

File Number: 11-B-25-DT

Meeting: 11/19/2025
Applicant: Irina Stevens Colite
Owner: Mohamed Abbas Walnut Hotel LLC
Project: Walnut Building

Property Information

Location: 706 Walnut St. **Parcel ID:** 94 L G 028
Zoning: DK-G (Downtown Knoxville, Grid Subdistrict)
Description:

c.1955, nine-story commercial building with multiple recessed storefronts at ground level. Exterior features brick masonry cladding and horizontal concrete fins between stories.

Description of Work

Level I Minor Alteration of an Existing Building/Structure, Sign

Installation of two internally illuminated wall signs, two internally illuminated projecting signs, and one non-illuminated wall sign. The illuminated wall signs feature blue and white square-shaped logos and white channel letters with 5" returns. The double-sided illuminated projecting signs have a depth of 1'-10" and primarily include white logos and texts on a blue background.

Walnut Avenue Elevation: A projecting sign measuring 2'-8.3" wide by 11'-7.13" tall (31.21 sq ft) will be installed with lag bolts on the fourth-story brick wall on the right side. The sign will be 32'-0" above the ground. Additionally, a non-illuminated wall sign, measuring 1'-5" wide by 1'-6" tall, will be installed on the southernmost column of the ground-floor storefront, at a height of 4'-3" above the grade.

Church Avenue Elevation: A projecting sign measuring 4'-7" wide by 2'-8.5" tall (12.41 sq ft) is to be installed with lag bolts at the Walnut Street corner of the building. The sign will be 11'-10" above grade. In addition, an internally illuminated wall sign measuring 18'-7.22" wide by 3'-6.5" tall (65.88 sq ft) will be mounted with studs on the wall between the second- and third-story windows.

East Elevation: An internally illuminated wall sign measuring 13'-11.31" wide by 16'-0.1" tall (223.19 sq ft) to be mounted with studs on the wall between the eighth and ninth stories. The top of the sign will be aligned with the top of the ninth-story windows.

Applicable Design Guidelines

Downtown Design Guidelines

B. The Traditional Grid District

1. Recommended Signs

These recommendations for signs in the traditional grid district recognize that certain types of signs are more

pedestrian-friendly and should be encouraged within the grid district.

- 1a. Wall signs on sign boards that are above a transom or first story and mounted flush to the building façade.
 - 1b. Projecting signs of modest size (9 square feet, maximum); a larger sign must be approved by the board.
-

Comments

Project History: The Design Review Board reviewed the exterior rehabilitation and signage proposal for this project in April 2022 (4-E-22-DT), with two revisions for the exterior rehabilitation (6-B-23-DT and 12-A-23-DT). The previous sign proposal included two wall signs on the Walnut Street Elevation, and one wall sign and one projecting sign on the Church Avenue elevation. The applicant is now proposing three wall signs and two projecting signs, and the location and size of these differ from those approved previously.

