



## Legislation Text

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**File #:** 18-506, **Version:** 1

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**DATE:** October 11, 2018

**TO:** Members of the Northfield Heritage Preservation Commission

**FROM:** Scott Tempel, City Planner

Sign Permit - Minnesota Soulstice - 300 Division St. S.

**ACTION REQUESTED:**

Request for the HPC to approve signage at 300 Division St.

**SUMMARY:**

Another new retail business is opening downtown. Elizabeth Spaulding came to the HPC meeting in September with a request for building colors. The HPC requested the applicant apply for a Certificate of Appropriateness for a sign plan. The applicant has hired Jim Bonhoff to create signage from the Minnesota Soulstice trademark.

**ANALYSIS:**

The applicable sections of the Downtown Historic District regulations in the sign ordinance include the following (Staff response is shown in **bold**):

**1. Placement:** Signs shall be positioned so they are an integral design feature of the building; signs shall complement and enhance the architectural features of the building. They shall be placed so that they do not destroy architectural details such as stone arches, glass transom panels, or decorative brickwork. Unless other placement is specifically approved by the Heritage Preservation Commission for reasons stated in the certificate of appropriateness by the Commission, signs may be placed only as follows:

- a. At or above the horizontal lintel, cornice, or beltcourse, or above the storefront windows;
- b. Projecting from the building;
- c. Applied to or painted on canvas awnings;
- d. In areas where signs were historically attached.

**Staff response: The signs meet placement requirements.** The signs will be located above the storefront windows and projecting from the building.

**3. Sign Shape:** Signs shall be designed to match the historical time period elements and regional location of the City, which primarily exclude such features as cut corners and non-rectangular shapes. In most cases, the edges of signs shall include a raised border that sets the sign apart from

the building surface or hanging space. Individual raised letters set onto the sign area surface are also preferred.

**Staff response: The signs meet shape requirements.** Lettering for the wall sign consists of a combination of individual 3D letters and painted lettering to be placed on the existing sign board. The existing signboard above the storefront windows has a raised border. The projecting sign is a circular representation of the Soulstice logo.

**4. Colors:** Sign colors shall coordinate with the building façade to which the sign is attached and shall be compatible with the property's use. A combination of soft/neutral shades and dark/rich shades are encouraged in order to reflect the historical time period. No more than two colors shall be used for the sign letters.

**Staff response: The signs meets color requirements.** The proposed signage is in black and white. The wall sign background is a rich, red earth tone .

**5. Material:** Signs and sign letters should be made of wood or metal that is in keeping with the corresponding historical time period of the building. Brackets for projecting signs shall be made of iron or other painted metal, and shall be secured at the top of the sign and anchored into the mortar, not the masonry.

**Staff response: The signs meet the material requirements.** The projecting sign is made of wood with raised wooden letters. Installation of the signs will not affect the brickwork.

**6. Message:** The sign message shall be legible and shall relate to the nature of the business. These requirements may be accomplished through the use of words, pictures, names, symbols and logos.

**Staff response: The signs meet message requirements.** The signs are legible and relate to the business. They use the business logo.

**7. Lettering:** Lettering styles shall be legible and shall relate to the character of the property's use and the era of the building. Lettering shall preferably include serif rather than strictly block type styles. Each sign shall contain no more than two lettering styles, and the lettering shall occupy no more than approximately 60% of the total sign area.

**Staff response: The signs may meet lettering requirements.** The lettering is legible and relates to the property's use. The lettering contains two styles and employs partial use of serifs. This is yet another case where the City's desire to promote local, entrepreneurial, artistic businesses causes conflict with the sign code. The modern artistic font in the logo does not comport with the lettering requirements. The font complies as messaging contained in a logo.

**8. Illumination:** External illumination of signs is permitted by incandescent or fluorescent light, but

shall emit a continuous white light that prevents direct shining onto the ground or adjacent buildings. Exposed neon signs shall be permitted when installed inside windows of the interior of the building. The use of internally lit signs, such as but not limited to backlit plastic, is not permitted. Exceptions to this guideline shall be allowed for public service, time/temperature and theater signs.

**Staff response: The signs meet illumination requirements.** The signs will not be illuminated.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness.