



3548 Atlanta Road Smyrna, GA 30080

October 4, 2019

City of Snellville
Planning and Development
Board of Zoning Appeals
Snellville, GA



RE: Variance for Signage – Snellville Plaza

Letter of Intent

On behalf of our client, M&P Property Shopping Centers, authorized landlord for the property owner, Snellville Plaza L.P., please find this letter of intent to file a request for variance regarding a ground sign to be located at the subject property, 2807 Highway 78 East, Snellville, Georgia, 30078.

M&P Property manages a multi-tenant shopping center located at the intersection of US Highway 78 and State Route 124. The center has availability for approximately 27 tenants. The existing ground sign on the Highway 78 frontage was removed for the recent road construction. The new site conditions provide topographical challenges for the placement of a new sign for the center. Particularly in that the site parking lot is lower than the existing roadway and a new retaining wall further obscures potential signage visibility. A sign erected on property by the literal interpretation of the code would result in a sign that would not have good visibility until after entry into the development.

Our client is desirous to erect two (2) signs that are 23 foot high with approximately 234sf of sign area (as designated in the sign ordinance as all the sign area from 2' above the base of the sign) in order to have a sign with visibility for the center and its tenants from both directions of Highway 78.

Article XII of the Zoning Ordinance Section 12.3 (SIGNS PROHIBITED) prohibit signs above 15 foot tall. The proposed signs would require a taller sign due to the lower elevation of the parking lot relative to the street grade and the obstruction of view by the retaining wall. The proposed design has an overall height of 23' to allow the visible sign copy area (15' tall) to be above the retaining wall and rail. This is of particular importance to travelers on Highway 78 headed east, as the horizon of trees and center are in the background of view of the proposed location, further obscuring the sign. A 23' high sign would place the major tenants and majority of the center name in better view, so that motorists would have a clearer vision of the center, allowing safer identification and entry into the center. The new road design already challenges motorists and a taller sign with better visibility would allow less distraction for drivers.

Section 12.3 B) 5) subsection a) of the Ordinance (as well as Section 12.2 – DEFINITIONS) define the SIGN AREA to not be inclusive of the 24” base. The proposed sign would require a taller sign base due to the lower elevation of the parking lot relative to the street grade and the obstruction of view by the retaining wall. The proposed design utilizes a 108” tall area for a including a 36” tall masonry base to allow the visible sign copy area to be above the retaining wall and rail.

Subsection b) of the same section allows one sign per road frontage. Because of the size of the center and the large number of tenants, one sign would not be adequate to allow all tenants to have a presence in one sign. Due to this, two smaller signs, oriented at approximate opposite ends of the center, would allow all tenants to have a tenant panel visible so travelers could better identify the location of the desired tenant.

Subsection f) of the same section requires a setback of 15’ from the public right of way. The proposed design has a setback of 8’ from the retaining wall. The retaining wall provides a protective barrier not found in usual settings, and the 8’ setback minimizes the already great parking lot space loss due to the road construction.

Granting this variance would not confer on this applicant any signification privileges which are denied to others similarly situated and would not violate more than (1) standard of Chapter 21 of the DeKalb County Code of Ordinance.



Previous Center Sign



Picture Showing difference in elevation of parking lot relative to road grade



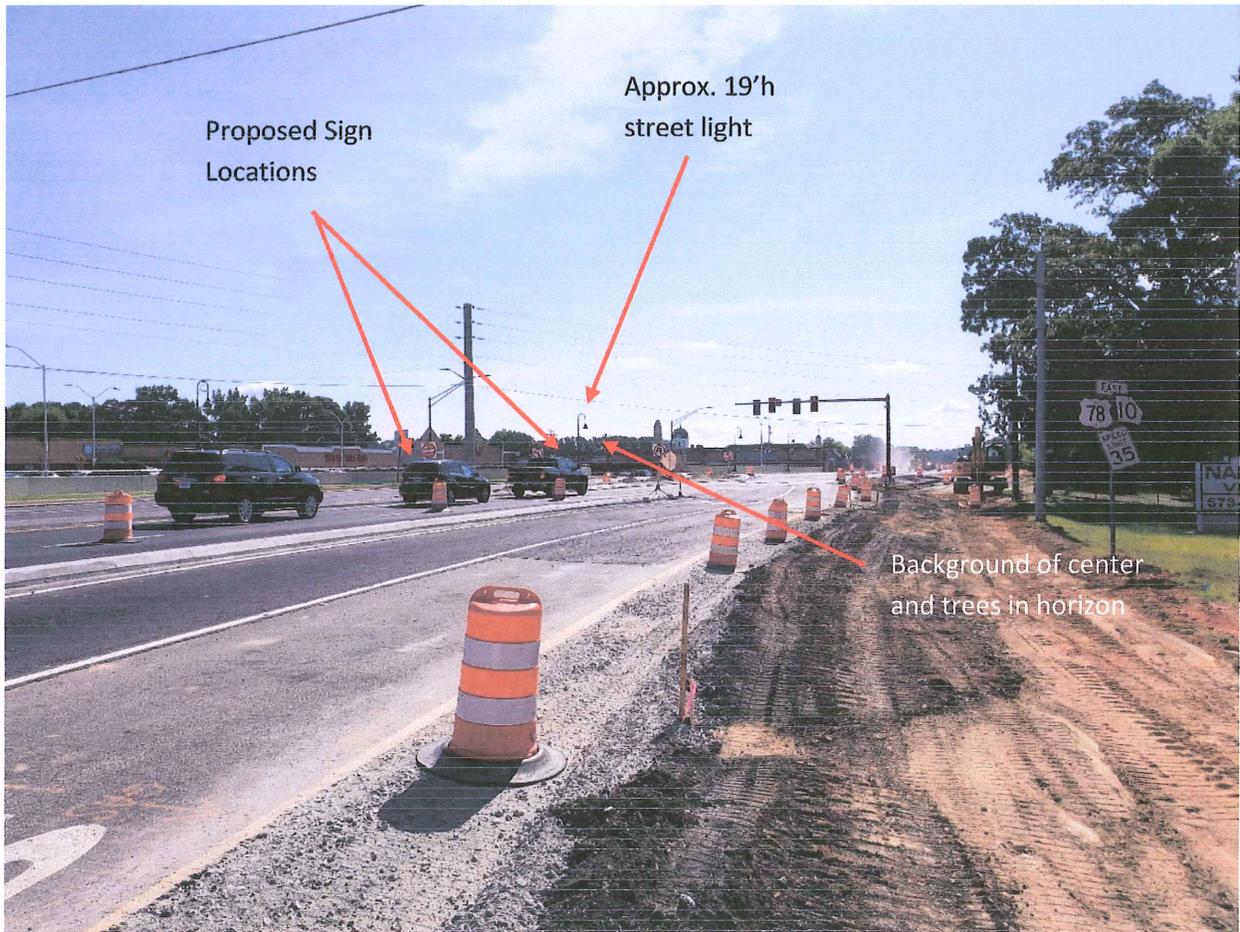
View of Sign Location facing west on Highway 78

Approx. 19'h street light (from road grade)



Proposed Sign "A" Location

View of sign location from Parking Lot



Proposed Sign Locations

Approx. 19'h street light

Background of center and trees in horizon

View of sign locations looking East from eastbound lane of HWY 78 near intersection of SR124



View of Sign location from westbound lane of Highway 78 facing west.