

**EXPEDITED**  
**MONTGOMERY COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION**  
**STAFF REPORT**

<b>Address:</b>	937 Ellsworth Drive, Silver Spring	<b>Meeting Date:</b>	5/26/2021
<b>Resource:</b>	Master Plan Site #36/7-003A <i>Silver Theater and Shopping Center</i>	<b>Report Date:</b>	5/19/2021
<b>Applicant:</b>	Gary Brent	<b>Public Notice:</b>	5/12/2021
		<b>Tax Credit:</b>	N/A
<b>Review:</b>	HAWP	<b>Staff:</b>	Michael Kyne
<b>Case Number:</b>	950981		
<b>Proposal:</b>	New sign		

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

☐ Approve  
☒ Approve with conditions

1. The red glass band above the storefront must be retained. If portions of the red glass band are in need of repair and/or replacement, the applicant must submit details and specifications to staff and receive approval prior to work commencing.

**ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION:**

**SIGNIFICANCE:** Master Plan Site #36/7-003A, *Silver Theater and Shopping Center*  
**STYLE:** Moderne/Art Deco  
**DATE:** c. 1937-8

Excerpt from *Places from the Past*:

**SILVER THEATRE AND SHOPPING CENTER (1937-8) 36/7-3**  
 SE Corner of Georgia & Colesville

The Silver Theatre and Shopping Center complex, which opened in 1938, is a rare example of an early planned neighborhood shopping center with parking integrated into the complex. The complex was planned to include all the retail uses required by residents of the surrounding neighborhoods, and to accommodate 50,000 patrons. The Silver Theatre had a seating capacity of 1,100. The complex was one of the first in the region to recognize the importance of and to design for the automobile: parking areas were provided at both the front of the complex and at the rear with a connecting underpass for both cars and pedestrians. Many of the stores had double entrances and could be entered from the front or the rear parking areas. The complex originally included a gas station island, no longer standing.

Architecturally, it reflects a fine example of streamlined Moderne styling with Art Deco detailing, designed by John Eberson, a national theater architect who also designed the Bethesda Theatre (1938). Eberson rejected earlier and more traditional commercial designs in favor of a thoroughly

modern style—streamlined Moderne with Art Deco detailing. Early 20th century streamlining was symbolic of the dynamic industrial and technological advances of the period, and was characterized by sleek mechanical curves and allusions to machines, such as trains and ships. The Silver Theatre, in particular, makes reference to nautical design themes. The Silver Theatre and Shopping Center was built at a time when Montgomery County was experiencing unprecedented growth. The complex was built in response to this development trend and vividly symbolizes the forces that changed and shaped 20th century Montgomery County

*Staff notes that the Maryland Historical Trust (MHT) holds an easement on the subject property. When MHT holds an easement on a property, the HPC typically requires applicants to receive MHT approval prior to submission of a HAWP application. However, under the terms of the easement, sign replacement/installation does not require MHT's review or approval.*



**Fig. 1: Subject building, as marked by the blue star.**

## **BACKGROUND:**

The HPC previously heard a preliminary consultation for the proposed new sign at the December 2, 2020 HPC meeting (staff notes that the previous application was under the adjacent property address of 8533 Georgia Avenue).<sup>1</sup> At the preliminary consultation, the HPC found the following:

- The red glass/contrasting horizontal band is a character-defining feature, and it should be preserved/remain visible.

## **PROPOSAL:**

The applicant proposes to remove three existing, non-historic signs and install two new signs on the subject building.

<sup>1</sup> Link to December 2, 2020 preliminary consultation staff report: <https://montgomeryplanning.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/ILB-8533-Georgia-Avenue-Silver-Spring.pdf>  
Link to December 2, 2020 HPC meeting audio/video transcript:  
[http://mncppc.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?publish\\_id=f58c36dc-35a4-11eb-bc32-0050569183fa](http://mncppc.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?publish_id=f58c36dc-35a4-11eb-bc32-0050569183fa)

**APPLICABLE GUIDELINES:**

IV. The Expedited Staff Report format may be used on the following type of cases:

2. Modifications to a property, which do not significantly alter its visual character.
6. Signs that are in conformance with all other County sign regulations.

