



City of Dover
Board of Adjustment
August 20, 2025
V-25-04

Title: Calvary Baptist Church Request for Area Variance for a Monument Sign

Location: South side of Forrest Avenue, West of Dover High Drive, and East of Artis Drive

Address: 2285 Forrest Avenue, Dover, DE

Owner: Calvary Baptist Church of Dover, Delaware, Inc.

Tax Parcel: ED-05-075.00-01-06.00-000

Application Date: July 01, 2025

Present Zoning: R-10 (One Family Residence Zone) and COZ-1 (Corridor Overlay Zone)

Present Use: Place of Worship/Church (Under Construction)

Proposed Use: Church with 13 ft 7 in tall, 70 SF Monument Sign

Reviewed By: Chris Salzano, AICP, Planner II

Variance Type: Area Variance

Variances Requested: Request has been made for a Variance from the requirements of *Zoning Ordinance*, Article 5 §4.7 to allow for a larger sign area and sign height

Project Description

Property at 2285 Forrest Avenue. A Request has been made for a Variance from the requirements of *Zoning Ordinance*, Article 5 §4.7, as associated with a proposed monument sign. The Variance Request seeks an enlargement of the allowable sign area from 12 SF to 70 SF and an increase of the allowable height from 7 feet to 13-feet 7-inches. The property is zoned R-10 (One Family Residence Zone) and is subject to the COZ-1 (Corridor Overlay Zone). The owner

** Correction to Zoning, only a 25-acre tract (later subdivided for this subject parcel) was rezoned from RM-2/COZ-1 to R-10/COZ-1 with Rezoning Application Z-22-02, Adopted by Ordinance #2022-11 by City Council action on 10/10/2022.

of record is Calvary Baptist Church of Dover, Delaware, Inc. Property Address: 2285 Forrest Avenue, Dover, DE. The Tax Parcel ID is ED-05-075.00-01-06.00-000.

Property and Adjacent Properties: Zoning and Land Use

The property is zoned R-10 (One Family Residence Zone). The property is 50.20± Acres according to City GIS systems (Exhibit F). The property contains a place of worship currently under construction per Conditional Use Site Plan C-19-06 Calvary Baptist Church. The adjacent properties on Forrest Avenue are zoned RM-2 and IO. The lots to the immediate north across Forrest Avenue are in the County. The lot to the immediate south is a vacant lot zoned RM-2 (Medium Density Residence Zone) which is proposed for development as an apartment complex S-24-06/S-23-04 Leander Lakes III.

A Map Exhibit (Exhibit F) prepared by Staff is attached to this Report. It shows the subject property's location and the surrounding zoning. Map Exhibit G shows an aerial view of the area.

Code Citations

R-10 (One Family Residence Zone)

The subject project area is zoned R-10 (One Family Residence Zone). *Zoning Ordinance*, Article 3 §1 lists the permitted uses, conditional uses, and other provisions of the R-10 zone. Per the *Zoning Ordinance*, Article 3 §1 places of worship are included as a conditional use in One-Family Residence zones per the *Zoning Ordinance* Article 3 §1.14.

COZ-1 (Corridor Overlay Zone)

The subject project area is also subject to the COZ-1 (Corridor Overlay Zone). *Zoning Ordinance* Article 3 § 27 establishes the purpose of the COZ-1 Zone as to promote superior urban corridor development, foster coordination and linkage among corridor properties, preserve the functionality and efficiency of the roadway and achieve a visually balanced streetscape environment which is friendly to pedestrians and motorists alike. Per the *Zoning Ordinance* Article 3 § 27.4 permitted uses in the COZ-1 (Corridor Overlay Zone) are governed by those provisions of this ordinance related to the specific zoning district designations of each property as depicted on the Zoning Map.

Sign Regulations

The *Zoning Ordinance*, Article 5 § 4 – Supplementary sign regulations, outlines the provisions for the placement of signs. See the purpose statement in the code excerpt below.

Article 5 Section 4

4.1 *Purpose statement.* The purpose of this section is to create a legal framework for a comprehensive and balanced system of signs and other street graphics to facilitate an easy and pleasant communication between people and their environment. The ordinance from which this section is derived is enacted to avoid the visual clutter that is potentially harmful to vehicular and pedestrian safety, property values, business environment and opportunities, and community appearance. With these purposes in mind, it is the intent of this section to authorize the use of signs which are compatible with their surroundings, appropriate to the activity that displays them, expressive of the identity of individual activities and the community as a whole, and legible in the circumstances in which they are seen, understanding that it is important for the economic vitality of the community as well

as individual businesses and institutions that they are clearly identified and their services are understood by the traveling public.

The section further outlines the design requirements for different types of signs. Under consideration in this application is a variance request for the size and height of a Freestanding Sign. See the code excerpt on the design regulations are for Freestanding Signs.

Article 5 §4.4 Design requirements

A. *Freestanding signs.*

1. Freestanding signs and attendant structures and bases shall be designed as an integral part of the site development and shall be coordinated and compatible with site grading, utility placements, landscaping and architectural elements.
2. Freestanding signs and associated landscaping shall be situated and maintained so as not to impair or block visibility of motorists and/or pedestrians traveling within the public street right-of-way or entering, exiting or crossing vehicular site entrances. No sign or landscaping in excess of three feet in height above the adjacent street grade, shall be erected, placed or maintained on any corner within the triangular area formed by intersecting right-of-way lines. Two sides of the triangular area shall be 20 feet in length and measured from the point of intersection of the right-of-way lines.
3. Freestanding signs shall be situated on the site and dimensioned so as not to substantially impair or block the visibility of adjacent buildings and/or existing signs.
4. All freestanding signs shall respect the exclusion zone. When a sign is not permitted within the exclusion zone, one additional wall sign may be permitted in accordance with the wall sign regulations.
5. When the presence of an existing freestanding sign on an adjoining property precludes a property from placing a freestanding sign due to exclusion zone provisions, the adjoining property owners and/or business interests may share a single freestanding sign structure in accordance with the provisions of subsection [4.9](#)—Supplementary sign provisions, F—Shared freestanding signs, of this section.
6. Location of monument signs and post and panel signs may be approved by the Planning Commission as part of a Site Development Plan Approval process.

