TOWN OF AMHERST BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS Thursday, January 30, 2025

AGENDA

<u>6:00 PM</u>

- 1. Call to Order and Determination of Quorum
- 2. Moment of Silence
- 3. Election of Officers Staff requests a nomination of a slate that includes a Chairman, Vice Chairman and Secretary.
- 4. Confirmation of Minutes from May 16, 2022
- 5. Hearing of Appeal for Steve and Jerry Martin
 - Staff Presentation
 - Appellant Presentation
 - Discussion and Questions
 - Decision
- 6. Adjournment

Town of Amherst Board of Zoning Appeals

A meeting of the Town of Amherst Board of Zoning Appeals was called to order by Vice Chairman Edward Carton at 7:00 PM on May 16, 2022, in the Council Chambers of the Town Hall at 174 S. Main Street.

The Chair noted that a quorum was present as follows and asked for a moment of silence.

Р	Edward Lawrence Carton	Р	June Driskill
А	Marvin Hensley	Р	R. A. "Tony" Robertson
Р	Teresa Tatlock Stinson		

Town Manager Sara McGuffin, and Clerk of Council Vicki Hunt, were also present.

Mr. Carton made a motion that was seconded by Ms. Stinson to dispense with the reading and approve the minutes from the April 4, 2017, meeting.

There being no discussion, the motion to approve the April 4, 2017, minutes carried 4-0 according to the following:

Aye	Edward Lawrence Carton	Abstain	June Driskill
Absent	Marvin Hensley	Aye	R. A. "Tony" Robertson
Aye	Teresa Tatlock Stinson		

Mr. Carton asked Town Manager McGuffin to chair the meeting during the election of officers. Ms. Stinson nominated Mr. Carton to be Chairman. There being no other nominations, the Board voted 4-0 to elect Mr. Carton Chairman by acclamation as follows:

Aye	Edward Lawrence Carton	Aye	June Driskill
Absent	Marvin Hensley	Aye	R. A. "Tony" Robertson
Aye	Teresa Tatlock Stinson		

Town Manager McGuffin asked for nominations for Vice Chairman. Ms. Stinson entered her name for election as Vice Chairman. There being no other nominations, the Board voted 4-0 to elect Ms. Stinson Vice Chairman by acclamation as follows:

Aye	Edward Lawrence Carton	Aye	June Driskill
Absent	Marvin Hensley	Aye	R. A. "Tony" Robertson
Aye	Teresa Tatlock Stinson		

Ms. Stinson nominated Town Manager McGuffin to be the Board's Secretary. There being no other nominations, the Board voted 4-0 to elect Ms. McGuffin Secretary by acclamation as follows:

Aye	Edward Lawrence Carton	Aye	June Driskill
Absent	Marvin Hensley	Aye	R. A. "Tony" Robertson
Aye	Teresa Tatlock Stinson		

Variance Application Review: T&T Investments, Inc. – Property Located on Address TBD Sunset Drive, between 184 and 204 Sunset Drive

Town Manager/Secretary McGuffin provided a report on a variance application as follows:

T&T Investments, Inc., owner Troy Cash, and their agent Trevor Gillespie, has applied for a variance to allow construction of a single-family home for property located between 184 and 204 Sunset Drive (TM# 95-3-B-11), zoned Limited Residential District R-1.

The application pertains to use of existing vacant lot for the construction of a new single-family home on an existing non-conforming lot. It is the desire of the property owner to remedy issues regarding the existence of a corner of a neighbor's existing septic drain field on a small portion of the lot between 184 and 204 Sunset Drive which would require a lot reconfiguration. If approved:

- 1. The reconfiguration of the non-conforming lot would be allowed.
- 2. The size provision found in Sec.18.1-802, minimum lot area, from 20,000 square feet to 17,424 square feet would be allowed.

Code section 18.1-601.01 was amended in 2018 upon a recommendation of the Planning Commission, by the Town Council, to encourage the development of non-conforming infill lots located within the Town.

