



# METROPOLITAN GOVERNMENT OF NASHVILLE AND DAVIDSON COUNTY

Metropolitan Historic Zoning Commission  
Sunnyside in Sevier Park  
3000 Granny White Pike  
Nashville, Tennessee 37204  
Telephone: (615) 862-7970  
Fax: (615) 862-7974

## STAFF RECOMMENDATION

411 Broadway  
November 18, 2015

**Application:** Signage

**District:** Broadway Historic Preservation Zoning Overlay

**Council District:** 19

**Map and Parcel Number:** 09306311100

**Applicant:** Manuel Zeitlin, Manuel Zeitlin Architects, LLC

**Project Lead:** Melissa Sajid, [Melissa.sajid@nashville.gov](mailto:Melissa.sajid@nashville.gov)

**Description of Project:** The applicant proposes new signage on the front façade.

**Recommendation Summary:**

Staff recommends approval of the proposed projecting signs and policy for buildings with historic signage with the condition that the two proposed signs are decreased in size so that they do not exceed eighteen square feet. With this condition, staff finds the project meets the design guidelines for signage in the Broadway Historic Preservation Zoning Overlay.

**Attachments**

**A:** Photographs

**B:** Site Plan

**C:** Elevations



## **Applicable Design Guidelines:**

### **IV.SIGNAGE**

#### **Applicability**

Historic signage should be retained. Removal of historic signage may take place as a Modification.

#### **Allocation of Sign Area**

The maximum sign area for each type of sign is established in the following tables. Specific requirements for each sign type are shown on the subsequent pages.

For each cell in the table, there is a maximum allowed sign area that may be utilized with any combination and any number of signs associated with that cell, unless otherwise noted.

The measurements for “linear feet” shall be at grade.

#### **Building Signs**

Wall, Awning, Canopy and Projecting Signs—1.5 square feet of sign area per 1 linear foot of building façade or 36 square feet, whichever is greater. When a projecting sign is used on a building, an additional .50 square feet of sign area per 1 linear foot of building façade shall be permitted, for a total 2 square feet per 1 linear feet of building façade.

### **GENERAL STANDARDS**

#### **Materials**

All permanent, on-premises signs shall be constructed of a rigid, weatherable material such as hard plastic, wood, MDO plywood, aluminum, steel, PVC, glass, fiberglass and or Plexiglass. On-premises permanent signs shall not be constructed of nonrigid materials including, but not limited to, vinyl, fabric, canvas, or corrugated plastic. The provisions of this subsection shall not apply to approved, permitted canopies, awnings and porticoes.

#### **Building Façade and Street Frontage Measurement**

In determination of number of stories of a building, rooftop additions shall not be considered within the number of stories.

#### **Building Sign: Shingle Sign**

##### **Description**

A single sign is a smaller building sign that projects outward, typically at a ninety degree angle, and hangs from a bracket or support that is located over or near a building entrance.

##### **General Provisions**

- Signs shall be located within 8 feet of an active pedestrian building entrance. This does not include service entries or entries that primarily remain locked.
- An active pedestrian entrance at the corner of a building is allowed signs on both streets.
- A shingle sign shall be located below the window sills of the second story.
- A shingle sign shall not be internally illuminated.
- A shingle sign cannot cover windows or architectural details.

##### **Design Standards**

- A** Area (max)—9 square feet
- B** Height (max)—3 feet
- C** Spacing from façade (min)—6 inches
- D** Width (max)—3 feet
- E** Depth (max)—6 inches

## **Building Sign: Projecting Sign**

### **Description**

A projecting sign is a type of building sign that projects outward from the façade, typically at a ninety degree angle. Projecting signs are typically, but not always, vertically oriented and generally mounted above the first floor.

### **General Provisions**

- A projecting sign must be located at least 25 feet from any other projecting sign. When building width prohibits adherence to this standard, flexibility shall be permitted through Modification to be reviewed by staff.
- A projecting sign may be erected on a building corner when the building corner adjoins the intersection of two streets. Allocation of sign area from both streets may be used, however, in no case shall the sign exceed the maximum dimensional standards below.
- A projecting sign shall be located below the windows sills of the third story.
- The top of a projecting sign shall not extend above the building eave or top of parapet.
- A projecting sign can be externally or internally illuminated in accordance with the Illumination design guidelines.
- Projecting signs that are 3-dimensional may be permitted through a modification.
- A projecting sign cannot cover windows or architectural details.

