

File Number: 8-B-26-DT

Meeting: 8/19/2026
Applicant: Logan A. Higgins Heyoh Design & Development
Owner: DWD-MEK Investors GP
Project: Jacks

Property Information

Location: 133 S. Gay St. **Parcel ID:** 94 E J 02701
Zoning: DK-G (Downtown Knoxville, Grid Subdistrict)
Description: c. 1900, Vernacular Commercial

Two story, brick, single bay, front elevation has divided storefront with small-paned transoms and a separate entrance to upstairs. Altered twelve paned fixed windows with brick sills, decorative vertical corbeling forms frieze below pressed tin cornice with decorative brackets. Flat roof. Contributing structure in the Southern Terminal and Warehouse (National Register) Historic District.

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends approval of Certificate 8-B-26-DT subject to the following conditions.

1. Meeting the minimum 9-ft sidewalk clearance per Article 10.3.F.2.a (Awnings and Marquees) of the zoning ordinance.
 2. Meeting the maximum sign area per Article 13.9.F.
 3. The text on the front of the awning can be boxed in with neon lights, but the neon striping at the top and bottom edge of the canopy must be removed.
 4. The underside of the awning can be black or high gloss white.
 5. With the exception of the three modifications noted in the description of work for this request, all other aspects of the signage and awning remain unchanged from the description of work in Certificate of Appropriate 1-F-26-DT and are made part of this approval by reference.
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Description of Work

Level I - Board Review

Minor Alteration of an Existing Building/Structure, Sign

Revision to the previously approved Certificate of Appropriateness (COA), 1-F-26-DT as follows:

- 1) Modifying COA 1-F-26-DT condition #3 to allow the underside of the awning to be high gloss white to match the historic awning, rather than a black finish.
- 2) Adding integrated linear downlight strip on the underside of the canopy (see reflective ceiling plan on page 8 of the plan set).
- 3) Add neon text to the front of the awning on the right side, similar to the text on the left side of the awning that was approved with COA 1-F-26-DT.

Condition #2 of the COA 1-F-26-DT allowed the text on the front of the awning to be boxed in neon, but does not allow the strip of neon along the top and bottom edges of the awning as presented on the plan.

Comments

Awning (Canopy): The applicant provided historic images of a similar awning on this building in the late 1940's. While the neon striping was on the older awning, which is the precedent for this proposal, staff recommended removing the neon striping with the previous approval (1-F-26-DT), and the board only approved neon boxing the text on front of the awning. Staff supports the addition of the neon text on the right side of the awning with the allowance of boxing the text with neon, as the board previously approved for the neon text on the left side of the awning.

Illumination of awnings is not addressed by the guidelines, and other types of illumination, such as for signs, are not recommended by the historic resources section of the design guidelines. In addition, the zoning ordinance prohibits neon or LED lighting that outlines doors, windows, architectural features, and building facades (Article 10.2.D).

Applicable Design Guidelines

Downtown Design Guidelines

C. Historic Resources

7. Recommended Signs

Commercial establishments need to advertise. However, advertising signs should be effective and appropriate to historic areas without contributing to visual clutter. Primary concerns are a sign's location, size, material, and illumination.

7a. Locate signs above storefront windows, below second-story windows on the sign board, or on the storefront windows themselves (30% is maximum coverage), or off the front of the building as a projecting sign (maximum size: 9 square feet).

7b. Create signs that are proportional to the building where they are located.

7c. Do not light signs internally.

8. Awnings

Awnings are allowed on historic buildings when they are appropriate to the building and are designed with traditional shapes, forms, and materials. If awnings are used, their overall size, shape, and projection from the building must be in proper proportion and scale to the building and contained within the window or door they shelter, and not cover adjacent wall surfaces. Canvas is usually the appropriate material for awnings.

8a. Allow awnings in traditional shapes and materials.

8b. Contain signs or advertising only within the valence of the awning



**DESIGN
REVIEW
BOARD**

8-B-26-DT
APPLICATION FOR CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS

 **133 S. Gay St.**
Level 1: Sign

Original Print Date: 7/30/2026 Revised:
Knoxville/Knox County Planning · Design Review Board

**Petitioner: Logan A. Higgins Heyoh
Design & Development**

N

0 160

Feet



JACKS SIGN

133 S GAY STREET
DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

8-B-26-DT



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PROJECT OVERVIEW

133 S. Gay Street was once a bustling restaurant deeply embedded in the Knoxville scene even serving local Kern's bread and JFG coffee. This restaurant featured a unique neon sign proudly displaying "Mitchell Grill".

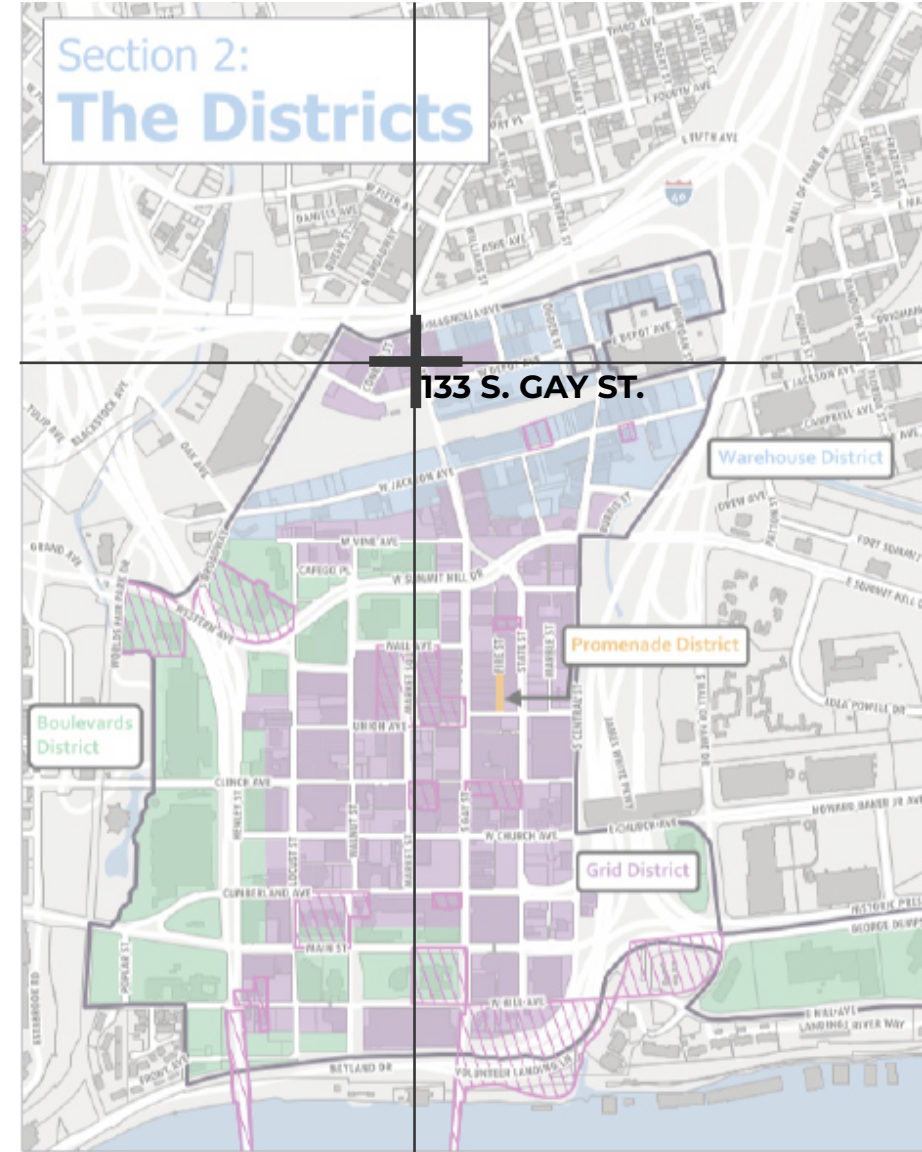
Over the years, the building has changed from commercial to residential to other uses over the last century. Now, it is an established coffee shop that also carries plants and local makers' goods - just like Mitchell's did when it opened in 1948. We want to propose bringing back that sign to return some of that unique design to the 100 block of Gay Street.

