

PLANNING REPORT

Architectural Review Board

Wednesday, February 25, 2026

N. High Street Renovations Case 25-121MSP/MPR

www.dublinohiousa.gov/ARB/25-121

Case Summary

Address	72 and 84 N. High Street, 20 North Street, Dublin, OH 43017
Proposal	Master Sign Plan and lighting plan on a 0.71-acre site in the Historic District.
Request	Review and approval for Master Sign Plan (MSP) and Minor Project Review (MPR) under the provisions of Zoning Code Section 153.176.
Zoning	HD-HC, Historic Core District
Planning Recommendation	<u>Approval of MSP and MPR with conditions.</u>
Next Steps	Upon approval of the MSP and MPR, the applicant may apply for building permits through Building Standards.
Applicant	Stage Capital Partners, Owner Gary Alexander, AIA Tim Bass, Bass Studio Architects
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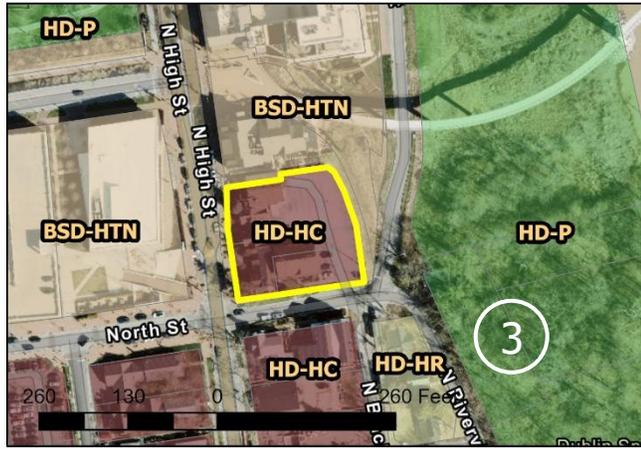
Site Location Map

25-121MSP - 72 & 84 N. High Street



Site Features

- 1 72 & 84 N. High St.
- 2 20 North St.
- 3 Recently re-zoned to Historic Core



1. Request and Process

The applicant was required to provide an MSP and lighting plan (the MPR) for this property via a previous condition of approval. Based on discussions with staff, an MSP is the best way to accommodate the number of eventual tenants on such a large building and site. Due to the unique site/building configuration and high number of potential tenant spaces, the proposed signage will deviate from the Historic District Code. Staff believes the proposed signage will best represent each potential tenant and create an appropriately lively streetscape. Stated goals include:

- Directories and tenant signage to reflect architectural details and color schemes of the buildings
- A unified graphic information and wayfinding system

Process

The MPR/MSP is a one-step process for certain project types that qualify under Code sections 153.176(I) and (L), respectively, and this project meets the criteria.

2. Background

Site Summary

The combined site is just under 31,000 square feet and zoned HD-HC, Historic Core District. It sits at the northern end of the Historic District, with Bridge Street District - Historic Transition Neighborhood directly to the north at The Pearl Restaurant. The site is highly visible from N. High Street, North Street, the Dublin Library, and the Link Pedestrian Bridge.

The 72/84 N. High Street structure is identified as a 1930s building with various additions, with the south portion being "Queen Anne" and the north portion being post-modern according to the 2017 Historic and Cultural Assessment (HCA). The building was noted as having poor integrity due to multiple additions and renovations. The current configuration of the structures was finalized ca. 2010. 20 North Street did not appear on the ODOT aerial maps until approximately 1989; it is not noted in the HCA. All three addresses are Background on the *Historic Design Guidelines* Map.

Case History

1987

Variances by Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA) waived parking requirements and parking lot interior landscaping. These Variances remain.

2009 (Case 09-002)

Variances by the BZA for:

- building setbacks for 72 and 84
- maximum lot coverage
- parking amount

2008, 2010

Signage and maintenance cases.

2020 (Case 20-191)

Proposal before ARB to redevelop entire site; no further action.

December 2024 (Case 24-145)

Board held an Informal Review pertaining to proposed renovations to all structures on the site. Discussion centered on using Historic Dublin for architectural cues, retaining identified signature features, and incorporating streetscape opportunities.

April 2025 (Case 25-015)

Board considered an MPR involving proposed renovations to all structures on the site. Board approved Waivers for: aluminum windows and doors, Timber Tech decking, and Boral siding in specific locations. Board approved MPR for site with conditions (summarized, with applicant updates in italics):

- 1) Applicant to coordinate with City on future utility/road improvements on North Street. Immediate installation of items in ROW requires an encroachment permit and are done at own risk. *Applicant has coordinated; no installations done to date.*
- 2) Landscape/hardscape on North Street (Phase 2) required to be installed within 90 days of roadway improvements/utility installation or as determined by staff. ROW encroachment permits may be required. *Still in effect.*
- 3) Signs are not approved with this MPR and require separate MSP, to include all building lighting and photometric plan, including bollard lights. *Addressed by this application.*

3. Zoning Code and Guidelines

Historic District – Historic Core District

The intent of the Historic Core District is to ensure sensitive infill development and provide an improved environment for walking while accommodating vehicles. Staff is especially focusing on the “improved environment for walking” to address site improvements to this property.

Historic Design Guidelines

The Guidelines suggest using adjacent Landmark buildings to guide Background building details. The majority of the proposal is related to site improvements, so Chapters 6 - Site Design, and 7 - Signs, are prioritized.

4. Project

Uses

Both 72 and 84 N. High Street will have retail uses. 20 North Street will remain office. Both uses are permitted in the zoning district, and no use specific standards apply.

Site Layout

This request will not change the existing layout of the site.

Setbacks and Lot Coverage

Based on previously-approved Variances, the existing conditions are legal, and no changes are proposed with this request.

Building Massing and Scale

The buildings’ massing and scale will not change with this proposal.

Signs

Wall Signs

Per Code § 153.173(L), 8 SF is the maximum permitted size for a wall sign. The sign type is permitted to be located on walls facing public streets and within 6’ of a principal entrance where not associated with a storefront. Wall signs should not extend more than 14” from the building façade, and the maximum permitted height is 15’ measured from grade to the top of the sign, not extending above the roofline. All proposed signs in this MSP are building-mounted wall signs.

The applicant has used inspiration from the architectural molding detail on 72/84 to create the sign panel frames. Staff appreciates this effort. Additional suggestions were made to employ unique materials, such as metal, or other artistic elements to best address the *Historic Design Guidelines*, Section 7.8A where interest and vibrancy is anticipated. Specific analysis comments are provided below.

Please note that Sheets 21 and 22 should be used to understand actual sign scale relative to the building: Sheets 17-20 are meant to indicate location rather than scale.

Single-Face Wall-Mounted Address Signs

The applicant proposes using address signs for informational purposes for each of the buildings. The intent of the signs is to ensure clear building identification while minimizing visual clutter and the need for large directory signs in the right-of-way. The signs maintain appropriate scale, reduce impact on historic materials, and support a cohesive streetscape. Individual signs are described in the table below:

Address Signs				
Building Address	Façade	General Location	Dimensions	Size
72 N High	West	Southern edge of façade	3’ x 2’	6 SF
84 N High	West	Northern end of façade, mounted between fenestration and primary entrance	3’ x 2’	6 SF
20 North	South	Eastern end of façade, mounted below the roof eave	3’ x 2’	6 SF

Address signs are required for safety reasons through the Building Code. Staff suggested integrating into the design scheme to avoid a generic solution.

Single-Face Wall-Mounted Building Markers

The applicant proposes using building marker signs to allow for building and tenant identification, and user wayfinding, while minimizing visual clutter and preserving the architectural integrity of the structures. Individual signs are described in the table below:

Building Marker Signs					
Building Address	Façade	General Location	Dimensions	Size	# of Panels
84 N High	South	At building corner adjacent to stair tower, facing 20 North	30" x 30"	6.25 SF	2
84 N High	East	Lower level, adjacent to primary entrance	30" x 30"	6.25 SF	2
84 N High	East	Lower level, adjacent to staircase	30" x 36"	7.5 SF	6
20 North	South	Main level, centered at stair opening	30" x 30"	6.25 SF	4
20 North	West	Above stair enclosure, facing 72 N High	30" x 30"	6.25 SF	2
20 North	North	Western edge of façade, main level above fenestration	30" x 19"	3.96 SF	2

Deviations from § 153.173L:

Multiple building marker signs are not within 6’ of the entrances and are higher than 15’ from grade; however, Staff agrees these signs are an appropriate response to the building design and the existing grade on the site.

These signs maintain an appropriate scale, coordinate with building features, and support a cohesive and orderly streetscape, especially in view of the overall building scale and the eventual number of tenants.

Single-Face Wall-Mounted Tenant Signs

The applicant proposes individual signs to provide clear tenant identification while minimizing visual clutter and preserving the integrity and historic character of the buildings. Individual signs are described in the table below:

Tenant Signs				
Building Address	Façade	General Location	Dimensions	Size
84 N High	West	Centered above primary entrance	6’ x 1’	6 SF
72 N High	West	Centered above primary entrance	6’ x 1’	6 SF

84 N High	West	Upper story façade, adjacent to north bay window	4' x 2'	8 SF
84 N High	West	Upper story façade, adjacent to south bay window	4' x 2'	8 SF
84 N High	East	Upper story façade bay, centered above north primary entrance	4' x 2'	8 SF
84 N High	East	Upper story façade bay, centered above south primary entrance	4' x 2'	8 SF
20 North	North	Lower level, centered above proposed secondary entrance (per 25-118MPR)	6' x 1'	6 SF
20 North	North	Lower level, centered above approved entrance	6' x 1'	6 SF
20 North	South	Lower level, centered above proposed tenant entrance (per 25-118MPR)	6' x 1'	6 SF

Deviations from § 153.173L:

The two 84 N High St. signs on the east façade are higher than 15' from grade; however, the significant grade change requires the deviation from Code.

