

APPLICATION FOR VARIANCE

VILLAGE OF POPLAR GROVE

Poplar Grove Village Hall
200 North Hill Street
Poplar Grove, IL 61065

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Case Number _____
Filing Date _____
Zone District _____

PZC Date _____
Admin Date _____
VB Date _____

PLEASE PRINT IN BLACK INK OR TYPE

- 1) The address or general location of the property for which this application is filed is:

11611 IL Route 76, Poplar Grove, Illinois 61065

and its Parcel Identification Number is: a portion of 05-02-200-006

is no lot, block, or tract, then attach a legal boundary description hereto.)

- 2) **Applicant Name:** Bel Air Estates, Ltd., an Illinois corporation

Mailing Address: 11619 Route 76, Poplar Grove, Illinois 61065

Daytime Phone: [REDACTED] Fax: [REDACTED] Zip: [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

- 3) **Property Owner Name:** SAME AS ABOVE

Mailing Address: _____

Daytime Phone: _____ Fax: _____ Zip: _____

- 4) **Attorney Name:** Kelly Hintzsche, AGHL Law [REDACTED]

Mailing Address: 839 N. Perryville Road, Ste. 200, Rockford, IL 61107

Daytime Phone: [REDACTED] Fax: [REDACTED] Zip: [REDACTED]

- 5) **Project Manager:** In order to reduce confusion, planning staff requests one contact person be designated to discuss issues concerning this petition.

Name: Steve Thomas

Mailing Address: 11619 Route 76, Poplar Grove, Illinois 61065

Daytime Phone: [REDACTED] Fax: [REDACTED] Zip: [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

NOTICE TO APPLICANT

A Variation is a zoning adjustment, which permits minor changes of district requirements where individual properties have proven hardships. Variances are restrictive and the degree of Variation is limited to the minimum change necessary to overcome the practical difficulty inherent on the property. "Variation" means the modification of the requirements of a zoning district and does not include the substitution of uses assigned to other districts. Use Variations are specifically prohibited.

A Variation recognizes that the same district requirements do not affect all properties equally; it is intended to permit minor changes to allow hardship properties to enjoy equal opportunities with similarly zoned properties. **You must prove that your land is affected by special circumstances or unusual conditions.** These must result in uncommon hardship and unequal treatment under the strict application of the Zoning Ordinance. Where hardship conditions extend to other properties, a Variation cannot be granted. The remedy for a general hardship is a change to the Zoning Map or to the text of the Zoning Ordinance.

You must prove that the combination of the Zoning Ordinance and the uncommon conditions of your property prevent you from making any reasonable use of your land as permitted by your present zoning district. Since zoning regulates land and not people, the following conditions cannot be considered pertinent to the application for a Variation: 1) Proof that a Variation would increase the financial return from the land, 2) Personal hardship, and 3) Self-imposed hardship. In the last case, the recognition of conditions created after the enactment of the Zoning Ordinance would encourage and condone violation of the law.

A proposed Variation which will adversely affect surrounding property or the general neighborhood cannot be granted. All Variations must comply with the intent and purpose of the Zoning Ordinance.

6) Variance for Maximum Signage - Wall Sign in General Business District

(what type of Variance)

From 150 sq. ft. ft. to 177.66 sq. ft.

To Permit: Business Signage

(what type of construction)

Reasons for Variance Request

7) Which of the following types of modifications will allow you a reasonable use of your land:

☐ Change in setback requirement

☐ Change in lot-coverage requirement

☐ Change in side yard restriction

☐ Change in off street parking requirement

☐ Change in area requirement

☒ Other (describe) Seeking increase in maximum signage area to permit 177.66 square feet wall sign

- 8) Describe how this variation is the minimum variation that will make possible the reasonable use of the land, structure, or buildings in question. **SEE ATTACHED SHEET**

- 9) What characteristics of your property prevent it from being used in a reasonable manner?