The Board should pay close attention to the state law and the Town's Zoning and Subdivision Ordinance in addition to the testimony during the required public hearing. Three affirmative votes by Board members will be required to approve this request. Town Code §18.1-1006.05 indicates that "substantially the same petition affecting the same land shall not be considered within any twelve (12) month period."

Trevor Gillespie, Realtor and Agent for Applicant/Property Owner Troy Cash came forward to explain the application and answer questions.

Applicant/Property Owner Troy Cash and Applicant Thomas Hill, President of T & T Investments were present to answer questions.

Chairman Carton opened a duly advertised public hearing at 7:25 P.M. on the Application for Variance submitted by T&T Investments, Inc. for property located on address TBD Sunset Drive, between 184 and 204 Sunset Drive. (TM# 95-3-B-11, zoned Limited Residential District R-1).

Shah Kanev, 204 Sunset Drive, Amherst, VA, came forward in opposition expressing her belief that if the variance is approved the proximity of a new construction on the subject property to her adjacent house would cause depreciation and raise privacy issues.

Andrey and Katerina Sunstev, 193 Sunset Drive, Amherst, VA, by letter opposed approval of the requested variance.

Joan C. Smith, 206 Sunset Drive, Amherst, VA, came forward in opposition and referred to subdivision restrictions pertaining to side yard set-back lines.

Shannan Carter, 184 Sunset Drive, Amherst, VA, came forward in opposition to the requested variance expressing her belief that new construction would be too close to her adjacent property.

William Carter, 184 Sunset Drive, Amherst, VA, came forward in opposition to the requested variance, referring to Health Department documents with a sketch of the drainage field.

Edgar Kinnear and Telia Jones Kinnear, 201 Sunset Drive, Amherst, VA, by letter, opposed approval of the requested variance expressing their belief that two drainage fields would be too close together.

Rob Bouldin, 224 Sunset Drive, Amherst, VA, came forward in opposition expressing his belief that approval of the requested variance would fundamentally alter and cause damage to the character of that section of the neighborhood.

Amy Dawson, 203 Sunset Drive, Amherst, VA, came forward in opposition expressing her belief that approval of the variance would contribute to depreciation of neighboring houses.

Bill Dawson, 203 Sunset Drive, Amherst, VA, came forward in opposition of approval of the requested variance.

Svet Kanev, 204 Sunset Drive, Amherst, VA, came forward in opposition of approval of the requested variance.

There being no one else present who wished to speak, the public hearing was closed at 8:14 P.M.

Chairman Carton recessed the meeting at 8:15 PM.

The meeting reconvened at 8:21 PM. It was noted that a quorum was present as follows:

Р	Edward Lawrence Carton	Р	June Driskill
А	Marvin Hensley	Р	R. A. "Tony" Robertson
Р	Teresa Tatlock Stinson		

Upon applicant's request, the matter was deferred for 30 days to the next meeting of the Board of Zoning Appeals upon motion of Mr. Carton, seconded by Ms. Stinson, and carried 4-0 as follows:

Aye	Edward Lawrence Carton	Aye	June Driskill
Absent	Marvin Hensley	Aye	R. A. "Tony" Robertson
Aye	Teresa Tatlock Stinson		

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:27 P.M.

Edward Carton, Chairman

ATTEST: _________Secretary

TOWN OF AMHERST P.O. Box 280 174 S. Main Street Amherst, VA 24521 Phone (434)946-7885 Fax (434)946-2087



STAFF REPORT FOR APPEAL TO NOTICE OF VIOLATION

DATE: January 22, 2025

SECTION: 24-580

PREVIOUS SECTION: 18.1-908

RE: Off Premises Sign Complaint

A zoning complaint was made on a sign on a vacant lot that pertained to a business on another lot. The Sign Ordinance, both in today's chapter, and in the 2015 version, prohibit "off-premises signs."

Under Section 24-580, Signs Prohibited in all sign districts, number 7 enumerates that "offpremises signs, other than those specifically permitted" are not allowed. There is a section in the sign ordinance that describes this issue more fully:

Sec. 24-573. - Signs shall pertain to the property.

