



Janice E. Talley, PP/AICP  
Director of Planning and Community Development  
[jtalley@montclairnjusa.org](mailto:jtalley@montclairnjusa.org)

## **MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Planning Board

**FROM:** Janice Talley, PP, AICP

**RE:** **APPLICATION 2550: MONTCLAIR HOSPITAL, LLC – HIGHLAND AVENUE/GEORGE STREET/WALNUT CRESCENT AND BAY STREET**  
(Block 4207, Lots 1, 2, 30 & 31; Block 4213, Lots 1-9, 10, 11, 12, 23 & 27)  
Major Site Plan and **APPLICATION 2548: ONE BAY URBAN RENEWAL LLC – 311 BAY AVENUE** (Block 4215, Lot 1) – Major Site Plan

**DATE:** March 20, 2018

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This report reviews the following items submitted for this application:

- Signage Plan dated 3/16/2018.

### **Site Description**

Application 2550 involves two parking areas associated with Hackensack Meridian Health Mountainside Hospital. The southern parking area includes the existing parking deck and parking lot located on Bay Street, Highland Avenue and George Street across from the hospital. The northern parking area is the vacant lots and lots containing residential homes on George Street, Claremont Avenue and Highland Avenue. These properties were designated as areas in need of redevelopment and are included in the Mountainside Hospital Redevelopment Plan.

Application 2548 involves the 3.4 acre property located along Walnut Crescent between Roswell Terrace and Bay Street that contains a three-story vacant building that previously housed the nursing school for Mountainside Hospital. The property contains 95 parking spaces with the primary point of access from Walnut Crescent, with a secondary point of access from Bay Street.



Figure 1: Redevelopment Subzones map

## Proposed Signage

The signage plan introduces a new, comprehensive signage design for the hospital, associated parking lots and the medical office building, which is consistent with the intent of the redevelopment plan. However, many of the signs in the proposed signage plan involve the existing hospital, which is located in Glen Ridge and was not included in the redevelopment plan. The following signs are associated with the hospital parking lot and the new medical office building and are regulated by the HUMC/Mountainside Hospital Redevelopment Plan.

**E-1**– This is the existing monolith **wayfinding** sign located on the property containing the nursing school near the northwest corner of the intersection of Walnut Crescent with Bay Avenue. This sign will be removed from this location.

**E-2** – This is an existing 4-sided internally illuminated monolith **wayfinding** sign located on the hospital property at the southeast corner of Walnut Crescent and Bay Avenue. This sign will be retrofitted with new signage that is consistent with the new signage design. As this is located on the property containing the hospital, it is not regulated by the redevelopment plan.

**E-23** – This is an existing 7.5 foot tall internally illuminated monolith **wayfinding** sign located on the property containing the nursing school on Bay Avenue across the street from the main entrance to the hospital. It will be replaced with a new two-sided internally illuminated sign measuring 8 feet in height, 4 feet, 4 inches in width.

**E-24** – This is an existing monument sign located at the side entrance to the child care center on the property containing the nursing school. This sign will be removed.

**E-32** – There are five existing no smoking panel signs located in the parking lot serving the hospital. The signs measure 2 feet in height and 1.5 feet in width. They will be replaced by five new smaller signs measuring 1.5 feet in height and 1 foot in width.

**E-34** – This is a **secondary directional sign** located near the physician's entrance to the parking lot serving the hospital. It measures 3 feet and 3 inches in height and 3 feet, 11 inches in width.

**N-1** – This is a new internally illuminated two-sided **wayfinding sign** located at new entrance to the medical office building measuring 8 feet in height, 4 feet, 4 inches in width. The sign is oriented to vehicular traffic on Bay Avenue and Walnut Crescent and provides direction to the emergency room, main entrance to the hospital, the medical office building and parking.

**N-2** – This is a new internally illuminated one-sided panel **pedestrian wayfinding sign** located at the Walnut Crescent crosswalk measuring 4 feet in height and 3 feet, 10 inches in width. The sign is oriented to pedestrians using the crosswalk and provides directions to the medical office building and hospital main entrance.

**N-3** – This is a new internally-illuminated one-sided panel **wayfinding sign** located at the corner Walnut Crescent and George Street measuring 6 feet in height and 5 feet, 7 inches in width. The sign provides directions to the emergency room and parking.

**N-4** – This is a new internally-illuminated one-sided panel **secondary directional sign** located on George Street measuring 4 feet in height and 3 feet 11 inches in width. It provides directions to the handicapped and valet parking lot.

**N-5** – This is a new non-illuminated one-sided panel **secondary directional sign** located on George Street measuring 4 feet in height and 3 feet, 11 inches in width. It provides directions to physician parking.

