

MEGAN BARRY  
MAYOR



**METROPOLITAN GOVERNMENT OF NASHVILLE AND DAVIDSON COUNTY**

Metropolitan Historic Zoning Commission  
Sunnyside in Sevier Park  
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**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

**105 Broadway**

**April 19, 2017**

**Application:** Signage

**District:** Broadway Historic Preservation Zoning Overlay

**Council District:** 19

**Map and Parcel Number:** 09306210100

**Applicant:** Joslin Signs

**Project Lead:** paul.hoffman@nashville.gov

**Description of Project:** An application for a new projecting sign. The applicant requests a modification from the Commission for a rotating element and chasing lighting.

**Recommendation Summary:** Staff recommends approval of the proposed projecting sign with the conditions:

1. Existing signage is removed, so that the total signage does not exceed 100 square feet;
2. MHZC Staff approve the sign prior to its installation.

Staff finds that the project meets Section IV of the Broadway Historic Preservation Zoning District Design Guidelines for signage.

**Attachments**

**A:** Photographs

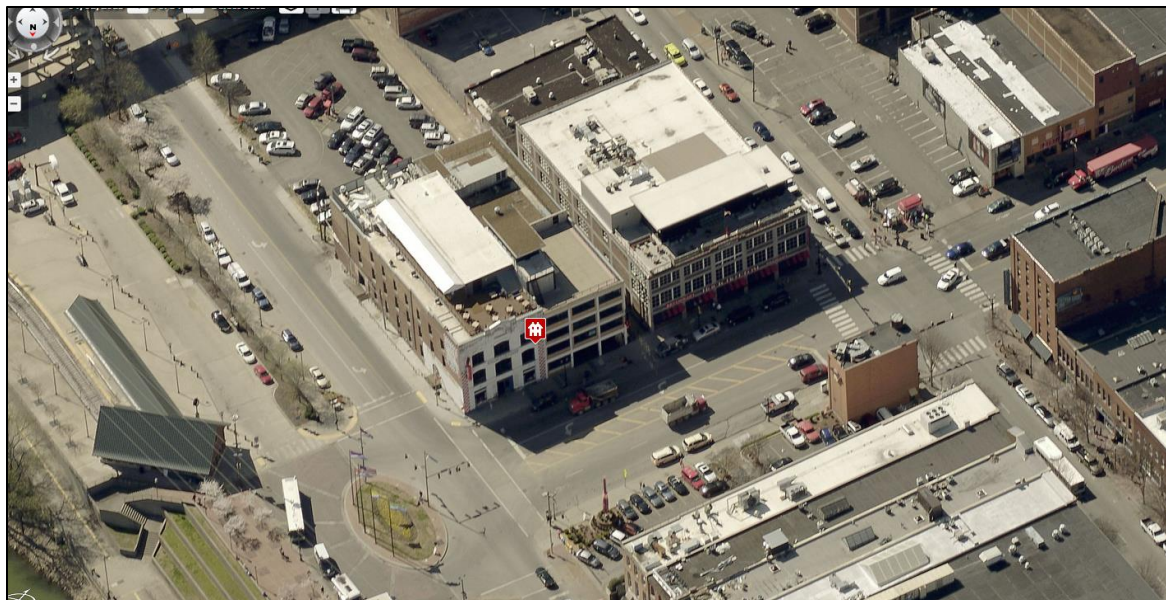
**B:** Site Plan

**C:** Elevations

**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**

### **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 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:** 105 Broadway is a contributing commercial building constructed circa 1935.

