

ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD STAFF REPORT

Project #/Name	ARB-2022-13: Shoppers World Retail Building Comprehensive Sign Plan Revisions and Reines & Rogers Jewelers Sign
Review Type	Certificate of Appropriateness for a Sign, Revisions to a Comprehensive Sign Plan
Parcel Identification	061M00012001D0
Location	220 Twenty-ninth Place Court (Figures 1 -3)
Zoned	Planned Development Shopping Center (PDSC) / Entrance Corridor (EC)
Owner/Applicant	FR Shoppers World LLC C/O Federal Realty Investment / Reines & Rogers Jewelers (Jessica Rogers) / Hightech Signs (Beth Robinson)
Magisterial District	Rio
Proposal	To revise some of the criteria of an approved Comprehensive Sign Plan to allow the installation of two internally illuminated wall signs with black faces and white illumination at night. (Figs. 4a-c)
Context	The Shoppers World Retail Building anchors the southeastern corner of the larger 29 th Place (formerly Shoppers World) shopping center. It is located south of the McDonald's building, north of Dominion Drive, and across Rt. 29 from other mixed commercial development.
Visibility	The north, south and east elevations of the building, and the signs on those elevations, including the Reines & Rogers sign, are all clearly visible from the EC street.
ARB Meeting Date	March 21, 2022
Staff Contact	Margaret Maliszewski

PROJECT HISTORY

The retail building was reviewed and approved by the ARB together with a replacement McDonald's building (ARB-1999-21 and ARB-1999-46) and a Certificate of Appropriateness was issued for the development on April 28, 2000. The architectural design was approved with awnings in Sunbrella "black cherry". The original awnings have been replaced with awnings of various colors. Property management is researching replacement options; the "black cherry" color is no longer available. Design criteria for the retail building wall signs were approved on March 2, 2000. The applicant would like to add black as a letter face color, noting the appropriate appearance of the DSW wall sign elsewhere in the development. (See Fig. 5.)

APPLICANT'S PROPOSED SIGN CRITERIA

Red text = applicant's proposed additions

SIGN FEATURE	DESIGN CRITERIA
SIGN TYPE	Channel Letter
LETTER FACE COLOR	White or Black (Day/Night, appearing white at night)
TRIM CAP COLOR/RETURN COLOR	Bronze or Black
RACEWAY COLOR	To match wall
CABINET FACE COLORS	
SIZE LIMITATIONS	
LOCATION(S)	Signs shall be located within the brick panels above the awnings.
MOUNTING DETAILS	
LOGO/GRAPHICS DETAILS	*Graphics may use multiple colors.
ILLUMINATION DETAILS	
TEXT	
LETTER TYPE/FONT	
MATERIALS	
COLORS	
*As of August 3, 2015, graphics with multiple colors may be used with channel letter signs, when the channel letter faces throughout the center are limited to a single color. Graphics shall be consistent with the Entrance Corridor Sign Guidelines.	

