

MEGAN BARRY  
MAYOR



## 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  
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### STAFF RECOMMENDATION

310 Broadway  
March 16, 2016

**Application:** Signage

**District:** Broadway Historic Preservation Zoning Overlay

**Council District:** 19

**Map and Parcel Number:** 09306202600

**Applicant:** Jim Rowan

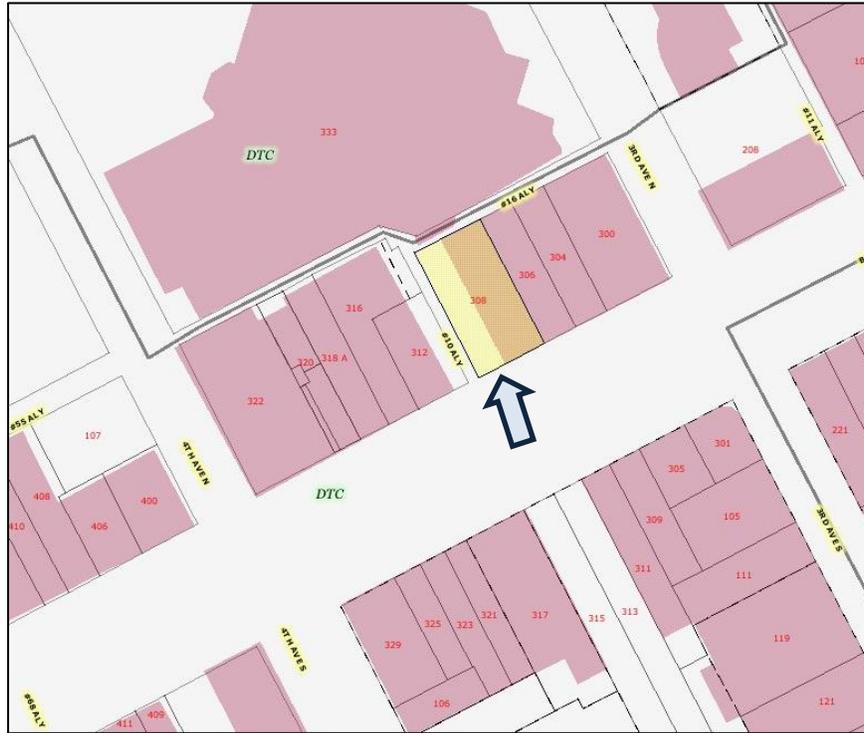
**Project Lead:** Melissa Baldock, melissa.baldock@nashville.gov

**Description of Project:** The applicant proposes to install a wall sign on the alley façade of the structure.

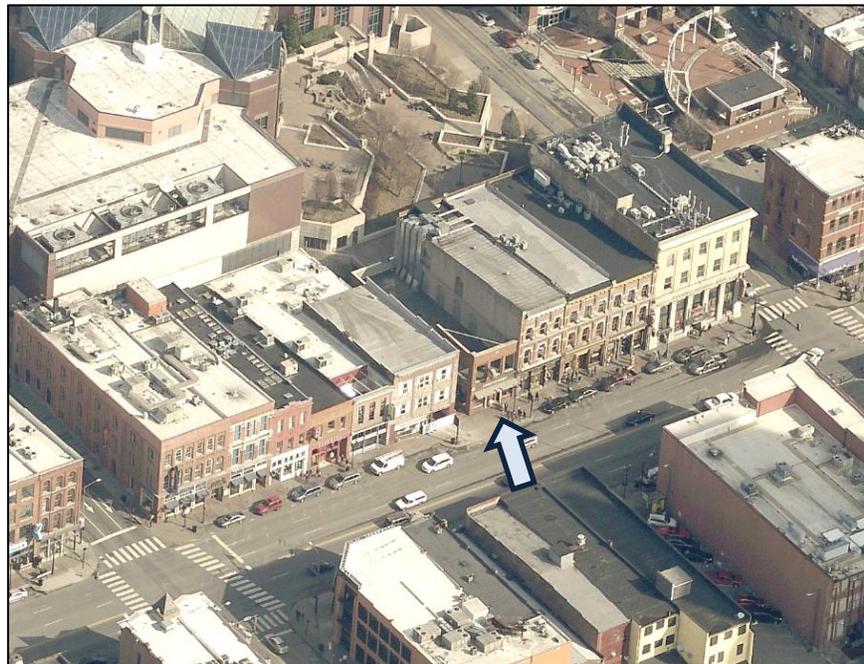
**Recommendation Summary:** Staff recommends disapproval, finding that the sign's location, raceway size and design, and illumination do not meet Section I.V. of the *Broadway Historic Preservation Zoning Overlay: Handbook and Design Guidelines*.

