

**ISSUE:** Certificate of Appropriateness for alterations (signage)

**APPLICANT:** Van Pham, represented by Robert J. Sargenti, Architect

**LOCATION:** Old and Historic Alexandria District  
628 King Street

**ZONE:** KR/King Street urban retail zone.

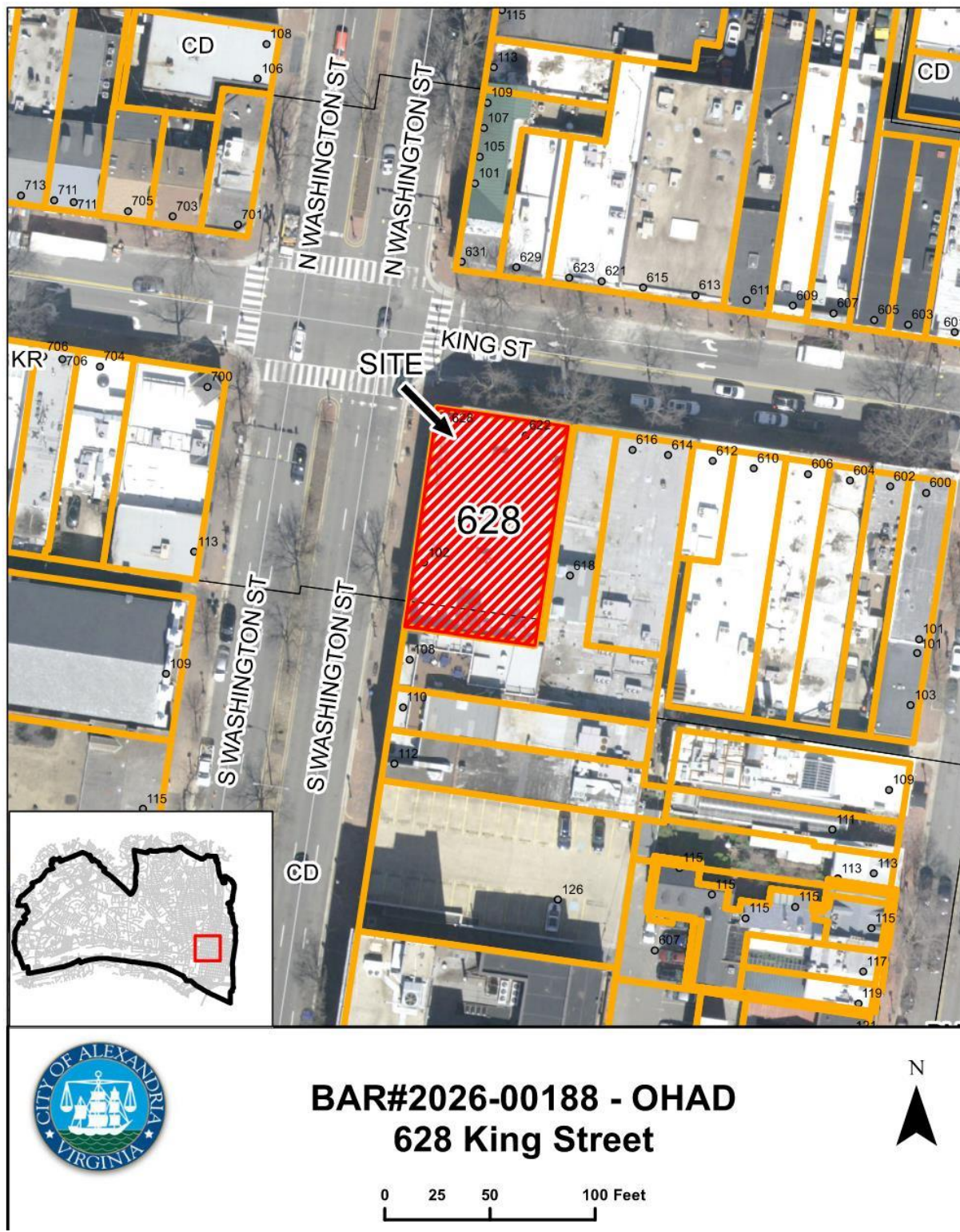
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**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends approval of the Certificate of Appropriateness for the proposed signage, with the condition that the lightboxes be used only during business hours and be turned off daily no later than 8:00 p.m.

