

VARIANCE REQUEST:

V-2012-006

**CITY OF SUWANEE
VARIANCE ANALYSIS**

CASE NUMBER: V-2012-006
REQUESTS: POLE SIGN
APPLICABLE SECTION: SECTION 1608 (D) GENERAL PROVISIONS
LOCATION: 3580 LAWRENCEVILLE-SUWANEE ROAD
DISTRICT/LAND LOT: 7-210-018A
ZONING: C-1 (NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL DISTRICT)

APPLICANT: SUWANEE TOWNE FLORIST
602 BUFORD HIGHWAY
SUWANEE, GA 30024

OWNER: OLD TOWN ENTERPRISES
PO BOX 924107
NORCROSS, GA 30092

CONTACT: MARK SANDERSON PHONE: 678-873-2210

RECOMMENDATION: APPROVAL WITH CONDITIONS

ANALYSIS:

The applicant seeks a variance from Section 1608 (D) of the City of Suwanee Zoning Ordinance to allow for a pole sign. The subject business is a floral shop located at the intersection of Davis Street and Buford Highway in the Old Town section of the City. The business is located in a 1,200 square foot building located on a 0.4 acre parcel. As such it would be entitled to a 64 square foot ground sign with 48 square feet of copy area and a maximum height of 6 feet. The address of the property is 602 Buford Highway.

Section 1608 (D) of the Zoning Ordinance regulates what type of ground signs are permitted in the City of Suwanee. Section 1608(D) states:

Construction of permanent ground signs. All permanent ground signs with a sign area greater than 6 square feet but 192 square feet or less shall be monument-style signs. No permanent pole signs greater than 6 square feet or less than 192 square feet shall be allowed.

The proposed sign that the applicant is requesting is 24.5 square feet and 4 feet tall. The sign would be supported by two 6x6 inch wood posts instead of the required monument base which would typically be an enclosed brick or stone base. The size and height of the proposed sign meets the requirements for this parcel.

The subject property is located at the intersection of Davis Street and Buford Highway. The property is surrounded by a mix of zoning and uses. To the north of the subject property are undeveloped lots that are zoned C-2 (General Commercial District). To the east and south of the property, are single family homes zoned R-100 (Single Family Residential District). To the west is a single family home zoned O-I (Office-Institutional District).

The subject site is located historic Old Town. The area is home to some of the City's oldest homes and non-residential buildings. The proposed sign is in context with many other signs in the area. Many of the businesses along Buford Highway are located in older buildings that use pole signs similar to the proposed sign. State Farm currently has a pole sign as does the Quality Search office, and Tire Omni. The City's downtown directional sign is also a pole sign. The proposed sign has a "historical look" that appears fit in with the area.

As previously stated, the proposed sign is 4 feet tall and 24.5 square feet. This is well within the permitted maximum height and size requirements. The site would be permitted to construct a 6 foot tall sign with 48 square feet of copy area on both Buford Highway and Davis Street because the zoning ordinance allows one free standing sign per road frontage. The applicant is requesting significantly less signage than they are entitled to 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 relief 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 which rises to the level of hardship. However, the proposed sign is in character with other signs along Buford Highway and is in context with historic Old Town. In addition, the proposed signage is less than what the business is entitled. As such, it is likely that approval of this variance would not cause substantial detriment to the public good nor impair the purposes or intent of the Zoning Ordinance. Therefore, staff recommends **APPROVAL WITH CONDITIONS** of V-2012-006.

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Planning Department Recommendation:

Approval of a variance for a pole sign subject to the following conditions:

1. This variance shall only apply to one sign located along Buford Highway.
2. Installed signage shall be consistent with the sign rendering in "exhibit C"
3. The location of the sign shall be consistent with the site plan dated 11/14/12.

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?

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?

Approval of the variance would not impair the public health, safety, comfort, morals or welfare of the inhabitants of the City.

**APPLICATION FOR VARIANCE FROM THE
CITY OF SUWANEЕ 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: Suwanee Towne Florist
Address: 602 Buford Hwy
City: Suwanee
State: Georgia
Phone: 678-482-0229
E-mail address: msand308@gmail.com

OWNER INFORMATION

Name: Old Town Enterprises
Address: PO Box 924107
City: Norcross
State: Georgia
Phone: 404-886-0948

CONTACT PERSON: Mark Sanderson

PHONE: 678-873-2210

ADDRESS OF PROPERTY 602 Buford Hwy, Suwanee, Ga 30024

LAND DISTRICT 7th LAND LOT 210 PARCEL R7210-018A LOT _____

SUBDIVISION OR PROJECT NAME (IF APPLICABLE) _____

ZONING C2

VARIANCE REQUESTED Sign Ordinance Sec 1611 (15), Section 1608 (D)

NEED FOR VARIANCE Please see attached description.

***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.**

APPLICANT CERTIFICATION

The undersigned below is authorized to make this application and is aware that an application or re-application for the same type of variance affecting the same land or any portion thereof shall not be acted upon within twelve (12) months from the date of last action by the Board of Appeals, unless waived by the Board of Appeals. An application or reapplication shall not be acted upon in less than (6) months from the date of the last action by the Board of Appeals.



[Signature] 11-14-12
Signature of Applicant Date

MARIE SANDERS
Typed or Printed Name and Title

Cynthia McCoy 11/14/12
Signature of Notary Public Date

Notary Seal

PROPERTY OWNER CERTIFICATION

The undersigned below, or as attached, is the record owner of the property considered in this application and is aware that an application or reapplication for the same type of Variance affecting the same land or any portion thereof shall not be acted upon within twelve (12) months from the date of last action by the Board of Appeals unless waived by the Board of Appeals. An application or reapplication shall not be acted upon in less than six (6) months from the date of the last action by the Board of Appeals.



[Signature] 11/14/12
Signature of Applicant Date

Brian C Barnard
Typed or Printed Name and Title

Cynthia McCoy 11/14/12
Signature of Notary Public Date

Notary Seal

DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT USE ONLY

Case Number V2012-006
Date Rec'd 11/14/12
Amount Rec'd \$300-

Variance Rec'd By [Signature]
Receipt

Administrative Hearing Date 12/10/12

ACTION TAKEN _____

SIGNATURE _____ DATE: _____

NEED FOR VARIANCE

Our request is for approval to install a very attractive and functional sign which is an improvement in appearance over many in the surrounding area and in keeping with the City's desire for low overall height and current size requirements.

We agree with and support the City's plans for improving the appearance of local businesses and to that end would like to install a sign in keeping with current size stipulations but in materials and design more similar to those used to designate Old Town locations, etc. Attached are several photos of existing signs in close proximity to our location, several of which are newly installed and while legal due to "grandfather" status, may not be in keeping with the City's plans. Also attached are photos of the Old Town signs which are more similar in design to what we are requesting to install.

