



DRIPPING SPRINGS
Texas

Short Mama's Bistro Sign Variance Request

Michelle Fischer, Sign Administrator
September 15, 2026

Short Mama's House, 101 College Street



September 1, 2026



DRIPPING SPRINGS
Texas

Variance Request

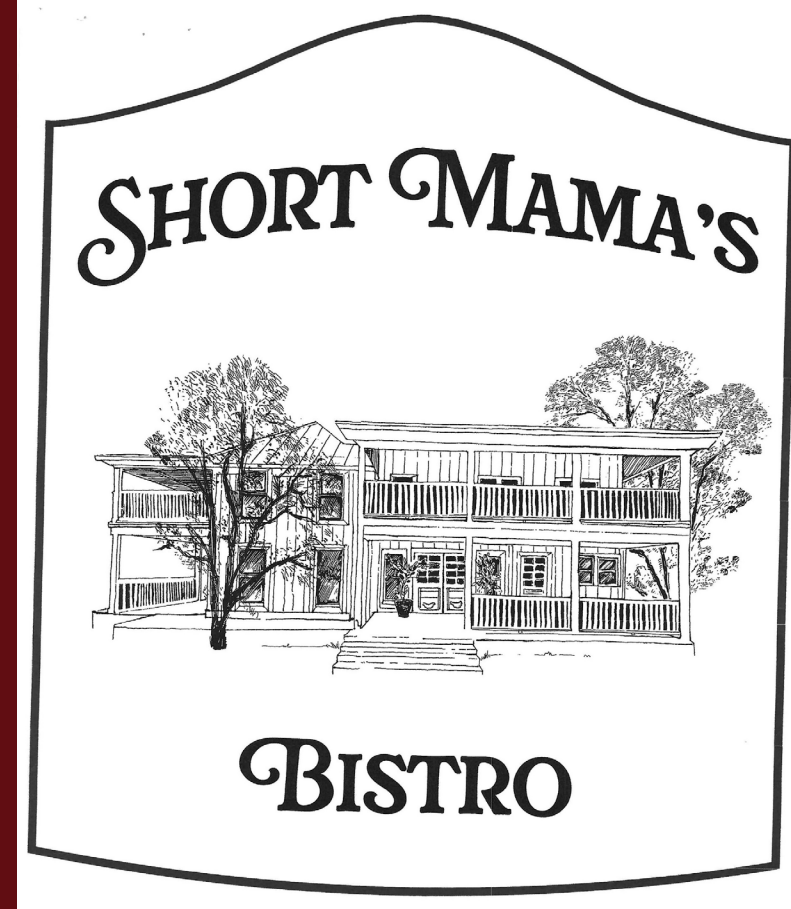
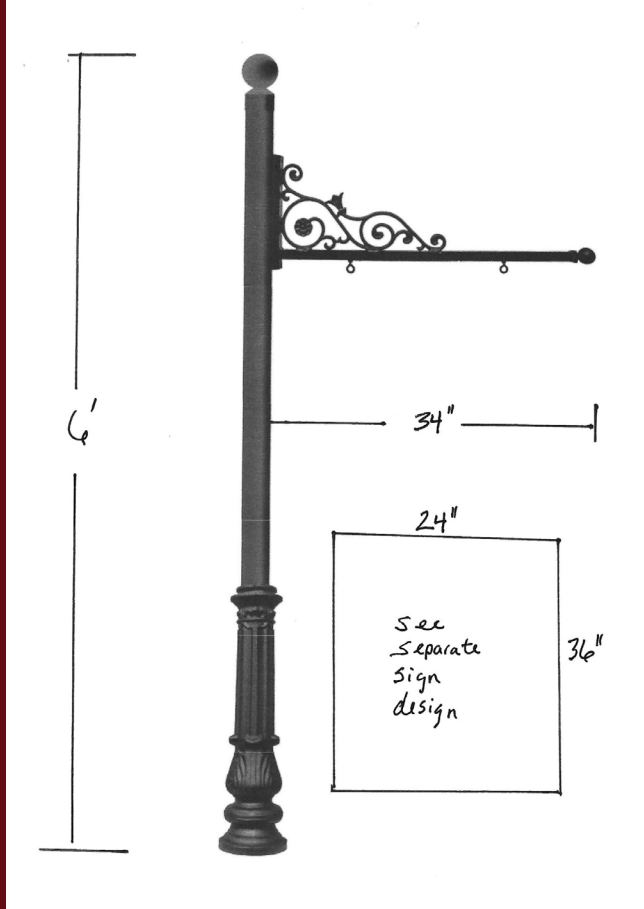
- Variance to allow two Pole Signs
- Chapter 26.01.009 9b)(17) of the City's Code of Ordinances prohibits Pole Signs
- Multi-unit complex is allowed free standing Monument Sign
 - One Monument Sign
 - 6 feet in height
 - 48 square feet in sign area
- Proposed Pole Signs
 - Two Pole Signs
 - Decorative metal pole with arm
 - 6 feet in height
 - 6 square feet in sign area
 - 12 square feet in combined sign area



