



Mayor & Council of Berlin

10 William Street, Berlin, Maryland 21811

Phone 410-641-2770 Fax 410-641-2316

www.berlinmd.gov

**Town of Berlin
Historic District Commission
September 3, 2025 – 5:30 PM
Berlin Town Hall – Council Chambers**

- 1. Call to Order**
- 2. Agenda Adoption**
- 3. Approval of Minutes:** August 6, 2025
- 4. Case # HDC-9-3-25-26:** 3 South Main Street – Requesting new signage
- 5. Case # HDC-9-3-25-27:** 12 Pitts Street – Requesting new signage
- 6. Case # HDC-9-3-25-28:** 2 Bay Street – Requesting improvements to rear outdoor area
- 7. Comments from the Public**
- 8. Comments from the Staff**
- 9. Comments from the Commissioners**
- 10. Comments from the Chairman**
- 11. Adjournment**

Any persons with questions about the above-referenced meeting or any persons needing special accommodations should contact Kate Daub at 410-641-4002. Written materials in alternate formats for persons with disabilities are made available upon request. TTY users dial 7-1-1 in the State of Maryland.

Town of Berlin
Historic District Commission
Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, August 6, 2025

Chairman Bunting called the Historic District meeting to order on August 6, 2025, at 5:30 PM. Members present were Lisa Doyle, Mary Moore, Carol Rose, and Laura Stearns. The absent member was John Holloway. Staff members present included Acting Planning Director Ryan Hardesty and Special Projects Administrator Kate Daub.

Chairman Bunting requested a motion to adopt the agenda for the August 6, 2025, meeting. Ms. Rose made a motion to approve the agenda, which Ms. Stearns seconded, and the approval was unanimous.

Next, Chairman Bunting sought a motion to approve the meeting minutes from July 2, 2025. Ms. Stearns made the motion, which was seconded by Ms. Doyle and passed unanimously.

The first case, HDC #8-6-25-21, involved the property at 407 South Main Street. Ms. Karen Prengaman presented her request for approval to install a generator in her backyard. She provided a map and photographs displaying the proposed location, which was situated behind a fence and partially screened by landscaping, including a prominent purple tree and fig trees that she had planted.

The Commission determined that the generator would be largely hidden from street view, especially during the warmer months. Ms. Prengaman also offered to add extra screening if visibility became an issue in the winter. A motion to approve Case #HDC-8-6-25-21 and the generator installation was made by Ms. Stearns, seconded by Ms. Rose, and unanimously approved.

Ms. Tara Talbot, owner of Reverie Arbor & Wine Bar at 7 South Main Street, appeared before the Commission to request approval of Case #HDC-8-6-25-22, seeking permission for additional signage to promote her new off-premises license for bottled wine sales to go. She explained that the proposed sign would be mounted above the sidewalk, attached to the underside of the existing business sign.

Commissioners discussed the required clearance height to ensure compliance with town regulations. Acting Planning and Zoning Director Ryan Hardesty confirmed that the minimum vertical clearance for an under-canopy sign is seven feet, and Ms. Talbot affirmed that the proposed sign would meet this standard.

The Commission voted to approve the signage contingent upon meeting the clearance requirement. On a motion by Ms. Stearns, seconded by Ms. Moore, Case #HDC-8-6-25-22 was approved unanimously.

Mr. William Ingram, property owner at 310 South Main Street, presented Case # HDC-8-6-25-23, proposing the installation of a generator. He noted that photos submitted with his application showed the proposed location, which would be out of view from the street. Ms. Rose commended him for the thoroughness of his submission. With no objections or visibility concerns, a motion to approve the generator as presented was made by Ms. Rose, seconded by Ms. Doyle, and passed unanimously.

The next case, Case # HDC-8-6-25-24, involved 16 Broad Street. Ms. Rhonda Pilarski of Sweet Sixteen Salon requested approval to replace rotting wood on the building's eaves and rear section. Chairman Bunting recused himself due to a personal connection with the applicant, and Ms. Stearns stepped in to preside. Ms. Pilarski confirmed that the replacement would match the existing design and color scheme. Commissioners expressed appreciation for preserving the building's historic look. A motion to approve the application was made by Ms. Rose, seconded by Ms. Moore, and passed unanimously.

Following this, Chairman Bunting recused himself due to personal connections with the applicant of the next case.

Ms. Sharon Chandler, representing Decatur Investments, presented the final case, Case # HDC-8-6-25-25, regarding 15 South Main Street. She requested retroactive approval for repainting and renovation work on a former warehouse building, which had been visually enhanced to complement the town's character and appearance positively. Ms. Stearns praised the transformation, noting that the work had already been completed, and stated that the application was mostly procedural. A motion to approve the repainting and door updates, as detailed in the application, was made by Ms. Rose, seconded by Ms. Doyle, and passed unanimously.

After approval, the commissioners briefly discussed the new business that had opened. Mr. Bill Outten, the business owner and tenant of 15 South Main Street, confirmed that the shop was officially open now that the sign was up.

During Comments from Staff, Ms. Hardesty inquired about two prior cases concerning the new snowball stand at 2 Bay Street and the adjacent building at 5 South Main Street, in which the commission had previously granted tentative approval for enhancements, pending final color selection. Ms. Stearns noted that the applicant had planned to consult with a color expert, Ms. Sue Moore, and return with a finalized color palette. However, she confirmed that no follow-up had occurred, as the property owners had reportedly been traveling. Ms. Hardesty clarified that

a formal reapplication was not necessary. Instead, the final colors could be submitted via email for documentation and approval, since the Commission's original motion had conditionally approved the enhancements subject to confirmation of the color scheme.

The conversation shifted to neighboring properties and compliance issues. Ms. Stearns mentioned a local homeowner who had informed the commission that he would paint his house white, but ultimately chose gray instead. While she found the final appearance visually acceptable, she expressed concern about the deviation from the approved plan. Ms. Rose pointed out that the lack of enforcement and follow-up inspections has been a longstanding issue, contributing to similar situations.

Further discussion highlighted that no system currently exists to verify whether aesthetic changes, such as paint colors, are executed according to approved plans, as they are not considered code violations. Ms. Rose added that, as a result, homeowners are often left to make changes at their discretion after initial approval, with little expectation of consequences for deviations.