**GENERAL NOTES TO THE APPLICANT**

1. **APPEAL OF DECISION:** In accordance with the Zoning Ordinance, if the Board of Architectural Review denies or approves an application in whole or in part, the applicant or opponent may appeal the Board's decision to City Council on or before 14 days after the decision of the Board.
2. **COMPLIANCE WITH BAR POLICIES:** All materials must comply with the BAR's adopted policies unless otherwise specifically approved.
3. **BUILDING PERMITS:** Most projects approved by the Board of Architectural Review require the issuance of one or more construction permits by Department of Code Administration (including signs). The applicant is responsible for obtaining all necessary construction permits after receiving Board of Architectural Review approval. Contact Code Administration, Permit Center, 4850 Mark Center Drive, Suite 2015, 703-746-4200 for further information.
4. **ISSUANCE OF CERTIFICATES OF APPROPRIATENESS AND PERMITS TO DEMOLISH:** Applicants must obtain a copy of the Certificate of Appropriateness or Permit to Demolish PRIOR to applying for a building permit. Contact BAR Staff, Room 2100, City Hall, 703-746-3833, or [preservation@alexandriava.gov](mailto:preservation@alexandriava.gov) for further information.
5. **EXPIRATION OF APPROVALS NOTE:** In accordance with Sections 10-106(B), 10-206(B) and 10-307 of the Zoning Ordinance, any Board of Architectural Review approval will expire 12 months from the date of issuance if the work is not commenced and diligently and substantially pursued by the end of that 12-month period.
6. **HISTORIC PROPERTY TAX CREDITS:** Applicants performing extensive, certified rehabilitations of historic properties may separately be eligible for state and/or federal tax credits. Consult with the Virginia Department of Historic Resources (VDHR) prior to initiating any work to determine whether the proposed project may qualify for such credits.



## **I. APPLICANT'S PROPOSAL**

The applicant requests a Certificate of Appropriateness for after-the-fact approval of two lightboxes with timers at 628 King Street. In addition, the LED screen located closest to the entrance will be replaced in kind. Staff notes that after-the-fact approval is required because the existing lightboxes are located within 4 feet of the storefront window and therefore constitute exterior signage subject to BAR review.

## **II. HISTORY**

The original nineteenth century building here burned well after a 1921 photo was taken of the site. This site and the adjacent property at 622 – 626 King, which also burned, were later combined and rebuilt for retail uses as a Lerner's store.<sup>1</sup> On February 17, 1949, the Board of Architectural Review “reluctantly” approved the demolition of the original nineteenth-century building, which had served as the headquarters of the Restored Government of Virginia in 1861. The building was in poor condition and was operating as a restaurant when the BAR approved the demolition. One BAR member referred to the proposed design for the new store as “simple and dignified,” after two previous submissions had been turned down.<sup>2</sup> Lerner Shops was issued Permit #4543 on **6/30/1949** to build this Colonial Revival style building at the southeast corner of Washington and King Streets. Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps and historic aerial photos indicate that the footprint and composition of the building have not changed since its **1949** construction.



**Photo 1: Original building in 1921.**

### *Previous BAR Approvals*

BAR2023-00525 – Administrative approval for signage (3/27/24)

BAR2023-00485 – Administrative approval for signage (11/14/23)

BAR2024-00064/00065 – Board approval of a new storefront openings and alterations (04/06/22)

BAR2018-00018 – Administrative approval for new roof (1/16/18)

BAR2004-00133 – Board approval of signs and exterior alterations (7/21/04)

BAR92-204 – Board approval of signs, awnings

BAR85-250 – Board approval of signs, lights, awnings

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<sup>1</sup> Bertsch, Amy, “Revisiting Another Civil War Era Hospital,” Out of the Attic, *Alexandria Times*, April 27, 2017.

<sup>2</sup> “Alexandria Reluctantly Agrees To Razing of Civil War Building, *The Evening Star*, Washington, D.C., February 18, 1949.



