

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  
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### STAFF RECOMMENDATION 1214, 1216, 1220 Rosa L. Parks Boulevard October 19, 2016

**Application:** Signage

**District:** Germantown Historic Preservation Zoning Overlay

**Council District:** 19

**Map and Parcel Number:** 08209025300, 08213014500, 08213014400

**Applicant:** Israel & Associates, architects

**Project Lead:** Paul Hoffman, paul.hoffman@nashville.gov

**Description of Project:** An application for a neon projecting sign, two wall signs, and painted signage for a previously-approved new commercial building.

#### Recommendation Summary:

Staff recommends approval of the projecting sign facing Rosa L. Parks Blvd, and wall signs 1 and 2, finding that they meet section 8.0 of the Germantown design guidelines with the condition that signage not flash, blink, revolve or race and that the projecting sign does not exceed one foot (1') in depth.

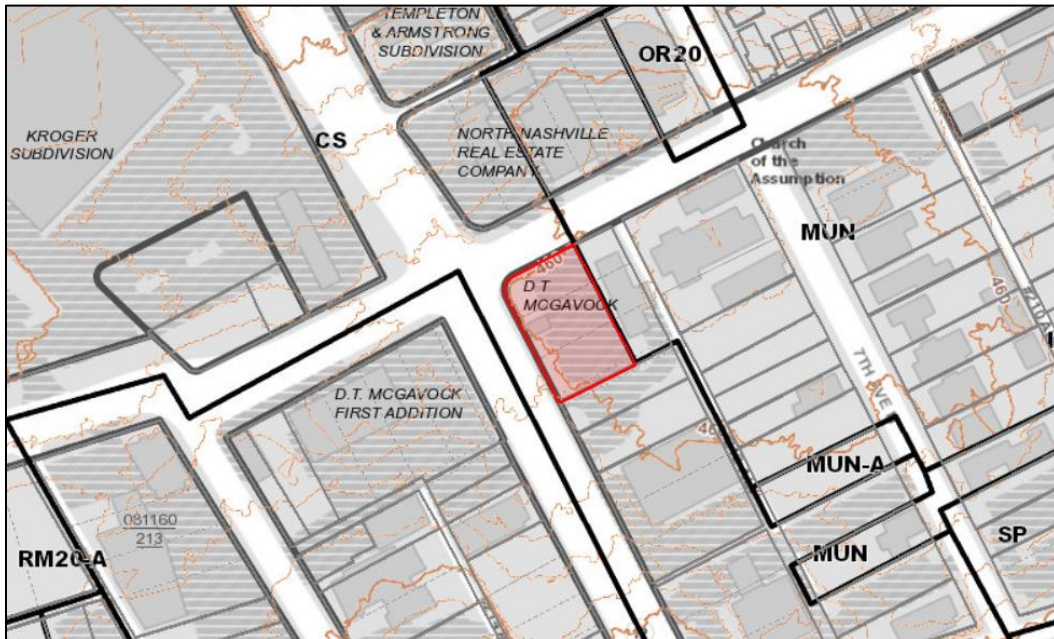
Staff recommends disapproval of the wall sign #3, painted sign finding that it will exceed the allotted sign area for the building and is in an inappropriate location.

#### Attachments

**A:** Photographs

**B:** Elevations

### Vicinity Map:



### Aerial Map:



## **Applicable Design Guidelines:**

### **8.0 Signage**

*Review is required only for permanent signs that are mounted on the exterior of buildings or anchored freestanding on the property. Signage behind display windows, transoms, and upper story windows, as well as temporary signs, such as sandwich boards and banners, are not reviewed.*

*Recognizing the importance of signage and building graphics to the business needs of merchants and property owners, the MHZC supports interpretation of the signage guidelines to further the dynamic, creative, entertaining, and often eclectic identity requirements of the Germantown district.*

