

**FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATION  
OFFICE OF PLANNING AND ZONING  
ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY, MARYLAND**

**APPLICANT:** Bob's Discount Furniture (Tenant)

**ASSESSMENT DISTRICT:** 5th

**CASE NUMBER:** 2023-0140-V

**COUNCILMANIC DISTRICT:** 1st

**HEARING DATE:** October 31, 2023

**PREPARED BY:** Jennifer Lechner  
Planner

**REQUEST**

The applicant is requesting a variance to allow tenant identification signs with greater area than allowed in a business complex on property located at 6625 Ritchie Highway in Glen Burnie.

**LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION OF SITE**

The subject site consists of 24.56 acres of land and is located with 925 feet of frontage along the east side of Ritchie Highway, and with 1,125 feet of frontage along the north side of East Ordinance Road. It is identified as Parcel 109 in Grid 13 on Tax Map 5.

The property is zoned C3 – General Commercial District, as adopted by the comprehensive zoning for Council District 1, effective July 10, 2011. The subject property is a tenant space within the Governor Plaza shopping center. The current tenant has an issued building permit for tenant facade signage identifying the retail furniture store, “Bob’s Discount Furniture”.

**PROPOSAL**

The applicants propose to add an additional 17’-6” x 2’-5” (42.3 square feet) identification sign, “Mattresses”, to their tenant facade.

**REQUESTED VARIANCES**

§ 18-3-308(b)(2) of the Anne Arundel County Zoning Ordinance provides that a business complex may have identification signs for the name of a tenant on not more than two facades in a one or two story structure, so long as the area of the signs does not exceed, for each tenant facade, the lesser of 10% of the area of the facade or 200 square feet.

The subject tenant facade contains 3,488.63 square feet of area, therefore the total signage may not exceed 200 square feet. Per the submitted sign renderings, the applicant is proposing identification signage on the front tenant facade totaling 240.5 square feet in area (198.2 square feet of approved signage plus an additional 42.3 square feet of signage), necessitating a variance of 41 square feet to the above limitation.

## **FINDINGS**

A review of the County aerial photography shows a business complex (shopping center) with inline and standalone tenant buildings consisting of a variety of mercantile and office uses.

This Office has found one active sign permit for the subject tenant. Building permit B02416878, to install a wall mounted sign, was issued on June 28, 2023. The approved identification signage is noted as 19'-1" x 10'-4 5/8" (198.2 square feet), and reads "Bob's Discount Furniture".

The applicant's letter states that they wish to install a 42.3 square foot channel letter set, in addition to the current 199.4 [sic] square foot of signage on the front elevation. The applicant explains that the building is set back roughly 825 feet from Governor Ritchie Highway and the additional square footage will allow Bob's Discount Furniture to advertise that they recently started selling mattresses. The applicant contends that effective signage and branding can contribute to a stronger local economy by attracting customers and improving foot traffic to businesses. In addition, the applicant believes their request aligns with a variance that Dick's Sporting Goods was granted in 2010.

The **Health Department** and **Fire Marshal** offered no objection to the request.

For the granting of a zoning variance, a determination must be made as to whether, because of certain unique physical conditions peculiar to or inherent in the particular lot or because of exceptional circumstances other than financial considerations, strict implementation of the Code would result in practical difficulties or an unnecessary hardship.

In this particular case, the distance of the tenant space from the entrance at Ritchie Highway presents a unique physical condition such that some relief is warranted. The requested relief of 42 square feet is negligible in comparison to the relief granted to other tenants in the shopping center, and reasonable in regards to the location and visibility issues from Ritchie Highway. The additional signage would provide adequate visibility to passing motorists and to the general public. As such, the variance would not necessarily alter the essential character of the neighborhood, impair the appropriate use or development of adjacent properties, nor be detrimental to the public welfare.

Therefore, the requested variance is considered the minimum necessary to afford relief and this Office supports the proposed variance for the additional signage.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

Based upon the standards set forth in § 18-16-305 of the Code under which a variance may be granted, this Office recommends ***approval*** of a zoning variance to § 18-3-308(b)(2) to allow identification signs with greater area than allowed on a tenant facade in a business complex.

DISCLAIMER: This recommendation does not constitute a building permit. In order for the applicant to construct the structure(s) as proposed, the applicant shall apply for and obtain the necessary building permits, and obtain any other approvals required to perform the work described herein. This includes but is not limited to verifying the legal status of the lot, resolving adequacy of public facilities, and demonstrating compliance with environmental site design criteria.



To Whom it May Concern,

We are applying for a variance to install an additional 42.3 sq. ft. channel letters set on the front elevation. Currently we have 199.4 sq. ft. of signage on the front elevation and per Article 18-3-308(b)(2) the allowance is the lesser of 10% of the area of the façade or 200 sq. ft.

