

Docket Item # 2
BAR CASE #2011-0301

BAR Meeting
November 16, 2011

ISSUE: Signage

APPLICANT : Burke and Herbert Trust Company by Gary Brent

LOCATION: 621 King Street

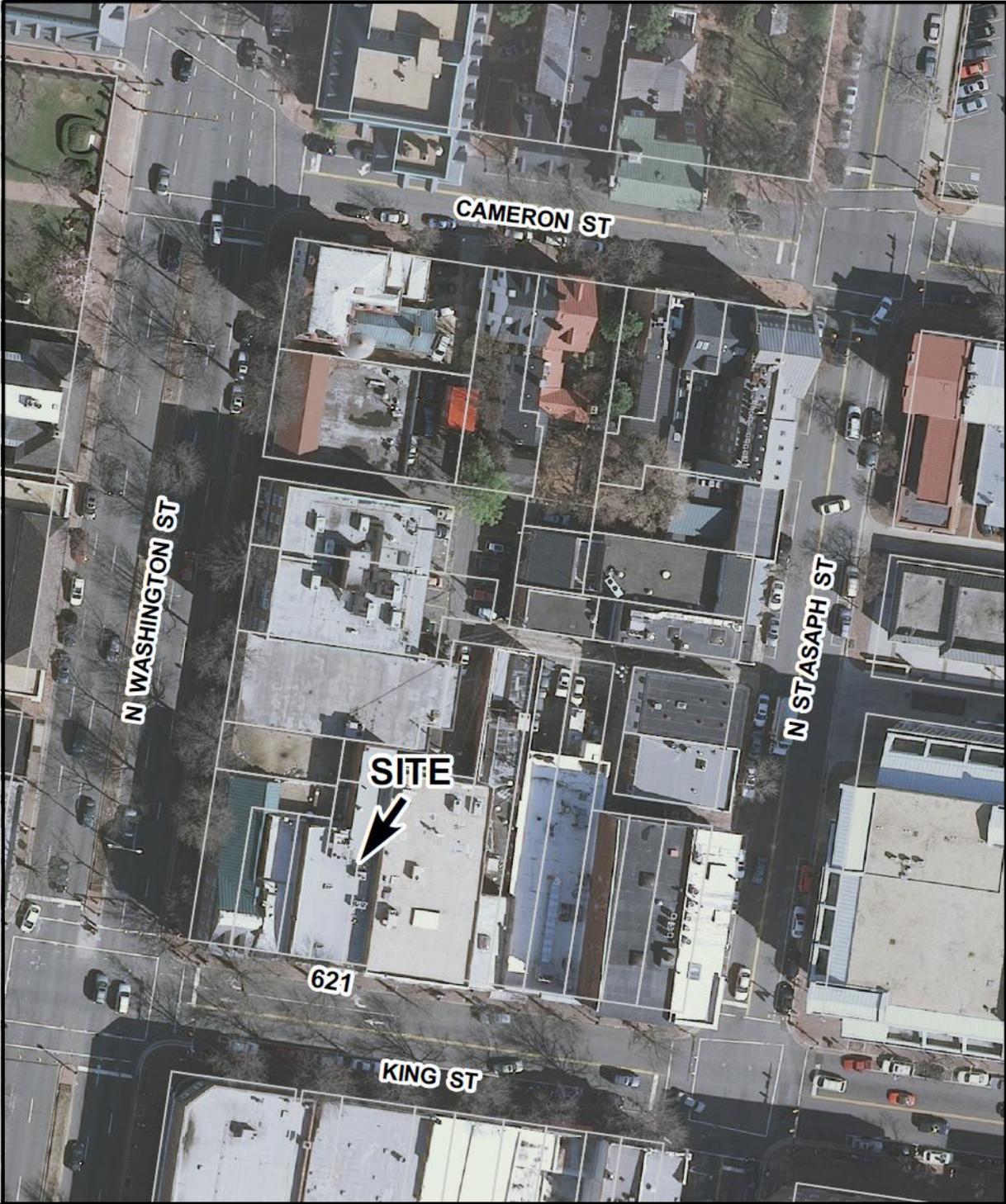
ZONE: KR / King Street urban retail

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends approval of the application with the following conditions:

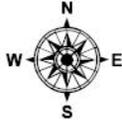
1. That all bolts be anchored through the mortar joints and not directly into the brick;
2. That the back plate be omitted;
3. That the intensity of illumination be determined in the field by Staff; and
4. That the protruding Plexiglas letters on the hanging sign be replaced with a flat lettering of the applicant's choice.