Any commercial message carried by permitted signs shall pertain to the business located on the same premises as the sign; or to any otherwise lawful noncommercial message that does not direct attention to a business operated for profit, or to a commodity or service for sale, provided that signs erected on contiguous properties with the same owner may pertain to a business located on any such contiguous property. Billboards and other off-premises signs are prohibited except as expressly permitted by this article.

Contiguous properties may be across the street from one another, but they cannot be separated by other properties. The allowance for a legal off-premises sign is not relevant for the Martins, as

they do not have a contiguous property line between the two parcels. Therefore, any sign on one parcel cannot be exempted through this Code section (map at end of report).

The sign on the lot was permitted in 2015, based upon the location of a used car lot, where the vehicles were located on the vacant lot, and the business office was located across the street. The original permitted sign referenced the business, and then provided the office location with an arrow. Below is the design for the original sign.



Based upon the location of the car lot on the vacant lot at the time, the sign was permitted as relating to the business on the lot, even though the office was located across the street.

At some point later, there was no longer a used car lot on the vacant lot, and the sign was changed to the sign below. This sign makes no reference to a business on the lot, only the business across the street, and thus becomes an off-premises sign.



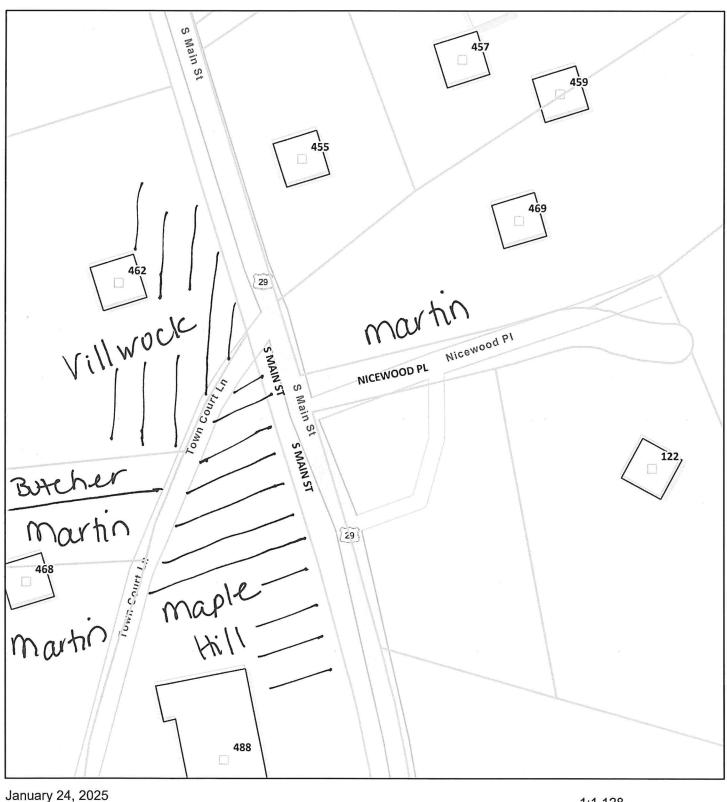
There is no doubt that the Martins have had a sign on this property for many years. Rior to the permitted sign, there was a portable sign that was used to advertise for local events and sales. The current sign has been present in some form since it was permitted in 2015.

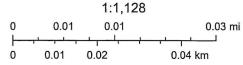
Based upon the complaint, and the change in the face of the sign, staff determined that the current sign face is illegal and a Notice of Violation was issued on November 20, 2024. The Martins appealed the Notice within their thirty day timeframe to do so, and this meeting was scheduled.

Because the sign structure was properly permitted, it is the face of the sign that is illegal. The remedy for this case could be taking the sign down, or covering the face of the sign for a future user.

Following this report is the map, the Notice of Violation and the appeal from the Martins.

Non-contiguous explanation





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TOWN OF AMHERST P.O. Box 280 174 S. Main Street Amherst, VA 24521 Phone (434)946-7885 Fax (434)946-2087

OFFICIAL NOTICE OF VIOLATION

- **Date of Issuance:** Wednesday, November 20, 2024
- Property Owner: Martin, Steve T & Jerry L P. O. Box 308 Amherst, VA 24521
- Identification:
 TM# 95 A 72

 No address, S Main Street, between 455 S Main Street and Nicewood Place
- Zoning District: B-2, General Commercial District

Description of Violation(s): You are hereby notified that staff has inspected and researched the above referenced property and found a violation of the following provisions of the Town of Amherst Zoning Ordinance (24-580 (7)).

