



Staff Report

Knoxville Historic Zoning Commission

File Number: 8-E-26-HZ

Meeting: 8/20/2026
Applicant: Benjamin Booher, Allen Sign Company
Owner: City of Knoxville

Property Information

Location: 810 Clinch Ave. **Parcel ID:** 94 M C 006
District: Sunsphere Individual H Landmark
Zoning: DK (Downtown Knoxville)
Description: Sunsphere, 1982.
266-foot tall hexagonal steel truss structure, topped with a 75-foot tall gold-colored glass sphere.

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends approval of Certificate 8-E-26-HZ as submitted.

Description of Work

Level II Installation of Signage

New free-standing monolith sign. Sign will measure 96" tall by 60" wide by 18" deep and feature a 48" by 36", full-color, high-resolution EMC sign. Vinyl-clad sign features acrylic push-through letters on the front and side. Sign will be located on the east side of the Sunsphere, near the entry to the Visitors Center.

Comments

1. The Sunsphere at 810 Clinch Ave is a local historic landmark. The zoning overlay includes the area surrounding the Sunsphere. The surrounding property is zoned DK-B (Boulevard subdistrict). Without the historic zoning overlay, the sign would be subject to Design Review Board approval based on the illumination and the size.
2. The applicable design guidelines are the Secretary of the Interiors Standards for Rehabilitation. Properties with the SOI Standards as the applicable guidelines, such as the Millers Building, reference Preservation Brief 25 for new signs.
3. Guidelines recommend that new signs respect the size, scale, and design of the historic resource, using compatible materials. The sign intends to provide information about the Sunsphere and Visitors Center via a changeable Electronic Message Center (EMC) within the overall plinth. The overall sign is appropriate for the scale of the Sunsphere. While vinyl and acrylic are not necessarily appropriate for a historic building, the sign uses compatible colors and functions as a standalone feature, separated from the Sunsphere by a railing.
4. The sign is not attached to the Sunsphere or the Visitors Center and could be removed without effect on the historic structure.

Applicable Design Guidelines

Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings.

9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and 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 and 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.

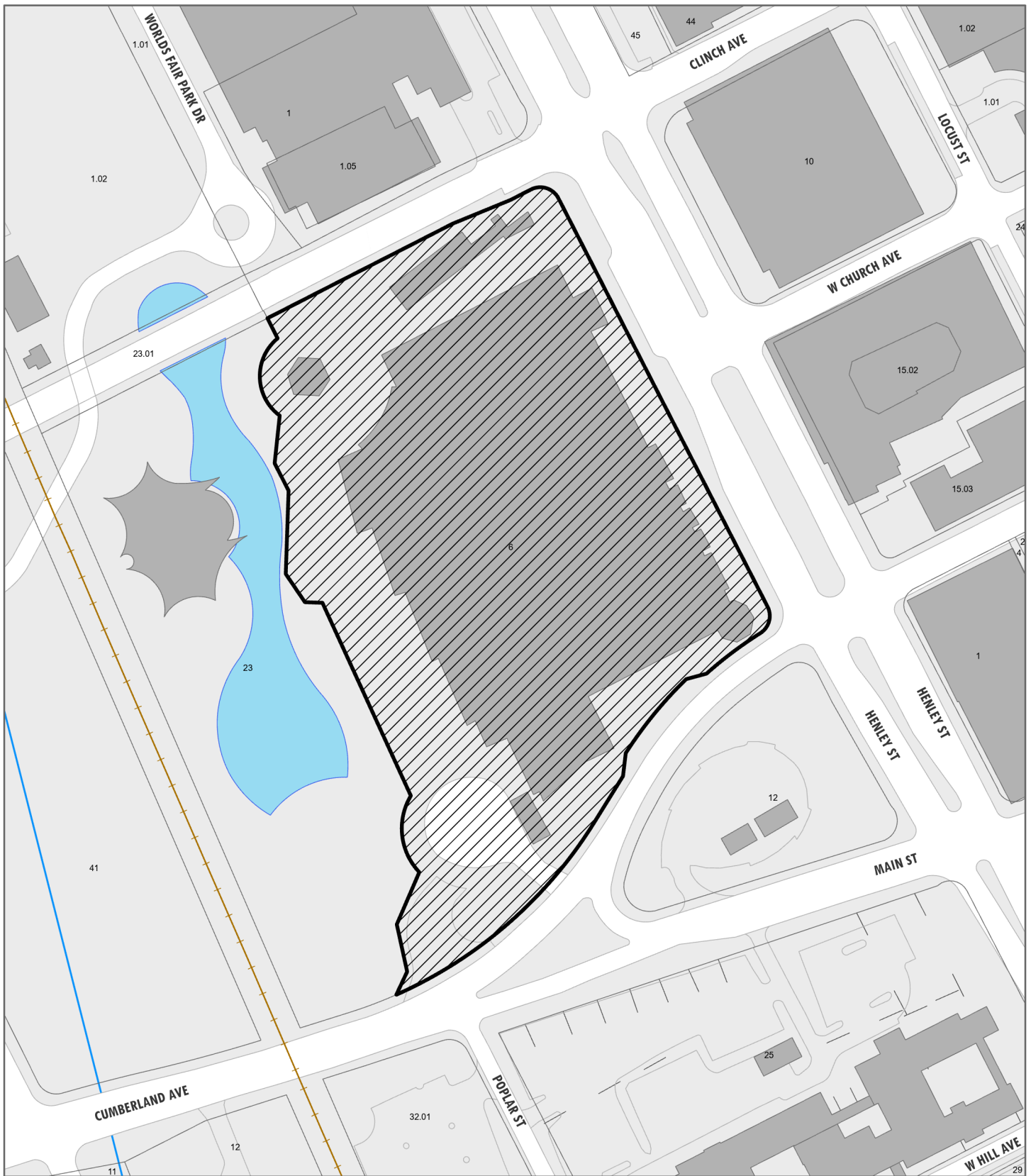
1. Signs should be viewed as part of an overall graphics system for the building. They do not have to do all the "work" by themselves. The building's form, name and outstanding features, both decorative and functional, also support the advertising function of a sign. Signs should work with the building, rather than against it.