SEE ATTACHED SHEET

Too narrow _____	Elevation _____	Soil _____
Too small _____	Slope _____	Subsurface _____
Too shallow _____	Shape _____	Other _____

- 10) Describe the items checked, giving dimensions where appropriate and how the characteristics are different than other properties in the district.

SEE ATTACHED SHEET

- 11) In what way do the above site conditions prevent any reasonable use, commonly enjoyed by owners of other properties in the same zoning district?

SEE ATTACHED SHEET

- 12) To the best of your knowledge, can you affirm that the hardship described above was not created by an action of anyone having an interest in the property after the Zoning Ordinance or applicable part thereof became law? Yes _____ No _____ If "No", explain why the hardship should not be regarded as self-imposed (self-imposed hardships are not entitled to variations).

SEE ATTACHED SHEET

- 13) Are the conditions on your property the result of other manmade changes, such as the relocation of a road or highway? If so, describe.

SEE ATTACHED SHEET

- 14) Will granting the variation requested give the applicant any special privilege that is denied by the Zoning Ordinance to owners of other lands, structures, or buildings in the same district? Explain your answer.

SEE ATTACHED SHEET

- 15) Specify how the granting of the variation requested will not be detrimental to the public welfare or injurious to other property or improvements in the neighborhood in which the property is located.

SEE ATTACHED SHEET

- 16) **LIST THE OWNERS OF RECORD:** Applicants shall list the owner of record for all properties located adjacent to and across the street or alley from the perimeter of the subject property. This information is found at the Supervisor of Assessments Office, 1208 Logan Ave. or the Belvidere-Boone County Planning Office. Verifying the accuracy of information is the responsibility of the applicant (use additional pages if necessary).

PIN#	Name/Trust No.	Street	City	Zip
05-02-200-001	Bel Air Estates, Ltd.	11619 IL Route 76, Poplar Grove, IL 61065		
05-02-200-002	Bel Air Estates, Ltd.	11619 IL Route 76, Poplar Grove, IL 61065		
05-02-400-010	Juan & Nancy Castro	11380 IL Route 76, Poplar Grove, IL 61065		
05-02-426-001	Bel Air Estates, Ltd.	11619 IL Route 76, Poplar Grove, IL 61065		
05-02-426-002	Maria & Andrzej Zubek	1020 Beech Bay Road, Poplar Grove, IL 61065		
05-02-426-003	Aaron Petry	7210 East State Street, Rockford, IL 61108		
05-02-426-004	Michael E. & Nicole C. Difford, Tr.	1012 Beech Bay Road, Poplar Grove, IL 61065		
05-02-426-005	Robert Cosman	1008 Beech Bay Road, Poplar Grove, IL 61065		
05-02-426-006	Christopher & England Fitchen	1004 Beech Bay Road, Poplar Grove, IL 61065		
05-02-426-007	Alexander & Carol Von Bosse	1000 Beech Bay Road, Poplar Grove, IL 61065		
05-02-426-008	Clyde E. & Susan L. Amundson	2641 Cessna Circle, Poplar Grove, IL 61065		
05-01-301-001	Russell S. & Elizabeth A. Crane	2633 Cessna Circle, Poplar Grove, IL 61065		
05-01-301-002	James M. Preiss	2621 Cessna Circle, Poplar Grove, IL 61065		
05-01-100-012	Bel Air Estates, Ltd.	11619 IL Route 76, Poplar Grove, IL 61065		
05-02-200-004	Bel Air Estates, Ltd.	11619 IL Route 76, Poplar Grove, IL 61065		
05-02-200-003	Bel Air Estates, Ltd.	11619 IL Route 76, Poplar Grove, IL 61065		

17) SUPPORTING INFORMATION: Attach a site plan drawn to scale showing lot dimensions, the size and locations of existing buildings, the locations and dimensions of proposed buildings or alterations, and any natural or topographic peculiarities of the property in question.