24-580. Signs prohibited in all sign districts.

The following types of signs are prohibited in all sign districts:

- (1) Any sign that impedes sight distance for a VDOT owned right-of-way.
- (2) Any sign that obscures a sign display by a public authority for the purpose of giving traffic instructions or directions or other public information.
- (3) Any sign, except official notices and advertisements, that is nailed, tacked, posted or in any other manner attached to any utility pole or structure or supporting wire, cable, or pipe; or to any tree on any street or sidewalk or to public property of any description.
- (4) Any sign that is attached to or mounted on a roof or projects above the plane of the building facade. This shall include decorative roofs such as a mansard roof.
- (5) Portable freestanding signs larger than 24 square feet or displayed for more than 60 days per year.
- (6) Except for time and temperature, no sign shall display flashing or intermittent lights, moving signs, inflatables or other lights of changing degrees of intensity, brightness or color. The light from any illuminated sign shall not cause direct glare into or upon any building or property other than the building or property to which the sign may be related. Neither the direct nor reflected light from an illuminated sign shall be located so as to create a traffic hazard to operators of motor vehicles on public thoroughfares.
- (7) Off-premises signs, other than those specifically permitted.

(Zoning Ord. 2003, § 18.1-908.10)

Background:

In 2015, Mr. Martin obtained a permit for a sign to be for a used car business to be located on the subject parcel. The sign advertised used cars, but directed customers to an office across the street. A sign for a business on that lot would be legal, and the structure of the sign was legally permitted.

However, there has been no used car business on the lot for several years, and at some point, the sign was erected that did not advertise any business on the lot, but just "Martin's Paint and Body Shop." Because that business is on a different lot, it is an off premises sign, and thus illegal. Mr. Martin had a previous sign on the property that may have been legally nonconforming, but that sign has not been present since at least 2018 and has passed its legally non-conforming status.

The original permit is attached to this Notice, as well as a current picture of the sign.

Whether the sign was originally constructed with its current facing, or whether that sign was faced with the off-premises language later, the sign does not comply with the Code or the permit that was approved. It is an off premises sign that advertises a business on another lot. This is not currently allowed within the Town of Amherst Zoning Ordinance, and it was not allowed at the time of the permit.

Corrective Action Required:

Please be advised that you have thirty (30) days to remedy the above violations by removing the sign or covering/painting over the lettering. Because the sign structure itself is permitted and in a legal location, the sign structure is not required to be taken down. It is the content that is illegal, not the structure.

Right to Appeal:

The determination by the Zoning Administrator that you are in violation of the Zoning Ordinance is a final decision. If you wish to contest this final decision, you must file an appeal with the Board of Zoning Appeals by submitting an Appeals Application, filing fee \$300.00, along with the basis of your appeal within thirty (30) days of the date of this notice. Filing should be made at Town Hall, located at 174 S. Main Street, Amherst, VA 24521. Failure to appeal within thirty (30) days will result in your loss of the right to appeal in this matter.

Notice By:

Sara E. McGuffin, Zoning Administrator

11.20.2016

Date

c: Town Attorney Town Council

DATE 21415-02 APPLICATION FOR SIGN PERMIT APPROVAL TOWN OF AMHERST **POST OFFICE BOX 280 AMHERST, VIRGINIA 24521** (434) 946-7885 APPLICANT OWNER ADDRESS ADDRESS No. CITY CITY CITY TELEPHONE NO. **TELEPHONE NO** 70 16-5307 841 REPRESENTATI ADDRESS 5 6 CITY TELEPHONE NO. use teross 0 (LOCATION OF REQUEST con a TAX MAP NO. LOTAREA EXISTING ZONING oh PROPOSED USE

The following information is required to confirm compliance with the Town Code:

2' HALL on LOT 95A72 between 2Twick and anderst Mry cleaners. ON SIDE at Anterst Dry Cleaners. He Highway Night of WAIL South Stere Thousand Sign # Existing or Proposed Height Size Location on the Site (provide map if necessary 12 Double Sided 1. Kerst Caran 2. INSTALLED SiaN 3. 7 feet from StAt 4. Aten South Streel 19 STATEMENT

Note: All documentation - including attachments and drawings - should be on reproducible 8½ X 11 paper.

