

**CITY OF ST. CHARLES
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
KIMBERLY MALAY, CHAIR**

**WEDNESDAY, August 20, 2025 – 7:00 P.M.
COUNCIL CHAMBERS
2 E. MAIN ST., ST. CHARLES, IL 60174**

- 1. Call to Order**
- 2. Roll Call**
- 3. Approval of Agenda**
- 4. Presentation of minutes of the August 6, 2025 meeting**
- 5. Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) applications**
 - a. 210 Cedar Avenue**
- 6. Grant Applications**
- 7. Landmark Applications**
- 8. Preliminary Reviews-** Open forum for questions or presentation of preliminary concepts to the Commission for feedback
- 9. Other Commission Business**
 - a. Steve Jones Law Office**
- 10. Public Comment**
- 11. Additional Business and Observations from Commissioners or Staff**
 - a. Pottawatomie District**
 - b. Rules and Ethics**
- 12. Meeting Announcements: September 3, 2025**
- 13. Adjournment**

ADA Compliance

Any individual with a disability requesting a reasonable accommodation in order to participate in a public meeting should contact the ADA Coordinator, Jennifer McMahon, at least 48 hours in advance of the scheduled meeting. The ADA Coordinator can be reached in person at 2 East Main Street, St. Charles, IL, via telephone at (630) 377 4446 or 800 526 0844 (TTY), or via e-mail at jmcmahon@stcharlesil.gov. Every effort will be made to allow for meeting participation. Notices of this meeting were posted consistent with the requirements of 5 ILCS 120/1 et seq. (Open Meetings Act).

**MINUTES
CITY OF ST. CHARLES
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 6, 2025**

Members Present: Smunt, Kessler, Pretz, Malay

Members Absent: Rice

Also Present: Emma Field, City Planner

1. Call to Order

Ms. Malay called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M.

2. Roll Call

Ms. Emma Field called Roll with four members present. There was a quorum.

3. Approval of Agenda

Mr. Kessler requested to add an item under Other Commission Business regarding 217 Cedar, as item 9a, and 218 Indiana Street, as item 9b. Ms. Malay requested to add an item under Other Commission Business regarding the Stevens Jones Law Office, as item 9c. Mr. Pretz requested making item 7 Preliminary Review and item 8 Landmark Applications.

A motion was made by Mr. Kessler and seconded by Dr. Smunt with a unanimous voice vote to approve the agenda as amended.

4. Presentation of minutes of the July 16, 2025 meeting

A motion was made by Dr. Smunt and seconded by Mr. Pretz with an unanimous voice vote to approve the Minutes as presented.

5. Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) applications

a. 12 N 3rd Street

Karen Dodge, representing Rec Haus, presented the COA to install a wall sign and a projecting sign on the west side at 12 N 3rd Street.

Mr. Kessler recused himself from the discussion due to a business relationship with the contractor.

A motion was made by Dr. Smunt and seconded by Mr. Pretz with a unanimous voice vote to approve the COA as presented. Mr. Kessler recused himself from vote.

b. 406 S 3rd Avenue

Mike Hoorelbek, Collegiate Landscape Inc., presented the COA to construct pavilion gazebo with corrugated steel roof and twelve foot section cedar privacy slat wall section at 406 S 3rd Avenue.

A motion was made by Mr. Kessler and seconded by Dr. Smunt with a unanimous voice vote to approve the COA as presented.

c. 13 S 2nd Street

Ms. Sue McDowell, representing Ruthie Lehmann, presented the COA to put up a painted sign and mural at 13 S 2nd Street.

Commission discussed the sealer and paint that will be used on the mural. Commenting on the failure rate of paint on brick and the removal of mural from the building should the building owner change or reach a point that the mural should come down.

Ms. Sue McDowell suggested removing the name of the foundation and the #988 from the mural and adding a removable plaque with the foundation name.

A motion was made by Mr. Kessler and seconded by Dr. Smunt with a unanimous voice vote to approve the COA contingent upon removing the foundation information and #988 from mural, adding the foundation name and the #988 on a plaque attached to the wall, and Commission receiving building owner's approval, how mural can be removed from the wall, and a maintenance warranty from the artist.

6. Grant Applications

a. 304 Chestnut Avenue

Mr. Christopher Rosati, Architect, presented the grant application request for replacement of eleven windows.

Commission and Mr. Rosati discussed the year home was built, being 1859, and the changes to the house since construction.

