

MEMPHIS AND SHELBY COUNTY OFFICE OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT
STAFF REPORT **# 4**

CASE NUMBER: PD 90-343 **L.U.C.B. MEETING:** October 13, 2011

DEVELOPMENT NAME: Poplar Court Planned Development

LOCATION: South side of Poplar Avenue; +/-1,700 feet east of Massey Road

COUNCIL DISTRICT: 2

SUPER DISTRICT: 9

OWNER OF RECORD/APPLICANT: South Central Wireless, LLC

REPRESENTATIVE: Stevie Crest Investments - Jason Polley

REQUEST: Increase in size of tenant sign and allowance of box sign where an individual channel letter designed sign is required

AREA: Approx. 3,000 sqft.

EXISTING LAND USE & ZONING: Residential Urban-3 (RU-3) District (Currently governed by PD 90-343-Buckingham Tower (Polar Court) Planned Development

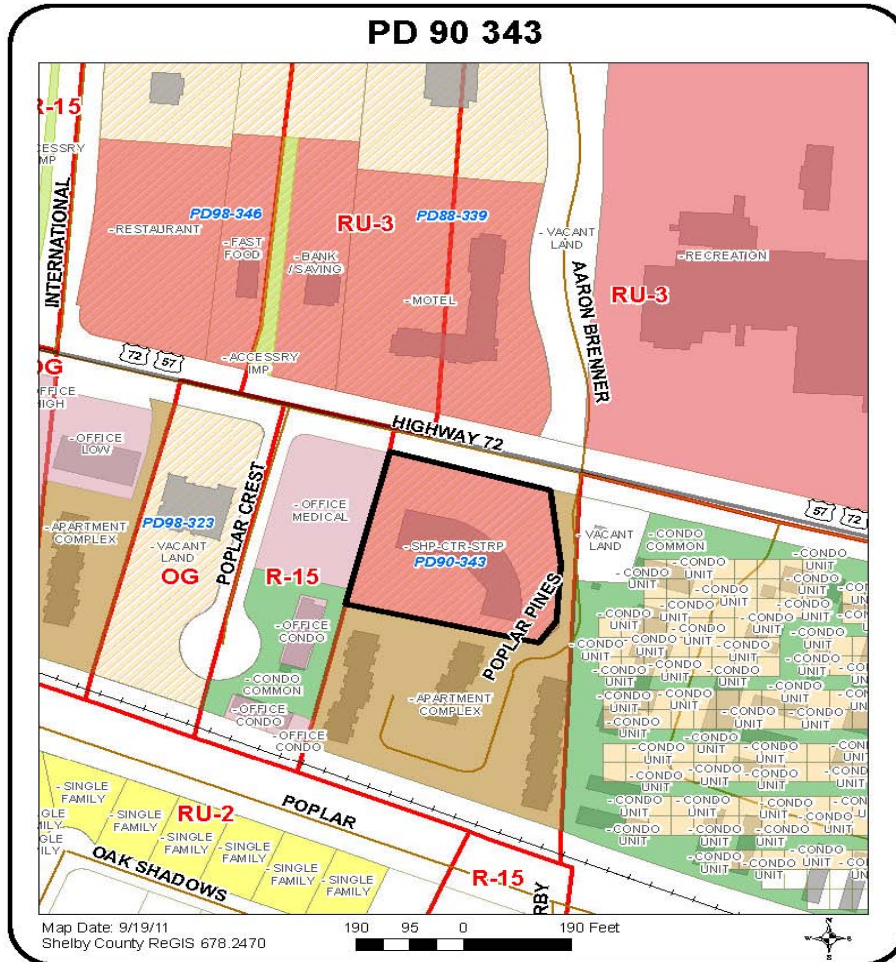
OFFICE OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT RECOMMENDATION
Approval with conditions

CONCLUSIONS

The Buckingham Towers Planned Development comprises roughly 25 acres, and is primarily characterized as a commercial center occupied by 8 to 12 individual tenants bays. The applicant requests an increase in the sign size and an alternate sign type than what is permitted by the sign conditions within the Planned Development. The maximum height for signage for attached signs installed above individual tenant bays, as established by the PD is 30 inches where as the applicant is requesting approximate 32 inches. The PD also requires that all signs employ individual channel letters with plexiglass faces and neon illumination. The applicant requests to install two signs one designed with individual channel letters and a second designed as a "box" type sign with fluorescent illumination.

The size increase for the first sign designed with individual channel letters is agreeable; however, the explicit requirement of the sign type is intended to retain consistency and conformity in the signage for all tenants within the commercial center, therefore the second sign should not be allowed. Allowing this requested divergence from the sign requirements which is exemplified by the current tenant signs could disrupt the consistency of the buildings façade and ultimately diminish the intent of the sign requirements and intent of the PD.