Applicants are reminded that building permits may be required from the Amherst County Building Official's office (434/946-9302).

Approved Rejected	ζ κ .	Zoning Administrator Habh				
		/ Note: This permit expires 365 days after approval.	Date 3/4/2015			

Mark & Karen STANLEY 2638 Boxwood Farm Rd, Amherst, VA 24521



434 946 7517 info@signsandwonders.biz www.signsandwonders.biz

Thank you for choosing Signs & Wonders. We appreciate your patronage and will do our best to produce a quality product for you. Please feel free to contact us at any stage of the development.

QUOTE for Martin's Paint & Body Shop AUTO SALES SIGN Contact: STEVE, JARED February 16, 2015



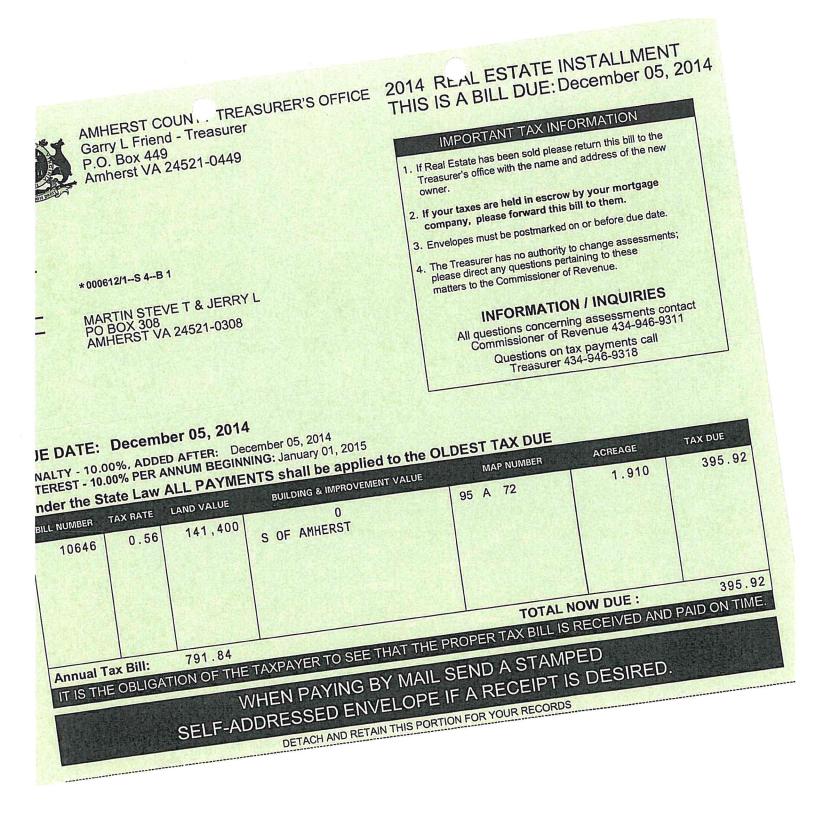
We will letter TWO 48 x 96" aluminum faces (customer supplied) in high performance black, pale gold and reflective red vinyl for a total of **\$653**. There will be no sales tax on this item. A deposit of 50% (\$326.50) is required before production can begin, the balance due at completion.

TERMS:

Price does not include sales tax or installation, unless specifically noted. Signs & Wonders is not responsible for permits.

