

# HISTORIC AND DESIGN REVIEW COMMISSION

August 21, 2019

**HDRC CASE NO:** 2019-459  
**ADDRESS:** 233 E HOUSTON ST  
**LEGAL DESCRIPTION:** NCB 407 BLK 17 LOT 20 SOUTH TEXAS BUILDING  
**ZONING:** D,H  
**CITY COUNCIL DIST.:** 1  
**DISTRICT:** Alamo Plaza Historic District  
**APPLICANT:** Carrie Barry/Comet Signs, LLC  
**OWNER:** HOTEL 603 NAVARRO LP  
**TYPE OF WORK:** Signage  
**APPLICATION RECEIVED:** August 08, 2019  
**60-DAY REVIEW:** October 07, 2019  
**CASE MANAGER:** Stephanie Phillips  
**REQUEST:**

The applicant is requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness for approval to install a new double face illuminated sign above the storefront of 233 E Houston St to replace an existing sign. The square footage of the signage will total approximately 45 square feet.

## APPLICABLE CITATIONS:

*Historic Design Guidelines, Chapter 6, Guidelines for Signage*

### 1. General

#### A. GENERAL

- i. *Number and size*—Each building will be allowed one major and two minor signs. Total requested signage should not exceed 50 square feet.
- ii. *New signs*—Select the type of sign to be used based on evidence of historic signs or sign attachment parts along the building storefront where possible. Design signs to respect and respond to the character and/or period of the area in which they are being placed. Signs should identify the tenant without creating visual clutter or distracting from building features and historic districts.
- iii. *Scale*—Design signage to be in proportion to the facade, respecting the building's size, scale and mass, height, and rhythms and sizes of window and door openings. Scale signage (in terms of its height and width) to be subordinate to the overall building composition.

#### B. HISTORIC SIGNS

- i. *Preservation*—Preserve historic signs, such as ghost signs or other signs characteristic of the building's or district's period of significance, whenever possible.
- ii. *Maintenance*—Repair historic signs and replace historic parts in-kind when deteriorated beyond repair.

#### C. PLACEMENT AND INSTALLATION

- i. *Location*—Place signs where historically located and reuse sign attachment parts where they exist. Do not erect signs above the cornice line or uppermost portion of a facade wall, or where they will disfigure or conceal architectural details, window openings, doors, or other significant details.
- ii. *Obstruction of historic features*—Avoid obscuring historic building features such as cornices, gables, porches, balconies, or other decorative elements with new signs.
- iii. *Damage*—Avoid irreversible damage caused by installing a sign. For example, mount a sign to the mortar rather than the historic masonry.
- iv. *Pedestrian orientation*—Orient signs toward the sidewalk to maintain the pedestrian oriented nature of the historic districts.

#### D. DESIGN

- i. *Inappropriate materials*—Do not use plastic, fiberglass, highly reflective materials that will be difficult to read, or other synthetic materials not historically used in the district.
- ii. *Appropriate materials*—Construct signs of durable materials used for signs during the period of the building's construction, such as wood, wrought iron, steel, aluminum, and metal grill work.

iii. *Color*—Limit the number of colors used on a sign to three. Select a dark background with light lettering to make signs more legible.

iv. *Typefaces*—Select letter styles and sizes that complement the overall character of the building façade. Avoid hard-to-read or overly intricate styles.

#### E. LIGHTING

i. *Lighting sources*—Use only indirect or bare-bulb sources that do not produce glare to illuminate signs. All illumination shall be steady and stationary. Internal illumination should not be used.

ii. *Neon lighting*—Incorporate neon lighting as an integral architectural element or artwork appropriate to the site, if used.

#### F. PROHIBITED SIGNS

i. An abbreviated list of the types of signs prohibited within San Antonio's historic districts and on historic landmarks is provided below. Refer to UDC Section 35-612(j) and Chapter 28 of the Municipal Code for more detailed information on prohibited signs.

Billboards, junior billboards, portable signs, and advertising benches.

Pole signs.

Revolving signs or signs with a kinetic component.

Roof mounted signs, except in the case of a contributing sign.

Digital and/or LED lighted signs, not to include LED light sources that do not meet the definition of a sign.

Moored balloons or other floating signs that are tethered to the ground or to a structure.

