



METROPOLITAN GOVERNMENT OF NASHVILLE AND DAVIDSON COUNTY

Metropolitan Historic Zoning Commission
Sunnyside in Sevier Park
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Nashville, Tennessee 37204
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STAFF RECOMMENDATION

**Broadway and Second Avenue Historic Preservation Zoning Overlay and Historic
Landmark Zoning Overlay Design Guideline Revisions
May 15, 2013**

Application: Broadway and Second Avenue Historic Preservation Zoning Overlay and
Historic Landmark Zoning Overlay Design Guideline Revisions

Map and Parcel Numbers: multiple

Council Districts: 19

Project Lead: Robin Zeigler, robin.zeigler@nashville.gov, 615-862-7970

<p>Description of Project: A sign design committee, established by the Mayor’s Office, developed new signage guidelines for all of the Downtown Core (DTC) with the exception of historic overlays. Metro Council adopted the result of those meetings, the DTC Sign Regulations.</p> <p>Another committee was established to look at altering the design guidelines for the historic overlays so that signage chapters and calculations were in keeping with the Metro Council adopted DTC Signage Regulations, allowing applicants to easily understand all requirements.</p> <p>Proposed are revised design guidelines with new chapters for Signage and additional housekeeping revisions.</p> <p>Recommendation Summary: Staff recommends adoption of the proposed design guidelines, finding that they meet the Secretary of Interior Standards.</p>	<p>Attachments A: Broadway Historic Preservation Zoning Overlay Design Guidelines B: Second Avenue Historic Preservation Zoning Overlay Design Guidelines C: Historic Landmark Zoning Overlay Design Guidelines</p>
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Applicable Ordinance:

Article III. Historic Overlay Districts

17.40.410.B. Establishment of Design Review Guidelines. The historic zoning commission shall adopt design guidelines for each historic overlay district and apply those guidelines when considering preservation permit applications. Design guidelines relating to the construction, alteration, addition and repair to, and relocation and demolition of structures and other improvements shall be consistent with the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended. A public hearing following the applicable public notice requirement of Article IV of this chapter shall precede the adoption of all design review guidelines by the historic zoning commission. Testimony and evidence material to the type of historic overlay under consideration may be considered by commission in its deliberations.

Background:

A sign design task force committee, established by the Mayor's Office, developed new signage guidelines for all of the Downtown Core (DTC) with the exception of historic overlays. Metro Council adopted the result of those meetings, the DTC Sign Regulations.

Another committee was established to look at altering the design guidelines for the historic overlays so that signage chapters and calculations were in keeping with the Metro Council adopted DTC Signage Regulations, allowing applicants to easily understand all requirements. The committee included representatives from MHZC, Mayor's Office, Codes Department, Planning Department, MDHA, Nashville Chamber of Commerce, The District, a local sign company, and a local downtown business owner. The MHZC was represented by Ben Mosley and staff members Robin Zeigler, historic zoning administrator and Tim Walker, executive director. The Committee met monthly over the course of several months.

Not included in the DTC Sign Regulations, but proposed to be covered in these draft design guidelines are Broadway and Second Avenue Historic Preservation Zoning Overlays and the Historic Landmarks located within the Downtown Core, which currently are: Customs House, Davidson County Courthouse, Hume Fogg Magnet School, Lindsley Hall, Shelby Street Bridge, Union Station, and WPA Municipal Garage at Rolling Mill Hill

Analysis and Findings:

The proposed design guidelines closely follow the DTC Sign Regulations adopted by Metro Council in terms of process, organization and calculation and the current version of the design guidelines in terms of process and requirements. The DTC Sign Regulations provides for different sign regulations based on different "street types." The draft guidelines discussed here only follow the regulations for "pedestrian street type," as all the current historic overlays and potential overlays in the DTC area are classified in the DTC Sign Regulations as "pedestrian streets."

Full copies of the design guidelines are attached and a summary of changes are as follows.

Process: The process for obtaining a building permit is similar to what it has been. All signage that meets the requirements of these design guidelines will be permitted by staff. Any applications that do not meet the guidelines will be reviewed by the Commission as a “modification.”

The proposed design guidelines clarify how non-conforming signs should be dealt with and allows for the removal of a non-conforming sign for repair.

Types: The new design guidelines include a chapter for Skyline signage and Pole signs. There are no high-rise buildings in any of the overlays but there could be in the future. For instance, the L&C Tower meets the qualifications of a Historic Landmark and the Broadway Historic Zoning Overlay will likely soon include a hotel with a high-rise component.

The proposed design guidelines allow for changeable copy signs for tourist-oriented businesses such as the signs approved last month for The Ryman. At this time, The Ryman is the only building in an overlay that meets the proposed definition for tourist-oriented business.