Also include a detailed written statement relative to the above listed requirements, fully explaining your proposal and any measures to mitigate negative affects of your proposal on neighboring properties.

SEE ATTACHED SHEET

Incomplete applications will be returned to the applicant after sixty (60) days.

DECLARATION

I, the applicant, of the above legally described property on which the variance is proposed, have provided answers to the questions herein that are true to the best of my knowledge. I have been granted permission by the property owner(s) of the above legally described property to apply for a variance on said property.

By virtue of my application for a variance, I do hereby declare that the appropriate appointed and elected officials who are responsible for the review of my application are given permission to visit and inspect the property  in order to determine the suitability of the request.

Applicant Signature:  _____ Date Signed: 7/15/2026

Owner(s) Signature:  _____ Date Signed: 7/15/2026

Date Signed: _____

STAFF SIGNATURE: _____ Date Signed: _____

Filing Fee - Amount Paid: _____ Check Number: _____

FILING PROCEDURE

- A. Submit this form and supporting information accompanied by an application fee (make checks payable to the **Village of Poplar Grove**). See the attached fee schedule.
- B. Selection of newspaper publication. See the attached newspaper selection sheet.
- C. Applicants must appear before the Village's Planning and Zoning Commission, Administrative Committee and the Village Board.

**Variance for Corporations, Partnerships, and Joint Venture
(If Applicable)**

1. Is the petitioner or applicant a corporation, partnership or joint venture?

Corporation

2. State the name for which the business is conducting business under.

Bel Air Estates, Ltd.

3. Are you acting for yourself, or in the capacity of agent, alter ego or representative of a principal?

President of Bel Air Estates, Ltd.

4. State the name(s) and address(es) of the actual and true principal(s).

Shareholders of Bel Air Estates, Ltd.: Stephen Thomas, Kristina J. Thomas, Blake A. Thomas and Austin J. Thomas

Address: 11619 IL Route 76, Poplar Grove, Illinois 61065

5. State the names and address of all officers, directors and all stockholders or shareholders owning any interest in excess of 20% of all outstanding stock of such corporation (use a separate sheet if necessary).

Shareholders of Bel Air Estates, Ltd.: Stephen Thomas, Kristina J. Thomas, Blake A. Thomas and Austin J. Thomas

Address: 11619 IL Route 76, Poplar Grove, Illinois 61065

LEGAL NOTICE REQUIRED

According to Illinois State Statutes, "notice of each hearing shall be published at least 15 days in advance thereof in a newspaper of general circulation published in the township or road district in which such property is located."

A Notice of Public Hearing will be completed by Planning Staff for publication in a newspaper of local distribution. Please select one of the following newspapers for publication:

*****THE COST OF THE PUBLICATION IS TO BE PAID BY THE APPLICANT*****

☐ **Belvidere Daily Republican**
(815) 547-0084 (publishes 5 days a week)

☐ **Boone County Journal**
(815) 544-4430 (publishes weekly)

NOTE: Fees are based on the length of the Notice of Public Hearing. If you wish to seek the lowest price, please contact the above newspapers at the telephone numbers provided.

CERTIFIED MAIL NOTICE REQUIRED FOR APPLICATIONS

The cost of the required mailing is the responsibility of the applicant and is not included in the required application fee.

In order to complete the required mailing notice the procedure is as follows:

- The applicant shall provide the required names and addresses of the owners of record within the application form.
- Staff will prepare the required forms and labels for the certified mailings.
- The green cards (receipts showing the mailings were received) are delivered to the planning department by the post office and must be received prior to the public hearing as proof that the mailings have been completed and provided as required.
- Two options exist for covering the cost of postage.
 - The Village will cover the cost to mail the letters upfront, an invoice will be provided to the applicant with payment required prior to the public hearing (payable to the Village of Poplar Grove). If payment is not received prior to the public hearing the case will be delayed until such time as payment is received.
 - The applicant may pick up the completed mailings, take them to the post office and pay the required fee at that time. If this option is chosen, the white receipts shall be provided to village staff to verify that the mailings were sent out and sent out at the proper time.

