

Metropolitan Historic Zoning Commission

# ELLISTON PLACE ROCK BLOCK HP ZONING OVERLAY

## ELLISTON PLACE ROCK BLOCK HISTORIC PRESERVATION ZONING OVERLAY

### INSIDE



### METROPOLITAN HISTORIC ZONING COMMISSION

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Nashville and Davidson County

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Adopted: **DRAFT**

<i>Historic Zoning Overlay</i>	2
<i>What are the Design Guidelines</i>	3
<i>Map of the District</i>	4
<i>Purpose of the Design Guidelines</i>	5
<i>Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation</i>	6
<i>A Short History</i>	7
<i>Demolition</i>	12
<i>Materials</i>	15
<i>Rehabilitation</i>	16
<i>New Constructions</i>	24
<i>Signage</i>	28
<i>Definitions</i>	37

## I. INTRODUCTION

### THE HISTORIC PRESERVATION ZONING OVERLAY

Please also see *MHZC Hand Book*.

In more than two thousand towns in the United States, neighborhoods and commercial districts use historic zoning as a tool to protect their unique architectural characters. There are quantifiable reasons for historic zoning: it gives neighborhoods greater control over development; stabilizes property values; decreases the risk of investing in one's building; promotes heritage tourism; protects viable urban housing stock; and preserves natural resources by conserving building materials. And there are less quantifiable, but equally important, reasons for historic zoning -- it protects our past for future generations, nurtures a sense of community, and provides a sense of place.

Historic zoning overlays are **locally** designated and administered by the Metropolitan Historic Zoning Commission (MHZC), an agency of the Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County. Historic zoning overlays are applied in addition to the base or land-use zoning of an area. *Historic zoning overlays do not impact how a property is used.*

Like the National Register of Historic Places, historic zoning honors an area's historical significance. There are six types of historic zoning overlays: historic preservation, historic landmarks, historic landmark-interiors, historic landmark-signage, neighborhood conservation, and historic B&B.

In neighborhood conservation and historic B&B zoning overlays, certain exterior work on buildings—new construction, additions, demolition, and relocation—is reviewed to ensure that the neighborhood's special character is preserved. In addition to the projects reviewed in neighborhood conservation and historic B&B zoning overlays, historic preservation and historic landmark overlays also include review of alterations to existing buildings -- like replacing windows, altering storefronts, or painting brick. Overlays with historic preservation or historic landmark zoning are not more historically significant than those with neighborhood conservation zoning; rather, the MHZC, in conjunction with neighborhood input and direction of the council member, determined that these overlays are most compatible with the goals of the neighborhood and the MHZC.

### WHAT IS REVIEWED

#### IN A HISTORIC LANDMARK OVERLAY

- *New construction (primary and secondary structures)*
- *Additions – increased footprint, height or building envelope of an existing structure*
- *Demolition (in whole or in part)*
- *Relocation of structures*
- *Construction of appurtenances (with the exception of portable storage buildings less than 100 square feet)*
- *Signage*
- *Repairs and alterations to existing structures*
- *Setback determinations*

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- *Repairs and Alterations to existing structures*
- *Building illumination*
- *Setback determinations*

## I. INTRODUCTION

### WHAT ARE THE DESIGN GUIDELINES?

The Metropolitan Historic Zoning Commission (MHZC) is the architectural review board that reviews applications for work on properties within historic zoning overlay districts. Its nine members, appointed by the mayor, include representatives from zoning districts, the Metropolitan Planning Commission, the Metropolitan Historical Commission, architect(s), and others. Design review is administered according to a set of design guidelines. The guidelines are criteria and standards, developed jointly by the MHZC and the residents of the neighborhood, which are used in determining the architectural compatibility of proposed projects. The guidelines provide direction for project applicants and ensure that the decisions of the MHZC are not arbitrary or based on anyone's personal taste.

The guidelines protect the neighborhood from new construction or additions not in character with the neighborhood and from the loss of architecturally or historically important buildings.

By state and local legislation, design guidelines for historic overlays must be in accordance with the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties*—criteria developed by the National Park Service and used by private and public preservation organizations throughout the country. (Please see I.E.)

### IN A NEIGHBORHOOD CONSERVATION OVERLAY (also B&B Homestays)

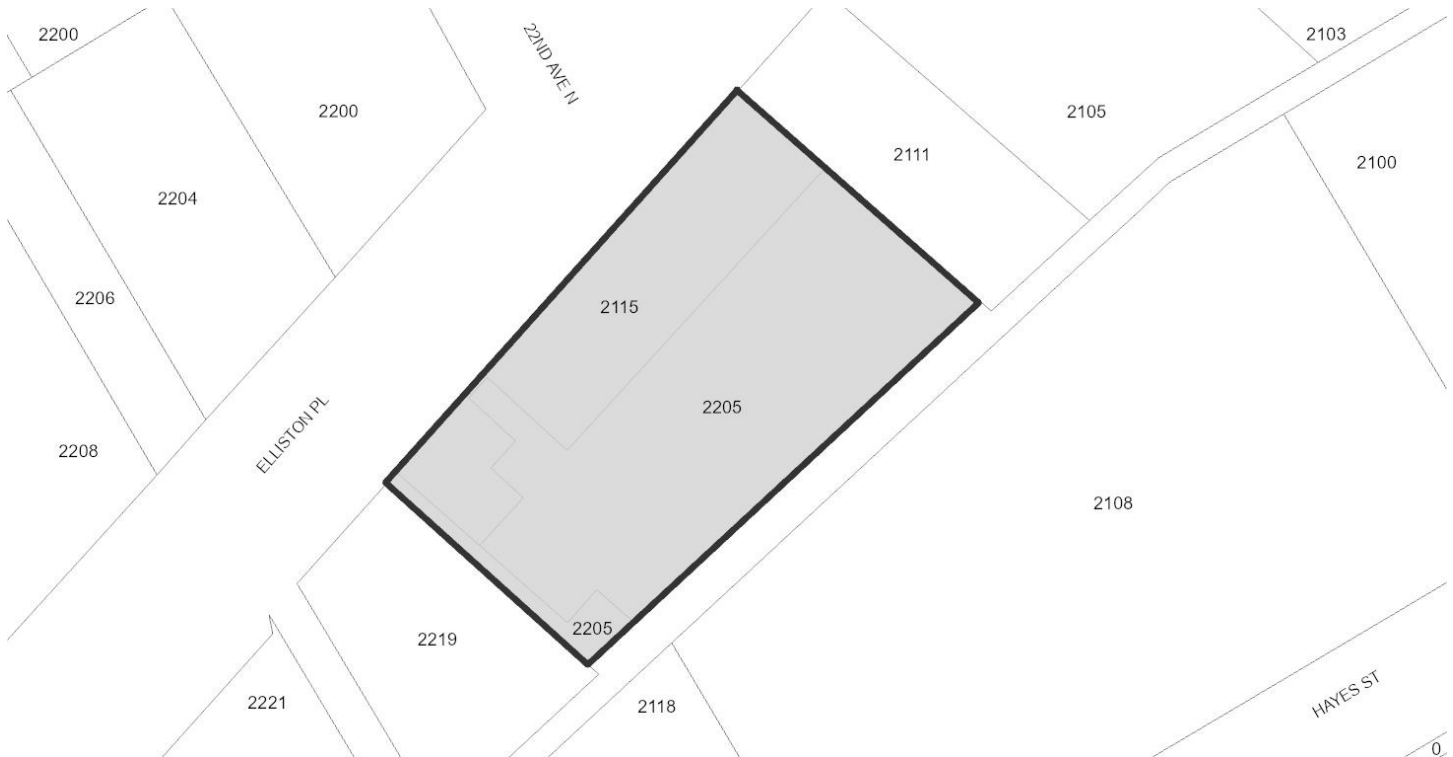
- New construction (primary and secondary structures)
- Additions – increased footprint, height or building envelope of an existing structure
- Demolition (in whole or in part)
- Relocation of structures
- Setback determinations

