

**LAND USE APPLICATION SUMMARY**

*Property Location:* 2945 Lyndale Avenue South  
*Project Name:* Jungle Theater Signs  
*Prepared By:* [Janelle Widmeier](#), Senior City Planner, (612) 673-3156  
*Applicant:* Jungle Theater  
*Project Contact:* Margo Gisselman, Jungle Theater  
*Request:* To update the marquee signage.  
*Required Applications:*

<b>Variance</b>	To increase the maximum allowed sign area on a primary building wall from 135 square feet to 650 square feet.
<b>Variance</b>	To increase the maximum allowed sign area of an individual sign from 180 square feet to 320 square feet.

**SITE DATA**

<b>Existing Zoning</b>	C3A Community Activity District PO Pedestrian Oriented Overlay District
<b>Lot Area</b>	11,210 square feet
<b>Ward(s)</b>	10
<b>Neighborhood(s)</b>	Whittier Alliance; adjacent to Lowry Hill East Neighborhood Association
<b>Designated Future Land Use</b>	Mixed Use
<b>Land Use Features</b>	Commercial Corridor (Lyndale Avenue) Activity Center (Lyn-Lake)
<b>Small Area Plan(s)</b>	<a href="#">Midtown Greenway Land Use and Development Plan (2007)</a> <a href="#">Lyn-Lake Small Area Plan (2009)</a> Please note that neither of these plans have guidelines specific to on-premise signage.

<b>Date Application Deemed Complete</b>	April 8, 2015	<b>Date Extension Letter Sent</b>	Not applicable
<b>End of 60-Day Decision Period</b>	June 7, 2015	<b>End of 120-Day Decision Period</b>	Not applicable

## BACKGROUND

**SITE DESCRIPTION AND PRESENT USE.** The Jungle Theater is located in the existing 2-story building. There is a parking area at the rear of the building and parking spaces on the north side of the building where the main entrance is located. A marquee is also located on the north side of the building, which shelters the main entrance.

**SURROUNDING PROPERTIES AND NEIGHBORHOOD.** There is a mix of uses in the immediate area.

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION.** The applicant is proposing to update the marquee signage for the Jungle Theater. The existing marquee structure will remain, but the three-dimensional forms on top of the marquee will be removed and replaced with neon images. The lettering on the marquee will also be updated with internally illuminated box letters. Because the 90 foot wide north wall is a primary building wall and no freestanding sign exists on the site, the maximum allowed sign area for that wall is 1.5 square feet per one foot of wall, or 135 square feet. The proposed sign area, including the rotating sign attached to the bottom of the marquee, is 650 square feet. The maximum allowed area per individual sign is 180 square feet. The total area of the north side of the marquee signs is 320 square feet. Variances are required to increase these maximum sign area requirements. The sign proposal would comply with all other applicable zoning code requirements.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS.** As of writing this report, no correspondence from the neighborhood group has been received. Any correspondence received prior to the public meeting will be forwarded on to the Board of Adjustment for consideration.

## ANALYSIS

### VARIANCE

The Department of Community Planning and Economic Development has analyzed the application for 1) a variance to increase the maximum allowed sign area on a primary building wall from 135 square feet to 650 square feet and 2) a variance to increase the maximum allowed sign area of an individual sign from 180 square feet to 320 square feet based on the following findings:

- 1. Practical difficulties exist in complying with the ordinance because of circumstances unique to the property. The unique circumstances were not created by persons presently having an interest in the property and are not based on economic considerations alone.*

**Both variances:** Practical difficulties exist in complying with the ordinance due to circumstances unique to the property. The existing marquee sign area already exceeds the maximum allowed sign area. Because the existing sign elements have deteriorated, the applicant is proposing to update the signs. The proposed marquee signage will be 3 feet taller than the existing three-dimensional forms on top of the marquee. The additional 3 feet is attributed to the star and wave elements. The increased height adds a total of 153 square feet of signage to the marquee. Because the signage on each side of the marquee is not in the shape of a rectangle, square, triangle or circle, the sign face area is determined by calculating the area of an imaginary rectangle drawn around each side of the marquee. In other words, the overall dimensions of each side are used to determine the sign area. The existing substructure, which sits above the marquee, will be reused. The substructure is inset. Although the new neon signs attached to the substructure will be taller, the bulk of the signs will likely appear to be similar. The building also has three primary building walls (east, west and north)

on which signage is allowed. Other than the one existing sign located on the wall facing Lyndale Avenue, there is no other existing or proposed signage on the building. The signs are intended to portray the iconic status of the theater. The proposed marquee signs will provide unique identification for an active use appropriately located in an activity center and on a commercial corridor.

2. *The property owner or authorized applicant proposes to use the property in a reasonable manner that will be in keeping with the spirit and intent of the ordinance and the comprehensive plan.*

**Both variances:** Regulations governing on-premise signs are established to allow effective signage appropriate to the planned character of each zoning district, to promote an attractive environment by minimizing visual clutter and confusion, to minimize adverse effects on nearby property, and to protect the public health, safety and welfare. The C3A Community Activity Center District is established to provide for the development of major urban activity and entertainment centers with neighborhood scale retail sales and services. In addition to entertainment and commercial uses, residential uses, institutional and public uses, parking facilities, limited production and processing and public services and utilities are allowed. The PO Pedestrian Oriented Overlay District is established to preserve and encourage the pedestrian character of commercial areas and to promote street life and activity by regulating building orientation and design and accessory parking facilities, and by prohibiting certain high impact and automobile-oriented uses. In the comprehensive plan, a variety of commercial and residential uses that generate activity all day long and into the evening are encouraged in activity centers. The proposed marquee signs will provide unique identification for an active use appropriately located in an activity center and on a commercial corridor. The most likely impacted property would be located to the north of the signs. The adjacent property to the north is a 2-story office building with no residential uses. The proposed signage is only slightly larger than the existing signage if the change in bulk is taken into consideration. The proposed signs will comply with all other applicable requirements. The theater contributes to the vibrancy of the activity center. The signs are intended to portray the iconic status of the theater and should not negatively affect the surrounding properties. The request is reasonable and in keeping with the spirit and intent of the ordinance and comprehensive plan.