COPYRIGHT NOTICE

These are original unpublished designs created by Karen Stanley/Signs & Wonders. Any design and/or lettering created for this project are the intellectual property of Karen Stanley and remain the copyright protected property of the same. They are presented for the sole purpose of customer consideration and approval in connection with a project being planned for you by Karen Stanley only. They are not to be shown outside of your organization or used in conjunction with the obtaining of other competitive bids. They may NOT be reproduced in any medium for any purpose without the expressed written permission of Karen Stanley. Any infringement of this drawing may be vigorously pursued to the fullest extent of legal remedy. Karen Stanley/Signs & Wonders will be reimbursed \$1000.00, for the time and defort in the research and design of this project, for each occurrence of infringement.



AMHERST TOWN CODE

q. Freestanding signs greater than 25 feet above the ground.

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Sec. 18.1-908.05 Signs Permitted in the Residential and Agricultural Zoning Districts.

- a. Temporary event signs, provided that they are not more than four (4) square feet in area, and there is not more than one (1) on any lot or premise.
- b. Residential Developments: Permanent subdivision or development identification signs indicating only the name and/or address of the premises. The identification sign shall be ground mounted, and shall not be internally illuminated. For developments of twenty (20) units or less the sign shall not exceed six (6) square feet in area or eight (8) feet in height. For developments of twenty-one (21) units or more the sign shall not exceed sixteen (16) square feet in area or eight (8) feet in height.
- c. Directional signs for parks, playgrounds, schools, religious institutions, and other non-residential uses of a non-commercial nature within the residential district, provided that such signs shall not exceed two (2) square feet in area, shall be within one (1) mile of the use, and shall not be illuminated.
- d. In the Transitional Use Zone District, identification signs, provided that they are not more than eight (8) square feet in area and there is not more than one (1) on any premise.

Sec. 18.1-908.06 Signs Permitted in the Commercial and Industrial Districts.

For each lot, tract, or parcel, one and one half (1-1/2) square feet of sign area shall be allowed for each (one) lineal foot of building frontage on the primary public street. In the case of buildings that front on more than one public street, sign area shall be based on the length of frontage of one side of the building only.

Signs approved under this section shall be exclusively for the businesses operated on the premises on which the signs are located. Sign area for changeable copy signs associated with churches, restaurants, theaters and gasoline sales establishments shall be included within the area allowed by this subsection. Changeable copy signs include display boxes for posters and menu boards where individual letters or numbers can be reconfigured but do not include portable signs as described hereinbelow.

Such sign area may be in a single sign, or in a combination of signs located on one or more sides of the building, with no more than two (2) signs allowed for each building facade. In addition, one (1) sign shall be permitted for the rear of the building, computed on the ratio of one half (1/2) square foot of sign for each (one) lineal foot of building frontage. Permitted signs shall be subject to the following limitations.

- a. Wall signs, provided that such signs do not exceed twenty percent (20%) of any exposed finished wall surface area including openings, or sixty (60) square feet, whichever is smaller, and do not extend more than six (6) inches beyond the building wall surface.
- b. Freestanding signs. One (1) freestanding sign shall be allowed when a building takes up less than fifty percent (50%) of the total lot area, provided that such sign be no larger than forty (40) square feet in area, no taller than twelve (12) feet and set back at least seven (7) feet from the public right of way. However, such freestanding signs shall not be larger than twenty (20) square feet along Main Street (U.S. 29 Business) from Monitor Road to 250' north of Nicewood Place.





APPLICATION FOR VARIANCE TOWN OF AMHERST BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS POST OFFICE BOX 280 AMHERST, VIRGINIA 24521 (434) 946-7885