### WHAT IS NOT REVIEWED IN HISTORIC PRESERVATION OVERLAYS

- Temporary (30 days or fewer) appurtenances, such as:
  - Real estate, opening soon, special event, and construction signage
  - Construction related fencing and structures
  - Special event related structures
- Painting of wood

## I. INTRODUCTION

### A. Map of District





## I. INTRODUCTION

### B. Purpose of the Design Guidelines

Within the zoning ordinance, “historic zoning” is used as the general term for Nashville’s six types of zoning overlay districts applicable to historic properties: historic preservation, neighborhood conservation, historic B&B, historic landmark, historic landmark-interior, and historic landmark-signage. The references to historic zoning in the ordinance and design guidelines is to be understood as a general term that covers the six different types of historic zoning.

Design guidelines are criteria and standards which the Metropolitan Historic Zoning Commission must consider in determining the appropriateness of proposed work within a historic preservation zoning overlay. Appropriateness of work must be determined in order to accomplish the goals of the overlays, as outlined in Article IX (Historic Zoning Regulations), Metropolitan Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance:

1. To preserve and protect the historical and/or architectural value of buildings or other structures;
2. To regulate exterior design, arrangement, texture, and materials proposed to be used within the historic district to ensure compatibility;
3. To create an aesthetic appearance which complements the historic buildings or other structures;
4. To foster civic beauty;
5. To strengthen the local economy; and
6. To promote the use of historic districts for the education, pleasure, and welfare of the present and future citizens of Nashville and Davidson County.

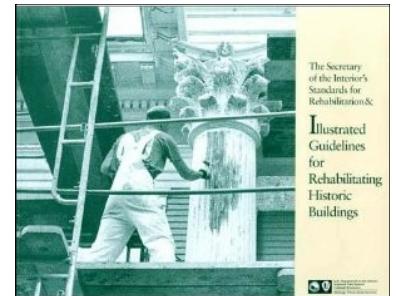
## I. INTRODUCTION

### C. Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation

By Tennessee state law, all design guidelines for historic zoning overlays must comply with the Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended. The section of the Act which deals specifically with rehabilitation of historic properties is the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Treatment of Historic Properties. The Standards are a series of concepts about maintaining, repairing, and replacing historic materials, as well as designing new construction or making alterations. When the design guidelines do not provide guidance for a specific request, the Standards may be relied upon.

- 1. A property will be used as it was historically or be given a new use that requires minimal change to its distinctive materials, features, spaces and spatial relationships.*
- 2. The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.*
- 3. Each property will be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or elements from other historic properties, will not be undertaken.*
- 4. Changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right will be retained and preserved.*
- 5. Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.*
- 6. Deteriorated historic features will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.*
- 7. Chemical or physical treatments, if appropriate, will be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials will not be used.*
- 8. Archeological resources will be protected and preserved in place. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures will be undertaken.*
- 9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, or spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work will be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale, proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.*
- 10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be undertaken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.*

*The full set of Secretary of Interior Standards may be found online at  
<https://www.nps.gov/tps/standards.htm>*



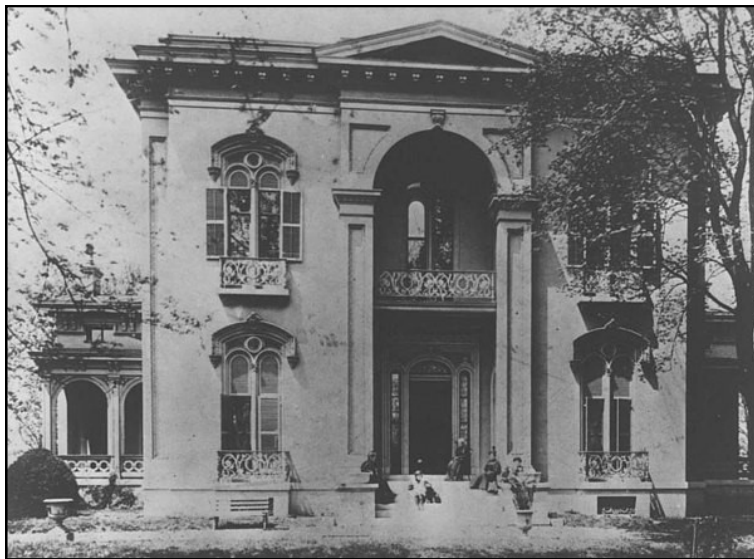
## I. INTRODUCTION

### D: A Short History of Elliston Place Rock Block

The Elliston Place Rock Block is important for its exceptional local significance for business that supported the performing arts and entertainment culture on this block, from 1960 with the opening of One Stop Records at 2201 Elliston Place to 2019 with the closing of “Nashville’s legendary dive-bar” the Gold Rush at 2205 Elliston Place. The center stone of the block is the Exit/In performance venue which was likely instrumental in the growth of the avant-garde collection of food, fashion and music that flourished on this block during the Exit/In’s heyday. (The Exit/In is a Historic Landmark and not included in the Rock Block district.)