The commission then discussed several properties with ongoing code issues or incomplete projects. Ms. Moore highlighted a long-running case involving a property with a trailer and partially completed work, colloquially referred to as "Home Depot" due to its cluttered appearance and storage of construction materials. Although located on a residential street, she said the property had a commercial appearance and remained in disarray for years. While law enforcement addressed some issues, she added that the situation persisted because the owner claimed to be "still working on it."

Ms. Rose expressed concern over accessory structures, such as garages or studios, that were approved with the expectation that a primary residence would later be constructed, citing the example on South Main Street. In many cases, she noted, the main buildings were never built, leaving incomplete or out-of-place additions that detract from the area's historic character. She emphasized that the lack of enforcement undermines the Commission's ability to ensure compliance and preserve the town's integrity.

Discussion continued regarding the property on South Main Street. Ms. Moore recalled that the owner had previously cited financial hardship, including water and sewer issues, as the reason for the lack of progress. Although the project had been approved in good faith, particularly given the involvement of a respected local family, she observed that the property's current neglected condition left the Commission feeling misled. Ms. Stearns remarked that, at a minimum, the owner could have cleaned and graded the lot to improve its appearance. She expressed disappointment that the property continues to detract from the town's character and frustration that stronger accountability measures had not been pursued.

Further concern arose when Ms. Doyle shared that, during a recent drive with a friend, the property's poor condition stood out in stark contrast to that of other houses on the street. Ms. Rose observed that, while the Historic District Commission works diligently to uphold standards, some approved projects produce unintended negative outcomes, raising questions about the effectiveness of the commission's efforts.

The discussion then turned to enforcement. Ms. Rose stated that the group had been assured that someone from the town, although not necessarily a current staff member, would verify that approved projects were executed as presented. She emphasized that many issues result from a lack of follow-up and highlighted the need for a dedicated staff member to inspect and enforce compliance.

Ms. Moore pointed out that the Historic District is distinct from other areas of the town because it is not a shopping center or commercial zone. As a result, it requires specialized oversight. The group acknowledged their limited authority, which meant they could observe instances of noncompliance but could not intervene directly. Ms. Rose proposed bringing the issue to Mayor Zack Tyndall to seek guidance or support in addressing these problems.

To address ongoing frustrations, Ms. Moore suggested establishing a formal timeline for project completion by recommending that applicants report back after 90 or 120 days or face fines if no progress is made. Ms. Hardesty clarified that permits usually expire after one year unless work continues, and extensions can be granted if needed.

Ms. Hardesty also informed the commission that the recent retirement of the Planning and Zoning Department Permit Coordinator had created a gap in staffing and institutional knowledge. The new code enforcer, although full-time, was less active in the field due to understaffing, which required the remaining staff to cover additional responsibilities.

Discussion returned to organizing a meeting with Mayor Zack Tyndall of the Town of Berlin to address issues related to enforcement and oversight. Chairman Bunting volunteered to coordinate this meeting. Ms. Doyle requested clarification on whether a follow-up is necessary to ensure that the completed work aligns with the submitted drawings and photos. Ms. Hardesty explained that the current code does not require such verification, but it could be incorporated through a formal amendment. The commissioners agreed that tracking completed work would be beneficial, especially for projects flagged during the review process as potentially problematic.

The discussion then shifted to the recently approved sign Reverie Arbor and Wine Bar. Chairman Bunting voiced concern that, if mounted too low, the sign could pose a safety risk to children or pedestrians. This raised a broader question of responsibility, specifically, who ensures that

approved projects, particularly those with safety implications, are carried out as specified. Ms. Hardesty agreed that such cases require both inspection and follow-up.

As the meeting concluded, Ms. Moore proposed that applicants be asked to return to future meetings to report on how they had addressed the conditions or concerns raised during their approval. She explained that this process would promote accountability by creating a clear record of completed, modified, or unresolved items. Chairman Bunting acknowledged recent challenges in department staffing and stressed the need for patience as the Town works to rebuild capacity and restore effective oversight.

Following no further comments from the public, staff, or commission members, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 6:06 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kate Daub". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Kate Daub
Special Projects Administrator



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Phone 410-641-2770 Fax 410-641-2316

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HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION APPLICATION

Date: 7/30/25 Subject Property Location: 3 South Main Case #: HDC-9-3-25-20
Property Owner: Robert Rosenblit Owner Phone #: 410-430-0433
Owner Address: 3 South Main St Owner Email: rcrosenblit@comcast.net
Agent/Contractor: Madison Stoltz, Runaway Bride Berlin Agent Phone#: 814-389-6117

Work Involves: ☐ Alterations ☐ New Construction ☐ Addition ☐ Demolition ☒ Sign ☐ Other madison@runawaybrideberlin.com

DESCRIPTION OF WORK PROPOSED:

new sign to hang on existing bracket -
light blue with black lettering

DOCUMENTS REQUIRED TO BE FILED WITH APPLICATION

All required documents must be submitted to the Planning Department prior to at least three (3) weeks prior to the next regularly scheduled hearing. Failure to include all the required attachments and/or failure of the applicant or his/her authorized representative to appear at the scheduled meeting may result in postponement of the application until the next regular scheduled meeting. If an application is denied, the same application cannot be resubmitted for one year from date of such action. The Berlin Historic District Commission Rules and Regulations are available for review in the Town of Berlin Planning Department.

The following items, if applicable, must be provided to Town Staff in order for the proposal to be considered:

1. Site plan.
2. Scaled drawings of plans and/or elevations of the proposal, or in the alternative, a scale model.
3. Color photographs of the existing structure, the area to be altered and close-ups of architectural details.
4. For a proposed new structure, photographs of the subject site and all buildings in the immediate vicinity.
5. All photographs shall be printed on 8½ x 11 paper or provided in digital format, and shall be labeled with a description of the contents of the photographs.
6. Samples of materials or copies of manufacturers product literature.

The applicant, or an authorized representative, has been advised to appear at the meeting of the Berlin Historic District Commission scheduled for 9/3/2025 (date).