**Montgomery County Code; Chapter 24A-8**

- (b) The commission shall instruct the director to issue a permit, or issue a permit subject to such conditions as are found to be necessary to insure conformity with the purposes and requirements of this chapter, if it finds that:
  - (1) The proposal will not substantially alter the exterior features of an historic site or historic resource within an historic district; or
  - (2) The proposal is compatible in character and nature with the historical, archeological, architectural or cultural features of the historic site or the historic district in which an historic resource is located and would not be detrimental thereto or to the achievement of the purposes of this chapter; or
  - (3) The proposal would enhance or aid in the protection, preservation and public or private utilization of the historic site or historic resource located within an historic district in a manner compatible with the historical, archeological, architectural or cultural value of the historic site or historic district in which an historic resource is located; or
  - (4) The proposal is necessary in order that unsafe conditions or health hazards be remedied; or
  - (5) The proposal is necessary in order that the owner of the subject property not be deprived of reasonable use of the property or suffer undue hardship; or
  - (6) In balancing the interests of the public in preserving the historic site or historic resource located within an historic district, with the interests of the public from the use and benefit of the alternative proposal, the general public welfare is better served by granting the permit.
- (c) It is not the intent of this chapter to limit new construction, alteration or repairs to any 1 period or architectural style.

***Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation***

The Secretary of the Interior defines rehabilitation as “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.” The *Standards* are as follows:

2. The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.
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 shall 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.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends that the Commission **approve with the one (1) condition specified on Page 1** the HAWP application under the Criteria for Issuance in Chapter 24A-8(b), (1) and (2), having found that the proposal will not substantially alter the exterior features of the historic resource and is compatible in

character with the district and the purposes of Chapter 24A;

and with the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation* #2 and #9;

and with the general condition that the applicant shall present the **3 permit sets of drawings, if applicable to Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) staff for review and stamping** prior to submission for the Montgomery County Department of Permitting Services (DPS) building permits;

and with the general condition that final project design details, not specifically delineated by the Commission, shall be approved by HPC staff or brought back to the Commission as a revised HAWP application at staff's discretion;

and with the general condition that the applicant shall notify the Historic Preservation Staff if they propose to make **any alterations** to the approved plans.

Once the work is completed the applicant will contact the staff person assigned to this application at 301-563-3400 or michael.kyne@montgomeryplanning.org to schedule a follow-up site visit.



**APPLICATION FOR  
HISTORIC AREA WORK PERMIT**  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION  
301.563.3400

FOR STAFF ONLY:  
HAWP# 950981  
DATE ASSIGNED \_\_\_\_\_

**APPLICANT:**

Name: Gary Brent E-mail: gary\_brent@mgpermits.com  
Address: 19187 Foggy Bottom Rd City: Bluemont Zip: 20135  
Daytime Phone: 410-507-0053 Tax Account No.: \_\_\_\_\_

**AGENT/CONTACT (if applicable):**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
Daytime Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Contractor Registration No.: \_\_\_\_\_

**LOCATION OF BUILDING/PREMISE:** MIHP # of Historic Property 937 Ellsworth Drive

Is the Property Located within an Historic District? ☒ Yes/District Name \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ No/Individual Site Name \_\_\_\_\_

Is there an Historic Preservation/Land Trust/Environmental Easement on the Property? If YES, include a map of the easement, and documentation from the Easement Holder supporting this application.

Are other Planning and/or Hearing Examiner Approvals /Reviews Required as part of this Application? (Conditional Use, Variance, Record Plat, etc.?) If YES, include information on these reviews as supplemental information.

