Notes from decode of Havoc ROM code:

Strings such as the Maze Hint are NOT stored in ASCII text as you might think. Rather they are encoded. First thing to note is that the valid characters are:

" 0123456789ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ..!-,%:"

You will note that it only supports Capital letters. I guess it’s not so much capital letters as there is only one representation for each letter. We just happen to make our string from Capital letters. These characters are “encoded” by their position in the string above. So the encoding for the alphanumeric digit 1 is actually 0x02. And “A” is 0x0B. The valid range is from 0-43

The encoding doesn’t stop there. For some reason the actual char offset in the string is encoded one step further. It’s shifted left 1 bit.

The string isn’t null terminated either. The sign bit is set to a 1 on the last character to indicate the end of the string.

So pulling out a character offset is performed like so:

byte charindex = (byte)((charValue & 0x7f) >> 1);

Last, the maximum string length is 255 characters and the first byte of any given string (the 0th index) is apparently used to encode a color to the letters.