

Docket Item # 6
BAR CASE # 2008-0117

BAR Meeting
September 3, 2008

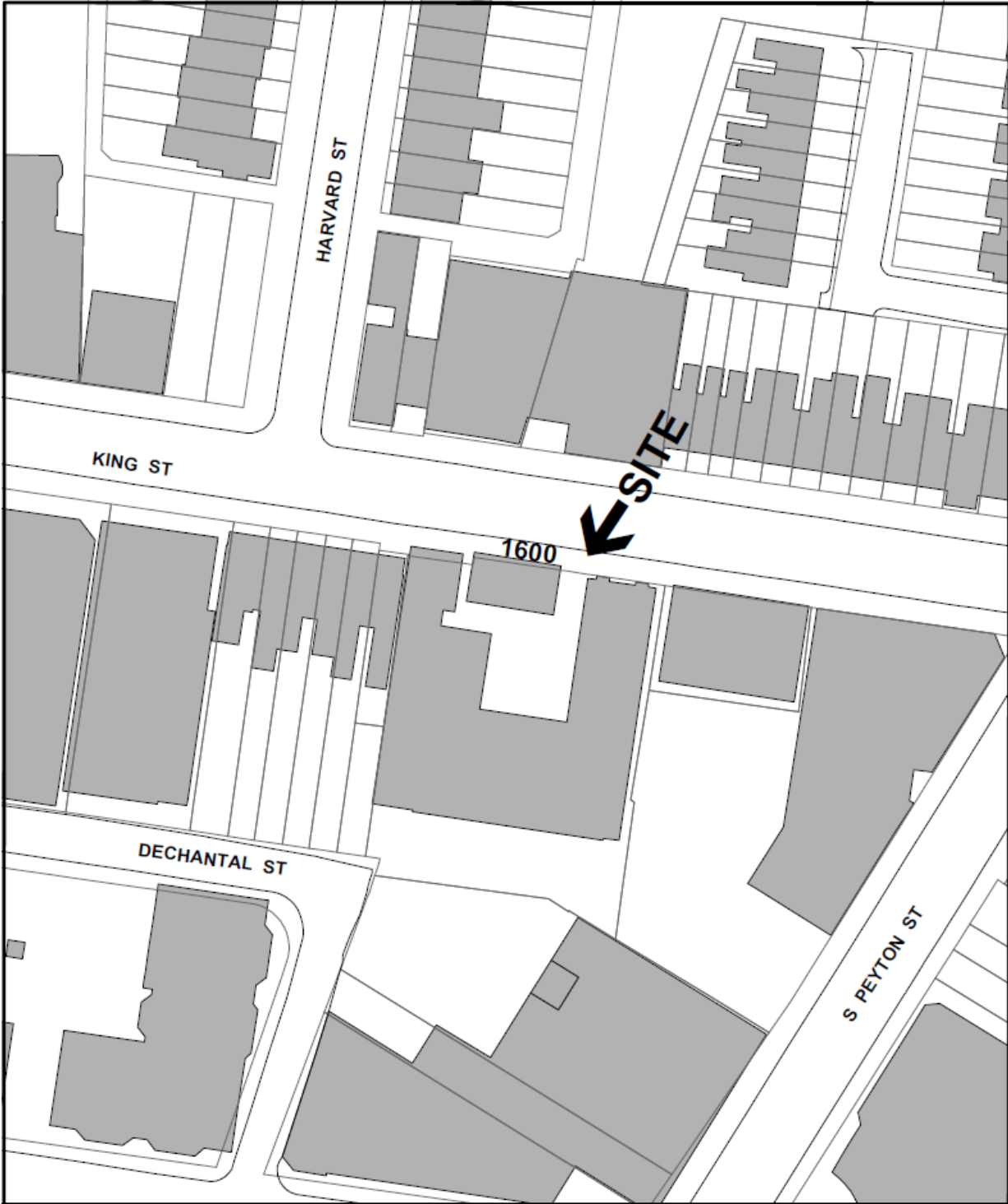
ISSUE: Signage

APPLICANT: DSF Long King Street, LLC, by Catherine Puskar

LOCATION: 1600 King Street

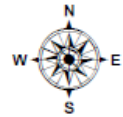
ZONE: KR/King Street Retail

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends approval.



