

ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD STAFF REPORT

Project #/Name	ARB-2020-44: Schewel Home Sign
Review Type	Certificate of Appropriateness for a Sign
Parcel Identification	04500-00-00-112D0
Location	2020 Seminole Trail
Zoned	Highway Commercial (HC)/Entrance Corridor (EC)
Owner/Applicant	Schewel Charlottesville/Hightech Signs (Kristyn Jones)
Magisterial District	Rio
Proposal	To install a freestanding sign.
Context	The sign is proposed to be located on a parcel that is already developed with the Schewels store. Other commercial developments are located along Rt. 29 to the north and south.
Visibility	The sign will be readily visible from the EC.
ARB Meeting Date	July 20, 2020
Staff Contact	Margaret Maliszewski

PROJECT HISTORY

The applicant's representative first contacted the County about a freestanding sign for this location in February 2020. A sign application was received on April 3, 2020. Staff comments on the proposal included a request to replace the metal pole cover base with a brick base for consistency with other nearby monument signs. The applicant's May 15 response addressed most of staff's requested revisions but noted that Schewels did not care for the look or expense of a brick base and asked that the design be approved. Staff explained the reasoning for the requested revision, and on June 4 the applicant asked for the decision to be appealed to the ARB. Staff consulted with the ARB chairperson and the item was scheduled for ARB review.

In the Fall and Winter of 2019, and again recently, staff discussed potential new wall signs for the store building.

PROPOSAL

The proposed sign consists of a 4' tall x 8' wide internally illuminated aluminum cabinet above a 4' wide x 8' tall metal-panel-covered pole.

ANAYLSIS

REF	GUIDELINE	ISSUE	RECOMMENDATION
II General Sign Guidelines			
1	Create a consistent and unified design approach along the Entrance Corridors. The <i>placement, size, illumination</i> and <i>colors</i> of signs can create unity along the corridor, or they can create a disjointed, visually competitive environment. Consistent and unified sign design allows the businesses located along the Corridor to have equal standing in visibility. It also provides a pattern of sign placement that makes the business locations and entrances more easily recognizable to both vehicular and pedestrian traffic.	Two signs located to the immediate south of Schewels (Keglers and Rivanna Plaza, Figure 1) are monument style signs consisting of cabinets on brick bases. Other freestanding signs in the vicinity (Atlantic Union Bank, Walmart, Honda/Jeep) also have brick bases. The vertical orientation and metal-panel-covered pole of the Schewels proposal are not consistent with these signs.	Revise the sign design to a monument style with a brick base.
2	Establish simplicity and reserve as preferred characteristics for sign design in these areas. This reflects the historic character of the area and enhances the aesthetic qualities of the Corridor. To this end, the overall design of a sign will be evaluated concurrently with that of the building on which it will be installed. The design of a building's walls, window locations, parapets and other architectural features will influence the Board's evaluation of appropriate signage. Likewise, a freestanding sign is evaluated in the context of the overall development in which it will be placed. Because each site is composed of a variety of elements that work together to create a unique character and appearance, ARB review of each sign proposal is guided by these sign guidelines within the context of the specific site for which the proposal is made.	Proposed sign materials include metal and acrylic. The Schewels building predates the establishment of the Entrance Corridors (Figure 2). The general forms, materials and character of the building are not consistent with the guidelines. Coordinating a new freestanding sign with other signs along the corridor would be more appropriate than coordinating it with a building that doesn't meet the EC guidelines.	
4c	Materials: Materials used in both the sign and support structures should complement the building and/or multiple business center (see page 14) being served by the sign.		
8b	Materials used in both the sign and support structures should be complementary. They should also support the aesthetics of the building and /or complex being served by the sign, although a direct duplication is not necessary. It is		