Staff agrees these signs are necessary to represent all future tenants of the building and to maintain the desired cohesiveness and character that is proposed. These signs maintain appropriate scale, limit visual dominance, and support a cohesive streetscape.

Materials and Colors

Single-Face Wall-Mounted Address Signs

All three wall-mounted address signs are proposed to be constructed with 2" thick HDU panels with 3½" frame molding and ½" raised letters. The material of the lettering is not stated in the proposed plan and has been met with a recommended condition of approval. The two proposed signs for the 72 & 84 N High St. building have proposed colors of SW 2829 (Classic White) for the background and SW 2836 (Quartersawn Oak) for the letters. The proposed colors for the 20 North St. sign are James Hardie Mountain Sage for the background and SW 2829 for the letters. All colors match the previously-approved colors for the buildings. The proposed font style for all three signs is Gotham.

Single-Face Wall-Mounted Building Markers

All six wall-mounted building markers are proposed to be constructed with 2" thick HDU panels with 3½" frame molding and ½" raised letters. The material of the lettering is not stated in the proposed plan and has been met with a recommended condition of approval. The panels will also be raised, and the number of panels is different for each sign, depending on the number of potential tenants for each building section as noted in the table. The three proposed signs for the 72 & 84 N High St. building have proposed colors of SW 2829 (Classic White), SW 2828 (Roycroft Pewter), and SW 2836 (Quartersawn Oak). The three proposed signs for the 20 North St. building have proposed colors of James Hardie Mountain Sage, SW 7069 (Iron Ore), and SW 2829 (Classic White). The proposed font style for all six signs is Gotham.

Single-Face Wall-Mounted Tenant Signs

All nine wall-mounted tenant signs are proposed to be constructed with 2" thick HDU panels with 3½" frame molding and ½" raised letters. The material of the lettering is not stated in the proposed plan and has been met with a recommended condition of approval. The six proposed signs for the 72 & 84 N High St. building have proposed colors of SW 2829 (Classic White), SW 2828 (Roycroft Pewter), and SW 2836 (Quartersawn Oak). The three proposed for the 20 North St. building have proposed colors of SW 7069 (Iron Ore) and SW 2829 (Classic White). The proposed font style for all nine signs is Gotham.

All the proposed sign colors were previously-approved in Case 25-015MPR. The font type is stylized yet legible, meeting *Historic Design Guidelines* Sections 7.1 and 7.8, with the exception that not all signs are illuminated. Code requirements for sign material, color, and font are generally met. Staff is comfortable with the colors and fonts based on the size of the buildings, the viewing distance, and the different architectural character between 74/82 and 20. Staff notes that each tenant/applicant shall apply for and obtain permanent sign permits from Building Standards, and that each sign shall conform to the approved MSP. No additional logos or colors shall be permitted.

Lighting

The 72/84 building currently has non-compliant flood lights in various locations, and these will be removed per the elevations. Along N. High Street, the applicant shows bollard lights in black to emphasize entry points and pedestrian areas (Fixture B1) and match those provided by the City nearby. Six of these are in the right-of-way (see below) and provide the desired streetscape interaction and integration.

Staff has worked with the consultant to obtain the necessary information for the lighting plan; however, the information is still not complete. Staff notes:

- The lighting plan layout appears to vary from the approved MPR (Case 25-015) site layout on the south side of the property; this needs to be clarified
- The right-of-way (ROW) lines need to be shown on the photometric plan to provide clarity for the required Encroachment Permits
- Many fixtures/bulbs do not meet the uniformity requirements and max/min lighting requirements in Code § 153.173(J)(4), as noted during review, and a redesign is necessary. For example, the Statistics table on the plan shows footcandles as high as 35.5fc, where 3fc is the maximum permitted
- Lighting levels are not provided on various decks and directly under some fixtures (previously requested), so Code § 153.173(J)(4) cannot be fully evaluated

- It is not clear that existing lighting levels are included in the photometric plan, per Code § 153.173(J)(6); this needs to be clarified
- The in-ground up-lighting for the historic wall is shown at 1000 lumens, which is above the maximum described in Code § 153.173(J)(8)(a); this needs to be adjusted

Staff is recommending a condition of approval to address the deficiencies that could be approved administratively, per Code § 153.177(M)(2)(k); however, the Board may determine that, because this is such a large and impactful site, and the lighting is so closely tied to the MSP, full Board review may be warranted.

