MONTGOMERY COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION STAFF REPORT

Address: 7006 Carroll Ave., Takoma Park Meeting Date: 10/9/2024

Resource: Contributing Resource **Report Date:** 10/2/2024

Takoma Park Historic District

Applicant: Thuy-Tu Tran **Public Notice:** 9/25/2024

Review: HAWP Tax Credit: No

Case No.: 1077218 Staff: Laura DiPasquale

Proposal: Install signage

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) **approve with one condition** the HAWP application, with final approval of all details delegated to staff:

1. The steel cable frame supports must be installed so as not to be visible from the street, or installed so that they are evenly spaced and attach into the mortar joints between the bricks. The cable frame supports must not overlap or cover the recessed band above the awning.

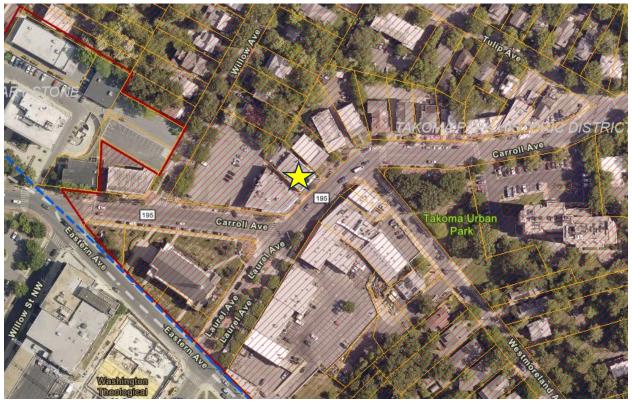


Figure 1: The subject property at 7006 Carroll Avenue, indicated with a star, is a Contributing Resource in the "Old Town" commercial area in the Takoma Park Historic District, outlined in red cross hatch.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

SIGNIFICANCE: Contributing Resource to the Takoma Park Historic District

STYLE: Colonial Revival

DATE: c. 1923



Figure 2: This image shows the existing building at 7006 Carroll Avenue. The existing black awning cover is proposed for replacement and new signage installed on the lower left-hand corner.

PROPOSAL

The applicant proposes to replace the existing awning box covering and to install new signage. The work includes removal of the existing canvas awning covering, wrapping of the existing awning frame in bent aluminum, and installation of single-tube neon lettering over flat lettering.



Figure 3: Rendering of the proposed signage.

APPLICABLE GUIDELINES

When reviewing alterations and additions for new construction to Contributing Resources within the Takoma Park Historic District, decisions are guided by the Takoma Park Historic District Design Guidelines (*Design Guidelines*) and Montgomery County Code Chapter 24A (*Chapter 24A*) and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation (*The Standards*). Additionally, as a building located within the Takoma Old Town and Commercial Revitalization Area, Ordinance No. 2592 applies.

Takoma Park Historic District Design Guidelines

There are two very general, broad planning and design concepts which apply to all categories. These are:

- The design review emphasis will be restricted to changes that are at all visible from the public right-of-way, irrespective of landscaping or vegetation (it is expected that the majority of new additions will be reviewed for their impact on the overall district), and,
- The importance of assuring that additions and other changes to existing structures act to reinforce and continue existing streetscape, landscape, and building patterns rather than to impair the character of the district.

Contributing Resources should receive a more lenient review than those structures that have been classified as Outstanding. This design review should emphasize the importance of the resource to the overall streetscape and its compatibility with existing patterns rather than focusing on a close scrutiny of architectural detailing. In general, however, changes to Contributing Resources should respect the predominant architectural style of the resource. As stated above, the design review emphasis will be

restricted to changes that are at all visible from the public right-of-way, irrespective of landscaping or vegetation.

- All exterior alterations, including those to architectural features and details, should be generally
 consistent with the predominant architectural style and period of the resource and should preserve
 the predominant architectural features of the resource; exact replication of existing details and
 features is, however, not required
- Some non-original building materials may be acceptable on a case-by-case basis; artificial siding on areas visible to the public right-of-way is discouraged where such materials would replace or damage original building materials that are in good condition
- Alterations to features that are not visible from the public right-of-way should be allowed as a matter of course
- All changes and additions should respect existing environmental settings, landscaping, and patterns of open space

6. SHOPFRONTS

(a) A shopfront as a part of the building facade shall be defined to include: the building face, porches, the entrance area leading to the door, side-lights, transoms, display platforms, devices including lighting and signing designed to be viewed from the public right-of-way and/or the areas visible to the public prior to entering the interior portion of the structure.

