

JOHN A. OLSZEWSKI, JR. County Executive

MAUREEN E. MURPHY
Chief Administrative Law Judge
ANDREW M. BELT
Administrative Law Judge
DEREK J. BAUMGARDNER
Administrative Law Judge

August 29, 2024

Dino La Fiandra, Esquire – <u>del@lafiandralaw.com</u> The Law Office of Dino C. La Fiandra, LLC 100 W. Pennsylvania Avenue, Suite 305 Towson, MD 21204

RE: Petition for Variance

Case No. 2024-0162-A

Property: 11907 Reisterstown Road

Dear Mr. La Fiandra:

Enclosed please find a copy of the decision rendered in the above-captioned matter.

Pursuant to Baltimore County Code § 32-3-401(a), "a person aggrieved or feeling aggrieved" by this Decision and Order may file an appeal to the County Board of Appeals within thirty (30) days of the date of this Order. For further information on filing an appeal, please contact the Office of Administrative Hearings at 410-887-3868.

Sincerely,

DEREK J. BAUMGARDNER Administrative Law Judge for Baltimore County

DJB:dlm Enclosure

c: Thomas Sheckells — <u>tsheckells@mragta.com</u>
Jennifer Carper — <u>jcarper@blairimage.com</u>
Craig Gore — <u>cgore@blairimage.com</u>
Andrew Gerlowsi — agerlowski@ggcommercial.com

IN RE: PETITION FOR VARIANCE	*	BEFORE THE	
(11907 Reisterstown Road) 4 th Election District 4th Council District	*	OFFICE OF ADMINISTRATIVE	
GGCAL RSC, LLC Legal Owner	*	HEARINGS OF	
Petitioner	*	BALTIMORE COUNTY	
remoner	*	Case No: 2024-0162-A	

OPINION AND ORDER

This matter comes before the Office of Administrative Hearings for Baltimore County ("OAH") as a Petition for Variance filed by GGCAL RSC, LLC ("Petitioner"), the owner of the property located at 11907 Reisterstown Road, Reisterstown, Baltimore County, Maryland ("the Property"). The Petition requests variance relief from Baltimore County Zoning Regulations ("BCZR") § 450.4.f.d (Table of Sign Regulations), to allow a total of two wall-mounted enterprise signs ("Mattress Warehouse") with a sign area of 148 sq. ft. (rear facade, without customer entrance) and 103 sq. ft. (front facade, with customer entrance), for a tenant in a multi-tenant retail shopping center building.

A public hearing was conducted on August 26, 2024, using the virtual platform WebEx in lieu of an in-person hearing. The Petition was properly advertised and posted. Andrew Gerlowski, Esq. appeared on behalf of Petitioner along with Thomas Sheckells of Morris & Ritchie Associates, the civil engineering firm that prepared and sealed the Site Plan. Jennifer Carper of Blair Image Elements also appeared in support of the Petitioner. Dino C. La Fiandra, Esq. represented the Petitioner. There were no Protestants or other interested citizens who attended the hearing.

The following exhibits were submitted by Petitioner and admitted into the record: (1) Scheckells CV; (2) Site Plan to Accompany Zoning Petition; (3) Photo Exhibit Plan; and (4) Photo Collection. The following Zoning Advisory Committee ("ZAC") comments were received from County agencies: (1) Department of Planning ("DOP"); (2) Department of Plans Review ("DPR"); and (3) Department of Environmental Protection & Sustainability ("DEPS"). Agency comments did not indicate any objection to the requested relief.

Findings of Fact

The case proceeded by way of modified proffer by Mr. La Fiandra. The property is approximately 21,780 sq. ft. in land area and is zoned BM-CCC. The lot is improved by a large multi-tenant retail shopping center with multiple buildings and internal paved surface parking areas. The lot is surrounded by a mix of commercial and institutional uses with residential uses to the southeast and east. The subject tenant space is currently leased to Mattress Warehouse and the proposed enterprise sign will identify the business for pedestrians and motorists from the roadway it is addressed. For this particular building, tenants are interior-facing such that enterprise signage faces the interior paved surface parking area with customer entrances below and accessible from the parking area. The "rear" of the building faces its Reisterstown Road frontage. The proposed enterprise sign with a total of 148 sq. ft. will be located on the rear façade without a customer entrance. The existing 103 sq. ft. enterprise sign will remain on the front façade with a customer entrance at ground level immediately below the sign.

