

## **STAFF REPORT**

**DATE:** March 19, 2026  
**TO:** Zoning Board of Appeals  
**FROM:** Francisco Jimenez, Planner  
**RE:** Petition Number: 2026-05  
Applicant / Owner: Amgad Sughayer / John Bays  
Location: 203 N. Ottawa St  
Request: A Variation on signage to exceed the maximum total sign area in the B-2 (central business) zoning district

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### **Purpose**

The applicant is requesting a Variation on signage to exceed the maximum total sign area in the B-2 (central business) zoning district from 50 square feet to 234 square feet in size. The Zoning Board of Appeals makes the final decision on this request.

### **Site Specific Information**

The subject property is a three-story multi-tenant building, and the applicant currently occupies approximately 2,600 square feet of space on the first floor in the southwest portion of the building. The occupied space was formerly a Harold's Chicken from 2021 until 2025. The subject property is zoned B-2 (Central Business District).

### **Surrounding Zoning, Land Use and Character**

All properties in this vicinity are zoned B-2 (Central Business District).

### **Applicable Regulations**

- Section 47-17.21 Signs

### **Discussion**

The applicant seeks to install signs on the canopy that extends over a drive aisle, located at the southwest corner of this building. One sign will face Cass Street. The other sign will face Joliet Street and the parking lot on the west side of the building. The applicant requests approval of this sign to better advertise this existing business, which is Baby's Cheesesteaks. The sign that will face Cass Street will be 132 square feet in area and the sign facing the parking lot will be 102 square feet. The attached renderings show that the signs will be illuminated and will meet all other requirements. There is an existing projecting sign on the façade that is approximately 25 square feet in size. The zoning ordinance allows for a maximum 50 square feet of sign area for a single tenant in the B-2 (Central Business) zoning district. With these two additional proposed signs, the total

sign area for this tenant space would be 259 square feet. Included in the staff report packet are elevations showing the sign as well as the proposed dimensions.

### **Recommended Action**

Approval of the requested Variation would allow the developer to install two signs on the west and south drive aisle canopy of the restaurant tenant space. Section 47-17.21(bb) details the findings of fact that need confirmation to support a variation request. Staff does not find that the Variation request meets the criteria for hardship or practical difficulties. The property in question can still yield a reasonable return if the variations are not granted and there are no perceived unique circumstances. However, staff does find that approval of the requested Variation will not alter the essential character of the area and would not be contrary to the objective of improving the overall appearance of the City. The sign text is appropriately sized to fit within the existing canopy frame. The sign also does not detract from the architectural style of this building and canopy.

### **Conditions**

If the Zoning Board desires to approve this Variation request to exceed the maximum total sign area in the B-2 (central business) district, staff recommends that the following conditions should be included:

1. That the increased maximum sign area granted herein shall be specific to the two canopy signs at the tenant space only and shall not be reallocated to other locations on the building in the future.
2. That maximum sign area of this tenant space shall not be expanded in the future.
3. That a building permit shall be obtained prior to construction.

ORIGINAL  
**Baby's**  
CHEESE STEAK  
LEMONADE • WINGS  
SALADS • FISH

CRYSTAL ROOM  
"Experience Detroit's Finest Venue"

**NOW OPEN!**



# FULL SIGNAGE PERMIT PACKAGE

## Project: The Original Babys Cheesesteak

Address: 203 N. Ottawa, Joliet, Illinois

Property Owner: Bays Investment Property

## EXHIBIT A – SITE & CANOPY DIMENSIONS

Item	Dimension	Area
Front Canopy	44 ft x 3 ft	132 sq ft
Side Canopy	34 ft x 3 ft	102 sq ft
Total Canopy	-	234 sq ft

## EXHIBIT B – PROPOSED SIGNAGE LAYOUT

Front signage is distributed across full 44 ft frontage: Babys (6 ft), Cheesesteak (16 ft), Lemonade (11 ft), Wings (11 ft).

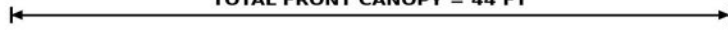
Side signage is proportionally scaled across 34 ft canopy.

## EXHIBIT C – VARIATION REQUEST

Applicant requests approval to exceed the standard 50% signage limitation to allow expanded canopy utilization for improved visibility, readability, and proportional design alignment.