****EXPIRATION OF APPROVALS NOTE:** In accordance with Sections 10-106(B) and 10-206(B) of the Zoning Ordinance, any official Board of Architectural Review approval will expire 12 months from the date of final approval if the work is not commenced and diligently and substantially pursued by the end of that 12-month period.

****BUILDING PERMIT NOTE:** Most projects approved by the Board of Architectural Review require the issuance of one or more construction permits by Building and Fire Code Administration (including signs). The applicant is responsible for obtaining all necessary construction permits after receiving Board of Architectural Review approval. Contact Code Administration, Room 4200, City Hall, 703-746-4200 for further information.



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I. ISSUE

The applicant is requesting approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness for the installation of replacement signage for Burke and Herbert at 621 King Street. The new signage is part of a company-wide rebranding effort.

Currently, there is one existing non-illuminated wall sign on the building face across the building's façade. The applicant is proposing to replace the wall sign with individual halo-lit letters that are approximately 17 inches in height. The lettering will be painted aluminum channel letters. The illumination will reflect off silver-painted back plates instead of the brick wall. The total square footage of the wall sign will be 26.16 square feet, a reduction from the existing wall sign. The applicant proposes to install a new hanging sign that will measure approximately 4.86 square feet. The hanging sign will be a rigid plastic (Cintra) with applied raised Plexiglas lettering that will read "Burke & Herbert Bank." The applicant will install a new simple black metal scroll bracket.

The existing ATMs are located within a glass enclosed lobby and are more than 4 feet from the window and therefore not within the Board's purview.

II. HISTORY

621 King Street is a five-bay, two-story painted brick commercial building with a pronounced metal cornice constructed circa 1906, according to the building's date marker. The central arched entrance is flanked on either side by non-original storefront windows.

III. ANALYSIS

Staff supports the proposed replacement signage for this site. Staff notes that the replacement wall sign is significantly smaller than the existing wall sign. The installation of both a wall sign and hanging sign is a common and appropriate sign combination throughout the historic district.

Staff supports the hanging sign in concept but finds that the projecting Plexiglas letters should be replaced with a flat lettering of the applicant's choice.

Staff and the Board are often concerned about the type and level of illumination proposed with any signage. Prior to filing an application, the applicant met with Staff to discuss lighting options. The applicant brought an internally illuminated blue plastic letter which Staff advised would not be appropriate. The applicant responded to Staff's concerns by proposing letters that will be halo-lit with a white LED lighting. Although the letters are blue, the lighting will be white. The halo lighting is proposed to be reflected off a silver back plate which Staff finds problematic, noting that its reflective nature is not appropriate on King Street or on this particular building. Generally, where the Board has approved halo illumination, the lighting reflects directly off the building wall or a frieze with a softer glow. Staff recommends that the back plate be omitted, or at a minimum, that a light, non-reflective color, such as a cream or ivory, be used in place of silver. However, the Board has generally found understated illumination to be appropriate along King Street. Within the past year, the Board has approved illumination at the CVS one block away at 503 King Street and also at the Chart House restaurant on the waterfront.

STAFF

Catherine Miliaras, Historic Preservation Planner, Planning & Zoning
Al Cox, FAIA, Historic Preservation Manager, Planning & Zoning

IV. CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

Legend: C - code requirement R - recommendation S - suggestion F- finding

Code Administration:

- F-1 The review by Code Administration is a preliminary review only. Once the applicant has filed for a building permit, code requirements will be based upon the building permit plans. If there are any questions, the applicant may contact Thomas Sciulli, Plan Review Supervisor at thomas.sciulli@alexandriava.gov or 703-746-4190. (Code)
- C-1 Building construction permits are required prior to sign attachment
- C-2 All signs shall conform to VCC Appendix "H" as amended
- C-3 All sign applications shall include;
- Size and type of sign
 - Method of attachment including number and type of fasteners
 - Maximum projection, minimum height above grade, and whether the sign is illuminated or non-illuminated

Transportation & Environmental Services:

RECOMMENDATIONS

- R1. Applicant shall be responsible for repairs to the adjacent city right-of-way if damaged during construction activity. (T&ES)
- R2. All improvements to the city right-of-way such as curbing, sidewalk, driveway aprons, etc. must be city standard design. (T&ES)
- R3. No permanent structure may be constructed over any existing private and/or public utility easements. It is the responsibility of the applicant to identify any and all existing easements on all plans submitted for approvals. (T&ES)
- R4. The building permit must be approved and issued prior to the issuance of any permit for demolition. (T&ES)

CITY CODE REQUIREMENTS

- C-1 Any work from or within the public right-of-way requires a separate permit from T&ES. (Sec. 5-2) (T&ES)
- C-2 A sign may be erected or displayed flat against a building wall or at an angle thereto, so

long as the sign does not project more than four feet from the building wall or within one foot of an established curb line and the bottom of the sign is at least eight feet above a sidewalk or parking area and at least 14.5 feet above any alley. (Sec. 5-2-29(c)) (T&ES)

- C-3 The owner shall obtain and maintain a policy of general liability insurance in the amount of \$1,000,000 which will indemnify the owner (and all successors in interest); and the city as an additional named insured, against claims, demands, suits and related costs, including attorneys' fees, arising from any bodily injury or property damage which may occur as a result of the encroachment. (Sec. 5-29 (h)(1)) (T&ES)
- C-5 The applicant shall comply with the City of Alexandria's Solid Waste Control, Title 5, Chapter 1, which sets forth the requirements for the recycling of materials (Sec. 5-1-99). (T&ES)
- C-4 The applicant shall comply with the City of Alexandria's Noise Control Code, Title 11, Chapter 5, which sets the maximum permissible noise level as measured at the property line. (T&ES)
- C-5 All secondary utilities serving this site shall be placed underground. (Sec. 5-3-3) (T&ES)

V. IMAGES



Figure 1. Front (south) elevation, existing and proposed.

