GWINNETT COMMUNITY BANK  
 SUBJECT: SUWANEE BRANCH  
 SHEET NO. 2 OF 4

# GWINNETT COMMUNITY BANK

## SIGNAGE PACKAGE

SITE ELEVATIONS  
 & RETAINING WALL  
 SIGNAGE SPECIFICATION

V-2008-003



END SECTION DETAIL

GENERAL SECTION DETAIL

*Sign 1 details*

DATE: 01/17/2008 10:00:06-202  
 PROJECT: GWINNETT COMMUNITY BANK  
 SUBJECT: SUWANEE BRANCH  
 SHEET NO. 4 OF 4

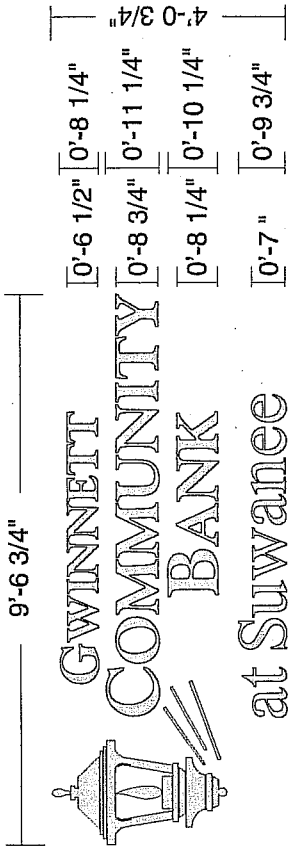
# GWINNETT COMMUNITY BANK

## SIGNAGE PACKAGE

MONUMENT SIGN  
 ELEVATION & SPECIFICATIONS

V-2008-003 Exhibit 'B'





One (1) set of Stainless Steel letters and logo.  
 Letters to have studs for mounting to planned brick wall.

0000 0'-7"

Scale= 1"=1'

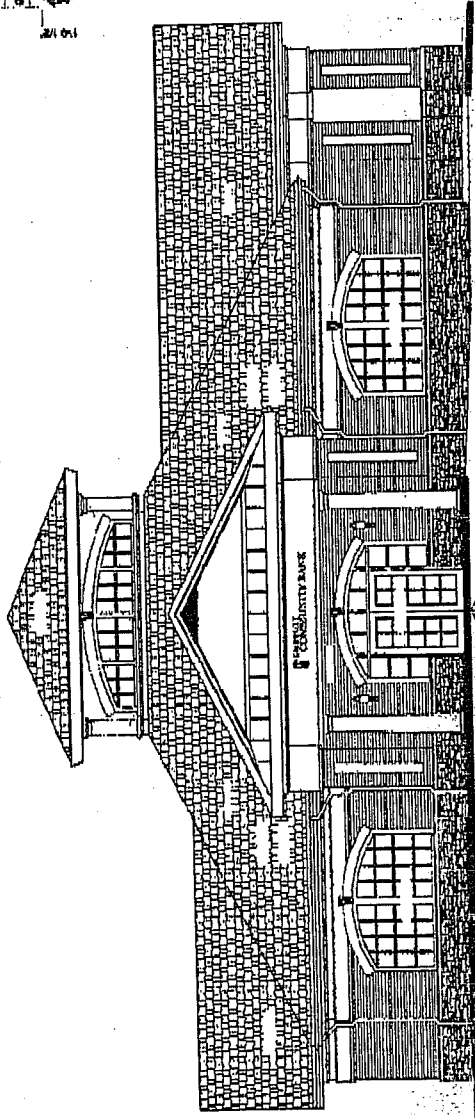
← sign 2



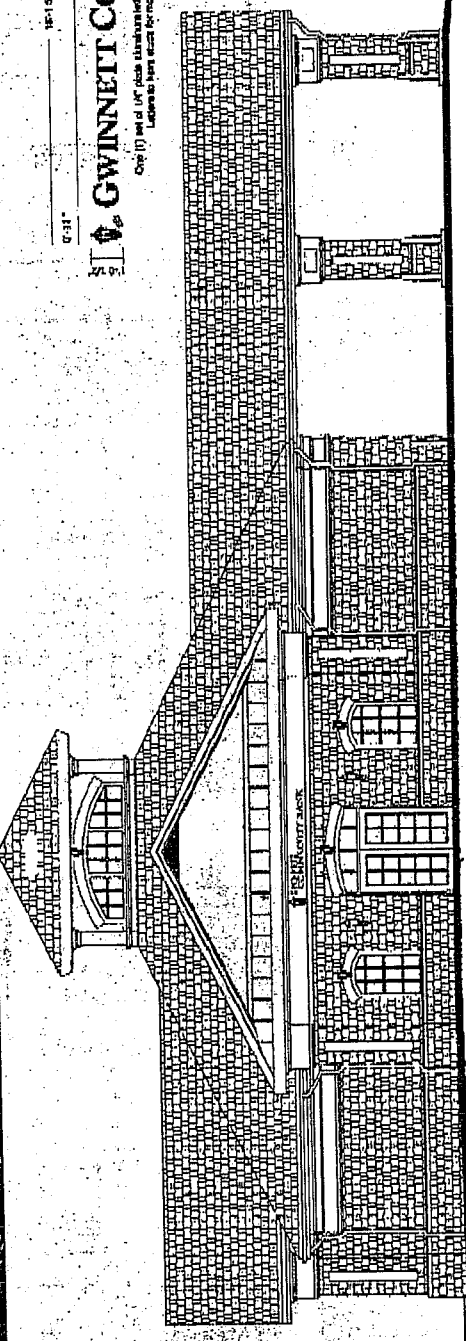
1 BLDG WALL ELEVATION  
 A01.2

V-2008-003

0'-31" 16'-11 1/2"  
 16'-11 1/2" 16'-11 1/2"  
**GWINNETT COMMUNITY BANK**  
 One (1) set of (1) sets architectural and engineering drawings.  
 License to have such drawings reproduced by hand.



0'-31" 16'-11 1/2"  
 16'-11 1/2" 16'-11 1/2"  
**GWINNETT COMMUNITY BANK**  
 One (1) set of (1) sets architectural and engineering drawings.  
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DATE: 01/11/2008 (DWG NO. 06-252)  
 PROJECT: GWINNETT COMMUNITY BANK  
 SUBJECT: SUWANEE BRANCH  
 SHEET NO. 3 OF 4

**GWINNETT COMMUNITY BANK**  
**SIGNAGE PACKAGE**

BLDG ELEVATIONS &  
 SIGNAGE SPECIFICATION

V-2008-003



**MATHIAS**  
CORPORATION

Gwinnett Community Bank Suwanee

Date: January 8, 2008

11-2008-003



City of Suwanee

CROSSROADS of PAST and FUTURE



CITY OF  
**Suwanee**  
G E O R G I A

V-2008-003

Location Map

**Legend**

- Streets
- City Limits
- ▨ V-2008-003