A motion was made by Mr. Kessler and seconded by Mr. Pretz with a unanimous voice vote to recommend approval of grant application as proposed

7. Preliminary Reviews- Open forum for questions or presentation of preliminary concepts to the Commission for feedback

a. 303 E Main Street

Ms. Lisa Norris presented staining the brick white at 303 E Main Street and adding a wood terrace wall. Relocate dumpsters in the back and put in a pergola.

Commission discussed staining is a better option rather than painting the brick.

8. Landmark Applications

a. Public Hearing: 801 Indiana Avenue "Eliza Caustin Farmhouse"

Mr. Pretz presented the application for 801 Indiana Avenue giving history of the home and history of home's owners. The name of the Landmark to be named to Eliza Caustin Farmhouse instead of just house.

Motion was made to exit Public Hearing by Mr. Kessler and seconded by Dr. Smunt.

A motion to recommend City Council consider the application for Landmark Status was made by Dr. Smunt and seconded by Mr. Kessler.

b. Public Hearing: 608-612 State Avenue “Col. Edward J Baker Home”

Mr. Pretz presented application for 608-612 State Avenue giving history of the home and history of the home’s owners.

Dr. Smunt suggested changes to the application being: architecture contains classical columns, as well as non-conforming shutters, aluminum siding, and replacement windows with exception to the leaded glass windows.

Motion was made to exit Public Hearing by Mr. Kesser and seconded by Dr. Smunt.

A motion to recommend City Council to consider the application for 608-612 State Avenue for Landmark Status was made by Mr. Kessler and seconded by Dr. Smunt.

9. Other Commission Business

a. 217 Cedar Avenue

Ms. Malay read letter submitted to City Council from the Historic Preservation Commission outlining the history of the Commission and concern of the Commission of the possible loss of 217 Cedar.

b. 218 Indiana Street

Mr. Kessler shared a link to property owner with options of starburst design to be added to the building at 218 Indiana as agreed upon by owner at the July 16, 2025 Historic Preservation Commission Meeting.

Commission discussed the Commission should have access to the plans submitted for permit to ensure work that was agreed upon and approved by Historic Preservation Commission is what has been submitted for permit.

c. Steven Jones Office

Mr. Pretz commented the Steven Jones Office should become an agenda item for the Commission. Commission would like to have an official from Public Works to attend a meeting to advise the Historic Preservation Commission on what the plan is for the Steven Jones Office restoration plan, the time line to get the work done, and the location of the sign that was removed when the building was moved.

10. Public Comment

11. Additional Business and Observations from Commissioners or Staff

Ms. Field advised she will send letters to all properties in the Historic District and Landmarked buildings introducing herself as the new Historic Preservation contact and advising them on the process of making changes to their properties.

Commission discussed the Pottawatomie District report. Mr. Kessler commented the report was large, much more than was needed. Dr. Smunt suggested walking the neighborhood to get a sense of the architecture, contributing and non-contributing, and the level of integrity of the buildings.

Ms. Field added in the recommendations the consultant listed nine properties, all but two of those are currently landmarked.

Mr. Pretz suggested a special meeting be set up to discuss the Pottawatomie District report. In preparation for the meeting take a look at the neighborhood listing homes that are Significant. Ms. Malay suggested September 10th.

12. Meeting Announcements: Historic Preservation Commission meeting Wednesday, August 20, 2025 at 7:00 P.M.

13. Adjournment

With no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 9:30 P.M.

From: [Kim Malay](#)
To: [Field, Emma](#); [Colby, Russell](#)
Subject: Letter to the Mayor and City Council regarding 217 Cedar Ave
Date: Thursday, July 31, 2025 8:33:30 PM

Hello Emma and Russ

I would like to submit this letter on behalf of the Historic Preservation Commission. Each member has reviewed it separately and would like to provide it to the Mayor and City Council.

Thank you for your assistance in this.

To Mayor Hull and the City Council:

Over 30 years ago, the City of St. Charles approved the formation of the Historic Preservation Commission (STC HPC) and the Historic Preservation Ordinance. Since that time, the Commission has reviewed and approved hundreds—if not thousands—of Certificates of Appropriateness (COAs) for properties within the city's three historic districts and among its 68 designated landmarks. Of all those reviews, only a small handful have ever been denied and brought before the City Council for final determination. This rarity is a testament to the Commission's thorough review process and its commitment to finding win-win solutions.

The denial before you now is because the proposed action did not comply with the guidelines set forth in the St. Charles Historic Preservation Ordinance, and no viable compromise could be reached. Such decisions are never made lightly.

Every property within the City of St. Charles is subject to City Code and Ordinances. These regulations—whether zoning codes, building permits, or others—exist to protect the community as a whole, not just individual property rights. The Historic Preservation Ordinance is no different; it is City law and should be upheld in the same manner as all other regulations.