The *Zoning Ordinance*, Article 5 § 4.7 is a table of permitted signs (Sign Table) for properties based on specific use, road type and sign type. This property is a non-residential use in a residential district and it has frontage on an urban minor arterial (All Streets) . See code excerpt below; the monument sign requirement is highlighted (the subject of this variance request).

Article 5 Section 4.7 *Permitted signs.* Signs are permitted in all zones in accordance with the following table, which is a list of permitted sign types by use, proximity to residential uses, and road classification.

District	Use	Road Type	Sign Type	Max Number Permitted	Max Size	Max Height	% Wall Area	Setback	Exclusion Zone
Residential Uses and Nonresidential Uses in Residential Districts	Single-Family Detached/ Semi-Detached	All Streets	Signs permitted in § 4.5 only						
	Professional Office	All Streets	Post or Monument	1/entrance	12 S.F.	7 feet	N/A	5 feet	20 feet
			Wall	1/frontage	16 S.F.	N/A	≤ 15%	N/A	N/A
	Subdivisions Multi-Family Residential Uses Manufactured Housing Communities	All Streets	Wall	1/frontage	32 S.F.	N/A	≤ 15%	N/A	N/A
			Monument or Post and Panel	2/entrance	32 S.F.	7 feet	N/A	5 feet	20 feet

District	Use	Road Type	Sign Type	Max Number Permitted	Max Size	Max Height	% Wall Area	Setback	Exclusion Zone
Nonresidential Uses Adjacent to Residential Districts or Uses	Places of Worship Daycare Centers Approved Conditional Uses Educational/Institutional All Other Approved Nonresidential Uses	Urban Principal Arterial	Wall	2/frontage	32 S.F.	N/A	≤ 15%	N/A	N/A
			Monument or Post and Panel OR	1/entrance	32 S.F.	7 feet	N/A	10 feet	20 feet
			Post**	1/frontage	16 S.F.	7 feet	N/A	5 feet	5 feet
			Pylon*	1/frontage	32 S.F.	30 feet	N/A	30 feet	50 feet
		Urban Minor Arterial	Wall	2/frontage	32 S.F.	N/A	≤ 15%	N/A	N/A
			Monument or Post and Panel OR	1/entrance	32 S.F.	7 feet	N/A	5 feet	20 feet
			Post**	1/frontage	16 S.F.	7 feet	N/A	5 feet	10 feet
		Urban Local/ Collector	Wall	2/frontage	32 S.F.	N/A	≤ 15%	N/A	N/A
			Monument or Post and Panel OR	1/entrance	32 S.F.	7 feet	N/A	5 feet	20 feet
			Post**	1/frontage	16 S.F.	7 feet	N/A	5 feet	10 feet

Additionally, the following definitions are part of sign regulations of the *Zoning Ordinance*:

Changeable sign: A sign with the capability of content change by means of manual or remote input, includes the following types:

(1) Manually activated: Changeable sign whose messages, copy or content can be changed manually on a display surface.

(2) Electrically activated: Changeable sign whose message copy or content can be changed by means of remote electrically energized on-off switching combinations of alphabetic or pictographic components arranged on a display surface. Illumination may be integral to the components, such as characterized by lamps or other light-emitting devices; or it may be from an external light source designed to reflect off the changeable component display. See also "Electronic message center."

Frontage: For the purposes of this section, the term "frontage" refers to a parcel's property line along a right-of-way, be it public or private, excluding alleys and service drives that are abutting residential properties. The parcel must be directly adjacent to the right-of-way for it to be considered to have frontage.

Monument sign: A low freestanding sign that is affixed to a base that is equal to or wider than the sign itself. The height of the sign is to be measured from the finished grade to the top of the sign. (See figure 5-3.)

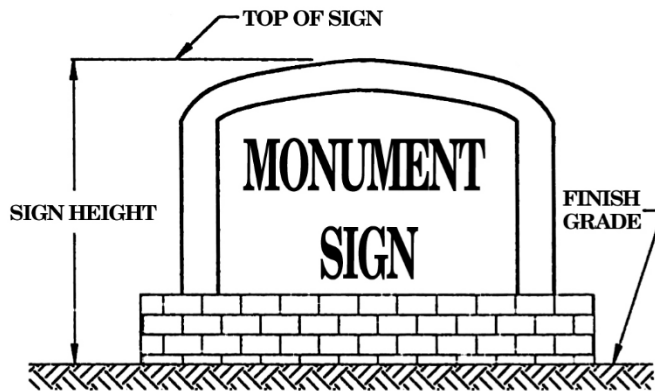


Figure 5.3 Monument Sign

Sign: Any device visible from a public place whose essential purpose and design is to convey either commercial or noncommercial messages by means of graphic presentation of alphabetic or pictorial symbols or representations.

Sign face: The surface upon, against or through which the sign copy is displayed or illustrated, not including structural supports, architectural features of a building or sign structure, nonstructural thematic or decorative trim, or any areas that are separated from the background surface upon which the sign copy is displayed by a distinct delineation, such as a reveal or border.

Sign area: The area of the smallest geometric figure, or the sum of the combination of regular geometric figures, which comprise the sign face. The area of any double-sided or "V" shaped sign shall be the area of the largest single face only. The area of a sphere shall be computed as the area of a circle. The area of all other multiple-sided signs shall be computed as 50 percent of the sum of the area of all faces of the sign.

Sign height: The height of a sign shall be the vertical distance from normal grade to the highest point of the sign. Any berming, filling or excavating solely for the purpose of locating the sign shall be computed as a part of the sign height.