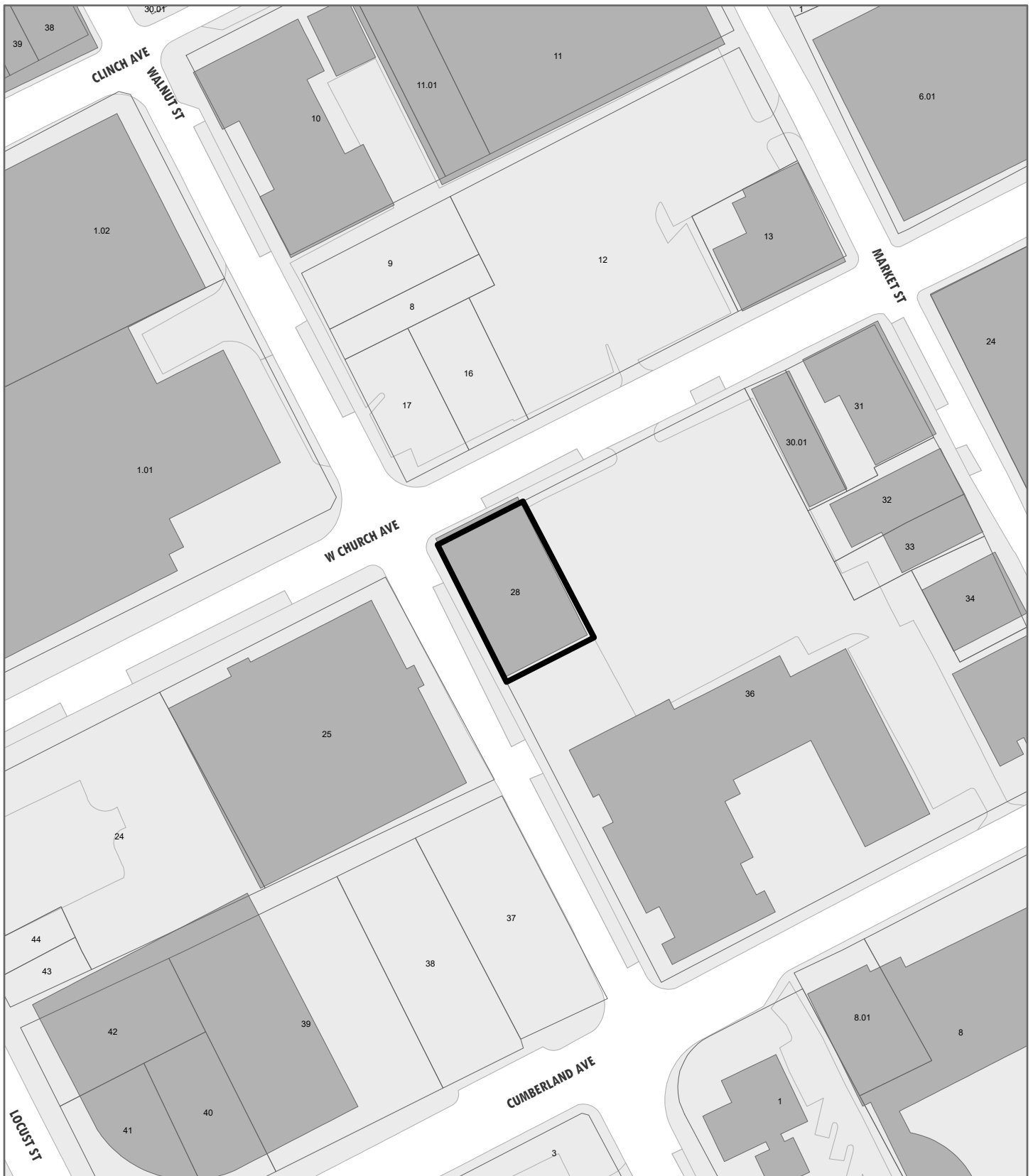
Staff Analysis: Overall, the proposal meets the intent of the design guidelines by providing the recommended sign types for the grid subdistrict. While the proposed signs are somewhat larger in scale, they are proportionate to the building and the wall surfaces where they will be placed. The guidelines recommend projecting signs with a maximum size of 9 sq ft; however, the Board has the authority to approve larger signs. The previous approval also included large wall signs.

The plans do not include any sectional drawings highlighting the mounting and illumination method. These details should be provided for review. The Board should also discuss the width of the projecting signs.

Recommendation

Staff recommends approval of Certificate 11-B-22-DT, subject to one condition:

- 1) Submit details of the internal illumination for review and approval by Planning staff.



11-B-25-DT

APPLICATION FOR CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS

**DESIGN
REVIEW
BOARD**

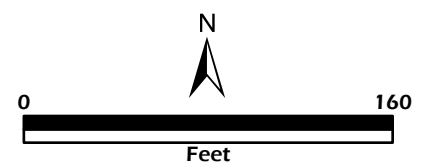


706 Walnut St.

Level 1: Sign; Level 2: Addition to an existing building/structure

Original Print Date: 11/7/2025 Revised:
Knoxville/Knox County Planning · Design Review Board

Petitioner: Irina Stevens Colite





DESIGN REVIEW REQUEST

- ☒ DOWNTOWN DESIGN (DK)
☐ HISTORIC ZONING (H)
☐ INFILL HOUSING (IH)

Irina Stevens

Applicant

10/27/2025

11/19/2025

Date Filed

Meeting Date (if applicable)

File Number(s)

CORRESPONDENCE

All correspondence related to this application should be directed to the approved contact listed below.