Elliston Place is named after the Ellistons, a slaveholding family that built a plantation on the land that is now the iconic street. Joseph Elliston built the house in 1816 and named it Burlington after his homestead in Kentucky. Over the course of the 19th century, the house went through several iterations with expansions and the sale of the land surrounding it. It was ultimately dismantled in 1932, although the materials were soon used by another branch of the family to build another house, also named Burlington, in Green Hills.

Elliston Place was established as a street in 1904 and started developing a reputation as a small but distinctive part of the cultural makeup of Nashville. In its first four to five decades, the business included typical ‘main street’ fare such as pharmacies, restaurants, grocery stores, a bakery, barber shops, and jewelry and clothing stores.



Burlington Mansion. *Photograph courtesy of the Tennessee State Library and Archives.*



Elliston Place Soda Shop shown in its original location. The two-story brick building to the left is its current location. *Photograph courtesy of CoStar News.*

## I. INTRODUCTION

The longest lasting of these businesses is the Elliston Place Soda Shop, founded in 1939 at 2111 Elliston Place. The shop was caught up in the counterculture of the 60s and 70s, feeding the up and coming patrons of Nashville's version of Little Bohemia. In 2020, the restaurant moved next door to 2105 Elliston Place, the former Cumberland Telephone Exchange building, built in 1907.

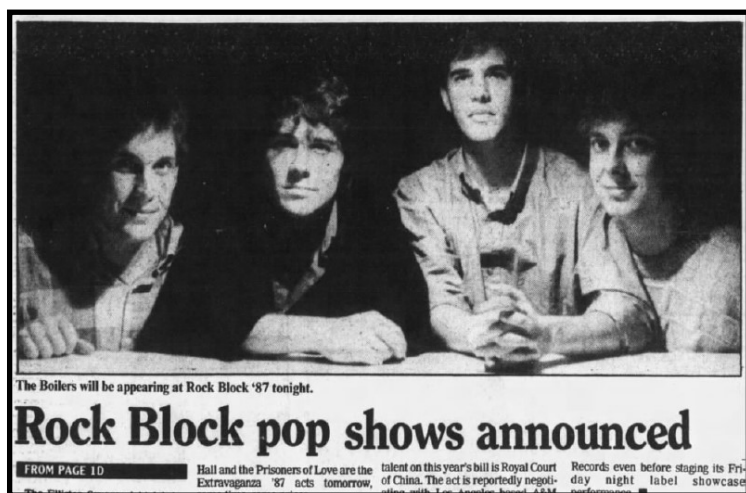
The Rock Block is considered to be the area from 2214 Elliston Place, the former location of TGI Friday's restaurant and the location of former apartment buildings at 2221 Elliston Place on the south end to the Elliston Place Soda Shop on the north end. According to a *Tennessean* article from June 26, 1999, the area was called "rock block" because of its street festivals and music venues. The first mention of "rock block" appears in the *Tennessean* in 1983 for the NARAS event, The Sock Hop on the Rock Block at Exit/In. In 1987 the Elliston Square entertainment venue hosted the Rock Block '87, musical showcase.

The street's connection to musical entertainment could be said to have started with One Stop Records in 1960. One Stop dealt in phonograph records and related items and sold record 'departments' to drug and grocery stores; however, the business did not last much more than a year before going bankrupt.

The block's true geneses is the opening of the Exit/In in 1971. The music venue serves as the hub to the culture of the district, with many businesses advertising their proximity to, or their location in relationship, to the club.



Vice President Al Gore refuses to reveal the name of his potential running mate while talking to the press on Elliston Place, August 7, 2000. Photograph by Bill Steber, *The Tennessean*.



*The Tennessean*, January 15, 1987, Page 35.



## I. INTRODUCTION

The Exit/In was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 2023. From its early years, Exit/In was renowned not only for the quality of musicians who performed there, but also the diversity. Jimmy Buffett had his first big break as the opening act for Dianne Davidson at the club. Doc Watson, bluegrass icon, Joan Baez, folk artist, and Odetta, one of the first black musicians to play at the club, all found homes on the Exit/In stage at one point or another. They even hosted comedians like Steve Martin. By the end of the decade, the club was hosting punk bands as well, such as the Talking Heads and the Police, effectively fusing genres and widening the scope of Nashville's music scene beyond country music.



Exit/In , 1975.

The live music scene stretched beyond Exit/In and was bolstered by its proximity to Vanderbilt University. Other music venues included Amies in the early 1990s at 2209 Elliston Place and Elliston Place Square at 2219 Elliston Place. Night Rhythm was a long-standing dance hall and The Corner Bar, a more recent restaurant, both offered live music. Although the building itself is not historic, The End, a dive bar not far from Exit/In, established in 1999, has a history of hosting famous musicians such as the White Stripes, REM, and Against Me!.

Elliston's music scene was more than just music alone, stretching to local fashion, food and music-related retail. Notable business that bolstered the music culture included Rock Block Guitars that opened in 1990 at 2113 Elliston and Psychs at 2213 Elliston Place. Psychs first opened on Second Avenue North in 1989, moving to Elliston in 1990.



Indian portraits, antique chandeliers and the "Nashville" sign from the Robert Altman film all bled in to give the Gold Rush, seen here on September 9, 1976 a look straight out of the Old West. Photo by Robert Johnson, *The Tennessean*

## I. INTRODUCTION

The CD music store specialized in the music of local artists and rare recordings. Additional stores included Discount Records and Sam Goody. Smoke shops added to the bohemian atmosphere with some occasionally in trouble with the law for selling products marketed for tobacco use but actually intended for marijuana use. Smoke shops included Mary Jane's, Jean Marie's, and Elliston Place Pipe & Tobacco that were all located at 2204 Elliston, a two-story multi-business building on the west side of the street constructed in 1977.

