

Docket Item # 1  
BAR CASE #2010-0325

BAR Meeting  
January 19, 2011

**ISSUE:** Signage  
**APPLICANT:** CHLN, Inc. (Chart House Restaurant)  
**LOCATION:** 1 Cameron Street  
**ZONE:** CD / Commercial

---

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:** Staff recommends approval of the application, subject to Staff approval of the intensity of the LED illumination in the field.

**BOARD ACTION, December 15, 2010:** Approved as amended, 6-0

**CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL:**

1. Gooseneck lighting will be utilized to light all large signage
2. All large signs will be framed with wood trim.

**SPEAKERS**

Mr. Martel, representing the Chart House, spoke in support of the proposal, as submitted, stating that the restaurant chain is currently undergoing a “re-branding.”

**BOARD DISCUSSION**

Mr. Smeallie noted that the revised designs are an improvement from the original application submittal presented to staff. Yet, he encouraged the applicant to re-study the lighting for the sign. He objected to the halo style lighting and recommended more traditional “gooseneck” lights, which are a common historic fixture within the district.

Mr. Neale concurred with Mr. Smeallie and preferred the more traditional style lighting. He also recommended that the applicant consider surrounding the sign with a wood “picture frame” to have it complement the existing architecture.

Mr. von Senden, Mr. Carlin and Mr. Fitzgerald agreed with Mr. Neale’s recommendation.

Mr. Fitzgerald moved approval of the application, with the conditions that the large signs be surrounded with a molded frame and lit from above with gooseneck lighting.

Mr. Smeallie seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

**REASON**

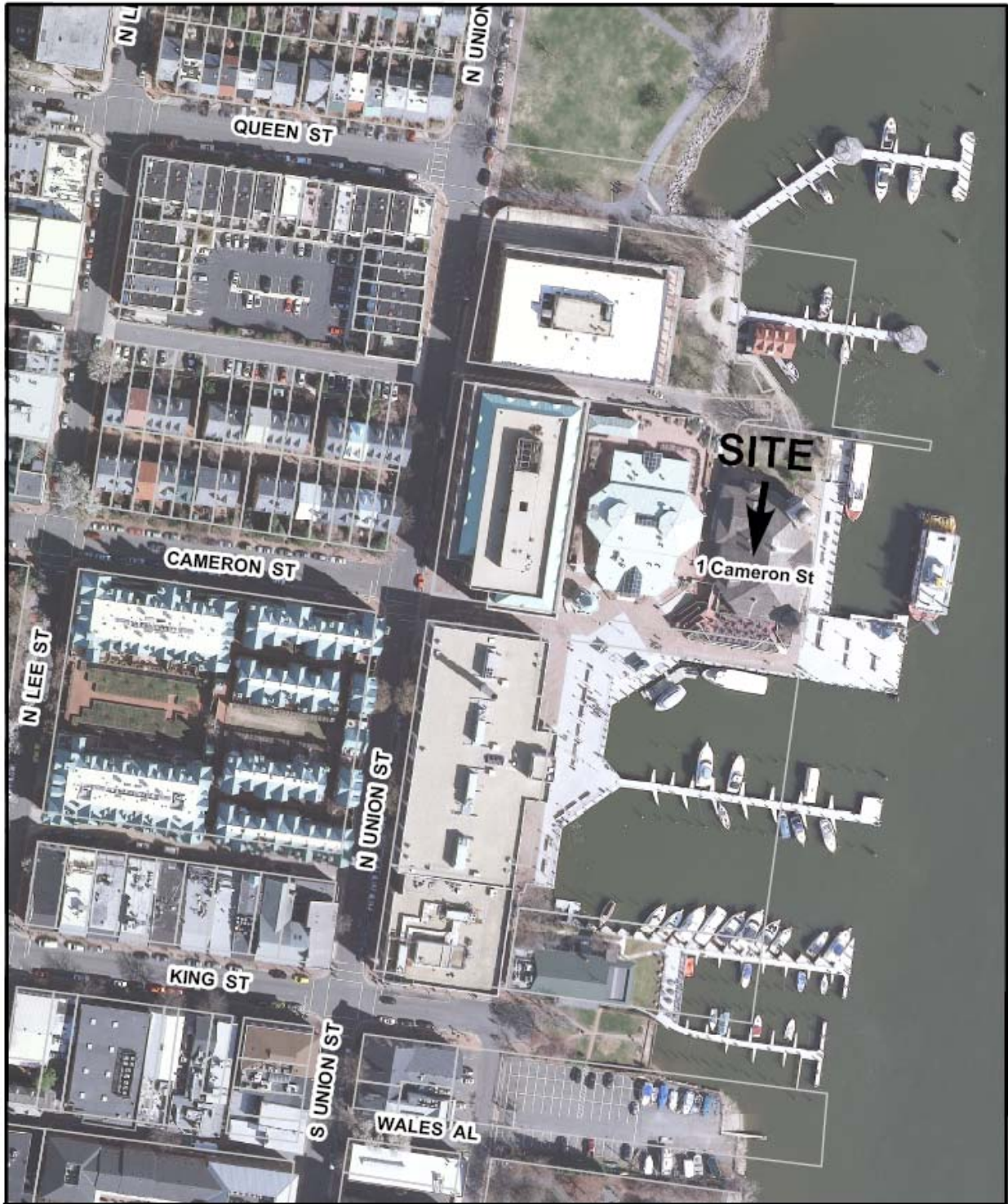
The Board generally agreed with the staff report but further believed that the halo style lighting