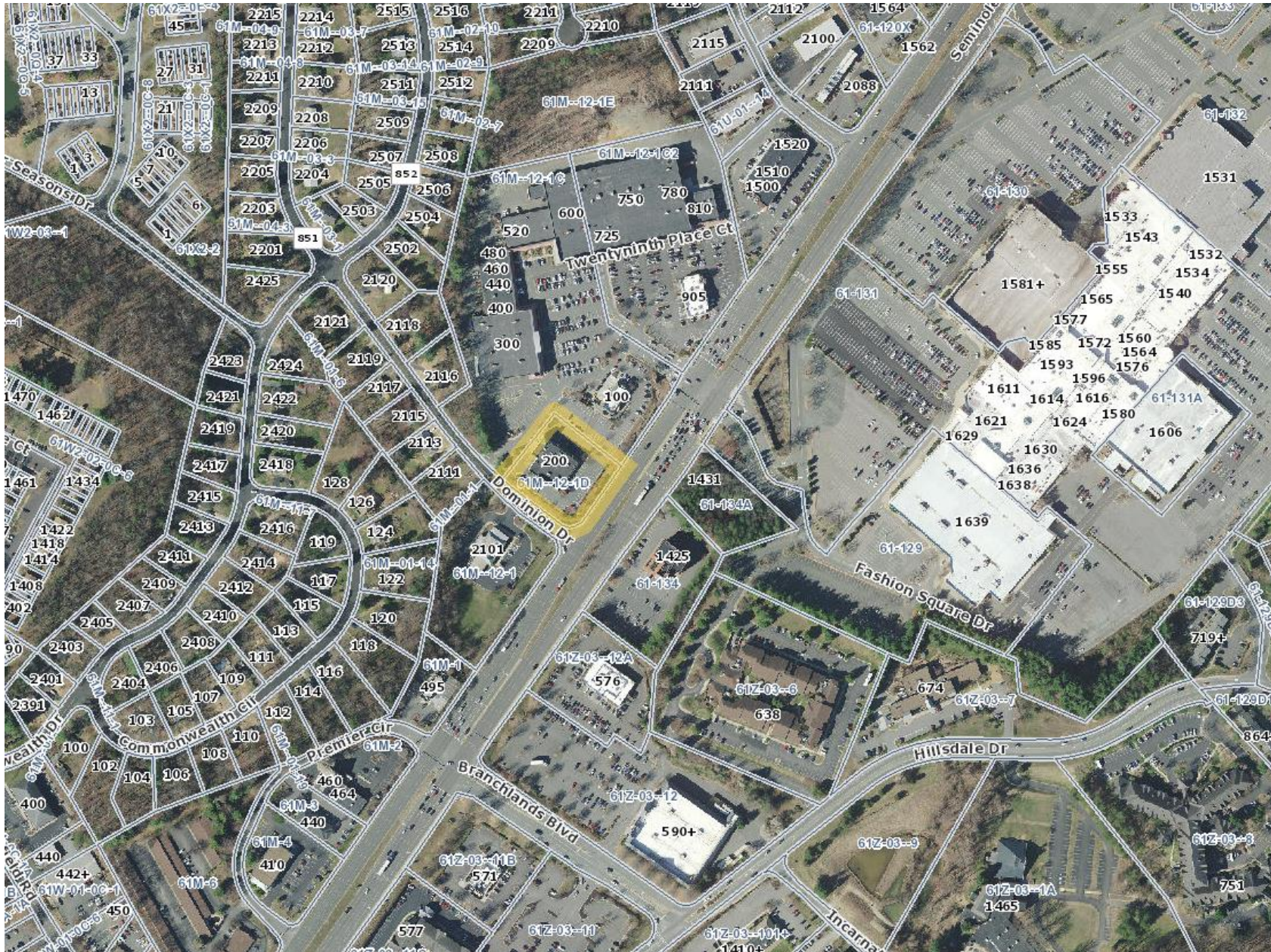


Figure 1: Location of the Shopper's World Retail Building.



Figure 2: Aerial view of the Shopper's World Retail Building.



Figure 3: View of the Shopper's World Retail Building from Rt. 29, facing west/southwest.

ANALYSIS

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.	In this proposal, unity would be achieved by maintaining a single sign type (channel letters), limited letter face colors (black or white), and a single illumination type (internal, face lit). Unity would be further enhanced by limiting the color of night-time illumination to white. The addition of a neutral daytime letter face color that is already used elsewhere in the development is not expected to have a negative visual impact on the EC.	None.
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.	Using channel letters with white or black faces would maintain a simple and reserved appearance for the building.	None.
3	Encourage creative design. The County encourages imaginative and innovative signs consistent with the purposes expressed above and in conformance with the regulations of the Albemarle County Code.	The day/night film is a good option for maintaining coordinated nighttime illumination.	None.
4	Design Compatibility		
4a	Placement: The design of a building's walls, window	There is no change proposed to the	Add the stucco panels in

