APPLICATION BY SAFEWAY TO MODIFY SIGN AREA REGULATIONS TO PERMIT AN INCREASE IN SIGN AREA
22350 STERLING BLVD, STERLING, VA 20164

STATEMENT OF JUSTIFICATION

Introduction

Safeway Inc. ("Applicant") submits this application to modify the Sign Regulations subject to Section 5-1204 (3) (D) Matrix of the Revised 1993 Loudoun County Zoning Ordinance to permit an increase in the sign area for its building facade. The Applicant requests a larger sign area than is permitted on the facade of the existing building for its signs and signs for Sun Trust Bank, Starbucks Coffee and Signature Café.

Site Location

The Safeway is located at 22350 Sterling Blvd. in the Sterling Plaza in the southeast corner of East Maple Ave. and Sterling Blvd. The area is developed with a 154,000 sq. ft. neighborhood shopping center (Sterling Plaza Shopping Center) with community serving retail uses and is zoned PD-CC (CC).

The Sterling Community and Sterling Plaza

The Safeway Store is located in the Sterling community of the Suburban Policy Area and is governed by the policies of the Revised General Plan and the retail policies of the Countywide Retail Plan Amendment. The Sterling Plaza is characterized by community retail uses where the appearance and application of urban design guidelines for building designs and signage is paramount. It stresses good sign location and design as well as architectural details that enhance the building's character to form a distinctive visual appearance.

Safeway Store in Sterling Plaza

Safeway is in a one story building with an area of 55,255 sq. ft. A construction permit (ZP 06897) was approved in October 2000 and an Occupancy Permit (OP 11789) was issued to Safeway on October 11, 2000.

Safeway Stores as a Supermarket

Safeway is a well known supermarket in the area and has an easily identifiable store facade prototype. Like most other large chains, when Safeway moved from small neighborhood stores to larger supermarkets, it established a distinct predetermined design with a new prototype facade with large graphics of food items and distinctive signage to inform the public what was available within such as "Starbucks Coffee" "Sun Trust Bank" and " Pharmacy". All wall signs are related in color and appearance. Safeway

currently uses a nationwide recognized coordination of its signage in terms of design and materials and logos such as "Safeway", "Starbucks Coffee" and "SunTrust Bank." These nationally recognized logos are uniform and easily recognized to provide for quick identification to people in motor vehicles and to alert the public of products that are available within the Safeway.

Therefore Safeway submits this zoning modification application to modify the existing sign regulations to permit an increase in sign area to permit nationally recognized signs and logos, to ensure uniformity and consistency in trademarked names and communicate to the public in an efficient and quickly recognized fashion the products available within by using nationally recognized logos of the merchants.

Existing Zoning Regulations

Under the Planned Development Community Center (PD-CC (CC)) zoning, the site is subject to Section 5-1204 (3)(D) Matrix of the Revised 1993 Loudoun County Zoning Ordinance with the following regulations being germane:

a) The maximum area of any one sign is 60 sq. ft.

b) Each facade can have no more than 3 signs.

c) Total signage allowable is based upon two (2) sq. ft. for every linear foot of building frontage not to exceed 60 sq. ft.

Existing Signs at the Safeway Stores in Sterling Plaza (See attached Photographs)

This Safeway store has the following existing signs on its facade:

1) Safeway – 104 sq. ft. (to be removed)
2) Food and Drug – 63 sq. ft. (to be removed)
3) Sun Trust Bank (temporary on the front window) – 12 sq. ft.(to be removed)
4) Starbucks Coffee (temporary on the front window) – 4 sq. ft. (to be removed)

Total Area of Existing Signs – 183 sq. ft.

Proposed Signs at the Safeway Store in Sterling Plaza

1) Safeway – 36.18 sq. ft.
2) "S" logo – 6.72 sq. ft.

3) Safeway and "S" logo – 126.5 sq. ft.

4) Starbucks Coffee – 22.55 sq. ft.

5) Sun Trusts Bank – 12 sq. ft.

6) Pharmacy and logo – 26.58 sq. ft.

7) Signature Café – 16 sq. ft.

Total Signage at Safeway Store – 246.53 sq. ft.

Matters of Consideration on Section 6-122 (E)
of the Revised 1993 Zoning Ordinance

Criterion 1: *Will the number, location and size of signs proposed adequately help people find what they need without difficulty or confusion: (are the signs visible to the driving public and located and sized to enable the public to make turns in a timely manner? Identify the criteria used to make this assessment, such as sign industry standards, etc. Is the modification the least amount needed to meet these criteria?)*

The number, location and size of the proposed signs will adequately help people find what they need at Safeway Stores without difficulty or confusion. Signs are National Logos and are made according to the ANSI Sign Standards Manual.

Criterion 2: *Will the proposed signage have an adverse impact on the visual character of an area or provide an overload of graphic messages or displays in the environment of Loudoun County.*

The proposes signage will not have any adverse impact on the visual character of the area, nor will it provide an overload of graphic messages or displays. The area has been improved with community retail for many years and these wall signs are all oriented towards the retail area.

Criterion 3: *Does the proposed signage treat similar types of signs consistently?*
The signs are consistent in terms of color, style and format. This combination is prevalent for Safeway facilities throughout the region.

Criterion 4: *Are the proposed signs subordinate to the structures and land use functions they reference and are they accessory components of an overall composition of architectural elements?*

The proposed signs are accessory components of the overall architectural elements of the Safeway Store. They are also subordinate to the structures and land use functions. The linear frontage is 276 sq. ft. and the proposed 247 sq. ft. of signage is less than one square foot per linear foot.

Additionally, the store has two (2) entrances and the increase will allow for signage over each entrance.

Criterion 5: *Does the proposed signage encourage the general attractiveness, historic quality, and unique character of Loudoun County, and protect property values?*
Yes, the signs compliment the general attractiveness in the area.

Criterion 6: *Does the proposed signage represent a comprehensive sign plan that is coordinated/unified, in terms of design, lighting, materials, colors, landscaping, etc., that reflects unique character of the planned development?*
The signs represent a comprehensive sign plan that is coordinated and unified in design, materials and color. This sign package appears regularly on Safeway stores throughout the region.

Criterion 7: *Does the site have unusual characteristics such as topography, size configuration and the like which would warrant a modification?* No

Criterion 8: *Is the proposed sign plan in conformance with the policies of the County's Comprehensive plan?*

Yes the signs plan is in conformance with the policies of Loudoun County Comprehensive Sign Plan.

Implications on Regulations

The existing and proposed signs are over the maximum allowable signage area for the store facade. The Applicant therefore requests an increase in signage area to permit the signs on the facade for all the departments and tenants in Safeway for the following reasons:

- The proposed location, number, size, height, shape and color of signs on the Safeway facade compliments the visual appearance of the store and has no adverse visual impact on the shopping center, the adjacent communities or shoppers in the area.
- It promotes the regional character of the Safeway store, its products and departments.

- The signs are not intrusive upon the commercial atmosphere of the shopping center and the local business environment.
- The proposed signs promote good visual quality; add visual assistance and enhancements to better inform the public in a tasteful manner as to what is available at the site in a quickly recognized format particularly for operators of motor vehicles.

The above information supports the request for an increase in sign area for the Sterling Plaza Safeway. Should you need further information, please contact me at 703-760-1956.

Sincerely,

Frank W. Stearns