and contemporary box sign were incompatible with the architectural character of the Chart House Restaurant building and the historic waterfront.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION, December 15, 2010: Staff recommends approval of the application, subject to Staff approval of the intensity of the LED illumination in the field.

**\*\*EXPIRATION OF APPROVALS NOTE:** In accordance with Sections 10-106(B) and 10-206(B) of the Zoning Ordinance, any official Board of Architectural Review approval will expire 12 months from the date of final approval if the work is not commenced and diligently and substantially pursued by the end of that 12-month period.

**\*\*BUILDING PERMIT NOTE:** Most projects approved by the Board of Architectural Review require the issuance of one or more construction permits by Building and Fire Code Administration (including signs). The applicant is responsible for obtaining all necessary construction permits after receiving Board of Architectural Review approval. Contact Code Administration, Room 4200, City Hall, 703-746-4200 for further information.



**BAR CASE #2010-0325**



**Update:**

At the December 15, 2010 BAR hearing, the Board approved replacement signage for the Charthouse with the conditions that a wood frame be added around the signs and that the proposed internal illumination on the main sign be replaced with gooseneck light fixtures for external illumination. Because the Board approved the application (with conditions), the applicant was unable to appeal the Board's decision to City Council, and requested that the Board reconsider the application. In response to the Board's request the applicant added a raised border to frame the sign, as shown in the revised drawing. The applicant continues to request the internally illuminated channel letters with halo backlighting, similar to what is currently installed. Changes to the application are noted in **bold** in the report.

**I. ISSUE**

The applicant is requesting approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness for signage at 1 Cameron Street, the Chart House Restaurant. The existing signage will be replaced with an updated logo that will read "CH Chart House" on all signs. The updated logo is part of a nationwide image update. The signs will have black lettering outlined in a subdued gold on an aluminum frame painted a warm gray. **The signs will have a 1.5 inch raised border.** The applicant is proposing five signs, two of which are small accessibility signs:

West Elevation:

A 21.87 square foot (10 feet by 2 feet 2 inches) illuminated wall sign. *This is the only sign proposed for illumination.* The letters will be halo lit and a white LED halo will surround the perimeter. A 1.5 square foot sign (12 inches by 18 inches) will be posted by the entrance that reads "Certified Assist Dogs Only Beyond This Point" in addition to the logo.

North Elevation:

A 27.8 square foot (8 feet 1½ inch by 3 feet 6 inch) wall sign under the oculus window and a 4.5 square foot (3 feet by 1.5 feet) wall sign with additional language "Please follow ramp." Neither sign will be illuminated.

Northeast Elevation:

A 34.38 square foot (12.5 feet by 2 feet 8¾ inch) wall sign on the corner tower element. This sign will not be illuminated.