#### **8.1 Design Standards**

- 8.1.1 Signage should be placed in locations historically used for signage and should not obscure transoms, columns, cornices, decorative elements, or key architectural features.
- 8.1.2 Signs shall be of quality design and craftsmanship. Wood or painted metal are preferable materials. Low-grade plastics and synthetic materials are discouraged.
- 8.1.3 Awning signage is appropriate for non-residential structures. However, the size of the letters/graphics should not dominate the awning.
- 8.1.4 Signs shall be limited to on-premises signs related to the use or business conducted on the same site.
- 8.1.5 Well-designed hand-painted signs are permitted.
- 8.1.6 Well-designed permanent widow painted signs are permitted.
- 8.1.7 Abandoned, deteriorated, or damaged signs and sign posts shall be removed.
- 8.1.8 The number of signs permitted on a parcel shall be limited to the number of primary building entrances on the parcel plus one for each public street on which the parcel has frontage.
- 8.1.9 Signs for multiple tenant occupancies/multiple businesses shall be of similar material and design.

#### **8.2 Signage not Permitted**

- 8.2.1 No billboards or general advertising signs shall be permitted.
- 8.2.2 Marquee type signs for announcements of activities taking place at the location are prohibited (exceptions: churches, schools, and institutional use).
- 8.2.3 Rooftop signs are not permitted.
- 8.2.4 Off-site signs are not permitted.
- 8.2.5 Pole-mounted signs are not permitted.

#### **8.3 Projecting, Blade & Wall Mounted Signs**

Projecting signs shall be limited to one per property for each street frontage.

- 8.3.1 Projecting signs should be limited to an area of 16 square feet and should not project more than six feet from the building face. Maximum thickness should be limited to one foot. Their projection should be proportional to the design of the sign and appropriately scaled to the building.
- 8.3.2 Blade signs should not project more than three feet from the building and be no more than one story in height. They should be vertical in their design with a total maximum width of one foot.
- 8.3.3 One wall mounted sign per façade shall be allowed per business occupant. Wall mounted signs should be located between the first and second stories and have a maximum thickness of three inches.
- 8.3.4 Banners and flags that use placement, mounts, and materials compatible to the building may be used. Plastic is not an appropriate material.

#### **8.4 Monument and Freestanding Signs**

Monument and freestanding signs shall be permitted only when a building sits more than 20 feet from a public street.

- 8.4.1 Business signs shall be limited to one (1) sign for each street frontage per premises. Monument signs shall be limited to a height of 6', a thickness of 12", and a total area of 16'.

### 8.5 Sign Illumination

- 8.5.1 No sign that flashes, blinks, revolves, races, or is put in motion by the atmosphere shall be permitted. No visible bulbs, luminous paints, or plastics will be permitted as part of any New signs shall be either spotlighted, externally lit or backlit with a diffused light source.
- 8.5.3 Spot lighting should completely shield all light sources. Lights should be contained primarily within the sign frame.
- 8.5.4 Back-lighting should illuminate only letters, characters or graphics on the sign, not the sign background.
- 8.5.5 Neon is permitted only as lighting for channel letters on projecting and blade signs.
- 8.5.6 Buildings and signs may be illuminated by remote light sources, provided that these light sources are shielded to protect adjacent properties.

### 8.6 Canopies & Awnings

- 8.6.1 Canopies may be appropriate at ground-floor level provided they complement a building's architectural style and do not conceal significant architectural features.
- 8.6.2 Canopies should be constructed of materials compatible with the storefront of the building, such as metal and wood.
- 8.6.3 Historically, awnings were used on commercial buildings for both storefronts and upper façade windows. Occasionally, awnings were found on residential structures.
- 8.6.4 Awnings should be placed in locations historically used for awnings (within existing window and storefront openings) and should not obstruct transoms, columns, cornices or other architectural features.
- 8.6.5 Awnings may be fixed or retractable.
- 8.6.6 Storefront awnings should project no more than seven feet from the building and should cover no more than one-third of a storefront window display height.
- 8.6.7 The most appropriate design for awnings is a shed form. The use of shed awnings for upper façade windows is also appropriate. Curved forms are not appropriate, unless there is historical evidence for their use on a building.
- 8.6.8 Opaque canvas, cotton duck, or similar woven materials are appropriate for awnings. Plastic sheet or vinyl awnings are not appropriate.
- 8.6.9 Lighting and signage on canopies and awnings shall be consistent with guidelines for signage and lighting.

