

should be submitted on or before May 20, 2025.

For the Commission, by the Division of Trading and Markets, pursuant to delegated authority.<sup>56</sup>

**Sherry R. Haywood,**

*Assistant Secretary.*

[FR Doc. 2025–07314 Filed 4–28–25; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 8011–01–P

## SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION

[Release No. 34–102917; File No. SR–NASDAQ–2025–032]

### Self-Regulatory Organizations; The Nasdaq Stock Market LLC; Notice of Filing of Proposed Rule Change To List and Trade Shares of the VanEck Avalanche ETF Under Nasdaq Rule 5711(d) (Commodity-Based Trust Shares)

April 23, 2025.

Pursuant to Section 19(b)(1) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (“Act”),<sup>1</sup> and Rule 19b–4 thereunder,<sup>2</sup> notice is hereby given that on April 9, 2025, The Nasdaq Stock Market LLC (“Nasdaq” or “Exchange”) filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission (“Commission”) the proposed rule change as described in Items I and II below, which Items have been prepared by the Exchange. The Commission is publishing this notice to solicit comments on the proposed rule change from interested persons.

#### I. Self-Regulatory Organization’s Statement of the Terms of Substance of the Proposed Rule Change

The Exchange proposes to list and trade shares of the VanEck Avalanche ETF (the “Trust”) under Nasdaq Rule 5711(d) (“Commodity-Based Trust Shares”). The shares of the Trust are referred to herein as the “Shares.”

The text of the proposed rule change is available on the Exchange’s website at <https://listingcenter.nasdaq.com/rulebook/nasdaq/rulefilings>, at the principal office of the Exchange, and at the Commission’s Public Reference Room.

#### II. Self-Regulatory Organization’s Statement of the Purpose of, and Statutory Basis for, the Proposed Rule Change

In its filing with the Commission, the Exchange included statements concerning the purpose of and basis for the proposed rule change and discussed

any comments it received on the proposed rule change. The text of these statements may be examined at the places specified in Item IV below. The Exchange has prepared summaries, set forth in sections A, B, and C below, of the most significant aspects of such statements.

#### A. Self-Regulatory Organization’s Statement of the Purpose of, and Statutory Basis for, the Proposed Rule Change

##### 1. Purpose

The Exchange proposes to list and trade the Shares under Nasdaq Rule 5711(d), which governs the listing and trading of Commodity-Based Trust Shares on the Exchange.<sup>3</sup> VanEck Digital Assets, LLC (the “Sponsor”) is the sponsor of the Trust, Delaware Trust Company (the “Trustee”) is the trustee of the Trust, and a third party custodian, (the “AVAX Custodian”) will be the custodian of the Trust, who will hold all of the Trust’s Avalanche (“AVAX”) on the Trust’s behalf.

##### Overview of the Trust

The Shares will be registered with the Commission by means of the Trust’s registration statement on Form S–1 (the “Registration Statement”).<sup>4</sup> According to the Registration Statement, the Trust is neither an investment company registered under the Investment Company Act of 1940, as amended, nor a commodity pool for purposes of the Commodity Exchange Act (“CEA”), and the Sponsor is not subject to regulation by the Commodity Futures Trading Commission (“CFTC”) as a commodity pool operator or a commodity trading adviser in connection with the Shares. The Trust is a passive investment vehicle that does not seek to pursue any investment strategy beyond tracking the price of AVAX. As a result, the Trust will not attempt to avoid losses or hedge exposure arising from the risk of changes in the price of AVAX.

According to the Registration Statement, the Trust’s investment objective is to reflect the performance of the price of AVAX, the native token of the Avalanche network, less the expenses of the Trust’s operations. In

seeking to achieve its investment objective, the Trust will hold AVAX and will value its Shares daily based on the reported MarketVector™ Avalanche Benchmark Rate (the “Index”), which is calculated based on prices contributed by trading platforms that the Sponsor’s affiliate, MarketVector Indexes GmbH (“MarketVector”), believes represent the top five AVAX trading platforms based on the industry leading CCData Centralized Exchange Benchmark review report, as described below.

The Sponsor is not registered as an investment adviser and currently is not required to register under the Advisers Act in connection with its activities on behalf of the Trust. The Sponsor may, from time to time, stake a portion of the Trust’s assets through one or more trusted staking providers, which may include an affiliate of the Sponsor (“Staking Providers”). In consideration for any staking activity (“Staking Activity”) in which the Trust may engage, the Trust would receive certain staking rewards of AVAX tokens, which may be treated as income to the Trust.

The Trust will not acquire and will disclaim any incidental right (“IR”) or IR asset received, for example as a result of forks or airdrops, and such assets will not be considered for purposes of determining the Trust’s net asset value (“NAV”).

When the Trust sells or redeems its Shares, it will do so in either cash or in-kind transactions in blocks of 25,000 Shares (a “Basket”) at the NAV. The Trust will conduct creations and redemptions in cash or in-kind transactions with financial firms that are authorized to purchase or redeem Shares with the Trust (“Authorized Participants” or “APs”). Authorized Participants must be registered broker-dealers.

##### Background

##### AVAX and the Avalanche Network

AVAX is a digital asset that is created and transmitted through the operations of the peer-to-peer Avalanche network, a dispersed network of computers that operates on cryptographic software protocols based on open source code. No single entity is known to own or operate the Avalanche network on a day to day basis, the infrastructure of which is understood to be collectively maintained by a global user base. The Avalanche network allows people to exchange tokens of value, called AVAX, which are recorded on a public transaction ledger known as a blockchain. AVAX can be used to pay for goods and services, including computational power on the Avalanche

<sup>3</sup> The Commission approved Nasdaq Rule 5711 in Securities Exchange Act Release No. 66648 (March 23, 2012), 77 FR 19428 (March 30, 2012) (SR–NASDAQ–2012–013).

<sup>4</sup> See Registration Statement on Form S–1, dated March 14, 2025, submitted by the Sponsor on behalf of the Trust. The descriptions of the Trust, the Shares, and the Index (as defined below) contained herein are based, in part, on information in the Registration Statement. The Registration Statement is not yet effective, and the Shares will not trade on the Exchange until such time that the Registration Statement is effective.

<sup>56</sup> 17 CFR 200.30–3(a)(12).

<sup>1</sup> 15 U.S.C. 78s(b)(1).

<sup>2</sup> 17 CFR 240.19b–4.

network, or it can be converted to fiat currencies, such as the U.S. dollar, at rates determined on digital asset trading platforms or in individual end-user-to-end-user transactions under a barter system. Furthermore, the Avalanche network was designed to allow users to write and implement smart contracts—that is, general-purpose code that executes on every computer in the network and can instruct the transmission of information and value based on a sophisticated set of logical conditions. Using smart contracts, users can create markets, store registries of debts or promises, represent the ownership of property, move funds in accordance with conditional instructions and create digital assets other than AVAX on the Avalanche network. Smart contract operations are executed on the Avalanche blockchain in exchange for payment of AVAX. Like the Ethereum network, the Avalanche network is one of a number of projects intended to expand blockchain use beyond just a peer-to-peer money system.

#### Avalanche Network

Avalanche is a Layer 1 blockchain and smart contract platform for decentralized applications and custom blockchains. The Avalanche network is an open-source protocol that enables users to deploy smart contracts to support their blockchain projects and the network was created by Kevin Sekniqi, Maofan “Ted” Yin and Emin Gün Sirer and was further developed by researchers from Cornell University prior to its launch by Ava Labs US in September 2020. The Avalanche network is one of the main competitors of Ethereum and aims to beat the leading smart contract platform by offering higher transaction throughput without compromising scalability or security. Avalanche is powered by the Avalanche consensus protocol, which its proponents believe is a unique “proof-of-stake” algorithm comprised of three blockchains, X-Chain (Exchange Chain), C-Chain (Contract) and P-Chain (Platform), which allow the network to create and trade assets such as AVAX, coordinate transaction validators and facilitate the creation of smart contracts. Each chain serves a different purpose and run different consensus mechanisms based on their use-cases. The X-Chain is used to create and exchange native AVAX tokens and other assets. The C-Chain is used to host Ethereum Virtual Machine (EVM) compatible smart contracts. The P-Chain is coordinating network validators, tracks active subnets and allows the creation of new subnets. Ava Labs is the

main entity that develops and maintains the codebase of the Avalanche network and suite of tools and applications.

#### The AVAX Token

The AVAX token is the native token of the Avalanche network and serves as the base currency for transactions, smart contract interactions and deployment. The AVAX token also serves as a governance tokens that allows token holders to participate in the decentralized governance of the protocol. The AVAX token can be staked to help secure the network and earn staking rewards. AVAX has a capped supply of 720 million and is used as fee payment, for staking in Avalanche’s consensus process and provides a basic unit of account between subnets created on the network. AVAX holders may become transaction validators if they stake a minimum number of coins or can delegate their coins to an already existing validator.

#### Investment Objective

According to the Registration Statement, and as further described below, the investment objective of the Trust is for the Shares to reflect the performance of the price of AVAX less the expenses of the Trust’s operations. In seeking to achieve its investment objective, the Trust will hold AVAX and will value its Shares daily based on the Index, and process all creations and redemptions in cash or in-kind transactions with Authorized Participants. The Trust is not actively managed.

The Trust will not utilize leverage, derivatives or any similar arrangements in seeking to meet its investment objective. From time to time, the Sponsor may stake, or cause to be staked, all or a portion of the Trust’s AVAX through one or more Staking Providers. In consideration for any Staking Activity in which the Trust may engage, the Trust would receive certain staking rewards of AVAX tokens, which may be treated as income to the Trust.

#### The Index

As described in the Registration Statement, the Trust will use the Index to calculate the Trust’s NAV. The Index is designed to be a robust price for AVAX in USD and there is no component other than AVAX in the Index. The underlying AVAX platforms (the “constituent platforms”) are sourced from the CCData Centralized Exchange Benchmark review report. CCData’s Centralized Exchange Benchmark was established in 2019 as a tool designed to bring clarity to the

digital trading platform sector by providing a framework for assessing risk and in turn bringing transparency and accountability to a complex and rapidly evolving market.<sup>5</sup>

In calculating the closing value of the Index, the methodology captures trade prices and sizes from AVAX platforms and examines twenty three-minute periods leading up to 4:00 p.m. Eastern time (“ET”). It then calculates an equal-weighted average of the volume-weighted median price of these twenty three-minute periods, removing the highest and lowest contributed prices. Using twenty consecutive three-minute segments over a sixty-minute period means malicious actors would need to sustain efforts to manipulate the market over an extended period of time, or would need to replicate efforts multiple times across AVAX platforms, potentially triggering review. This extended period also supports Authorized Participant activity by capturing volume over a longer time period, rather than forcing Authorized Participants to mark an individual close or auction. The use of a median price reduces the ability of outlier prices to impact the NAV, as it systematically excludes those prices from the NAV calculation. The use of a volume-weighted median (as opposed to a traditional median) serves as an additional protection against attempts to manipulate the NAV by executing a large number of low-dollar trades, because any manipulation attempt would have to involve a majority of global spot AVAX volume in a three-minute window to have any influence on the NAV. As discussed in the Registration Statement, removing the highest and lowest prices further protects against attempts to manipulate the NAV, requiring bad actors to act on multiple AVAX platforms at once to have any ability to influence the price.