The building is set back roughly 825 ft. from Governor Ritchie highway and the additional square footage allowance will allow Bob's Discount Furniture to advertise with their "Mattresses" sign. Since the building setback is 825 ft, we needed to maximize the main building signage to the 200 sf. Our variance request is to add the mattress branding to the building. The mattress branding is imperative to the Bob's Discount Furniture branding as they recently started selling mattresses. Effective signage and branding can contribute to a stronger local economy by attracting customers and improving foot traffic to businesses.

In addition, Dick's Sporting Goods was granted a variance for a 425 sq. ft. sign in 2010 and we believe our request aligns with what Dick's Sporting Goods was granted.

We believe our application will be an improvement, not a detriment to the surrounding area. We do not believe the variance is substantial and is the minimal requirement for brand visibility. We do not believe the approval of our request will have an adverse effect on the neighborhood as it is a commercialized area.

Sincerely,

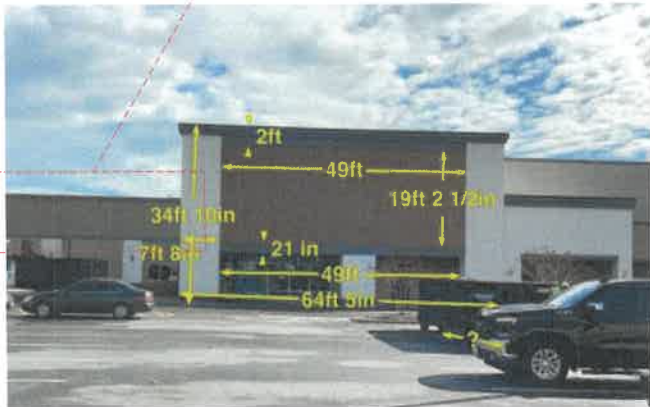
Tyler Penhallow

Cima Network Inc.  
121 New Britain Blvd.  
Chalfont, PA 18914  
215.716.3937  
tpenhallow@cimanetwork.com

**front elevation**



**\*\*NOTE: FLAT, EVEN SURFACE FOR INSTALL\*\***



**EXISTING CONDITION**



**PROPOSED RENDERING**

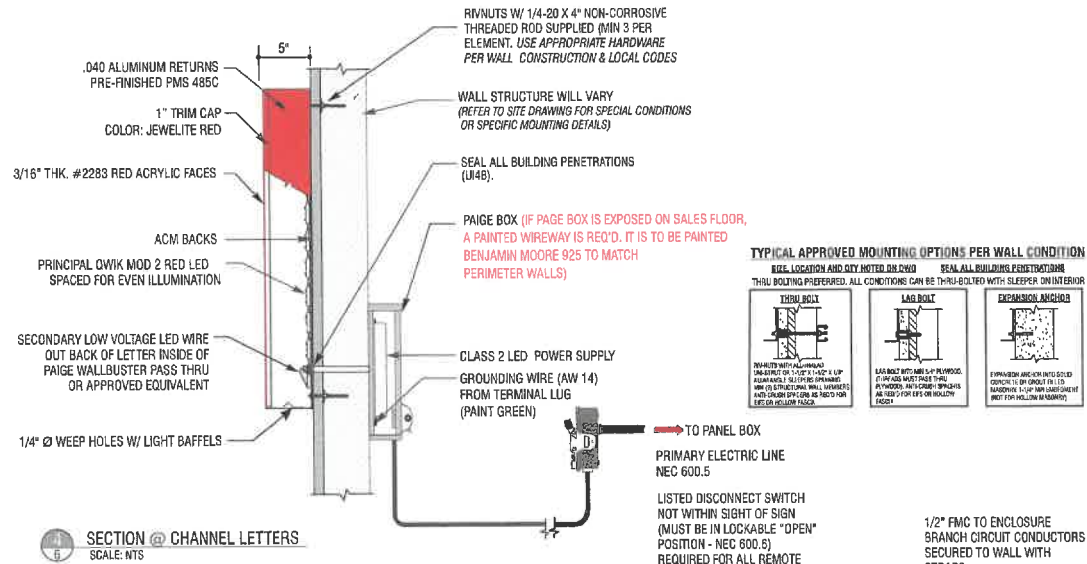
**\*\*Bob's Discount Furniture to add 24" x 24" access panel on the underside of the canopy centered under the Mattresses channel letters\*\***

