

*****DRAFT MINUTES*****

Alexandria Board of Architectural Review
Old & Historic Alexandria District

Wednesday, July 6, 2011

7:30pm, City Council Chambers, City Hall
301 King Street, Alexandria, Virginia 22314

Members Present: Tom Hulfish, Chairman
Arthur Keleher
Wayne Neale
Chip Carlin
John von Senden

Members Absent: Oscar Fitzgerald
Peter Smeallie

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

The meeting was called to order at 7:35 p.m. by Chairman Hulfish.

I. MINUTES

Consideration of the minutes of the public hearing of June 15, 2011.

BOARD ACTION: Approved, as submitted, 5-0

On a motion by Mr. Keleher, seconded by Mr. Neale the minutes were unanimously approved, as submitted, 5-0.

II. CONSENT CALENDAR

Items on the Consent Calendar are those where the applicant has agreed to all conditions of approval shown in the staff reports. Without objection, the staff recommendation for these cases will be approved as a group by unanimous consent of the Board at the beginning of the meeting. When announced by the Chairman, any member of the Board or of the public may ask that one of these cases be removed for full discussion.

1. **CASE BAR2011-0150**

Request for door alterations and bench installation at **123 N Pitt St (Parcel Address: 411 King St)**, zoned KR King Street Retail.

APPLICANT: The Pyne Company by Michael Molinari

BOARD ACTION: Approved, as submitted, 5-0.

III. DISCUSSION ITEMS

2. **CASE BAR2011-0149**

Request for awning with signage at **113 N Washington St**, zoned CD Commercial.

APPLICANT: Rebecca Fertig

BOARD ACTION: Approved, as amended, 3-2.

CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL:

1. That the existing special advertising window signs be removed;
2. That the existing signage be reduced in order to comply with the zoning ordinance:
 - a. That the wood wall sign on the door surround be removed
 - b. That the window decals be consolidated into one window decal per business with each decal being no larger than 3 square feet and within a single glass panel. The two decals shall be symmetrically located on opposite sides of the door.
 - c. That the white letters on the awning valance be reduced in height from 9” to 7”

SPEAKERS

Rebecca Fertig, owner, spoke in support of the project.

John Hynan, representing Historic Alexandria Foundation (HAF), said that the Foundation opposed phone numbers and websites on awnings. He said that it would be very complex to change the Board’s long-adopted policy and recommended that the Board continue with the established policy of no phone numbers and no websites.

BOARD DISCUSSION

Mr. Keleher and Chairman Hulfish agreed with Mr. Hynan and found that there was no need to post phone numbers or websites. Mr. Neale, Mr. von Senden and Mr. Carlin were not concerned that phone numbers and websites had detrimental effects.

Staff reminded the Board that they had asked for a survey of websites and telephone numbers, in response to a recent request from an Old Town merchants association to consider web addresses, and that there would be a full presentation at the next hearing.

On a motion by Mr. von Senden, seconded by Mr. Carlin, the Board voted to approve the application with staff recommendations by a vote of 3-2 (Chairman Hulfish and Mr. Keleher voted in opposition).

REASON

The Board supported the proposed awning but was divided on posting websites and phone numbers on signs and commented that they need to study the issue fully and that this approval was not to be considered a precedent.

3. **CASE BAR2010-0343**

Request for signage and alterations at **503 King St**, zoned KR, King Street Urban Retail.

APPLICANT: CVS/pharmacy by The Velmeir Companies (Kevin McGhee)

BOARD ACTION: **Approved, as amended, 4-1.**

CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL

1. That the entrance marquis awning that was removed not be reinstalled but that a small awning may be installed over the entrance to match the existing red canvas awnings over the front windows and that the wall sign proposed on the south elevation be centered above the entrance;

2. In addition to the proposed CVS/pharmacy halo illuminated signs, That one of the proposed “Open 24 Hours” wall signs may also be installed on each elevation, for a total of two signs, and that these “Open 24 Hours” ‘bug box’ type wall signs may only be illuminated with halo backlighting and may not have a backlit plastic face. The proposed Open 24 Hours window signs are not approved but the hours of operation may be displayed on a single sign on the glass adjacent to the store entrance on a sign not exceeding one square foot in area;
3. That the two windows on the North Pitt Street elevation at the south corner may be partially obscured per the revised scheme presented by the applicant but that the two 4’ wide completely open portions must be symmetrical within the two window openings.
4. That in the windows directly adjoining retail space in the store where the Board has approved obscuring any portion of the windows, the display fixtures, self-checkout machine screen, and any and all other display fixtures within 4’ of the exterior glass may be no taller than 42” in height above the floor, and that no posters, signs, or displays of any sort shall obscure the approved open portions of the windows above the 42" AFF line. The exterior face of the display fixtures at the windows shall be recessed from the glass a sufficient distance to have merchandise display areas facing the streets. These window displays must be changed at regular intervals (no less than quarterly), and may not be filled with posters, signs, photographs or anything other than merchandise.
5. That the only instances where the window and door openings may be obscured with photographs are the recessed window and door on the westernmost portion of the King Street façade and the storage area at the northernmost portion of the North Pitt Street elevation.
6. That in the instances where the Board has approved obscuring window and door openings at the storage areas with photographs, that the applicant utilize historic photographs of this area of King Street prior to urban renewal, with the final photograph selection and interpretive text to be approved by Staff.

SPEAKERS

John Hynan, representing Historic Alexandria Foundation (HAF), agreed with the staff recommendations.

Kevin McGhee, representing The Velmeir Companies for CVS/pharmacy, spoke in support of the application and presented an alternative scheme for opening the windows on North Pitt Street.

Rick Pepper, representing the applicant, spoke in support of the application.

