



**DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENT SERVICES – PLANNING DIVISION**  
*REPORT: Special Permit for a Drinking Place at 196 Trumbull Street*  
for consideration September 27, 2022

**STAFF REPORT**

**TO:** Planning & Zoning Commission  
**PREPARED BY:** Paul Ashworth, Senior Planner  
[paul.ashworth@hartford.gov](mailto:paul.ashworth@hartford.gov)

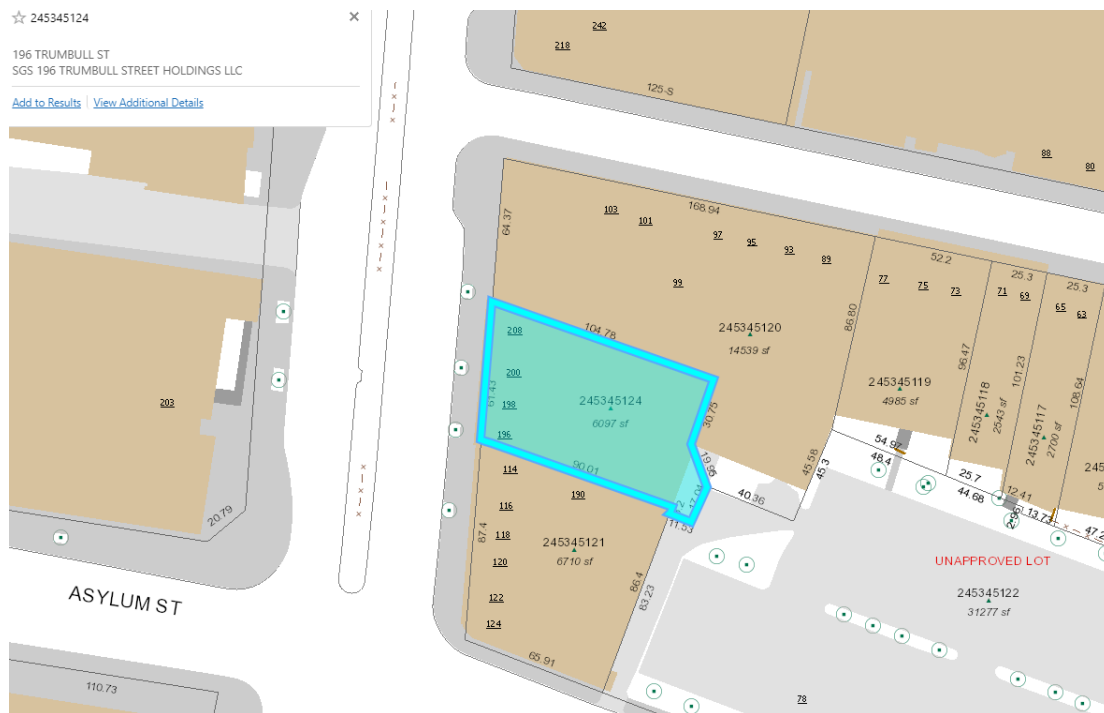
**PROJECT:** Eleanor’s Last Word Bar & Lounge  
196 Trumbull Street  
PARCEL ID: 245-345-124  
P&Z-COMM-2022-0672

**ZONE:** DT-3, Downtown District

**TYPE:** Special Permit for a new drinking place/bar in the DT-3, Downtown zoning district, per Section 1.3.4 and Section 3.3.5.I.

**APPLICANT:** Lifecare Design, Inc c/o Natalie Sweeney

**OWNER:** SGS 196 Trumbull Street Holdings LLC



**Overhead View – Hartford Planning Viewer 2022**

### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

The applicant is requesting approval of a drinking place/bar on the first floor of the existing Downtown Storefront building located at 196 Trumbull Street. The applicant is also requesting approval of a retail/candy and soda shop. The candy and soda shop is proposed to be a functioning retail space occupying the front of the building. The drinking place will be located behind the retail store and purposefully hidden. The new drinking place is styled after a 1920's *speakeasy* and thus the arrangement of the bar hidden behind the retail store will provide additional atmosphere and ambience to the patron experience.

The subject property is located within the Pratt Street National Historic District. However, no changes to the exterior of the building are proposed at this time.