Building Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Street: \_\_\_\_\_  
Town/City: \_\_\_\_\_ Nearest Cross Street: \_\_\_\_\_  
Lot: \_\_\_\_\_ Block: \_\_\_\_\_ Subdivision: \_\_\_\_\_ Parcel: \_\_\_\_\_

**TYPE OF WORK PROPOSED: See the checklist on Page 4 to verify that all supporting items for proposed work are submitted with this application. Incomplete Applications will not be accepted for review.** Check all that apply:

- |   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> New Construction   | <input type="checkbox"/> Deck/Porch          | <input type="checkbox"/> Shed/Garage/Accessory Structure            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Addition           | <input type="checkbox"/> Fence               | <input type="checkbox"/> Solar                                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Demolition         | <input type="checkbox"/> Hardscape/Landscape | <input type="checkbox"/> Tree removal/planting                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Grading/Excavation | <input type="checkbox"/> Roof                | <input type="checkbox"/> Window/Door                                |
|   |  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other: <u>Sign Installation</u> |

I hereby certify that I have the authority to make the foregoing application, that the application is correct and accurate and that the construction will comply with plans reviewed and approved by all necessary agencies and hereby acknowledge and accept this to be a condition for the issuance of this permit.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of owner or authorized agent

4-29-21  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**HAWP APPLICATION: MAILING ADDRESSES FOR NOTIFYING**  
 [Owner, Owner's Agent, Adjacent and Confronting Property Owners]

<b>Owner's mailing address</b> Peterson Companies 12500 Fair Lakes Circle Suite 400 Fairfax, VA 22033	<b>Owner's Agent's mailing address</b> MG Permits 19187 Foggy Bottom Rd Bluemont, VA 20135
<b>Adjacent and confronting Property Owners mailing addresses</b>	

Description of Property: Please describe the building and surrounding environment. Include information on significant structures, landscape features, or other significant features of the property:

Description of Work Proposed: Please give an overview of the work to be undertaken:

Install 2 illuminated wall signs

Work Item 1: _____	
Description of Current Condition:	Proposed Work: Install 2 illuminated wall signs

Work Item 2: _____	
Description of Current Condition:	Proposed Work:

Work Item 3: _____	
Description of Current Condition:	Proposed Work:



**HISTORIC AREA WORK PERMIT  
CHECKLIST OF  
APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS**

	Required Attachments						
Proposed Work	I. Written Description	2. Site Plan	3. Plans/ Elevations	4. Material Specifications	5. Photographs	6. Tree Survey	7. Property Owner Addresses
New Construction	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Additions/ Alterations	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Demolition	*	*	*		*		*
Deck/Porch	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Fence/Wall	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Driveway/ Parking Area	*	*		*	*	*	*
Grading/Excavation/ Landscaping	*	*		*	*	*	*
Tree Removal	*	*		*	*	*	*
Siding/ Roof Changes	*	*	*	*	*		*
Window/ Door Changes	*	*	*	*	*		*
Masonry Repair/ Repoint	*	*	*	*	*		*
Signs	*	*	*	*	*		*

sleep  number

Project No. 1329

**Signage Package**

937 Ellsworth Drive  
Silver Spring, MD 20910

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SIGNAGE | BRANDED ENVIRONMENTS | MAINTENANCE

LEGEND	
Front Elevation (Southeast)	<b>S1</b>
Side Elevation (Southwest)	<b>S2</b>