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	preferred that the base material match one of the primary building materials unless the design of the sign represents itself as a freestanding element complementing the building.		
4	Design Compatibility		
4b	Scale and Size: Signs located within the Entrance Corridor may not exceed the size, height and setback requirements as outlined in Section 4.15 of the Albemarle County Zoning Ordinance (unless the sign has received a variance).	The proposed sign meets zoning ordinance size requirements.	None.
4d	Lettering and Typeface: Lettering should be in proportion to the sign and the building for visual clarity and overall balance. Proportion of lettering includes font (size) and typeface (style). The use of three typefaces or fewer is more appropriate for signs in the Entrance Corridor. Additional typefaces may be approved only if they contribute to a balanced, legible, unified sign design.	Letter sizes are not indicated on the drawings, but the letters do not appear to be over-scaled and the clear space shown around the text appears to be sufficient. One typeface is proposed.	None.
4e	Color: Colors must be harmonious with each other. Colors must not clash with other elements on the site, both when viewed in daylight and at night, whether the signs are externally or internally lit. Overly intense color, such as but not limited to dayglo or fluorescent colors, are prohibited. The use of three colors or fewer is more appropriate for signs in the Entrance Corridor. Black and white are counted as colors. Additional colors may be approved if they contribute to a balanced and unified sign design. For raceway-mounted channel letters, raceways shall match the wall color.	Three colors are proposed: Pantone red 185 for the cabinet, grey 877 for the pole cover and “home” letters, and white for the “Schewels” letters. Generally, red, grey and white are harmonious colors. However, red 185 does not fall within the range of colors typically recommended for approval. Red 187, a darker shade of red, has been approved for other signs in the Entrance Corridors. The face of the sign cabinet is aluminum, so the red background will not illuminate.	Revise the cabinet background color from red 185 to red 187.
4f	Trademarks, corporate logos and graphics: The ARB may require that the color and scale of standard templates for trademarks, service marks, corporate logos and	No graphics are proposed.	None.

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	graphics be modified. When used, trademarks, service marks, corporate logos and/or graphics should be incorporated as an integral part of the overall sign.		
5	Lighting: The purpose of ARB review is to ensure that new development in the Entrance Corridors is compatible with the historic architecture of the County and to promote orderly and attractive development. There is no historical precedent for internally illuminated signs. However, the ARB recognizes the need to identify businesses to help the traveling public find their destination and exit the highway safely.	Internal LED illumination is proposed and is consistent with other nearby freestanding signs. The aluminum cabinet is opaque. The white push-through acrylic letters would illuminate. No outlines are proposed.	None.
5a	When illumination is required, the preferred solution is to externally illuminate the sign – in other words, to shine a light on the sign. External illumination is preferred because it allows consistency with the daytime image of the sign. External lighting appears to the viewer as reflected light and allows the focus of the sign to be the original overall shape, color and complete design of the sign. Internal lighting produces a fragmented, rather than unified, sign image at night compared to external lighting and may project light that is distracting to the viewer. Similarly, exposed light sources that form the body of a sign (such as, but not limited to, exposed or bare neon) are not appropriate for the Entrance Corridors. They can produce glare and, generally, do not achieve the subtle character and compatibility that is the goal for the Entrance Corridors.		
5f	Internal Illumination: Any internal illumination is considered to contribute to visual clutter and will be limited.		
8e	i. External illumination is preferred for freestanding signs.		
8e	iv. Cabinet signs shall have a non-illuminated background, or an opaque (zero light transmission) background. Cabinet signs shall be constructed such that no light spills outward		