**\*\*PRIMARY POWER TO BE PULLED IN CHANNEL LETTER LOCATION FOR BOTH SIGNS\*\***

**\*\*ACCESS PANEL DIRECTLY BELOW BDF SIGNAGE\*\***



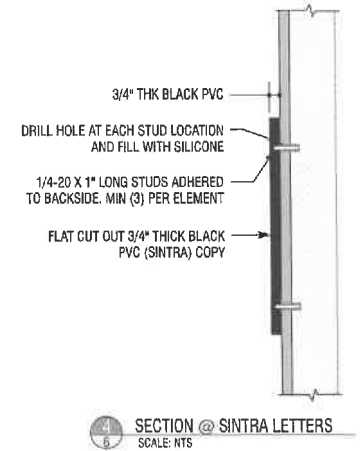
1 STACKED CHANNEL LETTER LAYOUT  
SCALE: 3/16" = 1' 0" 198.2 sf



SECTION @ CHANNEL LETTERS  
SCALE: NTS

\*\*PRIMARY POWER TO BE PULLED IN CHANNEL LETTER LOCATION\*\*

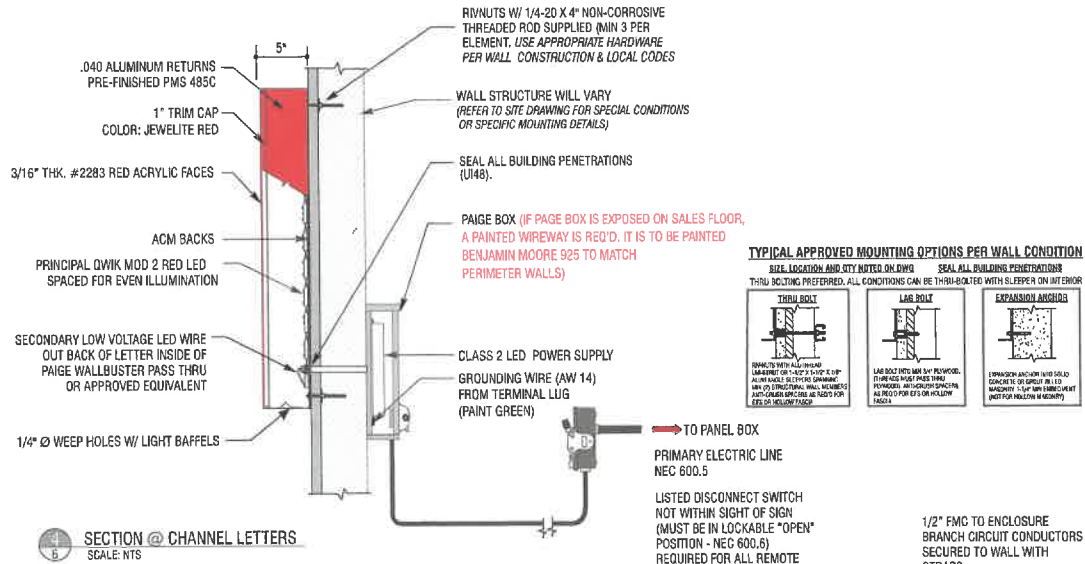
\*\*ACCESS PANEL DIRECTLY BELOW SIGNAGE\*\*





**2** **SECTION 2** SECONDARY CHANNEL LETTER LAYOUT **42.3 sf**  
SCALE: 1/4" = 1' 0"

**\*\*Bob's Discount Furniture to add 24" x 24" access panel on the underside of the canopy centered under the Mattresses channel letters\*\***



**\*\*PRIMARY POWER TO BE PULLED IN CHANNEL LETTER LOCATION\*\***

**\*\*ACCESS PANEL DIRECTLY BELOW SIGNAGE\*\***



**BDF Glen Burnie, MD - Exterior Signage Award**

1 message

Wed, Feb 15, 2023 at 3:22 PM

Tate, Andrew <Andrew.Tate@mybobs.com>

To: Samuel Alley <samalley@cimanetwork.com>, Joe McMurtrie <jmcmurtrie@cimanetwork.com>, Natalie Sorber <nsorber@cimanetwork.com>

Cc: "Vivoda, Larry" <Larry.Vivoda@mybobs.com>, "Lucas, Tim" <Tim.Lucas@mybobs.com>

Cima Team,

I am pleased to inform you that with a bid total of \$19,030.54, Cima is the successful bidder on the exterior signage for our new Glen Burnie, MD store.

Please proceed with your code research, due diligence, and sign drawings for our review and approval. We will coordinate with the Landlord for their approval as well. **Please get back to us within ONE WEEK with the sign code research using this form via Smartsheet <https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/d68ef841e56f404d844ff91aaf509a51>.**

Our construction is scheduled to begin April 17<sup>th</sup> (likely a few weeks sooner) and complete by July 7<sup>th</sup>. Please plan to ship the Coming Soon banner to the GC onsite by April 17<sup>th</sup>. The pylon panels with coming soon decals should be installed by April 17<sup>th</sup>. All the exterior signage will need to be installed before Friday, July 7<sup>th</sup>. That all said, the façade work was done by the Landlord and is complete as of this week. We'd want to get the signs up ASAP.