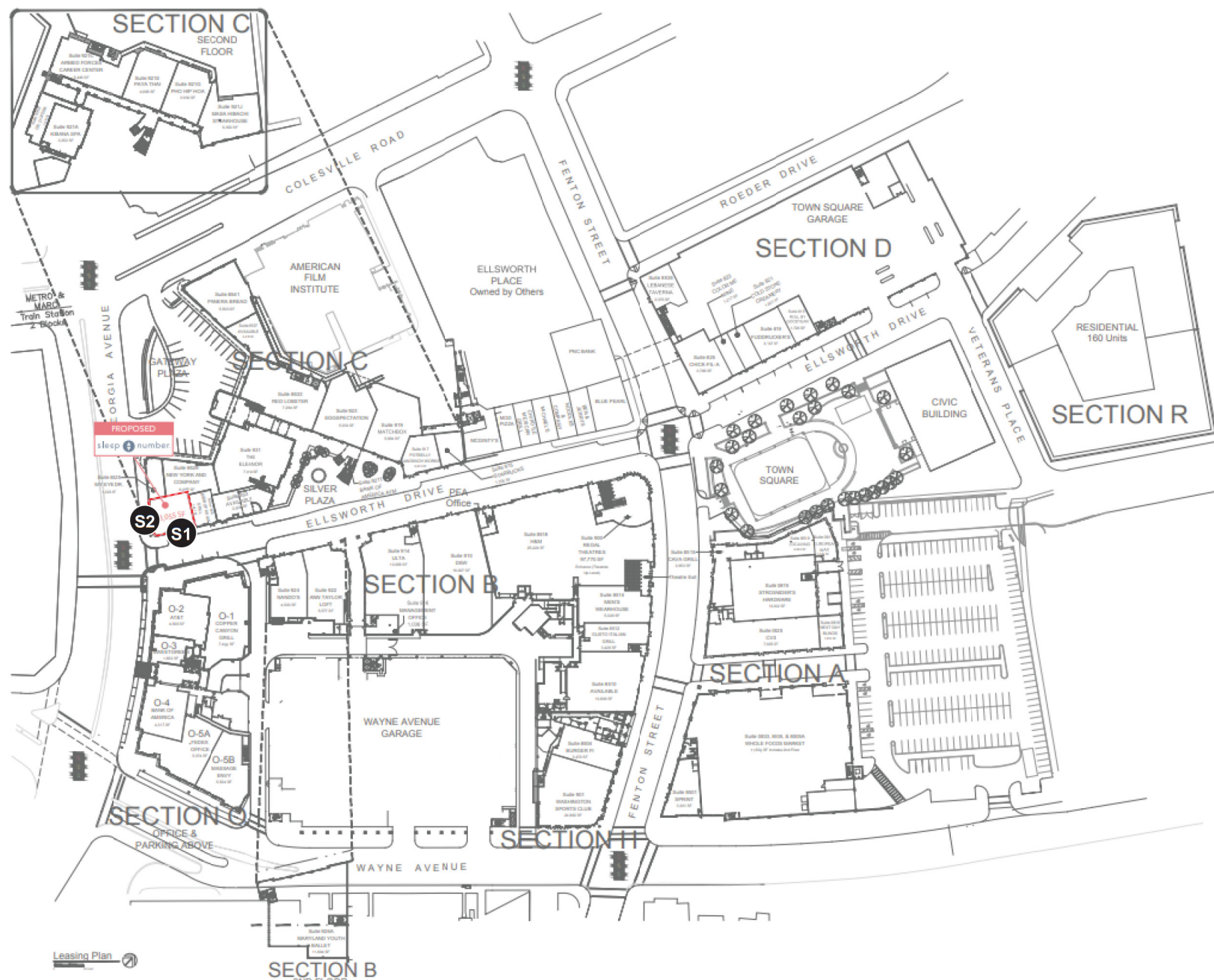


### Site Plan - Overview

Project No. 1329  
 Project Signage Package  
 Location 937 Ellsworth Drive  
 Silver Spring, MD 20910  
  
 Orig. Draft 02.08.2021  
 Project Mgr. Jim Zook  
 Designer Stephanie Chan  
 Rev. Art N/A  
 Rev. Date 00.00.00  
 Page Rev. 000  
 Rev. Details N/A

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 Office 847.301.0510  
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## Front (Southeast) Store Elevation