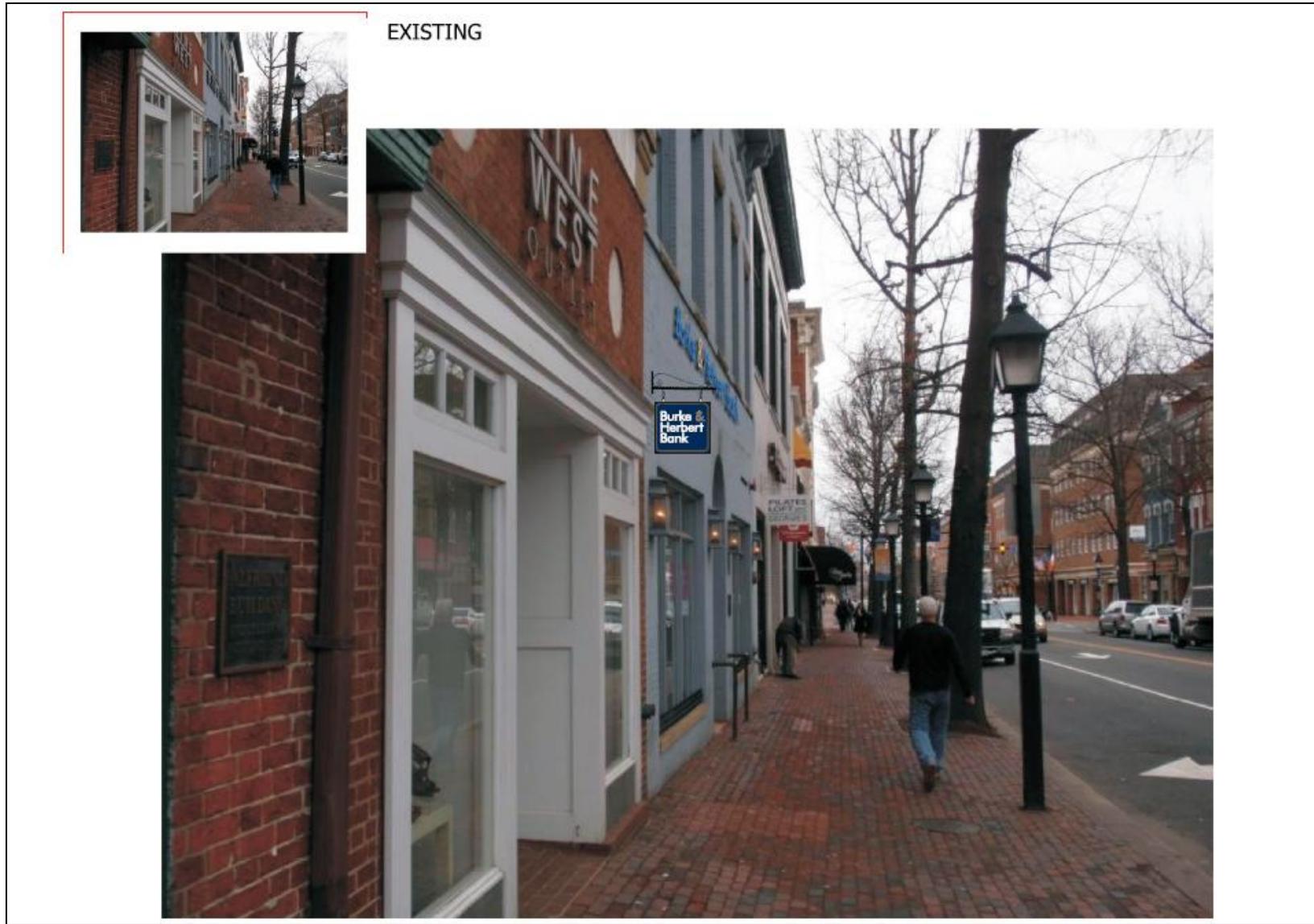


Figure 2. Looking east, existing and proposed.