### **Design Standards**

**A** Overall area allocation (max)—see allocation of sign area

**B** Height (max)

1 story buildings—10 feet

2 and 3 story buildings—16 feet

4 or more story buildings—20 feet

**C** Average spacing from façade (min)—1 foot

**D** Projection Width (max)—6 feet

**E** Depth of Cabinet (max)—2 inch or 18 inches for internally lighted or neon signs

### **Illumination**

Illumination of signs shall be in accordance with the following requirements:

#### **External Illumination**

- External light sources shall be placed close to, and directed onto the sign and shielded to minimize glare into the street, sidewalks or onto adjacent properties.
- Projecting light fixtures used for externally illuminated signs shall be simple and unobtrusive in appearance. They should not obscure the sign.

#### **Internal Illumination**

- Channel letters may be internally lit or back-lit.
- For cabinet signs, the background must be opaque. Only graphics, text and logs may be illuminated, and a halo of one inch around graphics, text, and logos may be non-opaque.
- Exposed neon may be used for lettering or as an accent.

#### **Prohibited Light Sources**

The following light sources are prohibited:

- Blinking, flashing, chasing, and sequential lighting. This type of lighting may be allowed for Broadway (not the district but the street) only through a modification. In these cases, the chase or flash should not last less than every three seconds.
- Bare bulb illumination.

**Background:** 411 Broadway is a three-story commercial building, constructed circa 1955. The structure previously housed Sterchi's Furniture. Paradise Park Trailer Resort is currently at this location. Last month the applicant requested modifications to the DTC for two signs and deferred so that staff could conduct additional research.

**Analysis and Findings:** The applicant proposes to install one new shingle sign and one new projecting sign on the front façade and remove three existing blade signs and a wall sign. This request was deferred from the October 2015 MHZC meeting so that staff could study and propose a policy to address historic signage that would not encourage the removal of the signage. The previously proposed window decal on the alley façade is no longer part of this request.

**Signage Locations:** The proposed shingle sign is directly above an entrance, meeting the requirement that it be within eight feet (8') of an active pedestrian entrance and it is below the second story window sills.



Figure 1: The three blade signs that hang below the second level and the wall sign seen in this image straight ahead are proposed to be removed.