The district is particularly noted for its fashion, including vintage and custom clothing stores, such as Sundance Inc, Dangerous Threads, Pieces, Van Gard, Flashback Vintage Clothing, Stuff, Buffalo Exchange, Union Blues, and Smack. Many of these stores were frequented by musicians, including country music legends. Dangerous Threads was a wholesale and retail clothier that moved from the west side of the street to the east side in 1992. They specialized in rhinestones, fringe, and custom clothes, outfitting the likes of Ronnie Milsap, Hank Williams, Jr. and the rock band, Cinderella.

In the same vein as vintage clothes were second-hand books. Retired postal clerk Charles Elder, opened Elder's Bookstore, in 1969, which did not move out of the district until 2011.

Food was a big a part of creating a holistic music and entertainment culture supporting both musicians and music venue patrons. Obie's Pizza, Samurai Sushi, Mosko's Muncheonette, and The Gold Rush were highlights of the block. The Gold Rush is

**CRIME**

# Raids bang away at suspected 'bongs'

**By JON YATES**  
*Staff Writer*

The first time you say "bong" in the Second Avenue Smoke Shop, the owner gives you a warning.

The second time, he kicks you out.

For years, it seemed like a good policy — proof that the glass water pipes sold in the small, dank store were for tobacco, not marijuana.

Federal authorities, however, didn't buy it and yesterday they cracked down.

Armed with search warrants, U.S. Customs agents raided the store and seven other local businesses, seizing two trailer loads full of pipes, water pipes, scales and business records.

**Eight shops hit**

Stores hit in yesterday's sting include:

- Music City Marketing**, 477-B McNally Drive, which agents described as a "distributor" of the goods.
- Karma**, 209 Broadway.
- New Life Record Shop**, 5343 Charlotte Ave.
- Whatever Shop**, 2113 Elliston Place.
- Elliston Place Pipe & Tobacco**, 2204-H Elliston Place.
- The Smoke Shop**, 1011 Gallatin Pike.
- Second Avenue Smoke Shop**, 112 Second Ave. N.
- Bazaar**, 412 Fourth Ave. S.

◆ Turn to PAGE 13A, Column 1

*The Tennessean, June 4, 1998, Page 1.*

## I. INTRODUCTION

perhaps best known, serving Mexican food and providing after-hours service. *The Tennessean* called it a “bohemian hangout” in 1991, “Nashville’s legendary dive bar” in 1976, and in 2008, challenged that “if there’s a better place to work up a buzz before a rock show on the Rock Block, we’d love to hear about it.”

An iconic feature of Music City, the Rock Block along with other areas such as Jefferson Street, established Nashville as more than just the capital of country music. Elliston Place became a place where musicians of all genres could develop their sound, their brand and their fans.



Customer Shauna Wilson sits outside of Ink Gallery Tattoo as life goes on in Elliston Place August 12, 2004. *Photo by John Partipilo, The Tennessean*

## II. DEMOLITION

### GENERAL PRINCIPLES-DEMOLITION

1. A primary purpose of the overlays is to prevent demolition of historic buildings and their character defining features.
2. The demolition of a building, or major portion of a building, which contributes historically, culturally, or architecturally to the character and significance of the district is not appropriate.
3. The historic character-defining features of a historic building should not be removed or destroyed.
4. Replacement of historic materials or features may be necessary in the case of extreme deterioration. In those cases, replacement materials and features should match the historic material and feature in terms of design, location, texture, and dimensions. If the original is not known, it shall be similar to common historic examples in the neighborhood. Substitute materials may be appropriate if the material has the same dimensions, texture, design, texture, and workability as the historic material.



All of the buildings in the overlay are historic and there is one vacant lot, as of 2024.



## II. DEMOLITION

### B. GUIDELINES

1. Partial-demolition of a structure
  - a. Character defining features of historic buildings shall be retained. Partial-demolition of historic buildings is appropriate if the feature to be removed is not a character defining feature.
  - b. The rear of buildings, beyond the first 40' of the building, may be removed for a rear addition, parking, or for structural reasons.
  - c. Historic masonry shall be retained.
  - d. Historic window and door dimensions and locations shall be retained. *(Materials themselves are not historic, as of the establishment of these design guidelines in 2024.)*
  - e. Historic building wall's dimensions and locations shall be retained.
  - f. Partial-demolition of non-contributing buildings is appropriate if demolition does not result in a form or condition that would not meet the design guidelines for "new construction" or if partial-demolition brings the existing building closer into compliance with the design guidelines for new construction.

## II. DEMOLITION

### 2. Full-demolition of a structure

- a. Historic buildings shall be retained unless the denial of the demolition will result in an economic hardship as determined by the MHZC in accordance with section 17.40.420 (Historic Zoning Regulations), Metropolitan Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance.
- b. Full-demolition of non-contributing buildings is appropriate as they do not contribute to the historic character of the district. *(As of 2024, there are no non-contributing buildings in the district.)*

### III. MATERIALS

#### **A: Guidelines: Relationship of Materials, Texture, Details, and Material Color**

1. The relationship and use of materials, texture, details, and material colors of a new building's public facades shall be visually compatible with or similar to historic buildings.
2. The principle cladding of new construction (not including a rear addition) in the district shall be a red-brown brick with dimensions, textures, and colors similar to historic brick found in the district. Appropriate accent materials include cut stone and glazed brick.
3. The principle cladding of a rear addition shall be brick, glass, and/or fiber-cement panels.

*Also see windows, doors, awnings, sidewalks, and signage for material guidance specific to those features.*

## IV. REHABILITATION

### General Principles: Rehabilitation

1. Character defining features shall be more carefully reviewed than other features.
2. Historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. When replacement is necessary, replacement materials, texture, and dimensions shall be the same as the original feature.
3. At the time of designation in 2024, none of the existing windows or doors, on the designated properties, were early or original; therefore, replacement should follow the design guidelines for replacement windows and doors.



Glazed brick of white and green and stone details are character defining features of 2115 Elliston Place.

