

**CITY OF SUWANEE
VARIANCE ANALYSIS**

CASE NUMBER: V-2008-006
REQUESTS: CONTINUE A NON-CONFORMING SIGN
DESPITE MAKING ALTERATIONS
APPLICABLE SECTION: SECTION 1609.B.2 AND 1612.C.2
LOCATION: SUWANEE DAM ROAD AND PEACHTREE
INDUSTRIAL BOULEVARD
DISTRICT/LAND LOT: 7-252-039
ZONING: C-2 (GENERAL COMMERCIAL DISTRICT)
DEVELOPMENT: BANK

APPLICANT / OWNER: QUANTUM NATIONAL BANK
505 PEACHTREE INDUSTRIAL BOULEVARD
SUWANEE, GA 30024

CONTACT: STEPHANIE RODD **PHONE:** 770-831-2605

RECOMMENDATION: **DENIAL**

ANALYSIS:

The applicant seeks a variance from Section 1609 of the City of Suwanee Zoning Ordinance to renovate an existing non-conforming monument sign for an individual establishment on an individual lot. The applicant intends to expand an existing electronic reader board and the sign would continue to exceed the maximum height and copy area for a ground sign. The applicant states that the sign is outdated and therefore needs to be upgraded with newer technology. The subject property is approximately 1.23 acres and is located at the intersection of Suwanee Dam Road and Peachtree Industrial Boulevard and contains an approximately 12,000 square foot two-story bank.

Section 1609.B.2 of the Zoning Ordinance regulates existing legally permitted nonconforming signs. It states that any legally permitted and constructed sign shall be allowed to continue as a legal non-conforming use under this Ordinance except that it shall not be enlarged, altered, or rebuilt except in conformance with this Ordinance. The applicant proposes to alter the sign including increasing the area of a variable message board. Section 1611 specifically prohibits variable message boards. Additionally, the sign would maintain the same size (approximately 58.15 square feet) and height (approximately 10.6 feet). Section 1612.C.2 limits a 12,000 square foot building to a ground sign for each road frontage no taller than 10 feet in height and no larger than 48 square feet of copy area. Therefore, in order to alter the sign as proposed, a variance is required.

The subject property is located at the intersection of Suwanee Dam Road and Peachtree Industrial Boulevard. To the north of the subject property, across Suwanee Dam Road are a mixture of residential and commercial uses. To the south of the subject property, along Peachtree

Industrial Boulevard, is a shopping center zoned C-2. West of the subject property is a mixed-use development including townhouses, single family residences and commercial buildings, all zoned PMUD. To the east of the subject property, across Peachtree Industrial Boulevard, a gas station zoned C-2 and an undeveloped tract zoned M-1.

The bank has frontage along Suwanee Dam Road and Peachtree Industrial Boulevard and therefore can have a ground sign on both roads. The existing monument sign is located at the intersection of Suwanee Dam Road and Peachtree Industrial Boulevard, approximately 15 feet from the closest right-of-way line along Peachtree Industrial Boulevard.

The applicant notes that they wish to upgrade the existing sign because the existing technology is outdated and uses more energy. Also, the applicant plans to increase the size of the electronic reader board and reduce the size of the identification panel, while maintaining the existing dimensions and height of the sign.

One of the purposes of the sign ordinance is to allow property to take advantage of their first amendment rights to free speech while regulating the erection and placement of signs in the City in order to provide safe operating conditions for pedestrian and vehicular traffic without unnecessary and unsafe distractions to drivers and pedestrians. Signs, which by reason of their size, location, and manner of illumination cast light directly on streets or are animated by means of flashing, blinking, or traveling lights could distract drivers and adversely affect traffic safety.

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.

In conclusion, the subject property does not appear to have a situation that rises to the level of hardship as defined by the Zoning Ordinance. The existing sign is legally non-conforming due to its size, height, and the electronic reader board. Any alteration to the sign would require the applicant to bring the sign into compliance, which would result in the removal of the electronic reader board, reduction of the height of the sign, and reduction of the sign area. The Zoning Ordinance prohibits variable message reader boards since signs, which by reason of their size, location, and manner of illumination cast light directly onto streets or are animated by means of flashing, blinking, or traveling lights which could distract drivers and adversely affect traffic safety. Therefore, staff recommends **DENIAL** of V-2008-006.