## **Downtown Code Signage Regulations for Gateway Street Type**

Gateway Street Type	
<b>Building Signs</b>	
Wall Sign	1.5 square foot of sign area per 1 linear foot of building facade or 36 square feet, whichever is greater.
Awning Sign	Where no ground sign exists, an additional 0.5 square feet of sign area per 1 linear foot of building facade shall be permitted, for a total of 2.0 square feet per 1 linear foot of building facade.
Canopy Sign	
Projecting Sign	
Shingle Sign	9 square feet per sign
<b>Ground Signs</b>	
Monument Sign	64 square feet Properties with 300 or more feet of frontage are allowed one additional monument sign of an additional 64 square feet
<b>Skyline Signs - area determined by average height of building</b>	
75' to 100'	480 square feet
101' - 200'	600 square feet
201' and taller	720 square feet



## DTC Wall Signs

### Description

A wall sign is a building sign that is attached flat to, or mounted away from but parallel to, the building facade.

A wall sign may be painted on the building facade.

### General Provisions

- A wall sign shall either be located lower than the window sills of the third story or at the top of the building, not to be placed below the windows of the highest floor.
- 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 pages 118.

### Design Standards

<b>A</b> Overall area allocation (max)	See pages 109-110
<b>B</b> Projection (max)	13 inches
<b>C</b> Exposed Raceway height (max)	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 the Illumination section (pages 118) for additional raceways standards and permitted locations.

## DTC Projecting Signs

### Description

A projecting sign is a type of building sign that projects outward from the facade, 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 a Minor 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 window sills of the fourth story.
- The top of a projecting sign shall not extend above the building eave or top of parapet, except on one story buildings where the top of a projecting sign may have a maximum of 20% of the sign height above the top of the building.
- A projecting sign can be externally or internally illuminated in accordance with pages 118.

### Design Standards

<b>A</b> Overall area allocation (max)	See pages 109-110
<b>B</b> Height (max)	
1 story buildings	10 feet
2 and 3 story buildings	16 feet
4 or more story buildings	20 feet
<b>C</b> Spacing from facade (min)	1 foot
<b>D</b> Projection Width (max)	6 feet
<b>E</b> Depth of cabinet (max)	18 inches

**Background:** In August 2016, the Commission approved new construction of two buildings on the lots 1214, 1216, and 1220 Rosa L. Parks Boulevard. This application is for projecting and wall signs for the southern building.

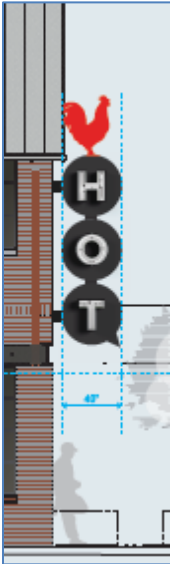


Figure 1: Neon projecting sign on Rosa L. Parks Blvd.

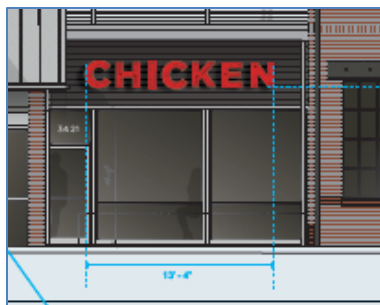


Figure 2: Wall sign #1 on the left side of the building.



Figure 3: Wall sign #3 facing Rosa L. Parks Blvd.