## IV. REHABILITATION

### A. Doors and Entryways

1. The design and dimensions of historic entryways, and related elements should be retained.
2. If replacement front doors are necessary, replacements should replicate the originals in design and dimension based on historic photographs or be full-light wood or metal doors.
3. Generally, new entryways should not be introduced to public facades unless needed for access to an upper floor or secondary building use. If a new entrance is needed, it should be compatible with the style and period of the building and have a design that is subordinate to the primary entrance.

*For rollup doors, see “Windows.”*



Doors and windows were replaced prior to designation but the dimension and design of entries should be retained.

## IV. REHABILITATION

### B. Windows

1. Replacement storefront windows should be full light and clear glass. Appropriate materials are wood or aluminum clad with a narrow profile.
2. Replacement upper level windows should be single or double-hung with a one-over-one design or a design to match historic photographs. Appropriate materials are wood or aluminum clad.
3. Window openings, surrounds, or other elements not original to a building should generally not be introduced to the front or visible sides of buildings.
4. Balcony rails and shutters are not appropriate window treatments.
5. Roll-up doors and windows are not appropriate on front or visible side elevations or on upper-levels.



## IV. REHABILITATION

### C: Building Walls & Architectural Features

1. Original walls, including wall plane, openings, recesses, detailing, masonry, and features should be retained. Deteriorated or damaged features should be repaired using historically appropriate materials. The removal of later wall covering to expose the original brick is encouraged.
2. Replacement of features that are missing or unable to be repaired may use modern materials if the material matches the original in color, design, texture, and workability.
3. Original walls, including wall planes, openings, recesses, detailing, and features should remain visible and not be concealed or obscured.
4. Decorative or functional detailing should not be added to buildings unless there is physical or photographic evidence that shows the detailing was original to the building.
5. Balconies should not be added to the historic buildings.
6. The use of detergent cleaners and chemical stain and paint removers to clean masonry or remove paint is appropriate under most conditions. Abrasive or high-pressure cleaning methods are destructive and should not be used.
7. Silicone-based water sealants are not recommended for use on historic masonry.



2201 Elliston Place (now a part of 2215)

## IV. REHABILITATION

8. Repointing with a hard (Portland cement) mortar is destructive to historic brick and masonry. Flexible mortar, made from mixing hydrated lime cement and natural sand, should be used when repointing is necessary.
9. Mortar used in repointing should match the historic mortar in width, depth, color, raking profile, composition, and texture.
10. Replacement bricks should be the same color, texture and size as those of the historic wall and should be laid, jointed, tooled, and mortared in the same manner.
11. Painting of unpainted stone and brick is not appropriate. In locations where masonry has already been painted, repainting, and color of paint shall not be reviewed.

### D. Roofs and Chimneys

1. Historic roof forms and related elements should be retained. (Roofing materials are not reviewed.)
2. Rooftop locations, concealed from pedestrian view, are appropriate places for mechanical systems.
3. Rooftops of the historic buildings shall not have any type of overhead coverings such as those that might be used for decks/patios.



## IV. REHABILITATION

### E. Mechanicals and Appurtenances

1. Do not damage, remove, cover, or obscure historic materials or features when installing mechanicals and appurtenances.
2. Generally, gutters and downspouts should not be located on the public façades of buildings. Such elements should be installed on the rear or side elevations of buildings, where possible.
3. The installation of gutters and downspouts should not result in the removal or obstruction of historic building elements.
4. Modern rooftop elements, such as mechanical units, ducts, solar panels, antennae, satellite dishes, and vents should not be easily seen from the public-right-of-way. Visible screens are generally not appropriate.
5. ATM & vending machines are not appropriate on the exterior of buildings but may be located on the interior, where they would not be reviewed.
6. Security cameras should be as small in scale as possible and located in minimally visible locations.
7. Audio/visual equipment is not appropriate on the outside of a building.

## IV. REHABILITATION

### F: Awnings

1. Canopies and marques are not appropriate.
2. Awnings should be installed to be no wider than the window or entrance it is covering and should not obstruct transoms, columns, cornices, or other architectural features.
3. Awnings may be fixed or retractable.
4. The most appropriate design for awnings is a shed form that does not exceed 3' in depth. Curved forms are not appropriate.
5. Awnings may contain graphics or signage, but may not be backlit. Spotlighting of awnings from above and lighting underneath that is oriented to the sidewalk is appropriate.
6. Opaque canvas, cotton duck, or similar natural materials are appropriate for awnings. Plastic or vinyl awnings should not be used.

*See design guidelines for signage if the awning includes signage or graphics.*

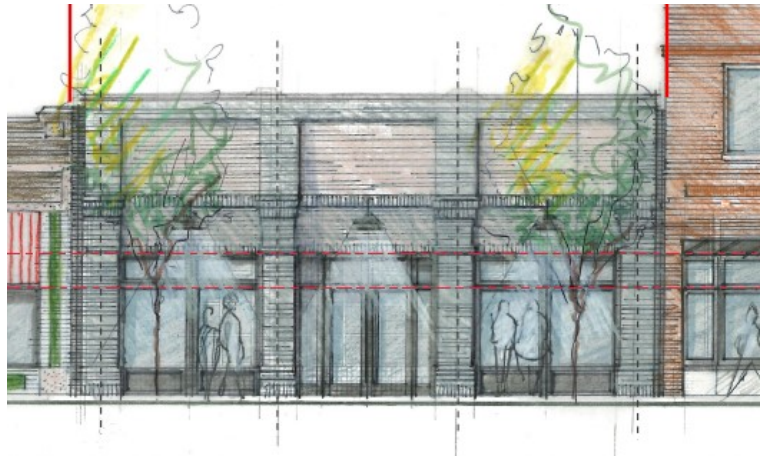


Examples of awnings in the district.

## IV. REHABILITATION

### G: Building and Site Illumination

1. If exterior building lighting is installed, it should be concealed or simple and unobtrusive in design, materials, and relationship to other façade or elevation elements.
2. Light should be directed toward the façade instead of outward. Building facades may be illuminated through downlights or simple gooseneck lamps.
3. Lighting may be used to highlight architectural features or to illuminate the sidewalk or entrances. Lighting that seeks to frame the building, frame architectural features, or wash a building in light is inappropriate.
4. Illumination should be clear (day light) light which does not distort the color of building materials and finishes.