3. *The proposed variance will not alter the essential character of the locality or be injurious to the use or enjoyment of other property in the vicinity. If granted, the proposed variance will not be detrimental to the health, safety, or welfare of the general public or of those utilizing the property or nearby properties.*

**Both variances:** Granting the variances would not negatively alter the character of the area and would not be detrimental to the health, safety, or welfare of the general public or of those utilizing the property or nearby properties. There is a mix of uses in the immediate area. The most likely impacted property would be located to the north of the signs. The adjacent property to the north is a 2-story office building with no residential uses. The proposed signage is only slightly larger than the existing signage if the change in bulk is taken into consideration. The proposed signs will comply with all other applicable requirements. The theater contributes to the vibrancy of the activity center. The signs are intended to portray the iconic status of the theater and should not negatively affect the surrounding properties.

### **Additional Standards for Sign Adjustments**

In addition, the Planning Commission shall consider, but not be limited to, the following factors when considering an adjustment to the number, type, height, area, or location of allowed signs on property located in an OR2 or OR3 District or a commercial, downtown, or industrial district:

1. *The sign adjustment will not significantly increase or lead to sign clutter in the area or result in a sign that is inconsistent with the purpose of the zoning district in which the property is located.*

**Both variances:** The C3A Community Activity Center District is established to provide for the development of major urban activity and entertainment centers with neighborhood scale retail sales and services. In addition to entertainment and commercial uses, residential uses, institutional and public uses, parking facilities, limited production and processing and public services and utilities are allowed. The PO Pedestrian Oriented Overlay District is established to preserve and encourage the pedestrian character of commercial areas and to promote street life and activity by regulating building orientation and design and accessory parking facilities, and by prohibiting certain high impact and automobile-oriented uses. The existing marquee sign area already exceeds the maximum allowed sign area. The proposed signage is only slightly larger than the existing signage if the change in bulk is taken into consideration. The proposed signs will comply with all other applicable requirements. The theater contributes to the vibrancy of the activity center and the signs are intended to portray the iconic status of the theater. Provided additional signage is not installed on the building at a later date, the proposed marquee signs will provide unique identification for an active use appropriately located in an activity center and on a commercial corridor without creating clutter.

2. *The sign adjustment will allow a sign that relates in size, shape, materials, color, illumination and character to the function and architectural character of the building or property on which the sign will be located.*

**Both variances:** The primary exterior materials of the 2-story building are brick, stucco, stone and concrete block on which a mural is painted. The signs will relate in size, shape, material, color, illumination and character of the building and the use. The substructure will be clad with a metal veneer. Box letters with neon lighting will be attached to the marquee faces. The signs placed on the substructure above will be neon.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The Department of Community Planning and Economic Development recommends that the Zoning Board of Adjustment adopt staff findings for the application(s) by Margo Gisselman, on behalf of the Jungle Theater, for the properties located at 2945 Lyndale Avenue South:

**A. Variance to increase the maximum allowed sign area on a primary building wall.**

Recommended motion: **Approve** the variance to increase the maximum allowed sign area on a primary building wall from 135 square feet to 650 square feet, subject to the following conditions:

1. No additional signs shall be allowed on the east and west building facades, except as already exist on the Lyndale Avenue elevation.
2. Approval of the sign permit by the Department of Community Planning and Economic Development.

**B. Variance to increase the maximum allowed sign area of an individual sign.**

Recommended motion: **Approve** the variance to increase the maximum allowed sign area of an individual sign from 180 square feet to 320 square feet, subject to the following conditions:

1. No additional signs shall be allowed on the east and west building facades, except as already exist on the Lyndale Avenue elevation.
2. Approval of the sign permit by the Department of Community Planning and Economic Development.

## ATTACHMENTS

1. Written description and findings submitted by applicant
2. Zoning map
3. Site plan
4. Sign plans
5. Renderings
6. Photos

April 7, 2015

2951 LYNDALE AVENUE SOUTH  
MINNEAPOLIS, MN 55408

To Whom It May Concern:

The Jungle Theater wishes to replace its existing marquee. The current marquee was installed at the end of the theater's renovation in 1999 and has been in place since then. It is old and weathered; in fact, portions of its structure are rotting. A renovation is required for both aesthetic and safety reasons. Since the Jungle Theater is an important patron draw for other businesses in the neighborhood (restaurants, shops, etc.) and since it is a signature visual element in the neighborhood's business landscape, we wish to retain the general size, scope and impact of the existing marquee.

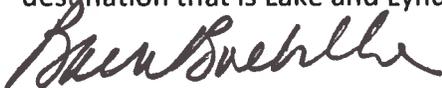
**THE  
JUNGLE  
THEATER**

PHONE 612.822.7063  
FAX 612.822.9408  
jungletheater.com

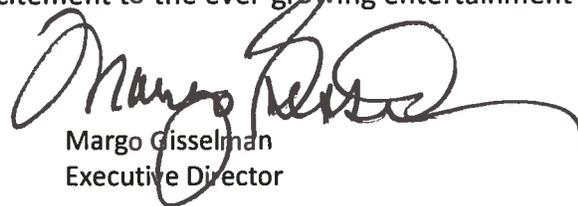
The Jungle Theater is requesting two variances: first, a location variance since the marquee is not located on the primary roadway, Lyndale Avenue, but rather is situated in the alley between the Jungle Theater and the Lyndale Tap House next door. Second, a size variance is required because the new marquee will be taller than the current one. The height of the bottom of the new marquee will remain the same as the height of the existing marquee - 14' above the sidewalk. The body of the new marquee itself will be 12'10" tall, 3 feet taller than the existing marquee. FYI: the overall height, from sidewalk to the top of the center star, will total 26'10".

The wooden sub-structure of the existing marquee will also serve as the sub-structure of the new marquee. This sub-structure will be clad with a metal veneer to protect it from the elements and keep it waterproof. The rotating 8-foot disk on the underside of the existing marquee has been in place and operating for ten years. We therefore wish to retain this element of the marquee since it has achieved a relatively iconic status in the neighborhood and has been an element of the Jungle's logo/brand for the past decade. This marquee project encounters no "practical difficulties" and is an important characteristic of the theater's visual persona.

The marquee presents no additional "sign clutter" since it occupies almost exactly the same space as the existing marquee. The Jungle Theater is a well-known and recognized flagship example of the power of the arts to encourage commerce and neighborhood activity. The new marquee, in its Jungle-esque fashion, is not only compatible with the character of the neighborhood, but will add another level of excitement to the ever-growing entertainment destination that is Lake and Lyndale.