BOARD DISCUSSION

Chairman Hulfish stated that he was troubled by obscuring windows which essentially resulted in turning a back to the street.

Mr. Neale noted that it was important to be visually open on the corner and commented that Just Vacations had provided a good vista into the space. He commented that he had no objection to signage that read “Open 24 Hours.”

Mr. von Senden appreciated the efforts that the applicant had made to reduce the area obscured. He stated that once the store is open, everyone will know it is open 24 hours and there would be no need for additional signage stating such. He commented that

traditional store designs feature display cases looking into the store. He thought that the offset for the cases needed to be further studied.

Mr. Keleher said that he did not object to the "Open 24 Hours" signage but was concerned about the shelving at the checkout area. He inquired whether the interior fixtures could be reduced in height to 3'-8" and advised that the window scheme should be further developed.

Mr. Carlin noted that his chief concern was visibility into store to see activity and people. He wanted to see the interior fixtures lowered in height to 4' and the creation of rotating displays of merchandise to be more in keeping with the retail contexts of stores on King Street. He expressed concern about the blank panels proposed to be in front of the self-checkout area. He advised that the interior fixtures at the front corner on North Pitt Street be adjusted so that the area to be closed off would be symmetrical on the street side. He noted that it would be important to keep the display areas fresh and interesting.

Mr. von Senden suggested that the proposed office and employee lounge area on the north wall be relocated toward the windows on the east wall within the storeroom in order to make use of the natural light and to indicate that there was activity inside from Pitt Street. He also inquired what one will see in the windows on the North Pitt Street elevation. Mr. McGhee responded that one would see merchandise displayed through the windows and that CVS did not want windows in the manager's office because of security concerns. Mr. von Senden thought that the overall project proposal needed further study.

Mr. Neale made a motion to approve the application with amendments to the staff recommendations and the conditions and that two "Open 24 Hours" signs be permitted and that interior fixtures be no taller than 42". The motion was seconded by Mr. Keleher. Mr. Carlin made amended the motion to clarify that all windows to be obscured that were not adjacent to storage areas, shall have a display area with seasonally rotated merchandise in place of posters or photographs. Mr. Carlin also specified that the two front windows on North Pitt Street should be symmetrical with respect to the 4' wide open sections.

The motion was approved, 4-1, with Mr. von Senden voting in opposition.

REASON

In general, the Board found that the proposed scheme had improved after working with Staff to reduce the number of obscured openings, however, the Board found that the height of the interior fixtures should be reduced to no more than 42 inches in height to allow clear views into the stores. The Board also found that the only locations appropriate for photographs were the storage areas (front recessed area at westernmost portion of King Street elevation and rear window and door at northernmost portion of North Pitt Street elevation). All other areas should have the low fixtures and allow sufficient space for the seasonal display of merchandise.

IV. OTHER BUSINESS

Staff informed the Board that a survey of websites on signs in the district would be presented at the next hearing.

Staff asked the Board whether they had any issues or concerns with the King Street Outdoor Dining Guidelines being applied throughout the district. The Board responded that they were very happy with the program and did not need to review individual projects that otherwise complied with the Guidelines previously approved by the Board.

V. ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Hulfish adjourned the meeting at approximately 8:40 pm.

VI. ADMINISTRATIVE APPROVALS

The following items are shown for information only. Based on the Board's adopted policies, these have been approved by Staff since the previous Board meeting.

CASE BAR2011-0156

Request for door replacement and fascia repair at **626 S Pitt St**, zoned RM Residential.

APPLICANT: Stanley Beach

CASE BAR2011-0157

Request for window replacement at **1220 Prince St**, zoned CL Commerical.

APPLICANT: William Semple

CASE BAR2011-0159

Request for window replacement at **225 N Washington St**, zoned CD Commerical.

APPLICANT: National Council for Adoption

CASE BAR2011-0160

Request for roof replacement at **617 S Saint Asaph St**, zoned RM Residential.

APPLICANT: Harold Fdelak

CASE BAR2011-0170

Request for window and siding replacement on dormers at **219 N Royal St**, zoned RM Residential.

APPLICANT: David Canfield

CASE BAR2011-0171

Request for HVAC relocation at **124 King St**, zoned KR King Street Retail.

APPLICANT: Paradise OT, LLC

CASE BAR2011-0172

Request for roof replacement and light installation at **408 S Royal St**, zoned RM Residential.

APPLICANT: Robert Macnab

CASE BAR2011-0173

Request for removal of non-historic brick planter and window, exterior light, roof, gate and door replacement at **406 S Royal St**, zoned RM Residential.

APPLICANT: Paul Darlington

CASE BAR2011-0174

Request for exterior repairs and in-kind replacements at **301 S Saint Asaph St**, zoned RM Residential.

APPLICANT: David Mulford

CASE BAR2011-0177

Request for bay window replacement at **208 S Fayette St**, zoned RM Residential.

APPLICANT: John Gosling

CASE BAR2011-0184

Request for awning replacement at **1420 W Abingdon DR**, zoned RC Residential.

APPLICANT: Bernstein Management Corp.

CASE BAR2011-0186

Request for signage at **815B King St**, zoned KR King Street Retail.

APPLICANT: Bishop Boutique

CASE BAR2011-0187

Request for roof replacement (gazebo and shed) at **121 N Fairfax St**, zoned POS Public Open Space and Community Recreation Zone.

APPLICANT: Carlyle House

CASE BAR2011-0188

Request for tuckpointing at **601 Queen St**, zoned RM Residential.

APPLICANT: Linda Fuselier

CASE BAR2011-0192

Request for signage at **1314 King St**, zoned KR King Street Retail.

APPLICANT: HomeMade Pizza Co.

Minutes submitted by,

Catherine Miliaras, Urban Planner, Historic Preservation
Boards of Architectural Review