### III. ANALYSIS

Staff has no objection to the proposed lightboxes. The Design Guidelines encourage signage that is compatible with and visually integrated into the building's architecture. The proposed signs are appropriately located within the building and are equipped with timers that allow them to be turned off when not in use. As a result, the proposal will significantly reduce light spill onto the streetscape during nighttime hours.



**Photo 2: Proposed interior lightboxes.**

Staff recommends approval with the condition that the lightboxes be used only during business hours and be turned off daily no later than 8:00 p.m.

### STAFF

Amirah Lane, Historic Preservation Planner, Planning & Zoning  
Julie Weisgerber, Historic Preservation Principal Planner, Planning & Zoning  
Tony LaColla, AICP, Land Use Services Division Chief, Planning & Zoning

### IV. CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

Legend: C- code requirement R- recommendation S- suggestion F- finding

#### Zoning

C-1 Proposed interior sign will comply with Zoning.

#### Code Administration

Sign permit is required.

**Transportation and Environmental Services**

- R1. The building permit must be approved and issued prior to the issuance of any permit for demolition, if a separate demolition permit is required. (T&ES)
- R2. Applicant shall be responsible for repairs to the adjacent city right-of-way if damaged during construction activity. (T&ES)
- R3. No permanent structure may be constructed over any existing private and/or public utility easements. It is the responsibility of the applicant to identify any and all existing easements on the plan. (T&ES)
- F1. After review of the information provided, an approved grading plan is not required at this time. Please note that if any changes are made to the plan it is suggested that T&ES be included in the review. (T&ES)
- C1. The applicant shall comply with the City of Alexandria's Solid Waste Control, Title 5, Chapter 1, which sets forth the requirements for the recycling of materials (Sec. 5-1-99). (T&ES)
- C2. The applicant shall comply with the City of Alexandria's Noise Control Code, Title 11, Chapter 5, which sets the maximum permissible noise level as measured at the property line. (T&ES)
- C3. Any work within the right-of-way requires a separate permit from T&ES. (Sec. 5-2) (T&ES)

**Alexandria Archaeology**

No archaeology comments.

**V. ATTACHMENTS**

*1 – Application Materials*

- *Completed application*
- *Plans*
- *Material specifications*
- *Photographs*

BAR CASE# \_\_\_\_\_  
(OFFICE USE ONLY)

ADDRESS OF PROJECT: 628 King Street Alexandria, VA

DISTRICT: ☐ Old & Historic Alexandria ☒ Parker – Gray ☐ 100 Year Old Building

TAX MAP AND PARCEL: 074.02-09-27 ZONING: KR/CD

APPLICATION FOR: *(Please check all that apply)*

☒ CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS

☐ PERMIT TO MOVE, REMOVE, ENCAPSULATE OR DEMOLISH  
*(Required if more than 25 square feet of a structure is to be demolished/impacted)*

☐ WAIVER OF VISION CLEARANCE REQUIREMENT and/or YARD REQUIREMENTS IN A VISION  
CLEARANCE AREA (Section 7-802, Alexandria 1992 Zoning Ordinance)

☐ WAIVER OF ROOFTOP HVAC SCREENING REQUIREMENT  
*(Section 6-403(B)(3), Alexandria 1992 Zoning Ordinance)*

Applicant: ☐ Property Owner ☒ Business *(Please provide business name & contact person)*

Name: Van Pham

Address:

City:

Phone:

Authorized Agent *(if applicable)*: ☐ Attorney ☒ Architect ☐ \_\_\_\_\_

Name: Robert J. Sargenti

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Legal Property Owner:

Name: Drew Turner Dir of Dev Douglas Development

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

**NATURE OF PROPOSED WORK:** *Please check all that apply*

- ☐ NEW CONSTRUCTION
- ☐ EXTERIOR ALTERATION: *Please check all that apply.*
- |                                                                                                      |                                                     |                                                     |                                   |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> awning                                                                      | <input type="checkbox"/> fence, gate or garden wall | <input type="checkbox"/> HVAC equipment             | <input type="checkbox"/> shutters |
| <input type="checkbox"/> doors                                                                       | <input type="checkbox"/> windows                    | <input type="checkbox"/> siding                     | <input type="checkbox"/> shed     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> lighting                                                                    | <input type="checkbox"/> pergola/trellis            | <input type="checkbox"/> painting unpainted masonry |                                   |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other <small>remove existing LED screen install Lightbox</small> |                                                     |                                                     |                                   |
- ☐ ADDITION
- ☐ DEMOLITION/ENCAPSULATION
- ☐ SIGNAGE

**DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED WORK:** *Please describe the proposed work in detail (Additional pages may be attached).*

Existing LED Screen to be removed per sign violation 9-301(A)

New Lightbox to be installed in existing opening. Size to match existing opening.