**Attachment  
A:** Signage  
images

**Vicinity Map:**



**Aerial Map:**



## **Applicable Design Guidelines:**

### **IV.SIGNAGE**

#### **INTRODUCTORY PROVISIONS**

##### **Intent**

The purpose of these regulations is to preserve the historic character of the overall district and individual historic buildings follow the basic principles and guidance of the “Downtown Codes Sign Standards” as adopted 1/30/2013. The “Downtown Codes Sign Standards” breaks signage guidance up by “street types.” The Broadway Historic Preservation Zoning Overlay closely follows the guidance for “Pedestrian Street” type.

##### **Applicability**

- These sign regulations apply to all properties within the Broadway Historic Preservation Zoning Overlay.
- (Not referencing code since our current design guidelines do not reference code and there are permissible signs within the code that would not meet our design guidelines.)
- Signage that is cut into the face of the building is prohibited.
- Signage located on the interior of a building or attached to the inside of glass windows is not reviewed.
- Sandwich board signs and 3-dimensional sidewalk signs that are brought into the building at the close of each business day shall not be reviewed by the MHZC but may require review by Public Works.
- Historic signage should be retained. Removal of historic signage may take place as a Modification.

##### **Sign Permit Applications**

Applications for sign permits shall be made with and reviewed by the Metro Historic Zoning Commission (MHZC). All sign applications that do not involve Modifications shall only require MHZC administrative approval.

##### **Common Sign Plan**

A common signage plan regulates signage for multiple businesses or tenants within one building or complex. A common sign plan is mandatory for all new developments and sign Modifications.

- A common signage plan shall provide for consistency among signs with regard to at least four of the following: materials; location of each sign on the building; sign proportions; color scheme; lighting; lettering or graphic style.
- The common signage plan shall establish an allowable area of signage for existing and future tenants with regard to all allowed sign types.
- The common signage plan shall indicate existing nonconforming signs as well as the amount and locations of on-premise signage to be allocated to each tenant under the new plan.

## **MODIFICATIONS**

##### **Sign Permit Modifications**

Requests for modifications to sign standards are reviewed by the Metro Historic Zoning Commission. If the property is also within a MDHA redevelopment district, approval from the MHZC is all that is needed. Two additional types of Modifications for signage related permits may be requested and are outlined below.

##### **Modifications for Exceptional Design**

Creative signage that does not fit the specific regulations of these guidelines may be considered by the MHZC, based on its merits, as they relate to all of the following design criteria:

- Architecture
- The configuration or location of the building or property
- Building scale
- Legibility
- Technical competence and quality in design, construction and durability

Applications for this type of Modification require submittal of a common sign plan for the property in question. Approval of any related structure (i.e. canopy) will require review by all applicable agencies. Exceptional design modifications shall not permit electronic changeable copy where it is otherwise not permitted.

## **RIGHT OF WAY ENCROACHMENTS**

Where a sign is proposed to encroach into the public right-of-way an application shall be made with the Public Works Department in addition to the sign permit application with the MHZC. Both applications shall include the requirements of the Public Works Department available at their website: [www.nashville.gov/Public-Works/Developer-Services.aspx](http://www.nashville.gov/Public-Works/Developer-Services.aspx), in addition to the MHZC submittal requirements.

## **NON-CONFORMING SIGNS**

Sections 17.40.660 and 17.40.690 of the Metro Zoning code apply. This section further clarifies them.

### Building Signs

A sign shall be brought into compliance with the provisions of these design guidelines if a sign permit is required to rebuild the sign. This does not include a panel change in a non-conforming cabinet sign, which shall be permitted.

### Ground Signs

An existing ground sign may change the face or panel of a sign that does not meet the area or height standards within these design guidelines. However, in no instance shall there be an increase in the degree of nonconformity. All new panels shall conform to all illumination standards therein.

A sign shall be brought into compliance with the provisions of these design guidelines if at any time the sign is altered, repaired, restored or rebuilt to the extent that the cost exceeds fifty percent of the estimated replacement cost of the sign (in current dollar value). All permits within any six consecutive calendar months shall be aggregated for purposes of measuring the fifty percent standard.

### All Signs

If the alteration or repair is caused by involuntary damage or casualty, the design may be altered or repaired to its pre-damaged condition.

### Repair and Maintenance

A sign may be removed or taken off-site for repair and maintenance. The sign must be returned to the original location within 90 days of removal.