- ☐ Owner ☒ Contractor ☐ Engineer ☐ Architect/Landscape Architect

Irina Stevens

Colite

Name

Company

5 Technology Circle

Columbia

SC

29203

Address

City

State

Zip

803-521-5777

istevens@colite.com

Phone

Email

CURRENT PROPERTY INFO

Mohamed Abbas / Walnut Hotel LLC

625 S Gay St., STE 110, Knoxville, TN 37902

631-747-9231

Owner Name (if different from applicant)

Owner Address

Owner Phone

706 Walnut Street, Knoxville, TN 37902

94 L G 028

Property Address

Parcel ID

Downtown Design, the Grid District

DK-G

Neighborhood

Zoning

AUTHORIZATION

Samiul Haque

Samiul Haque

10/27/25

Staff Signature

Please Print

Date

Irina Stevens

Irina Stevens

10/27/2025

Applicant Signature

Please Print

Date

REQUEST

DOWNTOWN DESIGN

Level 1:

- ☒ Signs ☐ Alteration of an existing building/structure

Level 2:

- ☐ Addition to an existing building/structure

Level 3:

- ☐ Construction of new building/structure ☐ Site design, parking, plazas, landscape

See required Downtown Design attachment for more details.

- ☒ Brief description of work: To install exterior signage identifying the hotel as rendered in the attached site document.

HISTORIC ZONING

Level 1:

- ☐ Signs ☐ Routine repair of siding, windows, roof, or other features, in-kind; Installation of gutters, storm windows/doors

Level 2:

- ☐ Major repair, removal, or replacement of architectural elements or materials ☐ Additions and accessory structures

Level 3:

- ☐ Construction of a new primary building

Level 4:

- ☐ Relocation of a contributing structure ☐ Demolition of a contributing structure

See required Historic Zoning attachment for more details.

- ☐ Brief description of work: _____

INFILL HOUSING

Level 1:

- ☐ Driveways, parking pads, access point, garages or similar facilities ☐ Subdivisions

Level 2:

- ☐ Additions visible from the primary street ☐ Changes to porches visible from the primary street

Level 3:

- ☐ New primary structure
☐ Site built ☐ Modular ☐ Multi-Sectional

See required Infill Housing attachment for more details.

- ☐ Brief description of work: _____

STAFF USE ONLY

ATTACHMENTS

- ☐ Downtown Design Checklist
☐ Historic Zoning Design Checklist
☐ Infill Housing Design Checklist

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

- ☐ Property Owners / Option Holders

Level 1: \$50 • **Level 2:** \$100 • **Level 3:** \$250 • **Level 4:** \$500

FEE 1:

1001

\$50.00

FEE 2:

FEE 3:

TOTAL:

\$50.00

Paid 10/28/25
DD



*Holiday Inn
Express*

— BY IHG —

HIEX-TN002-R01

Inn Code: TYSWS

706 Walnut St.
Knoxville, TN 37902
United States of America

New Construction
Quote #: 85662
Sales Order #: 82105

**NOT PRODUCTION READY
THIS DOCUMENT IS FOR VISUAL PURPOSES ONLY**

SITE PLAN



SIGN INVENTORY

L#	EXISTING	RECOMMENDATION	QTY
1A	None	Letterset	1
2	None	Letterset	1
3	None	Blade Sign	1
4	None	Wall Panel	1
5	None	Blade Sign	1

Surveyor: -

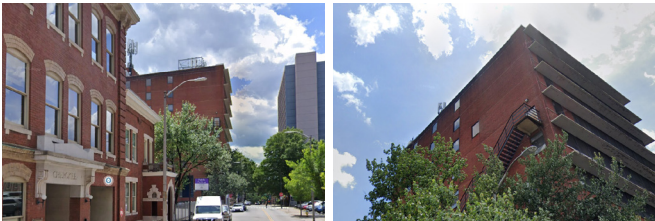
LOCATION 1 - HIEX-LTR-712-IL-EX-192H

Existing: None



SURVEY NOTES:

CONTEXT PHOTOS:



Recommendation: Letterset



RECOMMENDATION DETAILS:

Quantity	Sign Sq.Ft.	Illumination
1	223.19	Internal
Mounting		Fabrication
Studs		HIEX-28-CL-S-W

