



**Design Review Board (DRB)**  
**Staff Report**  
*(Revised)*

*Site Enhancements including new doors, railing, awnings, and signage*

Case # 17-8: Arnold's BBQ Downtown  
320 Monroe Ave. STE 2  
Memphis, TN 38103

Applicant: Mr. Mike Arnold  
Arnold's BBQ & Grill  
1124 Misty Isle  
Memphis, TN 38103

Property Owner: Mike Todd, Managing Member  
Monroe Associates, LLC  
629 Monroe Ave.  
Memphis, TN 38103

Background: The subject property is a building on the north side of Monroe Avenue, in the block between Fourth Street and Danny Thomas Boulevard. The applicant is leasing the back of the building in a space fronting Floyd Alley but visible from Madison Avenue through a surface parking lot.

The applicant has operated Arnold's BBQ in southeast Memphis for over 15 years and now plans to open a second location in Downtown Memphis.

The project requires DRB review because it was approved for an EIG grant from the CCDC at its October 12, 2017 CCDC meeting. The property owner was approved for an EIG grant in the amount up to \$29,512 to make site enhancements that enhance the curb appeal of the restaurant, while animating Floyd Alley and serving as a critical link between the Downtown Core and the Edge.

Project Description: Exterior building repair will include graffiti removal, brick tuck-pointing, installation of new entry doors, and exterior painting. Two

(2) large awnings and an outdoor patio with decorative metal railing will be installed in an area adjacent to Floyd Alley. The applicant is requesting approval to install one (1) large exterior projecting neon sign and one (1) internally illuminated wall sign on the north building elevation.

The scope of work in this renovation includes the following:

- Graffiti removal
- Pressure washing and masonry cleaning
- Window and door replacement
- One (1) projecting neon sign with a Theater Style “V” Shaped Cabinet to measure approximately 8 ft. (w) x 3 ft. 9 in. (h) will be located directly above the main door and main entrance awning. The aluminum sign will consist of full color printed graphics and neon open face channel letters to read “Arnolds Bar-B-Que & Grill” on both sides while also featuring the restaurant’s pig logo. The 7 in. (w) x 3 ft. 8 in. (h) north facing edge will consist of neon open face channel letters to vertically read “Arnolds.” A 3/8 in. steel cable with steel plate attachments will secure the sign to the building. The sign does have a minimum vertical clearance of 8 ft. as measured from the lowest point on the sign to the sidewalk level below.
- One (1) internally illuminated wall sign will be located directly under the projecting sign and above the main entrance awning. The sign will consist of an acrylic face with full digital print of flames and measure approximately 8 Ft. (w) x 2 ft. (h).
- Two (2) awnings
- Exterior lighting
- Concrete and asphalt work
- Custom steel patio railings
- Prep and paint lower concrete wall

Staff Report:

For purposes of DRB signage review, the subject property is located within the Ballpark sub-district and the Downtown Core. The entrance to the restaurant is located in an alley, but is visible from Madison Ave. The new windows and doors, awnings, railings, and additional site improvements help Arnold’s BBQ establish an official entrance to their newly renovated restaurant and storefront in an otherwise vacant alley.

In regards to the signs, per the CBID Sign Code, projecting signs shall project no more than 4 ft. from the building face. The projecting sign included in Arnold’s application presently is proposed to project 7 ft. 8 in. The DRB has granted exceptions to

the code up to a 6 ft. projection which would require the width to be reduced by 22%. The overall size of a projecting sign must also adhere to the sign code which states if the length of frontage on public right-of-way is less than 30', then the total allowable signage is 20 sq. ft. per side. The projecting sign in Arnold's BBQ application is 30 sq. ft. on both larger sides, exceeding code by roughly 10 sq. ft. From this measurement, the sign would have to reduce by 33% to be in code. Staff would suggest that the applicant reduce the scale of the projecting sign by 30% which would make its new projection 6 ft. 6 in. and each side 21 sq. ft.

The code also states that "any activity may display one wall sign on each side of the building that fronts onto a public right-of-way." Considering the visibility of the projecting sign from Madison, staff would suggest that the internally illuminated wall sign be removed.

**Staff Recommendation:**

**Staff recommends approval with the condition that the size of the projecting sign is reduced by 30%, the wall sign is removed, and all exterior work is within the property line for 320 Monroe Ave. No portion of the awning, patio railing, signage, or any other part of the project is approved to extend beyond the property line and into the alley.**