## **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.

Shingle Sign: 9 square feet per sign

### Ground Signs

Monument Sign-24 square feet

### Skyline Signs

75'-110'—480 square feet

101'-200'—600 square feet

201' and taller-720 square feet

## **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.

### **OTHER SIGN TYPES**

#### **Non Street Facing Signs**

Non street-facing building facades and alley frontages, not otherwise regulated, are allocated 1 square foot of sign area per 1 linear foot of building façade, to a maximum of the sign area permitted for the primary street frontage.

This includes lots adjoining open spaces, pedestrian walkways, or parking areas. Ground signs are not permitted on non-street facing building facades or alley frontages.

#### **Building Sign: Wall Sign**

##### **Description**

- A wall sign is a building sign that is attached flat to, or mounted away from but parallel to, the building façade.
- A wall sign may be painted on the building façade, in some instances, as a modification.

##### **General Provisions**

- A wall sign shall be located lower than the window sills of the top floor for multi-story buildings.
- No portion of a wall sign may extend above the roof line or above a parapet wall of a building with a flat roof.
- No portion of a wall sign may extend above the lower eave line of a building with a pitched roof.
- A wall sign cannot cover windows or architectural details.
- An exposed raceway shall be finished to match the background wall or be integrated into the overall design of the sign.
- A wall sign can be externally or internally illuminated in accordance with the section on Illumination.

##### **Design Standards**

- A** Overall area allocation (max)--see allocation of sign area
- B** Projection (max)--2 inch OR 13 inches for internally lighted or neon signage
- C** Exposed Raceway height--50% of the letter height, OR if the Raceway is used as the sign background, the Raceway may extend 3 inches beyond the largest part of the sign. Refer to Illumination section for additional raceway standards and permitted locations.

##### **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 logos 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.

### **Raceways and Transformers**

- Visible transformers are prohibited.

Changeable copy signs shall be in accordance with the following requirements:

### **Description**

- Manual changeable copy sign. A sign or portion of a sign that has a readerboard for the display of text information in which each alphanumeric character, graphic or symbol is defined by objects, not consisting of an illumination device. Changeable copy is changed or re-arranged manually or mechanically without altering the face or the surface of the sign.
- Electronic changeable copy sign. A sign or portion of a sign that displays information in which each alphanumeric character, graphic, or symbol is defined by a small number of matrix elements using different combinations of light emitting diodes (LED's), fiber optics, light bulbs or other illumination devices within the sign.

### **Usage**

- Manual and Electronic changeable copy is allowed for Tourist Oriented Businesses only when used in conjunction with a wall sign or a monument sign provided the changeable copy portion is no greater than 50% of the built sign area.
- An electronic changeable copy sign is not allowed in a Redevelopment District or on Interstate frontage.

### **Spacing**

- The closest edge of an electronic changeable copy sign must be a minimum distance of 100 feet from any residential zoning district.
- An electronic changeable copy sign must be separated from another electronic changeable copy sign by at least 50 feet.

### **Duration**

- Any image or message or portion of the image or message must have a static display for minimum duration of eight seconds.
- Transition time must be immediate.
- No portion of the image or message may flash, scroll, twirl, change color or in any manner imitate movement.

### **Brightness**

- The sign must not exceed a maximum illumination of 7,500 nits during daylight hours and a maximum illumination of 750 nits between dusk to dawn as measured from the sign's face at maximum brightness.
- Electronic changeable copy signs must have an automatic dimmer control to produce a distinct illumination change from a higher illumination level to a lower level.

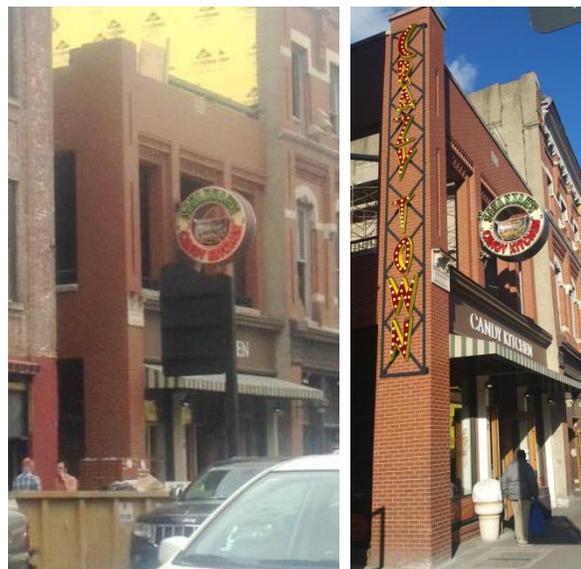
**Background:** The existing building at 310 Broadway is a brick commercial building, constructed in 2011. In 2015, the Metro Historic Zoning Commission approved an addition to this structure which finished out the second level and included a recessed third floor (Figure 1). Candy Kitchen and its existing signage will remain as part of the project. The proposed signage will be for an establishment on the upper stories, which will be connected to the building next door at 308 Broadway.