Applicant Signature: Madison Stoltz Date: 7/30/25

APPROVED:

Historic District Commission Chair (Date)

Planning Director (Date)

RUNAWAY BRIDE DOUBLE SIDED HANGING SIGN



23.25" H

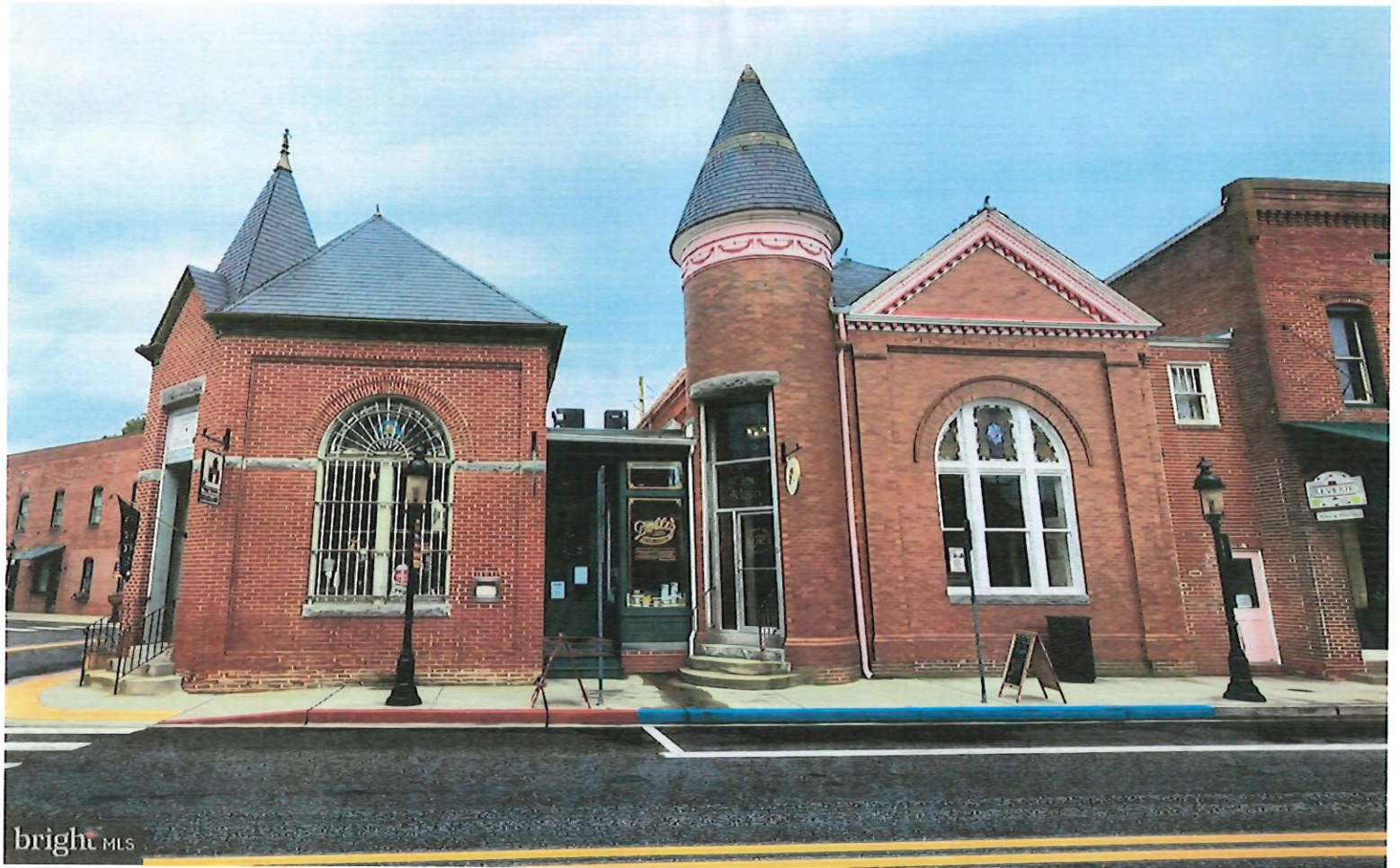
31.25" W

FEATURES:

- 3/4 Black PVC Base"
- 1/8" Printed Aluminum Sign Face (Light Blue)
- 1/4" Raised Black Acrylic Letters
- Eyehooks to match existing sign bracket placement

Plak That







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received
7/18/2025 CD



HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION APPLICATION

Date: 7/10/25 Subject Property Location: 12 Pitts St Case #: HDC-4-3-25-27
Property Owner: Heart of Berlin LLC Owner Phone #: 410-213-1900 ext 1102
Owner Address: 9919 Stephen Decatur Hwy, OC, Md 21842 Owner Email: spielstick@bwdc.com
Agent/Contractor: Liam Deck Agent Phone#: 410-713-0747
Work Involves: ☐ Alterations ☐ New Construction ☐ Addition ☐ Demolition ☒ Sign ☐ Other

DESCRIPTION OF WORK PROPOSED:

Hang a permanent sign from soffit outside of store for The Juice Club.
Sign dimensions - height is 22 in, Length is 30 inches, width is 1 inch

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6. Samples of materials or copies of manufacturers product literature.

The applicant, or an authorized representative, has been advised to appear at the meeting of the Berlin Historic District Commission scheduled for 9/3/25 5:30 pm (date).