LOCATION SCOPE:

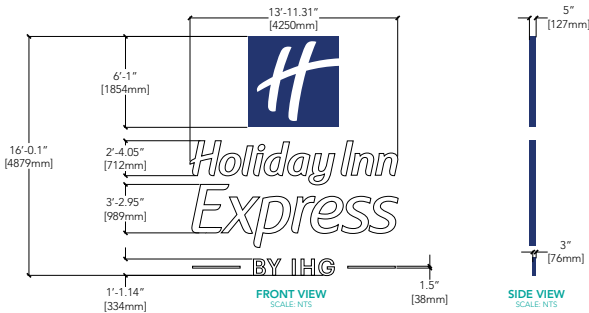
Install new sign.

Access inside of interior walls where signs will hang is required at the time of installation. Contact your project manager if you are interested in a pre-wire. All illuminated signage require the client's electrician to furnish and install a complete photocell and/or time clock to allow signs to operate at designated intervals. However, sign shall never operate on a 24/7 basis.

Client Responsibility:

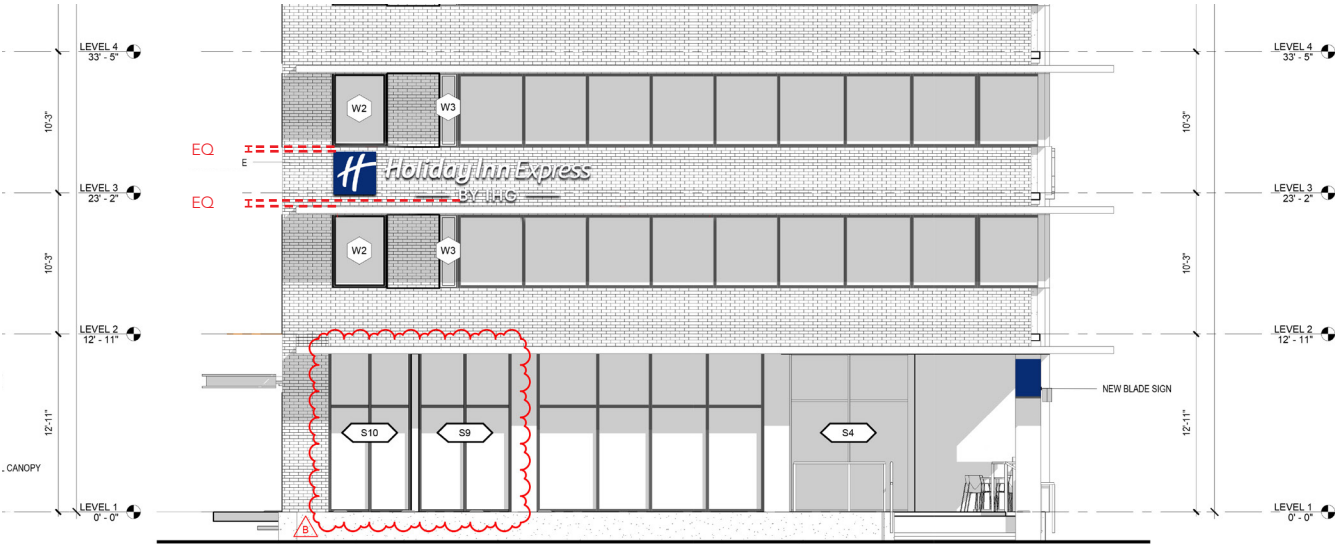
- 1 - Provide access inside interior walls
- 2 - Perform final connection

SIGN DETAIL:



LOCATION 2 - HIEX-LTR-741-IL-EX-043H

Recommendation: Letterset



SURVEY NOTES:
Church Avenue

RECOMMENDATION DETAILS:

Quantity	Sign Sq.Ft.	Illumination
1	65.88	Internal
Mounting		Fabrication
Studs		HIEX-18-CL-L-W

LOCATION SCOPE:

Install new sign. Per site plan, wall color is TBD, client to confirm prior to production.

