

ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD STAFF REPORT

Project #/Name	ARB-2024-58: 2415 Ivy Road (Bellair Place) Comprehensive Sign Plan Amendment
Review Type	Comprehensive Sign Review
Parcel Identification	06000-00-00-025A0
Location	2415 Ivy Road near the intersection of Canterbury Road (Figure 1)
Zoned	Commercial (C1) / Entrance Corridor (EC) / Airport Impact Area (AIA) / Steep Slopes - Managed
Owner/Applicant	JPA Tower Investors, LLC / Talley Sign Company (Keith Wagner)
Magisterial District	Samuel Miller
Proposal	To modify the Comprehensive Sign Plan (CSP) by removing one approved sign location, adding two new sign types and locations, and adding one letter color to accommodate signs for tenant spaces on the east side of the building.
Context	2415 Ivy Road is part of a small group of buildings (including 2405, 2409, and 2411) originally constructed as a John Deere dealership. The current signage for this building uses a limited color palette and a single illumination type to achieve compatibility.
Visibility	The proposed changes to sign locations on the east side of the building will be clearly visible from the EC (Ivy Road).
ARB Meeting Date	November 4, 2024
Staff Contact	Khris Taggart

PROJECT HISTORY

The ARB approved ARB2020-73, the final site plan and the proposed Comprehensive Sign Plan (CSP) for this site, on September 21, 2020, pending staff review of several conditions. Staff approved the revised site plan and CSP that addressed those conditions on January 28, 2021. In June of this year, sign applications for Grit Coffee and Selvedge Brewing were submitted with designs that are not consistent with the CSP. (Figures 2-5)



Figure 1: Pictometry image showing property along the Entrance Corridor.



Figure 2: Existing Sign Locations South Elevation.



Figure 3: Existing Sign Locations East Elevation.

SIGN FEATURE		PROPOSED CRITERIA
LOCATIONS		SEE ACCOMPANYING BUILDING ELEVATIONS FOR THE LOCATION OF THE SIGN BANDS AND PLACEMENTS SIGNS SHALL BE CENTERED HORIZONTALLY WITH IN FIRST FLOOR STORE FRONT WINDOWS AND CENTERED VERTICALLY WITHIN DESIGNATED SIGN BAND IN DESIGNATED SIGN BAND.
SIZE LIMITATIONS		STANDARD ARB GUIDELINES REGARDING SIZE AND PROPORTIONS APPLY.
LETTER TYPE / FONT		UNLIMITED
RACEWAY COLOR (IF USED)		TO MATCH THE COLOR OF THE WALL SW 6141 SOFTER TAN
GRAPHICS DETAILS		NO LIMIT TO OVERALL GRAPHIC COLORS AS LONG AS INDIVIDUAL TENANT GRAPHICS TOTAL NUMBER IS LIMITED TO THREE (3) AND ALL COLORS HAVE A COORDINATED APPEARANCE BACKGROUNDS OF GRAPHICS MAY BE REQUIRED TO BE OPAQUE TO MEET THE SIGN GUIDELINES.
CHANNEL LETTERS	LETTER FACE	SW 9178 IN THE NAVY
	RETURN / TRIM COLOR	SW 9178 IN THE NAVY OR SW DARK BRONZE CUSTOM MIX
	ILLUMINATION	DOWN-WASH ILLUMINATED (SEE DIAGRAM 2). ILLUMINATION TO COMPLY WITH ALBEMARLE CO. CODE CH. 18, SEC. 4.15.17