Any sign which does not identify a business or service within the historic district or historic landmark.

Any non-contributing sign which is abandoned or damaged beyond 50 percent of its replacement value, including parts of old or unused signs.

Notwithstanding the above, signs designated as a contributing sign or structure by the historic preservation officer shall not be prohibited unless or until such designation is revoked.

#### G. MULTI-TENANT PROPERTIES

i. *Signage Plan*—Develop a master signage plan or signage guidelines for the total building or property.

ii. *Directory signs*—Group required signage in a single directory sign to minimize visual color and promote a unified appearance

### 3. Projecting and Wall-Mounted Signs

#### A. GENERAL

i. *Mounting devices*—Construct sign frames and panels that will be used to be attach signs to the wall of a building of wood, metal, or other durable materials appropriate to the building's period of construction.

ii. *Structural supports*—Utilize sign hooks, expansion bolts, or through bolts with washers on the inside of the wall depending upon the weight and area of the sign, and the condition of the wall to which it is to be attached.

iii. *Appropriate usage*—Limit the use of projecting and wall-mounted signs to building forms that historically used these types of signs, most typically commercial storefronts. To a lesser degree, these signage types may also be appropriate in areas where residential building forms have been adapted for office or retail uses, if sized accordingly.

#### B. PROJECTING SIGNS

i. *Placement*—Mount projecting signs perpendicularly to a building or column while allowing eight feet of overhead clearance above public walkways.

ii. *Public right-of-way*—Limit the extension of projecting signs from the building facade into the public right-of-way for a maximum distance of eight feet or a distance equal to two-thirds the width of the abutting sidewalk, whichever distance is greater.

iii. *Area*—Projecting signs should be scaled appropriately in response to the building façade and number of tenants.

### FINDINGS:

- a. The primary structure located at 233 E Houston St is a 2-story commercial block constructed circa 1930 in the Art Deco style. The structure features a cast stone façade, granite storefront, and decorative Art Deco detailing at the parapet and second story windows. The structure is contributing to the Alamo Plaza Historic District.
- b. LOCATION – The applicant has proposed to install a new projecting sign in the location of an existing projecting sign above the storefront. Staff finds the location consistent with the Guidelines.
- c. SIZE – The applicant has proposed to install a new double-sided projecting blade sign measuring approximately 22.66 square feet per side reading “Palm Restaurant,” totaling approximately 45 square feet. The existing round projecting sign measures a total of approximately 32 square feet. The width of the proposed sign measures approximately 14 inches. According to the Historic Design Guidelines, projecting signs should be scaled

appropriately in response to the building façade and number of tenants. Total requested signage should not exceed 50 square feet for all building signage. The multitenant structure has another existing projecting sign totaling over 10 square feet, and the Palm Restaurant has existing awning signage and canopy signage. Staff finds that the proposed sign should be reduced in overall square footage and width to be more consistent with the Guidelines and to be more appropriate for scale and architectural detailing of the 2-story structure.

- d. MATERIAL AND COLOR – The applicant has proposed to construct the sign of painted aluminum with acrylic backing. Colors include low gloss black, brown, ivory, and gold. According to the Historic Design Guidelines, signs should be constructed of durable, non-reflective materials with a palette of three colors. Staff finds the materials appropriate and the colors acceptable given the monochromatic scheme.
- e. LIGHTING – The applicant has proposed channel letters with lighted white acrylic backing to be illuminated with white LEDs. The applicant has provided a nighttime rendering. According to the Historic Design Guidelines, only indirect or bare-bulb sources that do not produce glare should be used to illuminate signs. Staff finds the lighting proposal appropriate.

