



**Design Review Board (DRB) Staff Report**  
*Prepared for the August 4, 2021 DRB Meeting*

Public Art & Architectural Lighting

Case # 21-58: Kemmons Wilson HQ Public Art and Lighting  
40 Huling Ave  
Memphis, TN 38103

Applicant: Kemmons Wilson Companies  
8700 Trail Lake Dr. Suite 300  
Memphis, TN 38125

Background: Kemmons Wilson received approval for a CCRFC PILOT on April 14, 2020 in order to renovate an existing building at 40 Huling into their new corporate headquarters. The DRB approved the exterior renovations for the building at its October 7, 2020 meeting. The applicant is now returning with an application for the public art and architectural lighting components of the project.

The PILOT approval for 40 Huling included two bonus years for public art and architectural lighting. In reviewing these components, the DRB must determine two things: whether the proposed art and lighting are appropriate in general, and also whether the aesthetic impact of these features is great enough to qualify for the additional PILOT years.

Project Description: The proposed exterior lighting package for 40 Huling includes the following components:

- Neon-like linear LED lighting that wraps around the fascia of the canopy on the building's south elevation. At the southeast corner of the canopy, this lighting will also wrap around an extruded aluminum shape in the form of half a star. The same line continues into the art on the building's east wall (described in the public art section below).
- Linear LEDs will be placed on nine of the entrance canopy's structural beams, providing additional architectural lighting on the building's primary façade.
- LED Wall sconces that provide lighting on the building's north elevation. There will be eleven fixtures on the north side, punctuating the spaces between the windows on that

side. Three of the same fixtures will also be installed on the south of the building, on the section of the south façade not covered by the canopy.

The proposed public art consists of the following elements:

- A mural stretching across the building’s east wall depicting the profiles of Kemmons and Dorothy Wilson, overlaid by lines representing motion.
- Neon-like illuminated LED letters in a script style that read “Positive action by all of us will keep Memphis growing” installed over the top of the mural (at the same level as the linear lights that wrap around the canopy on the south side). The letters reading “by all of us” will blink in one-by-one on a timer, to emphasize those words.

**Staff Report:**

The Downtown Design Guidelines encourage public art when feasible, and recommend employing exterior lighting to enhance the public realm and improve the pedestrian experience. In the case of the public art and lighting proposal for 40 Huling, Board members are asked to judge both the general appropriateness of the plans, and whether they fulfil the intent of the PILOT program’s public art and enhanced architectural lighting criteria. In order to qualify as “enhanced architectural lighting,” a lighting plan should have a clear aesthetic impact that goes beyond purely functional lighting. Similarly, public art should have a significant impact on the public realm and go beyond the bare minimum needed to check the “art” box.

Staff believes that the lighting and art proposal for 40 Huling meets these standards. The art and lighting have a clear and significant impact on the public realm, and both components have been thoughtfully designed to complement the architecture of the building itself.

**Staff Recommendation:**     **Staff recommends approval.**