Among other items, Ms. Carper testified that the sign was the average size sign for a Mattress Warehouse location and the sign size and height are at least partially due to its location on the building and its proximity of 42 feet from the pedestrian right of way located parallel and adjacent to Reisterstown Road to ensure visibility. Among other items, Mr. Sheckells testified that

the retail shopping center is well-marked for both pedestrians and vehicles to clearly indicate tenant spaces, customer entrances, drive-through lanes, and other such features. Planning found that the proposed signage "does not appear to negatively impact the health, safety and well-being of vehicular or pedestrian traffic or create signage clutter and visual nuisance" and "the proposed size of the signage does not obstruct any views and is proportionally dimensioned as to not overshadow the other existing signage." County Exhibit 1, p. 1.

Conclusions of Law

Pursuant to BCZR § 307.1, "...the [Administrative Law Judge] shall have ...the power to grant variances from height and area regulations, from off-street parking regulations, and from sign regulations only in cases where special circumstances or conditions exist that are peculiar to the land or structure which is the subject of the variance request and where strict compliance with the Zoning Regulations for Baltimore County would result in practical difficulty or unreasonable hardship. Furthermore, any such variance shall be granted only if in strict harmony with the spirit and intent of said height, area, off-street parking or sign regulations, and only in such manner as to grant relief without injury to public health, safety and general welfare...". A variance request involves a two-step process, summarized as follows:

- (1) It must be shown the property is unique in a manner which makes it unlike surrounding properties, and that uniqueness or peculiarity must necessitate variance relief; and
- (2) If variance relief is denied, Petitioner will experience a practical difficulty or hardship.

Cromwell v. Ward, 102 Md. App. 691 (1995).

For purposes of the requested sign variance, I find that the Property is unique due to its large size and inward facing design with signage visible from this building primarily from the existing interior surface parking lot and not from its street frontage. For these reasons, I find that

special circumstances or conditions exist that are peculiar to this property and strict compliance with the Zoning Regulations for Baltimore County with respect to signage would result in practical difficulty. I further find that the requested variance relief can be granted in strict harmony with the spirit and intent of the BCZR and without injury to the health, safety or general welfare as the proposed additional enterprise sign will not have flashing, blinking, or otherwise distractive elements and will front on a main thoroughfare with sufficient distance from public sidewalks and roadways to not endanger pedestrian or vehicular safety. The additional enterprise sign will simply identify the location of this business along a commercial corridor from the roadway on which it is addressed. In sum, the evidence adduced at the hearing satisfies the requirements under BCZR § 307.1 and the factors articulated under *Cromwell v. Ward*, 102 Md. App. 691 (1995).

THEREFORE, IT IS ORDERED, this 29th day of August, 2024, by the Administrative Law Judge for Baltimore County, that the Petition for Variance from BCZR, §450.4.5.d (Table of Sign Regulations), to allow a total of two wall-mounted enterprise signs (each sign on a different building facade) with a size of 148 sq. ft. (rear facade, without a customer entrance) and 103 sq. ft. (front facade, with a customer entrance) respectively, for a tenant in a multi-tenant retail building, in lieu of the permitted canopy sign and wall mounted enterprise sign each on the same facade as the separate exterior customer entrance for the tenant space, be and is hereby **GRANTED**.

The relief granted herein shall be subject to the following:

1. Petitioners may apply for necessary permits and/or licenses upon receipt of this Order. However, Petitioners are hereby made aware that proceeding at this time is at their own risk until 30 days from the date hereof, during which time an appeal can be filed by any party. If for whatever reason this Order is reversed, Petitioners would be required to return the subject property to its original condition.

2. The Site Plan (Pet. Ex. 2) is attached hereto and incorporated herein in its entirety.

Any appeal of this decision must be made within thirty (30) days of the date of this Order.