The proposed signage matches the existing signage in area however the previous BAR approval was for three signs not five though all proposed signs will replace existing signs in same size and location (the large sign on the northeast elevation was not previously included in past BAR approvals).

**II. HISTORY**

The building at 1 Cameron Street is a one-story frame freestanding building in a Shingle Revival style that was originally built as a restaurant as part of the revitalization of the waterfront in **1987**.

The Board originally approved the signage for the Chart House Restaurant in 1990 (BAR Case #90-014, 10/3/90). In 2004, the Board approved replacement signage (BAR Case #2004-0171).

### **III. ANALYSIS**

The proposed alterations comply with Zoning Ordinance requirements.

The *Design Guidelines* recommend that: "...signs should be designed in styles, materials, typefaces, colors and lettering that are appropriate and sympathetic to the historic style of the building." The building is unique in the district as it is freestanding with frontage on the Potomac River and pedestrian walkways. It is often challenging for visitors to find the entrance to the restaurant due to the various ramps and walkways surrounding it, and Staff finds the additional signage does not overwhelm the building but rather helps identify the entrance. Although more signs are proposed for approval than the Board typically approves, no more than two signs (one wall and one accessibility) are ever visible from a single vantage point.

In this particular case, Staff finds the proposed signage to generally be appropriate. While the new logo is not necessarily stylistically compatible with the Shingle style architecture of the building and other buildings on the waterfront, Staff recognizes that it is part of a nationwide image update for the Chart House. The original proposal featured black lettering with a bright orange background on a shiny brushed aluminum wall sign. The illuminated sign was originally proposed to have a blue LED halo light around the perimeter. Staff expressed concern about this scheme and requested that the applicant modify the design to be more appropriate to the character of the historic district and particularly the waterfront. The modifications included the change of the wall sign background to a warm gray color and the use of a subdued gold hue in place of the orange. The blue perimeter lighting was also eliminated. **The 1.5 inch frame around the sign is an improvement as it provides a visual anchor to the sign design.**

**Staff does not object to the proposed lighting scheme and finds that the one currently illuminated sign has an appropriate level of illumination when seen in context.** However, because the proposed LED lighting is a new technology and Staff has limited experience evaluating the intensity of the light from the application material provided, we recommend that the intensity of the illumination be subject to Staff review and approval in the field. The applicant's representative verified that the intensity could be revised in the field, if necessary. The revised design is appropriate and consistent with the *Design Guidelines*. Therefore Staff recommends approval of the sign package with the condition noted above.

### **STAFF**

Catherine Miliaras, Historic Preservation Planner, Planning & Zoning  
Al Cox, FAIA, Historic Preservation Manager, Planning & Zoning

**IV. CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS**

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

Code Administration:

- C-1 A building permit is required prior to installation
- C-2 Electrical permit required prior to installation.
- C-3 Wall letters / signs must comply with USBC [H103-H111] Please indicate the method to be used for anchoring the letters to the wall.
- F-1 The applicant shall obtain a sign permit for the proposed sign and/ or wall lettering.



**IMAGES**



**Figure 1. Existing conditions, looking northeast.**



**Figure 2. Existing conditions with internally illuminated sign at night.**



Figure 3. Existing conditions, looking southwest.






**One Cameron Street  
Alexandria, VA, 22314**

09-28-1
11-18-1
11-30-1

SIGN TYPE	LOCATION	EXISTING		PROPOSED		COMMENTS
		SQ.FT.	ILLUMINATION	SQ.FT.	ILLUMINATION	
SIGN A	WEST	21.87	INTERNAL	21.87	INTERNAL	
SIGN B	NORTH	27.8	NON-ILLUM.	27.80	NON-ILLUM.	
SIGN C	NORTH	4.50	NON-ILLUM.	4.50	NON-ILLUM.	
SIGN D	NORTH EAST	34.38	NON-ILLUM.	34.38	NON-ILLUM.	

**CODE SUMMARY**

ZONING-703-838-4688- LAURIE  
 BOARD OF ARCH. REVIEW HEARINGS REQUIRED  
 (THEY WILL DETERMINE IF MONUM/PYLON IS ALLOWED)  
 WALL SIGN- 1 SQ. FT / 1 LINEAL FOOT OF FRONTAGE  
 WINDOW SIGN- 20% OF WINDOW IS PART OF TOTAL SIGN AREA




**3**  
 TEL: 8  
 9025  
 SAN D

Figure 4. Sign location diagram.