Urban principal arterial: US Route 13, Bay Road, and Court Street between 13 and Bay Road are considered to be urban principal arterials under the provisions of this ordinance. Delaware State Route 1 is not considered to be a road that will provide frontage for any parcel.

Applicant's Proposed Project and Variances Requested

The applicant is seeking to place a monument sign at the property and has requested an area variance to allow a larger sign area and taller sign height. The Applicant has submitted a site plan (Exhibit E) that shows the entrance area of the lot, location of the proposed sign. The Exhibit shows the location of the sign east of the entrance. The proposed sign is 13ft 7in tall, and has a 70SF sign area, of which 70% is a changeable sign as an electronic message center (EMC).

The Applicant described the project as follows: The placement of a 13ft 7in tall 70SF Monument Sign at the entrance to the property. The Applicant also provided a rendering; See Exhibit D. The Applicant also provided an additional narrative, which Planning Staff has transcribed below.

Dear Planning Department,

Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this signage variance request. On behalf of Cavalry Baptist Church, I'd like to outline the purpose and justification for the proposed sign.

The primary intent of the sign is to clearly and safely identify the church for members, guests, and first-time visitors. Given the church's location along a busy, fast-moving roadway, visible and timely signage is essential for safe access to the entrance and parking lot. The proposed sign has been thoughtfully scaled to the size of the property and designed not only for visibility, but also to complement the church's architectural style.

A key design feature is the top portion of the sign, where "Calvary" is presented in 12-inch-tall lettering. This size was chosen based on well-established signage standards, which show that a 12-inch letter is legible from up to 1,200 feet away for drivers – providing crucial reaction time to safely identify and enter the property. Reducing the letter size would compromise both readability and safety.

The sign also includes a modest electronic message center that functions as a digital bulletin board for the church and surrounding community. It will display up to five lines of 12-inch-tall text to welcome visitors and highlight events such as prayer breakfasts, Bible studies, and community programs. Reducing the size of the display would hinder legibility from the road, diminishing its effectiveness.

Equally important, the sign is designed to enhance-not detract from-the surrounding landscape. Brickwork and professional landscaping are included to ensure the sign blends tastefully with the architecture of the church and the broader environment.

Its worth noting that the scale of our sign is modest in comparison to neighboring signage. Dover High School nearby features a significantly larger sign and campus, and directly across the street stands a billboard over 500 feet in size. Within this context, our proposed sign is both appropriate and proportionate.

In summary, this signage proposal reflects the smallest practical size needed to safely and effectively meet the church's needs. It ensures visibility, improves navigation, fosters community connection, and does so with architectural and visual harmony. We respectfully request your support in approving this variance.

*Sincerely,
Seth Greenberg
Eastern Shore Signs & Graphics
On behalf of Calvary Baptist Church*

Exceptional Practical Difficulties Tests

Zoning Ordinance, Article 9 §2 dictates the specific powers and duties of the Board of Adjustment with regard to granting variances. Specifically, the Board must determine:

2.1 Variance – The board shall have the authority to authorize variances from provisions of the Zoning Ordinance that are not contrary to public interest where the board determines that a literal interpretation of the Zoning Ordinance would result in undue hardship or exceptional practical difficulties to the applicant. In granting variances, the board shall determine that the spirit of the Zoning Ordinance is observed and substantial justice is done.

2.11 Area Variance. A variance shall be considered an area variance if it relates to bulk standards, signage regulations, and other provisions of the Zoning Ordinance that address lot layout, buffers, and dimensions. In considering a request for an area variance, the board shall evaluate the following criteria and document them in their findings of fact:

- (a) the nature of the zone in which the property lies;
- (b) the character of the immediate vicinity and the contained uses therein;
- (c) whether, if the restriction upon the applicant's property were removed, such removal would seriously affect neighboring properties and uses; and
- (d) whether, if the restriction is not removed, the restriction would create unnecessary hardship or exceptional practical difficulty for the owner in his efforts to make normal improvements in the character of that use of the property that is a permitted use under the provisions of the Zoning Ordinance.

Review of Application

As part of the Application, the applicant was asked to summarize how the requested Variance relates to the above criteria. The applicant's responses are provided in Exhibit B – Written Narrative listed below. The Staff assessment of the application in accordance with the required criteria is provided below.

1. The nature of the zone in which the property lies.

Applicant Response:

The nature of the zone the property lies in is currently zoned R-10, one family residential. The use prior was farmland. The current use will be a church. The surrounding properties are a high school, church, residential, farmland, and barber shop.

Staff Response:

The subject property is zoned R-10 (One Family Residence Zone), and a place of worship/church is under construction on the parcel. The R-10 (One Family Residence Zone) allows a variety of uses, including the raising of field and garden crops; one-family detached dwellings; public buildings, structures, and uses, including parks, and playgrounds. The R-10 (One family Residence Zone) also allows various conditional uses including places of worship, including parish houses and schools including nursery schools, kindergartens and day care centers; railroad and public utility rights-of-way and structures necessary to serve areas within the city; Country clubs or other annual membership clubs, catering exclusively to members and their guests and accessory private playgrounds, golf courses, swimming pools, tennis courts and recreation buildings not

conducted as business enterprises; and Adult day care facilities. The surrounding land uses, as mentioned, include a High School, a church, residential apartments, and farmland. In the narrative, the applicant mentions that the surrounding signage, including the High School and an existing billboard, are larger than their sign. The Dover High School is subject to a Comprehensive Unified Sign Plan US-14-01, which allows the school campus to have larger signs than typically allowable on this road and more signage as approved through a Planning Commission review process. Furthermore, the aforementioned billboard is in Kent County and not in the City of Dover.

2. The character of the immediate vicinity and the contained uses therein.

Applicant Response: The character of the neighborhood is a high school, residential, single family and apartments with commercial uses as well. Across Forrest Avenue is under county jurisdiction.

