

HISTORIC AND DESIGN REVIEW COMPLIANCE AND TECHNICAL ADVISORY BOARD

February 23, 2024

HDRC CASE NO: 2024-073
ADDRESS: 3502 BROADWAY
LEGAL DESCRIPTION: NCB 6138 BLK LOT 45- 46
ZONING: C-2, RIO-1
CITY COUNCIL DIST.: 2
DISTRICT: Tobin Hill Historic District
APPLICANT: Louis Talamantez/LT Electric, LLC
OWNER: Carim Khanmohamed/Smoke Shop
TYPE OF WORK: Signage and installation of window film
APPLICATION RECEIVED: January 19, 2024
60-DAY REVIEW: March 19, 2024
CASE MANAGER: Jessica Anderson
REQUEST:

The applicant requests a Certificate of Appropriateness for approval to:

1. Install signage, including an internally illuminated sign mounted on a 12'x4' backing and window vinyl featuring the business logo in four locations.
2. Install under-eave lighting along the primary elevation of the building.

APPLICABLE CITATIONS:

UDC Sec. 35-673. – Site Design Standards.

(3) Light Temperature and Color.

A. Light temperature and color shall be between 2500°K and 3500°K with a color rendition index (CRI) of eighty (80) or higher, respectively. This restriction is limited to all outdoor spaces adjoining and visible from the river right-of-way and from the interior spaces adjoining the river right-of-way on the river level and ground floor level. Levels shall be determined by product specifications.

B. Unique lighting methods, including LED or colored lights, are allowed in RIO-7 in order to enhance architectural elements provided such lighting installations to not conflict with any other requirement in this section.

(4) Minimize the Visual Impacts of Exterior Building Lighting.

A. All security lighting shall be shielded so that the light sources are not visible from a public way.

B. Lighting (uplighting and downlighting) that is positioned to highlight a building or outdoor artwork shall be aimed at the object to be illuminated, not pointed into the sky.

C. Fixtures shall not distract from, or obscure important architectural features of the building. Lighting fixtures shall be a subordinate feature on the building unless they are incorporated into the over-all design scheme of the building.

(5) Prohibited Lighting on the Riverside or Creekside of Properties Abutting the River or Creek.

A. Flashing lights.

B. Rotating lights.

C. Chaser lights.

D. Exposed neon.

E. Seasonal decorating lights such as festoon, string or rope lights, except between November 20 and January 10.

F. Flood lamps.

UDC Sec. 35-678. – Signs and Billboards in the RIO.

(a) General Provisions.

(1) This section governs all exterior signs and all interior signs hung within ten (10) feet of an exterior fenestration, or those signs intended to be read by exterior patrons.

A. All signage within an RIO district shall conform to all city codes and must have approval of the historic preservation officer prior to installation.

B. Permits must be obtained following approval of a certificate of appropriateness.

C. No sign shall be painted, constructed, erected, remodeled, refaced, relocated, expanded or otherwise altered until it has been approved and a permit has been obtained from the development services department in accordance with the provisions of this section and applicable city code.

D. Signs, visual displays or graphics shall advertise only the business on the premises unless otherwise allowed in this section.

E. Temporary displays for permitted events are authorized if in accordance with chapter 28 of the City Code of San Antonio, Texas.

(2) When reviewing applications for signage the historic preservation officer and the historic and design review commission shall consider the visual impact on nearby historic resources.

A. Signs should respect and respond to the environment and landmark or district character in which constructed.

B. Signs should respect and respond to the river improvement overlay districts character and the historic Riverwalk.

C. The content or advertising message carried by permitted signs shall pertain to the business located on the same premises as the sign or to any otherwise lawful noncommercial message that does not direct attention to a business operated for profit, or to a commodity or service for sale, provided that signs erected on buildings with multiple businesses within shall pertain to any such business within.

(3) For signs with changeable message panels, the changeable message area of the sign shall not exceed twenty-five (25) percent of the total sign area, except for gasoline price signs which shall not exceed seventy-five (75) percent of the total sign area. Electronic changeable message boards shall be prohibited.

(4) The name of a business may be changed through the administrative approval process if the sign conforms to the provisions of this section, and if the color, size, and style of lettering, and illumination of the sign remain the same.

(5) Provisions under this section shall comply with chapter 28 of the City Code of San Antonio, Texas. In cases where provisions under this section are stricter or a sign is designated as a contributing structure, then this section shall control.