(b) General Provisions.

- (1) Shopfronts, entrances, signs, lighting, sun protection, porches, security grilles, etc., shall be compatible, harmonious, and consistent with the original scale and character of the structure.
- (2) All extraneous and unused hardware, signing, and equipment shall be removed.
- (3) All broken, rotten, or damaged elements shall be removed and replaced with elements that are harmonious with the design of the building and with the neighborhood.
- (4) Textured or colored glass and ribbed or patterned metal are not permitted as acceptable replacement materials for shopfront windows.
- (5) At such time as sign panels covering or replacing shop cornices are removed or deemed to need replacement, they shall be taken down and the cornice restored.
- (6) Grates, bars, and grilles shall be designed so as to be as inconspicuous as possible. They shall be kept painted and free of rust. In all cases, they shall be kept open during the normal daylight business hours of the community. Non-metal grilles and screens shall be prohibited. Enclosures and housings for security grilles and screens shall be as inconspicuous as possible and shall be compatible with the design of the shopfront.
- (7) Solid or permanently enclosed or covered shopfront windows shall not be permitted. Where the window treatment of the first floor is to be modified, such that the window openings will be made smaller, these new openings will not be smaller in size than the openings of the second or third-floor windows of the subject structure.

7. SIGNS

- (a) Signage materials shall be in harmony with the rest of façade materials and be easily maintained, such as: treated fabric; natural or painted wood; metal; cut-out letters of metal, wood, or plastic; and individual painted letters.
- (b) Signs should be placed where they conceal the least amount of architectural detail.
- (c) Signs may be a maximum of thirty (30) inches high and project not more than eight (8) inches from the outside face of the exterior wall. All signs shall be designed to be harmonious with the design of the building façade and neighboring structures. The maximum allowable sign area shall be two times the frontage of the building in feet.

. . .

(j) Flat signs may not be luminous but may be illuminated by any acceptable method listed below in the Lighting section.

8. LIGHTING

- (a) Exterior lighting shall be limited to lighting fixtures designed to be in harmony with the character of the buildings and the Takoma Old Town streetscape design theme. Such fixtures shall be mounted in the entrance ways and on the front facade of the building. Flood lighting concealed above a storefront roofing may be used to light the facades of buildings. Lighting of the shops will be encouraged during the evening hours. Lighting of the facades of the buildings may be accomplished with projecting fixtures at the roofline or at the storefront cornice line. Such fixtures shall be inconspicuous, harmonious with the design of the building, and project no more than twenty-four (24) inches from the face of the building. (b) The following lighting methods are permitted:
 - (1) Fully recessed downlights or wallwashers in projecting metal box. Box must run full length of the sign area.
 - (2) Shielded fluorescent lamps with diffusers in projecting metal box. Box must run full length of the sign area.
 - (3) "Gooseneck incandescent," porcelain enamel reflector on bent metal tube arm. Housing to prevent glare at pedestrian eyeline.
 - (4) Individually lit letters, either internally or back-lit.

Montgomery County Code, Chapter 24A Historic Resources Preservation

- (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 ensure 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
- (d) In the case of an application for work on an historic resource located within an historic district, the commission shall be lenient in its judgment of plans for structures of little historical or design significance or for plans involving new construction, unless such plans would seriously impair the historic or architectural value of surrounding historic resources or would impair the character of the historic district. (Ord. No. 9-4, § 1; Ord. No. 11-59.)

Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation

- 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 proportions, 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.

STAFF DISCUSSION

The subject property is a two-story brick commercial building constructed c.1923 with two heavily modified storefronts. In January 2024, the HPC approved a HAWP for replacement of the storefronts, replacement of the vinyl soffit under the existing awnings with fiber cement panels and recessed lights, and installation of gooseneck barn lights over the awnings.

The applicant now proposes to install individual neon letters over lettering painted on new painted metal cladding over the existing non-historic awning. Staff finds that the proposed work is a minor modification to a non-historic feature that will not have a significant impact on the character of the building. Staff notes that, provided the proposed cable structural supports do not attach into or obscure the recessed brick border over the awning, the proposed signage will not remove historic materials or alter spatial relationships that characterize the property and could be removed in the future leaving the essential form of the historic property intact, satisfying *Standards* 2, 9, and 10.