Figure 5. Previously approved proposed and existing sign on west elevation.



Figure 6. Revised proposal with border frame.

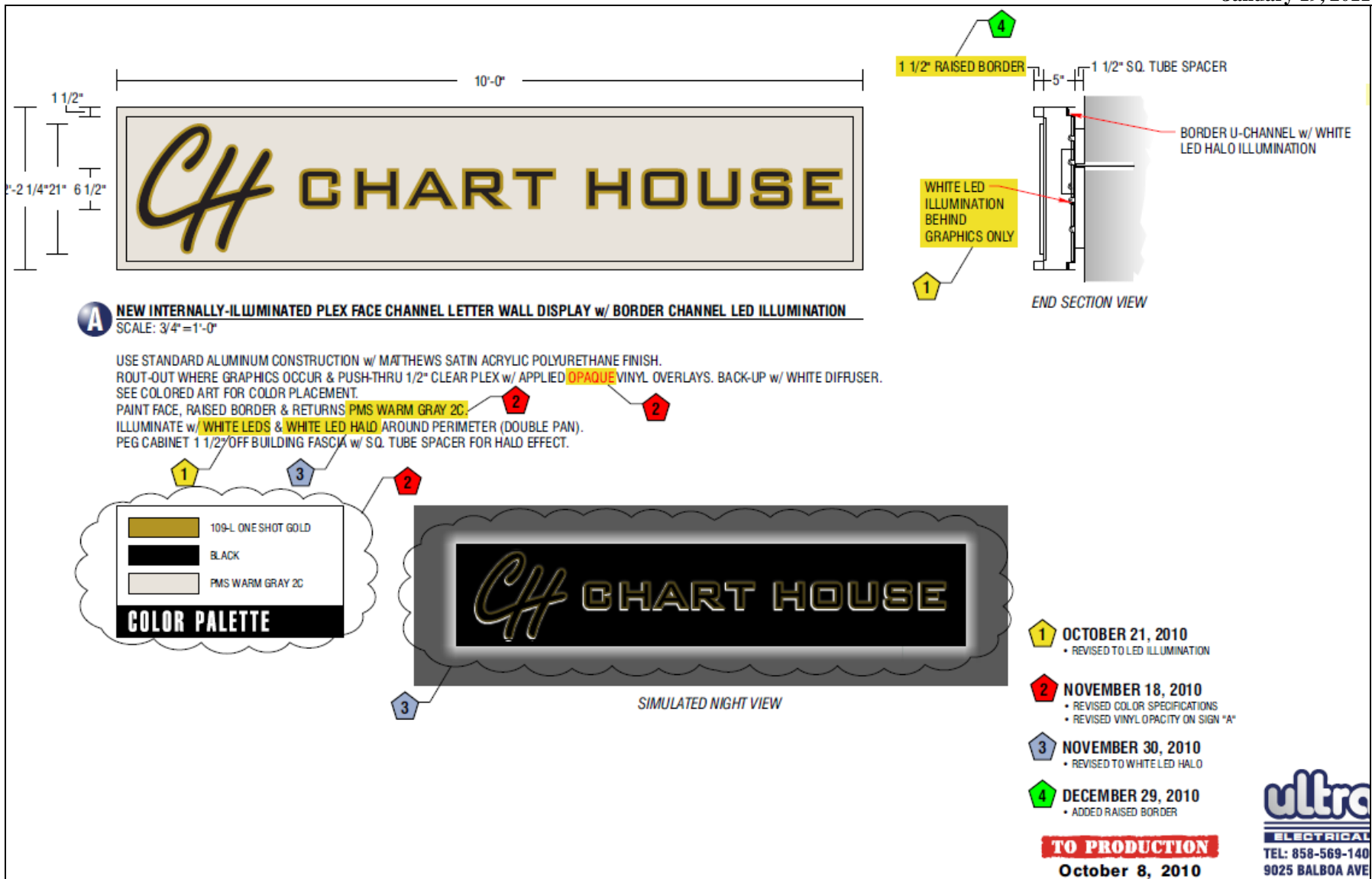


Figure 7. Revised details for illuminated sign on west elevation.



*NOTE:  
EXTERNAL ILLUMINATION BY OTHERS.*



*EXISTING CONDITIONS*

*PROPOSED SIGNAGE*

**ELEVATION**  
NO SCALE

*PHOTO LAYOUT FOR PRESENTATION PURPOSES.  
VERIFY ACTUAL INSTALLATION & DIMENSIONS.*

**Figure 8. Revised proposed and existing north elevation sign.**



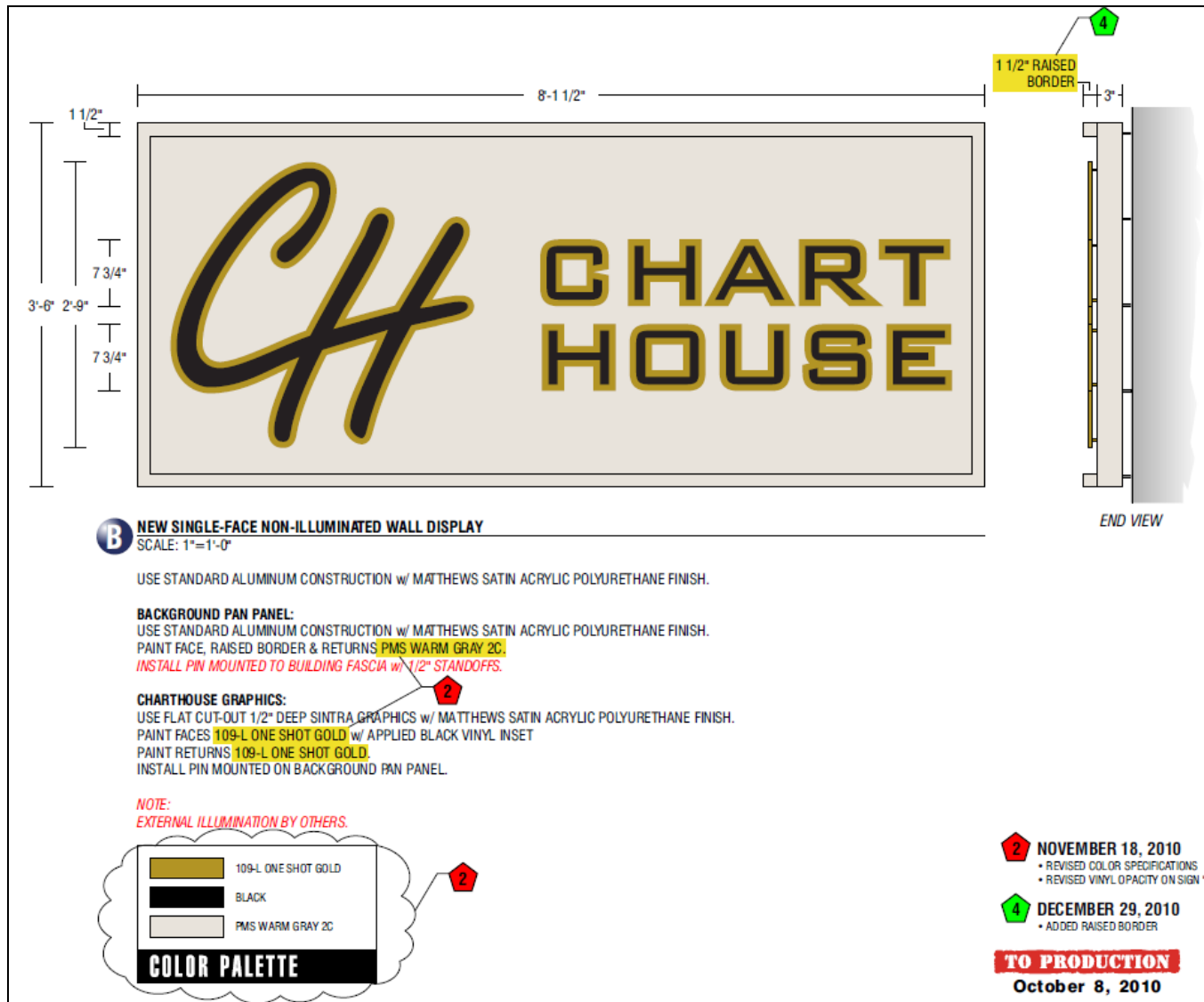


Figure 9. Revised details of north elevation sign.

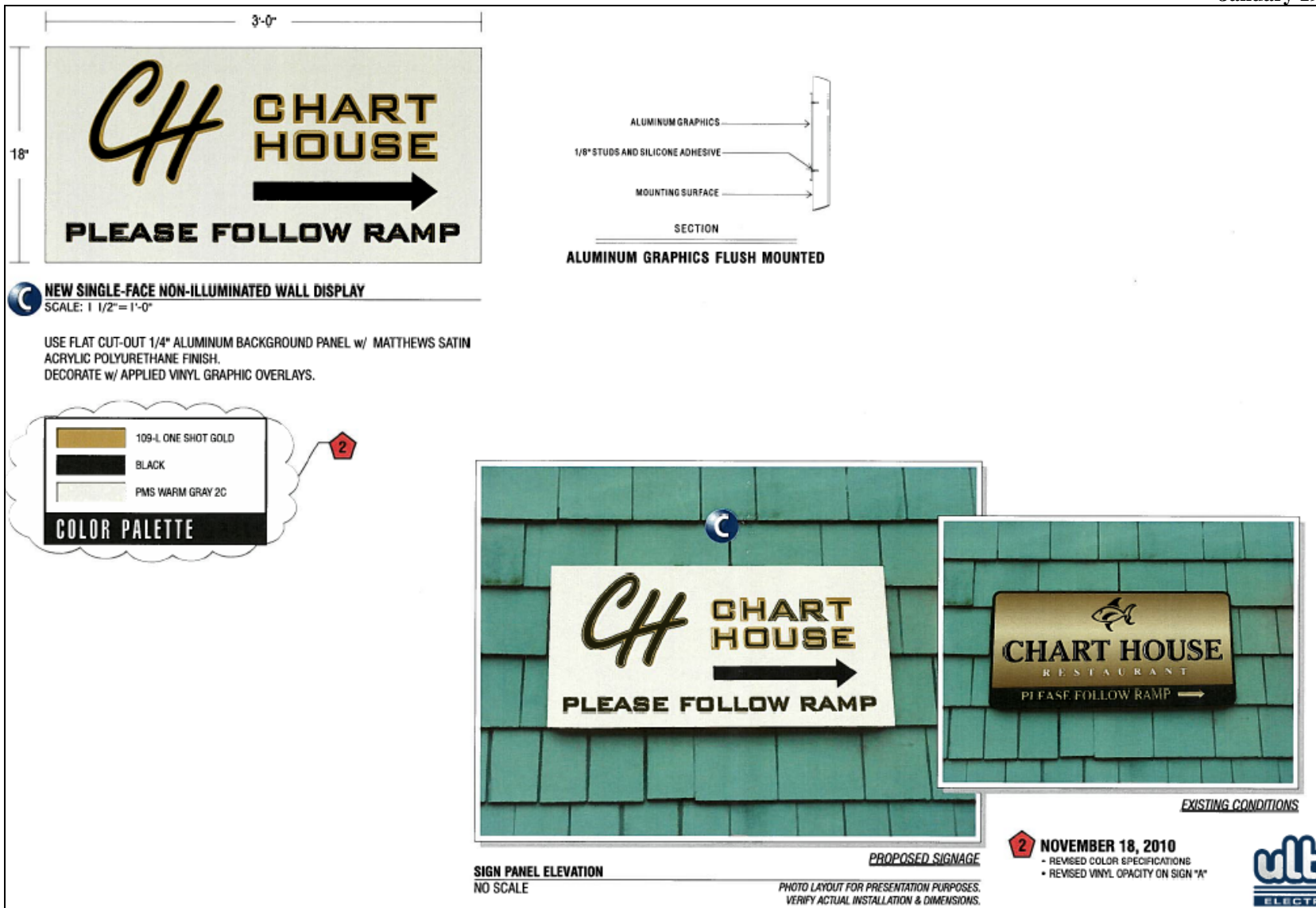


Figure 10. Existing and proposed accessibility sign on north elevation.