Staff Response: Forrest Avenue is a gateway into the City from the west and becomes a commercial corridor with residential users throughout. The speed limit is 35mph along Forrest Avenue, and there is a traffic sign/stop light at the intersection of Forrest Avenue and Dover High Drive. The Calvary Baptist Church entrance is from Forrest Avenue and is being developed with a right turn lane in and a left turn lane. The area surrounding the subject property includes apartments (Leander Lakes Apartments), Dover High School, residential users, and another nearby church, Dover Christian Church at 1738 Forrest Avenue. There is a vacant lot directly to the south of the church building, which is zoned RM-2 and proposed for future development as an apartment complex. In Kent County, on the north side of Forrest Avenue, are a mix of commercial and residential properties.

3. Whether, if the restriction upon the applicant's property were removed, such removal would seriously affect neighboring properties and uses.

Applicant Response: If the restrictions upon this applicant's property were removed, such removal would not seriously affect neighboring properties and uses. The properties across the street are located in Kent Co. and are allowed by code larger signs. That is why there is an approximately 575 square foot and 30 foot tall billboard across the street. By erecting this sign it will not adversely affect the neighboring properties.

Staff Response: The proposed sign will be located at the entrance to the Calvary Baptist Church on Forrest Avenue. Based on plans provided by the applicant, the proposed sign would be 13ft 7in tall, and 70 square feet in size, which is substantially larger than the City's sign ordinance would allow, even if this were a commercial property not adjacent to residential on this same road. The sign is setback twenty feet from the road per the applicant's Sign Permit application and would therefore be clearly visible to motorists traveling on Forrest Avenue. Despite the large size, the proposed sign should not affect the use of neighboring lands.

- 4. Whether, if the restriction is not removed, the restriction would create unnecessary hardship or exceptional practical difficulty for the owner in his efforts to make normal improvements in the character of that use of the property that is a permitted use under the provisions of the *Zoning Ordinance*.**

Applicant Response: If the restriction is not removed, the restriction would create an unnecessary hardship or exceptional practical difficulty, which would not be adequately identifying the entrance of the church for non parishioners who visit for weddings, funerals and other sacraments. With the speed and width of the road along with the size of the campus, this is the minimum variance that we can ask for. It is in keeping with the neighborhood.

Staff Response:

The *Zoning Ordinance*, Article 5 §4.7 states sign area in this case has an allowable square footage of 12 feet. There are two potential tables shown above (pages 3 – 4) which could be read for the applicable sign regulations. Staff is looking at this under the more strict definition of a nonresidential use within a residential district allowing a 12ft sign area and 7ft sign height because of the property's zoning and the surrounding character. However, the sign regulations could also be looked at as shown on the second table, as a place of worship adjacent to a residential zone, which would allow a 32 SF sign area and 7ft sign height. Forrest Avenue is classified under the Sign Ordinance as an Urban Minor Arterial. This portion of Forrest Avenue has a speed limit of 35 miles per hour. As the applicant noted in their narrative the Dover High School is nearby and the intersection to Dover High Drive features traffic signals further calming traffic. The Sign Regulations allow for the placement of freestanding signage on this property. The sign proposed is more than double in size the allowable sign area and almost twice the allowable sign height. Planning staff does not believe an unnecessary hardship or exceptional practical difficulty has been established by the Applicant. However, there is potential for confusion as to which provisions of the Sign Regulations should be applied (See Recommendation discussed below)

Variance Recommendations

Planning Staff looked at the sign regulations to determine the sign regulations to apply to this site (See Tables 1 and 2 above and the discussion regarding Unified Sign Plan potential). This portion of Forrest Avenue falls within a residential district; therefore, the sign is being reviewed against standards for a Non-residential Use within a Residential District (Table 1), giving it a maximum allowable square footage of 12 feet and a maximum height of 7 feet. Previously, another church (Dover Christian Church), located at 1738 Forrest Avenue, pursued an Area Variance (V-18-12) to increase the sign area to 32 square feet for their monument sign. A monument sign the size of 32 square feet is allowable on this road for Nonresidential Uses that are adjacent to a Residential District (Table 2). This example treats the sign and property as if it were simply adjacent to a residential district, as opposed to within a residential district.

If the Applicant were to pursue a Unified Sign Plan, the property would need to meet the definition of a Unified Campus or Complex per the *Zoning Ordinance* Article 5 § 4.3 and meet the following criteria per the *Zoning Ordinance* Article 5 § 4.8:

Unified campuses and complexes: The term "unified campuses and complexes" means:

- (1) Any "shopping center" as the term is defined in the zoning ordinance.
- (2) Or, any group of three or more principal structures under common management and operation, located on one or more contiguous properties;
- (3) Or, any single commercial or institutional parcel which has more than 400 linear feet of frontage on a principal arterial roadway which is occupied by a conforming commercial or institutional use. Unified campuses and complexes include, but are not limited to, shopping centers; entertainment, educational, medical, governmental, or religious campuses; office complexes; and industrial parks.

4.8 Unified Comprehensive Signage Plan.

A. *Purpose statement.* Recognizing that large campuses and complexes have signage needs that may not be adequately addressed by traditional sign regulations, this subsection of the ordinance is intended to allow a procedure for approval of a unified comprehensive signage plan for these Unified Campuses and Complexes.

1. Campuses and complexes are required to follow all standard signage requirements, as embodied elsewhere in this section, unless they choose to apply to the planning commission for comprehensive signage plan approval. All such plans must embody a thorough review of all existing signs.
2. Any proposed shopping center or group of three or more principal structures under common management and operation located on one or more contiguous properties is required to submit an application for comprehensive signage plan approval to the planning commission.
3. Any business or institution which has more than 400 linear feet of frontage on a principal arterial may submit an application for comprehensive signage plan approval.