(6) Special consideration should be given to the character of the sign itself proposed in the application, and whether the proposed sign has inherently historic characteristics which may fall outside of the guidelines presented below but which would contribute to the historic district, landmark or area for which it is being proposed. Additionally, when reviewing applications for signage the historic preservation officer and the historic and design review commission shall consider the visual impact on nearby historic resources.

(7) Memorials, markers, naming rights of public property, and recognition of charitable donations given to the City of San Antonio shall be additionally governed by any formal action passed by city council.

(b) **Sign Definitions.** For signage definitions, refer to subsection [35-612\(b\)](#) and chapter 28 of the City Code.

(c) **Standards for Sign Design and Placement.** In considering whether to recommend approval or disapproval of an application to construct or alter signage on a building, object, site, or structure in a river improvement overlay district, review shall be guided by the following standards in addition to any specific design guidelines approved by city council.

(1) Primary sign design considerations shall be identification and legibility. Size, scale, height, color and location of signs shall be harmonious with, and properly related to, the overall character of the district and structure. Sign materials shall be compatible with that of the building facade. Highly reflective materials that will be difficult to read are not permitted.

(2) Signs which describe, point, or direct the reader to a specific place or along a specific course, such as "entrance," "exit," and "disabled persons access," as well as government signs, shall be reviewed but shall not be included in total allowable signage area. Emergency signs shall be exempt from historic and design review commission approval.

(3) All graphic elements shall reinforce the architectural integrity of any building. Signs shall not disfigure, damage, mar, alter, or conceal architectural features or details and shall be limited to sizes that are in scale with the architecture and the streetscape. Emblems and symbols of identification used as principal structural or architectural design elements on a facade shall not be included in the total allowable signage per facade per structure when approved. Review shall be guided by the building's proportion and scale when such elements are incorporated.

(4) Graphics and signage may be illuminated by indirect, internal, or bare-bulb sources, providing that glare is not produced; by indirect light sources concealed by a hood or diffuser; by internal illumination with standard opal glass or other translucent material or with an equal or smaller light transmission factor. All illumination shall be steady and stationary. Neon lighting shall be permitted when used as an integral architectural element or artwork appropriate to the site. For purposes of this subsection, "Glare" shall mean an illumination level of six (6) Lux or greater at the property boundary. If internal illumination is used, it shall be designed to be subordinate to the overall building composition. Light fixtures should reflect the design period of the building on which they are placed. The use of ambient light from storefront or streetlights is encouraged.

(5) Signage requests for multi-tenant buildings must complement existing signage with regards to size, number,

placement and design, unless such existing signage is not in conformity with regulations in this article. It is recommended that the building owner or their agent develop a master signage plan or signage guidelines for the total building or property. If a property has an approved master signage plan on file with the historic preservation officer, then applications for signage may be approved administratively at the discretion of the historic preservation officer provided that they comply with such master signage plan. Notwithstanding the above, signs may not exceed the maximum size and height limitation of signage contained in chapter 28, article 9.

(d) **Proportion of Signs.** For all signage, signage width and height must be in proportion to the facade, respecting the size, scale and mass of the facade, building height, and rhythms and sizes of window and door openings. The building facade shall be considered as part of an overall sign program but the sign shall be subordinate to the overall building composition. Additionally, signs shall respect and respond to the character and/or period of the area in which they are being placed.

(e) **Number and Size of Signs.**

(1) **Number and Size.** The historic and design review commission shall be guided in its decisions by the total number of businesses or services per building and the percentage of visible storefront occupied by each business or service. Applicants may apply for up to three (3) signs total. Total signage for all applicants shall not exceed fifty (50) square feet unless additional signs and/or additional total footage is approved. Additional square footage may be approved provided that the additional signage is in conformity with, and does not interfere with, the pedestrian experience on the Riverwalk. The additional square footage shall be based upon the size and scope of the site. Signs should reflect the type and speed of traffic they are meant to attract. Signs designed for pedestrians and drivers of slow moving cars should not be the same size as signs designed for highway traffic.