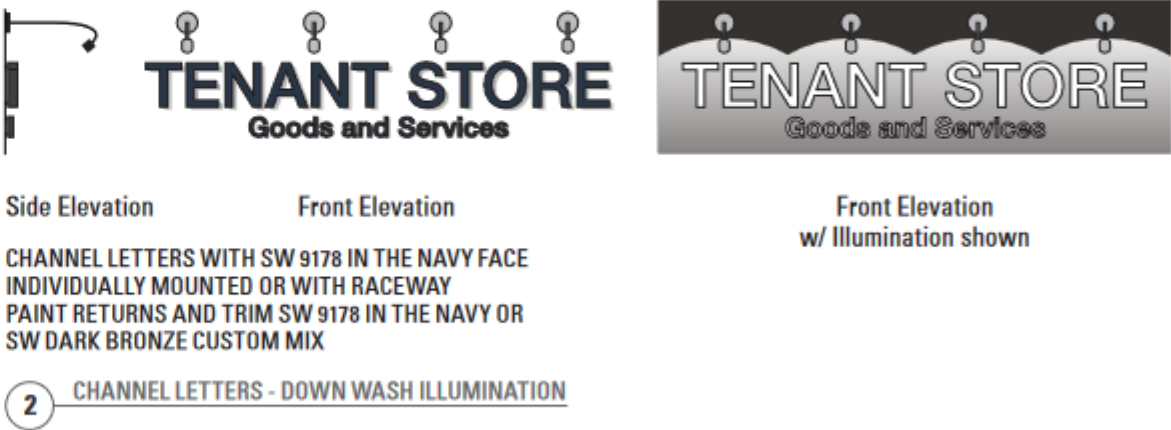


Figure 4: Existing Approved Sign Criteria.



Figure 5: Existing Approved Sign Locations on the South and East Elevations.

ANALYSIS

REF	GUIDELINE	ISSUES	RECOMMENDATIONS
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.	The existing Comprehensive Sign Plan (CSP) allows externally illuminated channel letters centered within the sign bands on the south elevation and the southern portion of the east elevation. An externally illuminated sign is also allowed to the north of the bay door along the east elevation (Fig 5). The current sign plan provides for a unified design by limiting the allowed sign type and locations. It achieves simplicity through the use of a limited color palette and a single illumination type. On the south elevation, the ARB-approved building renovation created traditional storefronts with sign bands. On the east elevation, the industrial character of the original building was largely preserved. The proposed amendment adds a creative component to the plan, but would maintain unity and simplicity due to the difference in character between the south and east elevations and the proposed sign locations.	See recommendations below.
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.		
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.		
2, 4 8	Freestanding Signs	No changes are proposed to the approved criteria for the monument sign.	None.
4, 9	Wall Signs		
4a	Placement: The design of a building’s walls, window 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.	The proposed amendments to the sign plan are limited to the east elevation. The changes involve removing the approved sign area to the right of the bay door (Fig. 5) and adding two new sign locations: one below the canopy in front of the bay door and the other at the northeast corner of the building. The placement of the new sign locations does not obscure any of the detailing present along the elevation, but the projecting sign extends above the adjacent roofline. In this zoning district, projecting signs are not allowed to exceed the top of the fascia. Along the east elevation, there are additional locations under the canopy that could accommodate hanging signs. Revising the sign plan to show sign locations in	Revise the height of the projecting sign for Selvedge Brewing so it does not exceed the top of the fascia. Revise the CSP to allow hanging signs centered in the three canopy bays on the east elevation.
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.		
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. 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.		

		each of the canopy bays would allow for greater flexibility for current and future tenants.	
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.	Signage on the east elevation allows for unlimited typefaces, consistent with the existing CSP. Due to the limited number of tenants, this is not anticipated to have a negative impact on the sign design or the building.	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.	White is proposed as an additional color for letter faces, bringing the total to two. This will apply only to new sign types and locations. White coordinates with existing approved color and the overall site.	None.
9c	For raceway-mounted channel letters, the raceway shall match the wall color.		
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.	No trademarks, corporate logos, or graphics are shown with the amendment to the sign plan. They can be reviewed with individual sign permit applications.	Add the following note to the sign plan: Please note that the ARB may require future tenants to modify the color and scale of standard templates for trademarks, service marks, corporate logos and graphics. When used, trademarks, service marks, corporate logos and/or graphics should be incorporated as an integral part of the overall sign.
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.	Two sign types are proposed to be added to the east elevation, a hanging sign with routed PVC letters that rest on top of an aluminum cabinet with white acrylic letters on the face and a projecting aluminum cabinet sign with push-through and routed acrylic letters. The signs appear integrated and coordinated with the building design. The channel letters on the hanging and projecting signs also share a level of coordination with those approved for the front elevation. However, it is unclear where the lower mount for the projecting sign will attach.	Revise the sign proposal to clarify the lower mounting location for the projecting sign.
5, 9	Lighting		
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 current sign proposal allows a single sign illumination type (external gooseneck fixtures). The proposed hanging sign would be non-illuminated and the projecting sign would be internally illuminated. Due	None.