### **KEY APPLICATION TIMELINES**

- Application Submission Date: August 1, 2022
- Date Application Accepted as Complete: August 1, 2022
- Application Date of Receipt: August 9, 2022 (sooner of either: date of next regularly scheduled meeting, or 35 days after acceptance of complete application)
- Public Hearing is scheduled to open on Tuesday, September 27, 2022; Open Hearing Deadline: October 13, 2022.
- Close Hearing Deadline (if opens September 27, 2022): (35 days after opening) Tuesday, November 1, 2022
- CT General Statutes Sec.8-7D allow that the applicant may consent to one or more extensions of time, provided the total extension of all time periods shall not be for longer than 65 days.

### **LEGAL STANDARD**

Standard for Application Type:

The Commission reviews special permits in accordance with Zoning Regulations section 1.3.4. Special permits may be approved, approved with conditions, or denied. Considerations the Commission may weigh in special permit review include: harmony with the plan of conservation & development; compliance with the purposes of the district; effect on existing development; creation of safety hazards in vehicular and pedestrian circulation; effects on traffic; compatibility with adjacent properties; suitability of arrangement of buildings, open space, and provision of light and air; impact on essential services; impact on stormwater runoff; impact on city services and infrastructure; tree and landscape provision; and pedestrian amenities. The Commission may deviate from the minimum requirements for building siting, height, street facades, accessory structures dimensions, tree installation, landscape installation, buffers, fencing, lighting, parking, signage, and street design by up to 15% upon certain findings.

**STANDARD SPECIFIC TO THE USE**

**Zoning Regulations**

**Figure 3.2-A Table of Principle Uses:** Drinking Places are permitted with a Special Permit in the DT-3 District.

**Section 3.3.5 – Service Uses**

- I. **Drinking Places.** Establishments selling alcoholic beverages, including beer, wine, and liquor for on-site consumption.
  - (1) Proximity to Residential. The establishment shall not be located within 1,200 feet of any residentially used parcel or a district permitting residential uses, unless cooked food is served (including taverns, pubs, or Eating Places).
  - (2) Proximity to Certain Uses. Except in DT and MS districts, no drinking place use shall be located within a 200 foot radius of any part of a lot used or reserved to be used as a temporary shelter facility, group living facility, group living facility for health reasons, rehabilitation home, roominghouse/boardinghouse, funeral home, house of worship, medical clinic, medical office, hospital, school, or park.

**Section 3.5.2.D – Outdoor Café:** Tables and chairs for patrons of any use where food and beverages are served located outdoors.

- (1) **General Location.**
  - (a) A minimum of 5 feet of sidewalk shall remain available and obstacle-free for passing pedestrians.

**Section 4.3.2 – Downtown Storefront Building Type Regulations**

- C. Retail and service uses are permitted by right on the ground floor of Downtown Storefront Buildings in the DT-3 district.

**Figure 8.2-A Permitted Sign Types by District:** Wall signs are permitted by right in the DT-3, Downtown District.

**Figure 8.3-A Wall Sign Requirements**

- Each first-floor tenant is permitted one wall sign per public entryway on public street facing facades.
- The total permitted sign area of each first-floor tenant wall sign shall not exceed 1 square feet for each linear front foot of exterior building wall for the tenant's unit.
- Maximum projection is 1' from the building face.

**Plan of Conservation & Development (POCD)**

**Play400: Make Hartford’s culture more vibrant**

- **Tourism:** Hartford has architecture, history, parks, arts, culture, sports, and museums that would be the envy of any similarly-sized city. Creating a coherent tourism strategy that highlights our diverse assets will draw people, drive investment, create service jobs, and foster a love of our great city.
- **Appoint a nightlife ambassador:** Identifying a person who navigates noise, safety, and traffic issues associated with nighttime activities will smooth neighborhood tensions and facilitate healthy entertainment.

**Grow400: Make Hartford’s economy more prosperous**

- **Entrepreneurship:** Hartford has a diverse business ecosystem filled with large anchor institutions, small businesses, and start-ups. Meeting the needs of these diverse enterprises and cultivating an innovation atmosphere will expand economic opportunities and connect Hartford to the region and the world.

**FINDING OF FACTS**

**Proposed Tenant Space**

- Proposed location is on the first floor of an existing Downtown Storefront Building.
- Tenant space is ~3,400 square feet.
- Existing storefront façade is not proposed to be altered with the exception of paint and a new sign.