NOTE: Cost of the mailing is based on the number of letters and weight of each mailing.

NRI No. _____

Natural Resource Information Report

Boone County Soil and Water Conservation District
211 North Appleton Road, Belvidere, Illinois 61008-1983
815-544-2677 Ext. 3

Owner's Name: Bel Air Estates, Ltd.

Address: 11611 IL Route 76, Poplar Grove, Illinois 61065

Petitioner's Name: Stephen R. Thomas

Address: 11611 IL Route 76, Poplar Grove, Illinois 61065

Contact Information:

Phone Number(s): (815) [REDACTED]

E-Mail Address: [REDACTED]

If a letter, would you like a copy for your records? Yes ☒ or No ☐

We will send copies via e-mail unless specifically told to mail.

Note: If a report is required the applicant will receive a copy, in addition to the applicant's legal representation, if applicable.

Type of Request:

☐ Change in Zoning from _____ to _____

☐ Subdivision- Attach proposed plat, if available.

☒ Variance (Explain Type) Seeking variance in maximum square footage of permitted wall signage allowed in GB district

☐ Other (Describe) _____

Legal Description Attached: Yes ☐ or No ☒.

If yes, Section _____ and Township _____. Note: Please include a map outlining the exact boundaries of the parcel.

If no, please list the address of the property for the proposed request:

11611 IL Route 76, Poplar Grove, Illinois 61065

Street/Road Address

A portion of 05-02-200-006

Village, Town, or City

43.26 acres total

Parcel Identification Number(s), if known

Total Acres

Natural Resource Information Fee Schedule

0-5 Acres	\$400.00
5 or more Acres	\$400.00 plus \$20.00 per acre for each acre over five acres
Letter/No Report	\$75.00

Note: Unfortunately, we do not accept credit or debit cards at this time. Before the report or letter can be started a payment must be received in full. We are sorry for any inconveniences.

Checks payable to:

Boone County SWCD
211 North Appleton Road
Belvidere, IL 61008-1983

I (We) understand the filling of this application allows an authorized representative of the Boone County Soil & Water Conservation District to visit and conduct any necessary on-site investigations on the site described above. Completion of this report may require 30 days as allowed under State Law.

Stephen R. Thomas, President
Bel Air Estates, Ltd.

Petitioner's Name Printed



ed

7/15/2026

Date of Request

Approved by the Soil & Water Conservation District Board

Date of Approval

This report is issued as a guide in making land use decisions and does not preclude further refinement of soil type boundary lines during more detailed on-site investigations. Interpretations are based on criteria established by the National Soils Handbook (USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service) and are subject to change by this office and appropriate agencies.

SUPPLEMENT TO APPLICATION FOR VARIANCE

Bel Air Estates, Ltd. (the "Applicant") respectfully submits this application requesting a variance from the Village of Poplar Grove sign regulations to allow installation of a 177.66-square-foot wall sign on the newly constructed hangar building located within a General Business (GB) District. The proposed sign would be located on the end wall of the hangar facing Illinois Route 76.

Based on the Village's review of the sign permit application, the maximum permitted wall sign area is 150 square feet. The Applicant is therefore requesting a variance of 27.66 square feet to allow a total sign area of 177.66 square feet.

REASONS FOR VARIANCE REQUEST

- 8) **Describe how this variation is the minimum variation that will make possible the reasonable use of the land, structure, or buildings in question.**

The requested variance is the minimum relief necessary to allow reasonable use of the property for its intended commercial purpose. The Applicant is not requesting a departure from the Village's sign regulations beyond what is necessary to address the unique conditions of this site. The request is limited to an additional 27.66 square feet above the permitted maximum.