DEREK J. BAUMGARDNER Administrative Law Judge

for Baltimore County

DJB/dlm



PETITION FOR ZONING HEARING(S)

To be filed with the Department of Permits, Approvals and Inspections To the Office of Administrative Law of Baltimore County for the property located at: which is presently zoned BM-CCC Address 11907 Reisterstown Road 10 Digit Tax Account # 0419086320 Deed References: 39012/24 Property Owner(s) Printed Name(s) GGCAL RSC LLC (SELECT THE HEARING(S) BY MARKING \underline{X} AT THE APPROPRIATE SELECTION AND PRINT OR TYPE THE PETITION REQUEST) The undersigned legal owner(s) of the property situate in Baltimore County and which is described in the description and plan attached hereto and made a part hereof, hereby petition for: a Special Hearing under Section 500.7 of the Zoning Regulations of Baltimore County, to determine whether or not the Zoning Commissioner should approve a Special Exception under the Zoning Regulations of Baltimore County to use the herein described property for a Variance from Section(s) Please see attachment. of the zoning regulations of Baltimore County, to the zoning law of Baltimore County, for the following reasons: (Indicate below your hardship or practical difficulty or indicate below "TO BE PRESENTED AT HEARING". If you need additional space, you may add an attachment to this petition) To be presented at hearing. Property is to be posted and advertised as prescribed by the zoning regulations. I, or we, agree to pay expenses of above petition(s), advertising, posting, etc. and further agree to and are to be bounded by the zoning regulations and restrictions of Baltimore County adopted pursuant to the zoning law for Baltimore County. Legal Owner(s) Affirmation: I / we do so solemnly declare and affirm, under the penalties of perjury, that I / We are the legal owner(s) of the property which is the subject of this / these Petition(s). Contract Purchaser/Lessee: Blair Image Eleph Signature

Name- Type or Print 5107 Kissell Avenue, Altoona, Pennsylvania Mailing Address / cgore@blairimage.com 814-283-2030 16601 Email Address Telephone # Zip Code Attorney for Petitioner: Dino C. La Fiandra, Esquire The Law Office of Dino C. La Fiandra, LLC 100 W. Pennsylvania Avenue, Suite 305 Towson, Maryland 21204

443-204-3473

Telephone #

Mailing Address

21204

Zip Code

Legal Owners (Petitioners):	Eric De V. to,
	Name #2 - Type or Print
Name #1 - Type or Print	Name #2 = Type of Finit
Signature #1 Boston St. St. 10096 Red Run Blvd, Ov	Signature #2 Baltimore wings Mille, Maryland
Mailing Address C	ity State
21117 410-559-250	
Zip Code Telephone #	Email Address V
Representative to be contact Dino C. La Fiandra, Esquire The Law Office of Dino C. I	ted: e La Fiandra, LLC
Name - Type or Print	

100 W. Pennsylvania Avenue, Suite 305 State Mailing Address /dcl@lafiandralaw.com 443-204-3473 21204 Email Address Telephone # Zip Code

CASE NUMBER 7024-0162-4 Filing Date (75, 7024 Reviewer Do Not Schedule Dates:

/dcl@lafiandralaw.com

Email Address

Petition for Zoning Hearing 11907 Reisterstown Road Continuation Sheet

Variance

1. From BCZR, §450.4.5.d (Table of Sign Regulations) to allow a total of two wall mounted enterprise signs (each sign on a different building facade) with a size of 148 square feet (rear facade, without a customer entrance) in one instance, and 103 square feet (front facade, with a customer entrance) in one instance, for a tenant in a multi-tenant retail building in lieu of one canopy sign and one wall mounted enterprise sign each with a size of 130 square feet and on the same facade as the separate exterior customer entrance for the tenant space.

MORRIS & RITCHIE ASSOCIATES, INC.