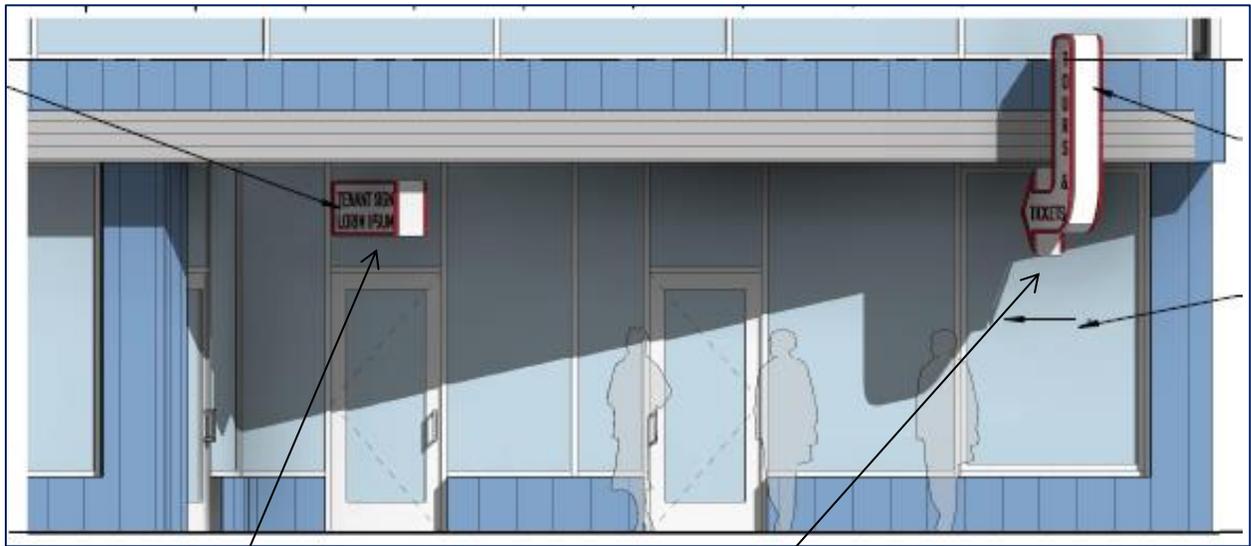


Figure 2: The shingle sign will hang above the door and the projecting sign will wrap the lower portion of the second level.

The projecting sign is located on the second story which projects over the recessed, first story entryway. It is at least twenty-five feet (25') from another projecting sign, as required by the design guidelines and is below the windows sills of the third story. It does not project above the building's eave or parapet, nor does it cover windows or architectural details.

Sign Materials: The main body of both signs will be painted aluminum, which is an appropriate material for signage under the design guidelines.

Signage Illumination: The shingle sign is not internally illuminated but is bordered in neon. Although neon is typically not appropriate for shingle signs, this particular location is unique because of the overhanging second level, creating a dark area that necessitates the simple neon border proposed. The projecting sign also incorporates neon, a type of illumination appropriate for projecting signs. None of the proposed lighting will be blinking, flashing, or chasing. Staff finds that the signage illumination will meet the Broadway Signage design guidelines.

Sign Size & Design: The shingle sign does not "project outward" as defined in the design guidelines, because of the unusual condition of this building having different wall planes for each level. The sign is only two feet and six inches (2' 6") tall, more than meeting the three foot (3') maximum. The sign exceeds the maximum area of nine (9) square feet by a negligible amount but is more than double (6' 3") the width allowed of three feet (3'). The depth also exceeds the allowed depth of six inches (6") because it incorporates neon. Staff found the additional dimensions to be appropriate because the sign does not protrude out from the building wall but is recessed below the projecting upper level and so will have a minimal visual impact on this large building.

The projecting sign is five feet, four inches (5' 4") tall which more than meets the maximum of sixteen feet (16'). It will not exceed eighteen inches (18") in depth, the maximum allowed for neon signs. The design guidelines also limit the maximum projection of a sign to six feet (6') including a minimum one foot (1') separation from the building. The proposed projecting sign does not meet the minimum of one foot (1') of separation; however, staff finds this to be appropriate because of the modern design of the building which includes different wall planes for each level. In addition, the intent of the arrow sign is to "wrap" the second projecting level which is conducive to the modern design of the building and it does not come close to meeting the maximum projection, being only two feet and six inches (2' 6") from the wall.

Sign Allotment: The signage allotment for this building is one hundred twenty square feet (120 ft<sup>2</sup>). An existing historic sign is one hundred seventeen square feet (117 ft<sup>2</sup>). The two proposed signs total approximately twenty-two square feet (22.13 ft<sup>2</sup>), which is approximately nineteen square feet (19.13 ft<sup>2</sup>). more than the allotment. If the existing signs were to remain, the allotment would be further exceeded. Staff recommends, and the applicant proposes, to remove all existing exterior signs, with the exception of the historic projecting sign, bringing the excess beyond the allotment to just approximately nineteen square feet (19.13 ft<sup>2</sup>).

When a historic sign comes close to or exceeds the allotment and a second business needs to be promoted, it could encourage the removal of the historic sign in order to obtain the necessary promotion in a manner that meets the design guidelines; therefore, staff recommends the following policy for historic signage.

“In order to encourage the preservation of historic signs, a building that has a historic sign that comes close to or exceeds the allotment and the building needs to promote an additional tenant or tenants, the building may have an additional fifteen square feet (15 ft<sup>2</sup>) more than the maximum allowed for the primary façade, if all other requirements of the design guidelines are met.”