### S1-1

**Proposed Signage = 94.0 SF**

**Relevant Signage Code**

2 SF per linear foot building frontage  
59.63 x 2 = 119.26 SF

**Sign Type**

LED Channel Letters, Front-Lit  
on Backer

**Mounting**

Flush Mounted

**Color Palette**

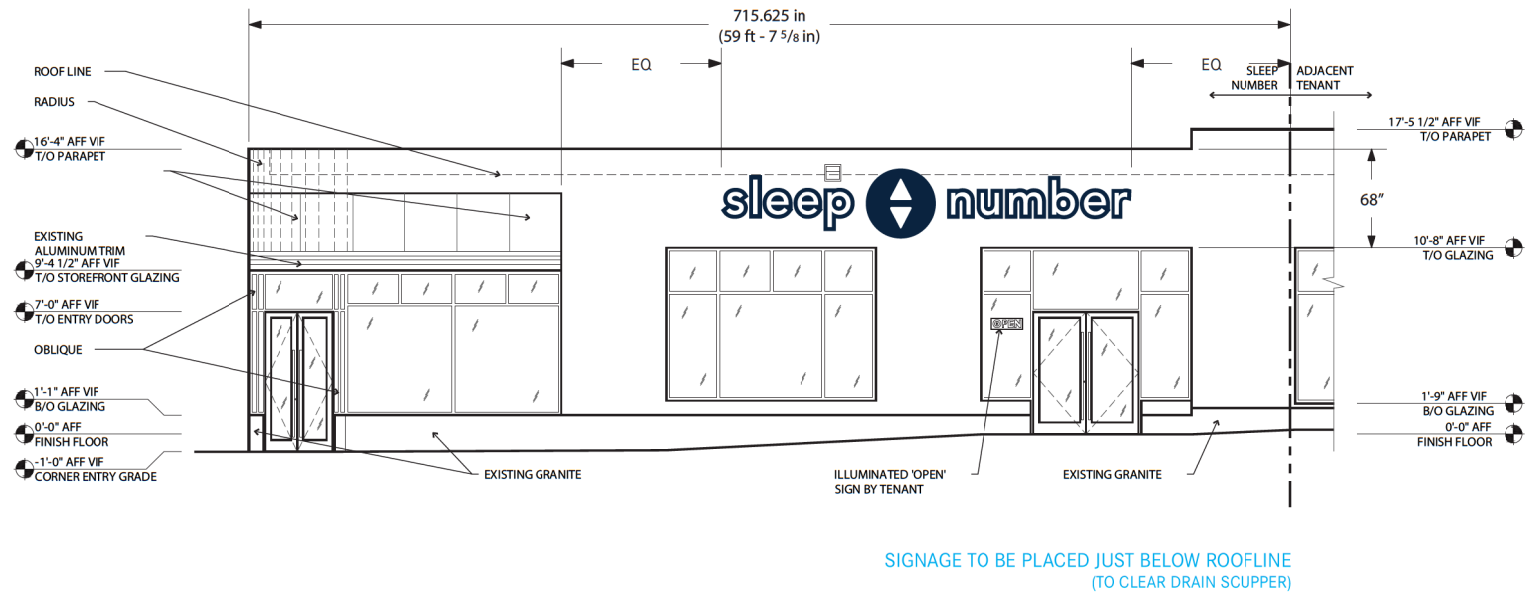
- Face: White
- Vinyl: Oracal 591 Translucent Blue
- Trim Cap, Return, & Backer: MP 14112 Blue
- Return:
- Facade: SW 0000

**Project No.** 1329  
**Project** Signage Package  
**Location** 937 Ellsworth Drive  
Silver Spring, MD 20910

**Orig. Draft** 02.08.2021  
**Project Mgr.** Jim Zook  
**Designer** Stephanie Chan  
**Rev. Art** Lila Roblin  
**Rev. Date** 02.15.2021  
**Page Rev.** 002  
**Rev. Details** Removed red glass notes

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Scale: 3/8" = 12"