REF	GUIDELINE	ISSUE	RECOMMENDATION
	locations, parapets and other architectural features shall influence the Board's evaluation of appropriate signage. Wall signs can help establish rhythm, scale and proportion across the façade of a building.	locations of wall signs. The brick panels above the storefront windows are appropriate, traditional sign locations. The stucco panels in the tower at the north/northwest corner of the building are also appropriate locations for channel letter signs.	the tower at the north/northwest corner of the building as approved locations for channel letter wall signs.
9a	Wall signs shall be integrated with the architecture of the building and the placement of such signs should not obscure architectural features or details, including but not limited to cornices, windows, columns, pilasters and paneling.		
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 Reines & Rogers sign meets ordinance requirements regarding size. The letters are a maximum of 11.375" tall in a 29" band and 17.75" in a 45-9/16" tall band. The signs do not appear over-scaled in their sign bands and there appears to be sufficient clear space on all sides. The sizes appear appropriate.	None.
9d	The size of a wall sign shall be coordinated with the size of the architectural element on which it is placed. The sign should not overcrowd the architectural element, the wall, or the sign area. (See Illustration 6 on page 26.) Buildings and building elements should not be used as a billboard. For example, an appropriate height for channel letters in a 30" high sign band is 18". This allows 6" of unoccupied space above and below the letters. Generally, 4" of clear space above, below, and to the sides of a channel letter sign is considered a minimum, with larger clearances required for larger sign bands. The ARB will consider the degree of visibility, the distance from the Entrance Corridor, and the architectural design of the building and the sign area in its determination of appropriate sizes and placement.		
4c	Materials: Materials used in both the sign and support structures should complement the building and/or multiple business center being served by the sign.	Standard materials that are compatible with those used in the surrounding area are proposed for the Reines & Rogers sign (aluminum, acrylic).	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	The proposed signs are illustrated with substantial clear space on all sides and appear to be in proportion to the available wall area. A single typeface is proposed for the Reines & Rogers signs.	None.

REF	GUIDELINE	ISSUE	RECOMMENDATION
	appropriate for signs in the Entrance Corridor. Additional typefaces may be approved only if they contribute to a balanced, legible, unified sign design.		
4e 9c	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.	Two colors are proposed for signs on the building. White and black are harmonious with each other and the building. The sign criteria indicate that the raceway color will match the wall; however, existing signs are direct mounted to the wall.	None.
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 graphics be modified. When used, trademarks, service marks, corporate logos and/or graphics should be incorporated as an integral part of the overall sign.	Multiple logo colors are proposed. The ARB has approved the use of multiple colors of logos when a single letter face color is used. This proposal adds a second letter face color, but black and white are generally neutral, and it is anticipated that the building would still maintain an appropriate appearance with multicolor graphics.	None.
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 illumination is proposed for the channel letters. That type of illumination is common in the area. It was previously approved for this building and has an appropriate appearance in this development. Requiring the channel letters with black faces to illuminate white at night will help ensure a consistent appearance.	None.
5a 9ei 10ei	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		

REF	GUIDELINE	ISSUE	RECOMMENDATION
	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.		
5b	Since external illumination does not fit every case, individual channel letters – a type of internally illuminated sign that has less visual clutter impact on the Entrance Corridors – may also be approved. Channel letters are generally the preferred type of internally illuminated wall sign because they project the total sign and are identifiable with the daytime image of the sign. When channel letters cannot be adequately accommodated, internally illuminated cabinet signs may be considered. If cabinet signs are utilized, the backgrounds of such signs must be made opaque (zero light transmission).		
5c	External illumination is also preferred for approved graphics/logos; internal illumination may be considered for approval on a case-by-case basis. The Board will evaluate the specific design for size (adjusted in proportion to the accompanying lettering), balance, complexity, and distance from and relationship to the Entrance Corridor. These factors will determine the extent of internal illumination that can be approved.		
5d	These solutions are intended to reduce glare, visual clutter and distraction along the streetscape, to provide for coordinated appearances along the Entrance Corridors, to increase visual continuity, to achieve a balance of business identification with		