This policy would allow buildings with historic signage to meet the design guidelines that state that “historic signage should be retained” while also assuring that the building can promote secondary tenants.

In this case, the building has three square feet (3 ft<sup>2</sup>) left of its base allotment. With the additional fifteen square feet (15 ft<sup>2</sup>) of the proposed policy, the applicant would have a new allotment of one hundred thirty-five square feet (135 ft<sup>2</sup>), which will allow an additional eighteen square feet (18 ft<sup>2</sup>). The proposal exceeds the new allotment by approximately four square feet (4.13 ft<sup>2</sup>); therefore staff recommends altering the proposed signs so that together they do not exceed eighteen square feet (18 ft<sup>2</sup>), which reflects the additional fifteen square feet (15 ft<sup>2</sup>) allowed by the proposed policy. In addition, in this case, not all design guidelines are met, as proposed in the policy. They are:

- Width of the shingle sign is approximately double the maximum
- Neon is not appropriate for shingle signage
- Shingle depth exceeds six inches (6 ft<sup>2</sup>) because neon is used
- Shingle sign does not project outward from the building
- Projecting sign does not have a minimum of one foot between it and the building

Staff argues that the proposed policy will be appropriate for all other buildings but does not need to be fully applied in this case because of the building’s unusually large size, modern design and different wall planes, conditions that are not present on any other buildings with historic signage or any other building in the district.

#### Review of what this policy would mean for other buildings with historic signs:

Historic signs are those constructed prior to 1969, as the 1970s is when the district changed from a variety of typical main street businesses, such as hardware and furniture stores, as well as those related to Nashville’s music industry, to primarily adult bookstores and peepshows. (Approximately seventy percent (70%) of current signs have been constructed since 1990 and so would not be considered historic.) There are five signs in the Broadway district that are pre-1969, not including painted murals and “integral” signage that is part of the building such as date or building names etched in

masonry. Historic painted signage and integral signage is typically not calculated in a building's signage allotment. The only remaining historic signs are: the wall sign at Acme Feed (101 Broadway), wall sign at Lawrence Record Shop (409 Broadway), projecting sign at Ernest Tubb Record Shop (417 Broadway), projecting sign at Robert's Western World (416 Broadway) and projecting sign at Paradise Park (411 Broadway), that is the subject of this proposal.



### **101 Broadway (Acme Farm Supply)**

The wall sign (and Purina red and white checks) date from 1965, when Acme Feed and Hatchery changed names to Acme Farm Supply. Because the building is a corner lot, there is additional allotment allowed for First Avenue. The policy would likely not affect this building as the current tenant has not maximized the allotment.



### **409 Broadway (Lawrence Record Shop)**

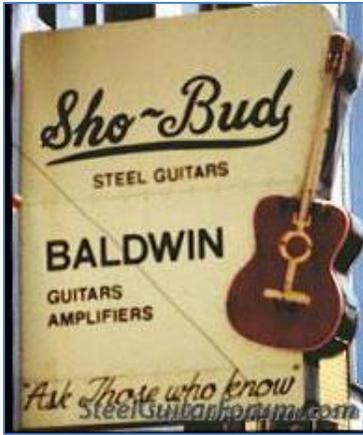
The wall sign is c.1964, installed when the family changed the business from Shoe and Western Wear Store to Lawrence Brothers Record Shop. The "Bros" was removed in 1995 when the name changed to just Lawrence Record Shop. (Painted mural is from 1995 when Lawrence Brothers Record Shop became Lawrence Record Shop.) This property has an allotment of fifty square feet (50 ft<sup>2</sup>), if a projecting sign is included. The existing signage is approximately forty square feet (40 ft<sup>2</sup>) so if a second tenant needed a sign and a projecting sign was included, there could be approximately twenty-five (25 ft<sup>2</sup>) more square footage of signage on this building, if the policy was adopted.



### **411 Broadway (Paradise Park)**

The original sign was for the Sterchi Furniture Company. Sterchi Brothers was the largest furniture company in the world by 1929. James Sterchi sponsored regional musicians and local radio programs as a way to help sell phonograph records in his furniture store. Later the sign changed for the Helig Meyers store. In 2005 it was changed to promote Paradise Park.