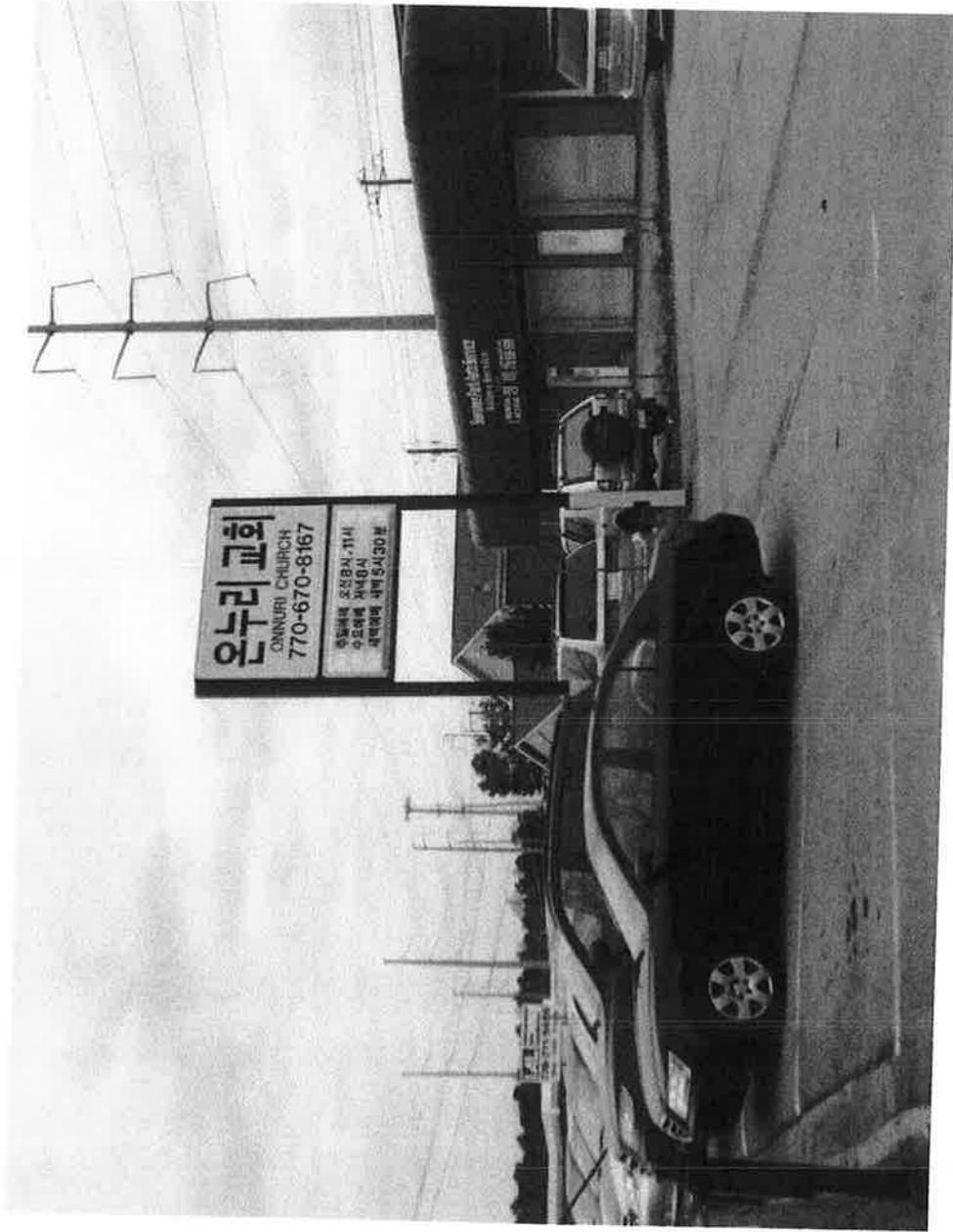
Finally, attached are drawings of our proposed sign as well as a plan of the property identifying the approximate location. Being a corner lot current regulations allow for two signs, one on Buford Hwy and another on Davis St. However we would much prefer to have a single pleasant and noticeable sign in the front of the building and if approved see no need for additional signage on Davis St. Dimensions for the requested sign are substantially less than allowed by existing regulations but will provide for the necessary additional business visibility in an attractive way.

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This sign is less than a 1/4 mile from our location on the same road.

V.2012.006



This sign is newly updated and approved due to "grandfather" status, but most likely not in keeping with City desires. Our requested sign would be much more attractive and desirable from a City architecture point of view.