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	from the top, bottom, sides or back. If outlines of letters are proposed, the width of the outline must be in proportion to the width of the letter. An outline width of 1/8" has been found to be an appropriate dimension for signs in the Entrance Corridors.		
5g	All Illumination shall be non-blinking.	Blinking lights are not proposed.	None.
III Guidelines for Specific Sign Types			
8	Freestanding Signs		
8a	Monument signs are preferred to pole-mounted signs because they are often of a smaller scale and can be more fully integrated into the overall development. Pole signs may be considered for approval if existing site conditions rule out the ability to use a monument sign, and only when the pole is in proportion to the sign cabinet or panel.	The proposed sign has a steel pole at its core, but the pole is not visible because it is hidden by the sign cabinet and the pole cover. The vertical orientation of the sign sets it apart from monument style signs.	Revise the sign design to a monument style with a brick base.
8c	The structure of a monument sign shall not overwhelm the sign. The structure and the sign that it supports must be in proportion to each other.	The sign cabinet and pole cover have the same dimensions. The base does not overwhelm the cabinet.	None.
8d	Landscaping: Use ground cover, shrubs and/or trees to integrate freestanding signs into the overall landscape development of the site. Refer to the Albemarle County Recommended Plants List, which is included in the <i>Albemarle County Architectural Review Board Design Guidelines</i> and is available on-line at www.albemarle.org .	The area between the parking lot and the street already contains landscaping (Figures 3 and 4). Shamrock holly align the perimeter of the parking lot. Locust trees and Crape myrtles are distributed throughout the grassy area. The sign is proposed to be located between a Locust tree and a Crape myrtle tree at the northern end of the parking row that is closest to the street. Alternating shrubs (Japanese Aucuba and Vernal Witch hazel) are proposed to be added at the base of the sign.	None.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS:

Staff recommends the following as the primary points of discussion:

1. The proposed sign base and materials.
2. The shade of red proposed for the cabinet background.

Staff recommends approval of the proposal with the following conditions:

1. Revise the cabinet background color from red 185 to red 187.
2. Revise the sign design to a monument style with a brick base.

ATTACHMENTS

A – Applicant's proposed sign design



Figure 1: Keglers and Rivanna Plaza monument signs with brick bases.



Figure 2: The existing Schewels building.



Figure 3: Schewels site and landscaping along the Rt. 29 frontage.