The allotment for this building is 120 square feet and the existing sign is 117 square feet.



#### 416 Broadway (Robert's Western World)

This sign is a revised version of the one created c. 1965 for Sho-Bud. In 1980 it was changed slightly to promote the new business of Shot Jackson. The 3-D boot on the top was likely added sometime after 1991 when the building housed Rhinestone Western Wear (later changed to Robert's Western Wear Bar and Night Club and then Robert's Two Doors Down.)

The allotment for this building is forty-four (44 ft<sup>2</sup>) square feet. The existing signage is approximately sixty-three (63 ft<sup>2</sup>) square feet, not including the boot that has been added to the top. If this policy were adopted, this building could have fifteen feet (15ft<sup>2</sup>) of additional wall or shingle signage. A second projecting sign would not meet the design guidelines or policy.



#### 417 Broadway (Ernest Tubb Record Shop)

According to owner David McCormick, this sign was constructed by Cummings Sign in 1960 and designed by the late country music star Ernest Tubb. It includes a marquee because the lower Broadway shop used to have live music and the marquee was used to promote performers.

The allotment for this building is approximately forty-two square feet (42 ft<sup>2</sup>) and the existing signage is approximately sixty square feet (60 ft<sup>2</sup>). If this policy was adopted and a second tenant required signage, this building could have wall or blade signs that do not exceed 15 square feet. A second projecting sign would not meet the design guidelines or the policy.

#### **Recommendation:**

Staff recommends approval of the proposed projecting signs and policy for buildings with historic signage with the condition that the two proposed signs are decreased in size so that they do not exceed eighteen square feet (18 ft<sup>2</sup>). With this condition, staff finds the project meets the design guidelines for signage in the Broadway Historic Preservation Zoning Overlay.

NEW SIGN - (TYPICAL TO BROADWAY) PAINTED ALUMINUM CABINET (6" DEPTH) NEON TRIM AT PERIMETER. AND NEON LETTERING



LEVEL 2  
12' - 9"

NEW SIGN - (TYPICAL TO BROADWAY) PAINTED ALUMINUM CABINET (6" DEPTH) NEON TRIM AT PERIMETER. AND NEON LETTERING

NEW OPERABLE TICKET WINDOW TO MATCH SIZE OF EXISTING

LEVEL 1  
0' - 0"

A

A

2 PROPOSED STOREFRONT  
1/4" = 1'-0"

EXISTING SOFFIT AND STOREFRONT

EXISTING SOFFIT AND STOREFRONT

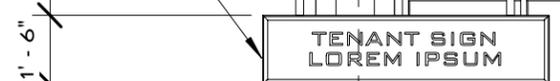
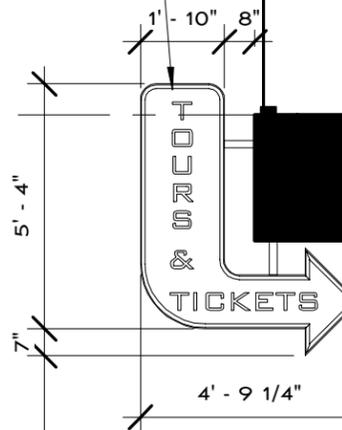
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SIGN DATA			
PROJECTING SIGN	TOTAL AREA	FACADE AREA	% OF FACADE
PROJECTING SIGN 01	12.75 SF	2540 SF	.5 %
PROJECTING SIGN 02	9.38 SF	2540 SF	.3 %

LEVEL 2  
12' - 9"

LEVEL 1  
0' - 0"



3 PROJECTING SIGN ELEVATION  
1/4" = 1'-0"

1 PROJECTING SIGN 02 ELEVATION  
1/4" = 1'-0"

411 BROADWAY

SIGN DATA

HISTORIC REVIEW  
10/07/15

04 REV

1549

MANUEL ZEITLIN ARCHITECTS



TEL 615 256.2880  
FAX 615 256.4839

516 HAGAN ST. STE 100, NASHVILLE, TN 37203