<sup>5</sup> As set forth in the Registration Statement, the CCData Centralized Exchange Benchmark methodology utilizes a combination of qualitative and quantitative metrics to analyze a comprehensive data set across eight categories of evaluation: legal/regulation, KYC/transaction risk, data provision, security, team/exchange, asset quality/diversity, market quality and negative events. Based on the CCData Centralized Exchange Benchmark, MarketVector initially selects the top five trading platforms by rank for inclusion in the Index. If an eligible trading platform is downgraded by two or more notches in a semi-annual review and is no longer in the top five by rank, it is replaced by the highest ranked non-component trading platform. Adjustments to exchange coverage are announced four business days prior to the first business day of each of March and September at 23:00 CET. The Index is rebalanced at 16:00:00 GMT/BST on the last business day of each of February and August.

### Net Asset Value

NAV means the total assets of the Trust (which includes all AVAX and cash and cash equivalents) less total liabilities of the Trust. The Administrator determines the NAV of the Trust on each day that the Exchange is open for regular trading, as promptly as practical after 4:00 p.m. ET based on the closing value of the Index. The NAV of the Trust is the aggregate value of the Trust's assets less its estimated accrued but unpaid liabilities (which include accrued expenses). In determining the NAV, the Administrator values the AVAX held by the Trust based on the closing value of the Index as of 4:00 p.m. ET. The Administrator also determines the NAV per Share.

The NAV for the Trust will be calculated by the Administrator once a day and will be disseminated daily to all market participants at the same time.

The Sponsor will monitor for significant events related to crypto assets that may impact the value of AVAX and will determine, in good faith, and in accordance with its valuation policies and procedures, whether to fair value the Trust's AVAX on a given day based on whether certain pre-determined criteria have been met. For example, if the closing value of the Index deviates by more than a pre-determined amount from an alternate benchmark available to the Sponsor, the Sponsor may determine to utilize an alternate benchmark. The Sponsor may also fair value the Trust's AVAX using observed market transactions from various trading platforms, including some or all of the trading platforms included in the Index.<sup>6</sup>

### Availability of Information and Intraday Indicative Value

In addition to the price transparency of the Index, the Trust will provide information regarding the Trust's AVAX holdings as well as additional data regarding the Trust. The website for the Trust, which will be publicly accessible at no charge, will contain the following information: (a) the prior business day's NAV per Share; (b) the prior business day's Nasdaq official closing price; (c) calculation of the premium or discount of such Exchange official closing price against such NAV per Share; (d) data in chart form displaying the frequency distribution of discounts and premiums of the Exchange's official closing price against the NAV, within appropriate

ranges for each of the four previous calendar quarters (or for the life of the Trust, if shorter); (e) the prospectus; and (f) other applicable quantitative information. The Trust will also disseminate the Trust's holdings on a daily basis on the Trust's website. Quotation and last sale information regarding the Shares will be disseminated through the facilities of the relevant securities information processor.

The intraday indicative value ("IIV") will be calculated by using the prior day's closing NAV per Share as a base and updating that value during the Exchange's regular market session of 9:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. ET (the "Regular Market Session") to reflect changes in the value of the Trust's AVAX holdings during the trading day. The IIV disseminated during the Regular Market Session should not be viewed as an actual real-time update of the NAV, because NAV per Share is calculated only once at the end of each trading day based upon the relevant end-of-day values of the Trust's investments. The IIV will be widely disseminated on a per-Share basis every 15 seconds during the Regular Market Session through the facilities of the relevant securities information processor by market data vendors. In addition, the IIV will be available through online information services, such as Bloomberg and Reuters.

Quotation and last sale information for AVAX is disseminated through a variety of major market data vendors. Information related to trading, including price and volume information, in AVAX is available from major market data vendors and from the trading platforms on which AVAX are traded. The normal trading hours for AVAX trading platforms are 24 hours per day, 365 days per year.

Information regarding market price and trading volume of the Shares will be continually available on a real-time basis throughout the day on brokers' computer screens and other electronic services. Information regarding the previous day's Nasdaq official closing price and trading volume information for the Shares will be published daily in the financial section of newspapers.

### The AVAX Custodian

The AVAX Custodian's services (i) allow AVAX to be deposited from a public blockchain address to the Trust's AVAX account, (ii) allow AVAX to be withdrawn from the AVAX account to a public blockchain address as instructed by the Trust, and (iii) allow AVAX to be staked. The custody agreement requires the AVAX Custodian to hold the Trust's

AVAX in cold storage, unless required to facilitate withdrawals as a temporary measure. The AVAX Custodian will use segregated cold storage AVAX addresses for the Trust which are separate from the AVAX addresses that the AVAX Custodian uses for its other customers and which are directly verifiable via the AVAX blockchain. The AVAX Custodian will safeguard the private keys to the AVAX associated with the Trust's AVAX account. The AVAX Custodian will at all times record and identify in its books and records that such AVAX constitutes the property of the Trust. The AVAX Custodian will not withdraw the Trust's AVAX from the Trust's account with the AVAX Custodian, or loan, hypothecate, pledge or otherwise encumber the Trust's AVAX, without the Trust's instruction. If the custody agreement terminates, the Sponsor may appoint another custodian and the Trust may enter into a custodian agreement with such custodian.