V. 2012-006



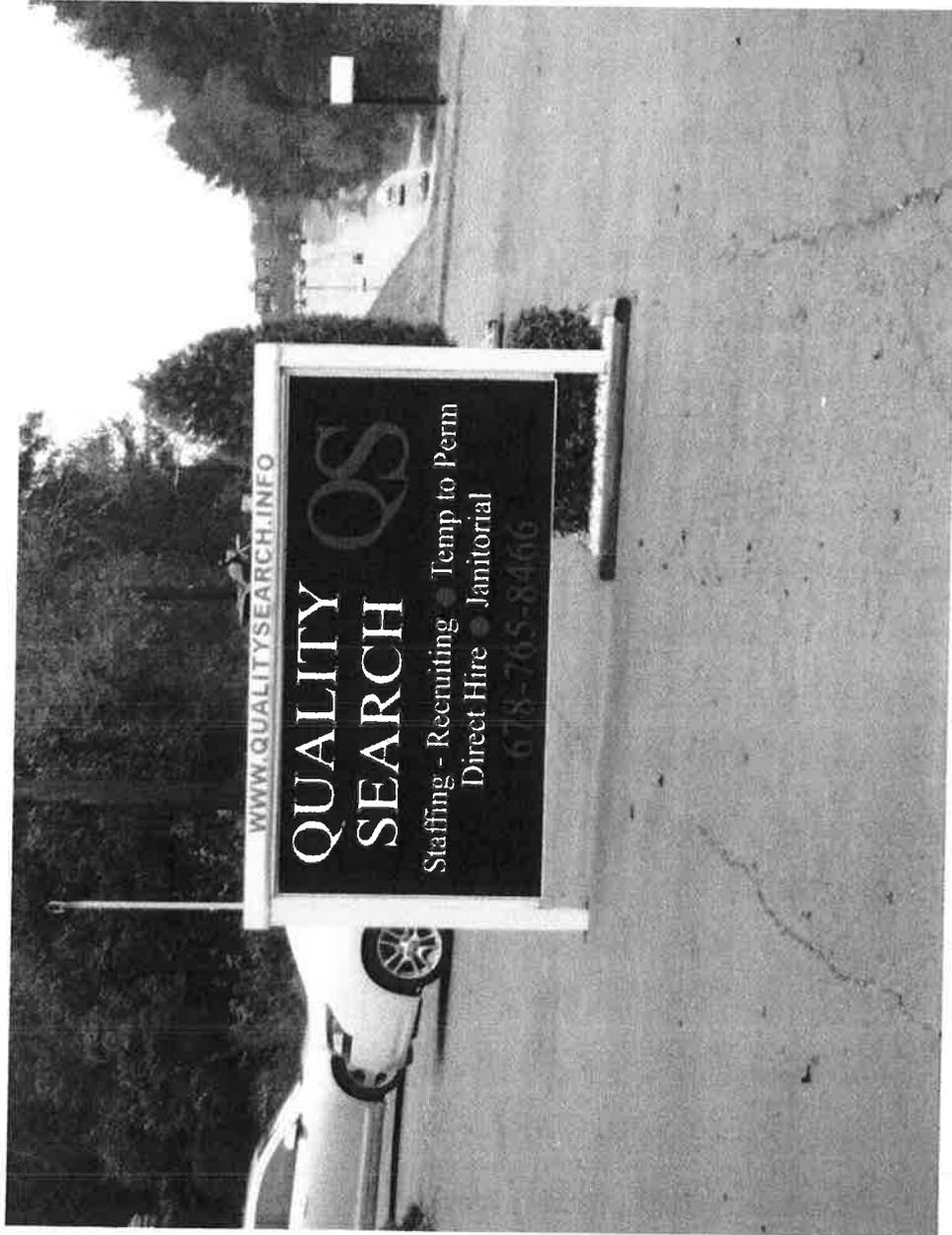
Another nearby "Grandfather" status sign.

V.2012.006



Attractive existing Old Town signage similar to what we are requesting to install.

V.2012.006



This sign is within 100 +/- yards of our location on Buford Hwy. and was also updated within the last 60 days. It is more in keeping with City desires yet also not in keeping with sign regulations..