Gooseneck lighting is an appropriate way to illuminate facades or awnings. *Image from Southeast Ventures/Giarratana LLC.*

## V. NEW CONSTRUCTION-INFILL

### General Principles: Infill Construction

1. The public facades – street related elevations – of proposals for new buildings shall be more carefully reviewed than other facades.
2. New construction should be consistent with existing buildings along a street in terms of height, scale, setback, and rhythm; relationship of materials, texture, details, and color; roof shape; orientation; and proportion and rhythm of openings.
3. Because new buildings usually relate to an established pattern and rhythm of existing buildings, the dominance of that pattern and rhythm must be respected and not disrupted.
4. New buildings must be constructed to a height that is compatible with the height of adjacent buildings.
5. Also see “Rehabilitation” and “Materials” for additional guidance on new construction.

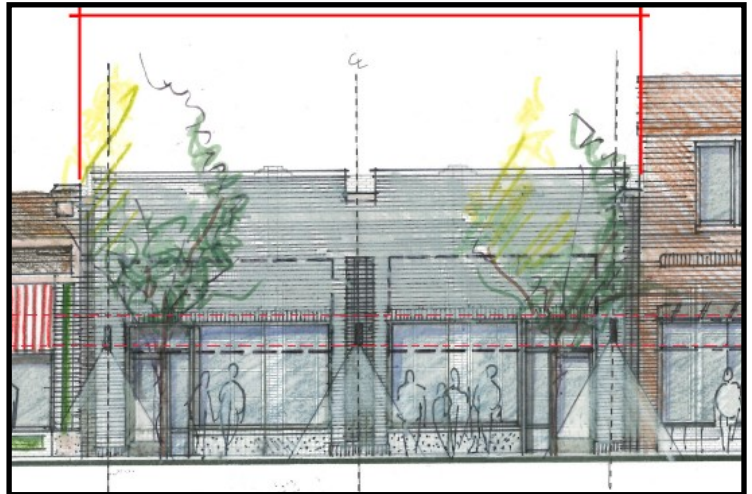
## **V. NEW CONSTRUCTION-INFILL**

### **A. Height & Scale**

1. Maximum height is two-stories and 28' for the first 40' of the building's depth. Maximum height beyond 40' is seven stories and 90'.
2. The size of a new building, its mass in relation to open spaces, and its windows, doors, openings, and appurtenances should be visually compatible with the surrounding buildings.

### **B: Setback and Rhythm of Spacing**

1. The setback from the street and side property lines established by adjacent or contiguous buildings shall be maintained.



Rendering of appropriate infill on a vacant lot. Permit issued prior to the establishment of the overlay. From Southeast Venture/Giarratana LLC.

### **C: Form & Roof Shape**

1. The roofs of new buildings shall flat behind a parapet wall.

### **D: Proportion and Rhythm of Openings**

1. The relationship of width to height of windows and doors and the rhythm of solids-to-voids in new buildings shall be visually compatible with the surrounding historic buildings.
2. A clear primary entry with storefront should be defined. Doorways on primary facades shall appear similar to those used historically. The primary entrance may be defined with an awning.
3. Door and window openings should be recessed on masonry buildings, as they are traditionally, rather than flush with the rest of the wall.

## V. NEW CONSTRUCTION-INFILL

### E: Guidelines: Orientation

1. The site orientation of new buildings shall be consistent with that of adjacent buildings and shall be visually compatible.
2. Primary building entrances shall be oriented to the primary street.

### F: Additions to Existing Buildings

1. Additions should not obscure or contribute to the loss of historic character-defining features or materials.
2. Rear additions may take place 40' behind the front wall of the historic building and may be a total of six stories or 90', not including elevator overruns, and as measured from front sidewalk.
3. Rear additions should be compatible in design, proportion and materials with the 2024 addition constructed in the center of the block.
4. Rooftop additions are not appropriate.



Side view of rear addition that received permits prior to the overlay.  
From Southeast Venture/Giarratana LLC.

## V. NEW CONSTRUCTION

### G: Outdoor Cafes

1. Sidewalk cafes must meet the public right-of-way encroachment requirements as required by the city ordinance and cannot cause a sight distance issue or obstruct the sidewalk/pedestrian path of travel. The encroachment review/approval process begins in the Nashville Department of Transportation Permits Office.
2. The following are not reviewed:
  - Furnishings and features that are not attached to anything and do not exceed a height of 3' from sidewalk.
  - Portable features such as heaters, fans and hostess stands that are removed at the close of business each day.
  - Table top lighting and lighting beneath temporary table umbrellas shall not be reviewed. (Please see building illumination for all other lighting.)
3. Outdoor café elements should not have temporary nor permanent covers, ceilings, roofs, or walls taller than 3' from sidewalk.
4. Although barriers for café areas that are less than 3' in height are not reviewed, it is recommended that they be metal, wood, glass, or heavy acrylic and not be chain link, thin plastic/vinyl/PVC, fabric, chicken wire, or cyclone fencing.
5. Permanent installations of electronic equipment, signage, and entertainment devices such as a television screens, audio speakers and equipment are not appropriate in outdoor cafes.





## VI. SIGNAGE

### INTRODUCTORY PROVISIONS

#### A. 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.

- 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 non-conforming signs as well as the amount and locations of on-premise signage to be allocated to each tenant under the new plan.

#### B. Right-of-way Encroachments

Where a sign is proposed to encroach into the public right-of-way an application shall be made with the Nashville Department of Transportation in addition to the sign permit application with the MHZC.

#### C. Non-Conforming Signs

Non-conforming signs 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. In no instance shall there be an increase in the degree of non-conformity. All new panels shall conform to all illumination standards therein.

#### D: Sign Types

##### 1. Examples of inappropriate sign types:

- Billboards
- Changeable copy signage
- Skyline signs
- Signage cut into historic masonry

##### 2. Sign Types Not Reviewed

- Signage located on the interior of a building or attached to the inside of glass windows.
- Temporary signage in place 1 time for 30 days or less, such as real estate, construction, 'opening soon,' or event-related signage.

#### E: Materials

##### 1. Signage Materials

Examples of appropriate materials include:

- Rigid, weatherable material such as hard plastic, wood, MDO plywood, aluminum, steel, PVC, glass, fiberglass, and/or Plexiglass
- Fabric and canvas



## VI. SIGNAGE

### F. Building Sign: Wall Signs

#### 1. Description

- a. A wall sign is a building sign that is attached flat to, or mounted away from but parallel to, the building façade.