Existing power to remain and be reused for new Lightbox

**SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS:**

- ☐ Check this box if there is a homeowner's association for this property. If so, you must attach a copy of the letter approving the project.

Items listed below comprise the **minimum supporting materials** for BAR applications. Staff may request additional information during application review. Please refer to the relevant section of the *Design Guidelines* for further information on appropriate treatments.

Applicants must use the checklist below to ensure the application is complete. Include all information and material that are necessary to thoroughly describe the project. Incomplete applications will delay the docketing of the application for review. Pre-application meetings are required for all proposed additions. All applicants are encouraged to meet with staff prior to submission of a completed application.

**Demolition/Encapsulation :** *All applicants requesting 25 square feet or more of demolition/encapsulation must complete this section. Check N/A if an item in this section does not apply to your project.*

- N/A
- ☐ ☒ Survey plat showing the extent of the proposed demolition/encapsulation.
- ☒ ☐ Existing elevation drawings clearly showing all elements proposed for demolition/encapsulation.
- ☐ ☒ Clear and labeled photographs of all elevations of the building if the entire structure is proposed to be demolished.
- ☒ ☐ Description of the reason for demolition/encapsulation.
- ☐ ☒ Description of the alternatives to demolition/encapsulation and why such alternatives are not considered feasible.

**Additions & New Construction:** Drawings must be to scale and should not exceed 11" x 17" unless approved by staff. Check N/A if an item in this section does not apply to your project.

- ☐ ☒ N/A Scaled survey plat showing dimensions of lot and location of existing building and other structures on the lot, location of proposed structure or addition, dimensions of existing structure(s), proposed addition or new construction, and all exterior, ground and roof mounted equipment.
- ☐ ☒ FAR & Open Space calculation form.
- ☐ ☒ Clear and labeled photographs of the site, surrounding properties and existing structures, if applicable.
- ☐ ☒ Existing elevations must be scaled and include dimensions.
- ☐ ☒ Proposed elevations must be scaled and include dimensions. Include the relationship to adjacent structures in plan and elevations.
- ☐ ☒ Materials and colors to be used must be specified and delineated on the drawings. Actual samples may be provided or required.
- ☒ ☐ Manufacturer's specifications for materials to include, but not limited to: roofing, siding, windows, doors, lighting, fencing, HVAC equipment and walls.
- ☐ ☒ For development site plan projects, a model showing mass relationships to adjacent properties and structures.

**Signs & Awnings:** One sign per building under one square foot does not require BAR approval unless illuminated. All other signs including window signs require BAR approval. Check N/A if an item in this section does not apply to your project.

- ☒ ☐ N/A Linear feet of building: Front: 35'-9" Secondary front (if corner lot): \_\_\_\_\_.
- ☐ ☒ Square feet of existing signs to remain: \_\_\_\_\_.
- ☒ ☐ Photograph of building showing existing conditions.
- ☐ ☒ Dimensioned drawings of proposed sign identifying materials, color, lettering style and text.
- ☐ ☒ Location of sign (show exact location on building including the height above sidewalk).
- ☐ ☒ Means of attachment (drawing or manufacturer's cut sheet of bracket if applicable).
- ☐ ☒ Description of lighting (if applicable). Include manufacturer's cut sheet for any new lighting fixtures and information detailing how it will be attached to the building's facade.

**Alterations:** Check N/A if an item in this section does not apply to your project.

- ☒ ☐ N/A Clear and labeled photographs of the site, especially the area being impacted by the alterations, all sides of the building and any pertinent details.
- ☐ ☒ Manufacturer's specifications for materials to include, but not limited to: roofing, siding, windows, doors, lighting, fencing, HVAC equipment and walls.
- ☒ ☐ Drawings accurately representing the changes to the proposed structure, including materials and overall dimensions. Drawings must be to scale.
- ☐ ☒ An official survey plat showing the proposed locations of HVAC units, fences, and sheds.
- ☐ ☒ Historic elevations or photographs should accompany any request to return a structure to an earlier appearance.