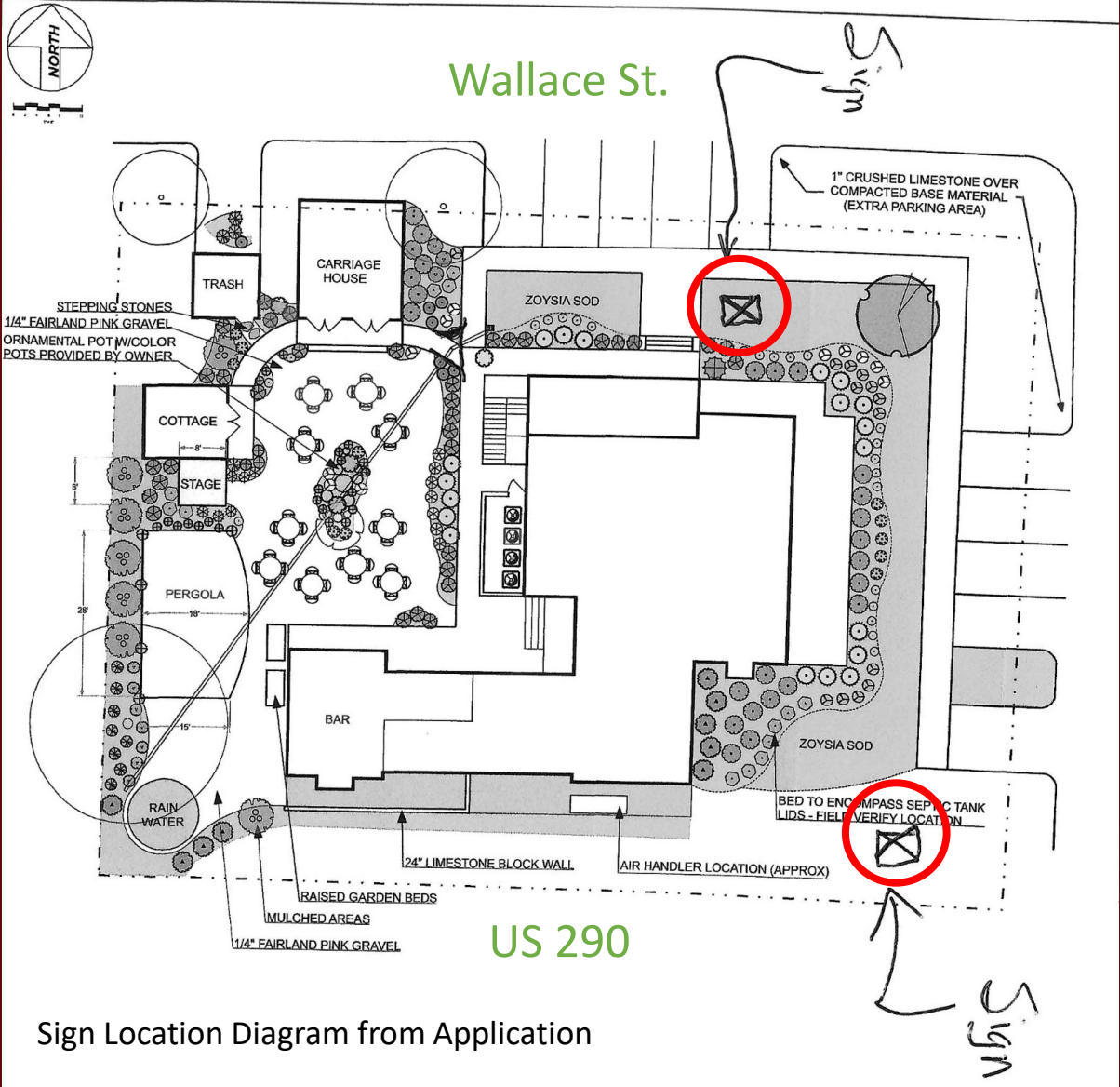
Multi-unit complex monument sign example