Historic preservation is sometimes misunderstood as a nuisance or a lower priority. In truth, it plays a vital role in a community's identity, economy, and quality of life. In Illinois and across the country, historic preservation serves as a foundation for sustainable development and civic pride. By protecting historic buildings, sites, and landscapes, communities connect with their past, encourage tourism, and foster places that attract both residents and businesses.

Here are a few key reasons why historic preservation matters:

- **Identity and Sense of Place:** Preservation maintains

a community's unique character and history, fostering a strong sense of belonging.

- **Economic Development:** Historic sites attract tourism, revitalize downtowns, and support businesses related to preservation and heritage.
- **Quality of Life:** Preserved historic environments make communities more attractive and desirable to live, work, and visit.
- **Community Engagement:** Preservation efforts bring people together around shared goals and pride in local heritage.
- **Education:** Historic properties offer tangible connections to the past, educating future generations about where they come from.

The **Judge Barry House at 217 Cedar Avenue** is one such historic property. Judge Barry was one of Kane County's earliest judges, the first president of the Kane County Bar Association, General Farnsworth's campaign manager, and a figure connected to Civil War history. Like General Farnsworth, Judge Barry played a significant role in the history of St. Charles. In 1991, the City Council was faced with a similar dilemma regarding the Farnsworth Mansion. At that time, the City had no preservation ordinance. The loss of that landmark was a turning point—one that spurred the adoption of the Historic Preservation Ordinance we now rely on.

As for the COA denial currently before you: when the demolition request was submitted in 2024, financial concerns were discussed, but the applicant did **not** request an economic hardship determination. Moreover, no comprehensive plan was presented for future development of the site, which is a requirement under our ordinance.

The Commission emphasizes that following the ordinance and its prescribed procedures is crucial. If the Church wishes to pursue an Economic Hardship Hearing, we are ready and willing to assist them through that process.

Summary of the Economic Hardship Process

Chapter 17.32 – Requirements for Demolition and Hardship

Under **Sections 17.32.100–110**, an applicant may appeal a demolition denial based on hardship, but only if they meet strict criteria:

A. Section 17.32.100 (Economic Hardship Criteria)

To qualify, the applicant must clearly demonstrate:

1. Inability to obtain a reasonable economic return from use of the property, even if preserved.
2. That the property cannot be adapted to any other permitted use.
3. A good-faith attempt to sell, lease, or make the property productive while retaining its historic character.

At this time, Baker Memorial Church has not submitted adequate documentation—such as financial records, feasibility studies, real estate market analysis, or adaptive reuse evaluations—necessary to substantiate a hardship claim.

B. Section 17.32.110 (Commission Review of Hardship Claims)

The Historic Preservation Commission must conduct a separate public hearing focused solely on the hardship appeal.

- The burden of proof lies with the applicant.
- The Commission will evaluate claims of economic unviability or extraordinary burden.

The STC HPC respectfully urges the City Council to consider the precedent this case could set for the city's other historic resources—such as the Hotel Baker, the Arcada Theatre, the Lewis Mansion, and even City Hall itself. Allowing this historic property to be lost could signal that allowing a building to fall into disrepair is an acceptable path to demolition—a strategy commonly known as "demolition by neglect." This would fundamentally undermine our preservation efforts citywide.


We hope that such a precedent is **not** set at Monday's meeting.

In closing, the STC HPC has spent over three decades striving to find balanced solutions through dialogue and compromise. This approach has led to many preservation successes. We continue to seek a similar outcome in this case. The Commission, along with other concerned organizations, remains committed to working collaboratively with Baker Memorial Church to preserve the Judge Barry House in a way that also serves the Church's interests.

What we need most now is **time**—time to explore and realize such a solution. Upholding the Commission's recommendation will provide that time.

Respectfully,

The St. Charles Historic Preservation Commission

	HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION AGENDA ITEM EXECUTIVE SUMMARY			
	Agenda Item Title/Address:	COA: 210 Cedar Avenue		
	Significance:	Landmark		
	Petitioner:	Bridgett Foster		
	Project Type:	Sign		
	PUBLIC HEARING		MEETING 8/20/2025	X
Agenda Item Category:				
	Preliminary Review		Grant	
X	Certificate of Appropriateness (COA)		Other Commission Business	
	Landmark/District Designation		Commission Business	
Attached Documents:		Additional Requested Documents:		
COA application, plans				
Project Description:				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requesting to change the existing sign at 210 Cedar Avenue to new wood sign with wood lettering. 				
Staff Comments:				
Recommendation / Suggested Action:				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide feedback and recommendation on approval of the COA 				