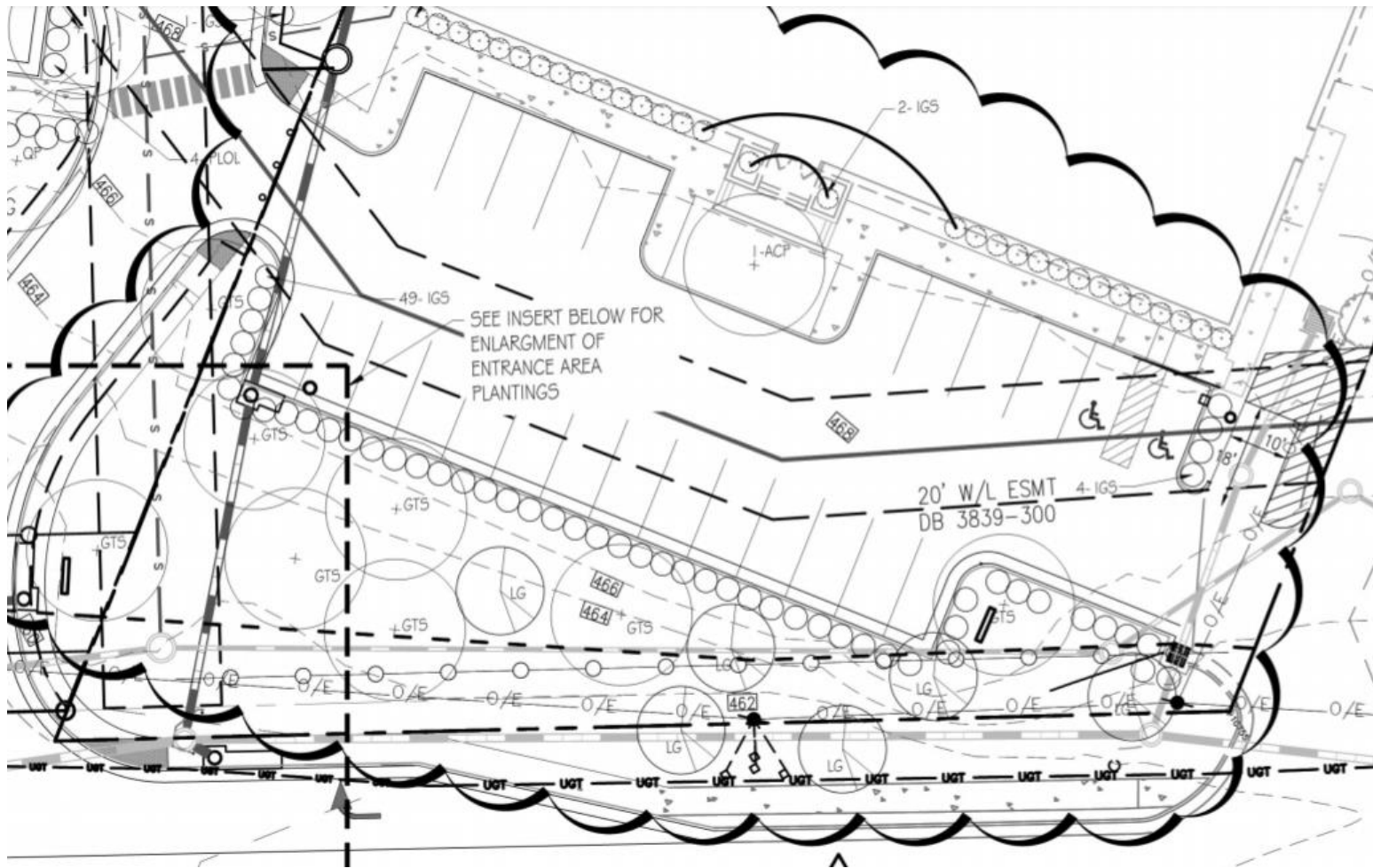


Figure 4: Sign location and landscaping along the street frontage.