Applicant Signature [Signature] Date 7/10/2025

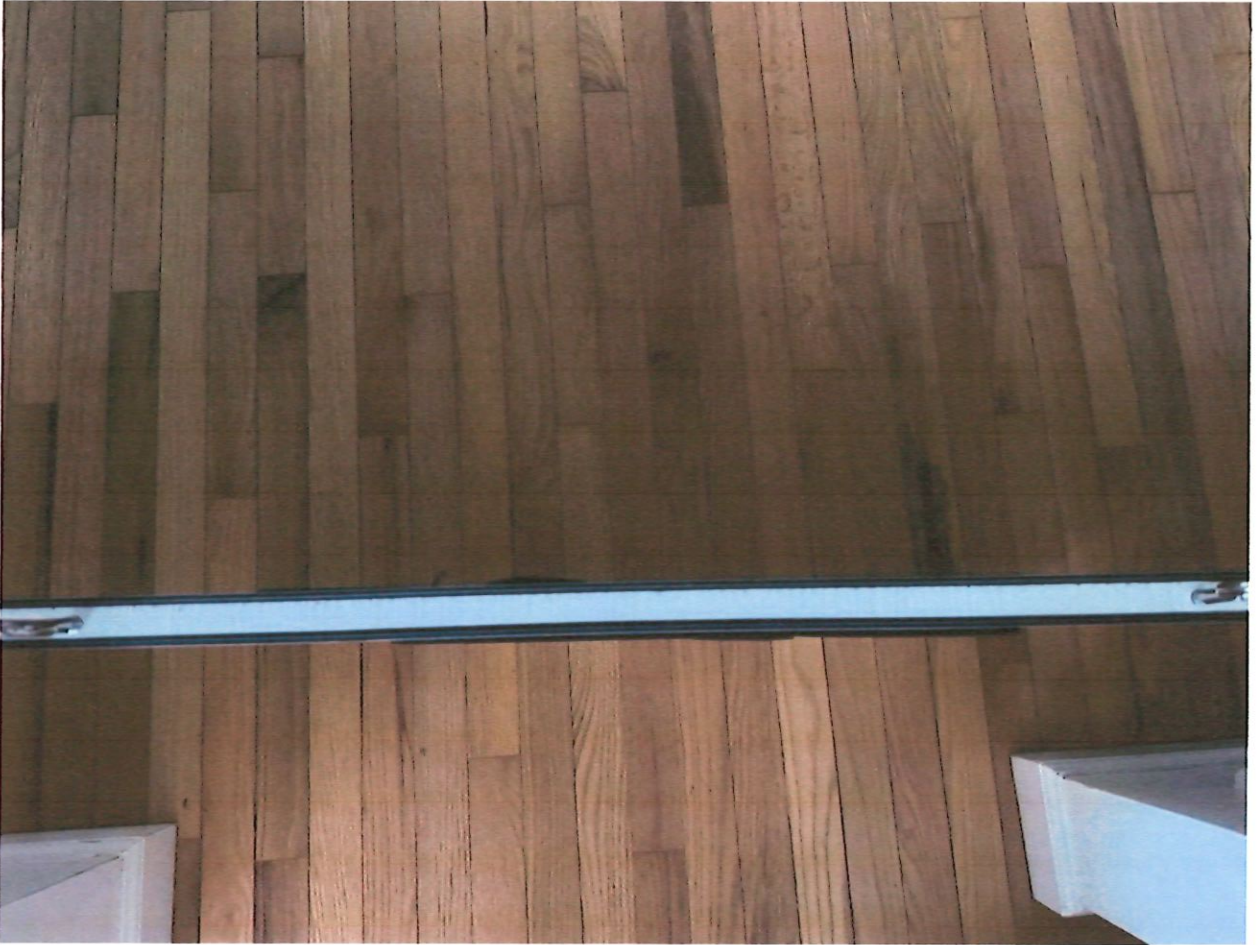
APPROVED:

Historic District Commission Chair (Date)

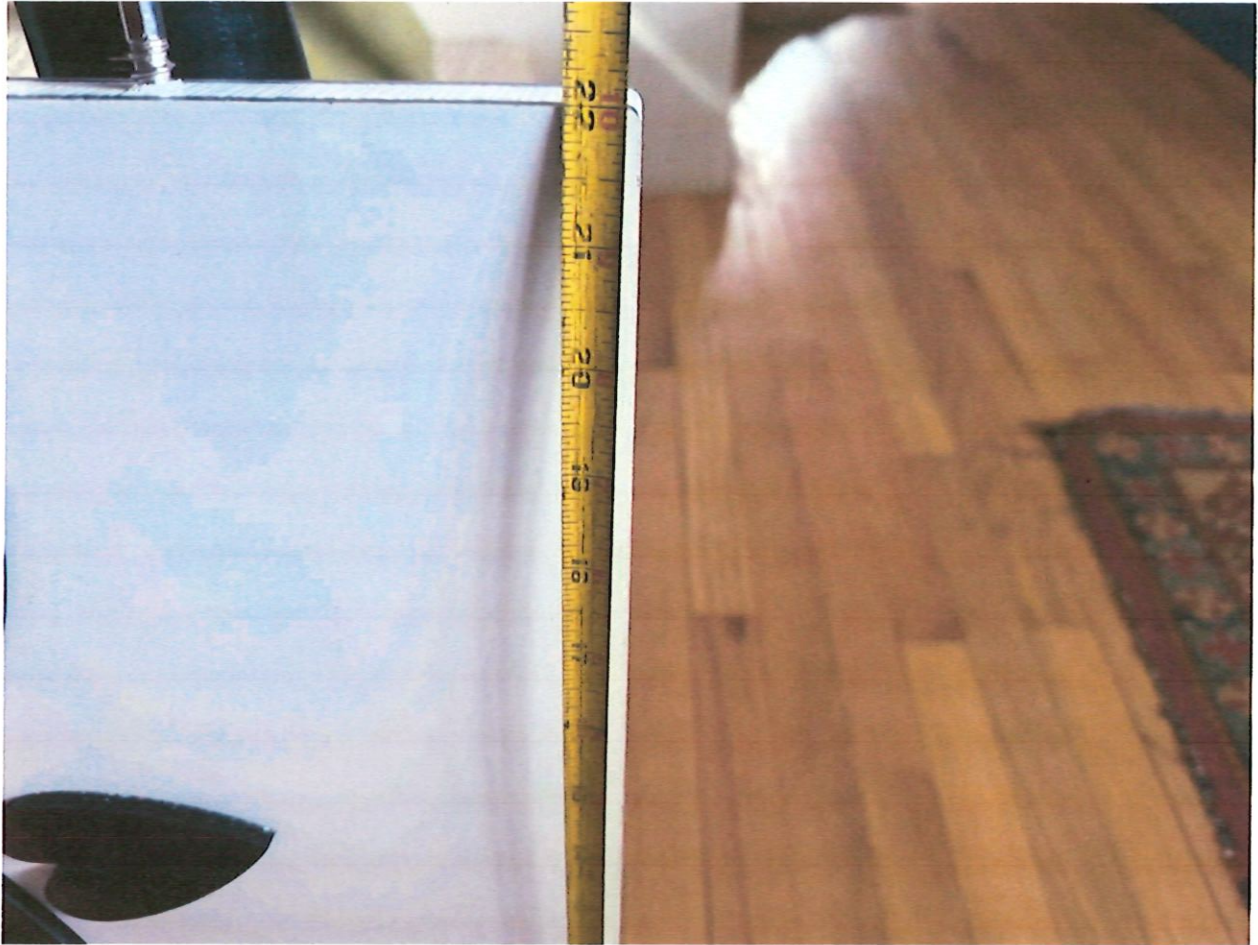
Planning Director (Date)