Proposed Decorative Pole and Sign



Proposed Pole Sign Locations



Sign Location Diagram from Application

Factors that make a Pole Sign appealing in the Mercer St. Historic District

- Historically, many of the buildings in the District had Pole Signs
- Several Pole Sign structures are still in use
- Some properties have reduced or no setbacks
- On street parking in front of buildings impairs visibility
- District is becoming more pedestrian friendly
- Monument Signs would appear overly large and are not compatible with the era of historic significance



Sign Ordinance Rewrite

- Currently being rewritten and includes a section for signage in historic districts
- Changes are based on historic district business owner, property owner, Council Member, and staff feedback
- Changes, if approved, will allow Pole Signs in the historic districts that are similar to the signs proposed by the applicant



Considerations for Granting a Variance

- 1) Special or unique hardship because of the size or shape of the property, or the visibility of the property from public roads.
- 2) Hardship claim based on the exceptional topographic conditions or physical features uniquely affecting the property.
- ✓ 3) Sign location, configuration, design, materials, and colors are harmonious with the hill country setting.
- ✓ 4) Natural colors and muted colors are favored. Color schemes must be compatible with the surrounding structures. Predominate use of bold and/or bright colors is discouraged.
- ✓ 5) Sign and its supporting structure should be in architectural harmony with the surrounding structures.



Considerations for Granting a Variance, *continued*

- ✓ 6) Mitigation measures related to the sign in question or other sign on the same premises.
- 7) Demonstrated and documented correlation between variance and protecting the public health and safety.
- ✓ 8) Stage at which the variance is requested. City will be more inclined to consider a request when sought during earlier stage of construction approval process.
- 9) Whether the sign could have been included in a master signage plan.
- 10) Sign Administrator may authorize the remodeling, renovation, or alternation of a sign when some nonconforming aspect of the sign is thereby reduced.



Lou Breed stands in front of her boardinghouse in the 1920s. On April 6, 1923, the *San Marcos Record* reported: "Madames Glosson and Breed bought the Perry place and opened a hotel, where the traveling public can find first class accommodations." The building still stands at the corner of College Street and Highway 290. At the time of the photograph, the boardinghouse faced the Haydon Cotton Gin, which later burned down.

Freeman, L.M., *Images of America: Around Dripping Springs* (Charleston, South Carolina, Arcadia Publishing, 2011), page 60.



Recommendation

- Variance request meets several considerations for granting a variance
- Proposed Pole Signs comply with the *Mercer Street Historic District Guidelines*
- Recommend approval of allowing the two proposed Pole Signs with the condition that a Monument Sign will not be installed on the property

QUESTIONS?



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September 3, 2026