**Proposed Use**

- The proposed retail/service, soda and candy shop will occupy only the first 20’ of the tenant space.
- The proposed drinking place/bar will occupy the rest of the tenant space in the rear:
- See Figure 1. Below for a full breakdown of the varying hours of operation.
  - o During periods when soda and candy shop is closed, the bar will station a security guard/greeter in the shop to direct patrons of the bar.

**Noise Mitigation**

- Noise absorbing panels are proposed on the interior of the bar to reduce the potential for sound to spill into the upper floors or neighboring uses.

**Proposed Outdoor Café**

- An outdoor café consisting of 3 tables and 6 chairs is proposed for patrons of the soda and candy shop.
- The tables and chairs appear to project ~5’ from the face of the building.
- There is approximately ~10’ from the face of the building to the edge of the tree wells in the public right-of-way.
- Patrons of the bar are not proposed to use the outdoor café.

<b>Soda Shop Hours of Operation</b>	
	<b>Soda Shop Open Hours</b>
Monday	CLOSED
Tuesday	10:00am-7:00pm
Wednesday	10:00am-7:00pm
Thursday	10:00am-7:00pm
Friday	10:00am-7:00pm
Saturday	11:00am-7:00pm
Sunday	11:00am-5:00pm
<b>Speakeasy Hours of Operation</b>	
	<b>Speakeasy Open Hours</b>
Monday	CLOSED
Tuesday	CLOSED
Wednesday	5:00pm-12:00pm
Thursday	5:00pm-12:00pm
Friday	5:00pm-1:00am
Saturday	5:00pm-1:00am
Sunday	5:00pm-12:00pm

Figure 1. Hours of operation – Applicant 2022



Figure 2. View of the subject property from Trumbull Street – Google Maps 2022



Figure 3. Rendering of proposed paint and signage – ARTfx 2022

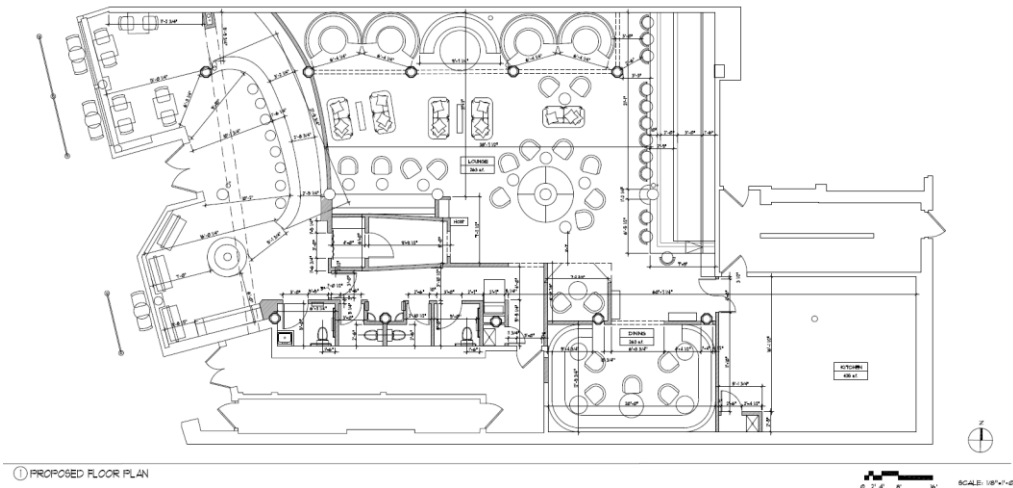


Figure 4. Proposed floor plan – Lifecare Design 2022

**COMMENTS RECEIVED (DEPARTMENTS, AGENCIES, NRZs, PUBLIC)**

As of this writing no comments have been received by staff.

**ANALYSIS**

The proposed retail/service candy and soda shop is permitted by right in the district and on the first floor of a Downtown Storefront building. The proposed outdoor café is also permitted by right in conjunction with the candy shop. The outdoor café appears to meet the requirements of Section 3.5.2.D however the total clear sidewalk width cannot be confirmed. Based on an analysis of the existing conditions, staff find that this parameter could easily be met and recommend approval of the outdoor café with the condition that a minimum of 5’ clearance be maintained between the outdoor café enclosure and the closest tree well.