(2) **Sign Area.** The sign area shall be determined in the following manner:

A. **Sign Areas.** The area of a sign shall be computed on the actual area of the sign. Sign area shall be calculated as the area within a parallelogram, triangle, circle, semicircle or other regular geometric figure including all letters, figures, graphics or other elements of the sign, together with the framework or background of the sign. The supporting framework of the sign shall not be included in determining sign area unless such supporting framework forms an integral part of the sign display, as determined by the historic preservation officer. If the sign is located on a decorative fence or wall, when such fence or wall otherwise meets these or other ordinances or regulations and is clearly incidental to the display itself, the fence or wall shall not be included in the sign area. In the cases of signs with more than one (1) sign face, including but not restricted to double-faced signs, back-to-back signs, overhanging signs, and projecting signs, each side of the sign shall be included in total allowable signage area.

B. **Channel Letter Signs.** For channel letter signs, the sign area shall be the smallest rectangle that will encompass the limits of the writing, including spaces between the letters. Each advertising message shall be considered separately.

(3) **Building Identification Signs.** An additional building identification sign may be placed on a building with multiple tenants, if the building name is not the same as the business(s) housed within and such sign is recommended for approval by the historic and design review commission. This type of sign is to identify a building as a destination, shall not exceed thirty-two (32) square feet, shall not be included in the total allowable signage area, and shall not include names of individual businesses.

(4) **Freestanding Signs.** Freestanding signs are allowed provided the sign does not interfere with pedestrian or vehicular traffic. Freestanding signs shall be perpendicular to the street, two-sided and no taller than six (6) feet. Freestanding signs shall not be located in the right-of-way.

A. **Projecting Arm Signs.** Signs hung from poles are allowed. Pole height shall not exceed six (6) feet and the pole diameter shall not exceed three (3) inches. Blade signs are not allowed to project over a sidewalk or other right-of-way.

FINDINGS:

- a. The property at 3502 Broadway is a single-story commercial structure built c. 1963. The property first appears on historic aerials in 1963. The property is located on the east side of Broadway between Parland Pl and Elmhurst Ave, across the street from Brackenridge Park and north of Mahncke Park. The property includes a smoke shop at the north end of the building and a gas station with canopy over pumps and convenience store at the south end. The property is located in a River Improvement Overlay (RIO-1).
- b. **SIGNAGE:** The applicant requests approval to install signage, including an internally illuminated sign mounted on a 12'x4' backing and window vinyl featuring the business logo in four locations. UDC 35.678 says applicants may apply for up to three (3) signs total. Total signage for all applicants shall not exceed fifty (50) square feet unless additional signs and/or additional total footage is approved. Additional square footage may be approved provided that the additional signage is in conformity with, and does not interfere with, the

pedestrian experience on the Riverwalk. The additional square footage shall be based upon the size and scope of the site. The parapet sign is 48 square feet including the backing. Staff was unable to determine the dimensions for window signage found on site, but the total square footage of the logos on the window vinyl exceeds 2 square feet. Staff finds the signage does not conform to UDC and should be reduced to three signs that do not exceed 50 square feet in total.

- c. **WINDOW VINYL:** The applicant requests approval to install full window vinyls across the elevation. All graphic elements shall reinforce the architectural integrity of any building. Signs shall not disfigure, damage, mar, alter, or conceal architectural features or details and shall be limited to sizes that are in scale with the architecture and the streetscape. Emblems and symbols of identification used as principal structural or architectural design elements on a facade shall not be included in the total allowable signage per facade per structure when approved. Review shall be guided by the building's proportion and scale when such elements are incorporated. Staff finds the window vinyl inappropriate and that overall window coverage should be reduced.
- d. **LIGHTING:** The applicant requests installation of under-eave lighting along the primary elevation of the building. UDC 35-673 says all security lighting shall be shielded so that the light sources are not visible from a public way, and that light temperature and color shall be between 2500°K and 3500°K with a color rendition index (CRI) of eighty (80) or higher, respectively. Levels shall be determined by product specifications. Staff finds the under-eave lighting does not conform to UDC.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of signage, based on findings a through d, with the following stipulations:

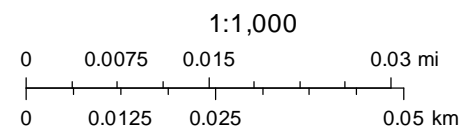
- i. That the applicant reduces signage to no more than three signs that are equal to or less than 50 square feet in total, as noted in finding b. This includes reduction of window clings to conform with signage standards, as noted in finding c.
- ii. That the applicant proposes under-eave lighting that conforms to UDC 35.673, namely lighting that is shielded to reduce glare and with a lighting temperature that meets RIO standards, as noted in finding d.