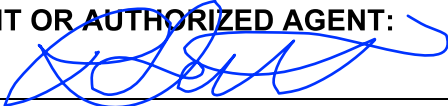
**ALL APPLICATIONS:** *Please read and check that you have read and understand the following items:*

- ☒ I understand that after reviewing the proposed alterations, BAR staff will invoice the appropriate filing fee in APEX. The application will not be processed until the fee is paid online.
- ☒ I understand the notice requirements and will return a copy of the three respective notice forms to BAR staff at least five days prior to the hearing. If I am unsure to whom I should send notice I will contact Planning and Zoning staff for assistance in identifying adjacent parcels.
- ☒ I, the applicant, or an authorized representative will be present at the public hearing.
- ☒ I understand that any revisions to this initial application submission (including applications deferred for restudy) must be accompanied by the BAR Supplemental form and revised materials.

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The undersigned hereby attests that all of the information herein provided including the site plan, building elevations, prospective drawings of the project, and written descriptive information are true, correct and accurate. The undersigned further understands that, should such information be found incorrect, any action taken by the Board based on such information may be invalidated. The undersigned also hereby grants the City of Alexandria permission to post placard notice as required by Article XI, Division A, Section 11-301(B) of the 1992 Alexandria City Zoning Ordinance, on the property which is the subject of this application. The undersigned also hereby authorizes the City staff and members of the BAR to inspect this site as necessary in the course of research and evaluating the application. The applicant, if other than the property owner, also attests that he/she has obtained permission from the property owner to make this application.

**APPLICANT OR AUTHORIZED AGENT:**

Signature:  \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name: Robert J. Sargenti

Date: 5/6/2026

# OWNERSHIP AND DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

Use additional sheets if necessary

1. Applicant. State the name, address and percent of ownership of any person or entity owning an interest in the applicant, unless the entity is a corporation or partnership, in which case identify each owner of more than three percent. The term ownership interest shall include any legal or equitable interest held at the time of the application in the real property which is the subject of the application.

| Name                          | Address    | Percent of Ownership |
|-------------------------------|------------|----------------------|
| 1. Essilor Luxottica-Van Phai | [REDACTED] | 100%                 |
| 2.                            |            |                      |
| 3.                            |            |                      |

2. Property. State the name, address and percent of ownership of any person or entity owning an interest in the property located at 628 KING STREET (address), unless the entity is a corporation or partnership, in which case identify each owner of more than three percent. The term ownership interest shall include any legal or equitable interest held at the time of the application in the real property which is the subject of the application.

| Name             | Address    | Percent of Ownership |
|------------------|------------|----------------------|
| 1. NORMAN JEMAL  | [REDACTED] | 70%                  |
| 2. DOUGLAS JEMAL | [REDACTED] | 5%                   |
| 3. MATTHEW JEMAL | [REDACTED] | 25%                  |

3. Business or Financial Relationships. Each person or entity listed above (1 and 2), with an ownership interest in the applicant or in the subject property is required to disclose any business or financial relationship, as defined by Section 11-350 of the Zoning Ordinance, existing at the time of this application, or within the 12-month period prior to the submission of this application with any member of the Alexandria City Council, Planning Commission, Board of Zoning Appeals or either Boards of Architectural Review.

| Name of person or entity | Relationship as defined by Section 11-350 of the Zoning Ordinance | Member of the Approving Body (i.e. City Council, Planning Commission, etc.) |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1.                       |                                                                   |                                                                             |
| 2.                       |                                                                   |                                                                             |
| 3.                       |                                                                   |                                                                             |

**NOTE: Business or financial relationships of the type described in Sec. 11-350 that arise after the filing of this application and before each public hearing must be disclosed prior to the public hearings.**

As the applicant or the applicant's authorized agent, I hereby attest to the best of my ability that the information provided above is true and correct.

