



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

Wall sign, projecting sign, and two (2) canopy signs

Case # 16-18: Hotel Napoleon
179 Madison Ave.

Applicant: Staybright Signs
P.O. Box 363
Southaven, MS 38671

Property Owner: Suna Winchester, LLC
179 Madison Ave.
Memphis, TN 38103

Background: The subject property is located at the southeast corner of B.B. King Blvd (formally known as Third Street) and Madison Avenue. The historic structure was built in 1902 and is individually listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The property has had several names over the years including the Winchester Building, the Press-Scimitar Building, and the Madison Avenue Building.

The property owner is renovating the existing 5-story office building for use as a boutique hotel with 58 rooms and amenities including a tapas restaurant, fitness center, concierge service, and valet parking.

Project Description: The applicant is requesting approval to install a total of four (4) exterior signs to identify the hotel. Proposed signs include the following:

- One (1) wall sign to read “Hotel Napoleon” will be placed on the south elevation. The sign will consist of internally-illuminated channel letters mounted to a vertical raceway. Each 24 in. (h) aluminum channel letter will be painted bronze and feature a white acrylic face. The raceway will be painted to match the color of the exterior walls. The overall dimensions of the sign as mounted on the wall will be 6 ft. 10 in. (w) x 24 ft. (h).

In addition to the channel letters, a flush-mounted wall sign (7.5 ft. x 6 ft. 5 in.) featuring the business logo will be placed above the channel letters. The internally-illuminated logo

sign will consist of an aluminum sign cabinet with a white polycarbonate face. Aluminum letters to read “HN” will be placed in front of the white polycarbonate oval and painted bronze.

- Two (2) sets of individual channel letters to read “Hotel Napoleon” will be mounted to a horizontal raceway on the top edge of the existing canopy at the front corner of the building. One (1) sign will be placed on the north side of the canopy facing Madison Avenue and the other sign will be placed on the west side facing B.B. King Blvd.

Each sign will measure approximately 30 in. (h) x 25 ft. (w). Each 20 in. (h) letter will be internally-illuminated and feature a white acrylic face. Below the channel letters will be a matching sign cabinet in the shape of a 4 in. (h) single-stroke underline. The 16 in. (h) raceway will be to the rear of the letters and painted to match the color of the canopy.

- One (1) projecting sign to feature the business logo will be placed on the west side of the building, at the same height as the first row of single windows. The internally-illuminated sign will be mounted perpendicular to B.B. King Blvd. The sign will measure approximately 6 ft. (w) x 7 ft. (h) and consist of an aluminum sign cabinet with a white polycarbonate face. Letters to read “HN” will be placed in front of the white polycarbonate oval.

Evaluation:

For purposes of DRB signage review, the subject property is located within the Downtown Core and the Baseball sub-district. Neither sub-district places any special restrictions or limitations on signage that apply to this application. For example, internally-illuminated signs are allowed by-right at this location.

DMC Staff is responsible for reviewing and administratively approving sign applications that meet the provisions of the Central Business Improvement District (CBID) Sign Code and do not require exceptions or a variance to any of the requirements. In this case, the proposed wall sign on the south elevation and the projecting sign on the west elevation are located outside the signable area. Staff opinion is that the proposed location of these two signs is appropriate and generally compatible with the building’s architecture. Additionally, the Code allows that “larger identification or signage” is permissible on canopies made of wood, metal, or other permanent material provided that it is “compatible with the design of the canopy.” Staff opinion is that the two signs proposed for the top edge of the canopy are appropriately scaled for the building and not out of character or inappropriate for this use and context.

Staff Recommendation: **Staff recommends approval**