REF	GUIDELINE	ISSUE	RECOMMENDATION
	order and continuity, and to limit negative impacts along the County’s Entrance Corridors.		
5e 9eii 10eii	External Illumination: Lighting should be shielded and not create glare. Lighting should be aimed so as not to project illumination beyond the sign. All external light sources shall be white.		
5f	Internal Illumination: Any internal illumination is considered to contribute to visual clutter and will be limited.		
5g	All Illumination shall be non-blinking.		
5h	Exposed Light Sources: An exposed light source that forms the body of a sign, such as but not limited to signs formed of exposed neon, as opposed to a light shining on a sign, shall not be used in the Entrance Corridors.		
III Guidelines for Specific Sign Types			
9	Wall Signs		
9b	Channel lettering (mounted on a raceway or individual letters) is preferred to cabinet signs because cabinet signs tend to appear less integrated with the building. Channel letters overlay the wall material and allow the structure of the building to “read through” with less interruption. This results in a more coordinated overall appearance.	Sign type is limited to channel letters.	None.
10	Wall Signs For Multiple Business Centers		
10a	A complete sign package shall be provided as part of the submittal materials for the review of any new multiple business center. The proposal should address how compatibility among signs will be achieved, and how new signs will be coordinated with the architecture of the building(s); the first approved sign installed in a multiple business center will establish the standard for all future signs for that center. The future review of proposals for new signs in existing multiple business centers will take into consideration the character and appearance of the existing building(s) and with existing sign(s).	The current proposal is a revision to the previously approved Comprehensive Sign Plan.	None.

REF	GUIDELINE	ISSUE	RECOMMENDATION
10b	b. Multiple business centers shall use a single sign type for all wall signs.	A single sign type is proposed – channel letters.	None.
10c	c. Compatibility among signs must be maintained through color or font and typeface selection.	A limitation on colors is proposed to maintain compatibility. Black and white are the colors proposed for the letter faces. This is expected to have an appropriate appearance.	None.
10d	Signs must be placed on the building in a manner that establishes a unified appearance.	Sign bands have been established across the elevations and are the locations proposed for all signs.	None.
10e	Lighting		
9eiii	iii. Channel letters with translucent faces shall be constructed such that no light spills outward from the top, bottom, sides or back. Faces and returns of channel letters shall be opaque when back-lit (halo-lit).	Standard channel letters, which typically have opaque backs and returns, are proposed.	None.
9eiv	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 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.	No cabinet signs are proposed.	None.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS:

Regarding the Comprehensive Sign Plan:

Staff recommends approval of the Comprehensive Sign Criteria as outlined in the following table:

Comprehensive Sign Criteria for the Shopper's World Retail Building

Red = Applicant's proposed additions

Blue = Staff's recommended additions.

SIGN FEATURE	DESIGN CRITERIA
SIGN TYPE	Channel Letter
LETTER FACE COLOR	White or Black (Day/Night, appearing white at night)
TRIM CAP COLOR/RETURN COLOR	Bronze or Black
RACEWAY COLOR	To match wall
ILLUMINATION	Internal. Illumination must appear white at night.
LOCATION(S)	Signs shall be located within the brick panels above the awnings or in the stucco sign bands of the tower.
LOGO/GRAPHICS DETAILS	*Graphics may use multiple colors.
*As of August 3, 2015, graphics with multiple colors may be used with channel letter signs, when the channel letter faces throughout the center are limited to a single color. Graphics shall be consistent with the Entrance Corridor Sign Guidelines.	

Regarding the Reines & Rogers wall signs:

Staff recommends approval as proposed.

