

Docket Item #10
BAR Case #2003-0233

BAR Meeting
October 15, 2003

ISSUE: Signage

APPLICANT: Triangle Sign & Service, Inc.

LOCATION: 821 South Washington Street

ZONE: CRMU-L/Commercial_Residential Mixed

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of the application with the following conditions:

1. That the channel letter sign above the store entrance not be illuminated; and,
2. That the six sets of window graphics are eliminated.

DISCUSSION:

Applicant's Description of the Undertaking:

To furnish & install storefront signage to the site noted above. Sign package consist of one internally illuminated channel letter set, one non-illum. transom sign above the entranceway, and six (6) sets of vinyl window graphics.

Issue:

The applicant is requesting approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness for signage for the Bombay Company at 821 South Washington Street. The applicant is proposing a 11' 2" by 2' internally illuminated sign reading Bombay. This sign will be located above the storefront entrance. One inch thick, bronze colored letters measuring 20 1/4" by 4' 8" with the business name and logo will be mounted to the transom above the entrance doors. The applicant is proposing six sets of beige colored vinyl window graphics with the lettering Bombay and the business logo. The window graphics will be centered at the bottom of the storefront windows.

History and Analysis:

821 South Washington Street is a one story brick retail building constructed circa 1951. It is part of a Colonial Revival style retail shopping strip along the west side of the 800 block of South Washington Street.

The applicant indicates that the building wall width occupied by the tenant is 36 sq ft +/-; maximum sign area allowed is 36 square feet. The proposed 35 square feet complies with zoning ordinance requirements.

The Boards are particularly concerned with the maintenance and memorial character of the George Washington Memorial Parkway which passes through Alexandria as Washington Street. Therefore, requests for signage on Washington Street must be compatible with the memorial nature of the parkway.

The *Design Guidelines* state that internally illuminated signs are discouraged. Staff believes that the existing light fixture used by the previous retail tenant is more appropriate than an internally illuminated sign for this location.

The *Design Guidelines* also recommend only one sign per business as appropriate. While Staff has no problem with any of the individual signs, the number far exceeds that generally approved by the Board.

Therefore, Staff recommends approval of the application with the condition that the sign above the storefront entrance is not internally illuminated and that the six sets of window graphics are eliminated.

CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

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

Code Enforcement

C-1 Construction permits are required for this project.

C-2 Wall letters must comply with USBC 2907.1.

Historic Alexandria

This calls for the use of neon, something which we generally avoid on Washington Street & the Old & Hist. district.