	the traveling public find their destination and exit the highway safely.	to the location at the rear corner of the building, the internal illumination is not expected to result in an uncoordinated appearance with the existing gooseneck fixtures.	
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.		
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 order and continuity, and to limit negative impacts along the County’s Entrance Corridors.		
5e	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.	There is no blinking illumination proposed.	None.
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.	There are no exposed light sources proposed.	None.
	<i>ii.</i> External illumination: Lighting directed toward a sign should be designed and shielded so that it illuminates the face of the sign and does not shine beyond the edge of the sign.	In addition to the existing external fixtures, the amendment would allow for an internally illuminated	None.

	<i>iii.</i> Internal illumination: 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).	sign at the rear corner of the east elevation. In this location, the additional illumination type is not expected to result in an uncoordinated appearance.	
	<i>iv.</i> 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.		
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 renovation of the south elevation created traditional storefronts with sign bands above, similar to the southern portion of the east elevation. Only a few changes were made to the east elevation's central and northern sections, preserving the original building's industrial character. The design elements present along this elevation (metal framed windows at the top of the elevation, loading bay with overhead door and canopy) establish this elevation as one that is distinctly different from the front (south) elevation. Additionally, the windows located at the top of the east elevation do not permit the installation of wall signs like those along the front elevation. The new sign types coordinate with the architecture of the east elevation and maintain an overall unified appearance.	None.
10b	b. Multiple business centers shall use a single sign type for all wall signs.		
10c	c. Compatibility among signs must be maintained through color or font and typeface selection.		
10d	Signs must be placed on the building in a manner that establishes a unified appearance.		
9e, 10e	<i>i.</i> External illumination is preferred for signs in multiple business centers.	The existing sign proposal only allows external illumination. The amendment would add internal illumination for the projecting sign. Due to the change in the character of the architecture from the front to the side elevation, and the distance between the channel letter and projecting signs, this is not expected to result in an uncoordinated appearance.	None.
	<i>ii.</i> Lighting should be aimed so as not to project illumination beyond the sign.		
	<i>iii.</i> 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).		
	<i>iv.</i> 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.		

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff recommends the following as the primary points of discussion:

- 1. The proposed signs compatibility with the building, signs on the south elevation, and surrounding context.

Regarding the Comprehensive Sign Plan amendment

Staff recommends approval with the following revisions:

- 1. Revise the CSP to allow hanging signs centered in the three canopy bays on the east elevation.
- 2. Add the following note to the sign plan: The ARB may require future tenants to modify the color and scale of standard templates for trademarks, service marks, corporate logos and graphics. When used, trademarks, service marks, corporate logos and/or graphics should be incorporated as an integral part of the overall sign.

Regarding the Grit Coffee and Selvedge Brewing signs

Staff recommends approval with the following revisions:

- 1. Revise the Selvedge Brewing projecting sign so that the maximum height does not exceed the top of the fascia.
- 2. Revise the sign proposal to clarify the lower mounting location for the Selvedge Brewing projecting sign.

ATTACHMENTS

- Attach. 1: [ARB2024-58: 2415 Ivy Road \(Bellair Place\) Amended Comprehensive Sign Plan](#)