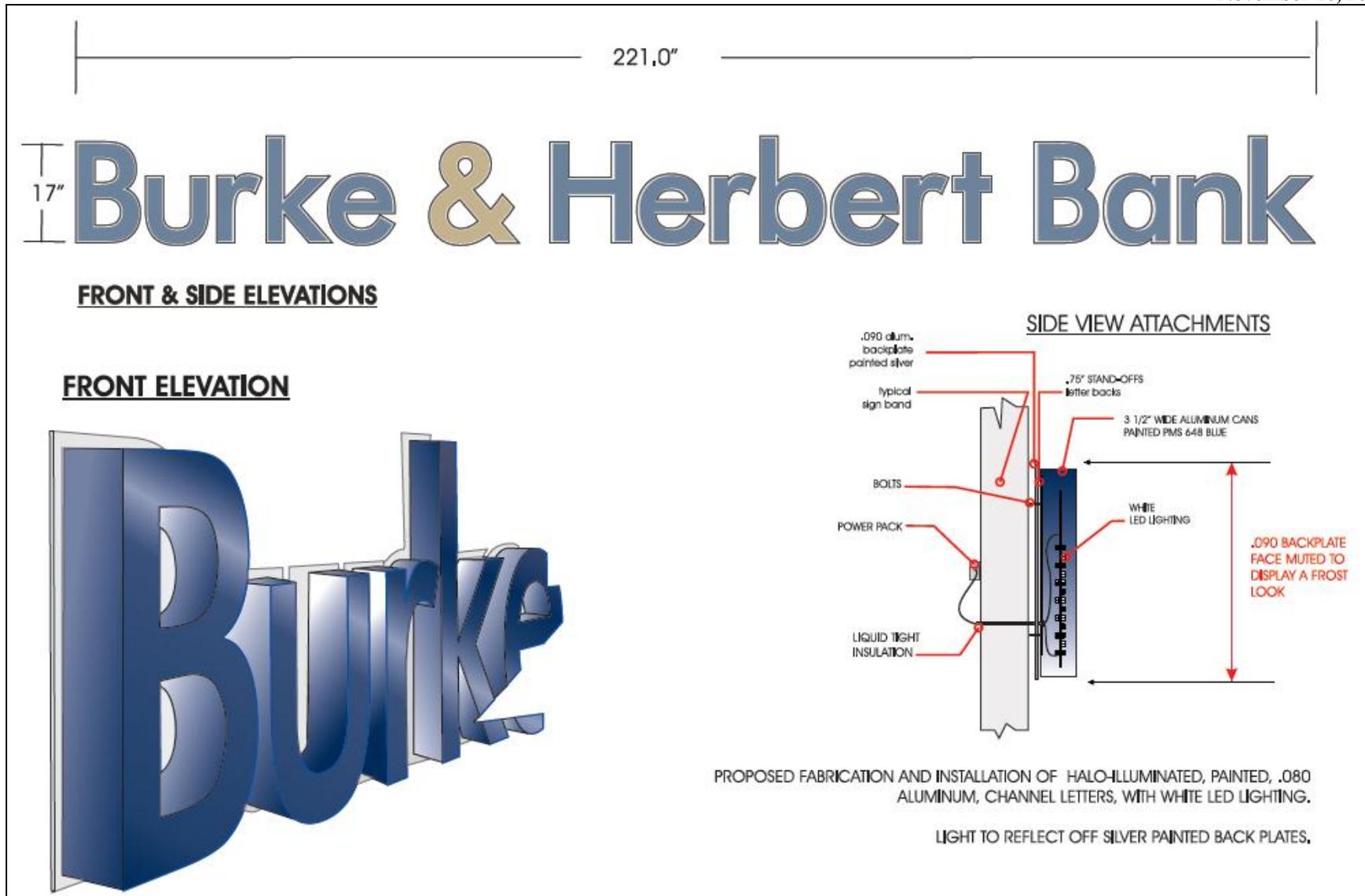


Figure 3. Details of proposed wall sign.