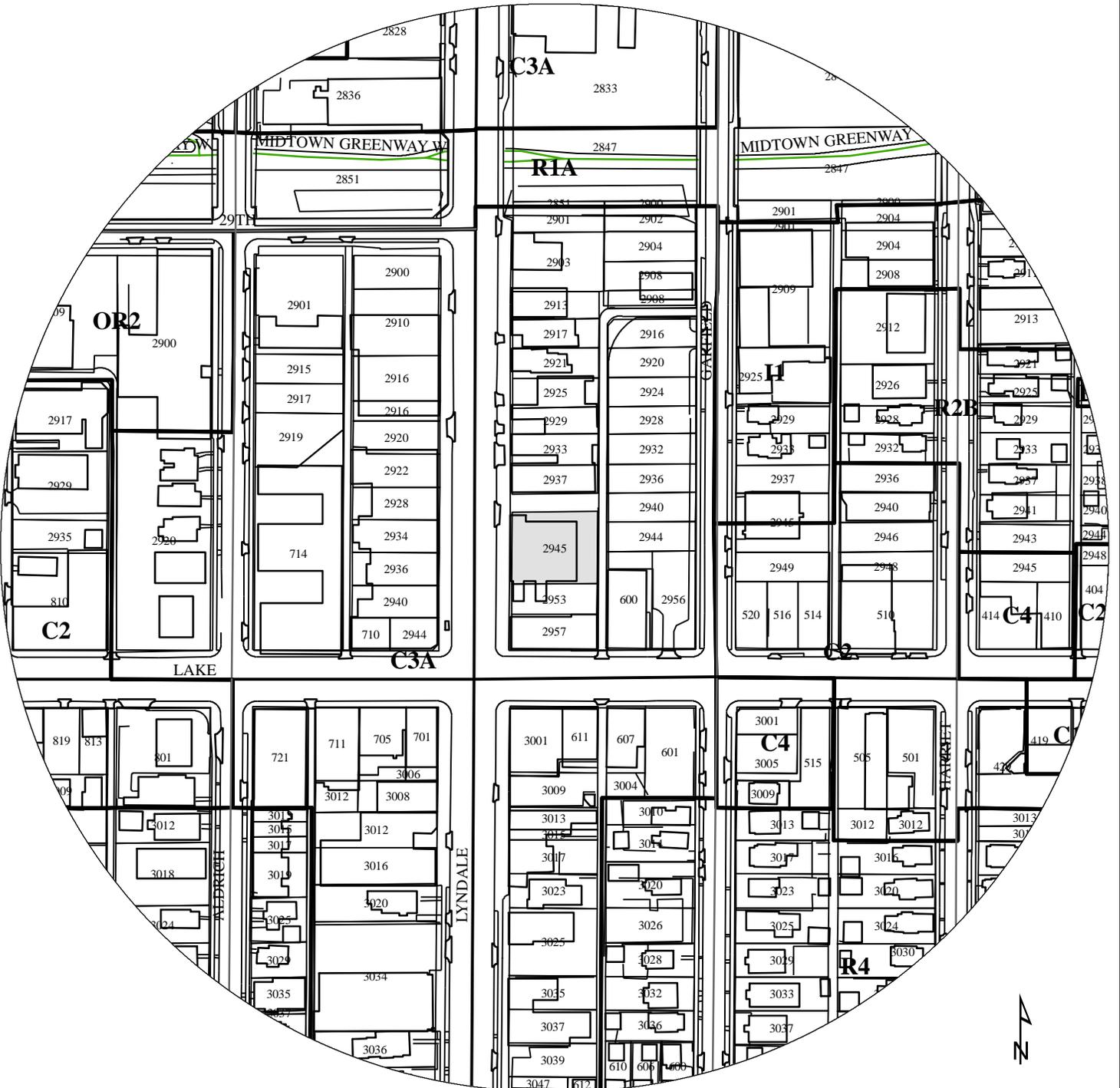
Bain Boehlke  
Artistic Director



Margo Gisselman  
Executive Director

NAME OF APPLICANT