This application has been prepared to seek approval from the Design Review Board under the City of Knoxville's Downtown Design Guidelines.



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PROJECT LOCATION IN DESIGN GUIDELINE BOUNDARIES



HISTORIC PRECEDENT OF ORIGINAL SIGN AT 133 S GAY ST.

Page 79 West Ada-3171 THE KNOXVILLE NEWS-SENTINEL Thursday, March 25, 1948 Time is of 1948 on your Dial-News is on WNCN-Read it in The News-Sentinel

Text of Truman's Palestine Statement

WASHINGTON, March 25.—Text of President Truman's statement today that the American people have a clear conscience regarding the policy of the United States in the United Nations regarding Palestine.

Gasoline Explosion Burns Martel Youth

THE KNOXVILLE NEWS-SENTINEL, March 25.—(AP) A youth named Martel was burned today in a gasoline explosion in a garage in Knoxville.

U. S. Developing Radioactive Cloud

WASHINGTON, March 25.—(AP) The United States is developing a radioactive cloud in the Pacific Ocean, according to a report from the Navy.

Judge Asks for Easter Ducklings for Park Lake

KNOXVILLE, Ky., March 25.—(AP) Judge William H. Hays today asked for a pair of Easter ducklings for the children of the Park Lake community.

Belgian Prince To Visit Knoxville

KNOXVILLE, Ky., March 25.—(AP) The Belgian Prince, Prince Philippe, is expected to visit Knoxville on his tour of the United States.

I use ABSORENE to clean my WALL PAPER and painted walls!

See How Easy it is to use ABSORENE to clean my WALL PAPER and painted walls!

CHASE HIM to... MITCHELL GRILL'S Formal Opening TOMORROW

133 S. GAY ST.

FREE GIFTS

FOR CUSTOMERS ONLY...
• Ice Cream
• Flowers for the Ladies
• CIGARS for the Men

OUR SPECIALTIES SERVED DAILY:

- Western Steaks and Chops
- Sea Foods, All Kinds
- Lunches and Dinners
- Sandwiches, All Kinds
- Fountain Treats
- Tasty Snacks

MITCHELL GRILL'S WELL-TRAINED EMPLOYEES WELCOME YOU!

WE SERVE KERN'S BREAD

JFG Special COFFEE

POST SIGN CO.

BUTCHERS SUPPLY CO.

ROY C. SMITH TILE CO.



14 THE KNOXVILLE JOURNAL, Friday, March 26, 1948

The Formal Opening of Mitchell Grill

133 S. GAY ST. DIAL 5-3210

At Your Service

GEORGE A. MITCHELL, Owner

Serving WESTERN COUNTRY

- STEAKS • CHOPS
- SEAFOOD • HAM
- Country FRIED CHICKEN
- many other Delicious Foods
- COUNTER OR BOOTH SERVICE
- REGULAR MEALS
- SHORT ORDERS
- SANDWICHES
- SODA FOUNTAIN

Bring the entire family to Mitchell's Grill to an evening meal and enjoy it in a delightful atmosphere.

★ ★ ★ ★

Try A Delicious Meal Anytime

- BREAKFAST
- LUNCH
- DINNER

FREE TODAY ONLY

To The LADIES... Flowers
GENTLEMEN... Cigars
CHILDREN... Swift's Ice Cream

Congratulations from the Following Firms

GLIDDEN PAINT STORE
100 W. Main
JAMES A. JONES
100 W. Main
Butcher's Supply Co.
100 W. Main
POST SIGN CO.
100 W. Main

Palace Cigar Store
100 W. Main
JOHN CRUZE SHEET METAL
100 W. Main
TRIANGLE MUSIC CO.
100 W. Main