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Planning Department Conditions

The Planning Department recommends denial of the request. Should the Board choose to approve the request, the following language and conditions should be considered:

Approval of a variance to allow for the alteration of a non-conforming sign that does not meet current signs standards subject to the following conditions:

1. The height, copy area and sign area of the altered sign shall not exceed the current height, copy area and sign area of the sign.
2. The variable message sign be consistent with the information included in exhibit 'A'.
3. Future changes of grounds signage shall be subject to all of the City's signage regulations.

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?**

The Zoning Ordinance prohibits variable message reader boards since signs, which by reason of their size, location, and manner of illumination cast light directly onto streets or are animated by means of flashing, blinking, or traveling lights which could distract drivers and adversely affect traffic safety.

**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: QUANTUM NATIONAL BANK
Address: 505 PEACHTREE INDUSTRIAL BLVD.
City: SUWANEE
State: GEORGIA
Phone: 770-945-8300
E-mail address: srodd@quantumbank.com

OWNER INFORMATION

Name QUANTUM NATIONAL BANK
Address 505 PEACHTREE INDUSTRIAL BLVD.
City: SUWANEE
State GEORGIA
Phone: 770-945-8300

CONTACT PERSON: STEPHANIE RODD

PHONE: 770-831-2605 - OFFICE

ADDRESS OF PROPERTY 505 PEACHTREE INDUSTRIAL BLVD. SUWANEE GA. 30024

LAND DISTRICT 7 LAND LOT 252 PARCEL _____ LOT _____

SUBDIVISION OR PROJECT NAME (IF APPLICABLE) _____

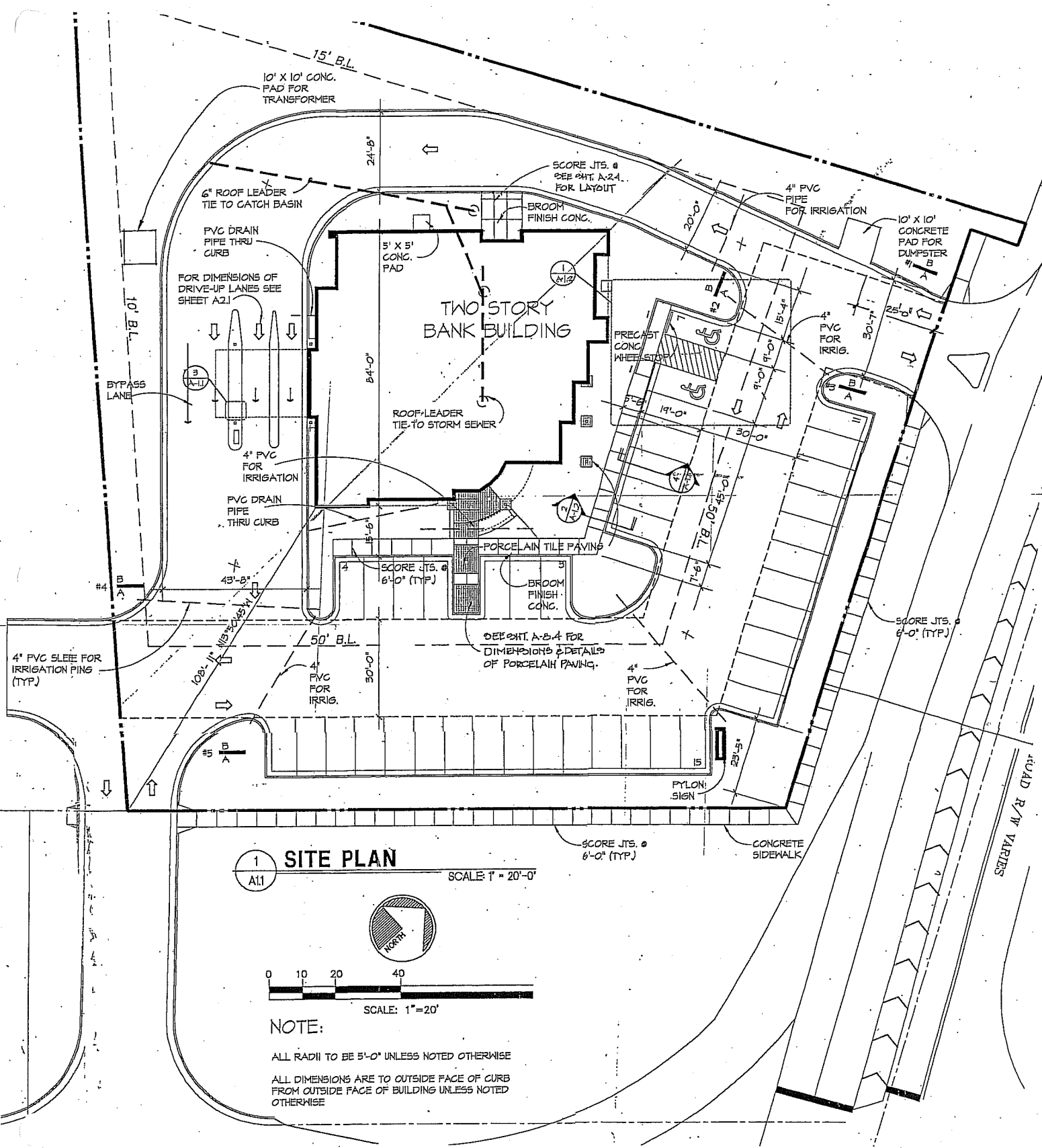
ZONING C-2

VARIANCE REQUESTED UPGRADE EXISTING MONUMENT SIGN. TOP OF CABINET TO BE REMODELED. FACE AND MATRIX BOARD TO BE REMOVED AND REPLACED WITH SLIGHTLY LARGER MATRIX READER BOARD. SMALLER ID PANEL & ROUTED STREET NUMBERS.

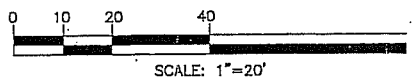
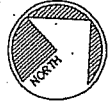
NEED FOR VARIANCE THE EXISTING ELECTRONIC BOARD IS OLD TECHNOLOGY WHICH MEANS MORE ENERGY CONSUMPTION, DISCONTINUED PARTS. ORIGINAL COMPANY WHO INSTALLED SIGN WENT OUT OF BUSINESS AND MAINTENANCE HAS BECOME A NIGHTMARE. LAMPS WILL BE DISCONTINUED. EVENTUALLY PARTS MAY BECOME SO SCARCE THAT BOARD CANNOT BE REPAIRED & WOULD BECOME AN EYESORE TO THE PUBLIC. LED MATRIX CONSUMES LESS ENERGY THAN EXISTING INCANDESCANT BOARD.

***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.**



1 SITE PLAN
 A11 SCALE: 1" = 20'-0"



NOTE:
 ALL RADII TO BE 5'-0" UNLESS NOTED OTHERWISE
 ALL DIMENSIONS ARE TO OUTSIDE FACE OF CURB FROM OUTSIDE FACE OF BUILDING UNLESS NOTED OTHERWISE