A

Schewel Vertical Monument Sign

Height: 4 Ft, Length: 8 Ft, Depth: 1 Ft 8 In

Height To Sign Base: 8 Ft

Fabricated aluminum cabinet

Illuminated

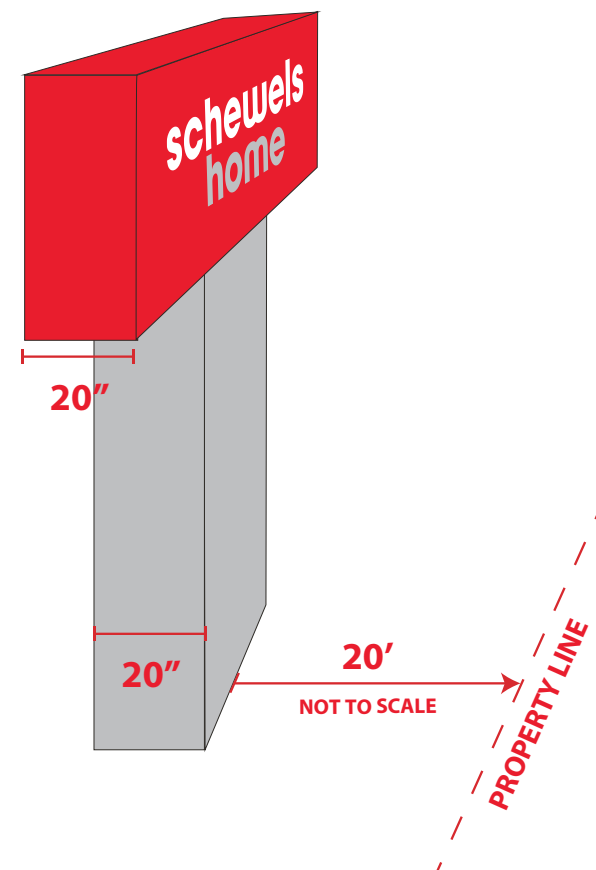
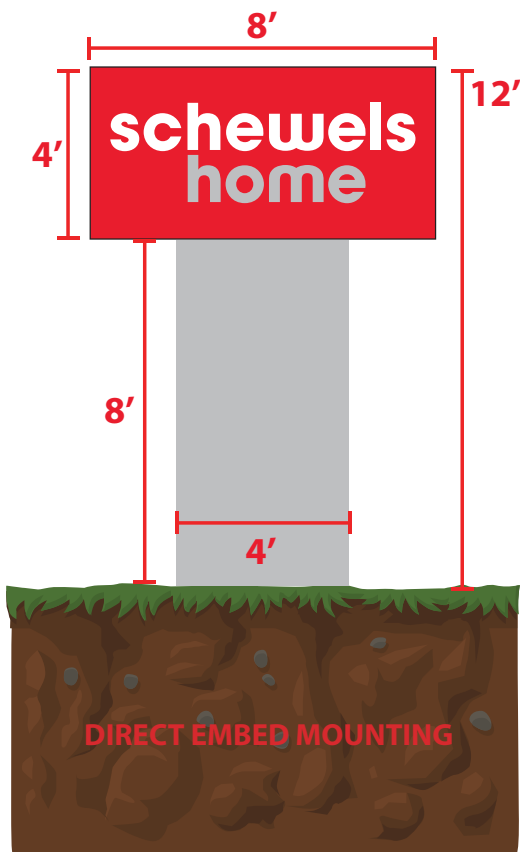
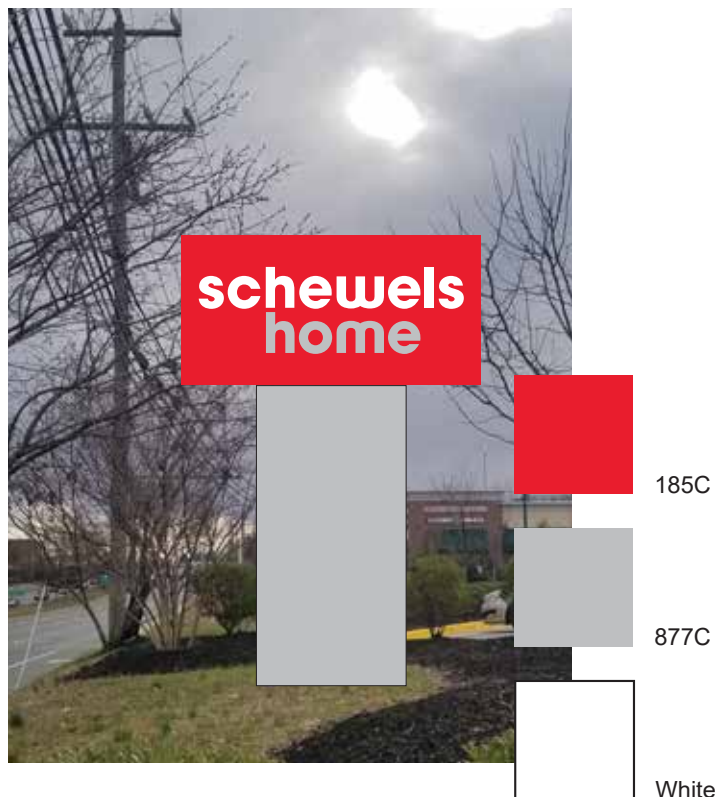
Double-sided

Painted 1 standard color. Custom colors may affect estimate.

Routed graphics with 1/2" push thru white acrylic

LED illumination

UL listed, disconnect switch



PLEASE NOTE THAT COLORS MAY NOT CONVEY ACCURATELY WHEN VIEWED. MEASUREMENTS ARE NOT TO SCALE.

ORIGINAL DRAWING
DATE 03/23/2020

Client:
Location:
Phone/Email:

**schewels
home**

SIGN PLACEMENT MAY CHANGE
We cannot guarantee exact color matches.
All sizes and dimensions are illustrated for
client's conception of project and are not to be
understood as being exact size of exact scale.