We Serve JFG Special Coffee

The New HANDI-SQUARE Bottle AVONDALE FARMS

Milk and Dairy Products

Congratulations MITCHELL GRILL They Serve SWAN'S BREAD



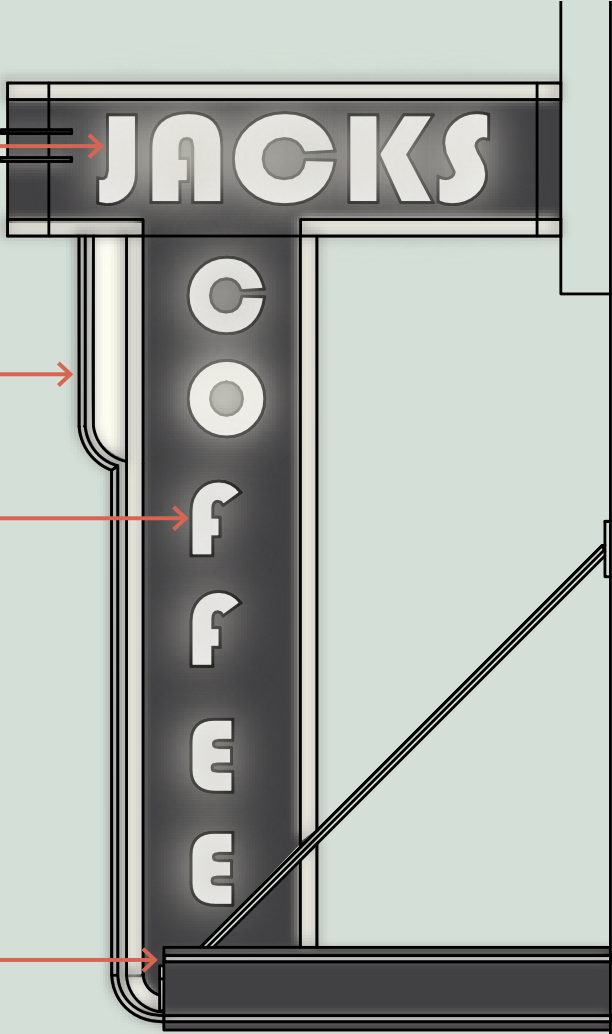
ELEVATIONS

NEON LETTERING

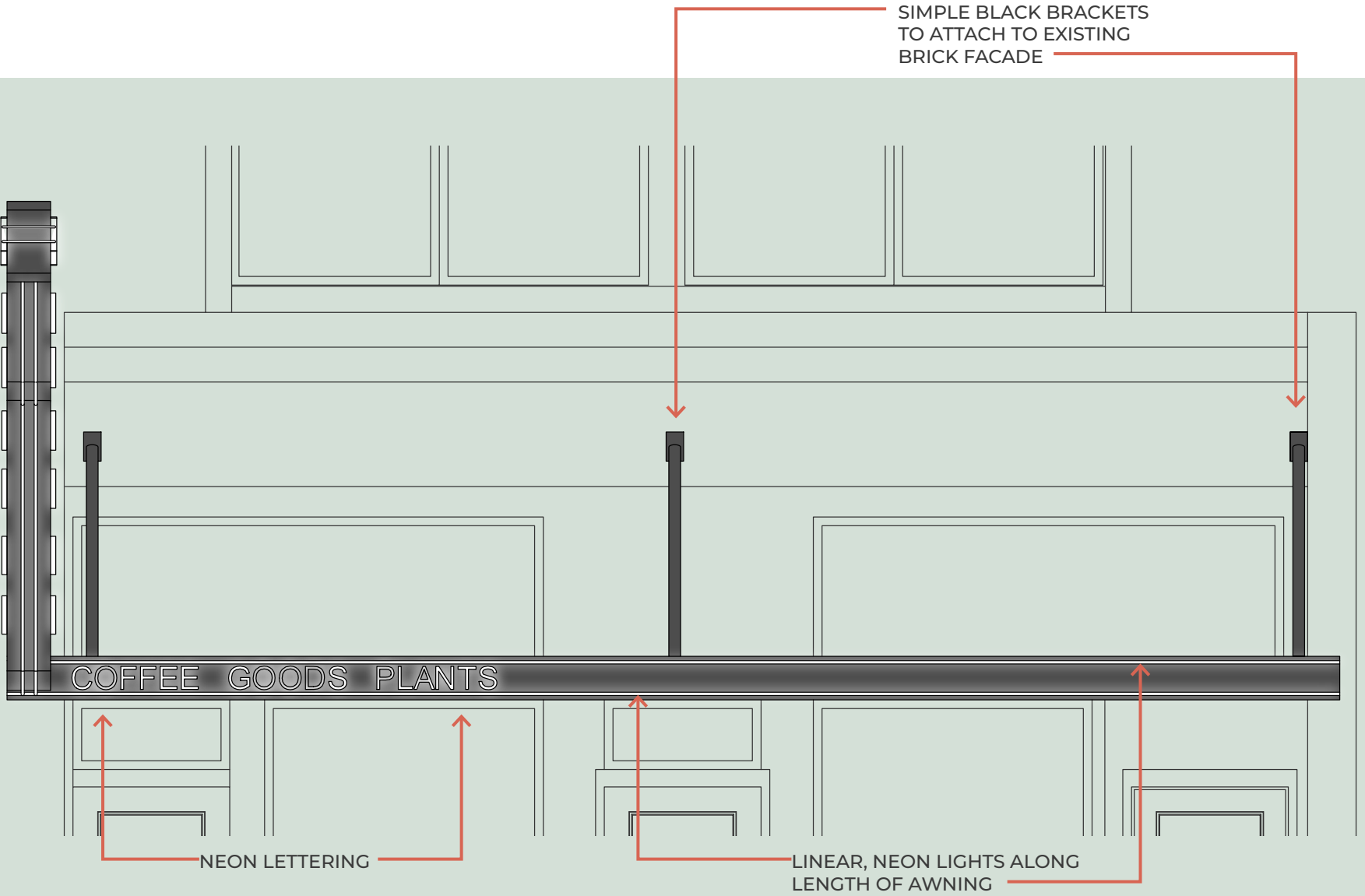
NEON STRIPING
ALONG STREET-FACING
ELEVATION