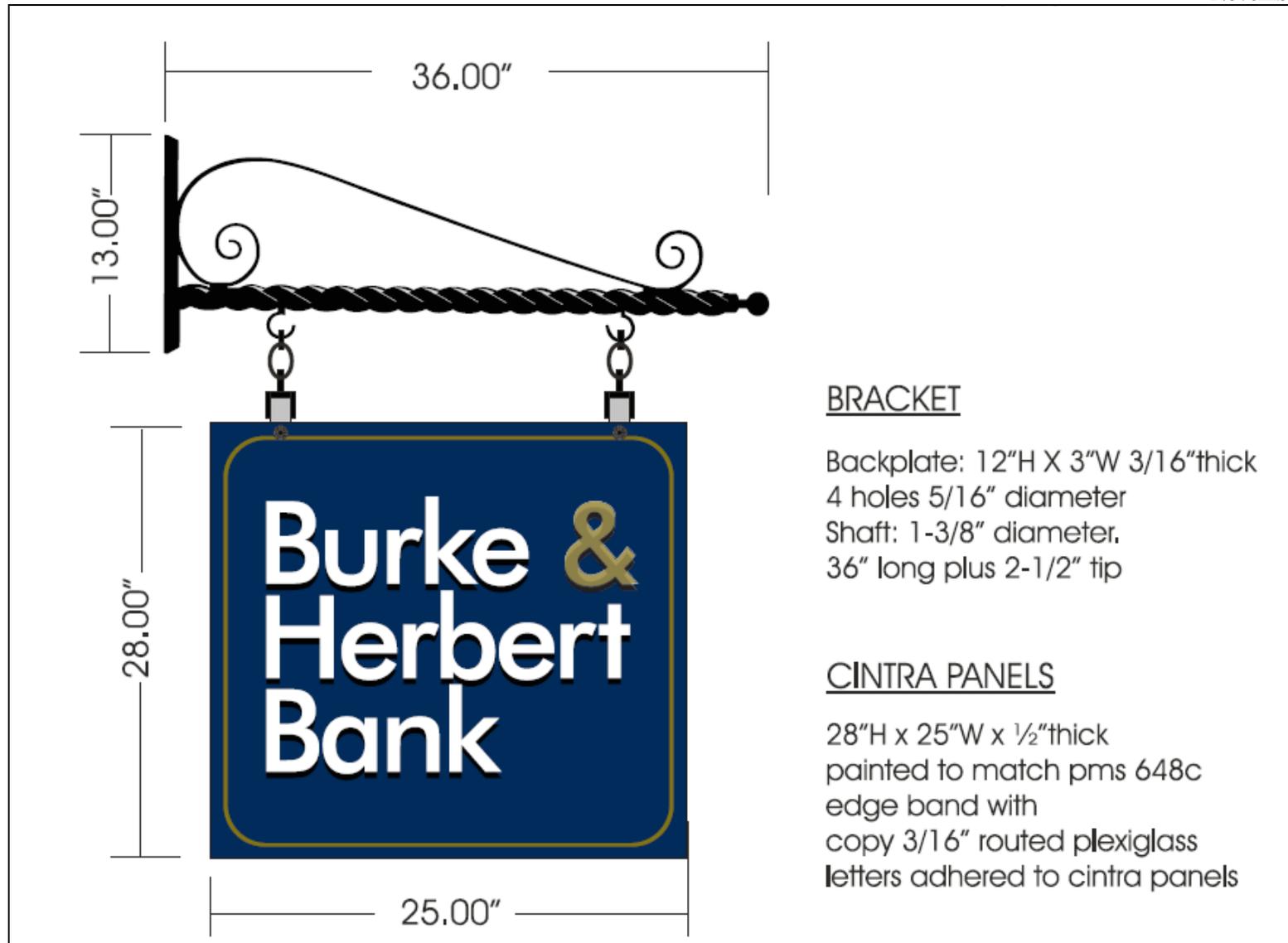


Figure 4. Details of proposed hanging sign.

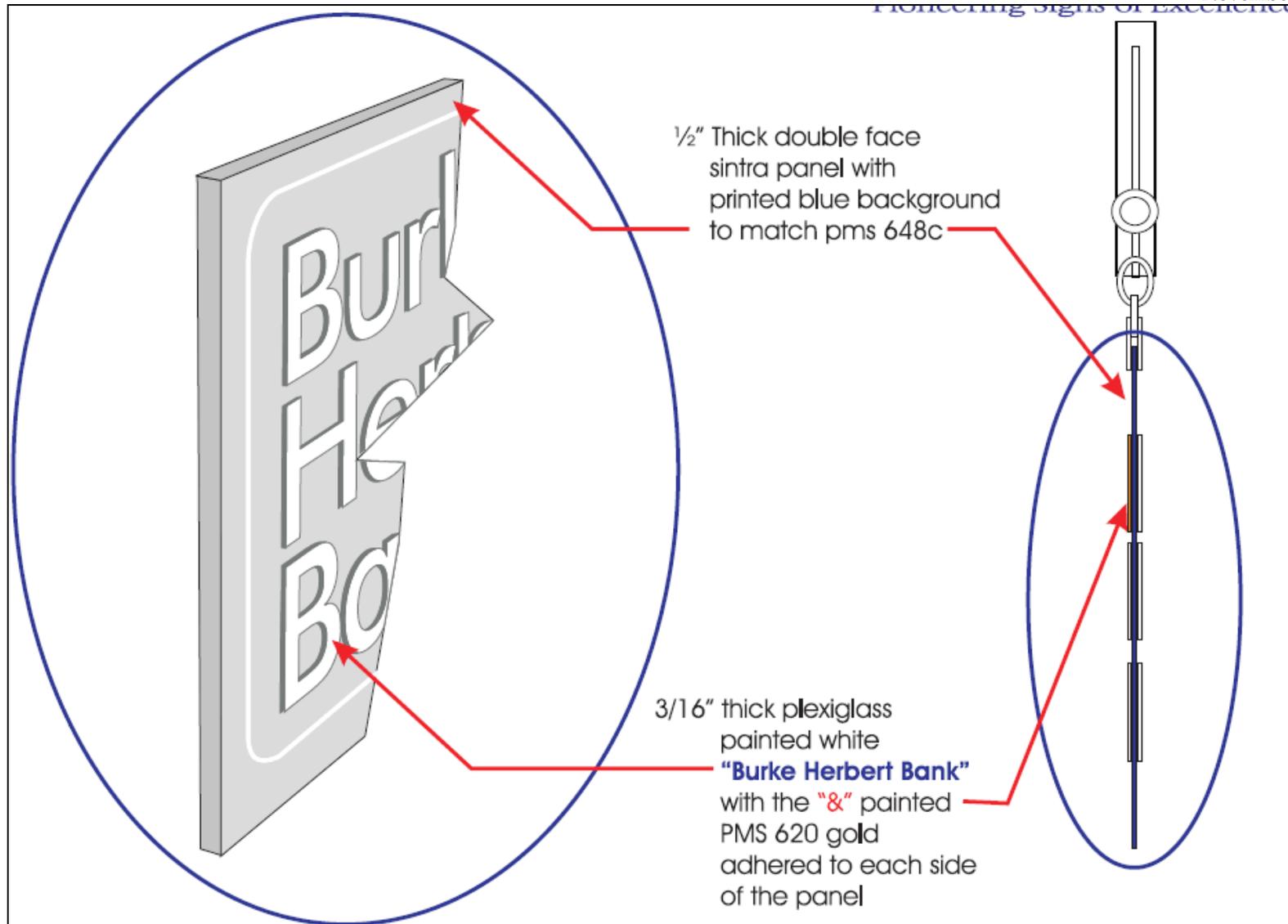


Figure 5. Details of proposed hanging sign.