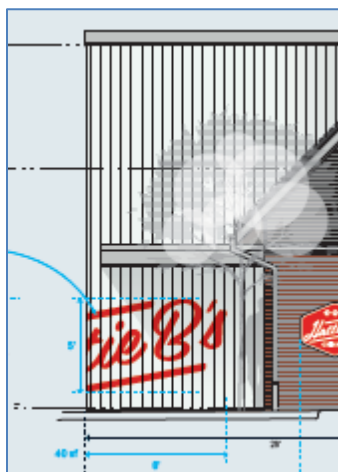
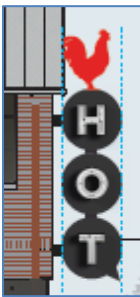


Figure 4: Wall sign #4, painted signage at the bottom of the building wrapping the left corner.

**Analysis and Findings:** Staff contends that the design guidelines were created with the interior of the district in mind and that the context of Rosa L. Parks Boulevard is significantly different in terms of the streetscape and the massing and form of buildings; therefore larger sizes may be appropriate. To determine how much more, staff considered the regulations provided by the Downtown Code, which includes the signage regulations for the opposite side of the street.

Allocation of Sign Area and Number of Signs: The project is allowed three signs per the design guidelines and four (three wall signs and one projecting sign) are proposed. Staff recommends removal of the lower wall sign as it exceeds the number of wall signs allowed by the ordinance and is not in an appropriate location. (See discussion of wall signs for more information about the location.)



Projecting Sign: The neon projecting sign reading “HOT” is proposed for installation on the west side of the building, facing the Rosa L. Parks Blvd (see Figure 1). It meets the design guidelines in terms of number, as one (1) projecting sign is allowed per building, it projects three feet and four inches (3’ 4”) which is well under the maximum of six feet (6’) allowed. The depth of the sign was not indicated. The design guidelines allow for one foot (1’); therefore staff recommends a condition that the projecting sign not exceed one foot (1’) in depth.

The design guidelines also limit the square footage to sixteen square feet (16 sq ft) but the proposed is fifty-three square feet (53 sq. ft.). The guidelines also say that signage should be appropriately scaled to the building. As this is new construction located in an area with no immediate historic context and is located on a road that is scaled differently than the interior of the district, Staff finds that a larger size is appropriate. The fifty-three square feet (53 sq. ft.) proposed is only approximately half the signage allotment allowed on the other side of Rosa L. Parks Blvd, per the Downtown Code, Gateway Street Type. (The allocation of sign area is 2.0 square feet of sign area per 1 linear foot of building frontage, (1.5 square foot with an additional 0.5 square foot per linear foot permitted when no ground sign is used). Therefore the building is permitted one hundred and eight square feet (108 sq. ft.) of signage for its fifty-four linear feet (54’) facing the street.)

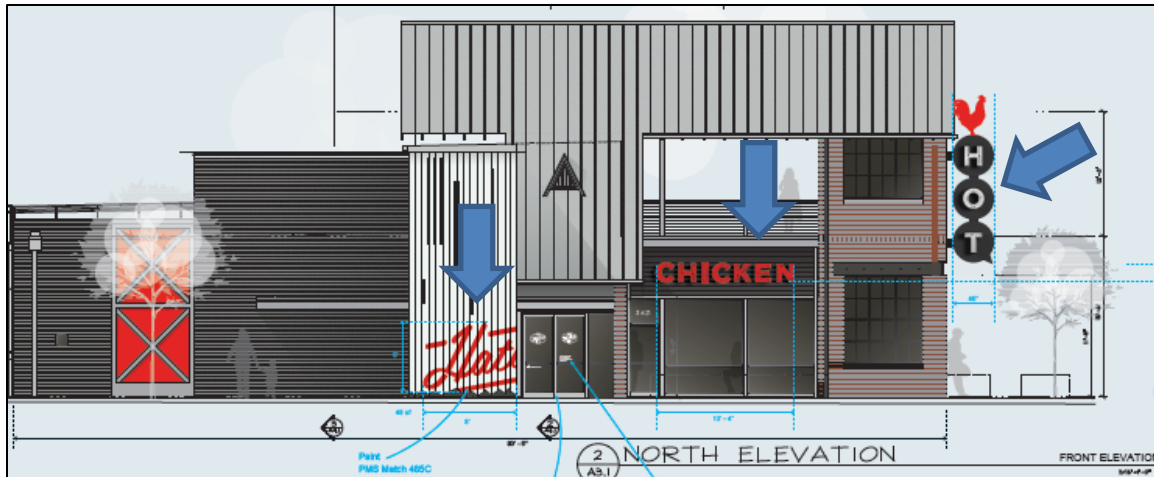
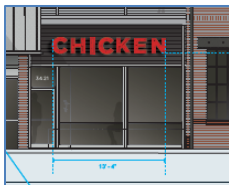