APPLICATION FOR COA REVIEW

HISTORIC PRESERVATION "CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS"



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT / CITY OF ST. CHARLES

CD@STCHARLESIL.GOV / (630) 377-4443

To be filled out by City Staff

Permit #: _____ -- _____ Date Submitted: ____/____/____ COA # _____ -- _____ Admin. Approval: _____

APPLICATION INFORMATION

Address of Property: 210 Cedar Avenue

Use of Property: ☐ Commercial, business name: The Twisted Gypsy

☐ Residential ☐ Other: _____

Project Type:

☐ Exterior Alteration/Repair

☐ Windows

☐ Doors

☐ Siding - Type: _____

☐ Masonry Repair

☐ Other _____

☒ Awnings/Signs

☐ New Construction

☐ Primary Structure

☐ Additions

☐ Deck/Porch

☐ Garage/Outbuilding

☐ Other _____

☐ Demolition

☐ Primary Structure

☐ Garage/Outbuilding

☐ Other _____

☐ Relocation of Building

Description:

Requesting approval for and installation of new sign

Applicant Information:

Name (print): Bridgett Foster

Address: 210 Cedar Aveune

Phone: 630-846-1748

Email: bridgett@thetwistedgypsystc.com

Applicant is (check all that apply):

☒ Property Owner

☒ Business Tenant

☐ Project contractor

☐ Architect/Designer

Property Owner Information (if not the Applicant)

Name (print): Bridgett Foster

Address: 5N304 S Ridge Lane, St Charles, IL 60175

Signature: Bridgett Foster

APPLICANT/AUTHORIZED AGENT SIGNATURE

I agree that all work shall be in accordance with the plans, specifications and conditions which accompany this application, and I have read and understand the Historic Preservation COA General Conditions.