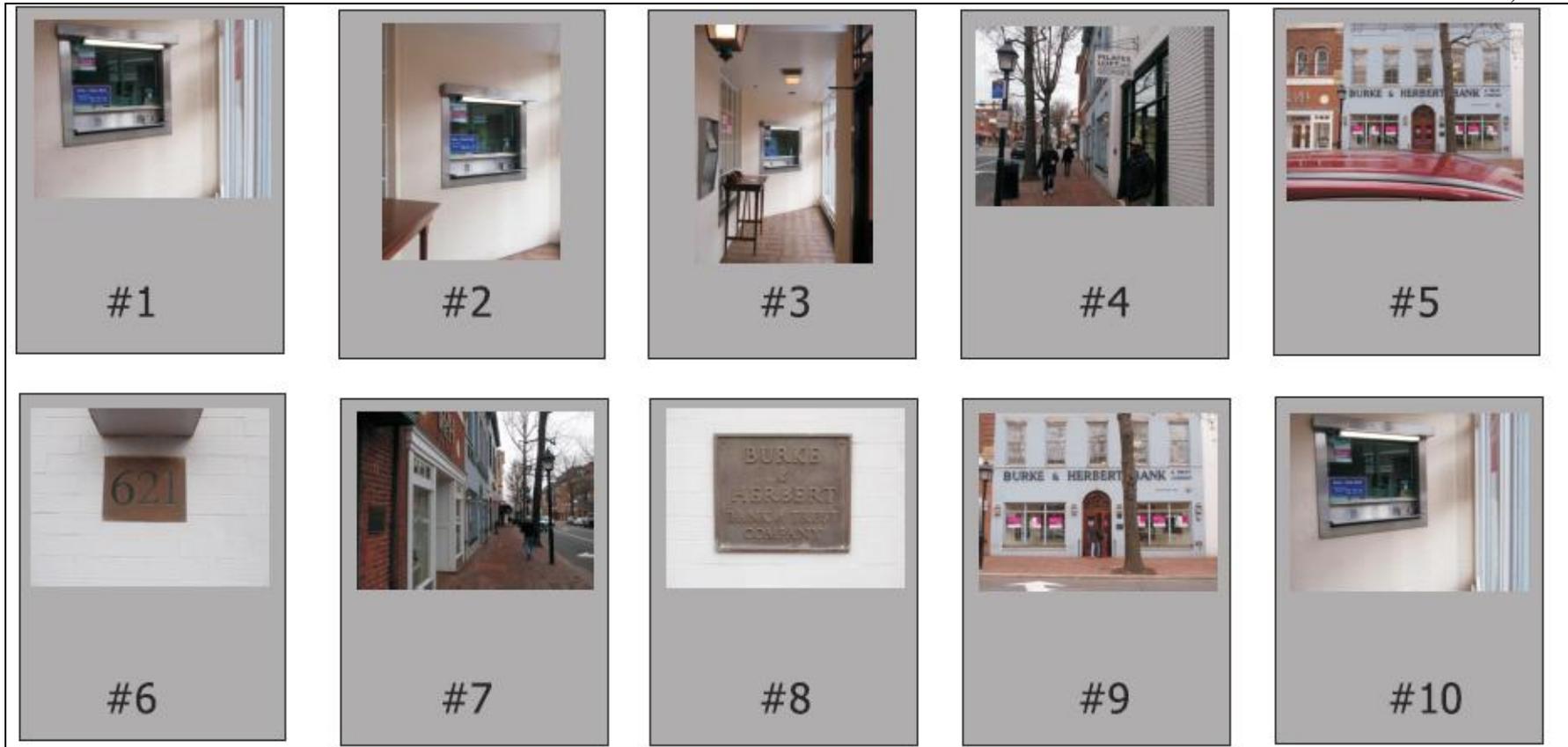


Figure 6. Photographs of existing conditions and features.