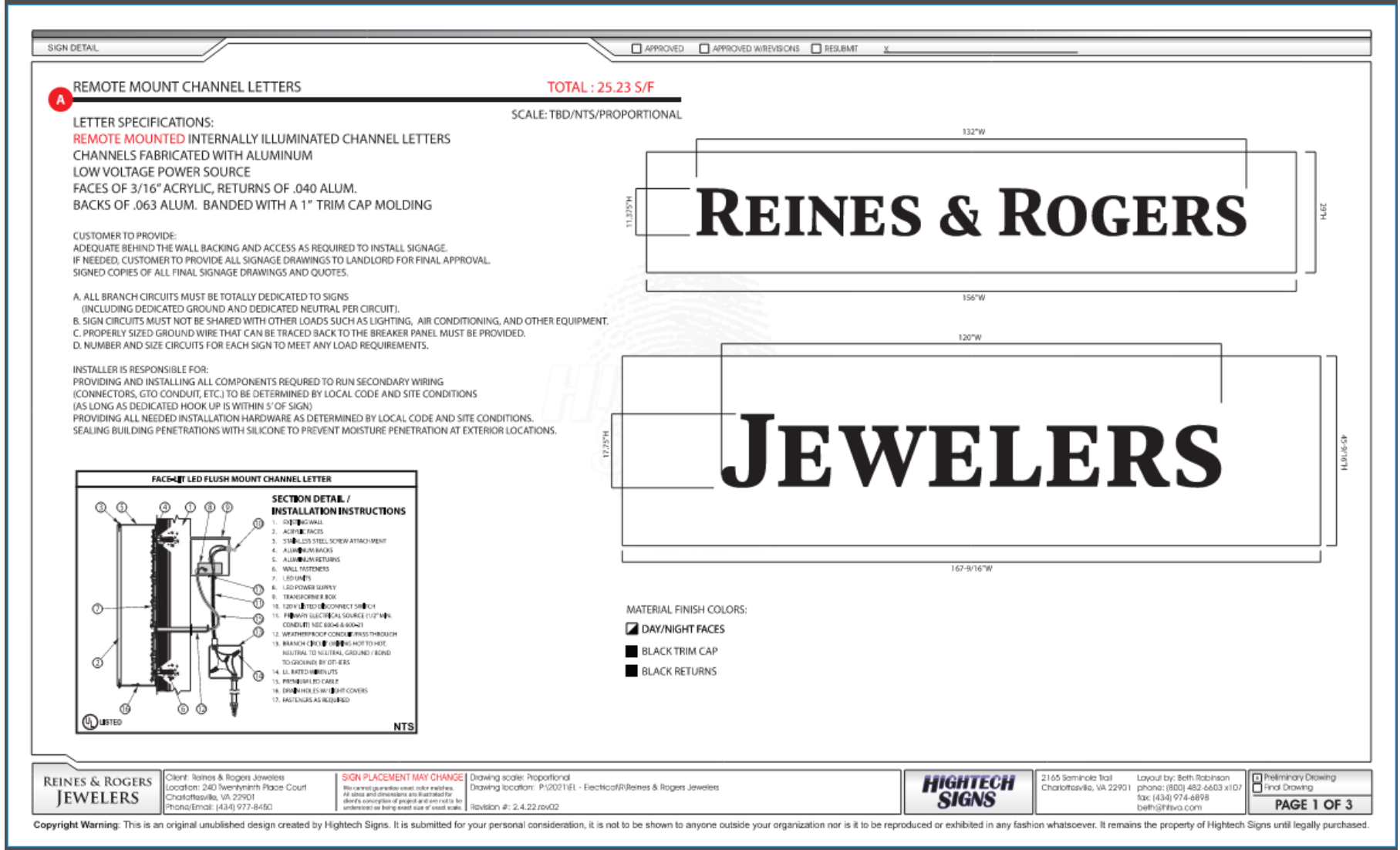


Figure 4a: Applicant's proposed design for the Reines & Rogers signs, sheet 1 of 3.