2. New signs should respect the size, scale and design of the historic building. Often features or details of the building will suggest a motif for new signs.

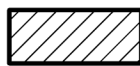
3. Sign placement is important: new signs should not obscure significant features of the historic building. (Signs above a storefront should fit within the historic signboard, for example.)

4. New signs should also respect neighboring buildings. They should not shadow or overpower adjacent structures.

5. Sign materials should be compatible with those of the historic building. Materials characteristic of the building's period and style, used in contemporary designs, can form effective new signs.



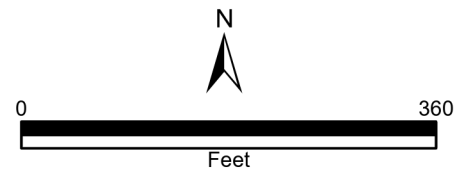
8-E-26-HZ
APPLICATION FOR CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS



810 Clinch Ave. 37902
 Sunsphere Individual H
 Landmark

Original Print Date: 7/30/2026
 Knoxville/Knox County Planning -- Historic Zoning Commission

Petitioner: Bnejamin Booher, Allen Sign Company



Size: 96" x 60"

Material: Aluminum

Quantity: 1

Comments: Embedded EMC Panel

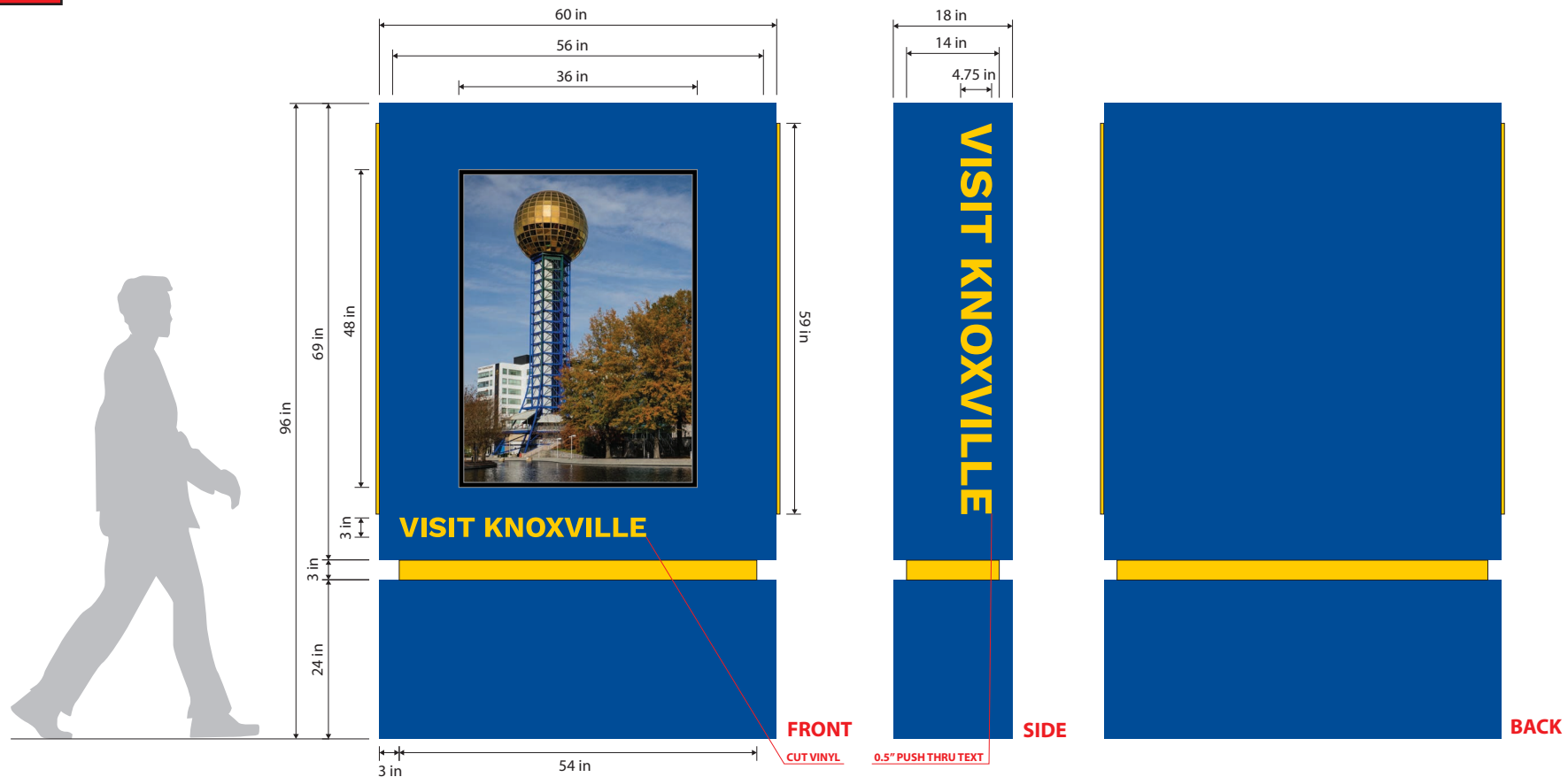
Work Order #: 65974TA

☐ Digital print

☐ Vinyl

☒ Other

file location: 65974TA_Visit Knoxville_Monolith Signage

OPTION B

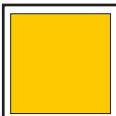
1qty - **OPTION B** - 96" x 60" x 24" Deep monolith sign painted PMS 2945C with a 2" deep recess painted PMS 116C

1qty - 48" x 36" EMC display panel, high resolution, full color, remote programmable.

1qty - 4.75" x 59" x 0.5" Deep push-thru acrylic text on both sides of signage with 3630-015L translucent vinyl.

1qty - 751 White Cut vinyl applied first surface to face of signage.

1qty - Installation



3M 3630-015L
PMS 116 C



PMS 2945 C



Design Sales Sales Design Design PROD. Print/Cut App. App. QC

MGMT. Route Route Plastic Plastic Metal Metal Paint Paint Assem. Assem. QC QC Crating

*By initialing here you confirm not only that the previous step is up to ASC quality standards, but also our part is complete and up to ASC quality standards & is ready to proceed.