## Side (Southwest) Store Elevation

### S2-1

#### Proposed Signage = 32 SF

##### Relevant Signage Code

2 SF per linear foot building frontage  
49.48 x 2 = 98.96 SF

##### Sign Type

Non-illuminated Painted 1/2" Aluminum Letters  
w/ Painted Aluminum backer

##### Mounting

Flush mounted using VHB  
and/or additional TBD adhesive

##### Color Palette

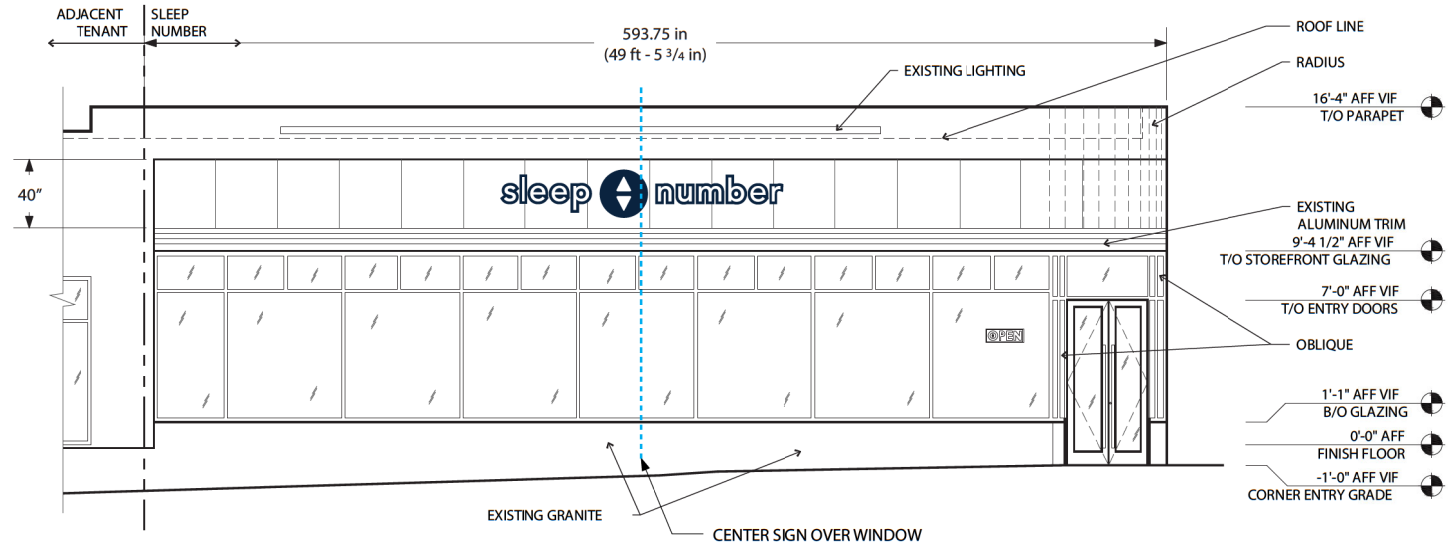
- Letters: Painted White
- Backer: MP 14112 Blue
- N/A
- N/A
- N/A

Project No. 1329  
Project Signage Package  
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Silver Spring, MD 20910

Orig. Draft 02.08.2021  
Project Mgr. Jim Zook  
Designer Stephanie Chan  
Rev. Art Lila Roblin  
Rev. Date 02.15.2021  
Page Rev. 002  
Rev. Details Revised Sign Type & Mounting

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Scale: 3/8" = 12"

## Sign Specification

### SPEC

Proposed Signage = N/A

**Sign Type**  
LED Channel Letters, Front-Lit  
on Backer

**Mounting**  
Flush Mounted

#### Color Palette

- Face: White
- Vinyl: Oracal 591 Translucent Blue
- Trim Cap, Return, & Backer: MP 14112 Blue
- N/A
- N/A

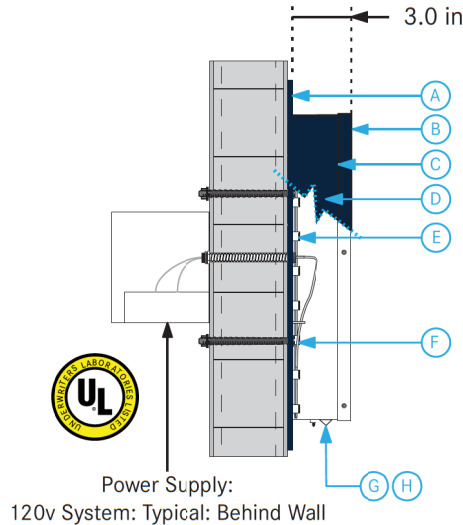
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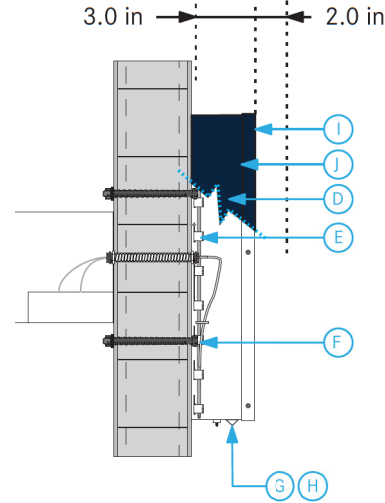
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#### Front-Lit L.E.D Channel Letterset

TYPICAL - Section Detail

\*Note: All fasteners to be non-ferrous and all penetrations shall be sealed water tight



#### Front-Lit L.E.D Logo

TYPICAL - Section Detail

Sign Specs	
A	.125" Aluminum Backer. Painted MP 14112
B	3/16" White Acrylic
C	1" Trim. Painted MP 14112
D	.04" Returns. Painted MP 14112
E	White LEDs
F	Mounting: Anchor Bolts
G	Weep Holes w/ Light Baffle Covering
H	Disconnect Switch
I	Flat face with translucent blue vinyl, 3M color Oracal 591 Trans Blue
J	1" Painted Metal Retainers

Sign Specification

SPEC (S2-1)

Proposed Signage = N/A

**Sign Type**  
Non-Illuminated Painted 1/2" Aluminum Letters  
w/ Painted Aluminum backer

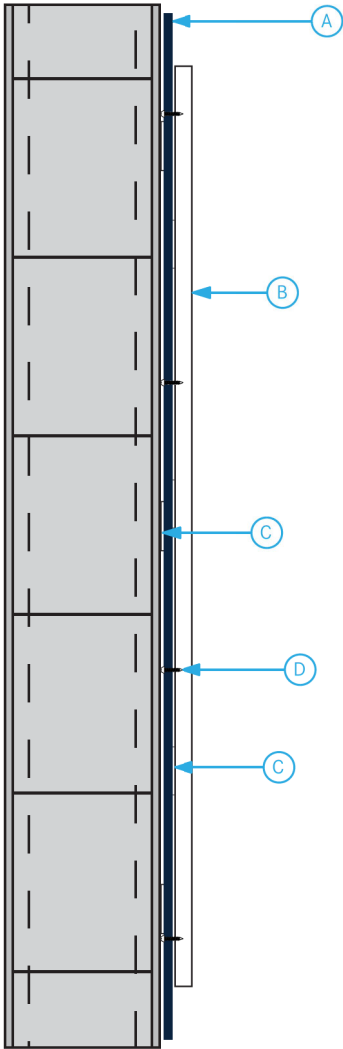
**Mounting**  
Flush mounted using VHB  
and/or additional TBD adhesive

- Color Palette**
- Letters: Painted White
  - Backer: MP 14112 Blue
  - N/A
  - N/A
  - N/A

**Project No.** 1329  
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**Rev. Date** 02.15.2021  
**Page Rev.** 002  
**Rev. Details** Revised Sign Type & Mounting

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sleep  number

Sign Specs	
A	.125" Aluminum Backer: Painted MP 14112
B	1/2" Thick Aluminum Letters: Painted White
C	Mounting: VHB Tape
D	Mounting: VHB and countersunk screws

Non-Illuminated Letterset  
TYPICAL - Section Detail