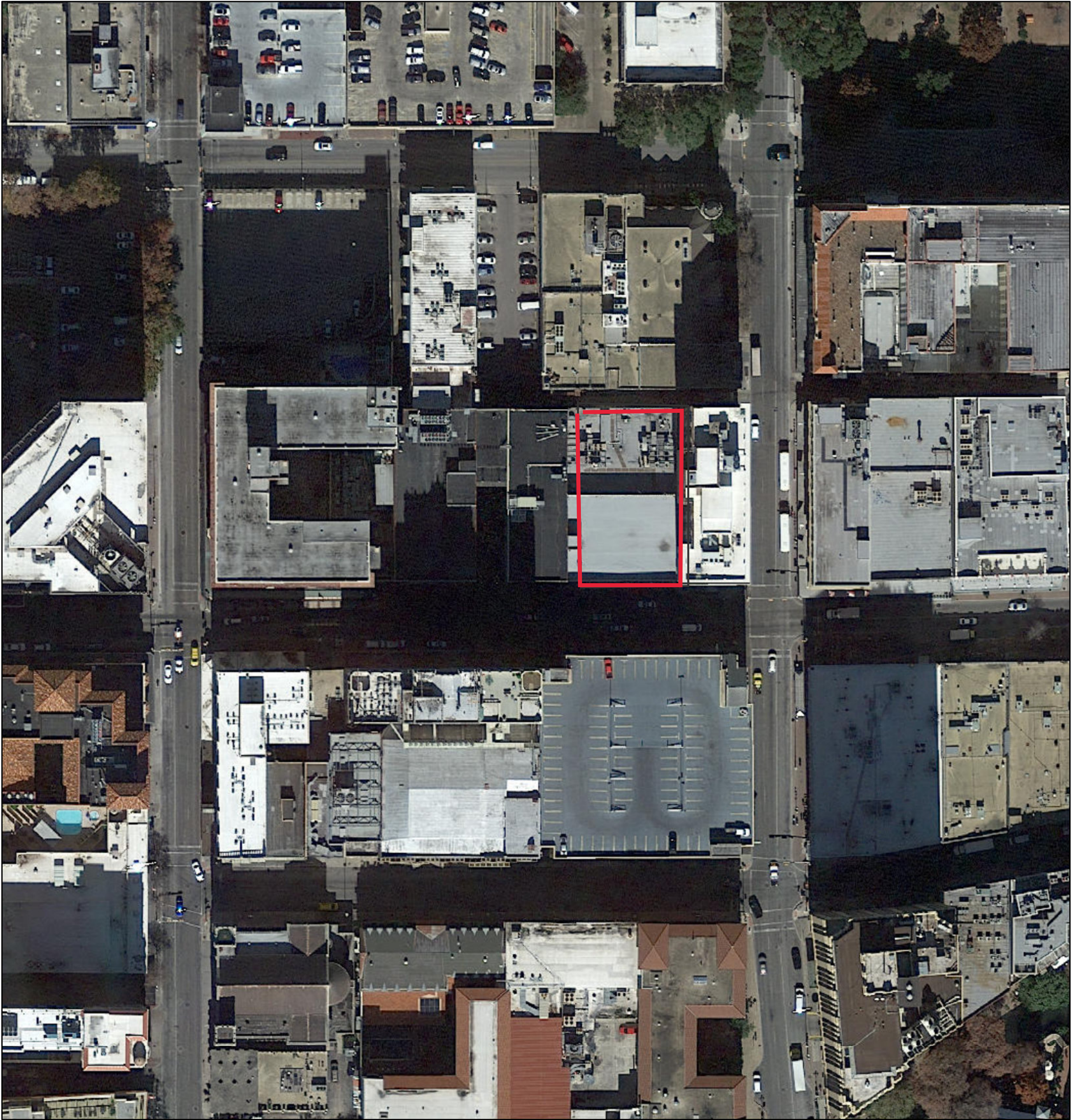
## **RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends approval based on findings a through e with the following stipulations:

- i. That the overall square footage be reduced to a minimum of 40 square feet to respond more closely to the scale and architectural details of the historic structure and that the cabinet depth be reduced where feasible as noted in finding c. The applicant must submit updated drawings and specifications to staff prior to receiving a Certificate of Appropriateness.

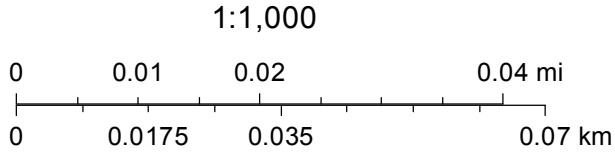


City of San Antonio One Stop



August 15, 2019

— User drawn lines



CoSA







Job Name:

# PALM

## RESTAURANT

☐ Proposal Drawing  
☒ **Final Drawing**

Client: Palm Restaurant

Location: 233 E Houston ,  
San Antonio, TX

Salesperson: Chris Quante

Prj. Mngr.: Katie Kopas

Date: 7/3/19

Designer:  LABONVILLE

File Name: 19-1999 Palm  
Restaurant Blade Sign FINAL  
R2.cdr

Proposal #: 48258

Job #: 19-1999

## Revisions

Final 1 7.18.19: Add new mounting method per instructions  
Final 2 8.5.19: Add sign to bldg  
Final 3 8.8.19: update



License #: 18010

**Corporate Office**  
5003 Stout Drive  
San Antonio, TX 78219  
(210) 341-7244

**Dallas**  
2703 Mockingbird Ln  
Dallas, TX 75235  
(972) 870-1594

**Houston (State Sign)**  
7630 Hansen Rd.  
Houston, TX 77061  
(713) 943-1831

**Austin (Custom Sign Creations)**  
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Austin, TX 78753  
(512) 374-9300

**Tyler (Design Center Signs)**  
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(903) 561-4995



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Page 4 of 5



- REMOVE AND DISCARD  
4' x 4' ROUND PALM SIGN



**PHOTO SURVEY -  
EXISTING**

### PHOTO SURVEY - PROPOSE

Scale  $3/16'' = 1'-0''$



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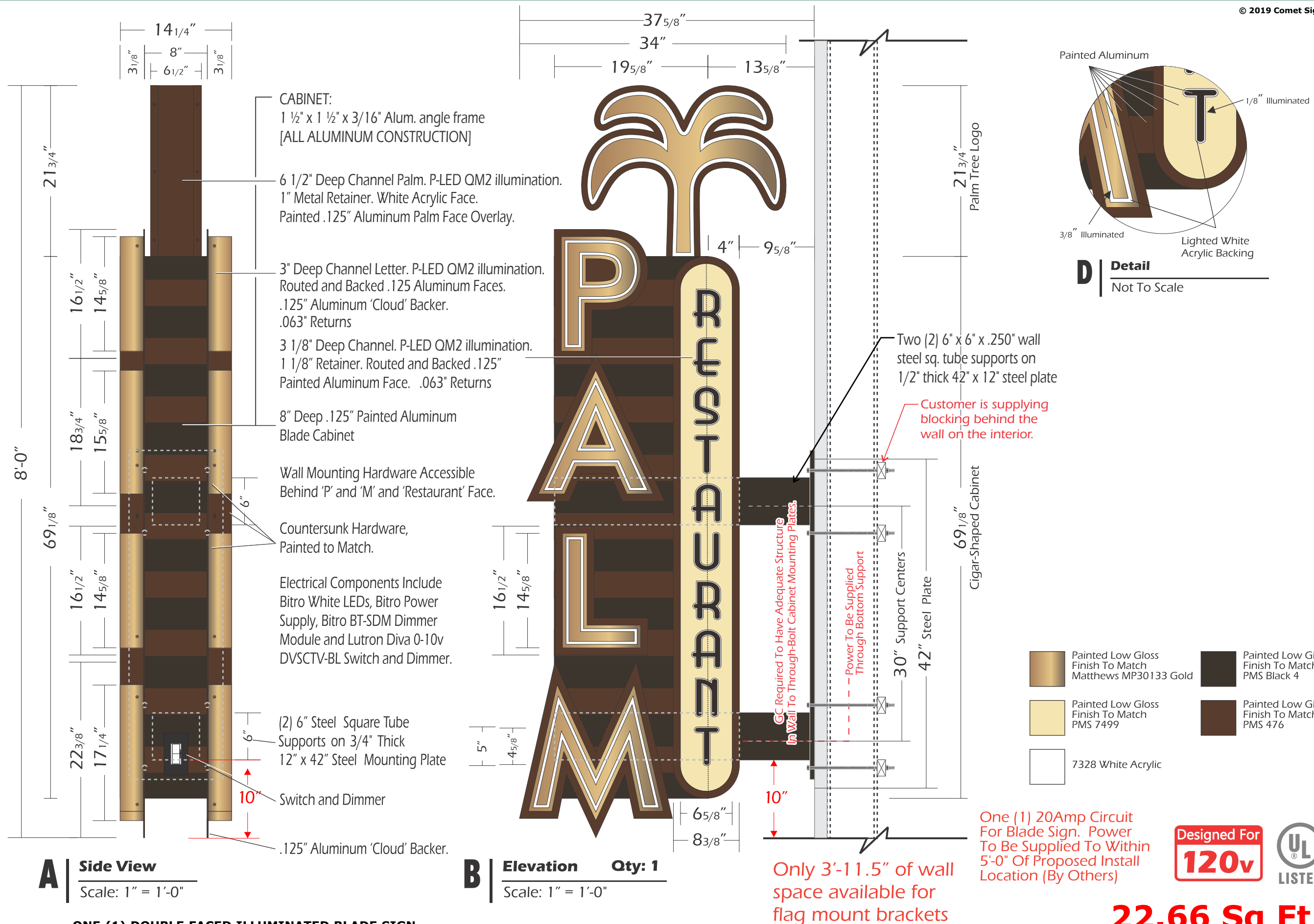
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NIGHT VIEW