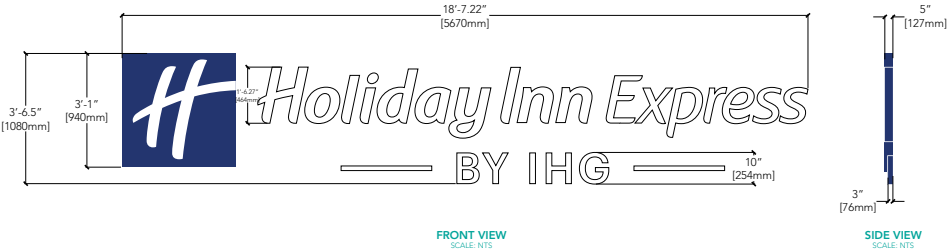
Access inside of interior walls where signs will hang is required at the time of installation. Contact your project manager if you are interested in a pre-wire. All illuminated signage require the client's electrician to furnish and install a complete photocell and/or time clock to allow signs to operate at designated intervals. However, sign shall never operate on a 24/7 basis.

Client Responsibility:

- 1 - Provide access inside interior walls
- 2 - Perform final connection

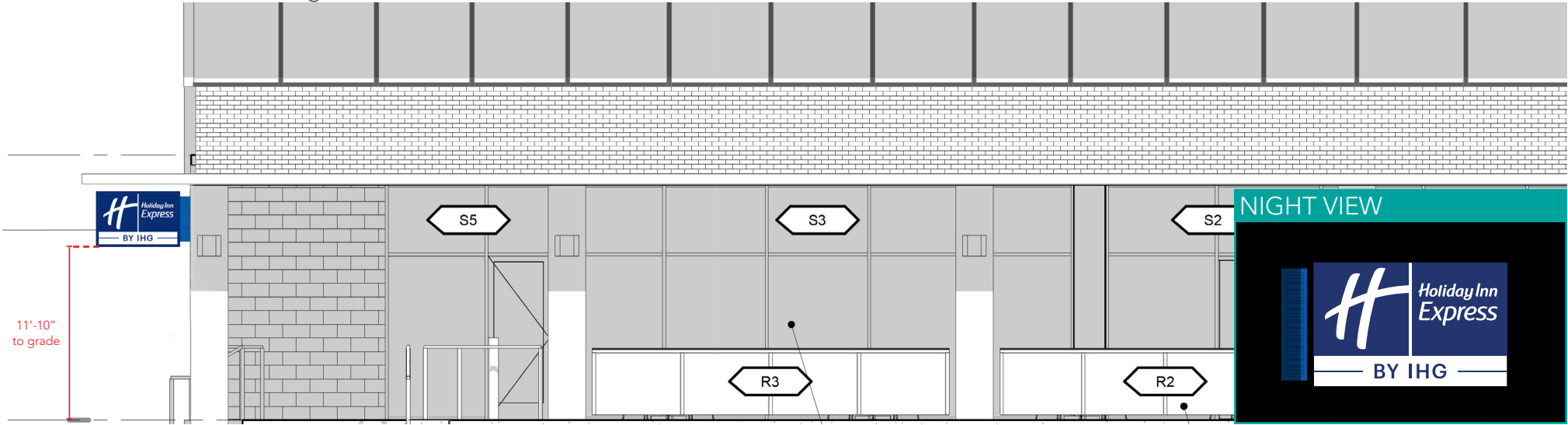
NEED MORE INFORMATION PRIOR TO PRODUCTION: SEE NOTES

SIGN DETAIL:



LOCATION 3 - HIEX-BLD-701-IL-DF-033H

Recommendation: Blade Sign



SURVEY NOTES:
Walnut Street

RECOMMENDATION DETAILS:			
Quantity	Sign Sq.Ft.	Illumination	Face
1	12.41	Internal	Double
Mounting		Fabrication	
Lag Bolts		XWP-11	

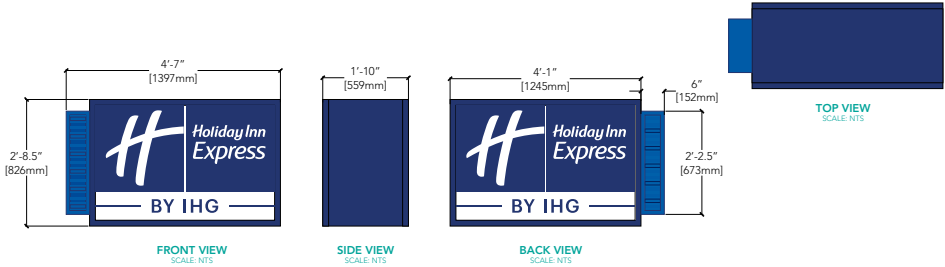
LOCATION SCOPE:
Install new sign. Per site plan, wall color is TBD, client to confirm prior to production.