Neon: All three documents are similar for signage with the exception of Broadway which allows for flashing and chasing neon lights. Although neon is proposed to be allowed everywhere, flashing and chasing neon lights are only allowed on Broadway the street, not the district, and as a “modification,” which means the Commission shall review all such requests.

The previous design guidelines allowed for neon in Broadway but only allowed exposed neon for wall signs on Second Avenue. Exposed neon is proposed to be allowed everywhere as it is with the recently adopted DTC Sign Regulations.

Illumination: The current design guidelines do not allow for internally lit signage; however, the Commission has already approved such a sign recognizing that it could be accomplished in a manner that is appropriate for the overlays. Internally lit signage is allowed if the background is a solid opaque color so that only the lettering appears to be illuminated.

Calculation: In the past, the design guidelines calculated appropriate signage by the number of signs. The new design guidelines propose to calculate a total allowable square footage based on a building’s linear street-front width. An applicant could use all of the square footage on one sign or break it up into multiple signs. The draft guidelines encourage property owners with buildings that have multiple tenants or potentially may have multiple tenants to consider a multi-tenant plan to assure that one tenant does not use all of the allotted square footage for the building.

Design: In the past, both the MHDA and the MHZC have not allowed for exposed raceways, which are enclosed conduits that form a physical pathway for electrical wiring. These have been required to be located inside the building; however, the interior location

requires multiple holes inserted through the walls. Therefore the proposed guidelines allow for raceways as long as they are minimal in size or form the background of the sign, to lessen their visual impact.

Housekeeping Alterations: Additional alterations to the guidelines is recommended. The drafts state that two-story infill buildings are appropriate on Broadway and Second Avenue. The current design guidelines, require three-stories; however, the districts have historic two-story buildings therefore the Commission has already allowed for two-story buildings in both districts.

Both Broadway and Second Avenue Historic Zoning Overlay design guidelines require that historic elements, such as bulk heads, windows, storefronts and pilasters be retained but only Broadway goes into further detail to provide guidance for when those elements are beyond repair or missing. That guidance, that has already been practiced by the Commission, is added to the draft guidelines for Second Avenue and can be readily reviewed by looking for the text in green.

The proposed design guidelines are in keeping with the Secretary of Interior Standards in that they assure minimal physical impact to the historic buildings and allow the architectural features of the historic buildings to remain visible.

Recommendation

Staff recommends approval of the draft design guidelines, finding that they meet section 17.40.410.B and the Secretary of Interior Standards for Rehabilitation.

ATTACHMENT NOTE: ATTACHING THE DESIGN GUIDELINES MAKE THIS DOCUMENT TOO LARGE. TO REVIEW DRAFTS PLEASE VISIT <http://www.nashville.gov/Historical-Commission/About/Historic-Zoning-Commission/Whats-New.aspx>

METROPOLITAN GOVERNMENT OF NASHVILLE AND DAVIDSON COUNTY

KARL F. DEAN
MAYOR



MAYOR'S OFFICE OF ECONOMIC
AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
METROPOLITAN COURTHOUSE, SUITE 102
NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE 37201
PHONE: (615) 862-4700

Date: May 8, 2013

To: Members of the Metropolitan Historic Zoning Commission

From: Terry Cobb, Director of Development Services,

Mayor's Office of Economic & Community Development

RE: Signage Guidelines for Broadway & 2nd Avenue Historic Overlays

My purpose in writing is to request your support for the proposed signage guidelines for Broadway, Second Avenue and Landmark overlays within the downtown area. The proposed guidelines reflect a public and private sector consensus and are considered to be consistent with the updated signage requirements recently adopted for the Downtown Zoning Code. This is evidenced by support from the Nashville Area Chamber of Commerce, The Downtown Partnership, The District and the Nashville Convention & Tourism Bureau – as well as recommendation from your own staff.

Early in 2013, Mayor Dean asked that I facilitate discussions of the downtown sign code and sign guidelines for downtown historic overlay districts between Metro and various stakeholders. The goal was to reach a consensus for a proposed, new Downtown Sign Code and signage guidelines for properties within the downtown historic overlay districts. Representatives of the Metro Planning Department, Metro Codes Department, the Historic Commission, the Mayor's Office and MDHA met over many months with commercial real estate professionals, sign manufacturers and representatives of the Chamber of Commerce, the Downtown Partnership, Nashville Convention & Visitors Bureau, and The District.

I am pleased to report that the stakeholders reached a true consensus for a proposed, new Downtown Signage Code and the Metro Council passed it unanimously. The stakeholder group then turned its attention to the signage guidelines which would apply to the Historic Preservation Overlays within the downtown area. Again, I am pleased to report that a true consensus has been reached and the proposal before you, today, represents that consensus. I encourage your support.

I would also like to thank Robin Zeigler, Tim Walker and Commissioner Ben Mosley for the many hours they each committed in the discussions to develop a win-win proposal for your consideration. I would also like to thank you for the important work you have volunteered to do, serving Metro Nashville & Davidson County.