LAND USE AND ZONING MAP



SURROUNDING LAND USES AND ZONING:

North: Predominantly office and commercial land uses governed by associated Planned Developments

East: Multiple family residential land use within the City of Germantown

South: Multiple family residential land use within the RU-3 District

West: General Office land use within the R-15 District and associated Planned Development

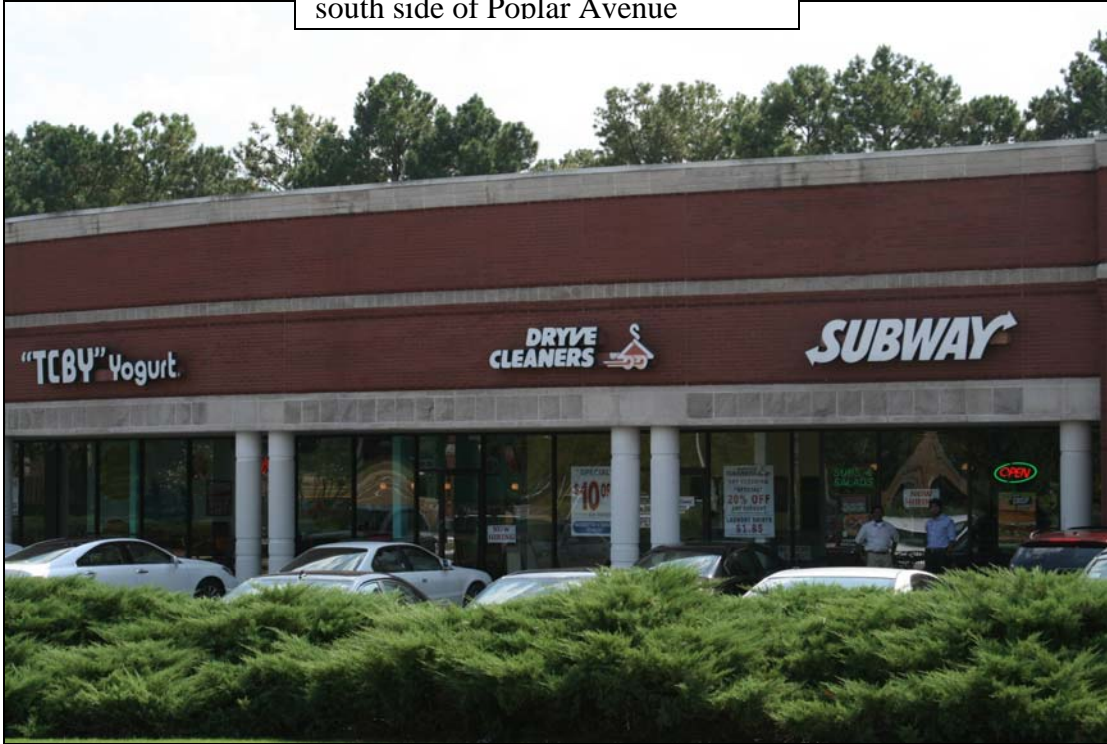
Subject Site (Tenant Space)