ENGINEERS, ARCHITECTS, PLANNERS, SURVEYORS, AND LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS



June 24, 2024

ZONING AREA DESCRIPTION FOR 11907 REISTERSTOWN ROAD UNIT C MATTRESS WAREHOUSE OF REISTERSTOWN

Tax Map 48, Parcel 270
Tax Account # 2500018469
Deed Reference: 39012/24

Beginning at a point located at the intersection of Reisterstown Road and East Cherry Hill Road or N 648,513.81 E 1,364,761.00, at the distance of 182.49' and bearing of N 30°15'17" W to a point. Thence, the following courses and distances:

- 2) North 44°22'58" West 483.78'.
- 3) North 45°37'01" East 206.54'.
- 4) North 44°22'58" West 469.88'.
- 5) South 40°43'28" West 207.29'.
- 6) North 44°22'58" West 62.23'.
- 7) North 40°45'30" East 578.08'.
- 8) South 77°38'24" East 192.40'.
- 9) North 84°21'01" East 587.67'.
- 10) South 03°04'01" West 800.64'.
- 11) South 47°59'39" West 425.50'.
- 12) North 44°20'06" West 149.72'.
- 13) South 45°40'05" West 115.00'.
- 14) South 44°20'13" East 145.05'.
- 15) South 47°59'39" West 10.00'.

Containing 693,867square feet or 15.9290 acres of land, more or less, being located in the 4th Election District and 4th Councilmanic District of Baltimore County, Maryland

I certify that this description was either personally prepared by me or I was in responsible charge of its preparation.



1220-B East Joppa Road, Suite 400K, Towson, MD 21286 (410) 821-1690 Fax: (410) 821-1748 www.mragta.com

DEPARTMENT OF PERMITS, APPROVALS AND INSPECTIONS ZONING REVIEW OFFICE

ADVERTISING REQUIREMENTS AND PROCEDURES FOR ZONING HEARINGS

The <u>Baltimore County Zoning Regulations</u> (BCZR) require that notice be given to the general public/neighboring property owners relative to property which is the subject of an upcoming zoning hearing. For those petitions which require a public hearing, this notice is accomplished by posting a sign on the property (responsibility of the legal owner/petitioner) and placement of a notice in a newspaper of general circulation in the County, both at least twenty (20) days before the hearing.

Zoning Review will ensure that the legal requirements for advertising are satisfied. However, the legal owner/petitioner is responsible for the costs associated with these requirements. The newspaper will bill the person listed below for the advertising. This advertising is due upon receipt and should be remitted directly to the newspaper.

OPINIONS MAY NOT BE ISSUED UNTIL ALL ADVERTISING COSTS ARE PAID.

228 CC W.S. A. CBO	
<u>For Newspaper Advertising:</u>	
Case Number: 2024-01	62-A
Property Address: 11907 Reis	sterstown Road
Property Description: Reisters	stown Shopping Center Lot 1A Land Condo
:	
Legal Owners (Petitioners): <u>G</u>	GCAL RSC LLC
Contract Purchaser/Lessee: B	lair Image Elements
PLEASE FORWARD ADVER	ΓISING BILL TO:
Name:	Dino C. La Fiandra, Esquire
Company/Firm (if applicable):	The Law Office of Dino C. La Fiandra, LLC
Address:	100 W. Pennsylvania Avenue, Suite 305
	Towson, Maryland 21204
Telephone Number:	443-204-3473

Real Property Data Search () Search Result for BALTIMORE COUNTY

View Map

View GroundRent Redemption

View GroundRent Registration

Special Tax Recapture: None

Account Identifier:

District - 04 Account Number - 2500018469

Owner Information

Owner Name:

GGCAL RSC LLC

Use: Principal Residence:NO

COMMERCIAL

Mailing Address:

STE 100

Deed Reference:

/39012/ 00024

10096 RED RUN BLVD

OWINGS MILLS MD 21117-4632

Location & Structure Information

REISTERSTOWN RD

Legal Description: 0.499 AC UNIT 2

REISTERSTOWN RD

REISTERSTOWN SHOPPING CENTER LOT 1A LAND CONDO

Map: Grid: Parcel:

Neighborhood:

Subdivision:

Block: Lot: Assessment Year:

Plat No:

0032/0042 Plat Ref:

Town: None

0048 0024

Premises Address:

20000.04

8042

1A 2023

Primary Structure Built

Above Grade Living Area

Finished Basement Area

Property Land Area 0.4990 AC

County Use

Stories

Full/Half Bath Quality

Garage

Basement

Exterior

Last Notice of Major Improvements

Value Information

Base Value

Value 01/01/2023 Phase-in Assessments As of 07/01/2023

As of 07/01/2024

Land: Improvements 249,500 2,551,200 2,800,700 249,500 2,551,200 2,800,700 0

2,800,700

2,800,700

Total: Preferential Land:

Transfer Information

Seller: GGCAL RSC LLC

Type: NON-ARMS LENGTH OTHER

Seller: Type: Seller:

Date: 05/30/2017 Deed1: /39012/ 00024

Date: Deed1: Date:

Deed1:

Price: \$0 Deed2: Price:

Deed2:

Price: Deed2:

Exemption Information

Partial Exempt Assessments:Class

County:

State:

Type:

000 000 07/01/2023 0.00

0.00|0.00

0.00

07/01/2024

0.00|0.00

Municipal: Special Tax Recapture: None

Homestead Application Information

Homestead Application Status: No Application

Homeowners' Tax Credit Application Information

Homeowners' Tax Credit Application Status: No Application Date:

2024-0162-A

OFFIC	MORE CO E OF BUI ELLANEO	OGET ANI	D FINANC	Е			2318 C/25	366 - 12024		520
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Rec From:		Dino	LaF	iandro						
For: Commercial (Sign) Variance										
	11967 Reisterstown Road									
	Zonini Case 2024-0162-A CASHIER'S									
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BALTIMORE COUNTY, MARYLAND

Inter-Office Correspondence



TO: Hon. Maureen E. Murphy; Chief Administrative Law Judge

Office of Administrative Hearings

FROM: Jeff Livingston, Department of Environmental Protection and

Sustainability (EPS) - Development Coordination

DATE: July 8, 2024

SUBJECT: DEPS Comment for Zoning Item # 2024-0162-A

Address: 11907 REISTERSTOWN ROAD

Legal Owner: GGCAL RSC, LLC.,

Eric DeVito, General Manager

Zoning Advisory Committee Meeting of July 8, 2024.

X The Department of Environmental Protection and Sustainability has no comment on the above-referenced zoning item.:

Reviewer: Earl D Wrenn

BALTIMORE COUNTY, MARYLAND

INTEROFFICE CORRESPONDENCE

TO: Peter Gutwald, Director DATE: July 3, 2024

Department of Permits, Approvals

FROM: Vishnu Desai, Supervisor

Bureau of Development Plans Review

SUBJECT: Zoning Advisory Committee Meeting

Case 2024-0162-A

The Bureau of Development Plans Review has reviewed the subject zoning items and we have the following comments.

DPR: No Comment.

DPW-T:

Landscaping: No comment.

Recreations & Parks: No comment LOS & No Greenways affected.

BALTIMORE COUNTY, MARYLAND INTER-OFFICE MEMORANDUM

TO: C. Pete Gutwald DATE: 7/11/2024

Director, Department of Permits, Approvals and Inspections

FROM: Steve Lafferty

Director, Department of Planning

SUBJECT: ZONING ADVISORY COMMITTEE COMMENTS

Case Number: 2024-0162-A

INFORMATION:

Property Address: 11907 Reisterstown Road

Petitioner: GGCAL RSC LLC- Eric DeVito

Zoning: BM-CCC **Requested Action:** Variance

The Department of Planning has reviewed the petition for the following:

Variance(s) -

1. From BCZR Section 450.4.5.d(Table of Sign Regulations) to allow a total of two wall mounted enterprise sign (each sign on a different building façade) with a size of 148 square feet (rear façade, without a customer entrance) in one instance, and 103 square feet (front façade, with a customer entrance) in one instance, for a tenant in a multi-tenant retail building in lieu of one canopy sign and one wall mounted enterprise sign each with a size of 130 square feet and on the same façade as the separate exterior customer entrance for the tenant space.

The proposed site is a 21,780 square foot commercial property zoned BM-CCC. It is surrounded by a mix of commercial and residential uses. The existing building is a Mattress Warehouse that is a part of a multi-tenant retail building. There are multiple previous Zoning Action requests associated with the property.