The proposed drinking place is permitted in the DT-3 district subject to the condition that if the use is within 200 feet of a residential use that the drinking place must also serve cooked food. The subject building is occupied by residential apartments on the upper floors and therefore the cooked food requirement applies. The applicant has provided a menu with at least one cooked food item. Staff request that the menu be expanded to include additional cooked food items, however the minimum requirement is met.

**Plan of Conservation & Development**

The proposed candy shop and speakeasy style bar a unique business not currently available in Downtown Hartford. The establishment of such a business could increase tourism and the amount of nightlife in the area. This is consistent with the Tourism goal of the POCD, however the POCD also identifies a goal regarding the appointment of a “Nightlife Ambassador” to help solve issues commonly associated with nightlife such as noise, traffic and pedestrian safety. The Nightlife Ambassador goal shows that the POCD, while allowing and potentially encouraging a vibrant nightlife component to the City, it intends to mitigate any potential nuisances created by such nightlife. The proposed business is fully contained within the building and the applicant has

committed to provided noise insulating panels thus mitigating the majority of potential noise pollution. The proposed location is in close proximity to Pratt Street, a burgeoning locus of nightlife and would continue this positive trend of development onto Trumbull Street. Staff find that the use, as proposed, would contribute positively to nightlife as described by the POCD.

**Summary**

The proposed uses in the subject location meet the requirements of the Regulations. The proposed outdoor café is in association with the candy shop and should the business ever wish to offer outdoor seating to patrons of the drinking place, a Special Permit application should be filed at that time consistent with Sec.3.3.5.I(3) of the Regulations. Staff find that the application is consistent with the POCD and should be approved.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends approval of this application with the following condition:

1. The proposed outdoor café shall be used only by patrons of the retail/service soda and candy shop and shall maintain a minimum of 5' clearance between the nearest tree well and the enclosure.

**A draft resolution follows.**

**ATTACHMENTS**

1. Applicant's Narrative
2. Floor Plan dated June 16, 2022

**REVIEWED AND EDITED BY,**

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Aimee Chambers, Director



**CITY OF HARTFORD  
PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION RESOLUTION  
196 TRUMBULL STREET  
SPECIAL PERMIT FOR A DRINKING PLACE**

- Whereas,** The City of Hartford Planning & Zoning Commission reviewed the application and attached documents regarding the request for a Special Permit for a new drinking place/bar in the DT-3, Downtown zoning district, per Section 1.3.4 and Section 3.3.5.I; and
- Whereas,** The subject property is located in the DT-3, Downtown district; and
- Whereas,** Section 3.3.5.I requires that all Drinking Places within 200 feet of a residentially used property serve cooked food and receive a Special Permit; and
- Whereas,** The proposed drinking place is to be located on the first floor of an existing Downtown Storefront Building with the upper floors occupied by residential apartments; and
- Whereas,** The applicant has provided a menu for the drinking place that shows cooked food; and
- Whereas,** The applicant has also proposed a retail/service soda candy shop in the front ~1/4 of the tenant space and an outdoor café; and
- Whereas,** The proposed outdoor café will only be used by patrons of the soda and candy shop and should the applicant ever wish to allow patrons of the drinking place to use the outdoor café, another Special Permit application will be required; and
- Whereas,** The proposed outdoor café appears to occupy only 5' of the approximately 10' of space between the front of the subject building and the nearest tree well; and
- Whereas,** The Plan of Conservation & Development states in its Play400 focus area that the City should make Hartford's culture more vibrant by increasing tourism and allowing safe nightlife that does not deteriorate quality of life for residents; and
- Whereas,** The Plan of Conservation & Development states in its Grow400 focus are that the City should support the local economy by encouraging entrepreneurship; and



**Whereas,** The Plan of Conservation & Development states in its Play400 focus area that the City shall encourage cafes and restaurants to incorporate outdoor seating areas and explore relaxing permitting requirements; and

**Whereas,** The proposed business represents a unique enterprise that could increase tourism and contribute to the local economy; and

Now therefore Be It

**Resolved,** The City of Hartford Planning & Zoning Commission hereby **denies/approves** the request for a a Special Permit for a new drinking place/bar in the DT-3, Downtown zoning district, per Section 1.3.4 and Section 3.3.5.I subject to the following conditions of approval:

1. The proposed outdoor café shall be used only by patrons of the retail/service soda and candy shop and shall maintain a minimum of 5' clearance between the nearest tree well and the outdoor café enclosure.