Front view of sign



Top View of Sign



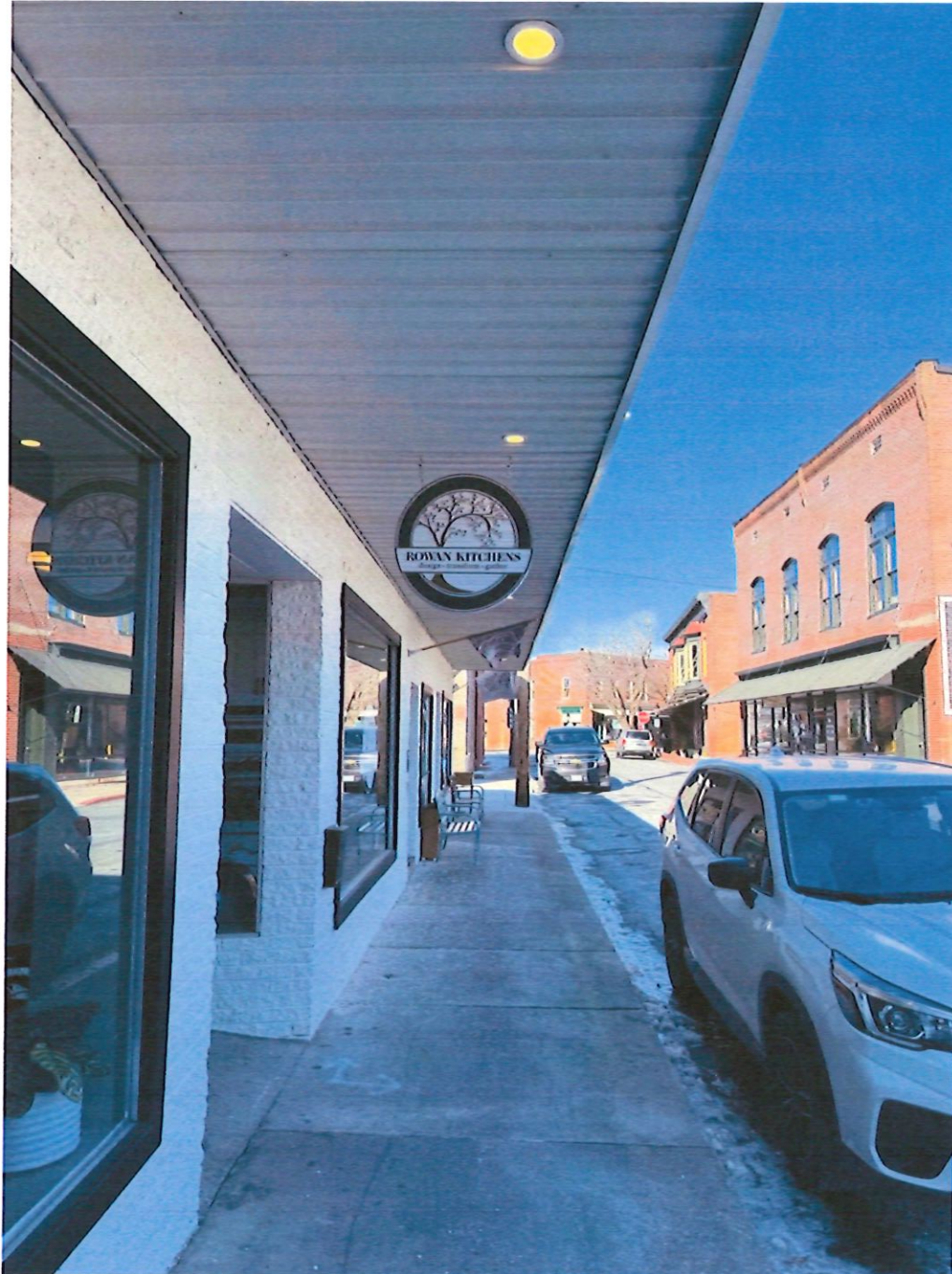
Height of sign: 22 Inches



Width of sign: ~1 in



Length of sign: 30 in



Similar sign: Rowan kitchens



Height above sidewalk: 120 inches



Sign hanger will sit ~2.5 inches from top of sign and ~2.5 inches from the soffit



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Pd. by
CC

HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION APPLICATION

Date: 7/29/25 Subject Property Location: 2 Bay Street Case #: HDC-9-3-25-28
Property Owner: Rosenblit Family, LLC Owner Phone #: 410-430-0433
Owner Address: 308C 14th St Ocean City MD 21842 Owner Email: rcrosenblit@comcast.net
Agent/Contractor: N/A Agent Phone#: N/A

Work Involves: ☒ Alterations ☐ New Construction ☐ Addition ☐ Demolition ☐ Sign ☐ Other

DESCRIPTION OF WORK PROPOSED:

Improvements to the outdoor area at 2 Bay Street.
Includes new surface material, landscaping and water feature.

DOCUMENTS REQUIRED TO BE FILED WITH APPLICATION

All required documents must be submitted to the Planning Department prior to at least three (3) weeks prior to the next regularly scheduled hearing. Failure to include all the required attachments and/or failure of the applicant or his/her authorized representative to appear at the scheduled meeting may result in postponement of the application until the next regular scheduled meeting. If an application is denied, the same application cannot be resubmitted for one year from date of such action. The Berlin Historic District Commission Rules and Regulations are available for review in the Town of Berlin Planning Department.

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6. Samples of materials or copies of manufacturers product literature.

The applicant, or an authorized representative, has been advised to appear at the meeting of the Berlin Historic District Commission scheduled for September 2, 2025 (date).