Access inside of interior walls where signs will hang is required at the time of installation. Contact your project manager if you are interested in a pre-wire. All illuminated signage require the client's electrician to furnish and install a complete photocell and/or time clock to allow signs to operate at designated intervals. However, sign shall never operate on a 24/7 basis.

Client Responsibility:
1 - Provide access inside interior walls
2 - Perform final connection

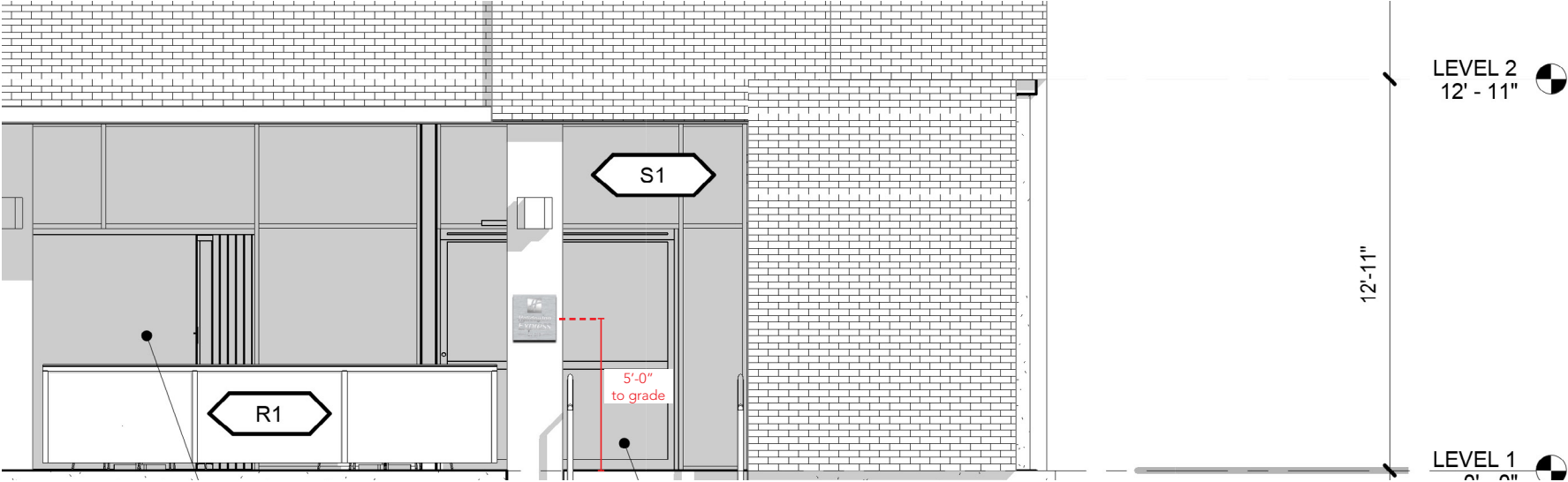
NEED MORE INFORMATION PRIOR TO PRODUCTION: SEE NOTES

SIGN DETAIL:



LOCATION 4 - HIEX-WPL-704-NL-SF-018H

Recommendation: Wall Panel



SURVEY NOTES:
Walnut Street

RECOMMENDATION DETAILS:

Quantity	Sign Sq.Ft.	Illumination	Face
1	2.13	None	Single
Mounting		Fabrication	
Spacers		XP1 (Spacers)	

LOCATION SCOPE:

Install new sign. Per site plan, wall color is TBD, client to confirm prior to production.