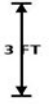
## EXHIBIT D – DIMENSIONAL RENDERING

**DIMENSIONAL SIGNAGE EXHIBIT**  
TOTAL FRONT CANOPY = 44 FT



SIDE CANOPY = 34 FT

SIDE SIGNAGE (EST.):  
BABYS = 5 FT  
CHEESESTEAK = 12 FT  
LEMONADE = 8 FT  
WINGS = 9 FT  
TOTAL = 34 FT

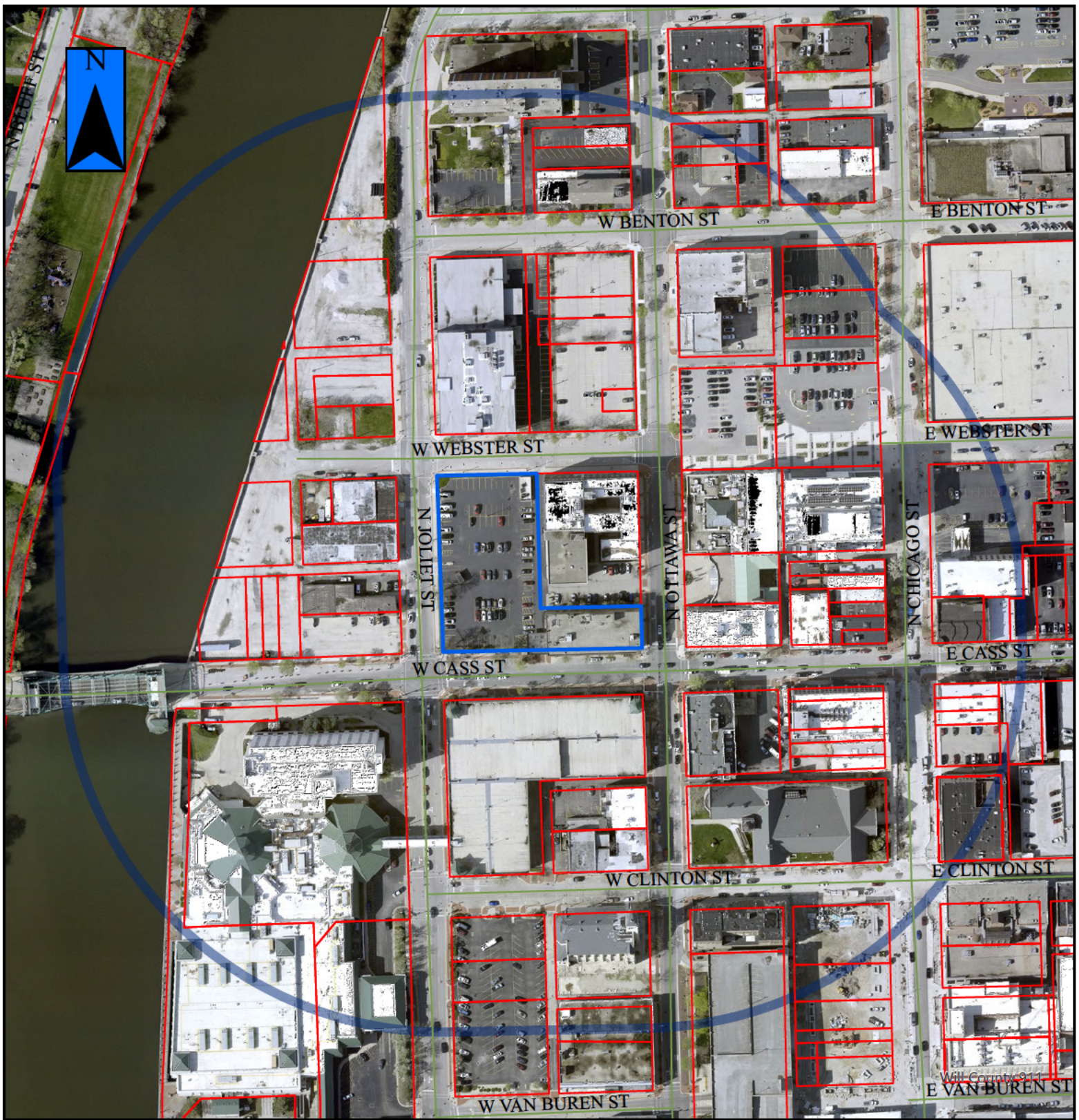


BABYS = 6 FT    CHEESESTEAK = 16 FT    LEMONADE = 11 FT    WINGS = 11 FT

6 FT + 16 FT + 11 FT + 11 FT = 44 FT TOTAL SIGNAGE WIDTH  
NOTE: ALL DIMENSIONS ARE ESTIMATES AND MAY VARY BASED ON FINAL INSTALLATION