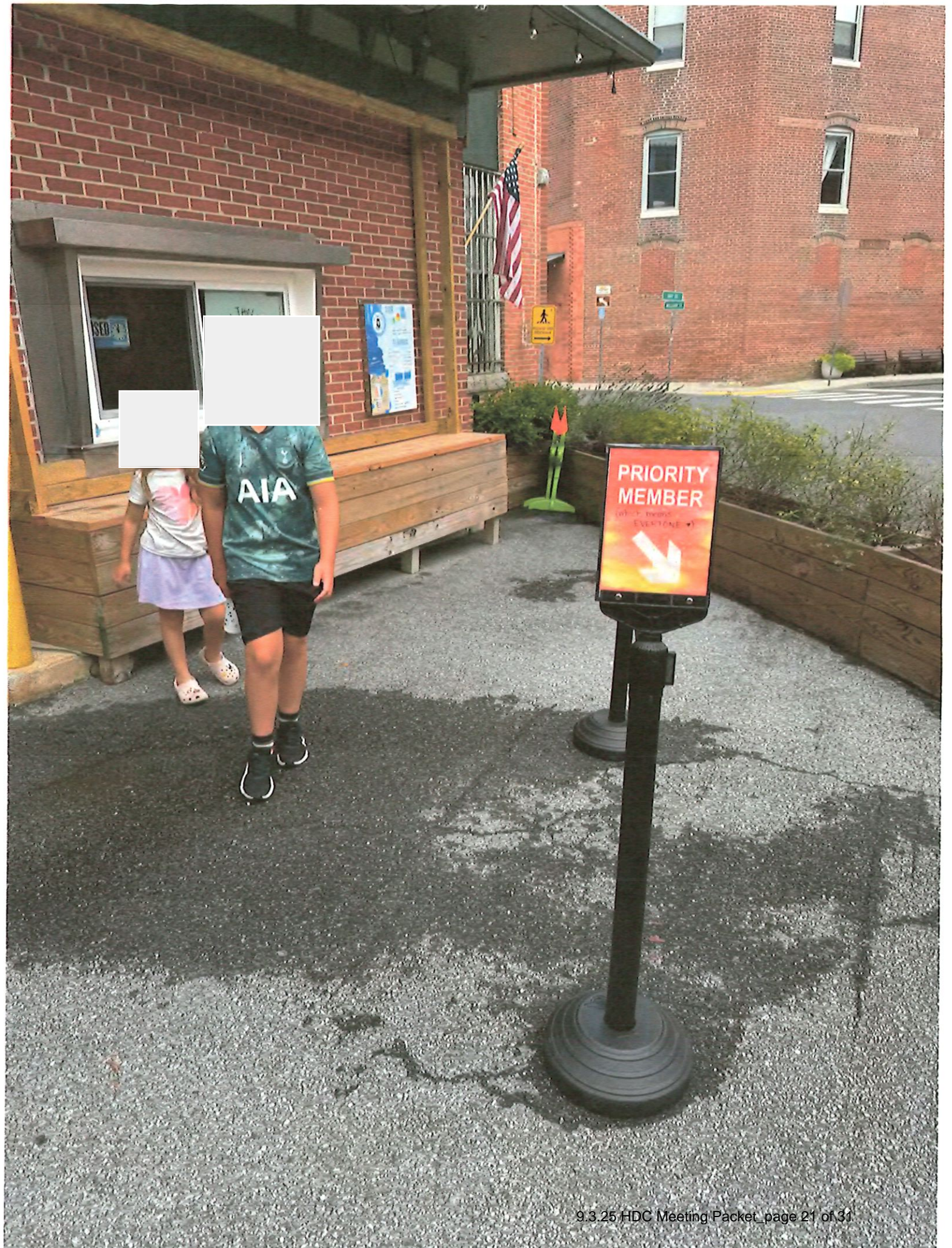
Applicant Signature

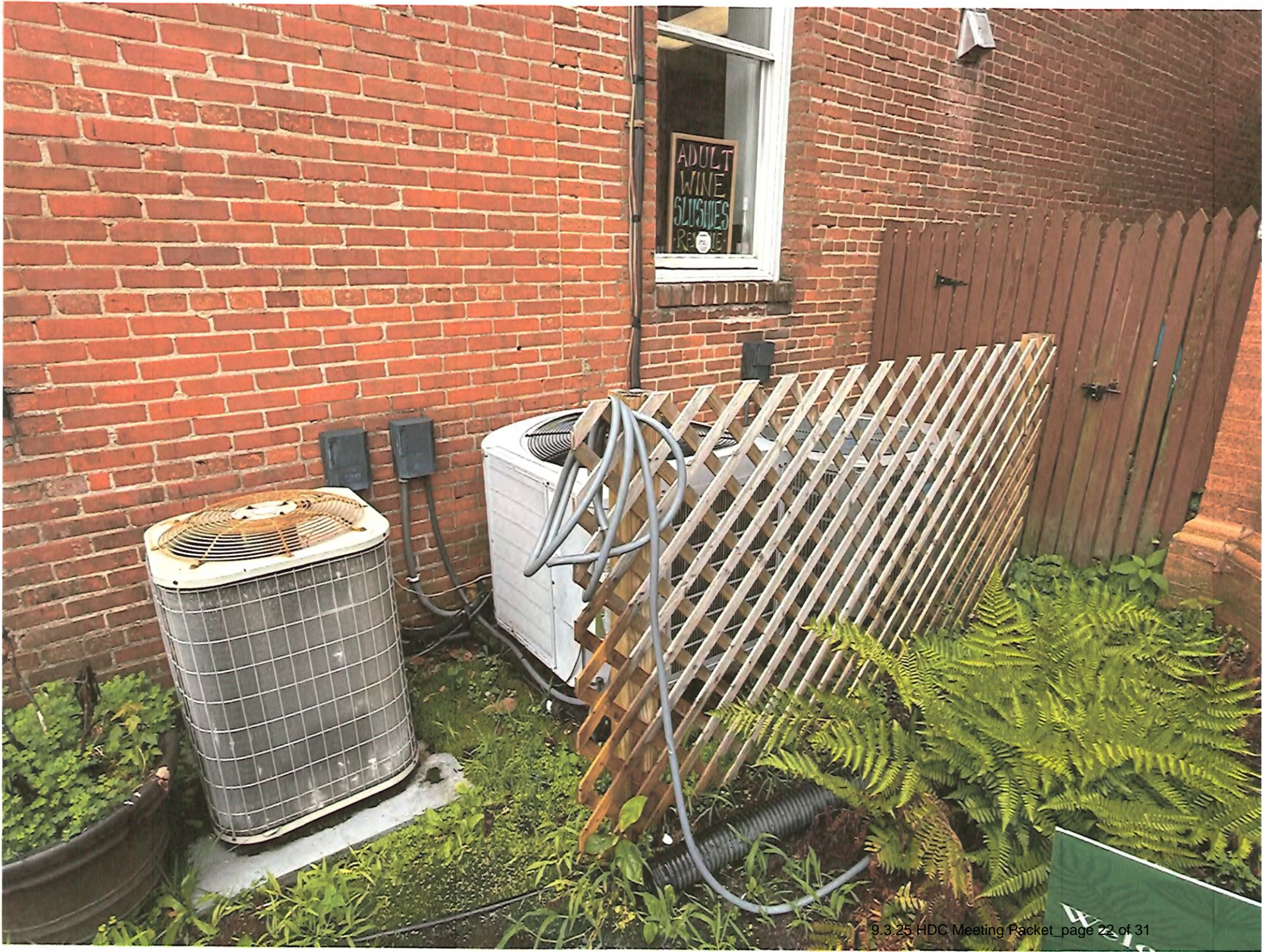
Date 7/29/25

APPROVED:

Historic District Commission Chair (Date)

Planning Director (Date)

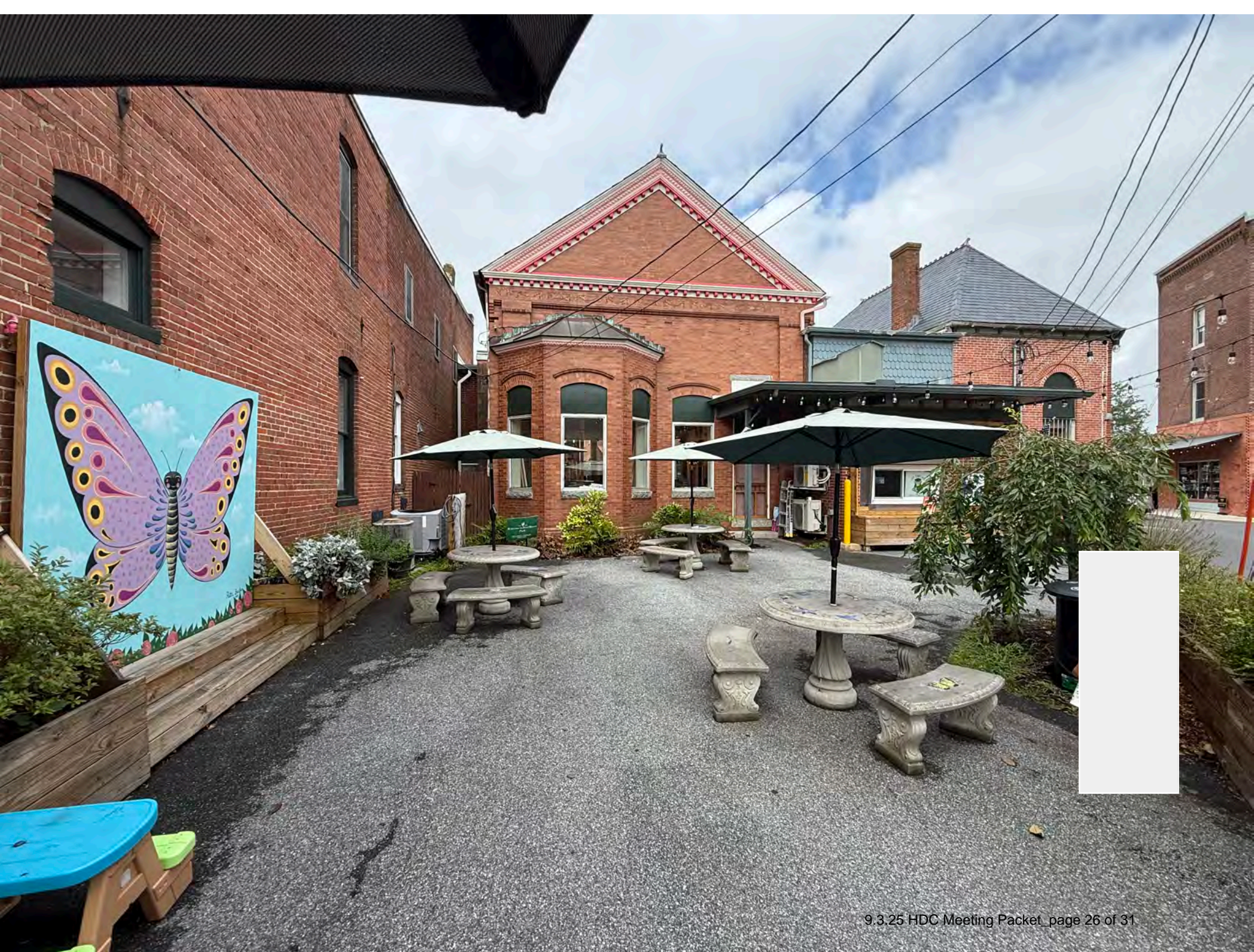








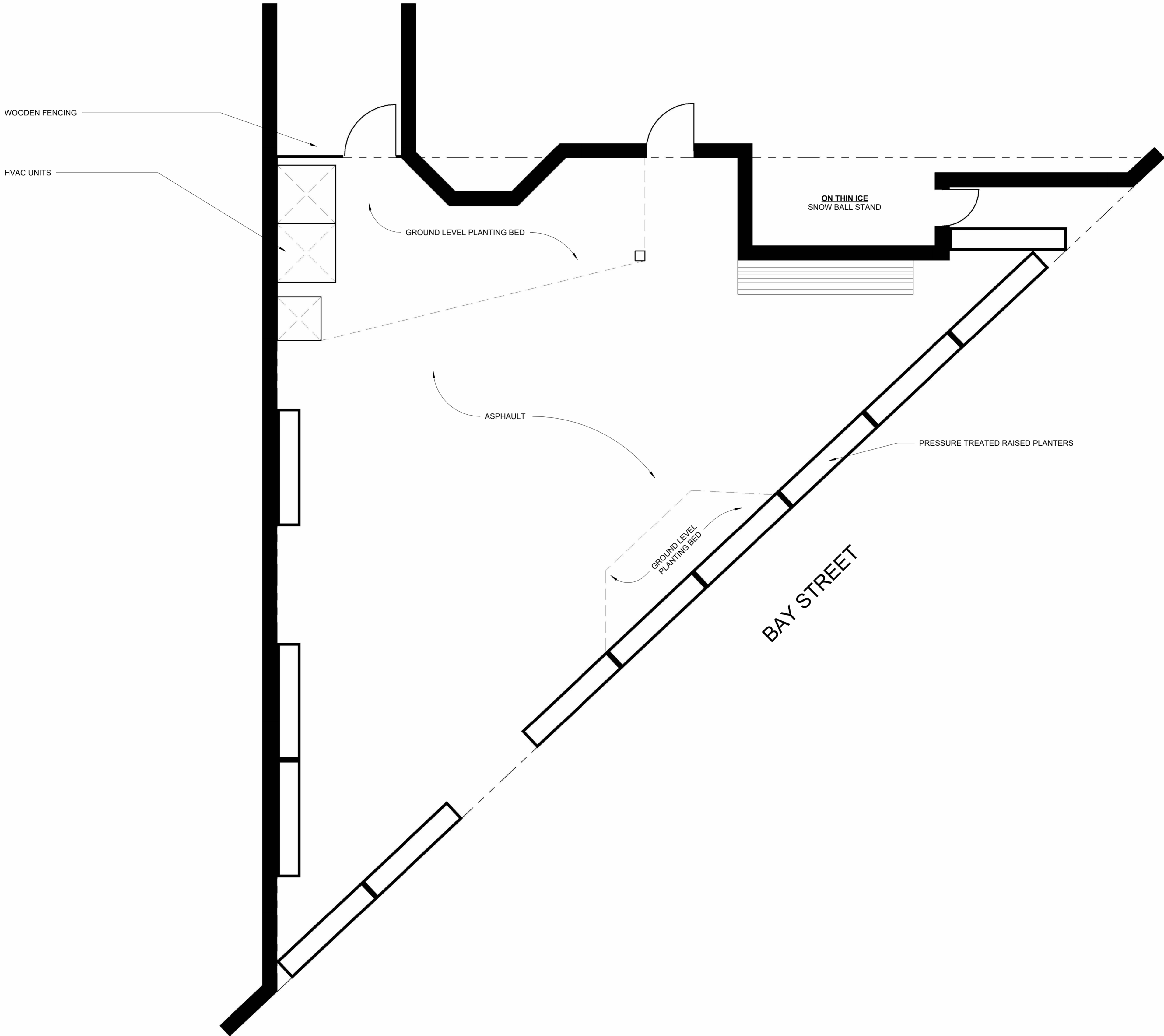












① SITE PLAN - EXISTING CONDITIONS
1/4" = 1'-0"

INITIAL REVIEW
ONLY

TOPIO

Landscape Architecture

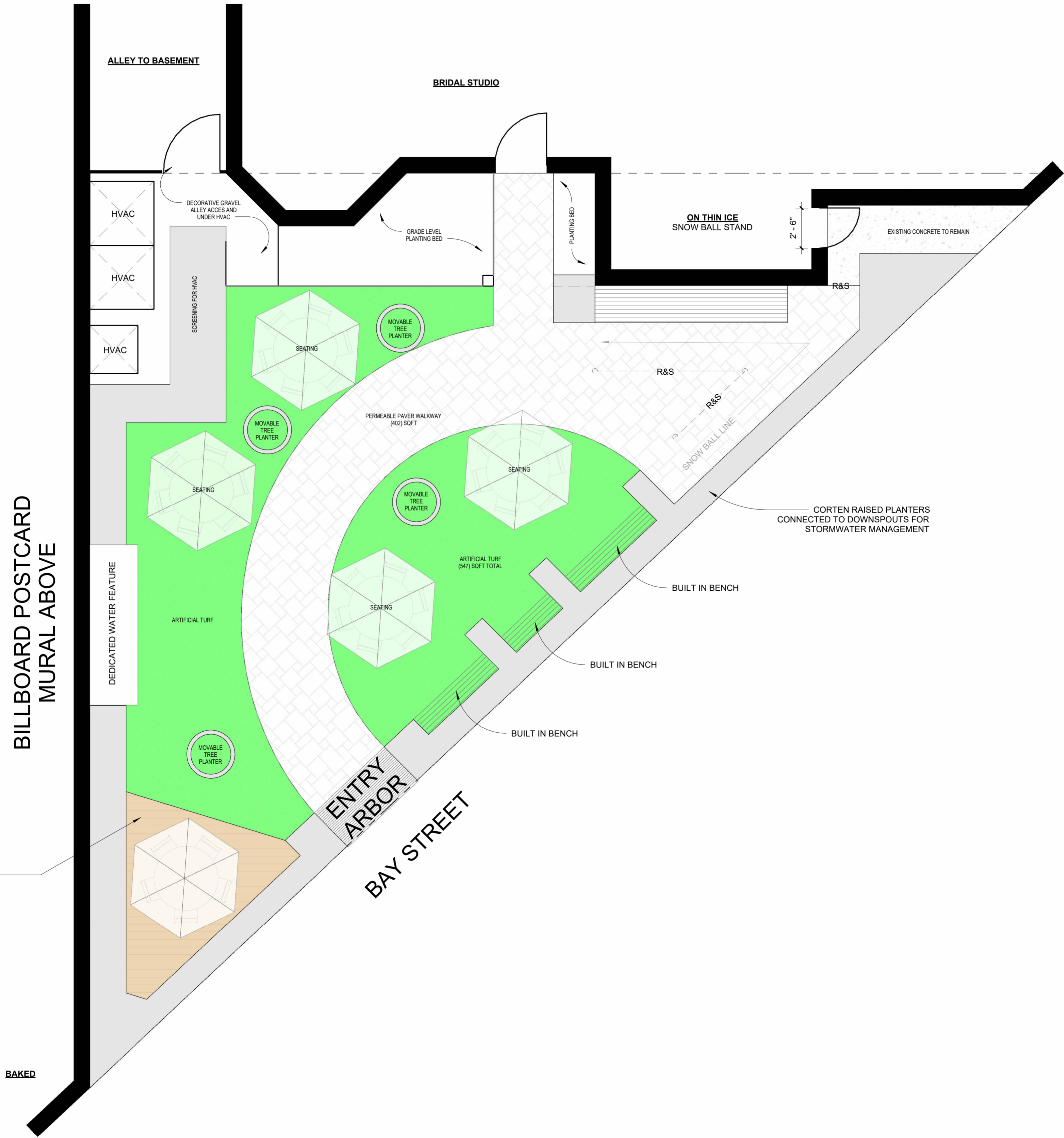
DESIGN + BUILD + INSPIRE

BERLIN POCKET PARK

BERLIN MARYLAND 21811

DSN	DR	CHKD
W	W	
T	T	---
SCALE	1/4" = 1'-0"	
No.		
JOB	T-2521	
ISSUE DATE:	8/4/25	
<u>L-001</u>		

REVISION			
REV.	DATE	DESCRIPTION	BY



CONCEPT - LAND USE DIAGRAM
OPTION A
1/4" = 1'-0"

CONCEPT - LAND USE DIAGRAM -
OPTION A

INITIAL REVIEW
ONLY

TOPIO
Landscape Architecture
DESIGN + BUILD + INSPIRE

BERLIN POCKET PARK
BERLIN MARYLAND 21811

REVISION			
REV.	DATE	DESCRIPTION	BY

NSN	DR	CHKD	W
T	M	T	---
ETVCS	As indicated		
ON			
BOF	T-2521		
ISSI	8/4/25		
L-102			