### Creation and Redemption of Shares

According to the Registration Statement, the Trust creates and redeems Shares from time to time, but only in one or more Baskets. The Trust would allow for both an in-kind creation and redemption process as well as a cash creation and redemption process. Baskets are only made in exchange for delivery to the Trust of the amount of AVAX represented by the Baskets being created, or an amount of cash sufficient to purchase such amount of AVAX, the amount of which is equal to the combined NAV of the number of Shares included in the Baskets being created determined as of 4:00 p.m. ET on the day the order to create Baskets is properly received. Baskets are only redeemed in exchange for delivery to the Trust of the amount of Shares represented by the Basket.

For a redemption in cash, the Sponsor shall arrange for the AVAX represented by the Basket to be sold to a Liquidity Provider and the cash proceeds distributed from the Trust's account at the Cash Custodian to the Authorized Participant in exchange for their Shares.

For an "in-kind" creation, Authorized Participants will deliver, or facilitate the delivery of, AVAX to the Trust's account with the Avalanche Custodian in exchange for Shares when they purchase Shares. For an "in-kind" redemption transaction, when Authorized Participants redeem Shares with the Trust, the Trust, through the Avalanche Custodian, will deliver AVAX to such Authorized Participants, or a designee thereof, in exchange for their Shares.

<sup>6</sup> Any alternative method to determining NAV will only be employed on an ad hoc basis. Any permanent change to the calculation of the NAV would require a proposed rule change under Rule 19b-4.

## Applicable Standard

The Commission has historically approved or disapproved exchange filings to list and trade series of Trust Issued Receipts, including spot-based Commodity-Based Trust Shares, on the basis of whether the listing exchange has in place a comprehensive surveillance sharing agreement with a regulated market of significant size related to the underlying commodity to be held.<sup>7</sup> The Commission has also consistently recognized, however, that this is not the *exclusive* means by which an ETP listing exchange can meet this statutory obligation.<sup>8</sup> A listing exchange could, alternatively, demonstrate that

<sup>7</sup> See Securities Exchange Act Release Nos. 78262 (July 8, 2016), 81 FR 78262 (July 14, 2016) (the “Winklevoss Proposal”). The Winklevoss Proposal was subsequently disapproved by the Commission. See Securities Exchange Act Release No. 83723 (July 26, 2018), 83 FR 37579 (August 1, 2018) (the “Winklevoss Order”). Prior orders from the Commission have pointed out that in every prior approval order for Commodity-Based Trust Shares, there has been a derivatives market that represents the regulated market of significant size, generally a Commodity Futures Trading Commission (the “CFTC”) regulated futures market. Further to this point, the Commission’s prior orders have noted that the spot commodities and currency markets for which it has previously approved spot ETPs are generally unregulated and that the Commission relied on the underlying futures market as the regulated market of significant size that formed the basis for approving the series of Currency and Commodity-Based Trust Shares, including gold, silver, platinum, palladium, copper, and other commodities and currencies. The Commission specifically noted in the Winklevoss Order that the approval order issued related to the first spot gold ETP “was based on an assumption that the currency market and the spot gold market were largely unregulated.” See Winklevoss Order at 37592. As such, the regulated market of significant size test does not require that the spot market be regulated in order for the Commission to approve this proposal, and precedent makes clear that an underlying market for a spot commodity or currency being a regulated market would actually be an exception to the norm. These largely unregulated currency and commodity markets do not provide the same protections as the markets that are subject to the Commission’s oversight, but the Commission has consistently looked to surveillance sharing agreements with the underlying futures market in order to determine whether such products were consistent with the Act. See Securities Exchange Act No. 99306 (January 10, 2024), 89 FR 3008 (January 17, 2024) (Self-Regulatory Organizations; NYSE Arca, Inc.; The Nasdaq Stock Market LLC; Cboe BZX Exchange, Inc.; Order Granting Accelerated Approval of Proposed Rule Changes, as Modified by Amendments Thereto, To List and Trade Bitcoin-Based Commodity-Based Trust Shares and Trust Units) (the “Spot Bitcoin ETP Approval Order”); 100224 (May 23, 2024), 89 FR 46937 (May 30, 2024) (Self-Regulatory Organizations; NYSE Arca, Inc.; The Nasdaq Stock Market LLC; Cboe BZX Exchange, Inc.; Order Granting Accelerated Approval of Proposed Rule Changes, as Modified by Amendments Thereto, To List and Trade Shares of Ether-Based Exchange-Traded Products) (the “Spot ETH ETP Approval Order”).

<sup>8</sup> See Winklevoss Order, 83 FR at 37580; see Spot Bitcoin ETP Approval Order, 89 FR at 3009; see Spot ETH ETP Approval Order 89 FR at 46938.

“other means to prevent fraudulent and manipulative acts and practices will be sufficient” to justify dispensing with a surveillance-sharing agreement with a regulated market of significant size.

The Commission has issued orders granting approval for proposals to list bitcoin- and ether-based commodity trust shares and bitcoin- and ether-based trust issued receipts (these proposed funds are nearly identical to the Trust, but proposed to hold bitcoin and ether, respectively, instead of AVAX) (“Spot Bitcoin ETPs” and “Spot ETH ETPs”). In both the Spot Bitcoin ETP Approval Order and Spot ETH ETP Approval Order, the Commission found that sufficient “other means” of preventing fraud and manipulation had been demonstrated that justified dispensing with a surveillance-sharing agreement with a market of significant size. Specifically, the Commission found that while the Chicago Mercantile Exchange (“CME”) futures market for both bitcoin and ether were not of “significant size” with respect to the spot market, the Exchange demonstrated that other means could be reasonably expected to assist in surveilling for fraudulent and manipulative acts and practices in the specific context of the proposals.

