

NARRATIVE IN SUPPORT OF CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT APPLICATION OF THE ARTS ALLEY, LLC

The Arts Alley, LLC (owned by Steve Duprey) developed the property located 20-22 S. Main Street into what is commonly known as “Arts Alley.” The property is in the Central Business Performance Zoning District (CBP). It is a commercial condominium, with 4 units.

The primary building along Main Street contains two condominium units. The first floor (Unit 1) is owned and occupied by The Friendly Toast. The second floor and rooftop comprise Unit 2, and are owned by Mr. Duprey (through The Arts Alley, LLC). On the second floor, Mr. Duprey operates a private event space known as “The Main Venue”. The Main Venue is a gathering space available for weddings and events. Above that, on the rooftop, Mr. Duprey operates a bar known as the “Rooftop Social,” which offers cocktails, casual food and live entertainment. The development opened in the summer of 2025. It has been immensely popular, and has breathed new life and energy into the Downtown area.

The Friendly Toast has installed a building sign above its entrance facing Main Street, but no other signage has been installed yet for The Main Venue or the Rooftop Social. The proposed signage plan for those two venues is enclosed herewith. As shown, Mr. Duprey proposes three new building signs:

- 1) A projecting sign for The Main Venue extending from the northerly (alley) building façade located at the second-floor level, and measuring 30sf;
- 2) A wall sign for The Main Venue located above the second-floor windows on the Main Street façade, measuring 19.7sf; and
- 3) A wall sign for the Rooftop Social located on the recessed wall behind the roof deck facing Main Street, measuring 72.9sf.

On November 5, 2025, the Zoning Board of Adjustment granted a variance to allow three new building signs totaling 122.6 sf, where a maximum of 3 building signs and 73sf is otherwise allowed. In addition to the granted variance, the proposed signs also require a conditional use permit due to the height of the wall signs (#2 and #3 above) on the building façade. Specifically, Section 28-6-9(b)(2) provides that:

Where a building is three (3) or more stories in height, the Planning Board may grant a conditional use permit to allow one wall sign for each building frontage, to be located between rows of windows or above the top row of windows or on the wall at a height in excess of twenty-five (25) feet above grade, provided that no window or exterior window trim is obstructed by the sign, and further provided that the sign identifies a principal use which is the sole occupant of the building, or the sign identifies the name or address of a building which is occupied by multiple principal uses.

Accordingly, Mr. Duprey seeks a conditional use permit in accordance with Section 28-6-9(b)(2) to allow wall signs above the sills of the first story windows and more than 25’ above grade.

It is critical to install signage above the sills of the first story windows and more than 25' above grade here because the building has three (3) different levels, with three different businesses. The businesses (restaurant, bar and event space) attract and depend on high customer traffic. Adequate signage is essential for these types of uses to succeed. Patrons walking on Main Street, or coming from the parking garage across the street, are likely to struggle to identify either of the businesses on the upper floors of the building, without adequate wall signage. The proposed signage is not excessive, but is reasonably sized and positioned to provide tasteful identification to the public. People passing by the Property will be drawn to the expansive glass and deck overlooking Main Street on the second floor, and the rooftop bar above it. Wall signage at the height of each such venue is necessary to identify which venue is which. If all signs were located at street level, it would create confusion for customers.

Pursuant to Article 28-9-4(b)(4), the criteria for a conditional use permit are met:

- a. The use is specifically authorized in this ordinance as a conditional use

The signage is authorized by conditional use permit pursuant to Section 28-6-9(b)(2) of the Zoning Ordinance.

- b. If completed as proposed by the applicant, the development in its proposed location will comply with all requirements of this Article, and with the specific conditions or standards established in this ordinance for the particular use

All other zoning requirements are met.

- c. The use will not materially endanger the public health or safety

The proposed signs effectively communicate the identity of the business on the upper floors of the building. They maintain and enhance the appearance of the area by using tasteful design and colors. They are critical to the long-term success of these businesses because they are necessary to attract patrons. They improve pedestrian and vehicular traffic safety by making the businesses easy to identify for those passing the site. Consequently, they pose no adverse effects on public health or safety.

- d. The use will be compatible with the neighborhood and with adjoining or abutting uses in the area in which it is to be located

The proposed uses as an event venue and rooftop bar are allowed by right in the CBP District. The proposed signage is reasonable to support those uses. Although subjective, we firmly believe that the design is tasteful and modest. The size and location of the signs is reasonably necessary to identify and advertise the businesses on upper floors of the building, and does not detract from the aesthetic of the surrounding area. The adjacent property is the theater, which has large, illuminated signage.

- e. The use will not have an adverse effect on highway or pedestrian safety

The proposed signage is not oversized, and is consistent with the area. The signs will improve highway and pedestrian safety by making the venues easier to locate.

- f. The use will not have an adverse effect on the natural, environmental, and historic resources of the City

The proposed signage has no impact on any natural, environmental or historic resources of the City. The CUP would merely allow the signs to be located on upper floors of the building, where the businesses are located.

- g. The use will be adequately serviced by necessary public utilities and by community facilities and services of a sufficient capacity to ensure the proper operation of the proposed use, and will not necessitate excessive public expenditures to provide facilities and services with sufficient additional capacity

The signage does not require any public utilities or community facilities, other than minimal electric. No public expenditure is required.