Drawing scale: Proportional
Drawing location:
Revision #: 1

**HIGHTECH
SIGNS**

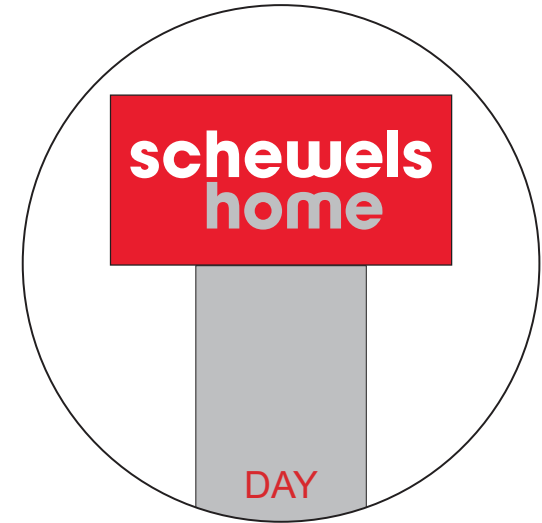
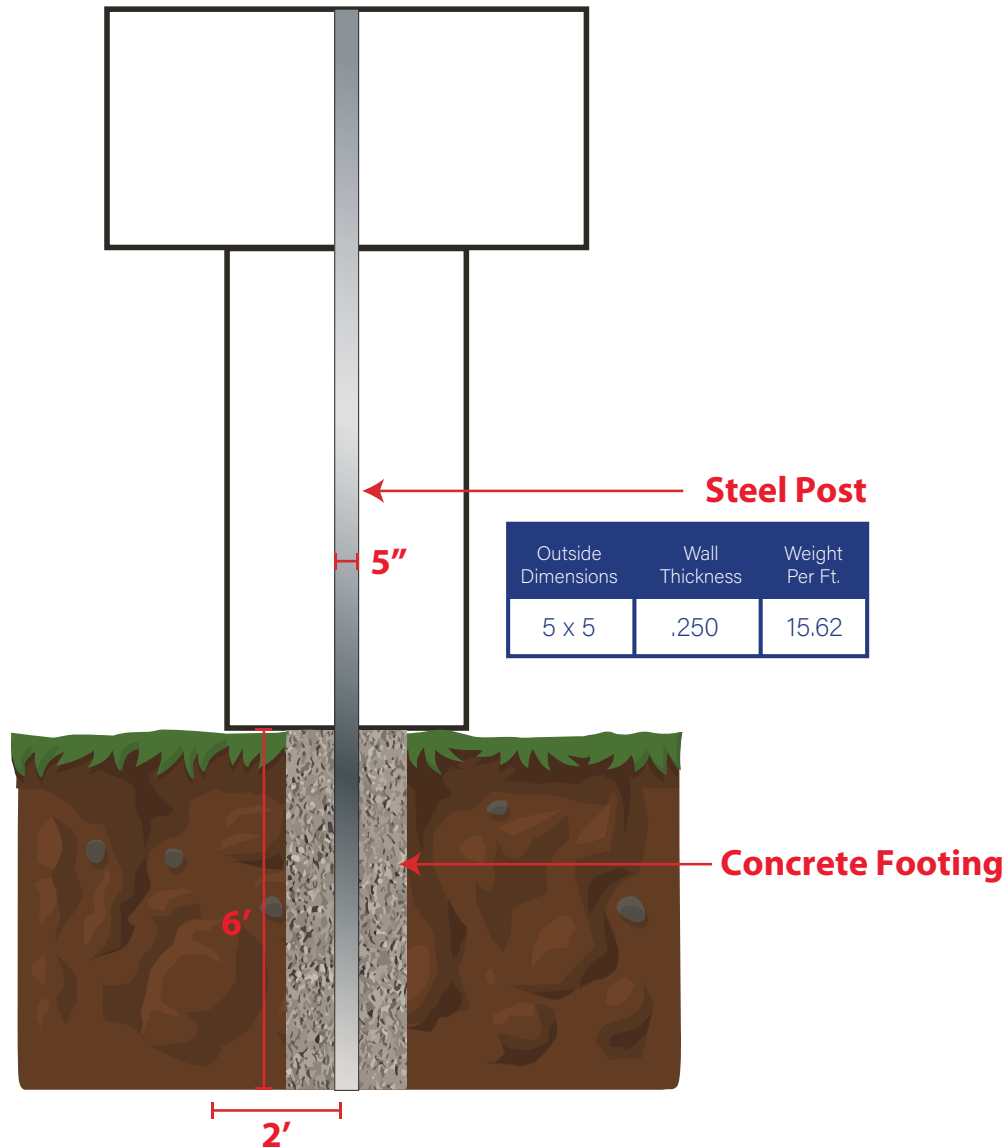
2165 Seminole Trail
Charlottesville, VA 22901

Layout by: Kristyn Jones
phone: (434) 974-7900 x100
kjones@htsva.com

☒ Preliminary Drawing
☐ Final Drawing

PAGE 1 OF 4

B Schewel Vertical Monument Sign



***ONLY** letters to illuminate at night

REV.1 05.15.2020

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PAGE 2 OF 4

C

Schewel Vertical Monument Sign

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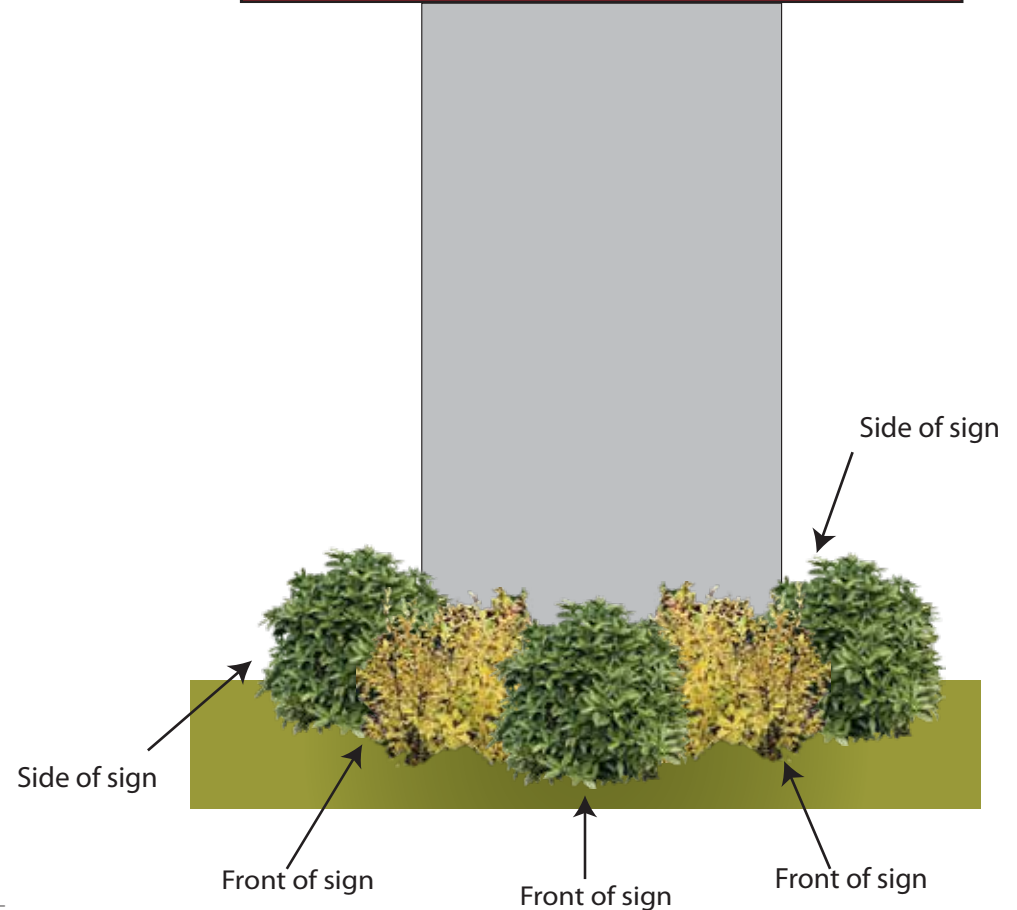


Japanese Aucuba
'Aucuba Japonica'
4.5' max
26" at time of planting
quantity: 6



Vernal Witchhazel
'Hamamelis Vernalis'
3' max
24" at time of planting
quantity: 4

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PAGE 3 OF 4

