

ZONING BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT STAFF REPORT

September 22, 2025

ZBA-75-25

GENERAL INFORMATION

Petitioner

Eric Hamner

Requested Action and Purpose

Petition for a variance from the sign regulations.

Location and Existing Zoning

3755 McFarland Blvd East. Zoned HC. (Council District 6)

Size and Existing Land Use

Approximately 1.2 acres, Commercial.

Surrounding Land Use and Zoning

North: Commercial, HC

East: Industrial, IL

South: Commercial, HC

West: Commercial, HC

Applicable Regulations

Sec. 25-31

Billboard: A sign with a message related to a business, profession, product, activity, service, or commodity that is offered, sold, or manufactured on property or premises other than that upon which the sign is located.

Sec. 25-180. – Freestanding sign general standards.

(a) Number of freestanding signs allowed.

1. Except in the D district, freestanding signs are allowed in accordance with the following:

- i. For a parcel with one street frontage, a single freestanding sign is allowed.
- ii. For a parcel with more than one street frontage, up to two (2) freestanding signs are allowed, with no more than one on a single street frontage, and each sign shall be oriented to be perpendicular to the street.
- iii. For a parcel with frontage along the Black Warrior River or Lake Tuscaloosa, a single monument sign is allowed along the frontage. Pole signs are prohibited along the Black Warrior River or Lake Tuscaloosa.

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2. Freestanding signs are not allowed in the D district.

b. *Pole signs.*

1. The portion of a pole sign below the sign structure shall be covered with materials similar to the materials used on the principal buildings on the site.

2. The pole of the sign structure below the sign shall not be considered part of the display area if it does not establish a logo or other representation of the establishment on the site where the sign is located, and contains no message other than the address of the site.

c. *Maximum height.*

1. Except as otherwise provided in subsection 2. below, the maximum height of a freestanding sign is established in table VI-16: maximum freestanding sign display area.

2. The maximum height of a freestanding sign on a lot abutting Interstate I-20/59 or I-359 south of I-20/59 shall be sixty-five (65) feet measured from the grade of the interstate with a maximum structure height of one hundred (100) feet if:

i. The development, including developments located at designated exit ramps, lies contiguous to the interstate right-of-way; and

ii. The development is adjacent to a locally classified road with no privately owned property between the right-of-way of the local street and the interstate right-of-way.

d. *Maximum display area.* The maximum height and display area allowed for each freestanding sign shall be as set out in table VI-16: maximum freestanding sign display area.

Sec. 25-182.h.2. Billboards

2. Limitations on Number of Billboards

The number of billboards and their supporting structures located on properties not adjacent to Interstate 20/59 shall not exceed the number of billboards that existed on December 4, 2007. On properties abutting the fenced right-of-way of Interstate 20/59, there shall be no limitation on the number of billboards provided all new billboards comply with the standards in this Article VI Division 10.

SUMMARY

The petitioner is requesting a variance to keep an existing sign along McFarland Blvd. Due to a recent subdivision, this sign is no longer on the property of the Best Western Hotel and is considered a billboard. Per the petitioner, the Best Western sign along McFarland Blvd is necessary to remain for the visibility of the hotel. The petitioner states that the existing Best Western sign fronting McFarland Blvd, due to the unique lot configuration, will remain on the newly created self-storage lot, with an

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easement provided to the Best Western hotel. According to the petitioner, the variance is requested on the hardship of a unique lot configuration that has caused the unusual circumstance.

Office of Urban Development, Planning Division: No comment

Office of Urban Development, Code Enforcement: No violations found, or complaints received

Office of Urban Development, Building and Inspections Division: No comment.

Infrastructure and Public Services, Engineering Division: No comment

Fire and Rescue Department, Fire Administration: No comment

Variance Application

Property Information:

Site Address:

3755 McFarland Blvd E, Tuscaloosa, Alabama 35405

Total Acres:

6

Number of Existing Structures:

4

Current Zoning:

Highway Commercial (HC)

Current Land Use:

Commercial

Applicant Information:

Applicant Name:

Eric Hamner

Applicant Address:

3200 Rice Mine Road NE, Tuscaloosa, Alabama 35406

Is the applicant also the property owner?

No

Property Owner Information:

Property Owner Name:

AAARD, LLC Nguyen

Property Owner Address:

1854 Lake Cyrus Club Rd, Birmingham, Alabama 35244

Property Owner Phone Number:

(205) 345-0816

Property Owner Email Address:

sanjay@baronhospitality.com

The primary consideration for a variance request is whether a literal enforcement of a zoning ordinance will result in an unnecessary hardship. Circumstances that are not hardships include self-inflicted or self-created, inconvenient, financial or personal. The petitioner must specifically state a hardship for the variance.