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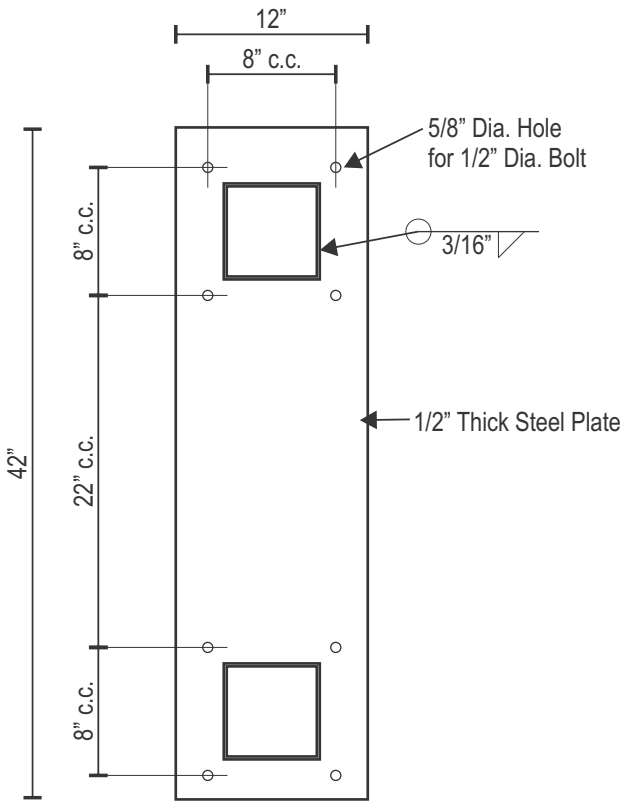
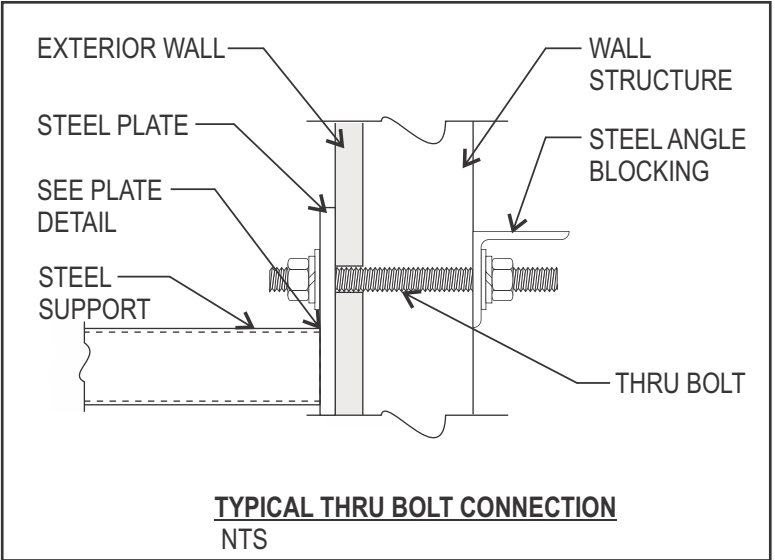


PLATE DETAIL

SCALE: 1"=1'-0"

A307 Bolts  
A36 Steel Plate





HOUSTON ST & NAVARRO ST



HOUSTON ST & JEFFERSON ST



HOUSTON ST & NAVARRO ST



HOUSTON ST & LOSOYA ST



BROADWAY ST



HOUSTON ST & NAVARRO ST



HOUSTON ST

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