As further discussed below, both the Exchange and the Sponsor believe that this proposal and the analysis to be included are sufficient to establish that there are sufficient “other means” of preventing fraud and manipulation that warrant dispensing of the surveillance-sharing agreement with a regulated market of significant size, as was done with both Spot Bitcoin ETPs and Spot ETH ETPs, and that this proposal should be approved.

The Commission has approved numerous series of Trust Issued Receipts,<sup>9</sup> including Commodity-Based Trust Shares,<sup>10</sup> to be listed on U.S.

<sup>9</sup> Pursuant to Nasdaq Rule 5720(a), the term “Trust Issued Receipt” means a security (a) that is issued by a trust which holds specified securities deposited with the trust; (b) that, when aggregated in some specified minimum number, may be surrendered to the trust by the beneficial owner to receive the securities; and (c) that pays beneficial owners dividends and other distributions on the deposited securities, if any are declared and paid to the trustee by an issuer of the deposited securities.

<sup>10</sup> Pursuant to Nasdaq Rule 5711(d)(iv), the term “Commodity-Based Trust Shares” means a security (1) that is issued by a trust that holds (a) a specified commodity deposited with the trust, or (b) a specified commodity and, in addition to such specified commodity, cash; (2) that is issued by such trust in a specified aggregate minimum number in return for a deposit of a quantity of the underlying commodity and/or cash; and (3) that, when aggregated in the same specified minimum number, may be redeemed at a holder’s request by such trust which will deliver to the redeeming holder the quantity of the underlying commodity and/or cash.

national securities exchanges. In order for any proposed rule change from an exchange to be approved, the Commission must determine that, among other things, the proposal is consistent with the requirements of Section 6(b)(5) of the Act, specifically including: (i) the requirement that a national securities exchange’s rules are designed to prevent fraudulent and manipulative acts and practices; and (ii) the requirement that an exchange proposal be designed, in general, to protect investors and the public interest. The Exchange believes that this proposal is consistent with the requirements of Section 6(b)(5) of the Act.

As noted above, the Commission has recognized that the “regulated market of significant size” standard is not the only means for satisfying Section 6(b)(5) of the Act, specifically providing that a listing exchange could demonstrate that “other means to prevent fraudulent and manipulative acts and practices” are sufficient to justify dispensing with the requisite surveillance-sharing agreement.<sup>11</sup> For example, in approving the Spot Bitcoin ETPs, the Commission found that there were “sufficient ‘other means’ of preventing fraud and manipulation,” including that:

[B]ased on the record before the Commission and the improved quality of the correlation analysis in the record, including the Commission’s own analysis, the Commission is able to conclude that fraud or manipulation that impacts prices in spot bitcoin markets would likely similarly impact CME bitcoin futures prices. And because the CME’s surveillance can assist in detecting those impacts on CME bitcoin futures prices, the Exchanges’ comprehensive surveillance-sharing agreement with the CME—a U.S. regulated market whose bitcoin futures market is consistently highly correlated to spot bitcoin, albeit not of “significant size” related to spot bitcoin—can be reasonably expected to assist in surveilling for fraudulent and manipulative acts and practices in the specific context of the [Spot Bitcoin ETPs].<sup>12</sup>

<sup>11</sup> See Winklevoss Order at 37580. The Commission has also specifically noted that it “is not applying a ‘cannot be manipulated’ standard; instead, the Commission is examining whether the proposal meets the requirements of the Exchange Act and, pursuant to its Rules of Practice, places the burden on the listing exchange to demonstrate the validity of its contentions and to establish that the requirements of the Exchange Act have been met.” *Id.* at 37582.

<sup>12</sup> See Securities Exchange Act Release No. 99306 (January 10, 2024), 89 FR 3008 (January 17, 2024) (Order Granting Accelerated Approval of Proposed Rule Changes, as Modified by Amendments Thereto, To List and Trade Shares of Bitcoin-Based Commodity-Based Trust Shares and Trust Units). The SEC made substantially similar findings in the approval order for Spot ETH ETPs. See Securities Exchange Act Release No. 100224 (May 23, 2024),

Today, Coinbase Derivatives, LLC (“Coinbase Derivatives”) offers trading in AVAX futures. Nasdaq has a comprehensive surveillance-sharing agreement with Coinbase Derivatives via its common membership in the Intermarket Surveillance Group (“ISG”).<sup>13</sup> This facilitates the sharing of information that is available to Coinbase Derivatives through its surveillance of its markets, including its surveillance of Coinbase Derivatives’ AVAX futures market. Similar to the Spot Bitcoin and Spot ETH ETPs previously approved by the SEC, Nasdaq’s ability to obtain information regarding trading in the AVAX futures from other markets that are members of the ISG (specifically Coinbase Derivatives) would assist Nasdaq in detecting and deterring misconduct.

#### Initial and Continued Listing

The Shares will be subject to Nasdaq Rule 5711(d)(vi), which sets forth the initial and continued listing criteria applicable to Commodity-Based Trust Shares. The Exchange will obtain a representation that the Trust’s NAV per Share will be calculated daily and will be made available to all market participants at the same time. A minimum of 40,000 Shares will be required to be outstanding at the time of commencement of trading on the Exchange. Upon termination of the Trust, the Shares will be removed from listing. The Trustee will be a trust company having substantial capital and surplus and the experience and facilities for handling corporate trust business, as required under Nasdaq Rule 5711(d)(vi)(D) and no change will be made to the Trustee without prior notice to and approval of the Exchange.