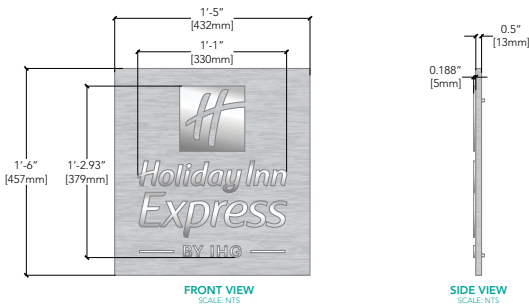
Access inside of interior walls where signs will hang is required at the time of installation. Contact your project manager if you are interested in a pre-wire. All illuminated signage require the client's electrician to furnish and install a complete photocell and/or time clock to allow signs to operate at designated intervals. However, sign shall never operate on a 24/7 basis.

Client Responsibility:

- 1 - Provide access inside interior walls
- 2 - Perform final connection

NEED MORE INFORMATION PRIOR TO PRODUCTION: SEE NOTES

SIGN DETAIL:



LOCATION 5 - HIEX-BLD-702-IL-DF-139H

Recommendation: Blade Sign



SURVEY NOTES:
Walnut Street



RECOMMENDATION DETAILS:

Quantity	Sign Sq.Ft.	Illumination	Face
1	31.21	Internal	Double
Mounting		Fabrication	
Lag Bolts		XWPS-24	

LOCATION SCOPE:

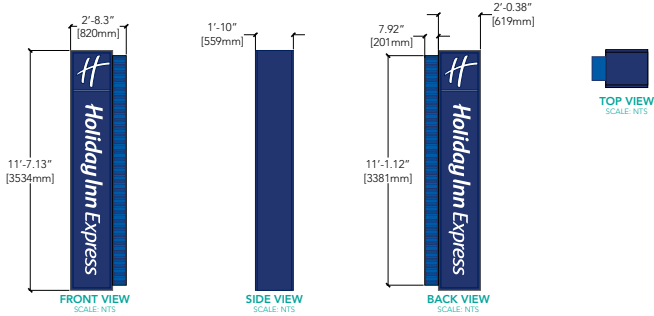
Install new sign. Per site plan, wall color is TBD, client to confirm prior to production.

Access inside of interior walls where signs will hang is required at the time of installation. Contact your project manager if you are interested in a pre-wire. All illuminated signage require the client's electrician to furnish and install a complete photocell and/or time clock to allow signs to operate at designated intervals. However, sign shall never operate on a 24/7 basis.

- Client Responsibility:
- 1 - Provide access inside interior walls
 - 2 - Perform final connection

NEED MORE INFORMATION PRIOR TO PRODUCTION: SEE NOTES

SIGN DETAIL:



WALL REPAIR GUIDELINES

Exterior

Corrugated

To be discussed with client. End result should ensure holes are filled or patched prior to installing new sign.

Brick

Holes to be filled with *QUICKRETE* mortar repair sealant or paintable caulk. Clean wall as required and quoted.

Concrete

Holes to be filled with *QUICKRETE* concrete repair sealant. Pressure wash wall.

Sidings

Patch holes with pre-approved painted aluminum.

Stucco and EIFS

Patch holes or re-mediate wall with *DAP ALEX PLUS* all-purpose acrylic latex caulk. Prep and paint wall with approved paint color (*SHERWIN WILLIAMS* or *BENJAMIN MOORE*).

- * Paint must cure for a minimum of 48 hours prior to graphics installation. Gassing and/or peeling of graphic can occur otherwise.
- * Electrical is to be brought to signage area prior to sign installation by GC or owner.

Interior

Drywall

Patch holes or re-mediate wall with *DAP ALEX PLUS* all-purpose acrylic latex caulk. Prep and paint wall to a Level 4 finish with approved paint color (*SHERWIN WILLIAMS* or *BENJAMIN MOORE*).

Wood, Marble, Glass, and Granite

To be discussed with client prior to budget presentation.

Wallpaper

Wallpaper to be removed and reapplied. PM to consult with client as they may have access to matching wallpaper.

Installation Schedule: Hilton/IHG allows installation of exterior signs up to 30/90 days before the published hotel open date.

Timeclocks/Photocells: All illuminated signs require the client’s electrician to provide and install a timeclock or photocell. (Do not allow signs to operate 24/7).

Interior Wall Access: Each illuminated letterset requires access inside the interior walls where the letterset will be installed. It is the client’s responsibility to provide access. If you would like to “pre-wire” the location, contact your project manager. Additional charges may apply.