**N-6** – Details not provided.

**N-7** – This is a non-illuminated two-sided panel **secondary directional sign** on east side of Walnut Crescent on hospital property identifying emergency entrance and directions to medical office building and main entrance. Sign measures 4 feet in height and 3 feet, 11 inches in width.

**N-8** – These are three ambulance parking only signs on Walnut Crescent that will remain as is.

**N-9** – These are four new dialysis ambulance parking only post-mounted signs located in parking lot in front of hospital on Bay Avenue.

**N-10** – This is a new non-illuminated post and panel sign in parking lot for medical office building stating parking for medical office building staff and patients only and that unauthorized vehicles will be towed.

**N-11** – This is a new two-sided non-illuminated post and panel **secondary directional sign** within the parking lot of the medical office building identifying location of valet

parking, visitor parking and physician and employee parking. The sign measures 4 feet in height and 3 feet, 10 inches in width.

**N-12** – This is a new two-sided non-illuminated post and panel **secondary directional sign** within the parking lot of the medical office building identifying location of valet parking, visitor parking and physician and employee parking. The sign measures 4 feet in height and 3 feet, 10 inches in width.

**N-13** – Details not provided.

**N-14** – Details not provided.

**N-15** – Details not provided.

**N-16** – New vinyl sign on the entry doors to the medical office building.

**T-1**– Sidewalk sign located on sidewalk in front of medical office building.

**T-2** – Sidewalk sign located on sidewalk near emergency room entrance.

## Redevelopment Plan Requirements

### 10.0 Signs & Wayfinding

Unless otherwise provided for below, standards and requirements for signs shall conform to Article XVIII (Signs) of the Montclair Zoning Ordinance.

#### 10.1 Comprehensive Wayfinding Plan

##### 10.1.1 Purpose

Wayfinding signage is very important to first time and infrequent visitors. Wayfinding signs and visual cues are used to guide motorists and pedestrians into campus, to parking areas, and to specific buildings or their ultimate destination. Furthermore, signage design can influence people's experience. The appropriate expression through form, color, typography and materials can help shape the user's experience and perception of their journey.

##### 10.1.2 General Requirements

- a. A comprehensive wayfinding signage plan shall be submitted for approval. The plan shall identify the location and content of all existing signage, as well as each proposed sign type, and the design specifications for signage materials, structure, size, letter size, standard symbols, colors, and any accessories.

**Provided.**

- b. Sign types within the signage package may include vehicular directional signs, pedestrian directional signs, freestanding building identification signage, wall signage, light pole banner signs, and historical markers or interpretive signage.
- c. Simplicity and legibility are primary design criteria for effective wayfinding signage.
- d. The signage plan should show uniformity and consistency in sign design for all sign types so users can easily recognize signage as part of the HUMC/Mountainside Hospital campus by, for example, consistent materials and

construction; consistent typeface, colors, arrows, and logos; and consistent graphic layouts and consistent overall appearance. Branding and marketing, however, are secondary considerations to informational effectiveness for signage. **Consistent signage scheme proposed.**

- e. Signage shall contribute to a facility's design character and quality. Signs should complement architecture and help establish the character for the environment.
- f. Signs shall be externally illuminated in accordance with the Montclair Ordinance. **Five internally illuminated signs are proposed.**
- g. Signage and graphics are to be durable, resilient, easily maintained and resistant to normal deterioration and acts of vandalism

**10.2 Building Signage. Details of the building sign have not been provided, but the location is shown on the architectural drawings.**

- a. The primary purpose of this sign type is to identify the name of the building and to indicate primary entrances. The wall sign may include a donor or honorific name for a building.
- b. Signage should be positioned on the building facade at the primary entrance and in view of major pedestrian walkways. **The proposed sign for the medical office building is located above the entrance door on a metal panel separating the second floor from the third floor.**
- c. Signage should respect the architecture of the building, and be placed so as not to obscure the distinctive architectural features.
- d. Letters should be mounted at or near the building entrance, or on a smooth horizontal area, surface or element integral to the design of the building, such as a belt course, horizontal mullion or cornice, and in a manner that does not damage the building materials or architectural elements.
- e. The size of wall-mounted signs shall comply with the Montclair Ordinance for signs in commercial districts. **The maximum permitted sign size is 24 inches for letters and 30 inches for logos per the Montclair Code and cannot be internally illuminated.**

**10.3 Freestanding Building Identification Signs. No freestanding building identification signs are proposed.**

Standalone signs are a "first impression" visual communication tool upon entering a site and shall be attractive to visitors. They shall be permitted as follows:

- a. Only one (1) such sign is permitted at each visitor entrance driveway or entry gate.
- b. They shall be two-sided and stand perpendicular to the street.
- c. Such sign shall be set back at least five feet from the closest property line.
- d. The signs shall contain only the official name of the building and the address, except the sign may also contain the Hospital's name or logo. This type of sign not intended as a building directory. Names of occupying units or internal spaces

are to be placed on internal directories. Full donor or commemorative names should not be on these signs.