The applicant also proposes to remove the canvas wrap over the existing, non-historic metal frame awning structure and to replace it with a painted aluminum covering. While the *Design Guidelines* indicate that canvas awnings are preferable over rigid awnings, they also note that metal signs and other shopfront elements that are easily maintained are appropriate. Staff finds that the proposed material is compatible with the property and commercial section of the district and recommends that as a Contributing resource, the HPC should exercise leniency in its review and focus on the compatibility of the material as prescribed in Chapter 24A(b)(2).



Figure 4: The projecting awning will be reclad and signage added to the front.



Figure 5: Rendering of the proposed signage. The vertical sign shown on the left is not included in the application.

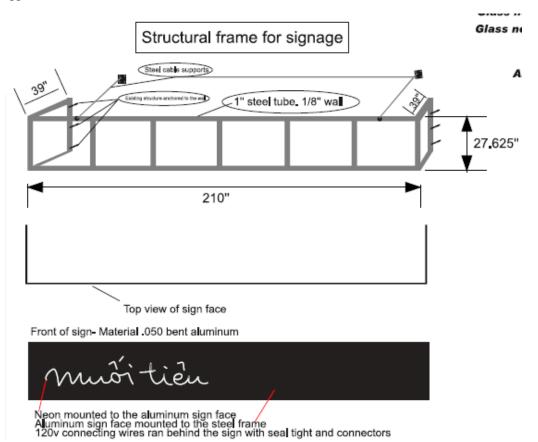


Figure 6: Details of the proposed signage and awning cladding.

The *Design Guidelines* state that signs may be a maximum of 30 inches high and project not more than eight inches from the outside façade of the exterior wall, and that individually lit letters are permitted. Staff finds that the proposed signage would include individually-lit neon letters between 10 and 17 inches tall by 92 inches wide and 2 inches deep, complying with the *Design Guidelines*.



Figure 7: Detail of the neon lettering sizes.

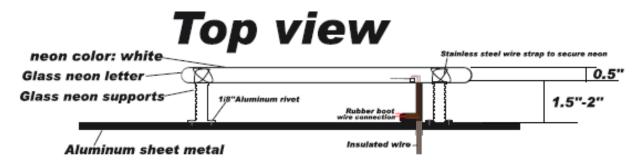


Figure 8: Top view of the neon sign showing a maximum 2 inch projection.



Figure 9: Examples of the single-tube neon script lettering proposed.

In the last decade, the HPC has approved a few larger-scale neon and channel letter signs for neighboring buildings at 6931-6939 Laurel Avenue, which is classified as an Outstanding resource in the district.¹

¹ HAWP #1057051, neon sign for Motorkat, 6939 Laurel Avenue, 2024: https://montgomeryplanning.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/I.C-6939-Laurel-Avenue-Takoma-Park-1057051.pdf HAWP #971274, channel-lit letter sign for Truist Bank, 6931 Laurel Avenue, 2021:

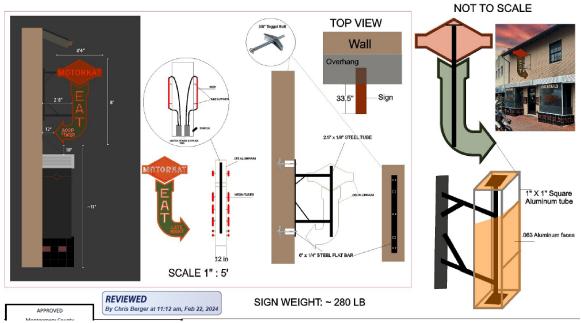


Figure 10: Approved neon sign for Motorkat, 6939 Laurel Avenue, HAWP #1057051, 2024.



Figure 11: Approved channel-lit letter sign for Truist Bank, 6931 Laurel Avenue, HAWP #971274, 2021.

https://mcatlas.org/tiles/06_HistoricPreservation_PhotoArchives/HAWP/11-17-

^{2021/6931%20}Laurel%20Avenue,%20Takoma%20Park%20-%20971274%20-%20Approval.pdf

¹ HAWP #628292, previous sign for the Republic Restaurant at 6937-6939 Laurel Ave, 2013: https://mcatlas.org/tiles6/06_HistoricPreservation_PhotoArchives/HAWP/HAWP_Archive/3703-13H_TAKOMA%20PARK%20HISTORIC%20DISTRICT_69376939%20LAUREL%20AVE,%20TAKOMA%20PARK_03212013.PDF



Figure 12: Previous sign for the Republic Restaurant at 6937-6939 Laurel Ave, approved by HAWP #628292 in 2013.

