

Docket Item #10  
BAR CASE #2003-0145

BAR Meeting  
November 5, 2003

**ISSUE:** Awning & signage  
**APPLICANT:** Tanat Suksomat  
**LOCATION:** 1019 King Street  
**ZONE:** CD/ Commercial Downtown

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**BOARD ACTION, OCTOBER 1, 2003:** On a motion by Mr. Wheeler, seconded by Ms. Neihardt, the Board deferred the application for restudy. The vote on the motion was 4-0.

**REASON:** The Board said that additional information was needed as to the location and appearance of the proposed awning and asked for an elevation drawing. The Board also expressed concern about the use of the awning for background for a sign.

**SPEAKER:** Tanat Suksomat, applicant, spoke in support

### STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of the application with the following conditions:

1. The existing signage (the Masaya sign above the picture window, the window sign Thai Cuisine, and the neon Open sign) are removed prior to the installation of the awning;
2. That the awning color be dark blue to match the window and door trim; and,
3. That the awning is anchored through the mortar joints rather than through the masonry units.

### DISCUSSION:

#### Applicant s Description of the Undertaking:

Install awning and signage.

#### Update:

Since the October 1, 2003 hearing, the applicant has submitted new photographs showing the proposed location of the awning. The applicant has also reduced the height of the awning by approximately 1'.

#### Issue:

The applicant requests approval of a certificate of appropriateness for the installation of an awning with signage for the new restaurant Masaya, Thai Cuisine at 1019 King Street. The purple canvas awning measures 14.6' by 3' with a 1.3' high valance. The awning will include the name Masaya measuring 6' 2 1/4" by 2', and the lettering Thai Cuisine measuring 12' 4 1/4" by 3 1/4" on the valance.

The applicant has submitted a fabric sample which will be made available at the public hearing.

#### History and Analysis:

The property located at 1019 King Street was probably constructed in the early to mid nineteenth century. Originally a side gable Federal style building, the facade was updated in the late nineteenth century by the installation of a Victorian false front. Additional alterations to Colonialize the storefront have resulted in a mix of Victorian and Colonial Revival elements.

The Board has previously approved several sign applications for 1019 King Street. In 1990, the Board approved a hanging sign and small menu board for Vietnamien s" (BAR Case #90-187, 9/5/90). In 1991 the Board approved an awning with signage (BAR Case #91-59, 4/3/91). In 1994, the Board approved a hanging sign Chintana Thai Restaurant on an existing bracket between the second story windows (BAR Case #94-34, 3/16/94). Finally, the Board approved a 1.5' by 6.5' sign with a black background and gold lettering (BAR Case #97-0227, 12/3/97) The 1997 sign was approved with the condition that the existing hanging sign (approved in 1994) be removed.

Per Sanborn maps the subject building and lot have a width of 16 ft +/- ; maximum sign area allowed is 16 square feet. The proposed 15.8 square feet of signage complies with zoning

regulations with the condition that all existing signs are removed. Staff notes that the logos on the ends of the awning and the larger sized lettering for Thai Cuisine, shown on the photographs do not meet zoning requirements and therefore are not before the Board.

The building currently has a number of existing unapproved signs for the Masaya Restaurant as well as a neon Open sign. The *Design Guidelines* state that neon signs are not appropriate on buildings constructed prior to the introduction of neon in the United States in 1923 (Signs - page 5).

The *Design Guidelines* also recommend that on masonry buildings awnings should be anchored through the mortar joints rather than directly into the masonry unit itself (Awnings - page 4).

Staff believes that the proposed shed awning is appropriate in material and style to the historic district. Although never installed, the Board has previously approved an awning for the building. Staff does however have concerns with the awning color. The color purple is generally not an appropriate color in the historic district. Staff believes that a dark blue color to match the newly painted trim would be more appropriate.

Therefore, Staff recommends approval of the application with the condition that all of the existing signage is removed prior to installation of the awning, that the awning color match the building trim, and that the awning be anchored through the mortar joints.

CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

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

Code Enforcement:

C-1 A construction permit is required for the proposed project.

Office of Historic Alexandria:

No comment.