Figures 1(left) shows the front façade of 310 Broadway and Figure 2 (right) shows the recessed third story under construction.

**Analysis and Findings:** The applicant proposes to install a wall sign on the alley façade of the structure.

**Signage Location:** The applicant is proposing to install the sign at the corner of the building, on the alley side of the façade (Figures 3 & 4). The design guidelines do permit signage on non-street facing facades like this one; however, the design guidelines state that wall signs “shall be located lower than the window sills of the top floor for multi-story buildings.” Although the design guidelines state that “No portion of a wall sign may extend above the roof line or above a parapet wall of a building



Figures 3 & 4 show the proposed location of the sign

with a flat roof,” this does not apply for buildings that are more than one story, where wall signs shall be located below the window sills of the top story.

In this case, the structure is two stories tall at the front, and therefore the sign should be located below the window sills of the second story. The recessed third floor is only minimally visible from Broadway and should not be counted when considering this signage location (see Figure 2). In fact, the design guidelines state “In determination of number of stories of a building, rooftop additions shall not be considered within the number of stories.”

The wall sign is proposed to extend up to the parapet wall at the top of the building, which staff finds does not meet Section IV of the design guidelines. Any proposed wall sign must be located below the window sill of the second story.

**Signage Size:** The proposed sign is two feet, eight inches (2’8”) wide and twenty feet (20’) tall (Figure 5). The total square footage of the proposed sign is fifty-three square feet (53 sq. ft.). The design guidelines state “Non street-facing building facades and alley frontages, not otherwise regulated, are allocated 1 square foot of sign area per 1 linear foot of building façade, to a maximum of the sign area permitted for the primary street frontage.” In this instance, the side façade is one hundred and seven feet (107’) long, but the signage allotment on the primary façade is fifty-eight square feet (58 sq. ft.). The signage allotment for the side façade is therefore fifty-eight square feet (58 sq. ft.).

Although the square footage of the sign meets the signage allotment for the alley façade, the sign’s proposed exposed raceway does not meet the design guidelines. The design guidelines limit the exposed raceway to extending just three inches (3”) beyond the largest part of the sign. The proposed raceway extends six to twelve inches (6”-12”) beyond the lettering. In addition the raceway is not finished to match the background wall and is not integrated into the overall design of the sign, as is required by the design guidelines.

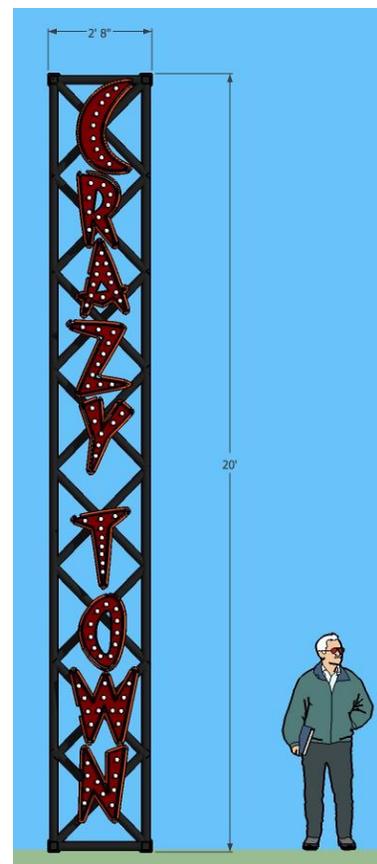


Figure 5. Proposed sign size

The applicant did not provide information on the signage projection.

Staff finds that the proposed signage size does not meet the design guidelines because the raceway extends more than three inches (3”) beyond the lettering and is not integrated with the overall sign design.

Materials: Information on the materials of the sign was not provided by the applicant.

Illumination: The applicant is proposing exposed bulbs for illumination. Bare bulb illumination is specifically prohibited by the design guidelines, and staff therefore finds that the proposed illumination does not meet Section IV. of the design guidelines.

**Recommendation Summary:** Staff recommends disapproval, finding that the sign's location, raceway size and design, and illumination do not meet Section I.V. of the *Broadway Historic Preservation Zoning Overlay: Handbook and Design Guidelines*.

