



**Design Review Board (DRB)
Staff Report**

Exterior Renovation

Case # 21-26: Big River Market
516 Tennessee St.
Memphis, TN 38103

Applicant: Nick Barbian
533 Rienzi Dr.
Memphis, TN 38103

Owner Representative: Casey Flannery, Property Manager
Anchor Investments
516 Tennessee St. #106
Memphis, TN 38103

Background: DRB review is required for this project because it received an Exterior Improvement Grant from the CCDC at its April 21st, 2021 meeting.

The subject site is located at the north east corner of Tennessee St. and G.E. Patterson Ave., within The Emerge Building. The applicant is proposing a new boutique market store on the ground floor that will serve the south end of Downtown. The overall project will require both interior and exterior renovation work.

Project Description: The applicant is proposing exterior improvements to meet the owner's programmatic needs of a new concrete patio and stair entrance for direct street access from G.E. Patterson. The store will house food, groceries, drinks, and coffee for residents, workers, and visitors to the South Main Neighborhood. The changes to the pedestrian view will include: a new patio with stairs and handrails, a new main entrance, a new storefront, exterior signage, and rework of the existing sidewalk.

Staff Report: The applicant is excited to join the newly announced South Point Grocery in bringing food accessibility to the southern end of Downtown. The applicant views this market not in competition with the grocer, but as a small market option for those who live or work within a 0.3-mile radius of the site. The business model is built upon

having an established consumer base within walking distance. The location especially provides convenience for the South Bluff neighborhood, residents of the Lofts, and the Tennessee Brewery residents.

The compact urban market style is designed for pedestrians and residents looking for high-quality products, grab-and-go foods, a quick coffee, an outdoor dining area for lunch, or to grab a few essential ingredients for dinner, within a short walk or bike-ride.

The proposed exterior improvements for 516 Tennessee St. fulfil the Downtown Design Guideline's goals of enhancing the public realm and the pedestrian experience in Downtown Memphis. The new patio space converts an inward facing office space into an outward facing commercial space.

Staff is supportive of this application because a compact grocery model complements the on-going development in the South Main neighborhood, promotes walkability and outdoor dining, and increases the appeal of living, working, and playing downtown. The proposed exterior improvements to 516 Tennessee St. bring activation to a corner of local emerging retail businesses and enhances the existing curb appeal of the Emerge Building.

Staff Recommendation: **Staff recommends approval, with the condition that the applicant submit a separate application for signage to staff.**