The proposed sign size is directly related to the scale and location of the hangar. As the building is approximately 400 feet from Illinois Route 76 and has a large exterior façade, a sign limited to 150 square feet does not provide the same practical identification opportunity available to businesses located closer to the roadway or on smaller structures.

The requested 177.66-square-foot sign area allows the business name to be reasonably identified from the roadway while remaining proportional to the hangar façade. A smaller sign would not adequately address the visibility limitations created by the building's size and setback.

- 9) **What characteristics of your property prevent it from being used in a reasonable manner?**

The unique characteristics preventing reasonable use under the existing sign limitation are the size of the hangar structure and its location approximately 400 feet from Illinois Route 76.

- 10) **Describe the items checked, giving dimensions where appropriate and how the characteristics are different than other properties in the district.**

Unlike many commercial properties where signage is located closer to passing traffic, the subject property contains a large-scale hangar building positioned a significant distance from the roadway. This combination of building scale and setback reduces the effectiveness of a sign that complies strictly with the standard maximum sign area. These conditions

differ from many properties within the General Business District because the building's size and distance from the roadway create a different visibility circumstance than properties with smaller buildings, shorter setbacks, or signage located closer to passing traffic. The requested variance is based on these physical characteristics of the property.

- 11) In what way do the above site conditions prevent any reasonable use, commonly enjoyed by owners of other properties in the same zoning district?**

The existing site conditions limit the property's ability to achieve reasonable business identification. Other commercial properties within General Business districts that are closer to a roadway or have smaller structures do not face the same visibility limitations. Without the requested variance, the property would be unable to provide comparable identification from Illinois Route 76 despite being located in a commercial zoning district intended to support business uses.

- 12) To the best of your knowledge, can you affirm that the hardship described above was not created by an action of anyone having an interest in the property after the Zoning Ordinance or applicable part thereof became law?**

Yes. The need for the variance is based on the unique relationship between the newly constructed hangar, the building's scale, and its setback from Illinois Route 76. The hangar was constructed as part of the lawful and intended use of the property within the General Business District, and the resulting visibility conditions are a function of the site layout and operational requirements of the facility. The requested variance is necessary to allow reasonable identification of the business from the roadway.

- 13) Are the conditions on your property the result of other manmade changes, such as the relocation of a road or highway? If so, describe.**

No. The conditions requiring the variance are not the result of road relocation or other changes to public infrastructure.

- 14) Will granting the variation requested give the applicant any special privilege that is denied by the Zoning Ordinance to owners of other lands, structures, or buildings in the same district? Explain your answer.**

No. Approval of the variance would not provide a special privilege. The requested relief is tied specifically to the unique conditions of this property, including the hangar's size and setback from Illinois Route 76. The variance would allow the property to have a reasonable level of identification comparable to other commercial properties in the district while still maintaining the intent of the Village's sign regulations.

- 15) Specify how the granting of the variation requested will not be detrimental to the public welfare or injurious to other property or improvements in the neighborhood in which the property is located.**

The requested variance will not be detrimental to the public welfare or injurious to surrounding properties. The proposed wall sign will be located entirely on the hangar building, will not extend into the public right-of-way, will not obstruct sight distances, and will not create a traffic or safety concern. The requested increase is limited in scope and proportional to the size of the structure.

Conclusion

For the reasons set forth above, the Applicant respectfully requests that the Village approve the requested variance to allow the proposed wall sign on the new hangar building.

Attachments

In support of the foregoing, Bel Air attaches the following supporting materials:

1. **EXHIBIT A:** Aerial Site Map Showing Proposed Hangar Location.
2. **EXHIBIT B:** Aerial Photograph Showing Completed Hangar.
3. **EXHIBIT C:** Proposed Wall Sign Design and Placement on Building Wall Facing Route 76.

EXHIBIT A

Aerial Site Map Showing Hangar Location



EXHIBIT B

Aerial Photograph Showing Completed Hangar



EXHIBIT C

Proposed Wall Sign Design and Placement on Building Wall Facing Route 76