*EXISTING CONDITIONS*

*PROPOSED SIGNAGE*

**REAR ELEVATION**  
NO SCALE

*PHOTO LAYOUT FOR PRESENTATION PURPOSES.  
VERIFY ACTUAL INSTALLATION & DIMENSIONS.*

**Figure 11. Revised proposed and existing sign on northeast elevation.**

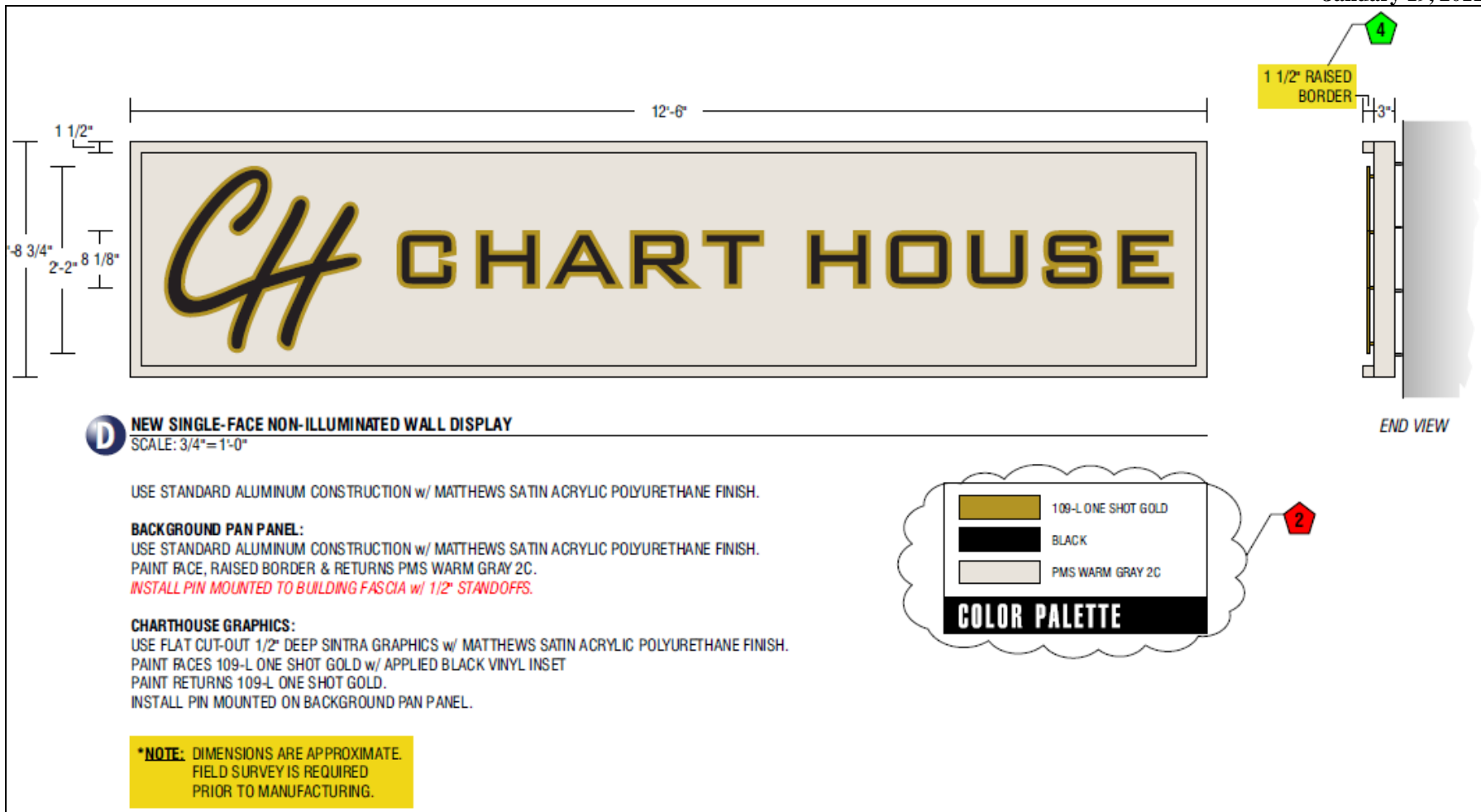


Figure 12. Revised details of northeast sign.