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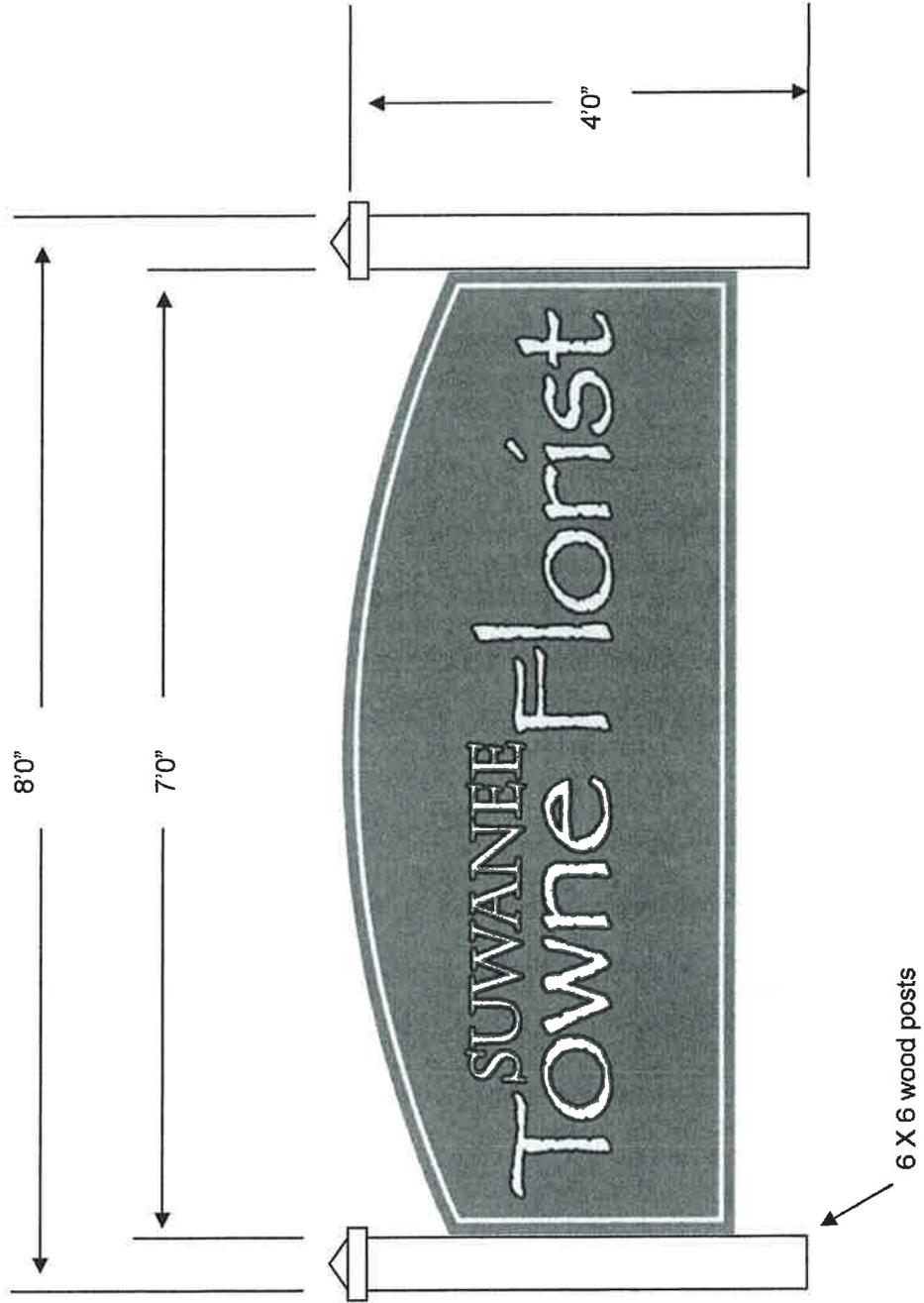
This sign is within a 100 +/- yards of our location on Buford Hwy and was installed within the last 30 days. It is approved due to grandfather status, but is likely not in keeping with the City's desire for low and attractive signage.

V.2012.006

Exhibit "C"

29.5 sq-ft
4 ft tall

Suwanee Towne Florist Proposed Sign Design



V-2012.006



EXHIBIT B V-2012-006

Aerial Map

Legend
 V-2012-006
 Major Road

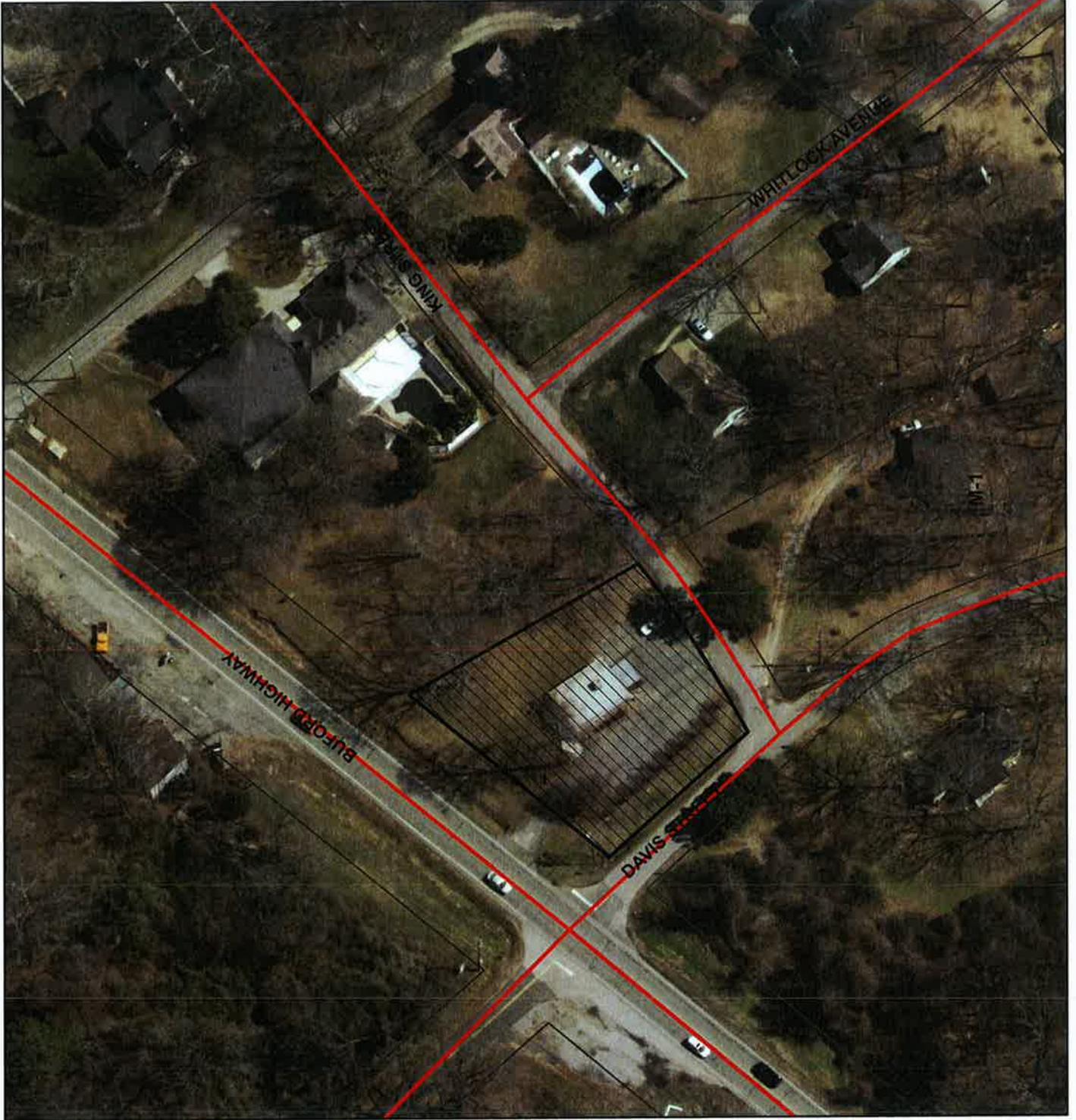
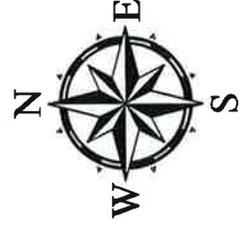


EXHIBIT B V-2012-006

Location Map

Legend

-  V-2012-006
-  Major Road