Client: Visit Knoxville

Date: 6/30/26 Price: \$ 10,700.00 - **job total**

Ph/Email: Designer: Nathan Lanning Rev: B Page: 3 of 5

Title: Monolith Signage

Approved By: Date:

ALLEN SIGN
SOUTH
573-3524
240B CHAPMAN HWY.
FAX 579-0356

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OPTION B



EXISTING VIEW



PROPOSED VIEW



PROPOSED ILLUMINATION

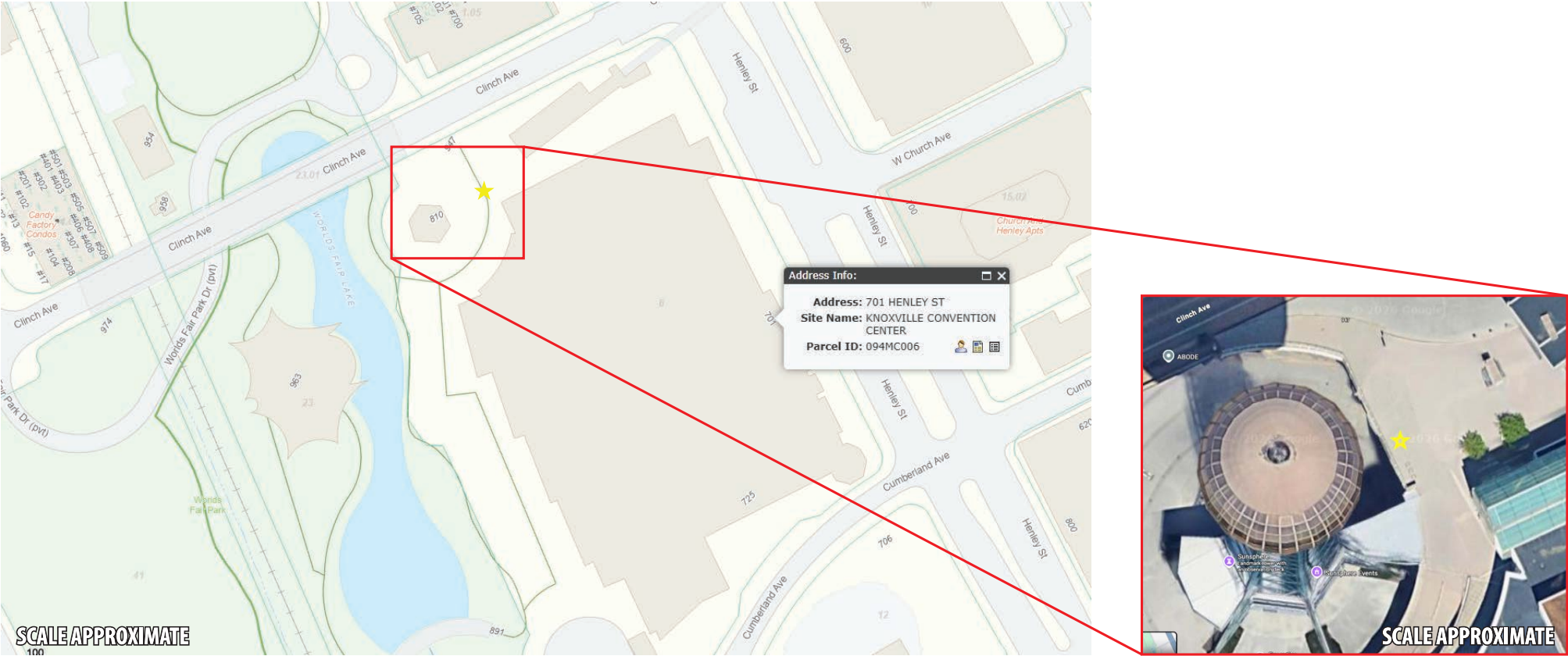
○ Digital print

○ Vinyl

● Other

file location: 65974TA_Visit Knoxville_Monolith Signage

SITE MAP



Design Sales Sales Design Design PROD. Print/Cut App. App. QC

MGMT. Route Route Plastic Plastic Metal Metal Paint Paint Assem. Assem. QC QC Crating

Client: Visit Knoxville
Ph/Email:
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Date: 6/30/26 Price: \$ 10,700.00 - job total
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