5/13/26

Date

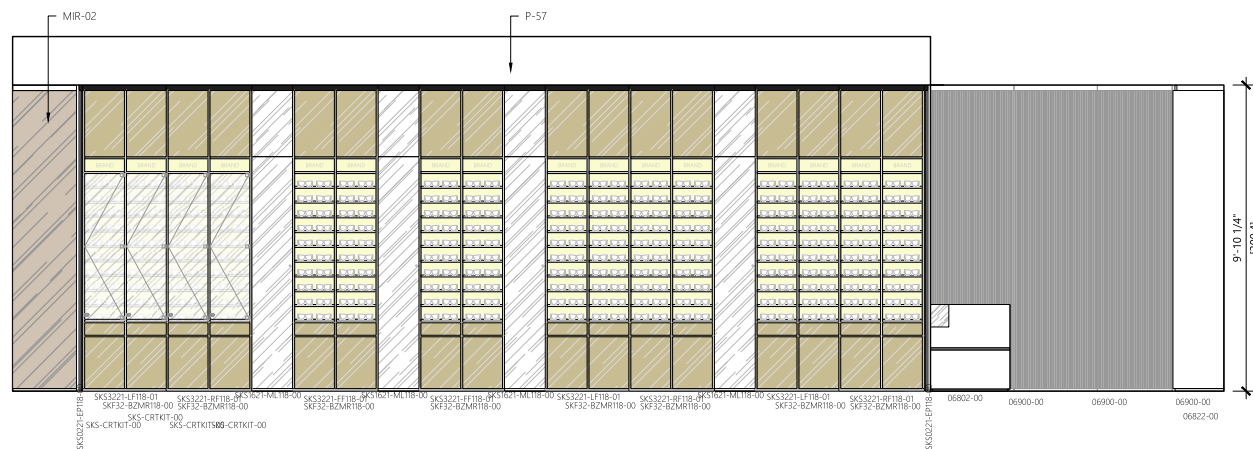
MAUREEN WOLFE

Printed Name



Signature

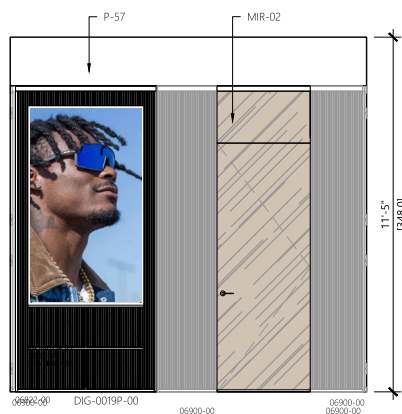




6  
EL2

**INTERIOR ELEVATION**

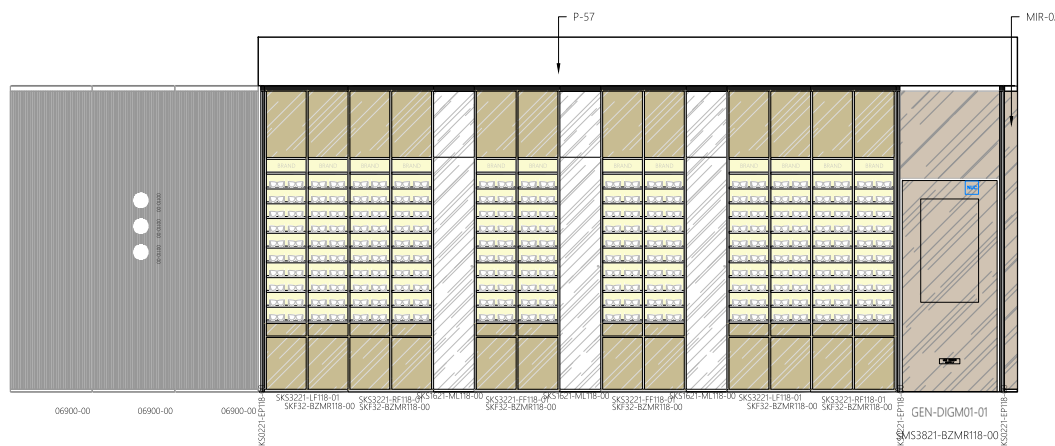
SCALE: 1/4" = 1'-0"



7  
EL2

# INTERIOR ELEVATION

SCALE: 1/4" = 1'-0"