- e. The sign shall be of a low-height or monument style, and of a design consistent in appearance with all signs in the sign package and building architecture in the campus.
- f. The base of the sign shall be landscaped with ground-cover vegetation that will not grow in height to obscure the sign.
- g. The maximum sign area shall be 20 square feet, and the maximum sign height 6 feet.

**10.4 Vehicular wayfinding. Four vehicular wayfinding signs and six secondary directional signs are proposed.**

The purpose of vehicular wayfinding signage is to provide drivers with advance directional information as to the locations of HUMC/Mountainside Hospital Campus destinations and parking facilities. Vehicular wayfinding signage should identify destinations such as:

- Emergency Department
  - Patient drop-off
  - Visitor/Patient parking
  - Valet parking
  - Building Entrances
  - Deliveries
- a. Content should be simple, and may only contain the destination name, directional arrow, and symbol, if applicable.
  - b. Such signs shall be placed along streets within the Hospital campus, placed perpendicular to the road, facing oncoming traffic.
  - c. Placement location and height shall maximize visibility, except that sign height shall not exceed 8 feet.
  - d. Secondary directional signs are also permitted at driveway entrances and within a parking area to provide further guidance at decision points. Such signs shall not exceed 3 feet in height.
  - e. The vehicular wayfinding program shall include an evaluation of signage at the following intersections to direct traffic to the area: ***Vehicular wayfinding signs from these locations have not been proposed.***
    - Bloomfield Avenue and Highland Avenue
    - Grove Street and Claremont Avenue
    - Ridgewood Avenue and Bay Avenue



**Pedestrian wayfinding. One new pedestrian wayfinding sign is proposed at the crosswalk across Walnut Crescent.**

Pedestrian wayfinding signage provides pedestrians with directional information to reach their ultimate destination, which can include, for example:

- Building entrances
  - Parking areas
  - Bus stops
  - Outdoor areas (i.e., to use mobile devices, make phone calls, smoke cigarettes)
  - Play areas for children
- a. One sign should be located at each pedestrian confluence point.
  - b. Signs can contain more information than those geared towards motorists since pedestrians have opportunity for longer reading time.
  - c. The size and height of pedestrian wayfinding signage shall fit within the HUMC/Mountainside setting, and meet the approval of the reviewing board. Such signs shall not exceed eight (8) feet in height.

**Additional Comments**

1. The details for each sign should accurately distinguish between the total height of the sign and the height of the sign panel.
2. Sheet 42 in the signage plan, which is the location plan for the new signs associated with the site plan, is very difficult to read without a magnifying glass. Enlarged copies of this sheet should be provided to make it easier for the Board and the public to read and understand the plan.
3. A deviation from Section 10.1.2f of the Redevelopment Plan which states that signs shall be externally illuminated in accordance with the Montclair ordinance is required because signs E-23, N-1, N-2, N-3 and N-4 are internally illuminated. The applicant should consider alternatives to internal illumination.
4. The following signs require deviations from Section 10.4d of the redevelopment plan which states that the maximum height for a secondary directional sign is three feet: E-34 (3 feet, 3 inches proposed), N-4 (4 feet proposed), N-5 (4 feet proposed), N-11 (4 feet proposed), N-12 (4 feet proposed),
5. Details of proposed signs N-6, N-13, N-14 and N-15 are not provided, even though Sheet 42 shows proposed locations for these signs. The applicant should provide details for each of these signs.
6. Sheet 42 shows sign N-5 located within the proposed park on George Street. This does not comport with the detail sheet of sign N-5, which shows the sign located adjacent to the entrance for the physician parking lot. The applicant should confirm the appropriate location for sign N-5.

7. The dimensions for sign N-13 (door sign on the medical office building) should be provided to illustrate that the sign does not occupy more than 20 percent of the glass.
8. The dimensions and materials for sign N-14 (sidewalk sign) should be provided and should illustrate that it meets the requirements of Montclair Code §347-110.4. Wood, metal and chalkboard signs are traditional, recommended materials. Plastic is not recommended. The maximum size for the sign is 2 feet in width and 3 feet in height and a certificate of insurance listing the Township as an additional insured must be provided.
9. Vehicular wayfinding signs should be provided at the intersections of Bloomfield Avenue and Highland Avenue; Grove Street and Claremont Avenue and Ridgewood Avenue and Bay Avenue.