**NOTES**

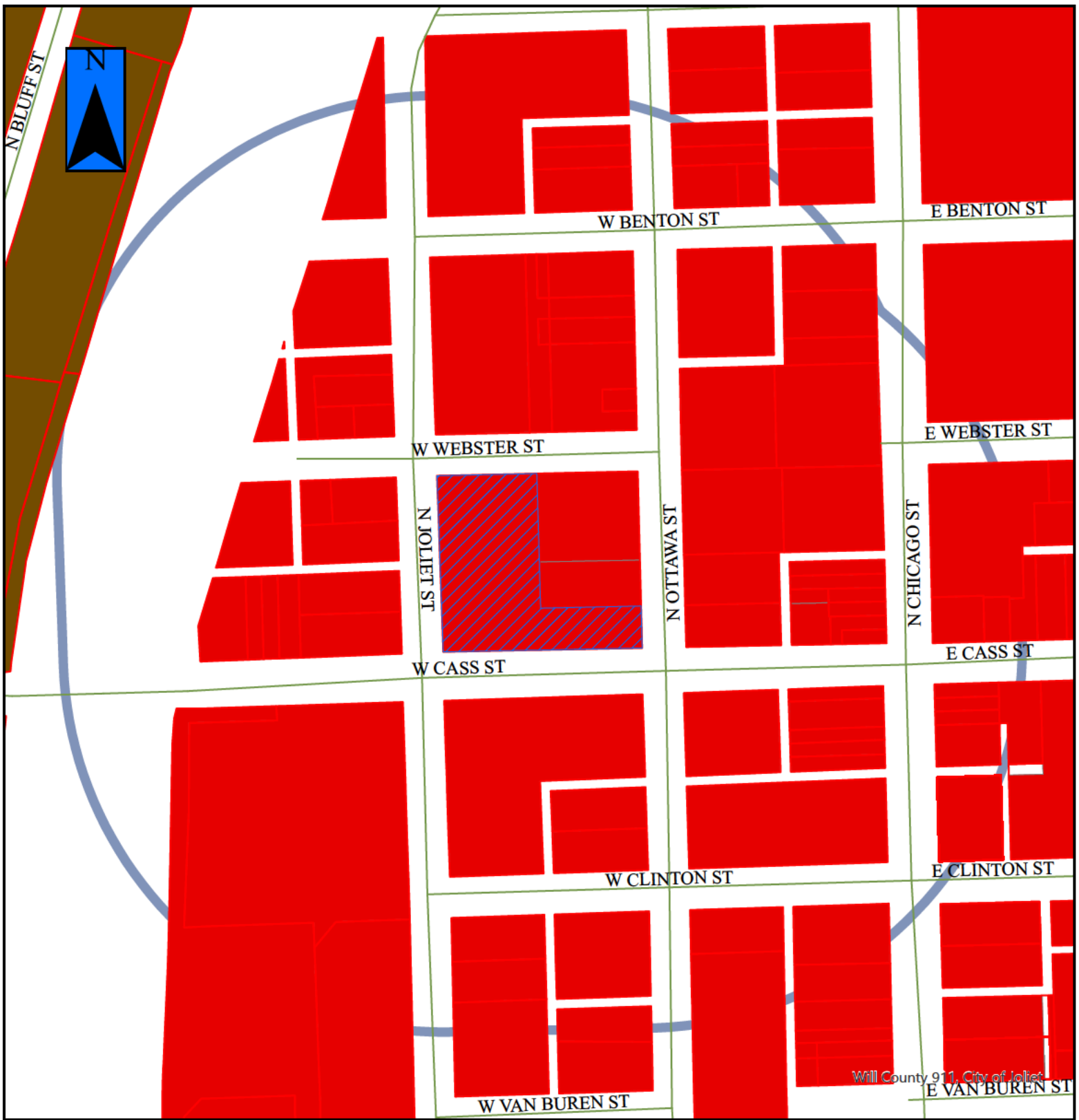
All dimensions are estimates and may vary based on final installation and field conditions.