V-2008-006

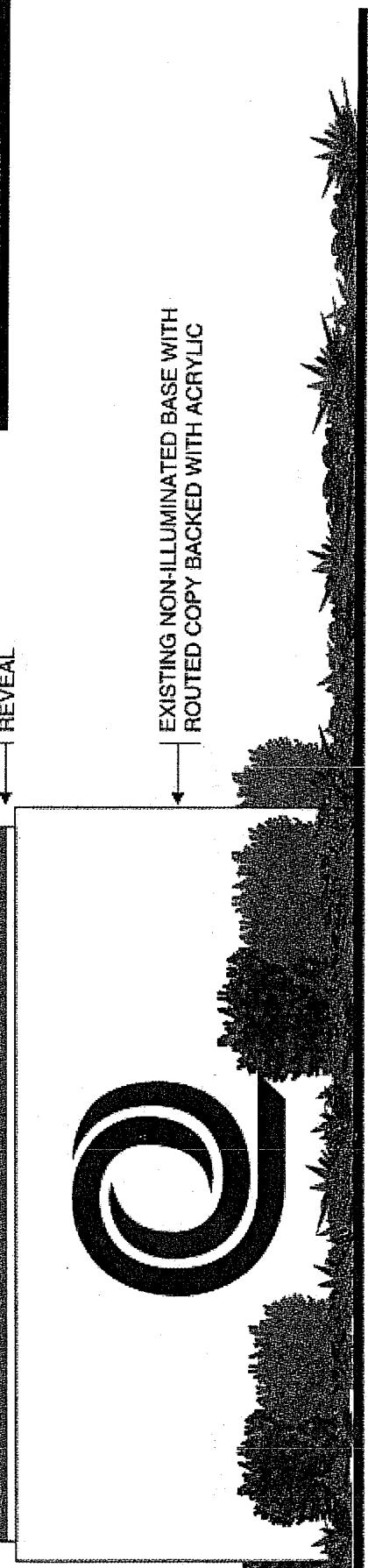
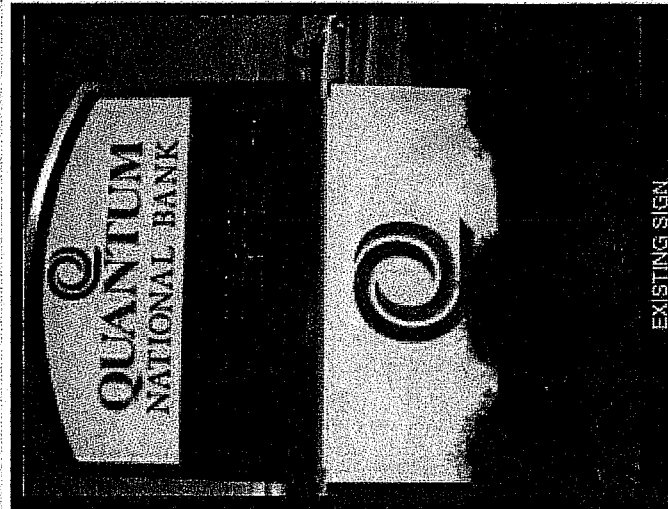
"Exhibit A"

SPECIFICATIONS:
EXISTING MONUMENT SIGN, TOP OF CABINET TO BE REMODELED, FACE AND MATRIX BOARD TO BE REMOVED AND REPLACED WITH LARGER MATRIX BOARD, SMALLER ID PANEL & ROUTED STREET NUMBERS.

106.5"
105.75"
3' TRIM



- 6" TALL ROUTED LETTERS MOUNTED TO ADDED TRIM
- ADDITIONAL TRIM TO MASK EDGE OF MATRIX BOARD SIZE TO BE DETERMINED
- 39"X92" 34MM LED MATRIX BOARD WITH 3 LINES OF 9" TALL CHARACTERS
- 22"X110.5" ALUMINUM FACE WITH ROUTED COPY AND PUSH-THRU ACRYLIC
- EXISTING NON-ILLUMINATED BASE WITH ROUTED COPY BACKED WITH ACRYLIC



COLORS: PMS #202 BURGUNDY VINYL ■ PMS #5535 BOTTLE GREEN VINYL □ WHITE

TYPE FACE: LOGO TYPEFACE



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 LANG DESIGN
 10000
 770-887-7338
 770-781-9128

CLIENT: QUANTUM NAT. BANK
 SALES PERSON: RICHARD PRUITT
 DESIGNER: NEIL TANNER

APPROVED BY:
 DATE: 1/14/05

FILE: ARTWORK / SALES ART / QUANTUM BANK
 SCALE: 1/2" = 1'

City of Suwanee

CROSSROADS of PAST and FUTURE




V-2008-006

Location Map

Legend

— Streets

 V-2007-006