As required in Nasdaq Rule 5711(d)(viii), the Exchange notes that any registered market maker (“Market Maker”) in the Shares must file with the Exchange, in a manner prescribed by the Exchange, and keep current a list identifying all accounts for trading the underlying commodity, related futures or options on futures, or any other related derivatives, which the registered Market Maker may have or over which it may exercise investment discretion. No registered Market Maker in the Shares shall trade in the underlying commodity, related futures or options on futures, or any other related

derivatives, in an account in which a registered Market Maker, directly or indirectly, controls trading activities, or has a direct interest in the profits or losses thereof, which has not been reported to the Exchange as required by Nasdaq Rule 5711(d). In addition to the existing obligations under Exchange rules regarding the production of books and records, the registered Market Maker in the Shares shall make available to the Exchange such books, records or other information pertaining to transactions by such entity or any limited partner, officer or approved person thereof, registered or non-registered employee affiliated with such entity for its or their own accounts in the underlying commodity, related futures or options on futures, or any other related derivatives, as may be requested by the Exchange.

The Exchange is able to obtain information regarding trading in the Shares and the underlying AVAX, AVAX futures contracts, or any other AVAX derivative through members acting as registered Market Makers, in connection with their proprietary or customer trades.

As a general matter, the Exchange has regulatory jurisdiction over its members, and their associated persons. The Exchange also has regulatory jurisdiction over any person or entity controlling a member, as well as a subsidiary or affiliate of a member that is in the securities business. A subsidiary or affiliate of a member organization that does business only in commodities would not be subject to Exchange jurisdiction, but the Exchange could obtain information regarding the activities of such subsidiary or affiliate through surveillance sharing agreements with regulatory organizations of which such subsidiary or affiliate is a member.

#### Trading Rules

The Exchange deems the Shares to be equity securities, thus rendering trading in the Shares subject to the Exchange’s existing rules governing the trading of equity securities. The Exchange will allow trading in the Shares from 4:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. ET. The Exchange has appropriate rules to facilitate transactions in the Shares during all trading sessions. The Shares of the Trust will conform to the initial and continued listing criteria set forth in Nasdaq Rule 5711(d) and will comply with the requirements of Rule 10A–3 of the Act.

#### Trading Halts

With respect to trading halts, the Exchange may consider all relevant factors in exercising its discretion to

halt or suspend trading in the Shares. The Exchange will halt trading in the Shares under the conditions specified in Nasdaq Rules 4120 and 4121, including without limitation the conditions specified in Nasdaq Rule 4120(a)(9) and (10) and the trading pauses under Nasdaq Rules 4120(a)(11) and (12).

Trading may be halted because of market conditions or for reasons that, in the view of the Exchange, make trading in the Shares inadvisable. These may include: (1) the extent to which trading is not occurring in the AVAX underlying the Shares; or (2) whether other unusual conditions or circumstances detrimental to the maintenance of a fair and orderly market are present.

If the IIV or the value of the Index is not being disseminated as required, the Exchange may halt trading during the day in which the interruption to the dissemination of the IIV or the value of the Index occurs. If the interruption to the dissemination of the IIV or the value of the Index persists past the trading day in which it occurred, the Exchange will halt trading no later than the beginning of the trading day following the interruption.

In addition, if the Exchange becomes aware that the NAV per Share with respect to the Shares is not disseminated to all market participants at the same time, it will halt trading in the Shares until such time as the NAV per Share is available to all market participants.

#### Surveillance

The Exchange believes that its surveillance procedures are adequate to properly monitor the trading of the Shares on the Exchange during all trading sessions and to deter and detect violations of Exchange rules and the applicable federal securities laws. The surveillance program includes real-time patterns for price and volume movements and post-trade surveillance patterns (*e.g.*, spoofing, marking the close, ping, phishing). Trading of Shares on the Exchange will be subject to the Exchange’s surveillance program for derivative products, as well as cross-market surveillances administered by FINRA, on behalf of the Exchange pursuant to a regulatory services agreement, which are also designed to detect violations of Exchange rules and applicable federal securities laws. The Exchange is responsible for FINRA’s performance under this regulatory services agreement.

The Exchange will require the Trust to represent to the Exchange that it will advise the Exchange of any failure by the Trust to comply with the continued

89 FR 46937 (May 30, 2024) (Order Granting Accelerated Approval of Proposed Rule Changes, as Modified by Amendments Thereto, To List and Trade Shares of Ether-Based Exchange-Traded Products).

<sup>13</sup> For a list of the current members and affiliate members of ISG, see <https://isgportal.org/public-members>.

listing requirements, and, pursuant to its obligations under Section 19(g)(1) of the Exchange Act, the Exchange will surveil for compliance with the continued listing requirements. If the Trust is not in compliance with the applicable listing requirements, the Exchange will commence delisting procedures under the Nasdaq 5800 Series. In addition, the Exchange also has a general policy prohibiting the distribution of material, non-public information by its employees.

The Exchange or FINRA, on behalf of the Exchange, or both, will communicate as needed regarding trading in the Shares with other markets and other entities that are members of the ISG, and the Exchange or FINRA, on behalf of the Exchange, or both, may obtain trading information regarding trading in the Shares and listed AVAX futures from such markets and other entities. The Exchange also may obtain information regarding trading in the Shares, listed AVAX futures via the ISG, from other exchanges who are members or affiliates of the ISG, or with which the Exchange has entered into a comprehensive surveillance sharing agreement.