B. *Design guidelines for unified comprehensive signage plans.*

1. Unified campuses and complexes applying for a unified comprehensive signage plan may not be held to the height, size, number and area regulations for signs found in other subsections of this section. However, the number, type and size of signs proposed may not be excessive, and must be in proportion to the scale of the buildings and the uses on the site.
2. All unified comprehensive signage plans must comply with all design guidelines found in subsection 4.4—Design requirements of this section, as well as all specific design guidelines found in this section.
3. Building signs shall be in harmony with the overall architectural concept for the site, and be compatible with each other and the building facades.
4. The freestanding signs identifying shopping centers and other unified campuses and complexes shall identify the name of the campus or complex and no more than three separate tenants within the campus or complex unless otherwise approved by the planning commission.
5. There shall be architectural harmony and unity of signs within a unified campus or complex. Sign type, color scheme, size, and illumination within the site shall be coordinated and shall be compatible with the architecture of the center and the surrounding area.

The property size is 52.20 acres per the City's GIS systems, while large one building on a property does not constitute a campus as defined by the *Zoning Ordinance* Article 5 §4.1. The site is not eligible to pursue the Unified Sign Plan process as it currently does not consist of multiple buildings. The property is not zoned as an institutional or commercial parcel and does not have more than 400 linear feet of frontage along a principal arterial roadway.

Staff recommends **denial** of the Variance as proposed for a Monument Sign of 13ft 7in total, 70SF for reasons as follows:

- The proposed sign does not meet the definition of a Monument Sign as it is taller than it is wide.
- The proposed base at 40in increases the overall sign height by over 3ft.
- The *Zoning Ordinance* does not permit signs of this size on this road, and the proposed sign would double the normally allowable square footage and height allowances. (Per the *Zoning Ordinance* Article 5 § 4.7 Table 1 and Table 2)
- The applicant has not provided any clear evidence for the safety of motorists argument.
- If the variance is not granted, the property owner will still be able to put up a sign that follows the City's sign ordinance appropriately upon approval of a compliant sign permit.
- Staff recommends an alternative option by allowing the applicant to implement signage as per the *Zoning Ordinance*, Article 5 § 4.7 Table 2.
- Staff recommends an alternative Monument Sign of 32SF and 7ft tall using the provisions of the *Zoning Ordinance* Article 5 § 4.7 Table 2 for a sign on an Urban Minor Arterial. This will reduce the overall sign area and sign height from the initial proposal.
- This middle ground alternative would allow the applicant to have right-sized signage for this portion of Forrest Avenue, at a size that would normally be allowed for this road type.
- If the 32 square foot 7 foot tall Monument Sign suggestion is accepted, the applicant will be able to put up a sign that is in character with Forrest Avenue as a corridor.

Advisory Comments to the Applicant

- If granted, the variance becomes null and void if work has not commenced within one (1) year of the date the variance was granted. At present there is no provision for extension.
- If the variance is granted, a Sign Permit is required prior to the commencement of the construction/installation of the sign. Must submit a revised Sign Permit for Permit #25-844.
- The Applicant should be aware that whenever the Board of Adjustment denies an application for a variance, such application for a variance, or an application on the same property, which is substantially similar, shall not be accepted for reconsideration by the Board of Adjustment sooner than one year from the date of denial (*Zoning Ordinance*, Article 9 §3.8).

GUIDE TO ATTACHMENTS

Exhibit	Description/Author	# Pages
A	BOA Application Form	1
B	Written Narrative	1
C	Applicant's Supplementary Narrative	2
D	Applicant's Rendering	1
E	Applicant's Site Plan	1
F	Site Map – Plain	1
G	Site Map – Satellite	1



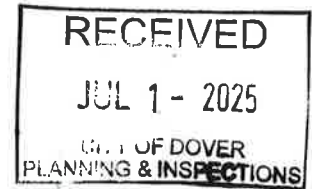
City of Dover, DE
 Department of Planning & Inspections
 P.O. Box 475, Dover, Delaware 19903
 (302) 736-7010 Fax: (302) 736-4217
www.cityofdover.com

V-25-04

Exhibit A

____ Area Variance
 ____ Use Variance
 ____ Appeal
 ____ Pre-App Date

Board of Adjustment Application



Application Information

Property Address: 2285 Forrest Ave Dover, DE 19904
 Tax Parcel Number: ED05-075.00-01-06.00
 Owner Name: Calvary Baptist Church of Dover
 Property Zoning: _____
 Variance (s) Requested: _____

*Provide eight (8) copies of any survey, drawings, photos, site plan, etc. that may help support your application, and your response to the criteria. The criteria for a use variance and appeal are on the back of the form.

Area Variance

An area variance shall be evaluated on the following criteria: **Please state how your request meets each of these four (4) criteria.**

1. The nature of the zone in which the property lies;
2. The character of the immediate vicinity and the contained uses therein;
3. Whether, if the restriction upon the applicant's property were removed, such removal would seriously affect neighboring properties and uses; and
4. Whether, if the restriction is not removed, the restriction would create unnecessary hardship or exceptional practical difficulty for the owner in his efforts to make normal improvements in the character of that use of the property that is permitted uses under the provisions of the zoning ordinance.

Signature

I Julius Harrell Hick do affirm that I am the property owner on which the variance is sought and that all the information provided in this application is accurate to the best of my knowledge and belief.

[Signature]
 Signature

Chair of Trustee Board
 Title of Calvary Baptist

6/27/25
 Date

25-7000004

1. The nature of the zone the property lies in is currently zoned R-10, one family residential. The use prior was farmland. The current use will be a church. The surrounding properties are a high school, church, residential, farmland, and barber shop.
2. The character of the neighborhood is a high school, residential, single family, and apartments with commercial uses as well. Across Forrest Ave is under county jurisdiction.
3. If the restrictions upon this applicant's property were removed, such removal would not seriously affect neighboring properties and uses. The properties across the street are located in Kent Co. and are allowed by code larger signs. That is why there is an approximately 575 square foot and 30 foot tall billboard across the street. By erecting this sign, it will not adversely affect the neighboring properties.
4. If the restriction is not removed, the restriction would create unnecessary hardship or exceptional practical difficulty, which would be not adequately identifying the entrance of the church for non parishioners who visit for weddings, funerals, and other sacraments. With the speed and width of the road along with the size of the campus, this is the minimum variance that we can ask for. It is in keeping with the neighborhood.