At this time, the petitioner is requesting two enterprise signs in lieu of the maximum of 1 with varying proposed square footages. The proposed signage and their locations appear to help achieve branding visibility and clear building indication for users accessing the site. The above variance relief request does not appear to negatively impact the health, safety and well-being of vehicular and pedestrian traffic or create signage clutter and visual nuisance. The proposed size of the signage does not obstruct any views and is proportionally dimensioned as to not overshadow the other existing signage in the multi-tenant retail building and fit the store front entrance.

The Department of Planning has no objections to the requested Variance request and recommends approval.

For further information, concerning the matters stated herein, please contact Brett M. Williams at 410-887-3482.

Prepared by:

Krystle Patchak

SL/JGN/KP

c: Dino C. La Fiandra, Esquire Yolanda Gregory, Community Planner Jeff Perlow, Zoning Review Kristen Lewis, Zoning Review Office of Administrative Hearings People's Counsel for Baltimore County **Division Chief:**

enifer G. Nugent

CERTIFICATE OF POSTING

		2024-0162-A
	RE: Case No.:	
	Petitioner/Developer:	
GGCA	Bla L RSC. LLC, Eric DeVito,	ir Image Element General Manager
	Date of Hearing/Closing:	August 26, 2024
Baltimore County Department of Permits, Approvals and Inspections County Office Building, Room 111 111 West Chesapeake Avenue Towson, Maryland 21204		
Attn: Jeff Perlow:		
Ladies and Gentlemen:		
This letter is to certify under the penalties of pe posted conspicuously on the property located at		equired by law were
11907 Reisterstown Road	SIGN 1A & 1B	
The sign(s) were posted on	August 4, 2024	
	Month, Day, Year)	



August 4, 2024

(Signature of Sign Poster) (Date)

SSG Robert Black

(Print Name)

1508 Leslie Road

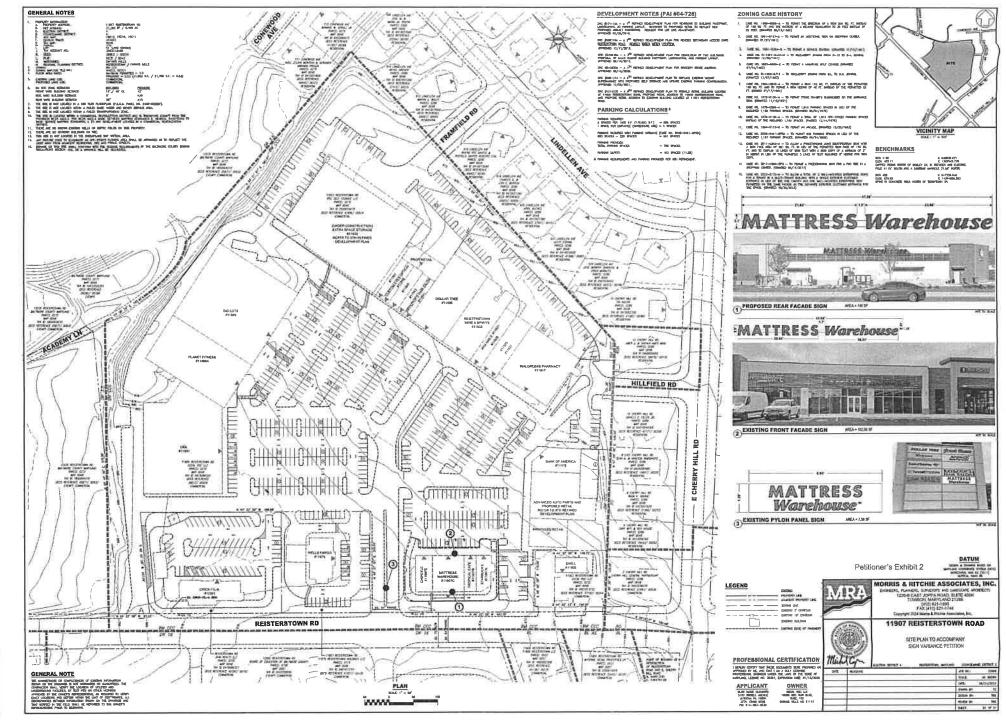
(Address)

Dundalk, Maryland 21222

(City, State, Zip Code)

(410) 282-7940

(Telephone Number)



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