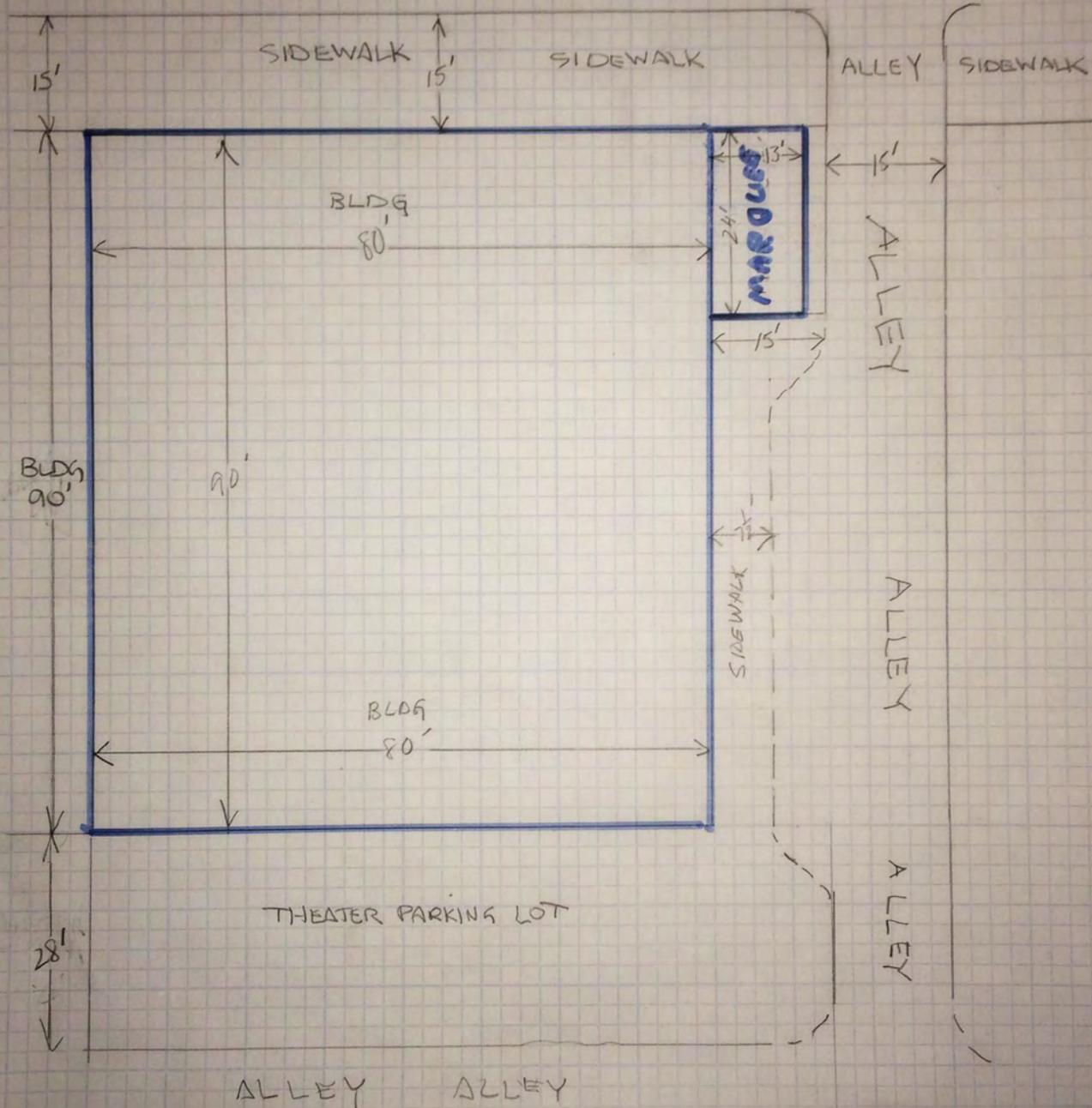
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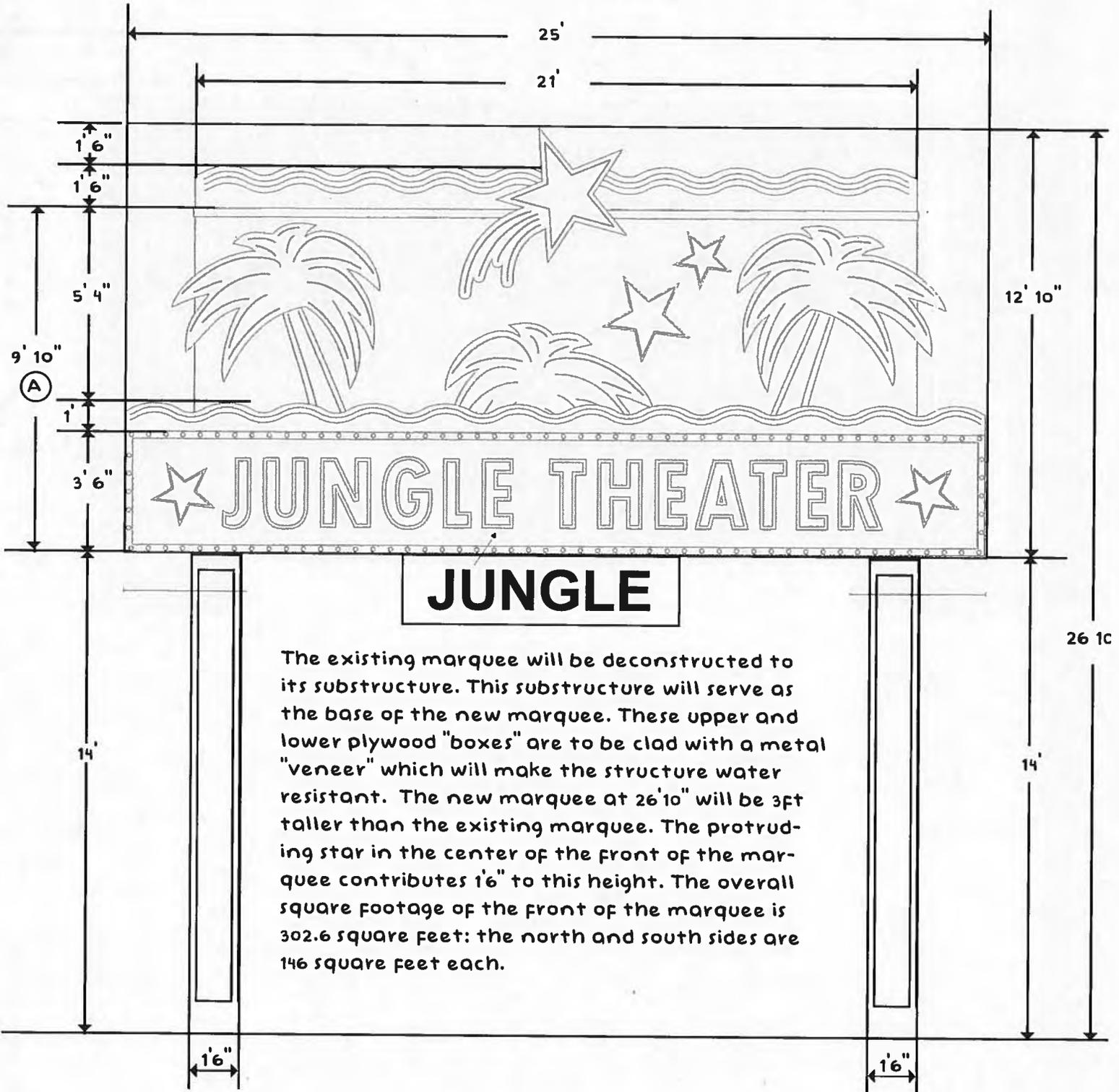