Buckingham Tower (Poplar Court)
south side of Poplar Avenue



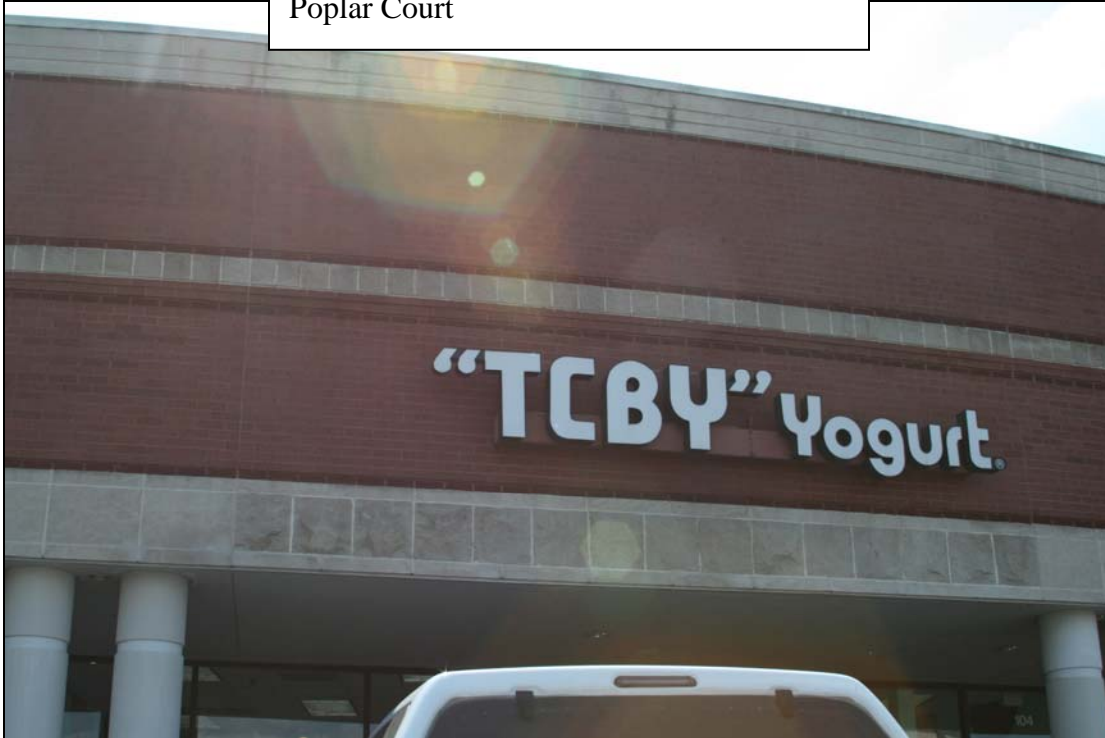
Buckingham Tower (Poplar Court)
south side of Poplar Avenue



Buckingham Tower (Poplar Court) View
from north side of Poplar Avenue



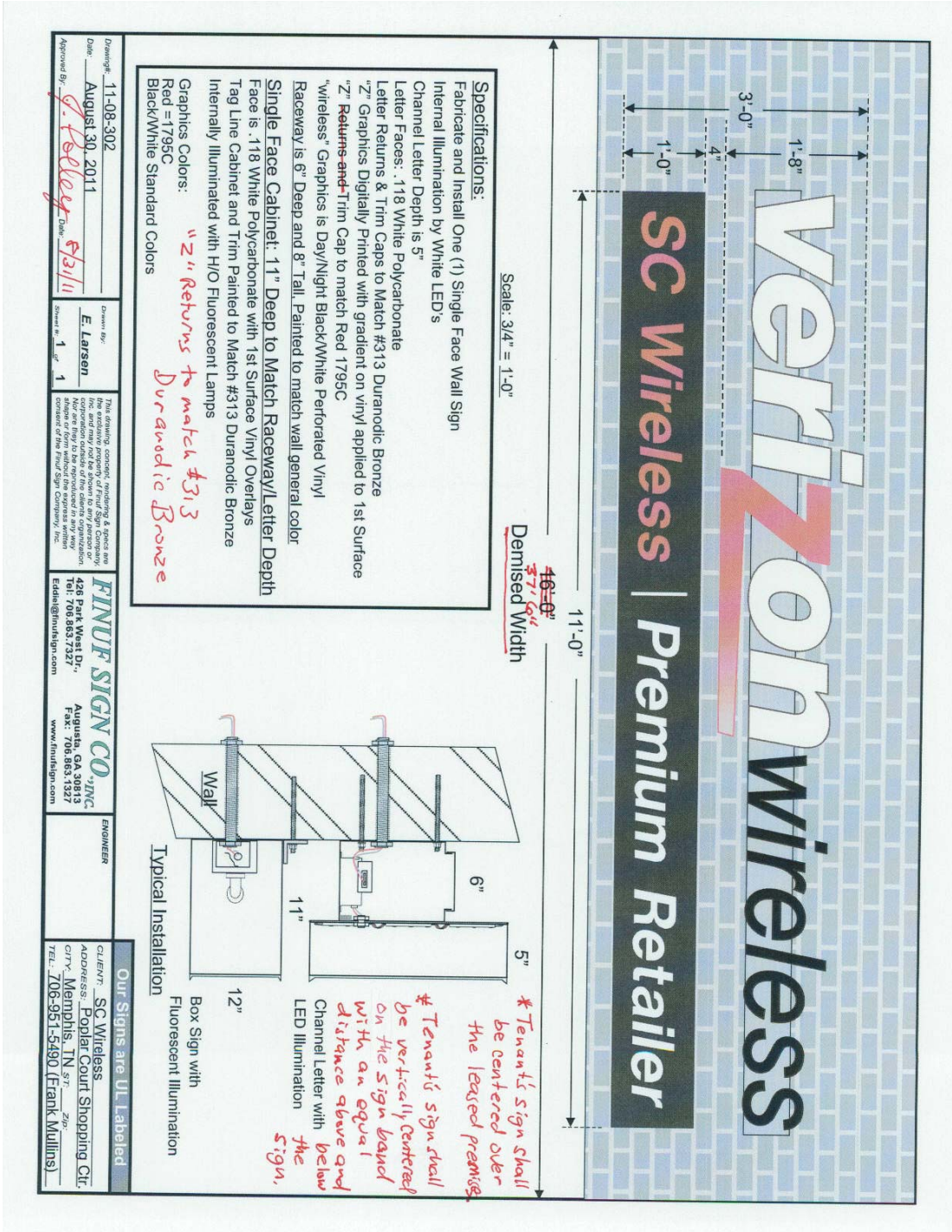
Example of a typical one line sign in
Poplar Court



Example of one line Verizon sign more
consistent with other signs in Poplar Court



Sign Elevations



Site Characteristics

The subject site is a tenant Space located within the Buckingham Towers (Poplar Court) Planned Development. The Buckingham Towers PD comprises approximately 3.13 acres and is situated on the south side of Poplar Avenue approximately 1700 feet east of Massey Road.

This site is just west of the Germantown City limits and is surrounded by a mixture of office, commercial, and multiple family residential land use.

Request

The applicant requests to exceed the maximum sign height of 30 inches and is requesting to install a box type designed sign where a sign with individual channel letters is required as illustrated in the Buckingham Towers Planned Development.

In the initial Planned Development approved by the Memphis City Council in December 1990 there were guidelines for the integrated monument sign that would front along Poplar Avenue; however, the sign requirements did not address individual tenant signs attached to the building. As a result the Buckingham Towers Planned Development was amended on December 18, 1992 **requiring that individual tenant signs meet the requirements for the General Office (O-G) District except that signs shall employ individual channel letters with plexiglass faces and neon illumination. The amendment also authorized a modification to permit a double line sign with a maximum total height of 30 inches**

Conclusion

The applicant proposes two separate signs that are to be erected directly above the tenant space; these two signs collectively amount to approximately 30 square feet and will have a comprehensive dimension of 32 inches in height and 11 feet in length. The top sign is composed of individual channel letters with LED illumination and is approximately 1 foot, 8 inches tall and 11 feet in length. The bottom sign is a box sign, 1 foot tall and 11 feet in length with fluorescent illumination.

Although the first sign or first line, is agreeable, the second line which is a box sign does not meet the intent of the sign requirements as established in the Buckingham Towers PD. The intent of the sign requirements is to maintain consistency of the signs within the PD.

The increase in the overall size of the sign is agreeable; however, the PD expressly requires "individual channel letters" and approval of a box sign may undermine its intent. This sign as submitted may result in an unbalanced facade and may disrupt the consistency of the signage in the front of the building, especially, with all other tenants having followed the requirements of the PD and the signs being constructed with individual channel letters.

The general intent of a Planned Development is to create a more desirable use of land and a more coherent and coordinated development (UDC Art. 4.11.1). This request does not necessarily improve the coherence or the coordination of the Buckingham Farms Planned Development

Recommendation

Approval with conditions

Conditions

1. The increase in the size of the overall sign should be allowed but the second line of the sign that is currently submitted as a “box sign” should be designed as an individual channel letter type sign so that this individual tenant sign remains consistent with other signs within Buckingham Towers and supports the intent of the P D.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Street Frontage: ± 300 feet
Planning District: Shelby Farms-Germantown
Census Tract: 213.32
Zoning Atlas Page: 2145/2245
Parcel ID: 0810009 A00002
Zoning History: Currently governed by the Buckingham Tower (Polar Court) Planned Development

DEPARTMENTAL COMMENTS

The following comments were provided by agencies to which this application was referred:

City Engineer: No comment on signs.
City Fire Division: No comments received.
City Real Estate: No comments received.
City/County Health Department: No comments by the Water Quality Branch & Septic Tank Program.
City Board of Education:

The subject property does not appear to be adjacent to any property which has been identified as belonging to Memphis City Schools (MCS). No identifiable impact on MCS' school-aged population or MCS' property interests.

Construction Code Enforcement: No comments received.
Center City Commission: No comments received.
Memphis Light, Gas and Water: No comments received.
AT&T/Bell South: AT&T Tennessee has no comment regarding this new development.

Memphis Area Transit Authority (MATA):	No comments received.
Landmarks Commission:	No comments received.
Memphis Park Commission:	No comments received.
TN Dep't of Environment & Conservation:	No comments received.
Fountain Square Condo Association:	No comments received.