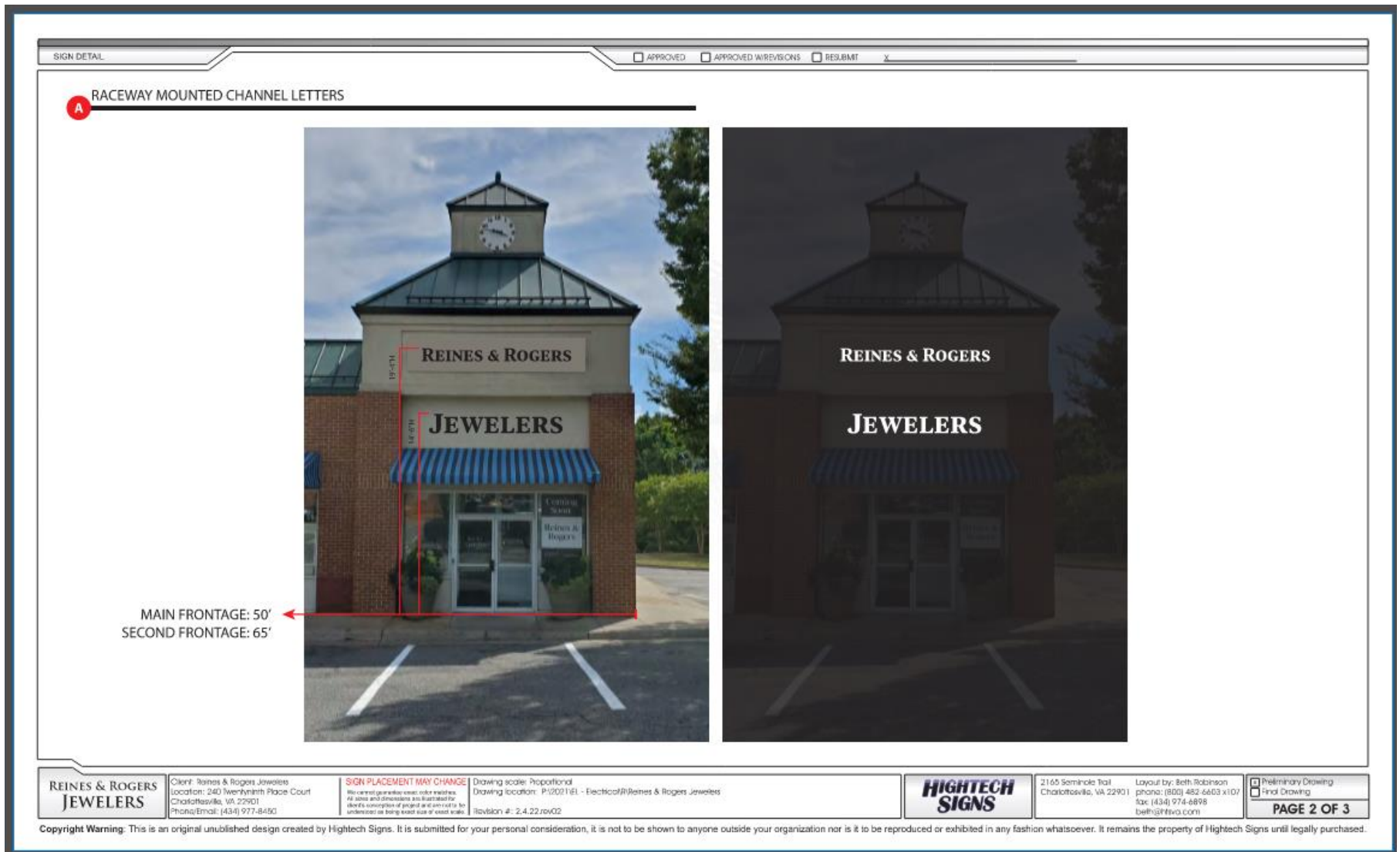


Figure 4b: Applicant's proposed design for the Reines & Rogers signs, sheet 2 of 3.