PROPERTY ADDRESS  
**2945 Lyndale Ave S**

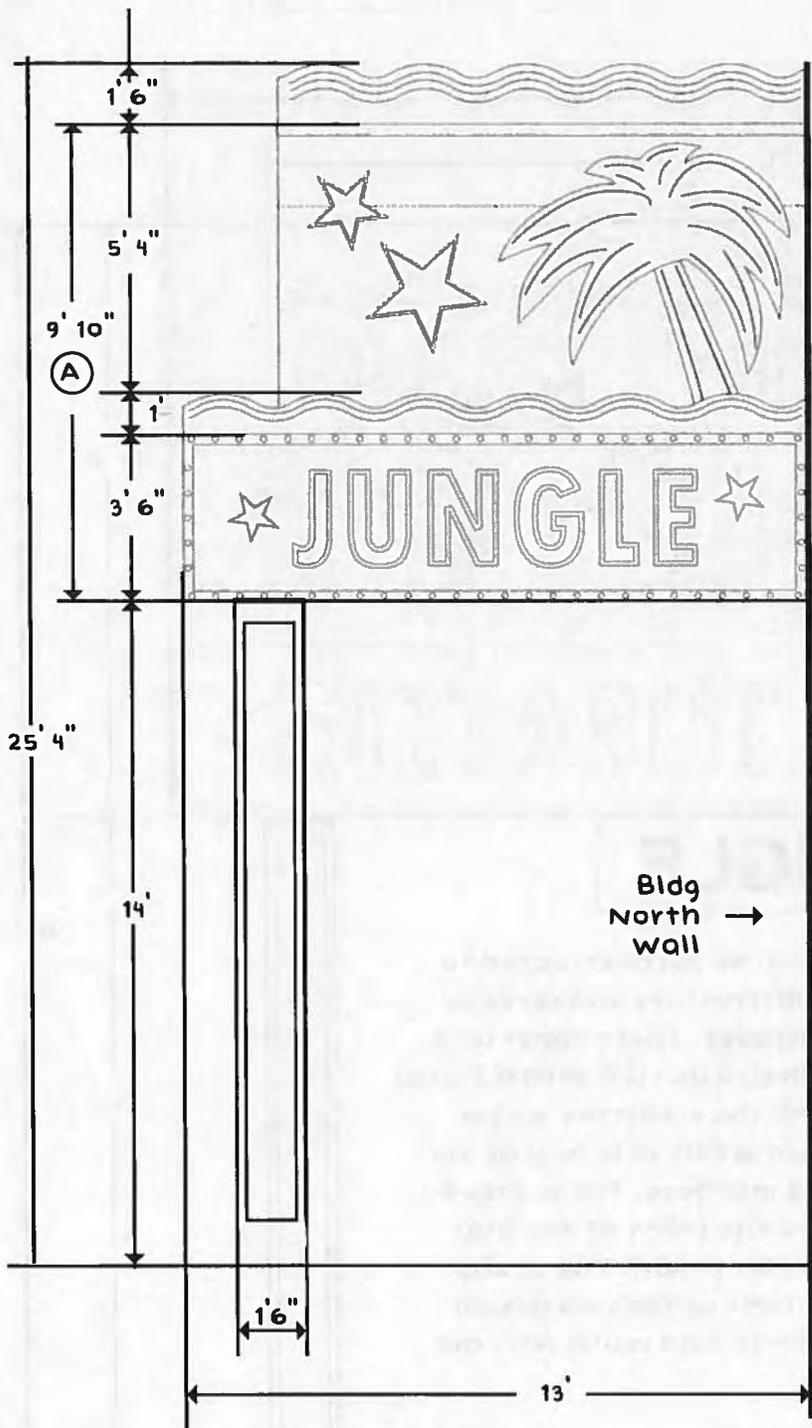
FILE NUMBER  
**BZZ-7106**

LYNDALE AVE. SO.