Be It Further,

**Resolved,** This 27<sup>th</sup> day of September, 2022.

**Attachment 1 – Applicant’s Narrative**

Emrey's Specialty Sweets and Soda Shop is a step back in time when the soda shop was the place to be seen and hang out. This take on the soda shop will be a bit more elevated in taste with unique soda blends and fun milkshake combinations. A variety of sweets will be offered in the retail area along with a friendly photo booth to mark the outing with photos.



But there is more to this soda shop than meets the eye. Through a secret door lies another step back in time to your local speakeasy bar and lounge, Eleanor's Last Word Craft Cocktail Bar. Here you can have an after hours drink matched with small bites to perfectly accompany the libation.



### Operational Hours

Soda Shop Hours of Operation	
	Soda Shop Open Hours
Monday	CLOSED
Tuesday	10:00am-7:00pm
Wednesday	10:00am-7:00pm
Thursday	10:00am-7:00pm
Friday	10:00am-7:00pm
Saturday	11:00am-7:00pm
Sunday	11:00am-5:00pm
Speakeasy Hours of Operation	
	Speakeasy Open Hours
Monday	CLOSED
Tuesday	CLOSED
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Friday	5:00pm-1:00am
Saturday	5:00pm-1:00am
Sunday	5:00pm-12:00pm

### Security plan

There will be a security guard/greeter to stand at the entry and greet all guests when the soda fountain is closed, otherwise people will come into the lounge by obtaining a pin number that they will type into the secret door. There is one door for entry only and one door for exiting.

A few tables and chairs will be located directly outside of the soda shop for soda shop patrons only, the bar/lounge will have no outdoor seating.

### Noise mitigation plan

Panels with mineral wool fiber will dampen sound to a 50 stc rating between the ceiling to the apartments above and lounge area. Music will be ambient for atmosphere and we will not be loud or have heavy bass sounds.

# Sample Menus *(to refresh seasonally)*

## Emrey's Specialty Sweets & Sodas

Old Fashioned Soda Bar and Gift Shop

### Ice Cream Floats:

**Cold pressed watermelon soda** topped with lemon sorbet and fresh mint.

**Rhubarb soda** topped with basil-flavored ice cream and vanilla crisps.

**Muddled blackberry smash soda** topped with vanilla ice cream and topped with brown sugar crystals.

**Original Root beer float** with vanilla bean ice cream

### Milkshakes:

#### **Everyday is My Birthday**

Birthday cake-flavored ice cream shake, topped with a cupcake and other baked treats from Bloom Bake Shop.

#### **Oh My Cereal**

Fruit loops flavored ice cream shake, topped with fruit loops, a chocolate molded bowl of fruity pebbles cereal, and marshmallow syrup.

#### **Chocolate Chunker**

Brownie ice cream shake, topped with two unique flavored brownies, chocolate syrup, and chocolate candies.

### Old Fashioned Sodas:

#### **Choose from the below flavors or choose your own flavor combination:**

Watermelon

Lemon/Lime

Chocolate

Almond

Pineapple

Strawberry

Blueberry

Birch Beer

Ginger

Root beer

#### **Italian Cream Sodas:**

Pineapple cream soda

Mint chocolate cream soda

#### **Add On to Any Soda:**

Proprietary natural energy elixer

# Eleanor's Last Word

Craft Cocktail Bar

## Sample Signature Cocktails

### **The Last Word**

Gin, Chartreuse, Lime, Maraschino Liqueur, accompanied by candied cherries.

### **The Empress**

Empress gin, rhubarb liqueur, pear, lime and honey.

### **Just Peachy**

Peach sorbet topped with prosecco

## Shareable Cocktails

### **The Wanne**

A vintage punch bowl filled with libations and fruits, and topped with champagne.

### **Flight of Clubtails**

Canned craft cocktails that are an updated replication of what the Hublein family used to produce in this very property.