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DOCUWARE

FILE COPY



Dear Planning Department,

Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this signage variance request. On behalf of Calvary Baptist Church, I'd like to outline the purpose and justification for the proposed sign.

The primary intent of the sign is to clearly and safely identify the church for members, guests, and first-time visitors. Given the church's location along a busy, fast-moving roadway, visible and timely signage is essential for safe access to the entrance and parking lot. The proposed sign has been thoughtfully scaled to the size of the property and designed not only for visibility, but also to complement the church's architectural style.

A key design feature is the top portion of the sign, where "Calvary" is presented in 12-inch-tall lettering. This size was chosen based on well-established signage standards, which show that a 12-inch letter is legible from up to 1,200 feet away for drivers - providing crucial reaction time to safely identify and enter the property. Reducing the letter size would compromise both readability and safety.

The sign also includes a modest electronic message center that functions as a digital bulletin board for the church and surrounding community. It will display up to five lines of 12-inch-tall text to welcome visitors and highlight events such as prayer breakfasts, Bible studies, and community programs. Reducing the size of the display would hinder legibility from the road, diminishing its effectiveness.



Equally important, the sign is designed to enhance-not detract from-the surrounding landscape. Brickwork and professional landscaping are included to ensure the sign blends tastefully with the architecture of the church and the broader environment.

It's worth noting that the scale of our sign is modest in comparison to neighboring signage. Dover High School nearby features a significantly larger sign and campus, and directly across the street stands a billboard over 500 feet in size. Within this context, our proposed sign is both appropriate and proportionate.

In summary, this signage proposal reflects the smallest practical size needed to safely and effectively meet the church's needs. It ensures visibility, improves navigation, fosters community connection, and does so with architectural and visual harmony. We respectfully request your support in approving this variance.