8  
EL2

**INTERIOR ELEVATION**

SCALE: 1/4" = 1'-0"

REVISION NO.: **REV 8**

STAGE: **CDS**

STATUS: **APPROVED**

Approved By: NRR Date: 8/9/23  
Approved By: CDR Date: 5/26/23  
Approved By: HST Date: ----  
Approved By: EA Date: 9/19/23

REVISION LOG:

| REV | DATE     | DESIGNED BY |
|-----|----------|-------------|
| 06  | 8/24/23  | AON         |
| 07  | 9/21/23  | SB/PZD      |
| 08  | 10/25/23 | SB/PZD      |
| 04  | 6/30/23  | AON         |
| 05  | 8/14/23  | DF          |

Location: ☐ INTERIOR LOCATION  
☒ EXTERIOR LOCATION  
☐ HOST LOCATION

Scope:

- ☒ NEW
- ☐ REMODEL
- ☐ RELOCATION
- ☐ REFRESH

Design Type: SGH06

TITLE: INTERIOR ELEVATIONS

SHEET:

## EL2

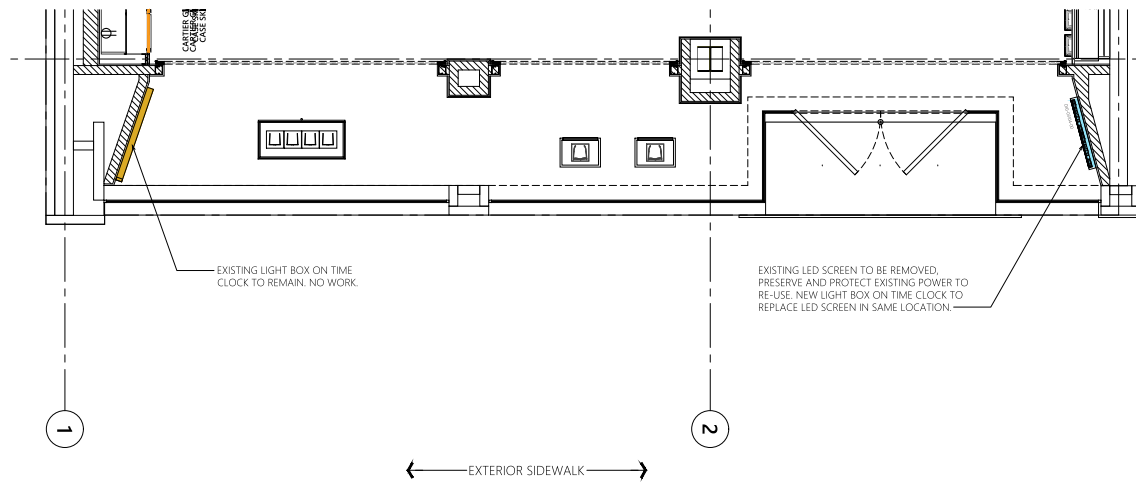




3 STOREFRONT RENDERING  
SCALE: N.T.S.



4 EX'G STOREFRONT IMAGE - EXTERIOR VIEW  
SCALE: N.T.S.



1 ENLARGED STOREFRONT PLAN  
SCALE: 1/2"=1'-0"



2 EX'G STOREFRONT IMAGE - INTERIOR VIEW  
SCALE: N.T.S.

DESIGN & CONSTRUCTION  
MANAGEMENT:  
**EspositoLuoettica**  
NORTH AMERICA STORE DEVELOPMENT  
1 West 37th Street, New York, NY 10018  
+1 212 302 1200

STORE #P242  
KING STREET  
628 KING STREET  
SUITE # 101  
ALEXANDRIA, VA 22314  
Construction for:

**sunglass hut**  
A Brand of EspositoLuoettica

Revisions:

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Architect / Engineer of Record

Seal

Architect Job No.: 9754-23

Historic Project  
Number: 89785

Brand Design Type:  
SGH 6.0 (SKIN)

ISSUED FOR:  
☐ BAK SUBMITTAL

ENLARGED  
STOREFRONT PLAN

|                  |        |
|------------------|--------|
| Date: 05/07/2023 | Sheet: |
| Drawn By: JI     | A300   |
| Checked By: BM   |        |