NEON LETTERING

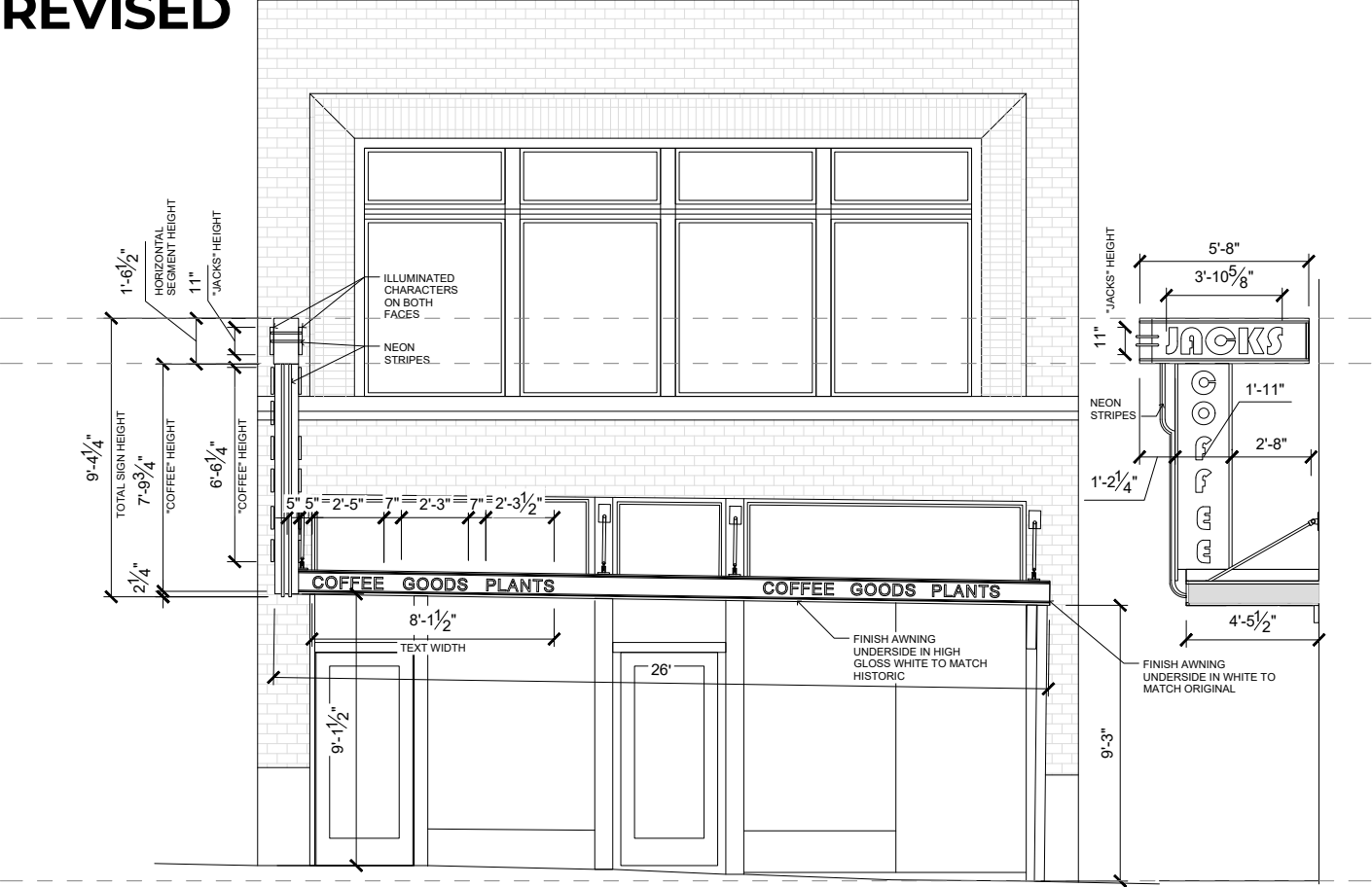
NEON STRIPING TO
WRAP AROUND
AWNING



ELEVATIONS

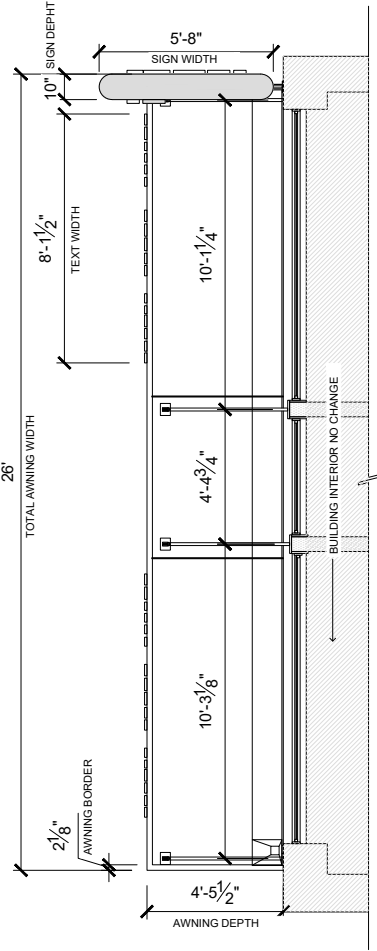


REVISED

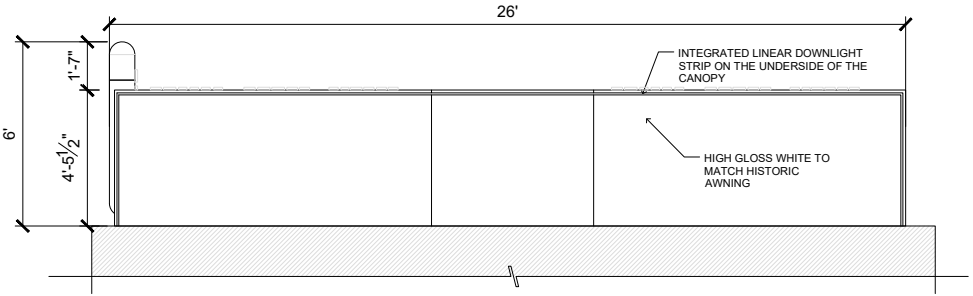


FACADE ELEVATION

SIGN ELEVATION



PLAN



REFLECTIVE CEILING PLAN