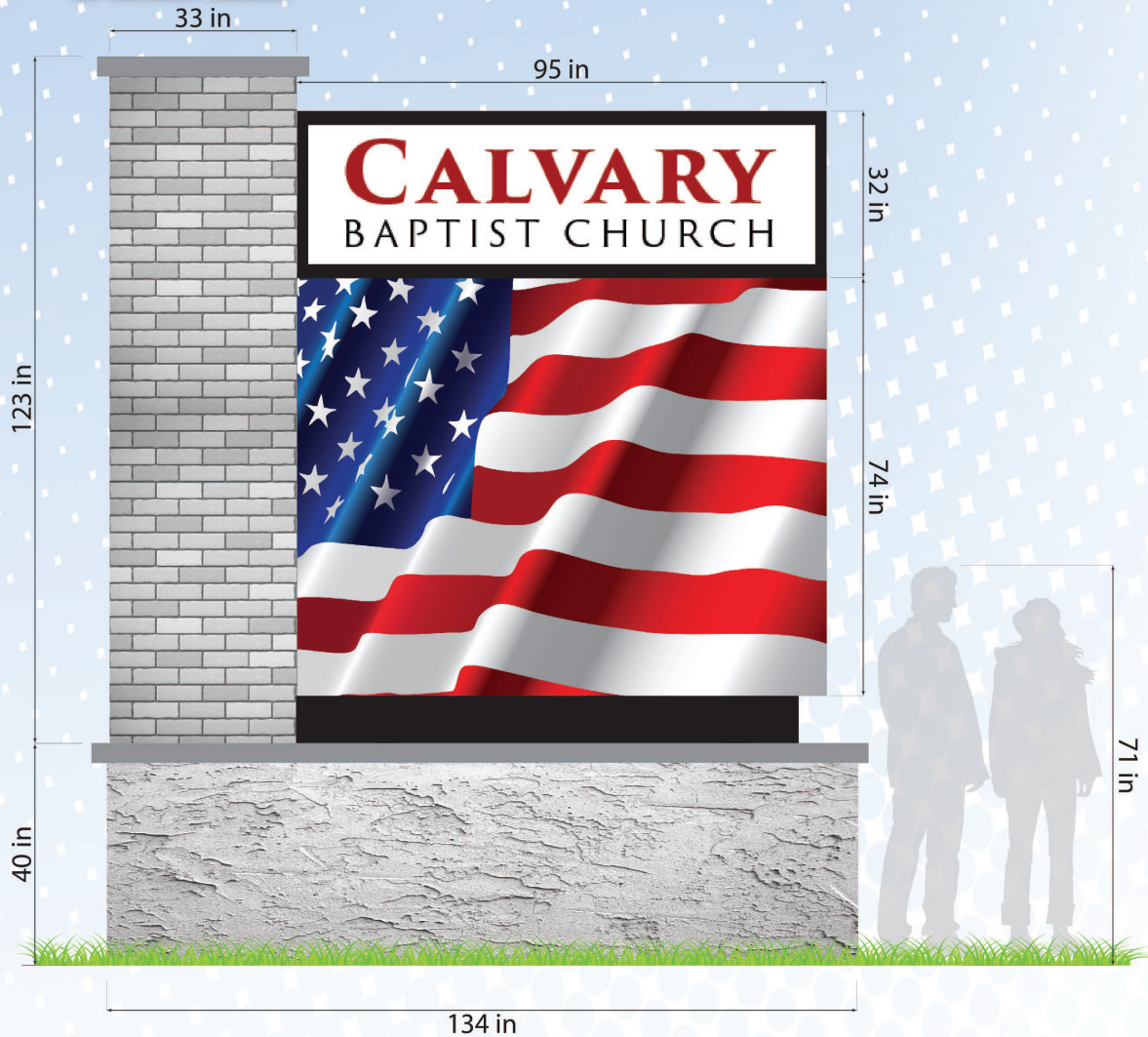
Sincerely,

Seth Greenberg

Eastern Shore Signs & Graphics

On behalf of Calvary Baptist Church

EASTERN SHORE SIGNS & GRAPHICS



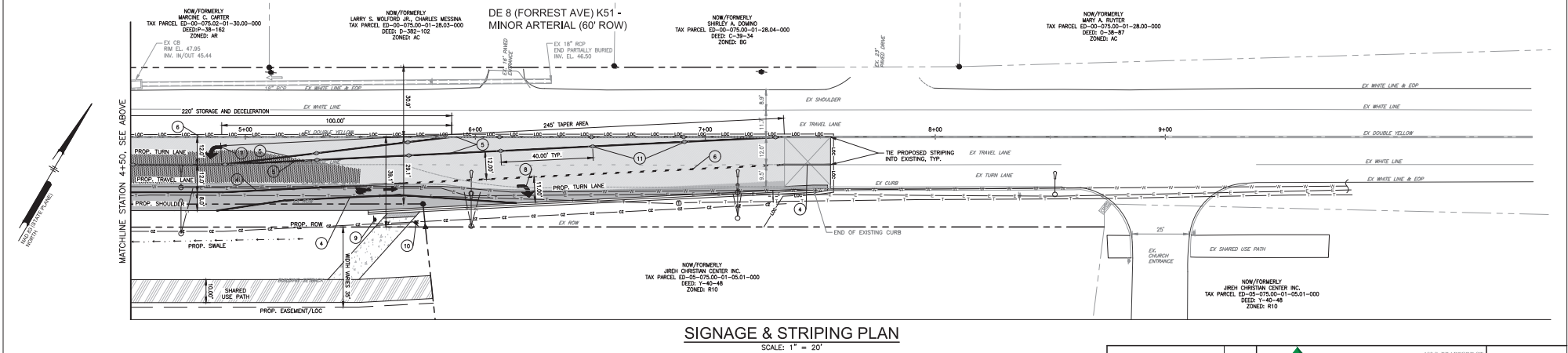
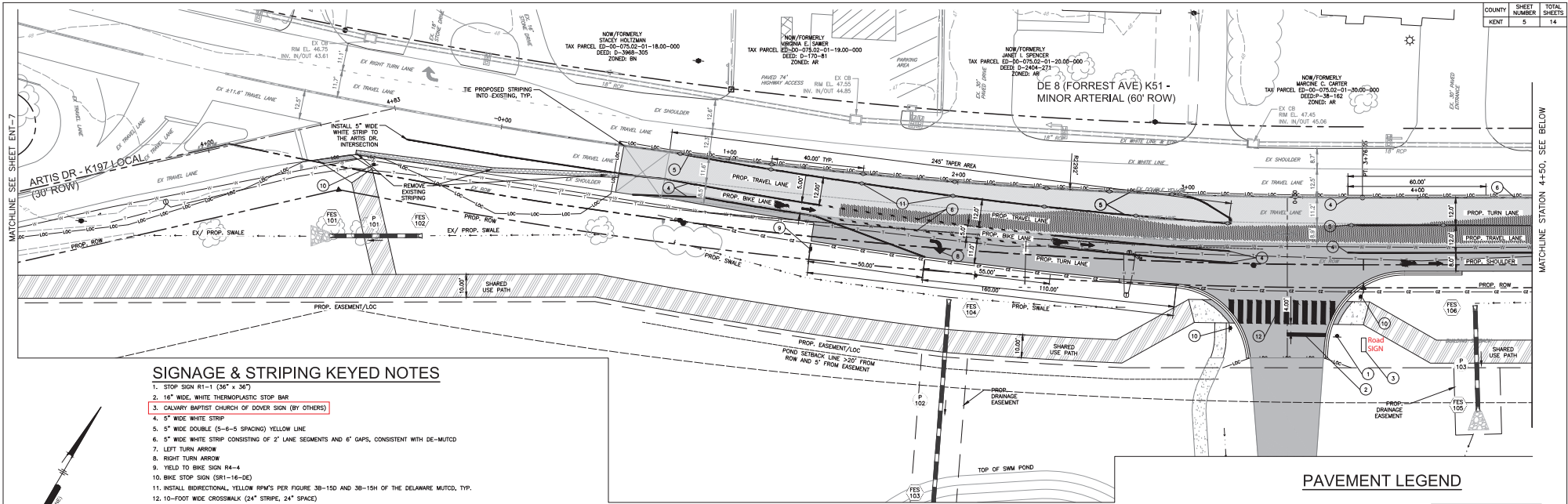
Sign area: Top Sign - 21 Sqft, Bottom Sign - 49 sqft, Total sqft - 70 sqft
 LED portion is 70% of sign area $49/70 = 70$ percent
 Total Height: 13ft 7in

302-747-7535

**PLEASE
NOTE**

1. PROOF READ AND SPELL CHECK ALL TEXT AND GRAMMER!
2. COLORS ON YOUR SCREEN ARE NOT THE ACTUAL COLOR
3. ANY CHANGES TO PROOF, MAY TAKE 3-5 BUSINESS DAYS
4. VEHICLES MUST BE WASHED -NO WAX- IF DIRTY, CLEANING FEE APPLIED
5. DEPOSIT MUST BE GIVEN BEFORE PRODUCTION BEGINS