Utilities, ROW Encroachment, Access/Parking

Utilities

Both staff and EMH&T (City’s consultant for Riverview Village) have finalized the utility locations for North Street, and those plans have been provided to this applicant. Construction for the larger project will start this spring.

ROW Encroachment

No signs are proposed within the right-of-way. Various lights are likely in the ROW, as previously noted. The applicant is aware that Encroachment Permits are required for any work within the City’s ROW.

Access

Access is not affected by this request.

5. Plan Review

Master Sign Plan Review

Criteria	Review
a) The MSP is consistent with the Community Plan, <i>Historic Design Guidelines</i> , and other adopted plans and policies.	Criterion Met: The proposal is consistent with the Community Plan, <i>Historic Design Guidelines</i> , and all City adopted plans, policies, and regulations using the design of the building details to inform the signage design. The proposed building-mounted signs meet requirements.
b) The proposed signs are appropriately sited and scaled to create a cohesive character that complements the surrounding environment and meets the intent of the architectural requirements of § 153.174 Design Standards and the <i>Historic Design Guidelines</i> .	Criterion Met with Condition: The proposed signs are appropriately sited and scaled for the buildings’ character and size. There is missing material information in the proposal that must be submitted to and reviewed by Staff. This material must create cohesive character and should respond to the Design Standards and <i>Historic District Guidelines</i> . This has been met with a recommended condition of approval.
c) The proposed signs are not in conflict with public streets, open spaces, utilities, or rights-of-way, and	Criterion Met: The applicant has worked with staff to remove previously-proposed signage from the right-of-way. The proposed signs do not

Criteria	Review
do not impeded the continued provision of services required by the City or other public agency.	conflict with public streets, open spaces, utilities, or provision of services.

Minor Project Review

Criteria	Review
a) The MPR is consistent with the Community Plan, the applicable Zoning Code requirements, <i>Historic Design Guidelines</i> , and adopted plans, policies, and regulations.	Criterion Met with Condition: The lighting plan is not yet in conformance with the Code as described herein.
b) In cases where a MPR is proposed within or as part of an approved PDP or FDP, the MPR shall be consistent with such approved PDP or FDP.	Not Applicable: No PDP or FDP exist for the property.
c) The MPR shall be consistent with the record established by the required reviewing body, the associated Staff Report, and the Director’s recommendation.	Criterion Met with Condition: The lighting plan is not yet consistent with the requirements for the reviewing body, staff, or the Director.
d) The proposed land uses meet all applicable requirements and use specific standards of §153.172, Uses.	Criterion Met: Proposed land uses of retail and office are permitted, and no use-specific standards exist.
e) The proposed development is consistent with the <i>Historic Design Guidelines</i> .	Criterion Met with Condition: The lighting does meet Guidelines Sections 6.7 A by using simplified designs that are not too ornate; however, 6.7 B states that soft, subdued lighting should be used. Based on review of the photometrics herein, this is not yet met.
f) The proposed MPR is consistent with surrounding historic context, character, and scale of the immediately surrounding area and the district as a whole.	Criterion Met with Condition: The proposed lighting is currently too bright and therefore does not blend in with the surrounding historic context. A recommended condition of approval addresses the need for compliance.
g) The proposed buildings are appropriately sited and conform to the requirements of §153.173, Site	Criterion Met with Condition: No new construction is proposed. Lighting falls under site development, and the proposed lighting does not

Development Standards, and the *Historic Design Guidelines*.

meet either Code or Guidelines but could with a redesign. Given the size and prominence of the site and buildings, this is of significant concern. All existing, non-compliant lighting is proposed to be removed as indicated on the plans/elevations.

- h) The proposed site improvements, landscaping, screening, signs, and buffering shall meet all applicable requirements of the Code and respond to the standards of the *Historic Design Guidelines*.

Criterion Met with Condition: The lighting does not yet meet requirements of the Code or standards of the Guidelines.

Recommendation

Planning Recommendation: Approval of the MSP with condition:

1. Prior to submitting a building permit, the applicant shall supply staff with a sample of the material proposed for the lettering on the signs for staff approval or propose a material that is regularly approved in the Historic District.

Planning Recommendation: Approval of MPR with condition:

1. Prior to installation of any lighting, the applicant shall supply staff with complete and approvable lighting information that meets all requirements under Code § 153.173(J), Lighting and Guidelines Section 6.7, Lighting. This lighting shall be approved administratively.