BAR CASE #2008-0117

9/3/2008



I. ISSUE:

The applicant is requesting approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness for signage at the DSF Long project, now referred to as the Lorien Hotel and Spa, at 1600 King Street. The signage package includes a total of six signs for the hotel development along upper King Street. The proposed signs are as follows, beginning with the sign on the eastern most building working west, using the key supplied by the applicant in their submittal packet:

- A) Restaurant/Retail Canopy Sign: One wall mounted canopy sign spanning 10' 8 ½" in length, projecting 2' ½" from the facade, with a width of 1'8", located above the main entrance to the restaurant, curved to mimic the arched opening. The canopy will maintain a 10'6" clearance from the sidewalk. The sign face area is 9' 7 ½". The aluminum canopy will include cove lighting to light wash the face of the sign. Four recessed spot lights will be installed with the canopy, pointing down. The main face of the canopy will be a black color with white trim. The sign lettering will be applied aluminum letters, in a grayish color. The text will read "BRABO", with a subtext of the restaurant chef (a place holder is indicated due the nondisclosure of the chef at this time). The canopy will be installed through the mortar joints on the facade. The applicant has provided specifications on the proposed canopy sign.

- B) Hotel Identification Canopy Sign: A curved metal sign, with an 11'6" radius, will span between the eastern most building and the 100-year Old Building, over the passageway into the courtyard entrance to the hotel. The canopy will span 15'3", and have a clearance of 8'9". The canopy will be two tiered, with free standing ½" thick brushed aluminum letters attached to the top/ second tier. The letters will be bracketed and welded to the canopy. The second tier also includes LED cove lighting. The text will read "LORIEN" with smaller text "hotel & spa". The canopy will be a black color, with the letters in brushed aluminum. A 4" physical gap will be maintained between the new sign and the 100-Year Old Building, with a 4" square tube welded to the sign and connected to the interior of the building. On the eastern building, the canopy will be fully attached to the façade, and connected with a 4" square tube.

- C) Hotel Identification Wall Sign: A wall mounted identification sign will be installed through the mortar joints on the north elevation of the new hotel building, adjacent to the main entrance, within the courtyard area. The sign will consists of individual ¼" aluminum letters, with each letter of the hotel 11" tall, and the smaller letters 2 1/2" tall. The sign will span 4'6", along a 7'6" span of exterior wall. The text will read "LORIEN" with subtext "hotel & spa". The letters will be a grayish metal color.

- D) Restaurant Sign: One new hanging sign will be installed using an existing decorative bracket on the façade of the 100-Year Building. The hanging/blade sign will measure 4' x 3'7", and will have a trim piece mounted along the top of the sign containing slim recessed light fixtures. The sign panel itself will be aluminum, with white trim, and the background in macadamia color (creamy brown). The text will read "BRABO" with subtext "TASTING ROOM". The text will be in black lettering.

- E) Restaurant/Retail Canopy Sign: One wall mounted canopy sign spanning 9' 6" in length, projecting 2' 6", with a width of 1'10 1/2", located above the main entrance to the restaurant/retail space on the remnant façade retained on the western most building. The sign will be rectangular to mimic the shape of the transom below the canopy. The canopy will maintain a 9'1/2" clearance from the sidewalk. The sign face area is 8' 6". The aluminum canopy will include recessed spot lighting under the canopy and LED cove lighting to light wash the face of the sign. The main face of the canopy will be a black color with white trim. The sign lettering will be applied aluminum letters, maintaining a grayish color. The text will read "THE BUTCHER'S BLOCK", with a subtext "A MARKET BY (the name of restaurant chef)" (a place holder is indicated due the nondisclosure of the chef at this time). The canopy will be installed through the mortar joints on the facade. The applicant has provided specifications on the proposed canopy sign.
- F) Hotel Projecting Sign: A projecting sign will be installed at the second story corner of the remnant façade of the western most building. The sign will be 9' tall, 2'6" wide, and have a thickness of 1'11". The sign will be aluminum with white cornice type trim at the top and bottom. Individual aluminum letters will be installed on the cabinet. The sign will have internal illumination. The double sided sign text will read "LORIEN, hotel & spa". The main cabinet will be in black and the lettering in a grayish aluminum. The sign will be attached to the building using 4" square tube supports and plate mount. A 1'2" gap will separate the sign from the façade. The sign will maintain a 14" clearance to the sidewalk.

II. HISTORY:

Prior to the commencement of the project, the property included a circa 1900 building at 1518 King Street, the row of three 100 Year Old Buildings at 1520, 1522 & 1524 King Street, and a circa 1900 building at 1600-1602 King Street. The rest of the property, on the interior and rear of the block, was used as a parking lot.

For this on-going project, the Board most recently approved alterations to the previously approved plans, on November 14, 2007 (BAR Case # 2007-0234). These alterations included changes to the roof top penthouse, windows and storefront changes to remnant façade, and windows on the new construction of the hotel. The other conditions of the Board's approval on January 18, 2006 of façade materials and design details for the new building have been met.

On January 18, 2006, the Board approved the façade materials and details of design for the new building to be constructed at 1600 King Street (BAR Case #2005-0165). Although the project was then just outside the boundaries of the Old and Historic Alexandria District, the Board reviewed the project for two reasons: BAR review of the new building was a condition of the original Development Special Use Permit (DSUP#2002-0041, 4/16/2005) and a row of designated 100-Year Old Buildings at 1520, 1522 & 1524 King Street was included in the project. The demolition of the rear sheds of these buildings and alterations to the rear facades were approved by the Board in 2005 and 2006 (BAR Case #2005-0164, 9/20/2005 and BAR Case #2005-0165, 9/20/2006). Subsequently, the historic district was extended along King

Street to include the block on which the project is located and the applicant decided to convert the project from condominium to hotel use.

The change in use to hotel with restaurant and day spa was approved by an amendment to the prior Development Special Use Permit (DSUP#2006-0036, 4/14/2007).

III. ANALYSIS:

Proposed signs meet Zoning Ordinance requirements.

In general, Staff is supportive of the proposed sign package for this large project located prominently along upper King Street. The applicant has met with Staff to discuss the proposal, their operational needs, and to address initial concerns expressed by Staff.

According to the Design Guidelines, “signs should be designed in styles, materials, type faces, colors and lettering that are appropriate and sympathetic to the historic style of the building... Signs should be as simple as possible and avoid repetitious and undue verbiage... Signs should be designed to be compatible with the historic building or structure... Signs should not detract from the architectural characteristics of historic structures. Similarly, signs should not overwhelm or obscure the architecture and decorative features of historic buildings... Buildings with multiple business and retail tenants should have a sign plan providing for coordinated graphics and placement.”

In regards to sign installation, the Design Guidelines state “signs should not be attached to a building in a manner which requires the removal of historic materials to create the minimum clearance height required by the building code. On masonry buildings, signs should be anchored through the mortar joints rather than directly into the masonry unit. Signs should be professionally installed so that the final appearance is neat and clean.”

As stated above, Staff supports the use of an aluminum metal material for the sign canopies and the approach for lighting. By containing the lighting within the canopy, the building facades have a cleaner appearance and do not have additional light fixture which add to visual clutter. The consistent use of color, type face, and materials demonstrate that the signs are related to the same complex of uses, while the different shapes provide some contrast and diversity along the streetscape. Staff also recognizes that the text on the signs has been kept to a minimum as specified in the Design Guidelines.

A particular concern of Staff has been the curved sign attached to the new eastern building and the 100-Year Old Building. Staff did not want this sign to negatively impact the 100-Year Old Building in its attachment, nor detract from the architectural characteristics of the building. The applicant has proposed to connect the sign with a 4” gap that provides a visual and physical break, which enables the 100-Year Old Building to remain largely unaltered. Therefore, the sign could be removed and the historic building appearance maintained and preserved. Staff reminds the applicant that the attachment should be through the mortar joint so as not to negatively impact the historic brick of the building.

Another area of concern of Staff had been the projecting blade sign at the corner of the western remnant façade building. The applicant has reduced the size of the sign to an acceptable size, and Staff is now supportive.

Therefore, Staff recommends approval.

IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval.

V. CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

Legend: C - code requirement R - recommendation S - suggestion F- finding

Code Enforcement:

- F-1 The applicant shall obtain a sign permit for the proposed sign and/ or wall lettering.
- C-1 Wall letters / signs must comply with USBC [H103-H111] Please indicate the method to be used for anchoring the letters to the wall.
- C-2 Projecting, hanging signs must comply with USBC [H103-H107, H112] for type of materials, maximum projection, vertical clearance below all parts of the sign, and additional loads.
- C-3 Canopies must comply with USBC 3202.3.1 for support and clearance from the sidewalk, and the applicable sections of USBC's Chapter 11. Structural designs of fabric covered canopies must comply with USBC 3105.3. The horizontal portions of the framework must not be less than 8 feet nor more than 12 feet above the sidewalk and the clearance between the covering or valance and the sidewalk must not be less than 7 feet.
- C-4 Canopies must comply with USBC 3105.1 and the applicable sections of USBC: Chapter 16. Structural designs of fabric covered canapés must comply with USBC 3105.3.
- C-6 Awnings must comply with all applicable requirements of USBC 3105.3 and 3202.3.1 Retractable and fixed awnings must have a minimum 7 foot clearance form a sidewalk to the lowest part of the framework or any fixed portion of any retractable awning is required. Retractable awnings must be securely fastened to the building and can not extend closer than 24 inches in from the curb line (USBC 3202.3.1).
- C-7 Fixed awnings must be designed and constructed to withstand wind or other lateral loads and live loads required by the USBC. Structural members must be protected to prevent deterioration (USBC 3105.3).

Historic Alexandria:

No comments received.

VI. IMAGES



Figure 1: Proposed Sign Locations



Figure 2: Double Faced Blade Sign Detail

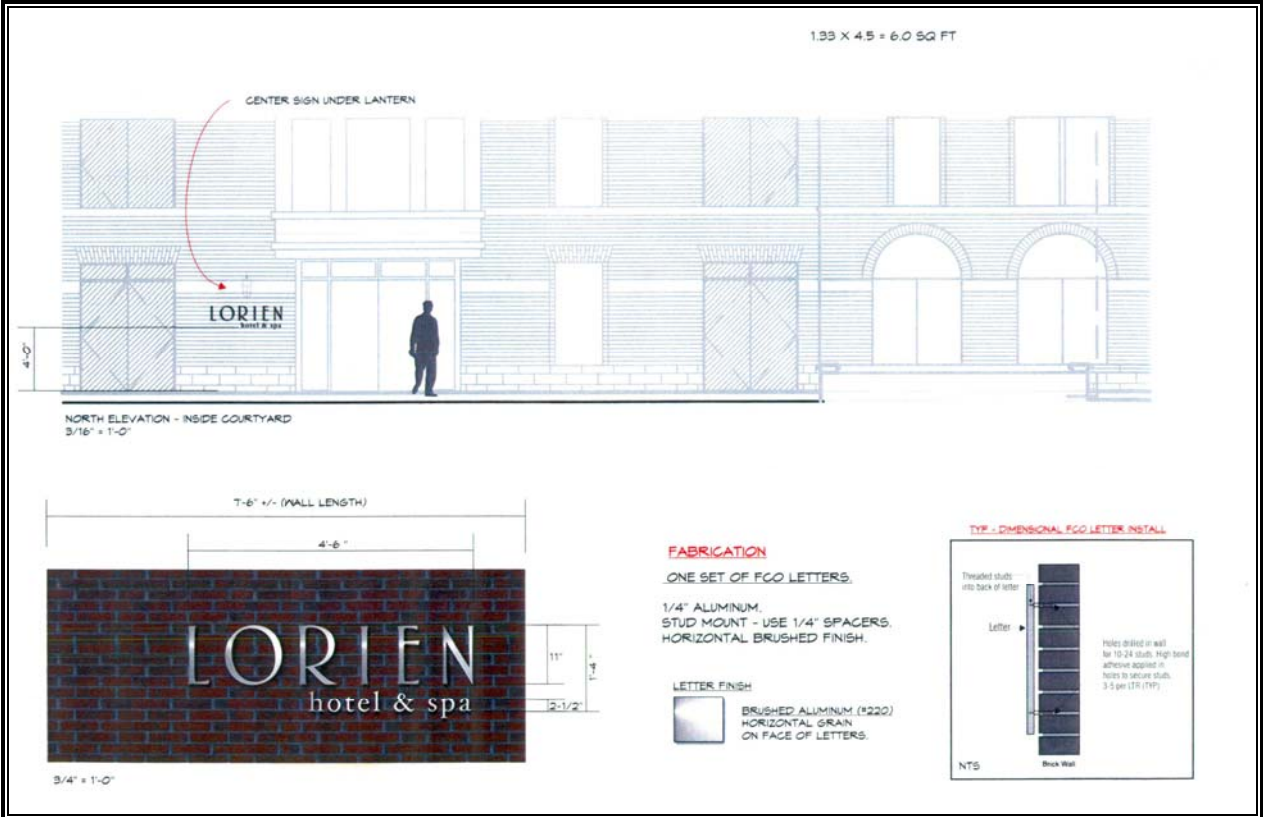


Figure 3: Mounted Courtyard Sign

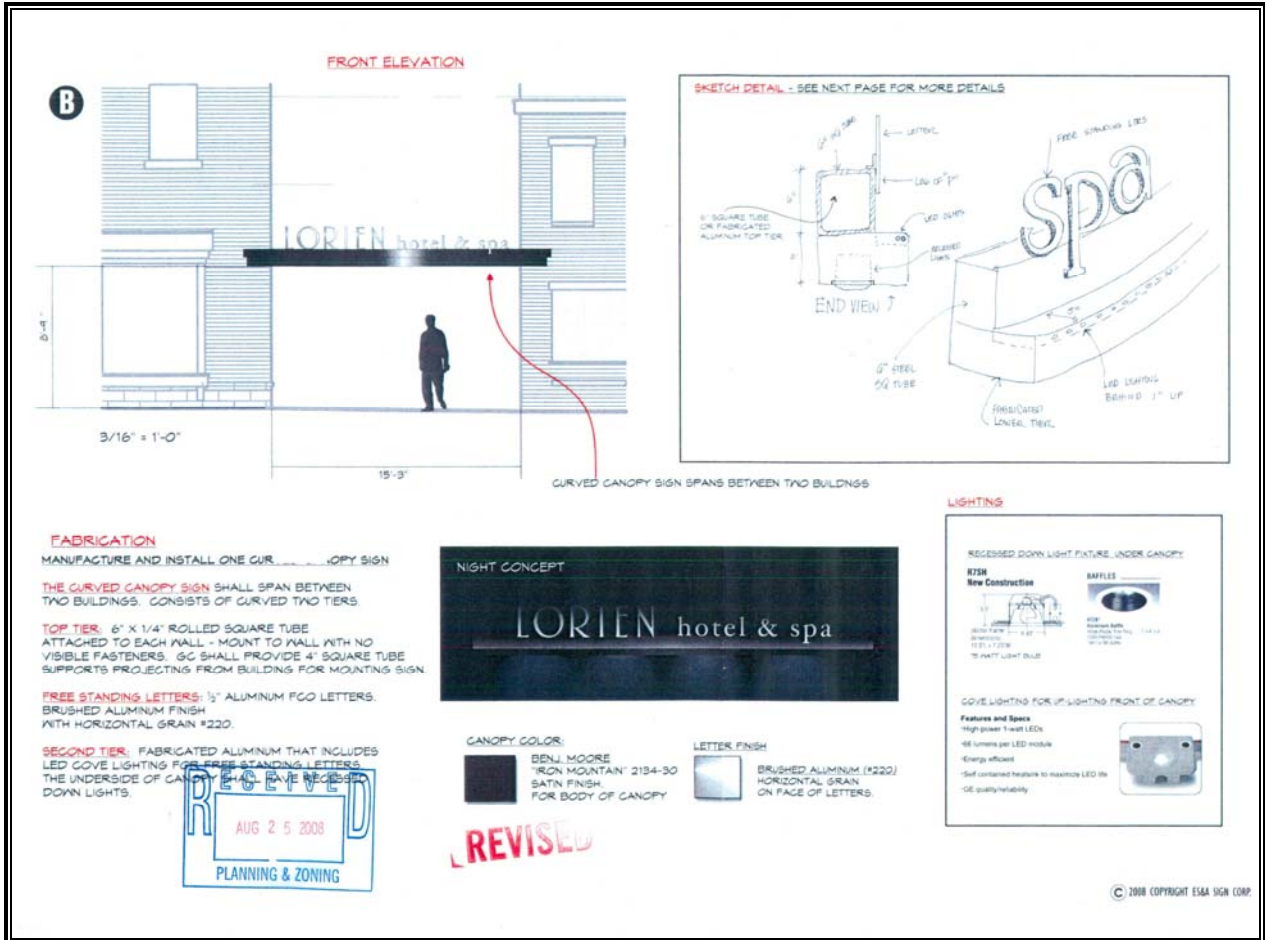


Figure 4: Canopy Sign

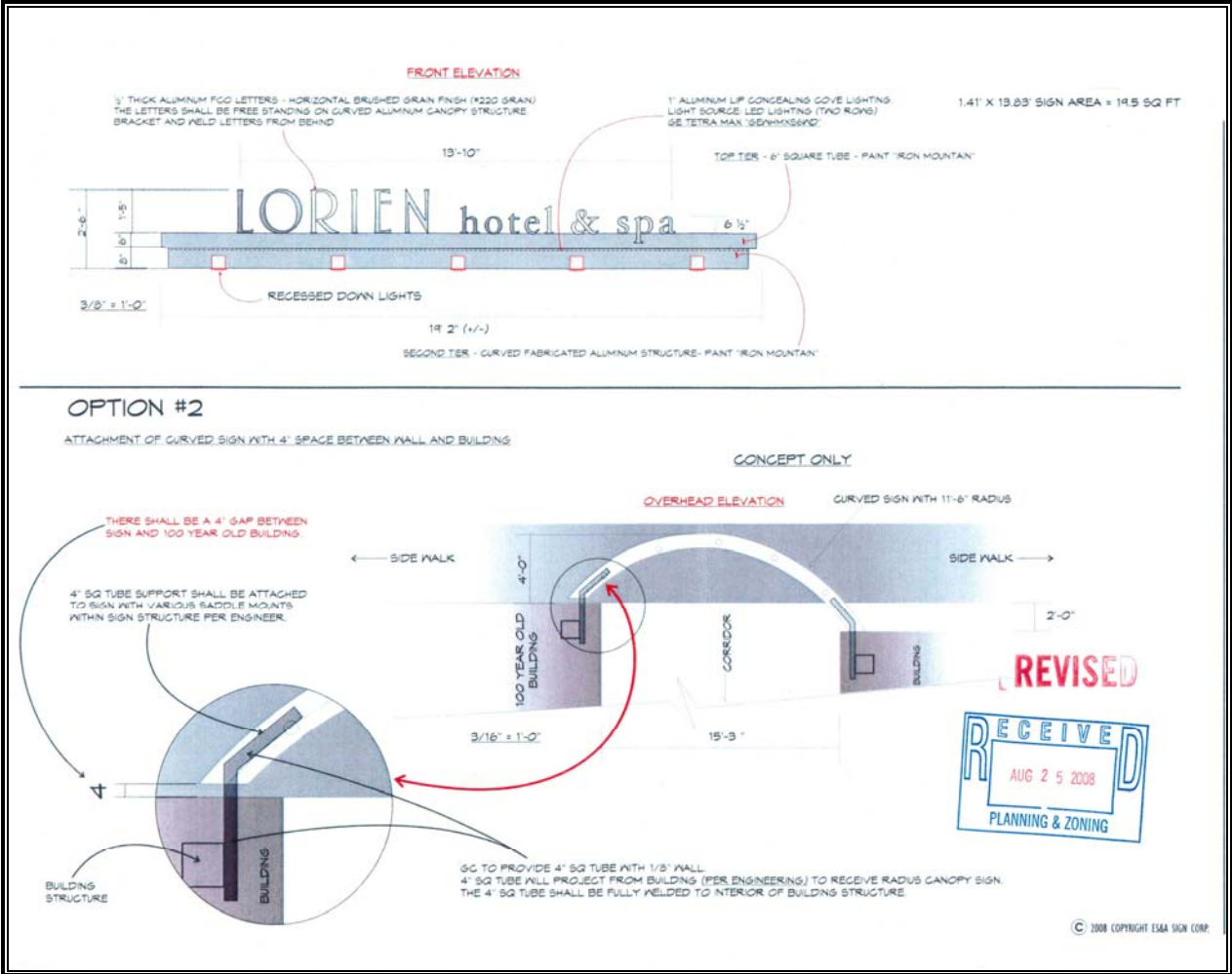


Figure 5: Canopy Sign Detail



Figure 7: Hanging Restaurant Sign

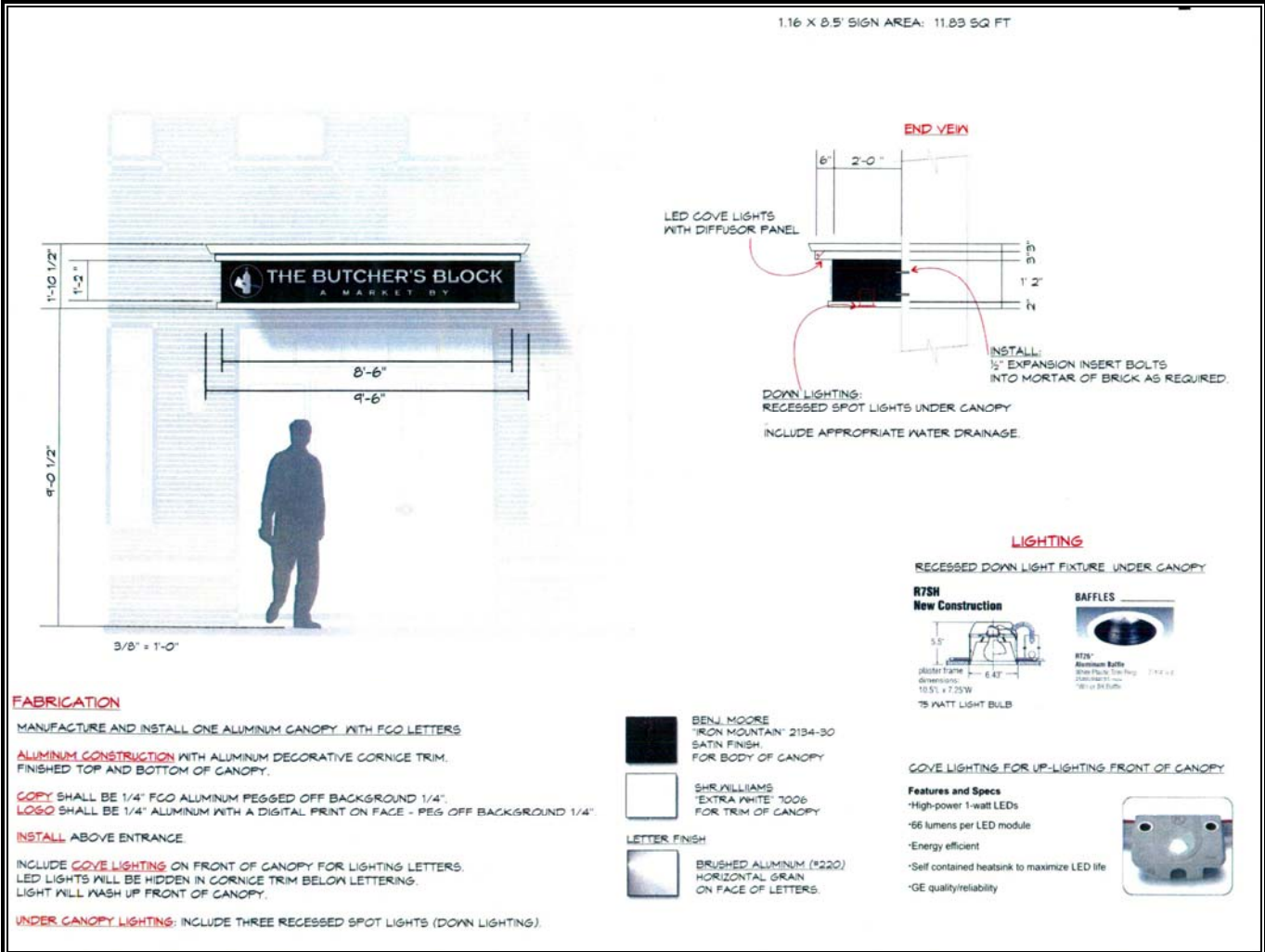


Figure 8: Restaurant Sign