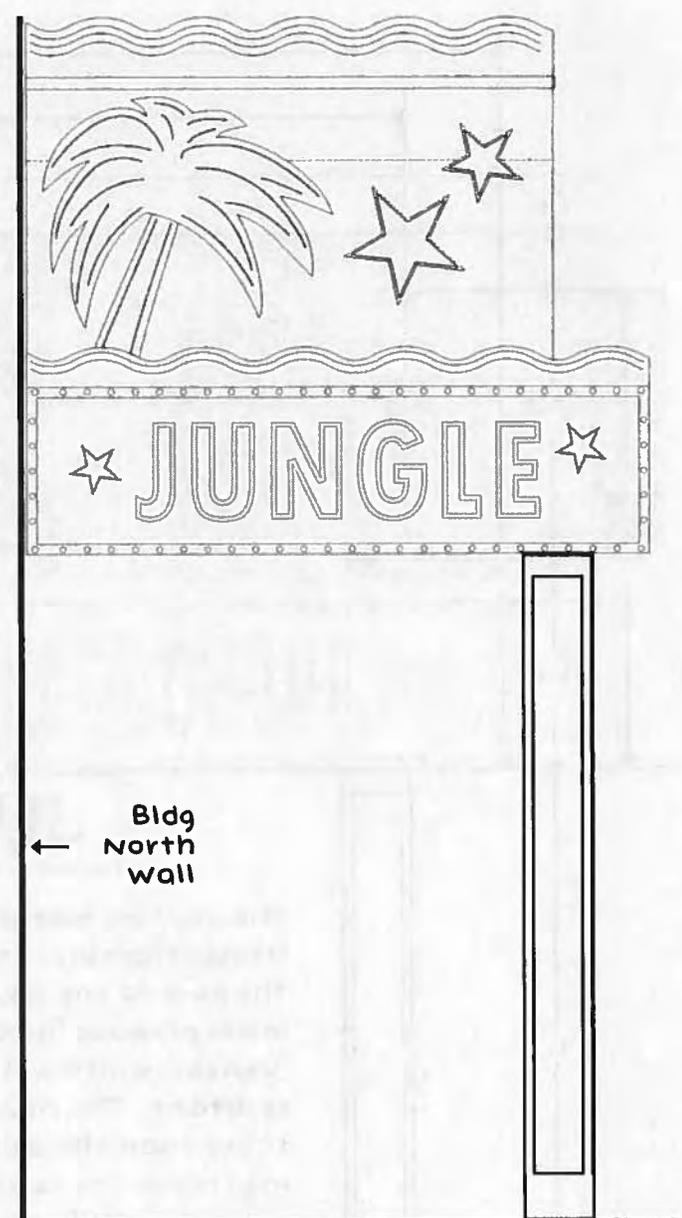


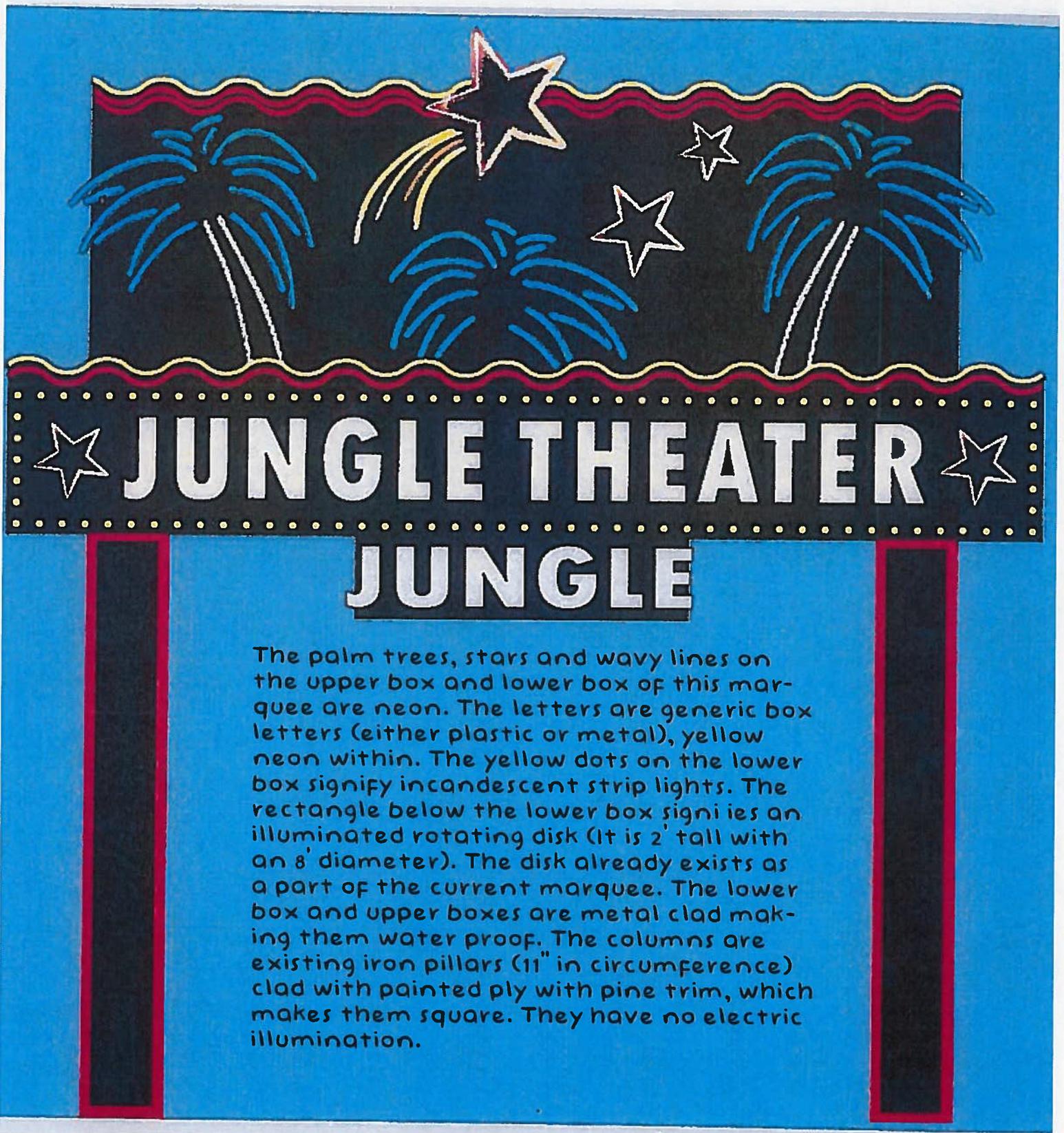


# East Side of Marquee



# West Side of Marquee (Numbers same as East )



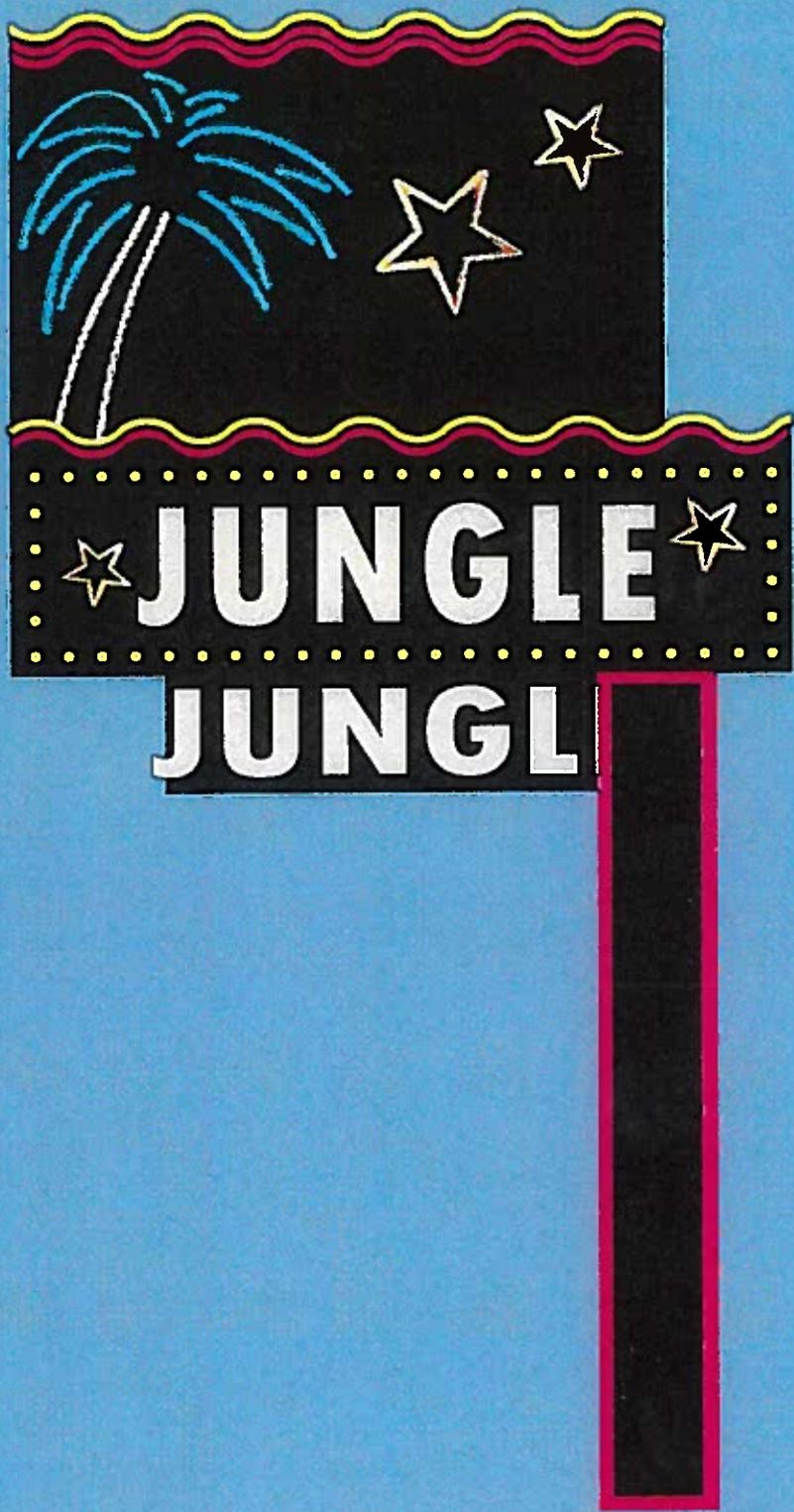


The palm trees, stars and wavy lines on the upper box and lower box of this marquee are neon. The letters are generic box letters (either plastic or metal), yellow neon within. The yellow dots on the lower box signify incandescent strip lights. The rectangle below the lower box signifies an illuminated rotating disk (it is 2' tall with an 8' diameter). The disk already exists as a part of the current marquee. The lower box and upper boxes are metal clad making them water proof. The columns are existing iron pillars (11" in circumference) clad with painted ply with pine trim, which makes them square. They have no electric illumination.