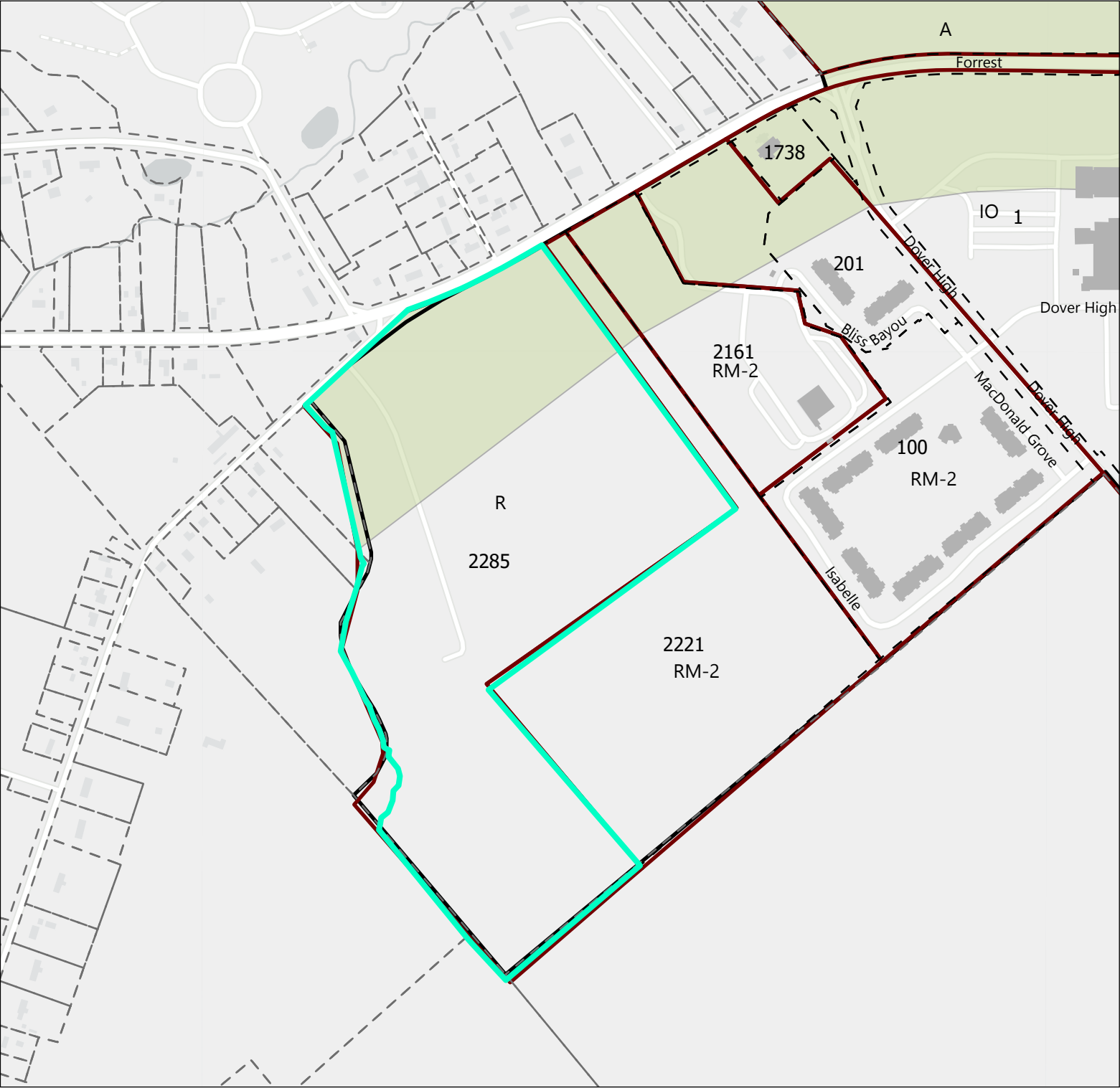
SITWORKS
ENGINEERING
PO BOX 2, 19 COMMERCE ST, HARRINGTON, DE 19952 Phone: (302) 841-7901

ENTRANCE SIGNAGE & STRIPING PLAN
FOR
CALVARY BAPTIST CHURCH OF DOVER
EAST DOVER HUNDRED - CITY OF DOVER
KENT COUNTY - STATE OF DELAWARE

REVISIONS	DATE	BY	DESCRIPTION
REVISIONS PER DELOIT COMMENTS	2/18/21	GAH	
REVISIONS PER DELOIT COMMENTS	4/14/21	GAH	
FINAL PLANS	11/10/21	GAH	

DESIGNED BY: GAH	CHECKED BY: DMH	DRAWING NAME: ENTRANCE SIGNAGE & STRIPING PLAN	DRAWING NO: 11760
DATE: 12-10-20	COMM. NO: N/A	FILE NO: TAM2001	SHEET NO: ENT-5

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Title:

Calvary Baptist Church Sign Variance Request

Address:

2285 Forrest Avenue

Parcel ID:

ED-05-075.00-01-06.00-000

Existing Zoning:

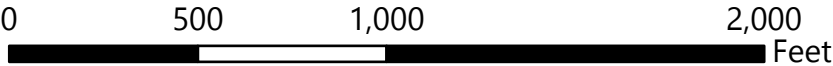
R-10 and COZ-1

Owner:

Calvary Baptist Church of Dover Delaware Inc

Date:

08/13/2025



Legend

Dover Parcels

Dover Boundary

Zoning

Parcels Outside Dover

Corridor_Overlay_Zone

Subject Property



Title:

Address:

Parcel ID:

Existing Zoning:

Owner:

Date:

Calvary Baptist Church Sign Variance Request

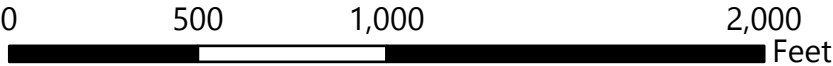
2285 Forrest Avenue

ED-05-075.00-01-06.00-000

R-10 and COZ-1

Calvary Baptist Church of Dover Delaware Inc

08/13/2025



Legend

 Dover Parcels

 Dover Boundary

 Parcels Outside Dover

 Corridor_Overlay_Zone

 Subject Property