Detailed Description of the Proposed Request, including Hardship:

Variance is requested from Sec 25-180 to allow 2 signs on a single parcel with a single street frontage. A Variance is also requested for from the definition of billboard for the Best Western sign fronting McFarland Blvd E. The property currently has 2 uses, a self-storage and a hotel, with 3 signs existing on the single parcel. The property has been approved by for subdivision to divide into 2 lots to separate the self-storage from the hotel for purchase of the self-storage business. Due to the unique existing nature of the lot layout, the self-storage parcel will have 2 existing signs fronting McFarland Blvd E. The proposed developer

wishes to improve the self-storage sign and continue its use for visibility of the business. The second sign on the self storage parcel is the existing Best Western sign fronting McFarland Blvd, which is necessary to remain for visibility for the hotel. Also, the existing Best Western sign fronting McFarland Blvd, due to the unique lot configuration, will remain on the newly created self-storage lot, with an easement provided to the Best Western, and therefor by definition, will become a "billboard" for the hotel on a separate parcel from that of the hotel business. We ask for a variance of these 2 sign regulations for the purpose of the developer to obtain a permit to revitalize the existing self storage sign which exists in disrepair. The current signs are grandfathered in as nonconforming. Both businesses require the signs for visibility and viability of the business. The variance is requested on the hardship of a unique lot configuration that has caused the unusual circumstance.

Supporting Documents:

Site Plan (if applicable):
25-1951.ZBA Exhibit.pdf

Elevation Drawings (if applicable):
259320.pdf

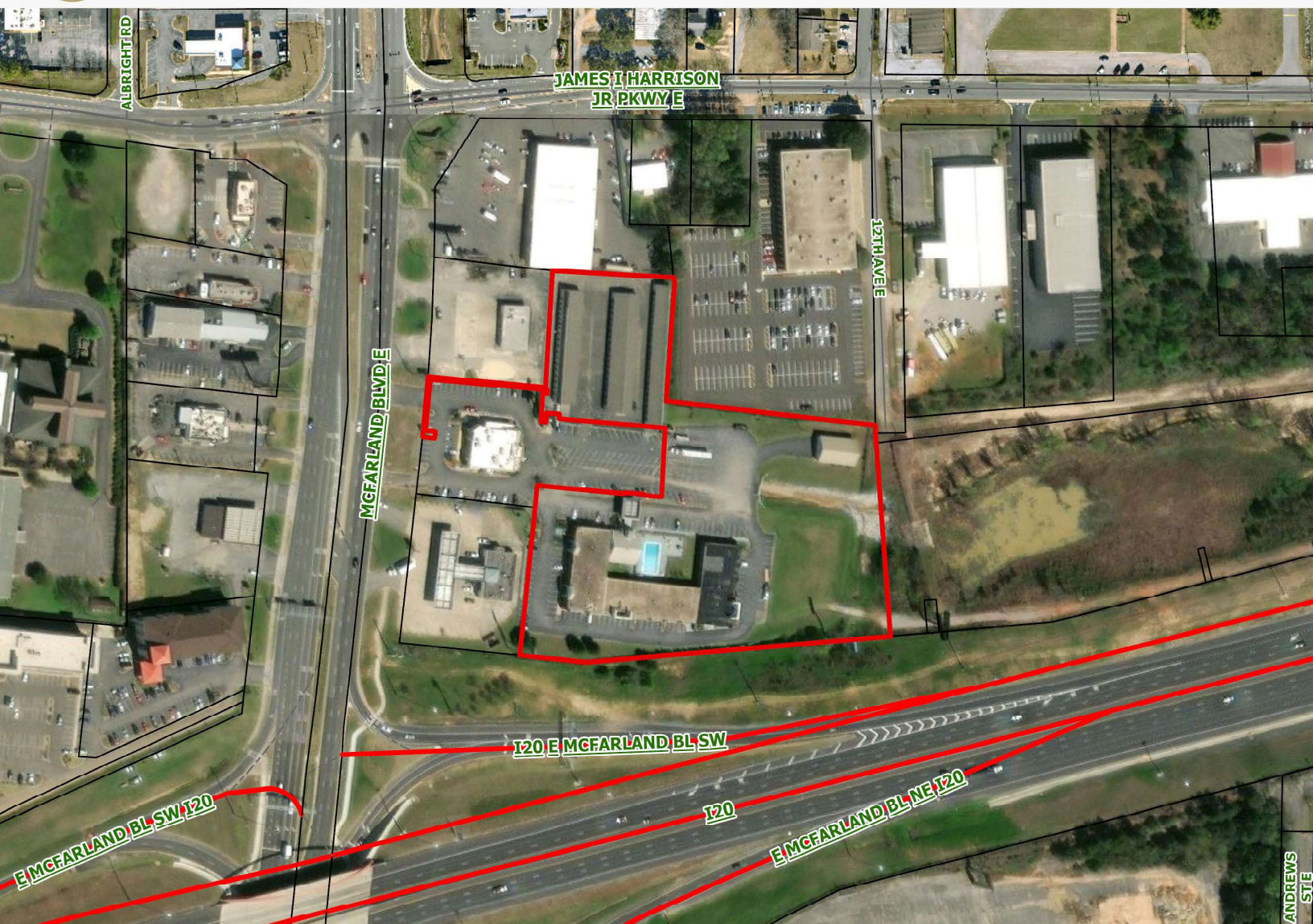
Additional Documents:

Once submitted, a staff member will contact the applicant using the email provided on this form within 24 hours. If more documents are required, the staff member will clarify what is required in that email. By submitting this application, you recognize the city will send public notification and place a sign on the property with information for the public.



3755 McFarland Boulevard East

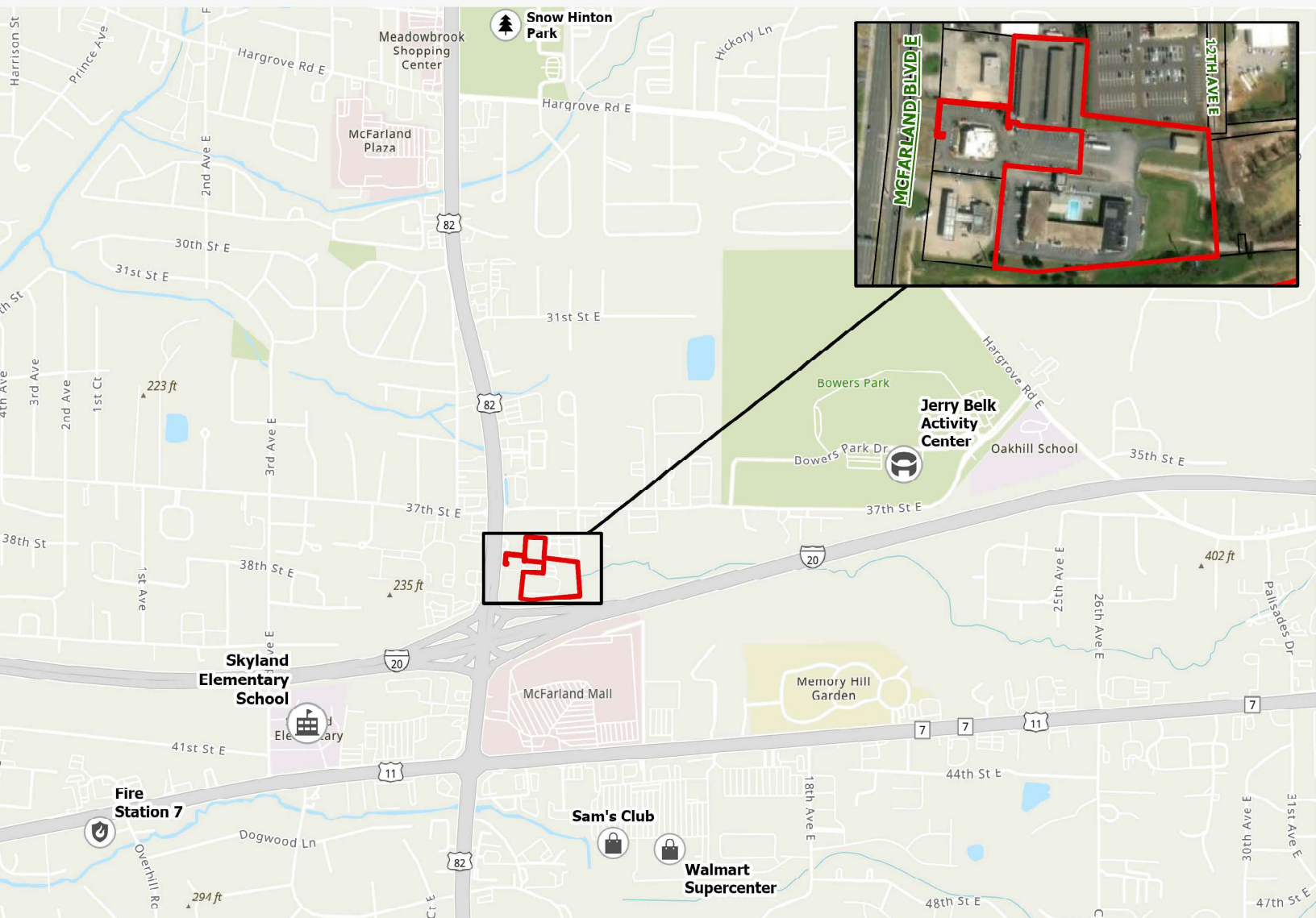
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0 100 200 300 400 Feet