121	16	12024
DAT	E	

	APPLICANT Steve T. & JERRY N. MARtin	OWNER <u>SAMe</u>
	ADDRESS P.O. BOX 308	ADDRESS
	CITY Amperst VA 24521	CITY
	(434) 841-8970 cell TELEPHONE NO. (434) 946-7083 home	TELEPHONE NO.
	REPRESENTATIVE N A	ADDRESS
	CITY	TELEPHONE NO
	LOCATION OF REQUEST 469 South	MAIN St. Amberst VA 24521
	TAX MAP NO. 95 A 72 LOT	AREA 1.91 ZONE <u>B2</u>
	PROPOSED USE in 2015 for a permanent:	my business Across the street. I was given a permision after using a mobile sign for over 25 years.
	QUESTIONS TO BE ANSWERED BY APPLICANT	on my business's side of the Road,
	 Which of the following special conditions necessi Exceptional narrowness, shallowness, size or s Exceptional topographic conditions or other ex Exceptional conditions of adjacent property. 	shape of property.
HAVING	UStomers AND deliveries. Without A se my VIADA license, jose potential 3. what effect would the variance have on adjacent adjacent property or change the character of the dis A sign has not been detriments	ning ordinance effectively prohibit or unreasonably ginia Independent Auto Dealer License Requires epair business involves out of the AREA tow sign to direct people to my entrance, I customers and that hardship could put me of property? would the proposal be detrimental to of busin strict? al to Adjacent properties since 1989 south ing the sign would be more detrimental
would since c	at of Lown tow toucks rustomoor	AND deliveries wouldn't KNOW where to
enter.	Please attach sketches and other detailed information	on to this application. They may enter Adjacent properties or try to turn es signs describing the action requested under this application to Arec und o. the
	As owner of the property listed above, Appeals to grant a variance as described	I hereby petition the Board of Zoning herein The Wanten <u>ferm N. Martin</u> <u>12/16/24</u> Signature of Owner Date
	BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS PUBLIC HEA	
	BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS ACTION:	Date Time

Date





CURRENT Sign

Both the permitted 2015 sign And the current sign are advertising MARtin's PAINT & Body Shop. Both signs have the SAME PHONE NUMBER, (434 - 946-5307) Both ARE directing customers Across SigNS the street. The 2015 sign SAYS "office ACROSS the street At MARtin's PAint Body Shop! The current sign has a direction ARROW, instead of wording to direct customers ACROSS the street.

The 2015 sign has "Auto Sales" And A Cell Number "434 444 5925" which the curren Sign does not. However the current sign is still directing Auto sales customers to my shop. MARTIN'S PAINT Body Shop is the legal NAME of my Auto sales business. Really the only thing that has changed is that JARed's phone number is no longer included. People were calling his cell in the middle of the night trying to get a wreeker

Adjacent property owner information for

Special Use Permit Application - Rezoning Application - Conditional Zoning Application - Variance Application - Appeal Application

§ 15.2-2204 of the Code of Virginia requires that a notice of pending action to be mailed to the owners, their agent or the occupant, of all abutting property and property immediately across the street or road from the property affected, including those parcels which lie outside the Town; and, if any portion of the affected property is within a planned unit development, then to such incorporated property owner's associations within the planned unit development that have members owning property located within 2,000 feet of the affected property. The purpose of this form is to assist the applicant to collect the needed information from the Amherst County Commissioner of the Revenue's office.

0	Tax Map #	Physical Address	Owner's Name	Owner's Mailing Address
Borders on Left	95A7396A6112	455 S.MAIN A St. Amherst VA 24521	JUNE P. DRISKI II	P.O. Box 95 Amherst VA24521
of SigN	96A6A11	457 S. MAIN St. Amhrest VA 24521	S1)	1
	11	459 S.MAIN St. Amherst VA 49521	()	1)
Borders Behind	96A7A2A	162 GARIAND Ave. Amheest VA 24521	Christine L. AND DONNA M. DIXON	162 GARLAND AVE. Amberst VA 24521
Borders Right	95A74	125 Nicewood Pl. Amherst VA 24521	Megan A. MARtin	125 Nice wood PL. Amherst VA 24521
Borders on Right Across Rood	95A71	122 Nicewood PL. Amherst VA 24521	Demalas Investments	240 Totsie Floyd Road Amberst VA 24521
ACROSS FROM SigN	95A54	462 S. MAIN St. Amherst VA 24521	Robert E. SR AND Elizabeth Villwock	462 S. MAIN ST Amberst VA 24521
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Applicants should use as many forms as are needed to provide the needed information.

Note: Applicants are reminded that §18.1-1002 of the Town Code requires signs describing pending action by the Planning Commission, Town Council or Board of Zoning Appeals to be posted when approval of a site plan, subdivision, special use permit, rezoning, conditional zoning, variance, or appeal is requested.