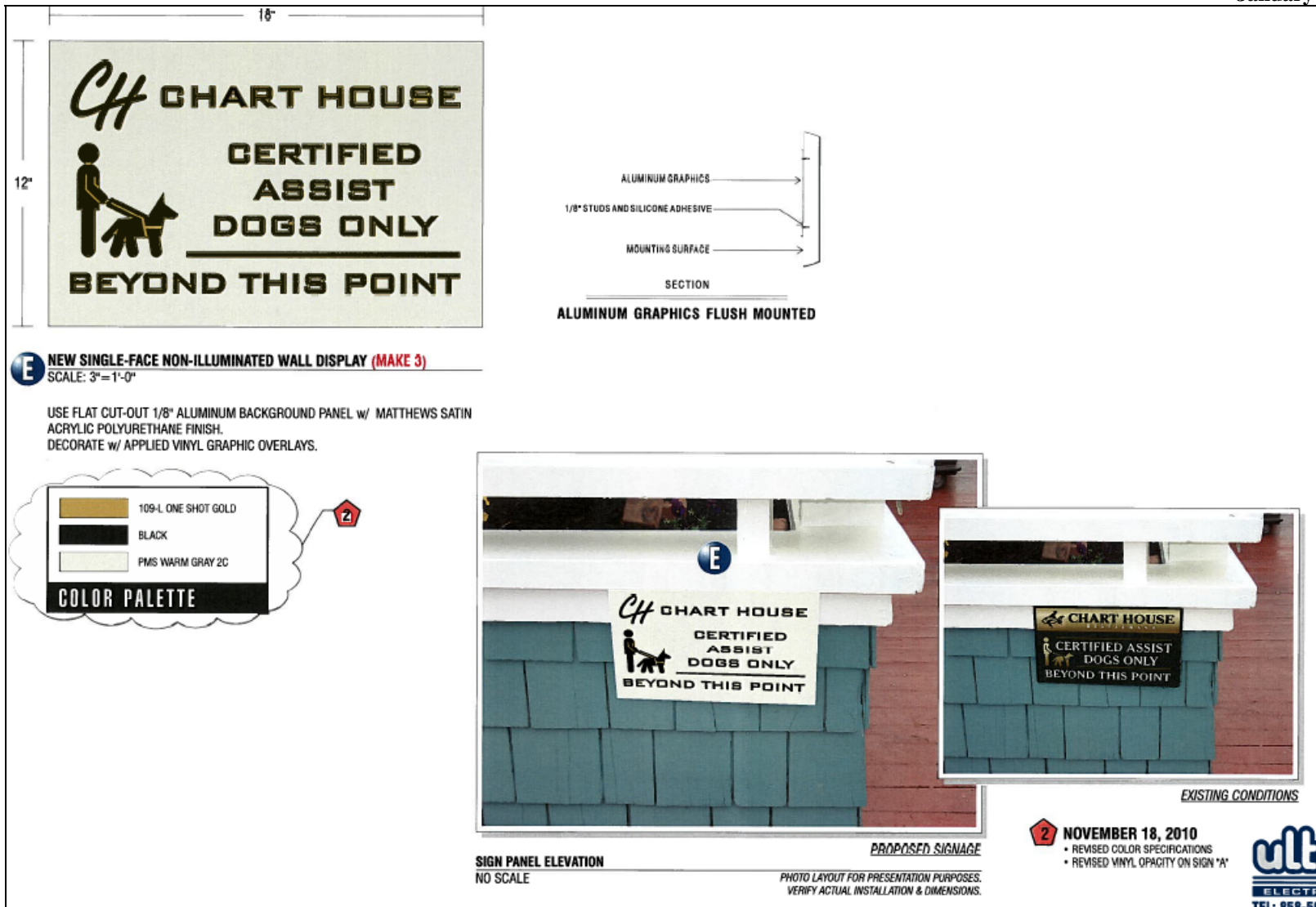


Figure 13. Existing and proposed accessibility sign.