City of San Antonio One Stop



February 15, 2024

- CoSA Addresses
- Community Service Centers
- 🎓 Pre-K Sites
- CoSA Parcels
- BCAD Parcels



FIVE STAR SMOKE SHOP

FIVE  STAR
SMOKE SHOP

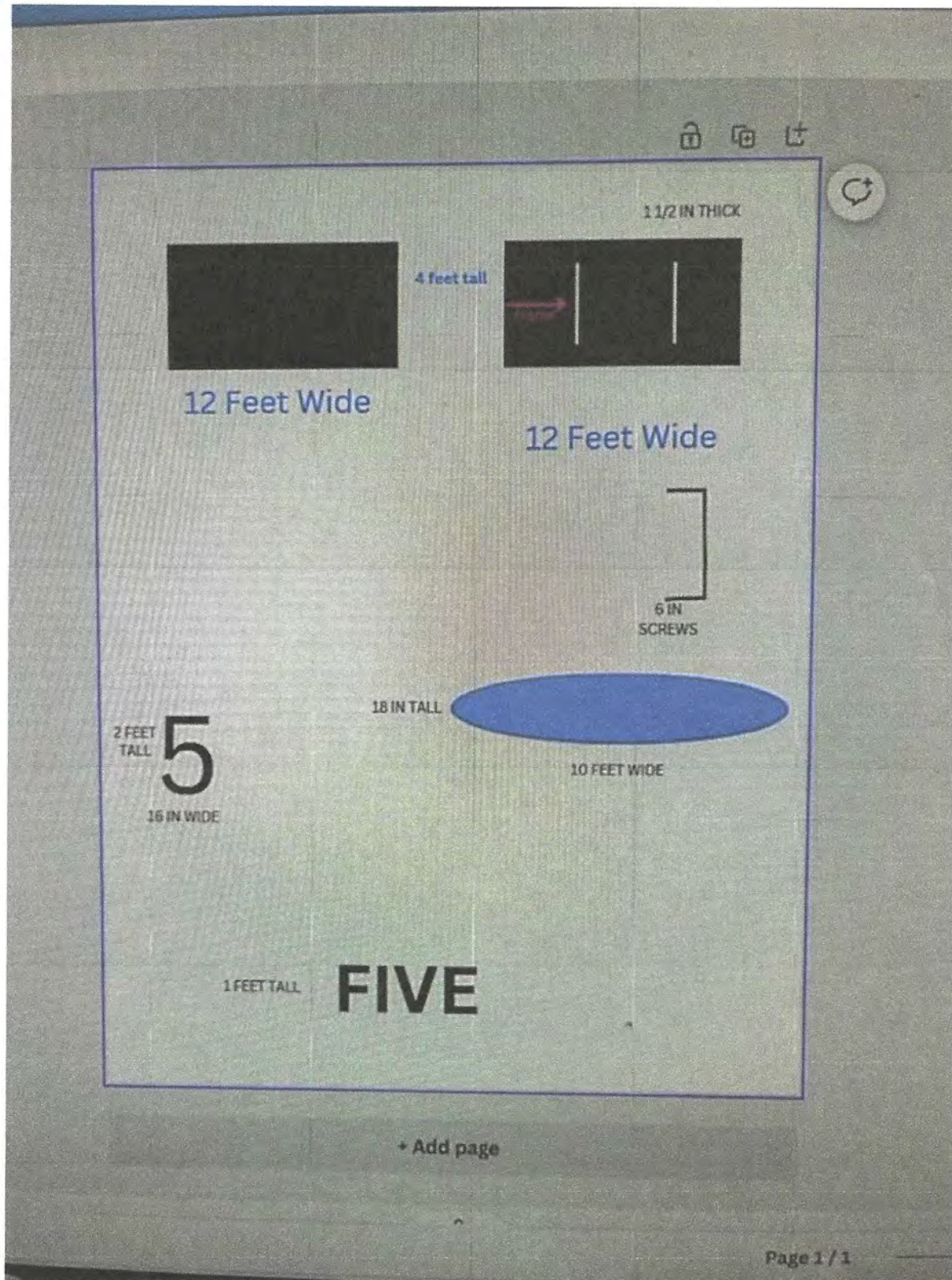
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