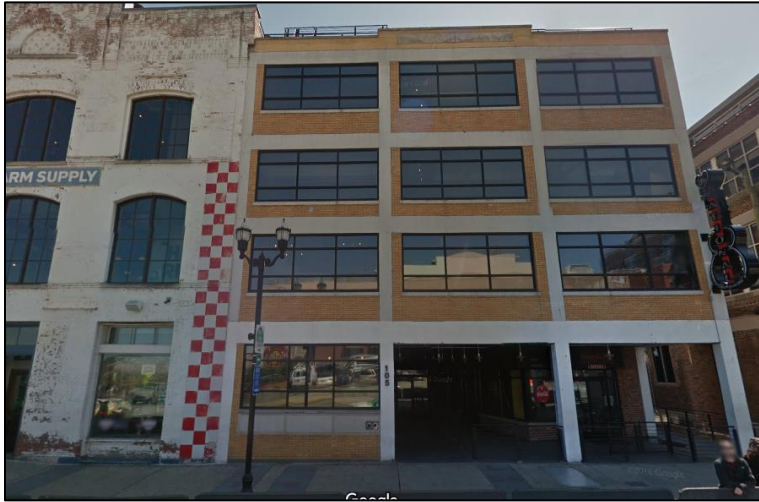


Figure 1. 105 Broadway

**Analysis and Findings:**

Allocation of Sign Area: The building has fifty feet (50’) of street frontage. When a projecting sign is used, the building is permitted two square feet (2 sq. ft.) of signage per linear foot. The building’s allotment of sign area with a projecting sign is therefore one hundred square feet (100 sq. ft.). The proposed sign measures twenty feet by five feet (5’), for a total of one hundred square feet (100 sq. ft.). This uses up the entirety of the allowable sign area for the building.

The existing signage consists of a projecting sign installed in 2011. Since the new sign meets the maximum for the building’s allotment, Staff recommends removal of all existing signage in order that the total signage does not exceed one hundred square feet (100 sq. ft.). With this condition Staff finds that the proposed signage meets section IV of the design guidelines.

Rotation: The Commission has approved rotation on signs in the district. However, they have usually been a small portion of the sign, or a smaller sign overall.

Examples of rotating signage include:

ADDRESS	YEAR APPROVED	SQUARE FOOTAGE (1 side)
312 Broadway	2016	6.75
429 Broadway	2016	5.5 x2
325 Broadway	2015	2.2
318 Broadway	2014	21.25
101 Broadway	2014	12.2
400 Broadway	2013	6.6



In this case, the proposed rotating area is roughly circular with an area of sixteen square feet (16 sq. ft.). The dimensions of the sign meet the design guidelines, and the rotating element is in keeping with others approved by the Commission. Therefore, Staff recommends approval of the rotation.

Location: The proposed location for the sign is a pilaster at the building's west corner. The nearest projecting signs are ninety-five feet (95') and one hundred fourteen feet (114') to the left and right, respectively. According to the design guidelines, a projecting sign shall be located below the window sills of the third story. The proposed location will not obscure any architectural elements of the building. Staff finds the proposed location of the sign to be in accordance with Section IV of the design guidelines.



Figure 2. Rendering of new sign

Illumination: The sign is proposed with neon letters and LED lights on either side of the logo. The “Underground” will be stationary. The lights will chase so that they appear to be falling down both sides of the sign. The design guidelines allow for blinking, flashing, chasing, and sequential lighting as a modification by the Commission. Since the ability to have chasing lights is a modification, it should be used sparingly to maintain the historic character of the district. Signs that currently have chasing elements are:

- 306 Broadway, one row of barrels approved to chase, MHZC decision February 2017;
- 322 Broadway, only the central lettering (the word “Margaritaville”) chases, approved in 2010;
- 421 Broadway, four small musical notes at the top of the sign chase, approved in 2016;
- 423 Broadway, two of five words have chasing lights and an arrow has chasing dots. This sign has not yet been installed.

Staff finds that the area of motion proposed is a small enough percentage of the total sign area, and staff recommends approval of the modification in this case for chasing.

Materials: The sign will have a metal cabinet with painted or applied lettering and neon channel letters. These materials are appropriate for signage and meet section IV of the design guidelines.

### **Recommendation:**



Staff recommends approval of the proposed projecting sign with the conditions:

1. Existing signage is removed, so that the total signage does not exceed 100 square feet;
2. MHZC Staff approve the sign prior to its installation.

Staff finds that the project meets Section IV of the Broadway Historic Preservation Zoning District Design Guidelines for signage.