## 2026-05a


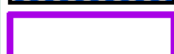


-  = Property in Question / Propiedad en cuestión
-  = 600' Public Notification Boundary / Límite de notificación pública de 600 ft (180 m)



2026-05



 = Property in Question  
 = 600' Public Notification Boundary

Legend			
	B-1		R-2
	B-2		I-TA
	B-3		R-2A
	I-1		I-TC
	I-2		R-1
	I-T		R-1A
	I-T		R-1B
	I-TA		R-2A
	I-TB		R-3
	I-TC		R-4
	R-1		R-5
	R-1A		R-5
	R-1B		R-B

# JOLIET PLANNING DIVISION

## Zoning Board of Appeals Application Packet

### Variation

This packet should contain all of the following documents:

- Application;
- Ownership disclosure form;
- Public notice sign posting requirements and sign template

If you have any questions please contact the Planning Division staff.

Joliet Planning Division - 150 West Jefferson Street,  
First Floor-South Wing, Joliet, Illinois 60432

Phone Number: (815) 724-4050

Email Address: [zoning@joliet.gov](mailto:zoning@joliet.gov)

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

\*\*\*Verified by Planner (please initial): \_\_\_\_\_\*\*\*

Payment received from: \_\_\_\_\_

Petition #: \_\_\_\_\_

Common Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Date filed: \_\_\_\_\_

Meeting date assigned: \_\_\_\_\_

ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

JOLIET, ILLINOIS

**PETITION FOR VARIATION/APPEAL**

City of Joliet Planning Division, 150 W. Jefferson St., Joliet, IL 60432

Ph (815)724-4050 Fax (815)724-4056

ADDRESS FOR WHICH VARIATION IS REQUESTED: 203 N. Ottawa st. Ste. 150

PETITIONER'S NAME: Amgad Sughayer

HOME ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP CODE: \_\_\_\_\_

BUSINESS ADDRESS: 203 N. Ottawa st. Joliet, IL ZIP CODE: 60432

PHONE: (Primary) [REDACTED] (Secondary) \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL ADDRESS: [REDACTED] FAX: \_\_\_\_\_

PROPERTY INTEREST OF PETITIONER: \_\_\_\_\_

OWNER OF PROPERTY: John Bays

HOME ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP CODE: \_\_\_\_\_

BUSINESS ADDRESS: [REDACTED] ZIP CODE: 60435

EMAIL ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_ FAX: \_\_\_\_\_

**Any use requiring a business license shall concurrently apply for a business license and submit a copy with this petition. Additionally, if this request is for operation of a business, please provide the following information:**

BUSINESS REFERENCES (name, address, phone or email):

203 N. OTTAWA ST Joliet IL 60432

OTHER PROJECTS AND/OR DEVELOPMENTS:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

PERMANENT INDEX NUMBER (TAX NO. OR P. I. N.): 4609-0231;

*\*Property Index Number/P.I.N. can be found on tax bill or Will County Supervisor of Assessments website\*\**

LEGAL DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY (an attached copy preferred):  
Restaurant on 1st Floor of the Bldg

LOT SIZE: WIDTH: \_\_\_\_\_ DEPTH: \_\_\_\_\_ AREA: \_\_\_\_\_

PRESENT USE(S) OF PROPERTY: Restaurant

PRESENT ZONING OF PROPERTY: Restaurant

VARIATION/APPEAL REQUESTED: Signage - Exterior on Canopy Both Sides

**RESPONSE TO VARIATION CRITERIA**

The Zoning Board of Appeals is authorized to grant or recommend relief only when it has received adequate evidence to establish a practical difficulty or hardship. The evidence must support each of the following three conditions:

- (a) The property in question cannot yield a reasonable return by use permitted and subject to the conditions allowed by the regulations in the particular district or zone.
- (b) The plight of the owner is due to unique circumstances.
- (c) The variation, if granted, will not alter the essential character of the locality.

Please describe how this request meets the criteria by responding to the following questions in your own words.

1. How do the applicable zoning regulations prevent the property in question from yielding a reasonable return?

Exposure to The Public

Terrible Exposure on Exterior of Building. (Address of Building is "OTTAWA" and Building (Back of Bldg location is on Cass St)

- Also The Bridge Being Down for a year isn't Helping at all.