#### 2. General Provisions

- a. A wall sign shall be located between the top of the storefront and the bottom of the window sills of the top floor for two story buildings or at least 3' from the top of the parapet for one-story buildings.
- b. No portion of a wall sign may extend above the roof line or above a parapet wall of a building with a flat roof.
- c. A wall sign cannot cover or hang in front of windows or architectural details.
- d. Wall signs should not exceed 2" in depth.



Example of wall sign from 2007.

## VI. SIGNAGE

### G. Building Sign: Painted

#### 1. Description

Painted signs are building signs that are painted on the surface of the building. Painted signs generally consists of painted lettering for the purpose of advertising the business located in the same building.

#### 2. General Provisions

- a. All painting of masonry, whether for signage, to change the color of the building, or for artwork shall be reviewed by the MHZC. (See also section II.C.)
- b. Painted signs and murals may be added to rear or side elevations and should not cover transoms, columns, cornices, decorative elements, openings and architectural features or require the enclosure of openings.
- c. Generally, painted signage should not have lighting; however, if lighting is necessary, there should be no more than two gooseneck lights or another type of light that can be hidden by an existing architectural feature.



Example of painted signs at 2215 Elliston Place.

## VI. SIGNAGE

### H. Building Sign: Window Sign

#### 1. Description

Signage that is painted onto or adhered to the exterior side of window and door glazing. (Signage installed inside or attached to the inside of the glazing of a window is not reviewed.)

#### 2. General Provisions

- a. Window signs shall not exceed 20% of the window surface. Signage that is oriented to only the top, only the bottom, or only the center of the window is encouraged. Paper, banners, or graphic films that obscure views inside a building are not appropriate window signage. The intent is to maintain transparency into the building while providing on-site business or building identification.
- b. Window signs may be painted, gold leafed, or thin vinyl adhered to the inside or outside of the glass. Etched glass is also appropriate.

## VI. SIGNAGE

### I. Building Sign: Awning Sign

#### 1. Description

Awning Signs are graphics and symbols painted, sewn, or otherwise adhered to the awning material as an integrated part of the awning itself.

#### 2. General Provisions

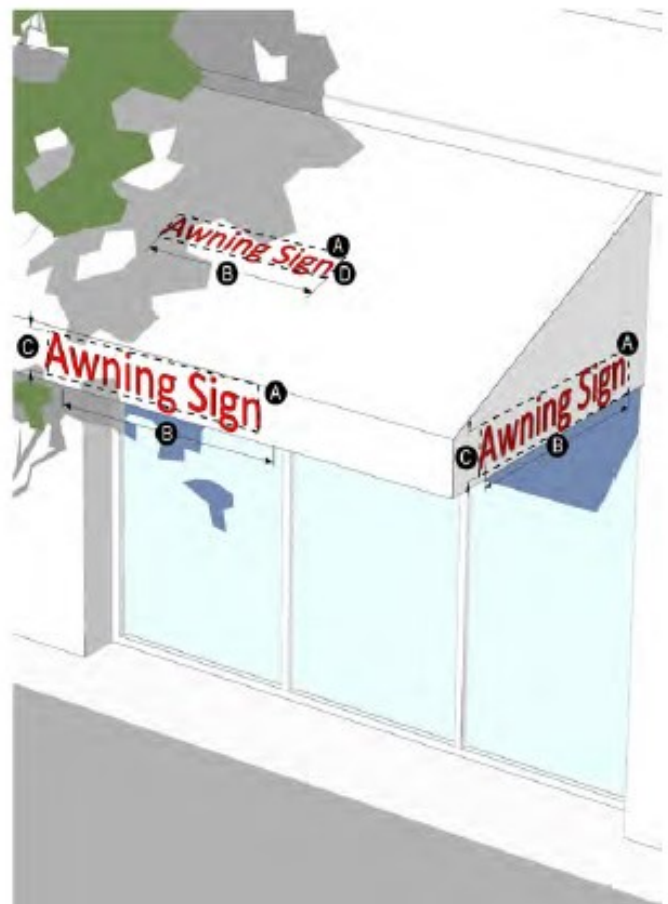
- Only awnings at the ground level may contain signs.
- A maximum of one sign is allowed per awning face.
- A sign on an awning may only be externally illuminated. (Sidewalk lighting under the awning is appropriate if it does not create internal lighting for the awning signage.)
- An awning sign cannot cover architectural details.
- See the Awnings section of the design guidelines for additional information on the design of awnings.

#### 3. Design Standards

- Overall area allocation (max) (see allocation of sign area)
- Sign Width (max % of awning width/depth) 75%
- Height of text and graphics on valance (max) 2 feet
- Max area of sloping plane covered by sign 50%



Example of awing signs from 2007.





## VI. SIGNAGE

### J. Building Sign: Shingle Sign

#### 1. Description

A shingle sign is a small building sign that projects outward, typically at a ninety degree angle, and hangs from a bracket or support that is located over or near a building entrance.

#### 2. General Provisions

- A shingle sign shall be located below the window sills of the second story.
- A shingle sign shall not be internally illuminated.
- A shingle sign cannot cover windows or architectural details.
- The edges of a shingle sign shall not include signage or lighting and should be painted a dark, solid, unobtrusive color.
- Shingle signs shall not spin or have moving elements.