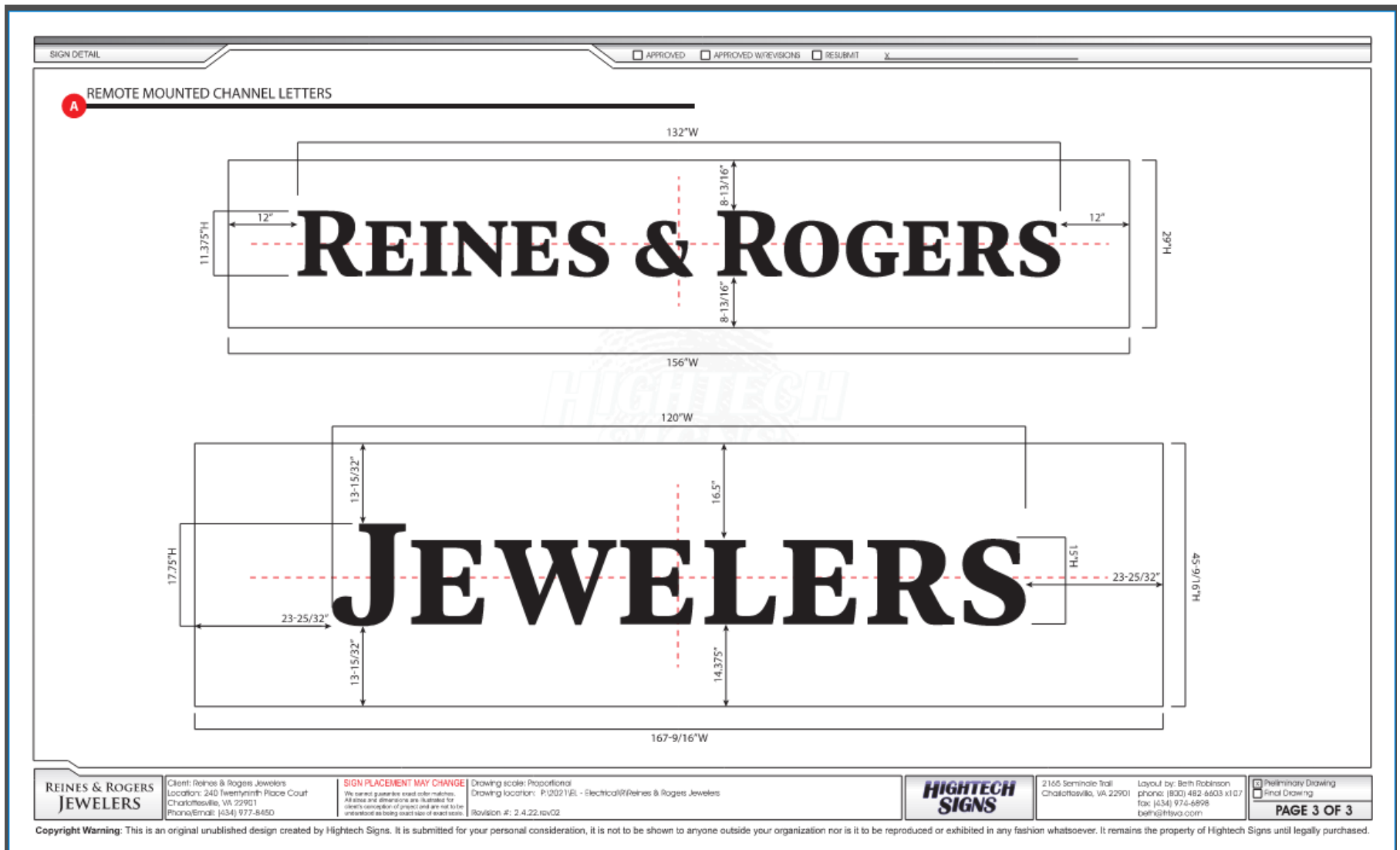


Figure 4c: Applicant's proposed design for the Reines & Rogers signs, sheet 3 of 3.



Figure 5: View of the DSW wall sign in the 29th Place shopping center.