## Paired Small Bites

Cheese and meat board options

Hummus and pickled vegetable plate

(3) Different choice crostinis

A sampling of mini finger sandwiches

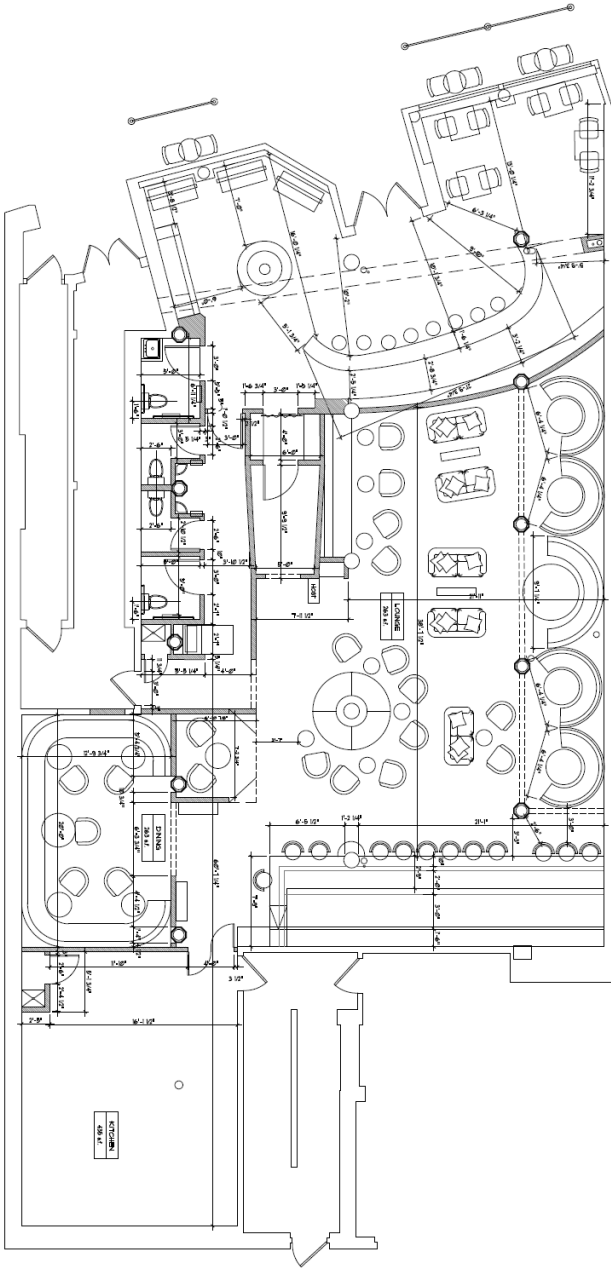
## Sweet Accompaniments

Honey Lavender Panna Cotta

Chocolate mousse

Strawberries and Champagne Sorbet

Attachment 2 – Floor Plan dated June 16, 2022



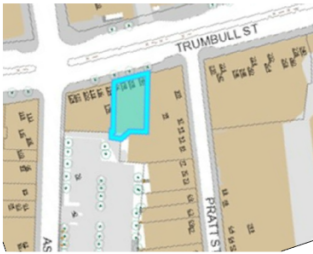
① PROPOSED FLOOR PLAN

SCALE: 1/8" = 1'-0"



② RETAIL LOCATION

SCALE: NTS



③ BUILDING SITE LOCATION

SCALE: NTS



**Emrey's  
Candy Shop  
& Lounge**

106 TRUMBULL BLVD  
HARTFORD, CT 06103

**LIFECARE DESIGN INC.**  
1429 Park St, Ste 201  
Hartford, Ct, 06108  
architecture • planning • interior design  
www.lifecareinc.com

**PROPOSED FLOOR PLAN & SITE LOCATION**

DATE: 06/16/22  
SCALE: 1/8" = 1'-0"

**A-1**

**X-X**

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Storefront Elevation - Option 1  
NTS

Double layer of acrylic, mounted with stand offs  
and lit from above with wash light

Night View



**artyx** 27 Britton Drive, Bloomfield, CT 06002 | 860.242.0031 | 800.486.4278 | 860.242.2898 | [artixsigns.com](http://artixsigns.com)

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Project Name: Emvey's Sweets & Sodas - 196 Trumbull St., Hartford, CT

Job#: 59650

Scale: As Noted

Date: 8/24/22

Artist: PNH

Sales Person: CB

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