



STATEMENT OF JUSTIFICATION (SOJ)  
BELMONT EXECUTIVE CENTER

(LCTM #62/24 (MCPI #083-35-9224); LCTM #62/M10/LBPP (MCPI #083-17-8172);  
LCTM #62/23 (MCPI #083-27-1064); LCTM #62/N10/LBOO1 (MCPI #083-17-2087);  
LCTM #62/16 (MCPI #083-37-8701); and LCTM #62/22 (MCPI #083-37-1744))

December 30, 2008

**COMPREHENSIVE SIGN PACKAGE**

INTRODUCTION

Belmont Executive Center, ZMAP 1997-0009, was approved on December 21, 2004 by the Board of Supervisors (Copy Teste, SOJ). The action rezoned (the "Property") to the Planned Development – Commercial Center – Community Center District (PD-CC-CC) and Planned Development Office Park District (PD-OP) to allow construction of a mixed use center. The Owner and Applicant, Belmont Land LP and Toll Land XV LP, (the "Applicant") now wishes to obtain approval of a Zoning Modification ("ZMOD") to develop a Comprehensive Sign Package for the Property, pursuant to Section 5-1204(E) of the Zoning Ordinance in accordance with Section 6-1511(B).

PROJECT LOCATION

The Property is located on the south side of Route 7, at the intersection with Claiborne Parkway. This area is identified in the Comprehensive Plan as appropriate for destination retail uses.

MODIFICATIONS

This ZMOD application will address the following types of signs at Belmont Executive Center, as reflected in the Sign Matrix found in the SOJ:

1. Project Sign [Section 5-1204(D)(3)(e)];
2. Entrance Signs [Section 5-1204(D)(3)(e)];
3. Freestanding Tenant Signs [Section 5-1204(D)(3)(f) & Section 5-1204(D)(3)(g)];
4. In-line Tenant Signs [Section 5-1204(D)(3)(h), Section 5-1204(D)(3)(i) & Section 5-1204(D)(3)(j)];
5. Office Signs [Section 5-1204(D)(3)(l), Section 5-1204(D)(3)(m) & Section 5-1204(D)(3)(p)];
6. Automobile Service Station Signs [Section 5-1204(D)(3)(r)];
7. Freestanding Restaurant Signs [Section 5-1204(D)(3)(bb) & Section 5-1204(D)(3)(cc)];
8. Business Signs [Section 5-1204(D)(3)(ii)];
9. Traffic Signs [Section 5-1204(D)(7)(e)]; and
10. Real Estate Signs [Section 5-1204(D)(7)(e)].

## JUSTIFICATION

The Applicant wishes to realize the vision for Belmont Executive Center which evolved during the rezoning process, as reflected in the approved Proffer Statement (SOJ Attachment XXX). Belmont Executive Center was described as, and the Applicant proposes to construct, a high quality shopping enclave. In order to achieve this purpose, the Applicant seeks a ZMOD to design a coordinated and unique Comprehensive Sign Package (the "Package") for Belmont Executive Center. Section 5-1202 of the Revised Zoning Ordinance states "...that the primary purpose of signage is to help people find what they need without difficulty or confusion, and without adverse impact on the visual character of an area..." A well-planned mixed use center, such as Belmont Executive Center, seeks to place signs to assist patrons in locating the center and in easily traveling to their desired destination within the center (Sign Location Map, SOJ Attachment XXXX). To this end, the Applicant has designed a striking Package which will clearly become associated with Belmont Executive Center. While effectively identifying Belmont Executive Center and communicating internal locations, the Package creates a pleasing sense of place. Thus, the Applicant proposes a Package which identifies the allowable number of site signs, the general design, color and location of site signs at Belmont Executive Center.

Based on years of experience in office, retail development, the Applicant has devised a unique approach to the formula used to calculate sign square footage for "In-line" and "Freestanding" tenants. Experience shows that certain sized tenants have certain, similar signage requirements.

The Design Guidelines for Signs and Lighting state that "A unified graphic design theme is strongly encouraged." (CPAM 1996-0001, Countywide Retail Policy Plan Amendment, #D.1) Further, the proffers for Belmont Executive Center require the establishment of a Commercial owners association to be responsible for design standards. The Association adopted the Design Guidelines and Development Standards dated December 18, 2005, which include signage standards. The Applicant presents just such a Package in this ZMOD application which unifies a large mixed use center and respectfully requests approval.

## CRITERIA FOR CONSIDERATION

*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 this criteria?)*

The Belmont Executive Center Comprehensive Sign Package incorporates signs proposed at locations, and in such a manner, which will effectively guide visitors and patrons into and around the Property. The degree to which the existing Zoning Ordinance regulations are being modified is consistent with the formulas used at other shopping centers in Loudoun County with similar users to establish their Sign Packages.

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 Sign Location Map identifies where site signs will be placed. A site sign is defined as a sign placed by the Applicant, its' representative or successor, to identify a destination, point out a route, to ensure safety or communicate regulations. The Applicant proposes to position signs so as to most effectively direct patrons to the Property, into the Property and within the Property. A distinctive project sign is proposed along the Route 70 frontage to identify the overall Property. There will be one primary entrance along the northern and southern boundaries of the Property. A pair of entrance signs will be place at each such entrance. Smaller, discreet signs will be placed at the secondary entrances to safely guide traffic into and out of the Property. The site signs found within the Property will be located throughout the office park and shopping center. Taken as a whole, the proposed Package includes a modest display to identify the Property.

Criterion 3: *Does the proposed signage treat similar types of signs consistently?*

The formula underlying the Package at Belmont Executive Center is represented in the Sign Matrix. Each sign on the Property will be placed within the identified categories and will meet the stipulated standards. The Applicant identifies the color, typestyle and materials for all internal site signs at Belmont Executive Center, so that the entire center will be a coordinated, unified whole.

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 Applicant evaluated the design concept envisioned for Belmont Executive Center and the general size and shape of prospective tenants in establishing the sign square footage formula for each category of sign. The proposed signs are subordinate to the structures and land use functions which they serve and are coordinated with and complementary

to the architectural character of the entire Belmont Executive Center Shopping Center.

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

The proposed signage is an attractive reflection of Loudoun County in general. An attractive, fiscally successful shopping center and office park will help maintain and even bolster property values.

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 Belmont Executive Center Comprehensive Sign Package is uniquely designed for the Property. Each sign erected on the Property will need to comply with the Belmont Executive Center Sign Matrix and the Belmont Executive Center Signage Design Standards and Guidelines. Thus, each sign will embody the unique character of Belmont Executive Center.

Criterion 7: *Does the site have unusual characteristics such as topography, size configuration and the like which would warrant a modification?*

Belmont Executive Center is a large mixed use center located on 401 acres where the rezoning approval under ZMAP 1997-0016 of permitted PC-CC-OP uses. A Comprehensive Sign Package which defines the sign program is critical to creating a unified, coordinated sense of place on the Property.

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

The proposed Belmont Executive Center Sign Package reflects the policies of the Loudoun County Comprehensive Plan by: 1) providing an attractive, coordinated and unified sign program which enhances the development; and 2) promoting safe and efficient vehicular and pedestrian movement.