- Would like to increase Exposure of Exterior of Building.

What unique circumstances exist which mandate a variance?

- Back of Bulky address isn't ON "OTTAWA ST" ON (955)
- Bridge Not in Service
- In an office Bulky

What impact would the granting of this variance have upon the essential character of the general area? Please include both positive and negative impacts.

This will definitely ↑ increase Exposure to Bulky and Traffic to downtown area food establishments

**REQUIRED SUPPORTING ATTACHMENTS**

- Site plan / concept plan / floor plan / building elevation plan
- Joliet Ownership Disclosure form
- Business license application (if applicable)

**NOTARIZATION OF PETITION**

STATE OF ILLINOIS) ss  
COUNTY OF WILL)

I, [Redacted], depose and say that the above statements are true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief. I agree to be present in person or by representation when this petition is heard before the Zoning Board of Appeals.

[Redacted Signature]

Owner's Signature  
(If other than petitioner)

Subscribed and sworn to before me  
this \_\_\_ day of \_\_\_, 20\_\_

Ray [Redacted]

# CITY OF JOLIET OWNERSHIP DISCLOSURE FORM

The City of Joliet requires that applicants for zoning relief, subdivision approval, building permits and business licenses disclose the identity of all persons having an ownership interest in the business and the real property associated with the application. A copy of this form must be completed and submitted with other application materials. Failure to properly complete and submit this form may result in the denial of the application.

## I. INFORMATION ABOUT THE APPLICATION

This form is submitted as part of an application for the following (check all that apply):

- Rezoning, Special Use Permit, Variation, or Other Zoning Relief (Complete Sections II and III)
- Preliminary Plat, Final Plat, or Record Plat of Subdivision (Complete Sections II and III)
- Building Permit (Complete Sections II and III)
- Business License (Complete All Sections)

## II. INFORMATION ABOUT THE PROPERTY

The address and PIN(s) of the real property associated with this application are:

\_\_\_\_\_ 203 N. Ottawa ST \_\_\_\_\_

PIN(s): \_\_\_\_\_

## III. PROPERTY OWNERSHIP

Select the type of owner of the real property associated with this application and fill in the appropriate contact information below:

- Individual:** State the names, addresses, and phone #'s of the individual owner(s)
- Corporation:** State the names, addresses, and phone #'s of all persons holding 3% or more of the stock of the corporation and the percentage of shares held by such stockholders
- Limited Liability Company:** State the names, addresses, and phone #'s of all members of the company along with the percentage of ownership held by each member
- Land Trust:** State the names, addresses, and phone #'s of the trustee(s) and all beneficiaries
- Partnership:** State the names, addresses, and phone #'s of all partners
- Other type of organization:** State the names, addresses, and phone #'s of all persons having a legal or equitable ownership interest in the organization or the right to direct the affairs of the organization

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_  
Bays Investment  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

E-MAIL: \_\_\_\_\_ FAX: \_\_\_\_\_

**IV. BUSINESS OWNERSHIP**

If the owner of the business is different than the owner of the real property associated with the application, then the following information must be provided:

Select the type of business owner associated with this application and fill in the contact information below:

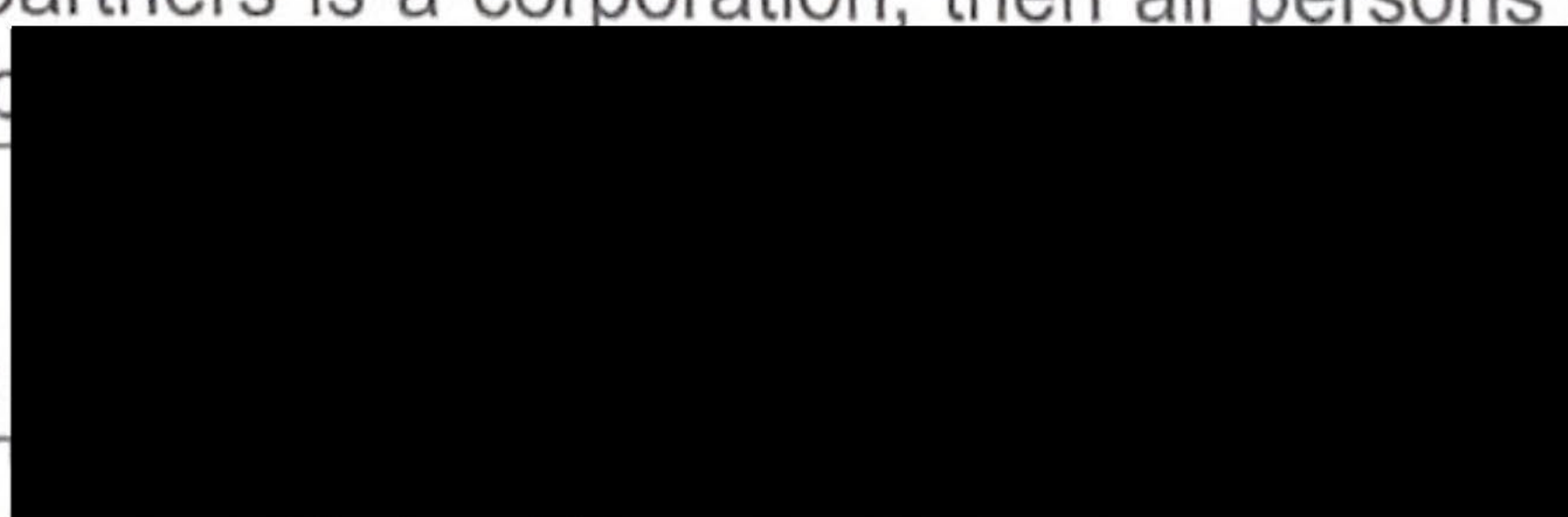
- Individual:** State the names, addresses, and phone #'s of the individual owner(s)
- Corporation:** State the names, addresses, and phone #'s of all persons holding 3% or more of the stock of the corporation and the percentage of shares held by such stockholders
- Limited Liability Company:** State the names, addresses, and phone #'s of all members of the company along with the percentage of ownership held by each member
- Partnership:** State the names, addresses, and phone #'s of all partners
- Other type of organization:** State the names, addresses, and phone #'s of all persons having a legal or equitable ownership interest in the organization

4. The sign shall be provided by the City of Joliet Planning Division up to the applicant's premises or a suitable display area.

5. It shall be the applicant's responsibility to post the sign. The sign shall be provided by the applicant to the City with the date and location of the posting of the sign.

E-MAIL:  FAX: \_\_\_\_\_

**NOTE:**  
If a stockholder, member, beneficiary or partner disclosed in Section III or Section IV is not an individual, then the individuals holding the legal or equitable title to the real property or business associated with the application must also be disclosed. For example, if the real property associated with an application is owned by a land trust, and the beneficiary of the land trust is a limited liability company, then the members of the limited liability company must be disclosed. If one of the members of the limited liability company is a partnership, then the identity of the partners must be disclosed. If one of the partners is a corporation, then all persons owning 3% or more of the issued stock must be disclosed.

**SIGNED:** 

**DATE:** 3/8/26

**Name, Title, and Telephone Numbers of Person Completing and Submitting This Form:**  
President

**PRINT**

**ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS**  
**CRITERIA FOR VARIATIONS**

Section 47-19.8 of the Zoning Ordinance states:

A variation shall not be granted in any case unless the Board shall find and clearly state in its record of the case that:

	Does the evidence presented sustain this criteria?	Comments
<p>(1) Reasons sustaining the contention that strict enforcement of the Ordinance would involve practical difficulties or impose exceptional hardship were found as follows:</p> <p>(a) _____</p> <p>(b) _____</p> <p>(c) _____</p> <p>(list of reasons)</p>		
<p>(2) Adequate evidence was submitted to establish practical difficulties or particular hardship so that, in the judgment of the Board, a variation is permitted because the evidence sustained the existence of each of the three following conditions:</p> <p>(a) The property in question cannot yield a reasonable return if permitted to be used only under the conditions allowed by the regulations in the particular district or zone.</p> <p>(b) The plight of the owner is due to unique circumstances.</p> <p>(c) The variation, if granted, will not alter the essential character of the locality.</p>		
<p>(3) A public hearing was held on such variation of which at least 15 days and not more than 30 days notice was published in the _____ (name of newspaper) on _____ (date).</p>		