

REPORT OF THE PLANNING DEPARTMENT**APPLICATION FOR SIGN WAIVER 2025-0636 (SW-25-03)****SEPTEMBER 16, 2025**

Location: 3603 Blanding Boulevard

Real Estate Number: 102902-0000

Waiver Sought: Reduce Minimum Setback from 10 feet to 6 feet

Current Zoning District: Commercial Community General-1 (CCG-1)

Current Land Use Category: Community General Commercial (CGC)

Planning District: District 4 – Southwest

Council District: District 9

Applicant /Agent: Patrick Joyce, Esq.
14 East Bay Street
Jacksonville, Florida. 32202

Owner: E. Howard Acree, Jr.
3603 Blanding Boulevard
Jacksonville, Florida. 32210

Staff Recommendation: **APPROVE**

GENERAL INFORMATION

Application for Sign Waiver **Ordinance 2025-0636** (SW-25-03) seeks to reduce the minimum setback for a sign from 10 feet required to 6 feet to permit a sign which has existed, and was permitted on the property, since 1973, and to allow for a potential replacement sign to be placed in the same location. The subject site is a 0.42 acre parcel which has been developed and used as the Cedar Hills Animal Hospital since 1989. The site is located at the intersection of Blanding Boulevard, a FDOT Principal Arterial Roadway, and Wilson Boulevard, a 4 Lane Collector Roadway. The sign's location is along Blanding Boulevard which has undergone numerous widenings and reconfigurations at the intersection causing the sign to go further into the setback.

NOTICE TO OWNER / AGENT

Section 656.1310, Ordinance Code, sets forth procedures and criteria for evaluating waivers of the Part 13 sign regulations. Section 656.1310 of the Ordinance Code defines a sign as “a painting, structure or device which is placed, erected, or constructed or maintained on or in the ground, or on or outside of an enclosed building or other object or structure or affixed or painted on or inside an exterior window of a building for the purpose of displaying information, advertisement or attraction of the attention of persons, including posters, pictures, pictorial or reading matter and a letter, word, model, device or representation used in the nature of an advertisement, announcement, attraction or direction”.

STANDARDS, CRITERIA AND FINDINGS

Pursuant to Section 656.1310(a)(i) through (x), Ordinance Code, provides that, with respect to action upon Applications for Sign Waivers, the Planning Commission shall grant a waiver only if substantial competent evidence exists to support a positive finding based on each of the following criteria as applicable:

- (i) *Will the effect of the sign waiver be compatible with the existing contiguous signage or zoning and consistent with the general character of the area considering population, density, scale, and orientation of the structures in the area?*

Yes. The effect of the sign waiver will be compatible with the existing contiguous zoning and general character of the area, if approved. The proposed setback reflects the same setback of the existing sign that has been in place for decades. The existing sign will remain in its current location. If the sign were to meet the required setbacks of 10 feet from the right of way, the sign would severely disrupt the flow of traffic on the site as it would be in the middle of the vehicle use area.

- (ii) *Would the result detract from the specific intent of the zoning ordinance by promoting the continued existence of nonconforming signs that exist in the vicinity?*

No. The result of the sign waiver will not detract from the specific intent of the zoning ordinance, in that the existing sign is unable to conform to required setbacks due to the configuration of the site. The existing sign – along with other signs along Blanding Boulevard – have remained in their current positions for decades and have not caused issues.

- (iii) *Could the effect of the proposed waiver diminish property values in, or negatively alter the aesthetic character of the area surrounding the site, and could such waiver substantially interfere with or injure the rights of others whose property would be affected by the same?*

No. The effect of the proposed sign waiver is unlikely to diminish property values in, or negatively alter the aesthetic character of the area surrounding the site, in that the proposed sign will still be setback from the road and separated by a sidewalk.

- (iv) *Would the waiver have a detrimental effect on vehicular traffic or parking conditions, or*

result in the creation of objectionable or excessive light, glare, shadows or other effects, taking into account existing uses and zoning in the vicinity?

No. The sign waiver will not have a detrimental effect on vehicular traffic or parking conditions. Rather, the reduced setback will allow the sign to be seen by motorists and will fit the character of the area as there are other signs along Blanding Boulevard that are close to the right of way.

- (v) *Is the proposed waiver detrimental to the public health, safety or welfare, or could such waiver result in additional public expense, creation of nuisances, or cause conflict with any other applicable law?*

No. The proposed waiver for setback is unlikely to be detrimental to the public health, safety, or welfare in that the existing sign is located at the same spot and the request is to permit the existing, and allow for a replacement if needed, still at the same location without disrupting existing sidewalks on site.

- (vi) *Does the subject property exhibit specific physical limitations or characteristics, which could be unique to the site and which would make imposition of the strict letter of the regulation unduly burdensome?*

Yes. The subject property does exhibit specific physical limitations that limit the possible setback of the sign location from the property line. The existing sign is only a few feet from the asphalt drive aisles that runs in front of the establishment. The distance from the ROW and the drive aisle does not leave enough room for the sign to comply with the 10-foot setback requirement and therefore the sign would need to be placed in the drive aisle.

- (vii) *Is the request based exclusively upon a desire to reduce the costs associated with compliance and is the request the minimum necessary to obtain a reasonable communication of one's message?*

No. The request is not based on a desire to reduce the costs associated with compliance but is based upon a desire to continue to provide signage for the property with the location of the existing sign remaining the same.