Figure 5. The north (side) elevation shows the proposed projecting sign on west façade, the wall sign over the storefront, and the painted signage toward the rear.

The sign will have LED neon lighting and aluminum channel letters, which meets the design guidelines for sign illumination. Staff recommends a condition that the sign not flash, blink, revolve or race.



Wall sign #1: The “CHICKEN” wall sign is proposed for the north elevation, above the storefront (Figure 2), which is an appropriate location according to the design guidelines.

This sign also features LED neon and aluminum channel letters and measures thirteen feet by two feet (13'x 2') for 26 square feet (26 sq. ft.). The design guidelines permit one wall sign per façade. The sign will be located above the first story and has a thickness of four inches (4"). Although the design guidelines specify that a wall-mounted sign should not exceed a thickness of three inches (3"), Staff finds that the additional inch of depth will not be visible, and that the sign is appropriate. In addition the additional depth may be appropriate for Rosa L. Parks as the signage across the street is allowed to be 13" thick, according to the DTC Signage regulations.



Wall sign #2: The smaller panel on the west elevation measures three feet ten inches by three feet (3'10" x 3') for a total of eleven feet, six inches (11.5 sq. ft.). Although the Germantown design guidelines specify that a wall-mounted sign should be located between the first and second stories, Staff finds this location to be appropriate, as it is a modestly-sized sign and it will be recessed from the front wall of the building by thirty-one feet (31').





Figure 6. West elevation shows the small wall sign and the other half of the proposed painted sign.



Wall sign # 3, painted sign: A painted sign is proposed wrapping the corner of the building on the north façade (see Figure 6). In general, painted signage at the bottom of a building is not appropriate as it is not a typical historic location for signage. Also this sign is sixteen feet by six feet (16' x 6'), for a total of ninety-six square feet (96 sq. ft.), which exceeds the allotment of sign area allowed by the DTC Signage regulations by seventy-eight feet, six inches (78' 6"). Staff therefore recommends disapproval of the painted signage both for the collective size of all the signage

proposed, the sign exceeds the number of wall signs allowed, and the inappropriate location.

Allocation of Sign Area final calculation:

<b>TOTAL AREA PERMITTED</b>	<b>108 square feet</b>	<b>Sign area remaining</b>
Projecting sign	53 square feet	55 square feet
Wall sign 1	26 square feet	29 square feet
Wall sign 2	11.5 square feet	17.5 square feet
Wall sign 3, Painted sign	96 square feet	<b>-78.5 square feet</b>

Staff recommends approval of three signs as that is the maximum number allowed by the design guidelines even though they exceed the square footage allowed by the design guidelines, based on the fact that the project is located in a different context than the interior of the district and is not located near historic buildings. Staff specifically recommends approval of the projection sign and the two wall signs as they meet the design guidelines for appropriate location and for the number of wall signs permitted on a building. Staff recommends disapproval of the painted sign as it is not in a historic location.

**Recommendation:**

Staff recommends approval of the projecting sign facing Rosa L. Parks Blvd, and wall signs 1 and 2, finding that they meet section 8.0 of the Germantown design guidelines with the condition that signage not flash, blink, revolve or race and that the projecting sign does not exceed one foot (1') in depth.

Staff recommends disapproval of the wall sign #3, painted sign finding that it will exceed the allotted sign area for the building and is in an inappropriate location.