Signature: Bridgett Foster Date: 8/14/2025

56" Wide Total
outside posts

53" Tall
Total signage

76" Tall
Total signage
Grade to Arch top

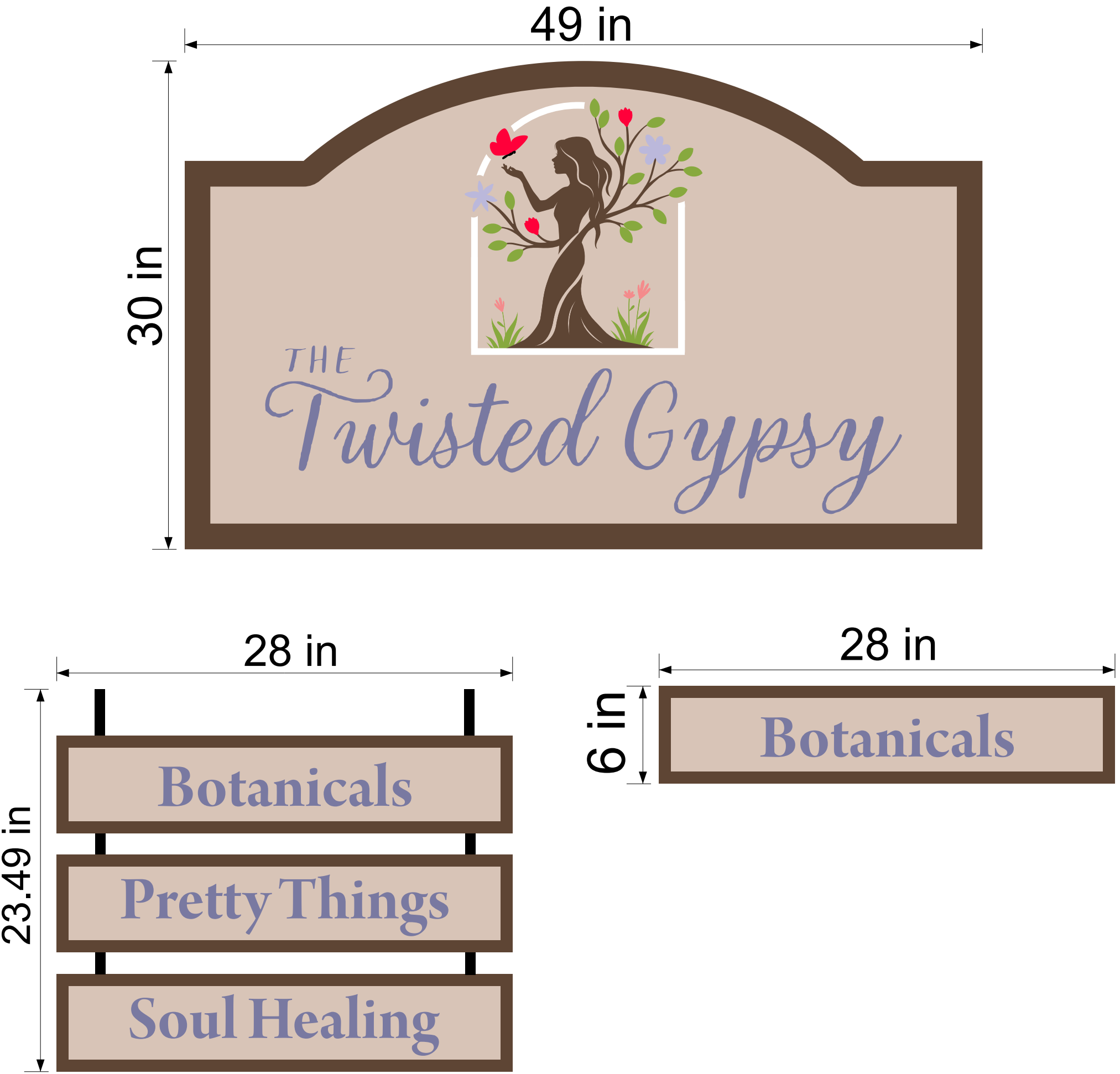


New Signage Proposal:

(1) Double sided sandblasted HDU Signage, painted to match.
Signage is 49" wide x 30" tall and is 2" thick/depth

Signage is through bolted between 2 existing painted and treated posts.

Bottom portion of signage is attached with
1/2" threaded rod through (3) panels. These
panels are also double sided 2" thick/depth HDU
Sandblasted and painted to match.



HADCO

by Signify

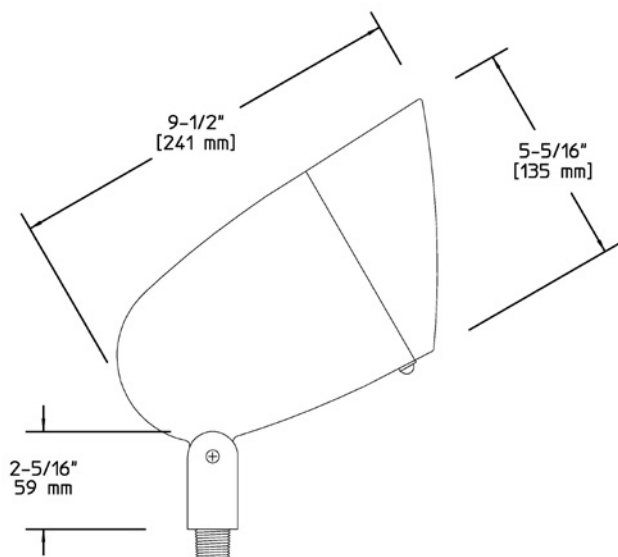
Landscape

Bullyte

B3 Aluminum

Ground lighting to display
light on sign.

Project: _____
Location: _____
Cat.No: _____
Type: _____
Lamps: _____ Qty: _____
Notes: _____



Ordering Guide

Example: B3 A

Product Code	B3	Aluminum Bullyte
Finish	A H G	Black Bronze Verde

Specifications

HOUSING:

Die-cast aluminum. Fully-adjustable swivel arm with vibration-proof locking teeth. Gasketing is silicone. Fasteners are 300 series stainless steel. Fully rotatable shroud, gasketed, cast aluminum. 1/2" NPS male threads to screw onto accessory mounting stake or junction box, sold separately.

FINISH:

Thermoset polyester powdercoat is electrostatically applied after a five-stage conversion cleaning process and bonded by heat fusion thermosetting.

OPTICAL ASSEMBLY:

Clear tempered glass affixed at 10° angle for natural cleaning.

LAMPING:

100W maximum PAR30/R30 medium base lamp. Lamp is not included. Lower wattage lamps are acceptable. HID PAR30 MH or MV acceptable with remote ballast (not included).

ELECTRICAL ASSEMBLY:

4kv rated porcelain mini-can base. Nickel-plated screw shell with center contact.

BALLAST:

Must order inground (IBH) or above ground (ABH) ballast housing separately.

WARRANTY:

Three-year limited warranty.

CERTIFICATIONS:

ETL listed to U.S. safety standards for wet locations. cETL listed to Canadian safety standards for wet locations. Manufactured to ISO 9001:2008 Standards.

Width:

5 5/16" (135mm)

Length:

9 1/2" (241mm)

Max. Weight:

2.96 lb.

Signify