



Project Address: 307 E Wilson Street
Application Type: Signage Exception
UDC is an Approving Body
Legistar File ID #: [90723](#)
Prepared By: Jessica Vaughn, AICP, UDC Secretary

Background Information

Applicant | Contact: Mary Beth Growney Selene, Ryan Signs, Inc. | Jeremy Eppler, Summit Credit Union

Project Description: The applicant is proposing the installation of a wall sign on a wall that is not directly adjacent to a parking lot or street, on the south elevation of the building, a non-qualifying elevation for signage.

Approval Standards: The UDC is an **approving body** on this request. The Sign Control Ordinance, [MGO Sec. 31.043\(3\)\(d\)](#) states that: “After a public hearing as provided in Sec. 33.24(4)(e)3(d), the Urban Design Commission (UDC) may permit the use of wall signs on building façades not adjacent to off-street parking areas where, due to a variation of building setbacks, a signable area exists, provided the area of the sign shall not exceed the area of the wall sign permitted on the front of the building.”

Summary of Design Considerations

Project Site Location. The project site is located in Madison’s downtown on E Wilson Street, near the intersection of S Butler Street, E Wilson Street, and King Street. While the primary street façade is E Wilson Street, the site does also have visibility from John Nolen Drive.

Existing Signage. There is limited signage on the building today because of the exterior façade alterations that are currently underway that were approved in 2023 by the UDC (Legistar File ID [76206](#)). The proposed alterations include the redesign of the front entrance volume, addition of a metal canopy structure, painting all façades, and adding a metal panel accent band on the John Nolen Drive façade. As indicated in the application materials, Sign Code compliant above-canopy signage and window signage along the E Wilson Street façade will be requested.

As reflected in the application materials a cabinet sign was once located on the south elevation. While this sign was permitted in 1999, updates to the Sign Code rendered this sign a nonconforming sign. Staff note that this sign has been removed to complete the façade alterations. Once the sign is removed, it cannot be replaced without the approval of a Sign Exception pursuant to MGO 31.043(3)(d).

Summary of Sign Code Requirements and Proposed Signage. Since the south façade is not adjacent to an off-street parking area associated with the development, signage is not allowed on this elevation. As noted above, the UDC may grant an exception to this requirement provided that the signage shall not exceed the area of wall signage permitted on the front of the building. In this case, the code allows for a 56 square-foot wall sign on the E Wilson Street-facing elevation. At 34.11 square feet, the proposed sign is smaller than what the code would allow.

The proposed wall sign is comprised of aluminum, back-lit (halo) letters and logo.

Summary of Staff Analysis. A signage exception is required because the proposed sign is located on a non-qualifying elevation, not facing a street or parking area associated with the building.

Staff believe that the approval criteria have been met and are supportive of the proposed signage given that:

- The proposed wall sign is smaller than what the code would allow on the street-facing elevation.
- The proposed sign is of a higher quality design aesthetic with individual channel lettering and back-lit (halo) lighting, and
- It is consistent with other signage in the area, including those next door for the Saddlery, which was also approved as a Sign Exception pursuant to MGO 31.043(3)(d) (Legistar File ID [77009](#)).