#### Information Circular

Prior to the commencement of trading, the Exchange will inform its members in an information circular ("Information Circular") of the special characteristics and risks associated with trading the Shares. Specifically, the Information Circular will discuss the following: (1) the procedures for creations and redemptions of Shares in Baskets (and that Shares are not individually redeemable); (2) Section 10 of Nasdaq General Rule 9, which imposes suitability obligations on Nasdaq members with respect to recommending transactions in the Shares to customers; (3) how information regarding the IIV and NAV is disseminated; (4) the risks involved in trading the Shares during the pre-market and post-market sessions when an updated IIV will not be calculated or publicly disseminated; (5) the requirement that members deliver a prospectus to investors purchasing newly issued Shares prior to or concurrently with the confirmation of a transaction; and (6) trading information. The Information Circular will also discuss any exemptive, no action and interpretive relief granted by the Commission from any rules under the Act.

The Information Circular will also reference the fact that there is no regulated source of last sale information regarding AVAX, that the Commission

has no jurisdiction over the trading of AVAX as a commodity.

Additionally, the Information Circular will reference that the Trust is subject to various fees and expenses described in the Registration Statement. The Information Circular will also disclose the trading hours of the Shares. The Information Circular will disclose that information about the Shares will be publicly available on the Trust's website.

#### 2. Statutory Basis

The Exchange believes that its proposal is consistent with Section 6(b) of the Act,<sup>14</sup> in general, and furthers the objectives of Section 6(b)(5) of the Act,<sup>15</sup> in particular, in that it is designed to promote just and equitable principles of trade, to remove impediments to and perfect the mechanism of a free and open market and a national market system, and, in general to protect investors and the public interest.

The Commission has approved numerous series of Trust Issued Receipts, including Commodity-Based Trust Shares, to be listed on U.S. national securities exchanges. In order for any proposed rule change from an exchange to be approved, the Commission must determine that, among other things, the proposal is consistent with the requirements of Section 6(b)(5) of the Act, specifically including: (i) the requirement that a national securities exchange's rules are designed to prevent fraudulent and manipulative acts and practices; and (ii) the requirement that an exchange proposal be designed, in general, to protect investors and the public interest. The Exchange believes that this proposal is consistent with the requirements of Section 6(b)(5) of the Act.

As noted above, the Commission has recognized that the "regulated market of significant size" standard is not the only means for satisfying Section 6(b)(5) of the act, specifically providing that a listing exchange could demonstrate that "other means to prevent fraudulent and manipulative acts and practices" are sufficient to justify dispensing with the requisite surveillance-sharing agreement with the underlying spot market. The Exchange and Sponsor believe that such conditions are present. As discussed above, in approving the Spot Bitcoin ETPs, the Commission found that there were "sufficient 'other means' of preventing fraud and manipulation," including that:

[B]ased on the record before the Commission and the improved quality of the correlation analysis in the record, including the Commission's own analysis, the Commission is able to conclude that fraud or manipulation that impacts prices in spot bitcoin markets would likely similarly impact CME bitcoin futures prices. And because the CME's surveillance can assist in detecting those impacts on CME bitcoin futures prices, the Exchanges' comprehensive surveillance-sharing agreement with the CME—a U.S. regulated market whose bitcoin futures market is consistently highly correlated to spot bitcoin, albeit not of "significant size" related to spot bitcoin—can be reasonably expected to assist in surveilling for fraudulent and manipulative acts and practices in the specific context of the [Spot Bitcoin ETPs].<sup>16</sup>

As discussed above, Coinbase Derivatives offers trading in AVAX futures. Nasdaq has a comprehensive surveillance-sharing agreement with Coinbase Derivatives via its common membership in ISG, which facilitates the sharing of information that is available to Coinbase Derivatives through its surveillance of its markets, including its surveillance of Coinbase Derivatives' AVAX futures market. Similar to the Spot Bitcoin and Spot ETH ETPs previously approved by the SEC, Nasdaq's ability to obtain information regarding trading in the AVAX futures from other markets that are members of the ISG (specifically Coinbase Derivatives) would assist Nasdaq in detecting and deterring misconduct.

The Exchange further believes that the proposed rule change is designed to prevent fraudulent and manipulative acts and practices and to protect investors and the public interest in that the Shares will be listed and traded on the Exchange pursuant to the initial and continued listing criteria set forth in Nasdaq Rule 5711(d). The Exchange has in place surveillance procedures that are adequate to properly monitor trading in the Shares in all trading sessions and to deter and detect violations of Exchange rules and applicable federal securities laws. As discussed above, the surveillance program includes real-time patterns for price and volume movements and post-trade surveillance

<sup>16</sup> See Securities Exchange Act Release No. 99306 (January 10, 2024), 89 FR 3008 (January 17, 2024) (Order Granting Accelerated Approval of Proposed Rule Changes, as Modified by Amendments Thereto, To List and Trade Shares of Bitcoin-Based Commodity-Based Trust Shares and Trust Units). The SEC made substantially similar findings in the approval order for spot ether ETPs. See Securities Exchange Act Release No. 100224 (May 23, 2024), 89 FR 46937 (May 30, 2024) (Order Granting Accelerated Approval of Proposed Rule Changes, as Modified by Amendments Thereto, To List and Trade Shares of Ether-Based Exchange-Traded Products).

<sup>14</sup> 15 U.S.C. 78f(b).