Larry Vivoda will be the Construction Manager running this project. Please coordinate access for site survey, site readiness, etc. with Larry and keep me in the loop.

Congratulations on winning another project with us. We're sure it will prove to be a successful and mutually beneficial partnership.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Thank you,



**Andy Tate**

Director of Construction

M: 860-338-1928

E: andrew.tate@mybobs.com

434 Tolland Turnpike

Manchester, CT 06042





ANNE  
ARUNDEL  
COUNTY

MARYLAND  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

J. Howard Beard Health Services Building  
3 Harry S. Truman Parkway  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
Phone: 410-222-7095 Fax: 410-222-7294  
Maryland Relay (TTY): 711  
www.aahealth.org

Tonii Gedin, RN, DNP  
Health Officer

**MEMORANDUM**

TO: Sadé Medina, Zoning Applications  
Planning and Zoning Department, MS-6301

FROM: Brian Chew, Program Manager  
Bureau of Environmental Health *BC*

DATE: September 26, 2023

RE: Governor Plaza Associates  
6625 Ritchie Highway  
Glen Burnie, MD 21061  
C/O Fed Realty INVMT 12404404, 909 Rose Ave Suite 200 North Bethesda, MD  
20852

NUMBER: 2023-0140-V

SUBJECT: Variance/Special Exception/Rezoning

The Health Department has reviewed the above referenced variance to allow greater sign area than allowed.

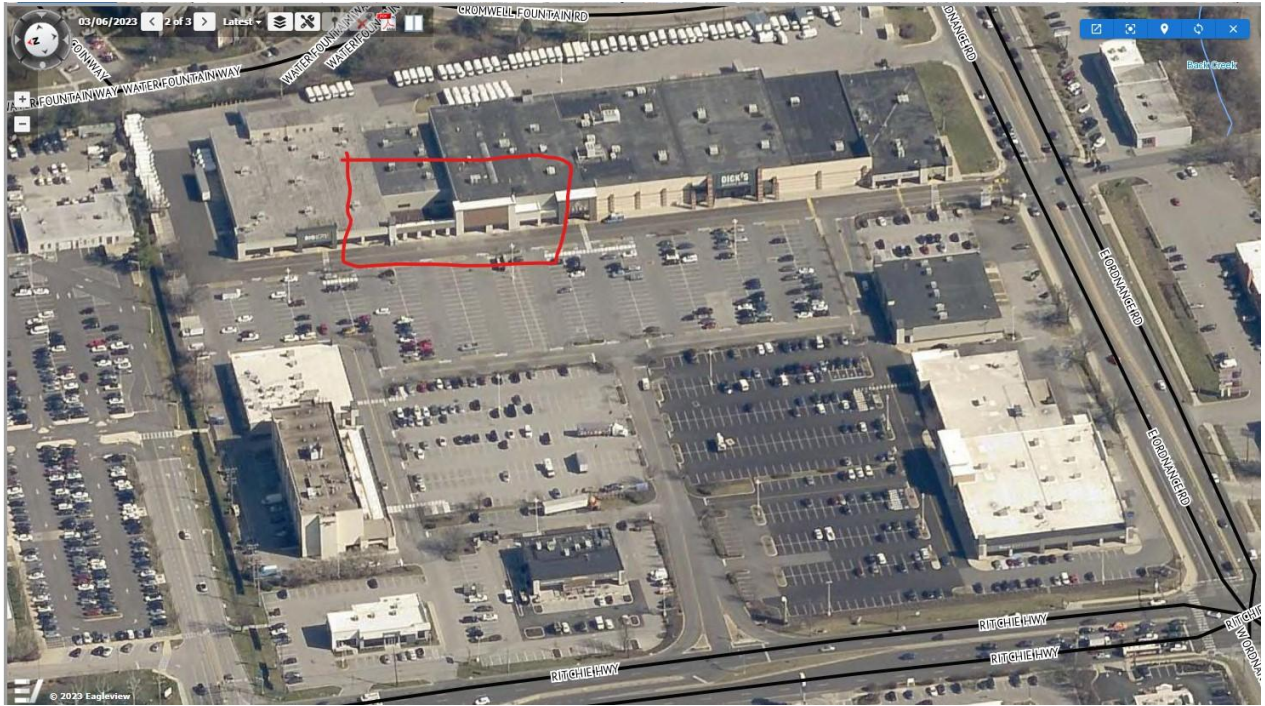
The Health Department has has no objection to the above referenced variance request.

If you have further questions or comments, please contact Brian Chew at 410-222-7413.

cc: Sterling Seay

2023-0140-V

**2023 oblique aerial**



**2023 oblique aerial detail**