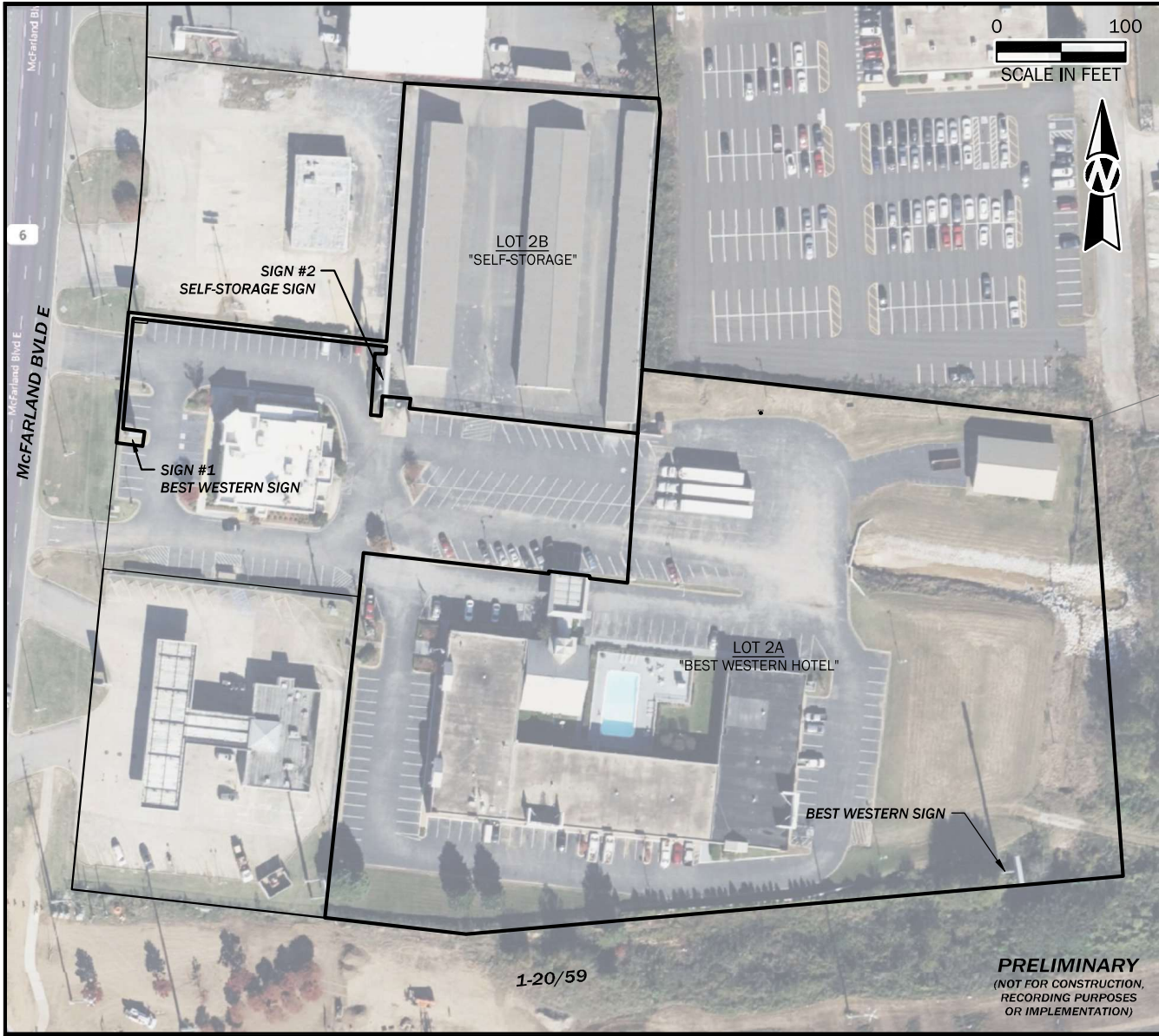




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1 inch = 1,250 feet
0 625 1,250 1,875 2,500 Feet





3516 Gresham Avenue | Tuscaloosa, AL 35401
205.345.0816 | www.ttlusa.com

ZBA SIGN EXHIBIT

AAARD, LLC
3755 McFARLAND BLVD EAST
TUSCALOOSA, ALABAMA

PRELIMINARY
(NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION,
RECORDING PURPOSES
OR IMPLEMENTATION)