<sup>15</sup> 15 U.S.C. 78f(b)(5).

patterns (e.g., spoofing, marking the close, pinging, phishing). Trading of Shares on the Exchange will be subject to the Exchange's surveillance program for derivative products, as well as cross-market surveillances administered by FINRA, on behalf of the Exchange pursuant to a regulatory services agreement, which are also designed to detect violations of Exchange rules and applicable federal securities laws. The Exchange is responsible for FINRA's performance under this regulatory services agreement.

The Exchange will require the Trust to represent to the Exchange that it will advise the Exchange of any failure by the Trust to comply with the continued listing requirements, and, pursuant to its obligations under Section 19(g)(1) of the Exchange Act, the Exchange will surveil for compliance with the continued listing requirements. If the Trust is not in compliance with the applicable listing requirements, the Exchange will commence delisting procedures under the Nasdaq 5800 Series. In addition, the Exchange also has a general policy prohibiting the distribution of material, non-public information by its employees.

The Exchange will communicate as needed regarding trading in the Shares with other markets and other entities that are members of the ISG, and the Exchange may obtain trading information regarding trading in the Shares and listed AVAX futures from such markets and other entities.

Trading in Shares of the Trust will be halted if the circuit breaker parameters have been reached or because of market conditions or for reasons that, in the view of the Exchange, make trading in the Shares inadvisable. These may include unusual conditions or circumstances detrimental to the maintenance of a fair and orderly market.

The proposed rule change is designed to perfect the mechanism of a free and open market and, in general, to protect investors and the public interest in that it will facilitate the listing and trading of Shares that will enhance competition among market participants, to the benefit of investors and the marketplace.

For all the above reasons, the Exchange believes that the proposed rule change is consistent with the requirements of Section 6(b)(5) of the Act.

#### *B. Self-Regulatory Organization's Statement on Burden on Competition*

The Exchange does not believe that the proposed rule change will impose any burden on competition not necessary or appropriate in furtherance

of the purposes of the Act. The Exchange notes that the proposed rule change rather will facilitate the listing and trading of an additional exchange traded product that will enhance competition among both market participants and listing venues, to the benefit of investors and the marketplace.

#### *C. Self-Regulatory Organization's Statement on Comments on the Proposed Rule Change Received From Members, Participants, or Others*

No written comments were either solicited or received.

#### **III. Date of Effectiveness of the Proposed Rule Change and Timing for Commission Action**

Within 45 days of the date of publication of this notice in the **Federal Register** or within such longer period up to 90 days (i) as the Commission may designate if it finds such longer period to be appropriate and publishes its reasons for so finding or (ii) as to which the Exchange consents, the Commission will:

- A. by order approve or disapprove such proposed rule change, or
- B. institute proceedings to determine whether the proposed rule change should be disapproved.

#### **IV. Solicitation of Comments**

Interested persons are invited to submit written data, views and arguments concerning the foregoing, including whether the proposed rule change is consistent with the Act. Comments may be submitted by any of the following methods:

##### *Electronic Comments*

- Use the Commission's internet comment form (<https://www.sec.gov/rules/sro.shtml>); or
- Send an email to [rule-comments@sec.gov](mailto:rule-comments@sec.gov). Please include file number SR-NASDAQ-2025-032 on the subject line.

##### *Paper Comments*

- Send paper comments in triplicate to Secretary, Securities and Exchange Commission, 100 F Street NE, Washington, DC 20549-1090. All submissions should refer to file number SR-NASDAQ-2025-032. This file number should be included on the subject line if email is used. To help the Commission process and review your comments more efficiently, please use only one method. The Commission will post all comments on the Commission's internet website (<https://www.sec.gov/rules/sro.shtml>). Copies of the submission, all subsequent amendments, all written statements with respect to the proposed rule

change that are filed with the Commission, and all written communications relating to the proposed rule change between the Commission and any person, other than those that may be withheld from the public in accordance with the provisions of 5 U.S.C. 552, will be available for website viewing and printing in the Commission's Public Reference Room, 100 F Street NE, Washington, DC 20549, on official business days between the hours of 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. Copies of the filing also will be available for inspection and copying at the principal office of the Exchange. Do not include personal identifiable information in submissions; you should submit only information that you wish to make available publicly. We may redact in part or withhold entirely from publication submitted material that is obscene or subject to copyright protection. All submissions should refer to file number SR-NASDAQ-2025-032 and should be submitted on or before May 20, 2025.

For the Commission, by the Division of Trading and Markets, pursuant to delegated authority.<sup>17</sup>

**Sherry R. Haywood,**  
*Assistant Secretary.*

[FR Doc. 2025-07312 Filed 4-28-25; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 8011-01-P**

## **SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION**

### **Sunshine Act Meetings**

**TIME AND DATE:** 2:00 p.m. on Thursday, May 1, 2025.

**PLACE:** The meeting will be held via remote means and/or at the Commission's headquarters, 100 F Street NE, Washington, DC 20549.

**STATUS:** This meeting will be closed to the public.

#### **MATTERS TO BE CONSIDERED:**

Commissioners, Counsel to the Commissioners, the Secretary to the Commission, and recording secretaries will attend the closed meeting. Certain staff members who have an interest in the matters also may be present. In the event that the time, date, or location of this meeting changes, an announcement of the change, along with the new time, date, and/or place of the meeting will be posted on the Commission's website at <https://www.sec.gov>.

The General Counsel of the Commission, or his designee, has certified that, in his opinion, one or more of the exemptions set forth in 5

<sup>17</sup> 17 CFR 200.30-3(a)(12).