Staff finds that the proposed alterations are compatible with the character of the site and district and recommends the HPC approve the modifications under the *Design Guidelines* 6, 7 and 8, Chapter 24A-8(b)(2) and (d) and Standards 2, 9 and 10.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) <u>approve with one condition</u> the HAWP application, with final approval of all details delegated to staff:

1. The steel cable frame supports must be installed so as not to be visible from the street, or installed so that they are evenly spaced and attach into the mortar joints between the bricks. The cable frame supports must not overlap or cover the recessed band above the awning.

under the Criteria for Issuance in Chapter 24A-8(b)(1), (2), and (d), having found that the proposal, as modified by the condition, is consistent with the *Takoma Park Historic District Guidelines* and Ordinance No. 2592, and therefore 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, #9, and #10.

and with the general condition that the applicant shall present an electronic set 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 laura.dipasquale@montgomeryplanning.org to schedule a follow-up site visit.



APPLICATION FOR HISTORIC AREA WORK PERMIT HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION 301.563.3400

DATE ASSIGNED____

FOR STAFF ONLY:

HAWP#__

APPLICANT:				
Name: Thuy-Tu Tran	E-mail: thuytu@muoi-tieu.com			
Address: 7006 Carroll Ave, Ste A	city: Takoma Park zip: 20912			
Daytime Phone: 202-679-9400	Tax Account No.:			
AGENT/CONTACT (if applicable):				
Name:	E-mail:			
Address:	City: Zip:			
Daytime Phone:	Contractor Registration No.:			
LOCATION OF BUILDING/PREMISE: MIHP # of Histori	ic Property			
Is there an Historic Preservation/Land Trust/Environment map of the easement, and documentation from the Ea Are other Planning and/or Hearing Examiner Approvals (Conditional Use, Variance, Record Plat, etc.?) If YES, in supplemental information.	sement Holder supporting this application. S/Reviews Required as part of this Application?			
Building Number: 7006 Street: Cal	rroll Ave			
Town/City: Takoma Park Nearest Cros	ss Street: Laurel Ave			
Lot: Block: Subdivision:	Parcel:			
TYPE OF WORK PROPOSED: See the checklist on P for proposed work are submitted with this applica be accepted for review. Check all that apply: New Construction Deck/Porch Addition Fence Demolition Hardscape/Lands Grading/Excavation Roof I hereby certify that I have the authority to make the formula accurate and that the construction will comply with agencies and hereby acknowledge and accept this to	Shed/Garage/Accessory Structure Solar Tree removal/planting Scape Window/Door Other; Outdoor Signage Oregoing application, that the application is correct th plans reviewed and approved by all necessary be a condition for the issuance of this permit.			
// _ // _ / / _	9/18/2024			

HAWP APPLICATION: MAILING ADDRESSES FOR NOTIFING

[Owner, Owner's Agent, Adjacent and Confronting Property Owners]

Owner's mailing address Thuy-Tu Tran (Restaurant Owner) 7010 Poplar Ave Takoma Park, MD 20912	Owner's Agent's mailing address					
K.C. Associates (Property Owner) 10511 Summit Ave Kensington, MD 20895						
Adjacent and confronting Property Owners mailing addresses						
The Covered Market 7000 Carroll Ave Takoma Park, MD 20912						
Scissor & Comb 7009 Carroll Ave Takoma Park, MD 20912						
7014 Carroll Ave Takoma Park, MD 20912						
7012 Carroll Ave Takoma Park, MD 20912						
Ace Hardware 7001 Carroll Ave Takoma Park, MD 20912						
Solar Nails 7006 Carroll Ave Takoma Park, MD 20912						

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

Commercial property located at 7006 Carroll Avenue. The building has two stories with two restaurants on the main floor and smaller office spaces above. Muoi Tieu has an adjacent alleyway that leads from the front (facing Carroll Ave) to the parking lot in the back adjacent to Willow Ave.

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

We are proposing to install neon lighted lettering with the restaurant's name on the soffit above the main entrance to the restaurant. The soffit currently has a metal frame around it with a canvas wrap. The proposal would be to remove the canvas wrap, support the metal frame with stainless steel cables bolted to the brick wall.

.050

The frame would then be covered with .63" aluminum (painted flat black) and the neon lettering would be attached to it. The aluminum would be painted a flat black and the lettering under the neon lettering would be hand painted.

Work Item 1:	
Description of Current Condition:	Proposed Work:
Front of the restaurant: soffit made of aluminum siding over the front entrance of the restaurant, currently covered with metal frame and canvas wrap.	
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/Exc avation/Land scaing	*	*		*	*	*	*
Tree Removal	*	*		*	*	*	*
Siding/ Roof Changes	*	*	*	*	*		*
Window/ Door Changes	*	*	*	*	*		*
Masonry Repair/ Repoint	*	*	*	*	*		*
Signs	*	*	*	*	*		*

Muoi Tieu: Exterior Signage HWAP Application (1077218)

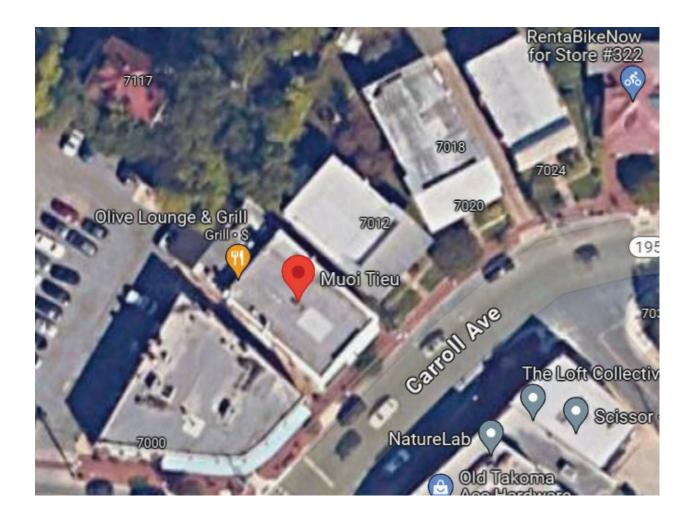
Muoi Tieu (7006 Carroll Ave, Suite A, Takoma Park, MD 20912)

I. Written Description

The façade of the restaurant currently has a soffit over the front entrance with a canvas wrap and metal frame around the soffit. The canvas is currently painted black with no lettering. The canvas covering the soffit itself is 2.5' tall x 17.5' wide x 3' deep.

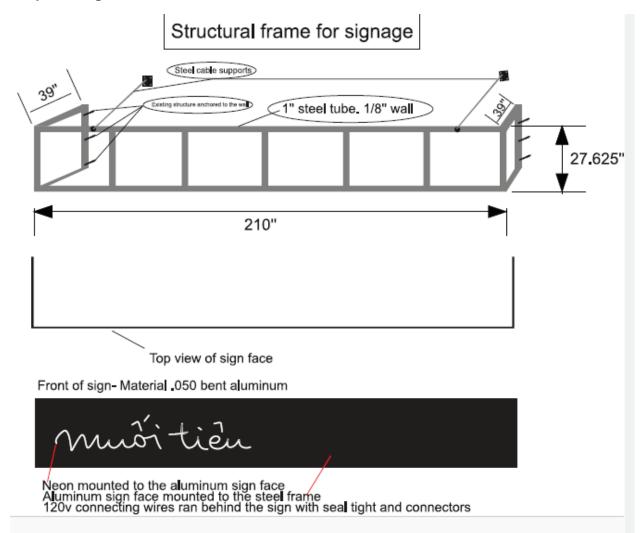
We are proposing to remove the canvas wrap and reinforce the metal frame with stainless steel cables bolted to the brick. We would wrap the frame with 0.050 aluminum, painted flat black, that would be 2.5' tall x 17.5' wide x 3' deep. We propose adding the script MUOI TIEU logo in real white neon attached directly to the awning. We would connect to the existing electric supply on the outside of the building and the conduit will be concealed behind the soffit frame. The size of the neon will be approximately 17" tall x 92" wide. The neon lettering would be raised approximate 2" above the aluminum. We will hand paint "MUOI TIEU" in block lettering directly on the aluminum behind the neon and the words "SALT & PEPPER" in smaller size would also be hand-painted.

II. Site Plan



III. Plans/Elevation

Shop Drawings:





- The soffit itself is 2.5' tall x 17.5' wide x 3' deep.
- The size of the neon will be approximately 17" tall x 92" wide.

IV. Materials/Specification

Front/soffit signage:

- Soffit made of aluminum siding, currently covered by metal frame and canvas wrap
- Canvas wrap to be replaced with .050 aluminum painted flat black
- Metal frame to be supported with stainless steel cables attached to brick
- Handwritten script letters "Muoi Tieu" would be made of real white neon lighting, raised approximately 2" above aluminum
- Block letters "Muoi Tieu" and "Salt and Pepper" will be hand painted on aluminum

V. Photographs

Current:



Proposed:



^{*}Please disregard rendering of lightbox sign in the alley.

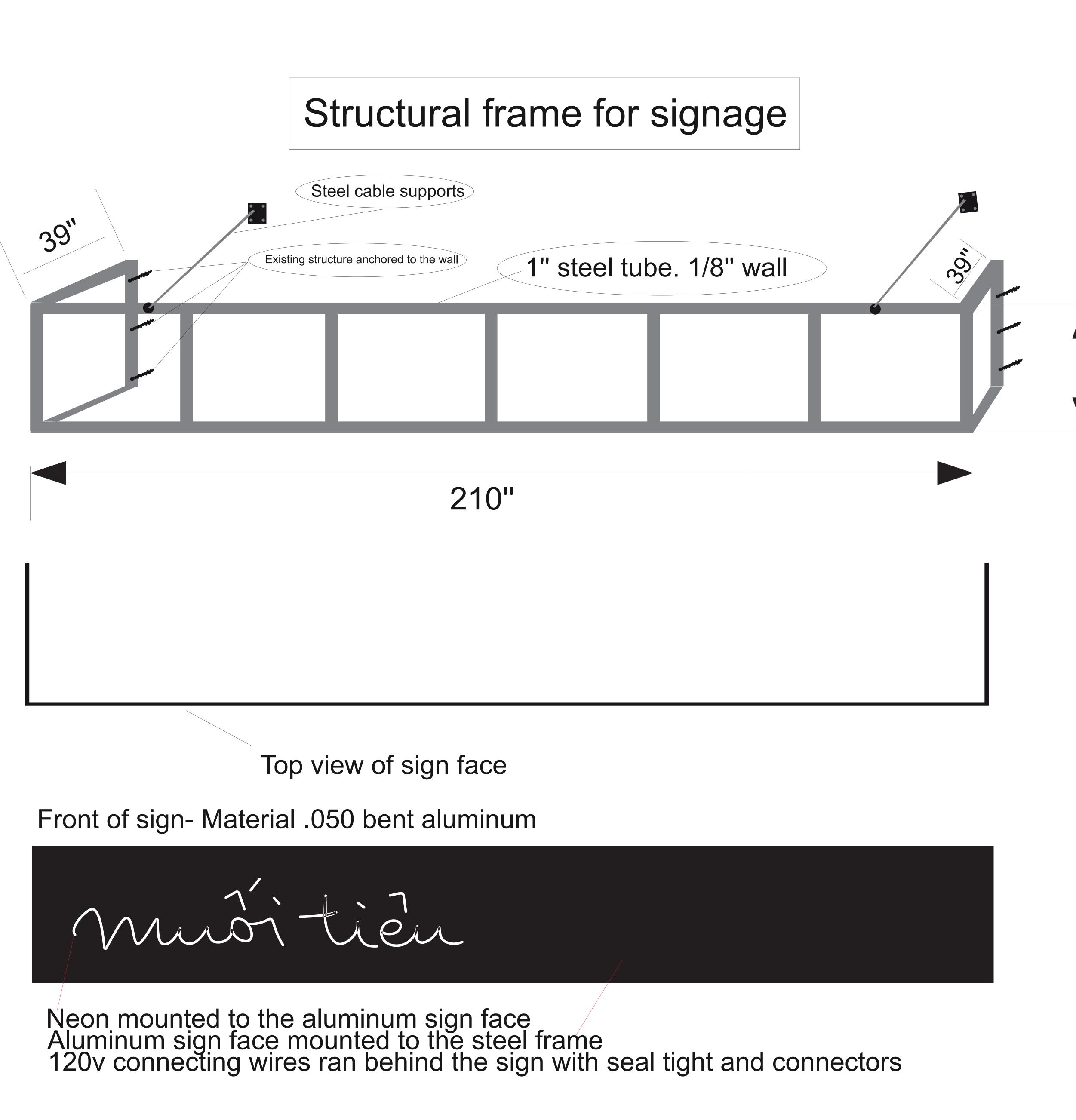
Muoi Tieu: Exterior Signage HWAP Application (1077218)