- (viii) *Is the request the result of violation that has existed for a considerable length of time without receiving a citation and if so, is the violation that exists a result of construction that occurred prior to the applicants acquiring the property, not being a direct result of the actions of the current owner?*

No, the request is not the result of any active cited violation. A previous citation for the sign was filed in 2006 do to a lack of permit, however a sign permit is on file for the sign under B-73-4721.

- (ix) *Does the request accomplish a compelling public interest, such as, for example, furthering the preservation of natural resources by saving a tree or trees?*

The Planning Department has not identified any result of the request that is against the public interest at this time.

- (x) *Would strict compliance with the regulation create a substantial financial burden when considering the cost of compliance?*

Yes. Strict compliance with the regulation could create a financial burden on the applicant for setbacks. Removing and relocating the existing sign to allow for the required setback would create an unnecessary financial cost for the establishment and would limit the ease of traffic on the site.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION

Upon visual inspection of the subject property on September 9, 2025, the Planning Department staff noticed that the required Notice of Public Hearing sign **was not** posted.

RECOMMENDATION

Based on the foregoing, it is the recommendation of the Planning Department that Application Sign Waiver **2025-0636 (SW-25-03)** be **APPROVED**.



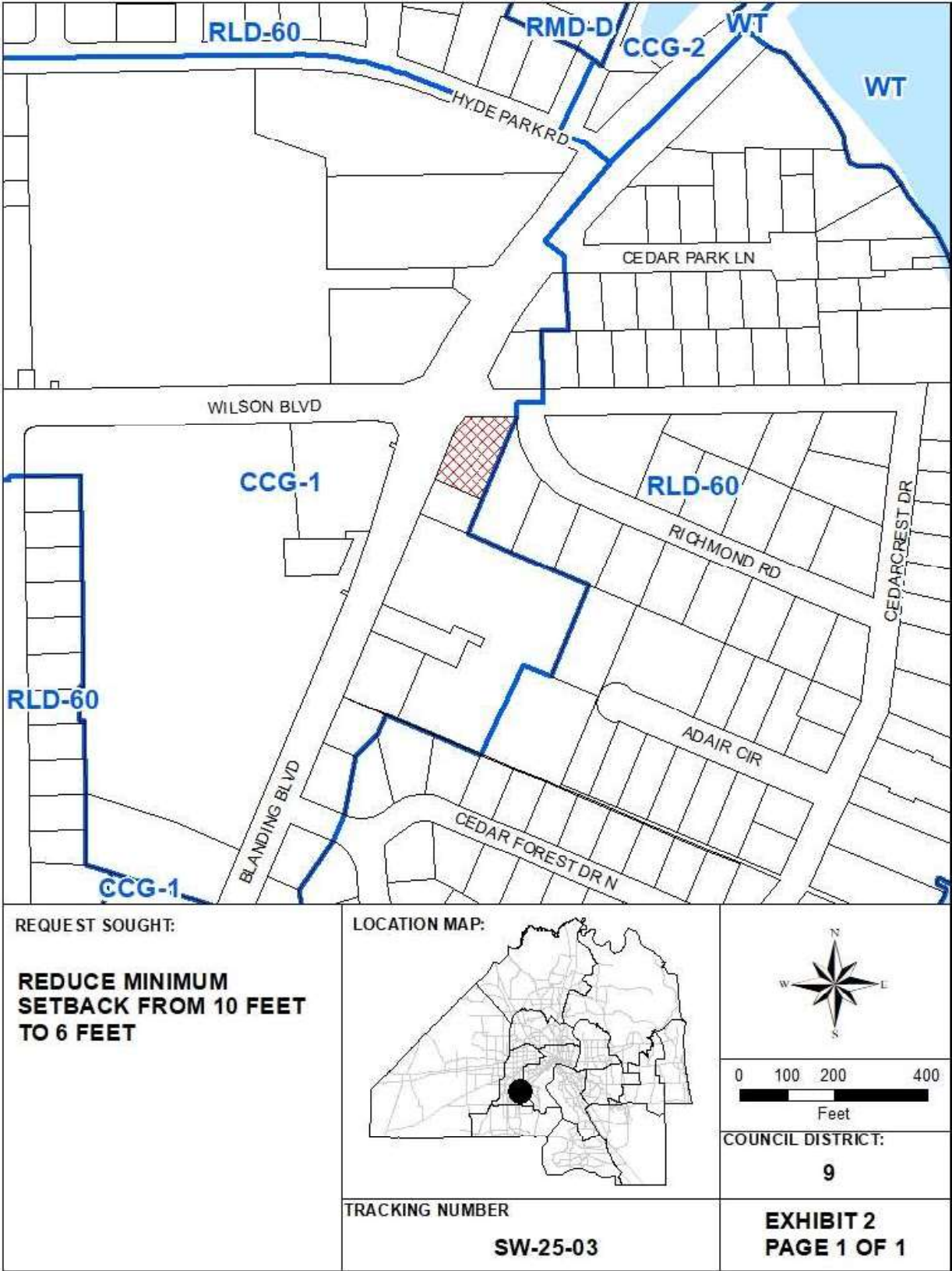
Aerial Map



View of the Existing Sign



View of the neighboring sign at 3619 with the request sign in the background



Legal Map