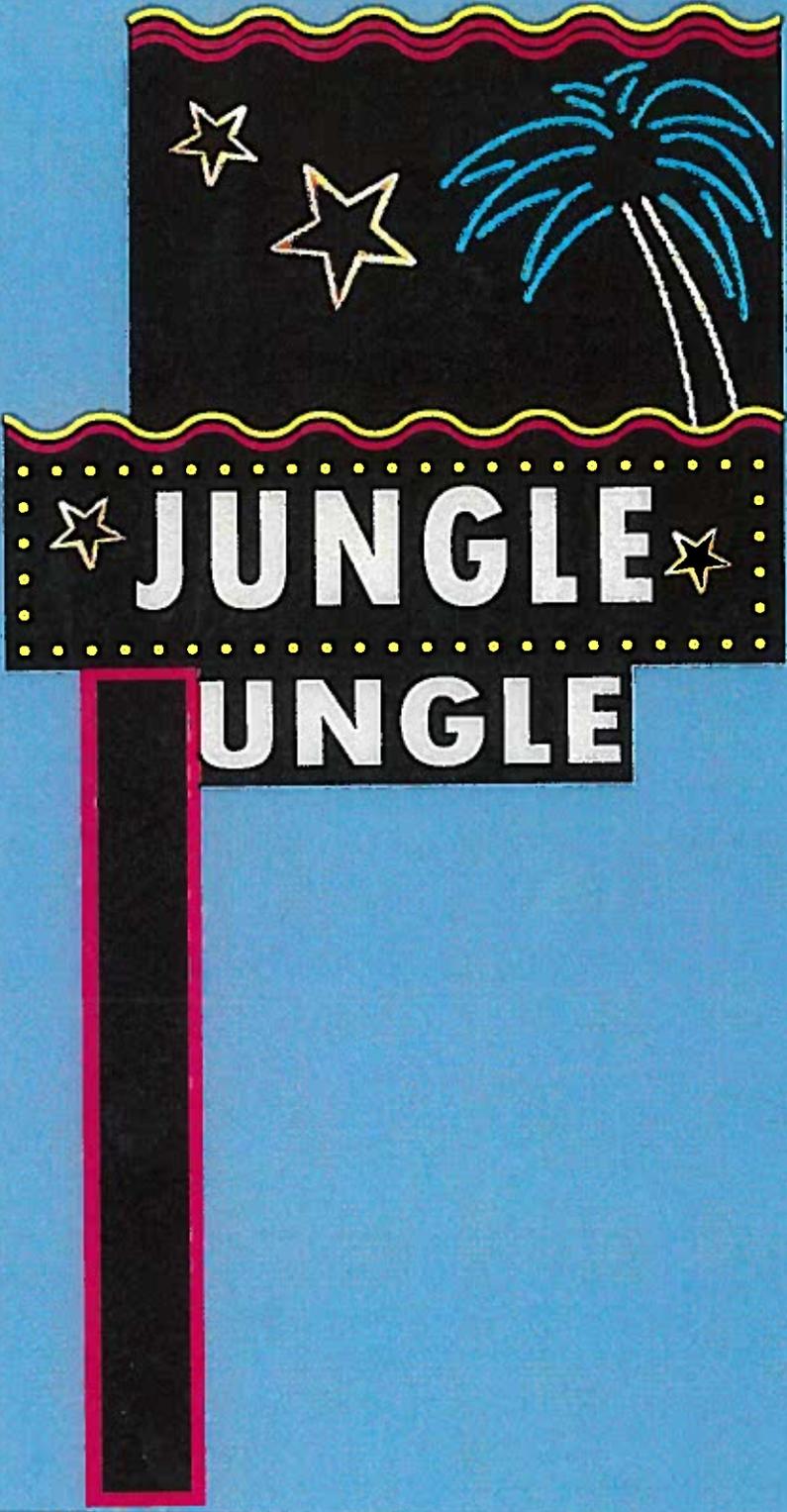


★ JUNGLE THEATER ★

JUNGLE

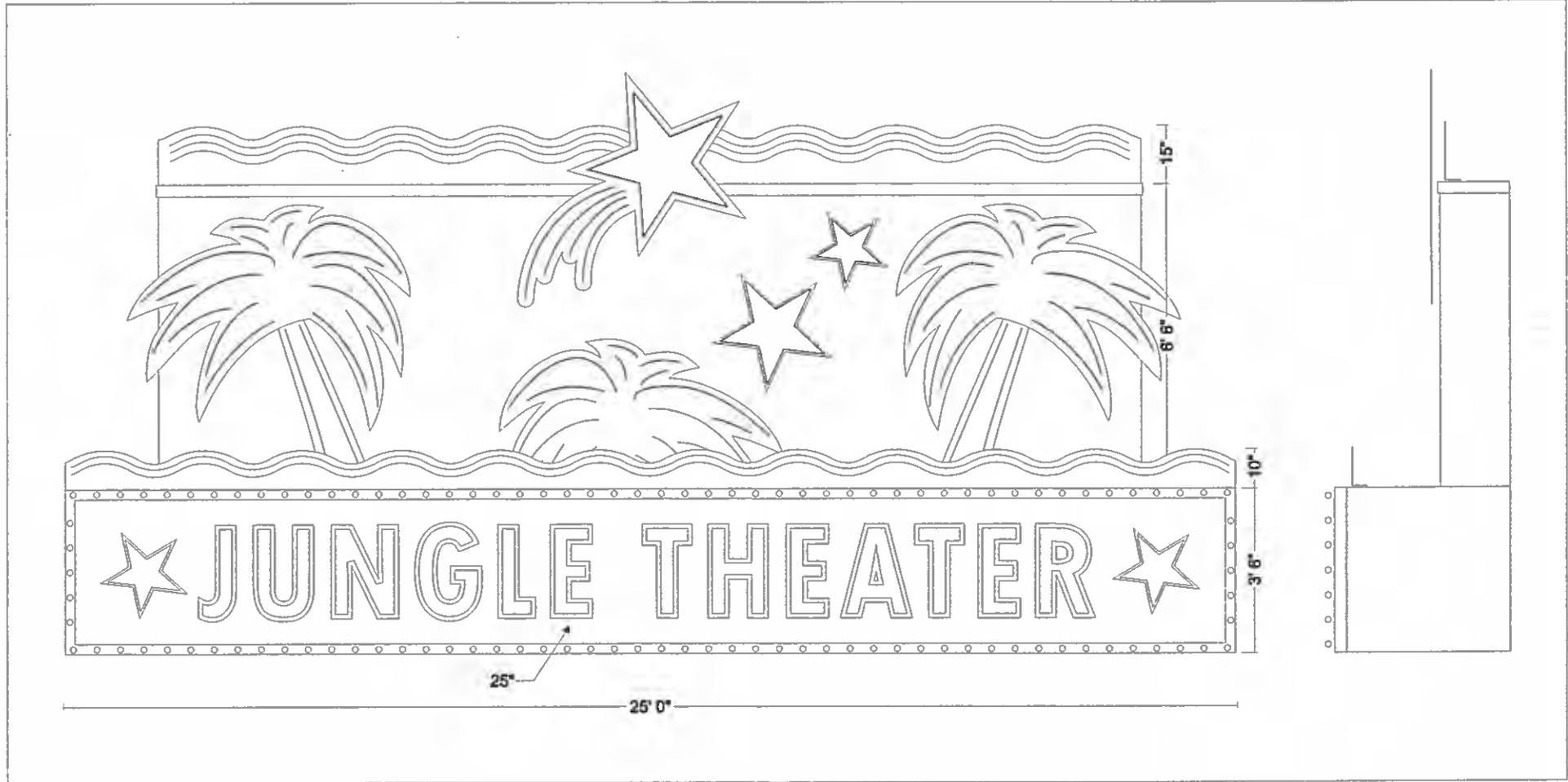


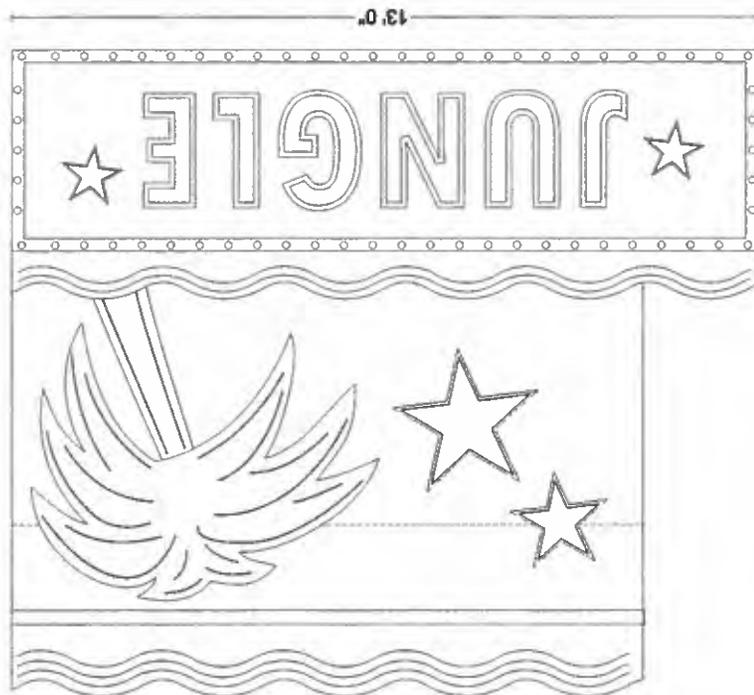
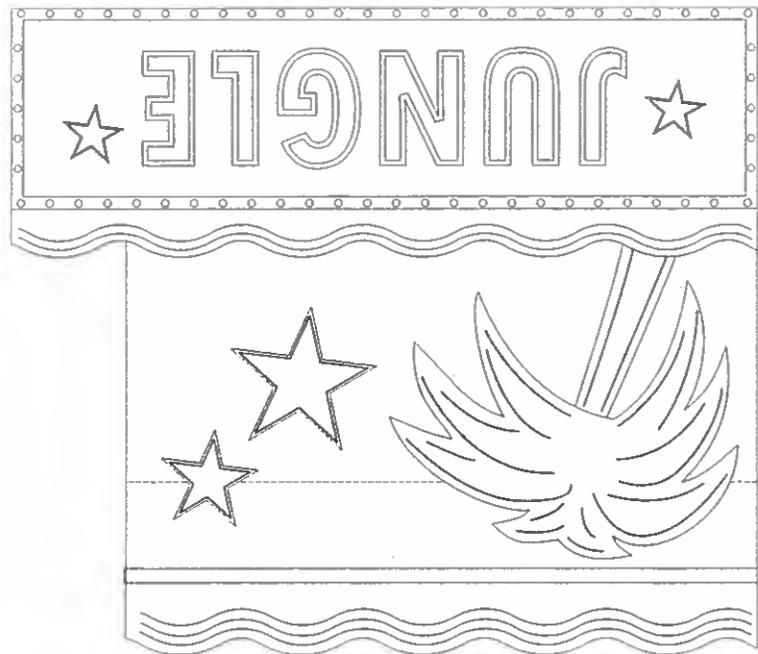
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# JUNGLE THEATER

AVYLAKE

## JUNGL

## ATER



HOUSE

JUNGLE THEATER JUNGLE

THEATRE

BEGIN ONE WAY

251





DO NOT  
ENTER

Jungle  
Theater  
Street  
Parking  
Only  
←

ARTIST: PATTY WALKER  
PAINTERS: HALEY BROWN, JENNY BROWN  
DESIGNER: JENNY BROWN  
SPONSORS: PLYMOUTH STATE UNIVERSITY, WHEEL COUNTY  
MURAL PROJECT  
CITY OF WHEELING