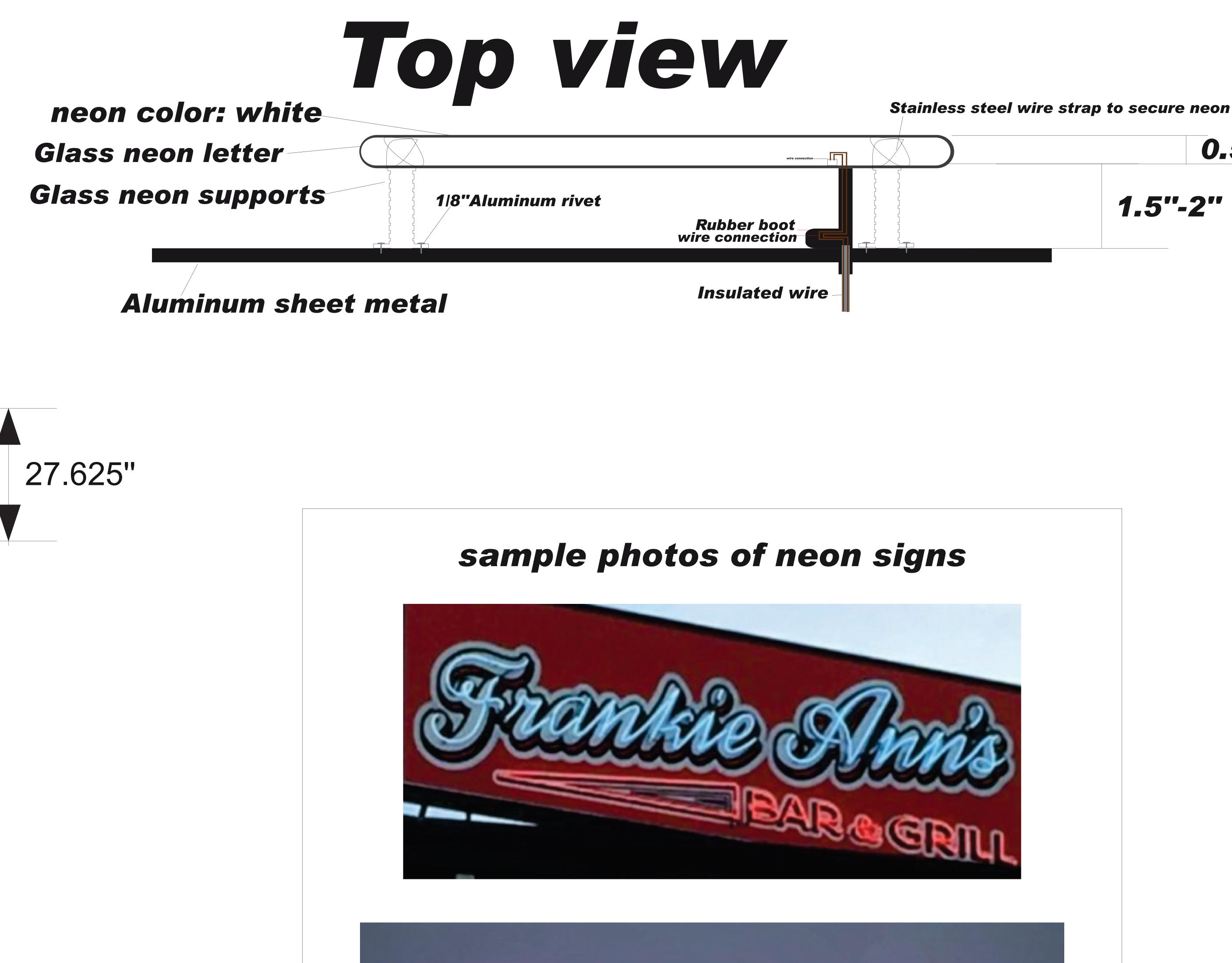
VI. Property Owner Address:

K.C. Associates 10511 Summit Ave Kensington, MD 20895

Neon sizing - Representation address-

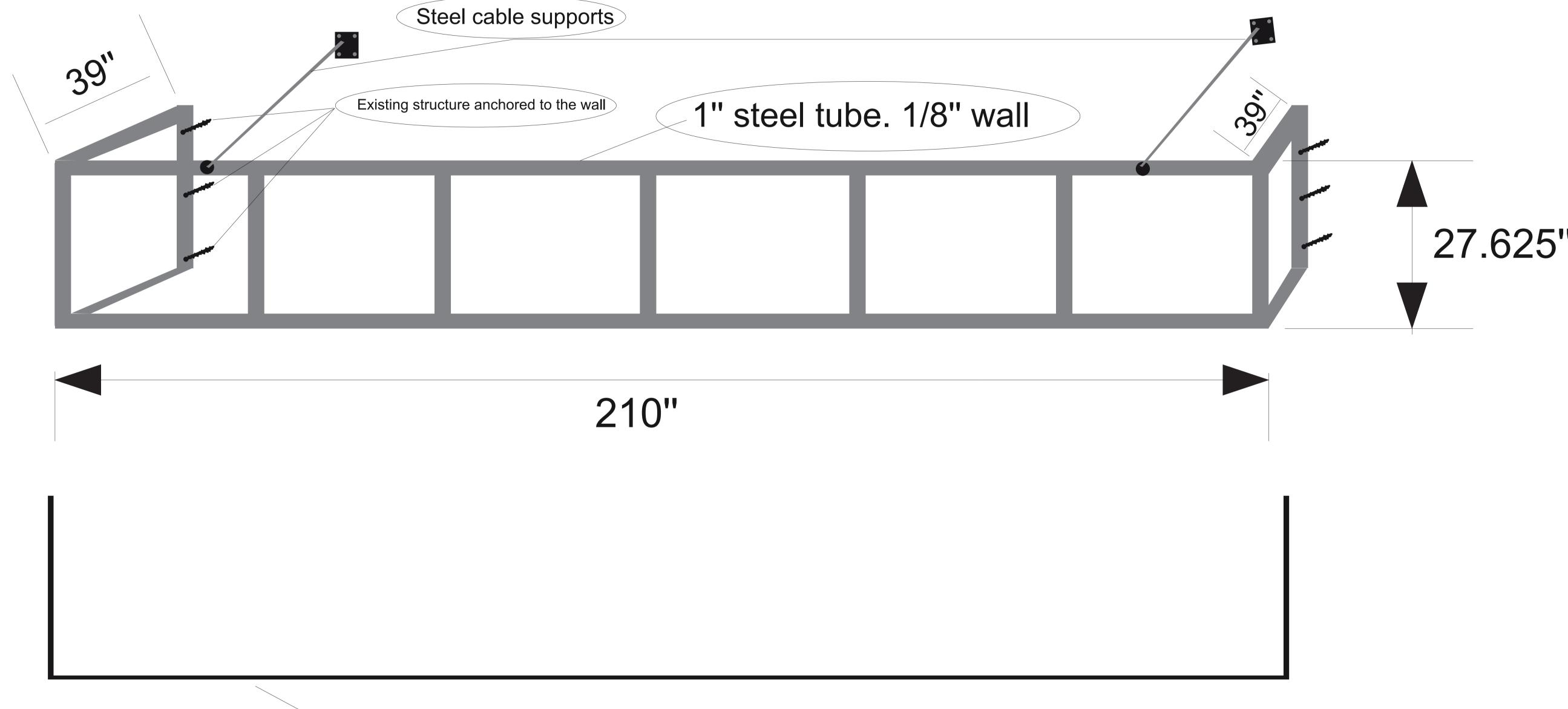






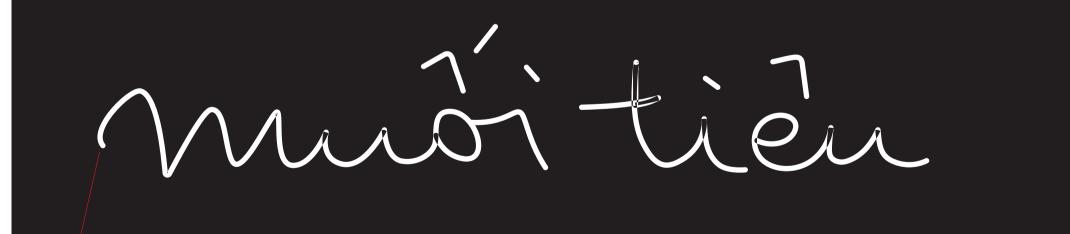


Structural frame for signage



Top view of sign face

Front of sign- Material .050 bent aluminum



Neon mounted to the aluminum sign face Aluminum sign face mounted to the steel frame 120v connecting wires ran behind the sign with seal tight and connectors