#### 3. Design Standards

- Area (max) 9 square feet
- Height (max) 3 feet
- Spacing from façade (min) 6 inches
- Width (max) 3 feet
- Depth (max) 6 inches



## VI. SIGNAGE

### K. Guidelines: Building Sign-Projecting Sign

#### Description

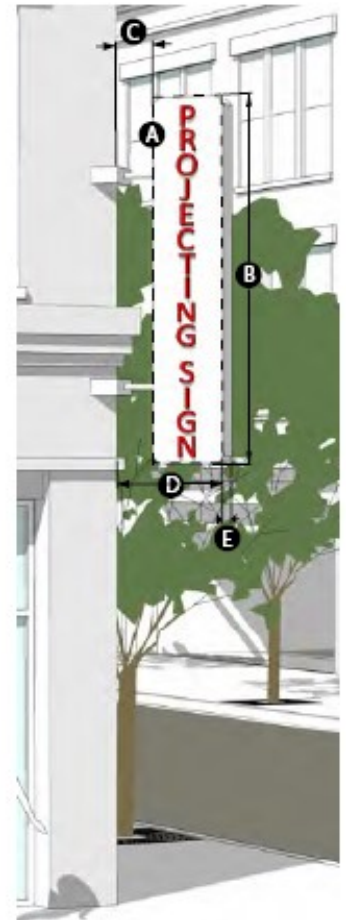
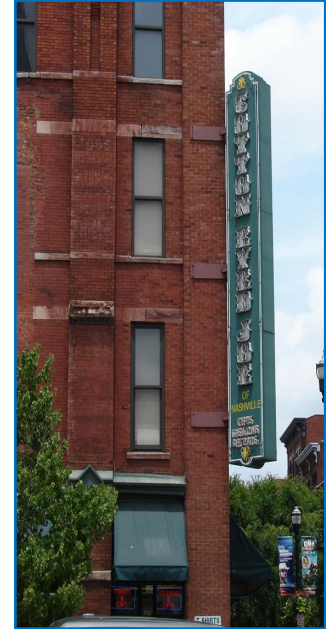
A projecting sign is a type of building sign that projects outward from the façade, typically at a ninety degree angle.

#### General Provisions

- A projecting sign may only be located on rear additions. (During the district's period of significance the only projecting sign was the Elliston Place Soda Shop.)
- A projecting sign shall be located below the windows sills of the top 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.
- A projecting sign cannot cover windows or architectural details.

#### Design Standards

- Overall area allocation (max) 45 SF
- Projection Width (max) 1 foot
- Depth of Cabinet (max) 2 inch or 18 inches for internally lighted or neon signage



## **VI. SIGNAGE**

### **L. Signage Illumination**

Illumination of signs shall be in accordance with the following requirements:

#### **1. External Illumination**

- a. External light sources shall be placed close to and directed onto the sign and shall be shielded to minimize glare into the street, sidewalks, or onto adjacent properties.
- b. Projecting light fixtures used for externally illuminated signs shall be simple and unobtrusive in appearance. They should not obscure the sign.



## VII. DEFINITIONS

**Addition:** *New construction that increases the footprint, height, or building envelope of an existing structure.*

**Alteration:** *A replacement or change in a building material; the addition or elimination of any architectural element of a building; a repair that reconstructs any part of an existing building; construction of, or change to, an appurtenance.*

**Appropriate:** *Suitable for, or compatible with, a property or district, based on accepted standard and techniques for historic preservation.*

**Appurtenances:** *Fences, walls, paving, streetlights, curbs, gravel, signs, satellite dishes, fountains, mailboxes, and other accessory or adjunct permanent built features related to a building or streetscape and those features or structures installed for more than 30 days in a calendar year.*

**Awning:** *An awning is a secondary covering attached to the exterior wall of a building without additional supports and is located above a window or entrance. It is typically a metal frame covered in canvas.*

**Canopy:** *An overhead flat roof covering located above an entrance and constructed of rigid materials such as metal or wood. It may or may not also include structural poles, signage, and lighting.*

**Certificate of Appropriateness:** *See Preservation Permit.*

**Character-Defining Features:** *Individual physical elements of any structure, site, street, or district that contribute to its overall historic or architectural character, and for which it is recognized as historically or architecturally significant.*

**Demolition:** *The tearing down of a building in whole or in part.*



## VII. DEFINITIONS

**Elevation:** *A scaled drawing that illustrates the view of a side of a building.*

**Facade:** *An exterior side of a building.*

**Historic:** *A structure or site, usually constructed during the period of significance, which possesses historical or architectural significance, based on the criteria for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.*

**Mural:** *A piece of artwork that does not provide advertising and that is adhered onto an exterior façade. Typically murals are painted but may also be paper, cloth, vinyl, or plastic adhered to a wall.*

**New Construction:** *Any freestanding structure on a lot constructed after the designation of the historic preservation zoning district.*

**Non-Historic:** *A structure or site, usually constructed after the period of significance, which does not possess historical or architectural significance, based on the criteria for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.*

**Orientation:** *The directional expression of a building's front façade.*

**Period of Significance:** *Refers to the span of time during which significant events and activities occurred. Events and associations with historic properties are finite; most properties have a clearly definable period of significance.*

**Preservation Permit:** *A legal document issued by the Metropolitan Historic Zoning Commission confirming review and approval of work to be done on property within the boundaries of an historic or conservation zoning district. A preservation permit is required before getting a building permit. Previously called Certificate of Appropriateness.*

## VII. DEFINITIONS

**Public Facade:** *The exterior faces of buildings that front public streets.*

**Public Right of Way:** *A publicly owned and maintained street or walkway.*

**Raceways:** *A three-sided rectangular box that functions as a mounting mechanism and electronic component enclosure for a wall mounted sign.*

**Reconstruction:** *Construction of an accurate replica of a historic building or portion thereof, based on physical, pictorial or documentary evidence.*

**Rehabilitation:** *The act or process of making possible a compatible use for a property through repair, alterations, and additions while preserving those portions or features which convey its historical, cultural, or architectural values.*

**Repair:** *See alteration.*

**Sequential Lighting:** *Illumination of sculptural elements, letters, or other sign parts in individual light bulbs, neon tubing, or neon-like elements and illuminated in sequence and from sequential positions to give the appearance of motion of that element.*

**Sail Sign/Wind Banner/Feather Sign:** *A freestanding or mounted sign that is supported by a flexible or semi-flexible full or partial frame within which is a material constructed of vinyl paper or other wind resistant and moveable materials.*

**Shall:** *What is required.*

**Should:** *What is required unless physical facts of the lot or building would result in an alternative being more appropriate.*



*Example of sign with exposed raceway.*

Sunnyside in Sevier Park  
1113 Kirkwood Avenue  
Nashville, TN 37204  
Phone: 615-862-7970

*The Metropolitan Historic Zoning Commission reviews applications to create new historic overlay districts and reviews and approves preservation permits in historic and conservation districts for new construction, alterations, additions, repair and demolition. For design guidelines, permit applications, and meeting information, visit us at [www.nashville.gov/mhc](http://www.nashville.gov/mhc).*

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