

Docket Item #14
BAR Case #2003-0241

BAR Meeting
November 5, 2003

ISSUE: Awning & signage
APPLICANT: DMS Sign Connection Inc.
LOCATION: 118 King Street
ZONE: CD/Commercial

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends denial of the application. Staff also notes that the existing sign above the ATM does not comply with zoning ordinance requirements and must be removed within 15 days.

DISCUSSION:

Applicant s Description of the Undertaking:

Install one awning on front wall of building, sign on (3) sides.

Issue:

The applicant is requesting approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness for an awning above the ATM located at 118 King Street. The proposed awning measures 4.7' by 2' by 1.5' with blue colored canvas covering 1" square aluminum tubing. The bottom of the awning will be enclosed by an eggcrate plastic lens and will be internally illuminated by a row of fluorescent lamps. The awning will include the name Chevy Chase Bank in white lettering and a red underline on all three sides. The lettering on the front of the awning will be approximately 3" tall while the lettering on the sides will be 2". The bottom of the awning will be 7' above the sidewalk.

History and Analysis:

118 King Street is a new two story brick retail and office building completed in early 2001. The design of the new building was approved by the Board in 2000 (BAR Case #2000-0019, 4/5/00).

The history of the approval of the existing ATM begins with the previous Small Mall building located on the site. In November 1996, an ATM was originally considered by the Board as part of an application from the Bank of Alexandria (BAR Case #96-0226, 11/6/96). Staff recommended denial of the ATM which was subsequently denied by the Board. The Board's decision was appealed to City Council by the Bank. City Council initially remanded the application to the Board for further consideration. The Board reconsidered the ATM in early 1997 (3/5/97) and again denied the application. The decision was again appealed to City Council which this time overturned the Board and approved the installation of the ATM (4/12/97). Following this, Council adopted a change to the Zoning Ordinance concerning the location, size, lighting and signage for ATM s.

In 2000, an application for a new building and relocated ATM was presented to the Board for 118 King Street (2000-0019, 4/19/00). Staff again recommended denial of the ATM. The Board approved the application for a new building and denied the ATM (BAR Case #2000-0019, 4/19/00). The decision was appealed to City Council which overturned the Board and approved the installation of the ATM (5/13/00).

During the course of the public hearings on the design of the new building, members noted that the presence of the ATM on the facade of the building disrupts the otherwise studied symmetry of the King Street elevation. Staff believes that the installation of the proposed awning further disrupts the symmetry of the building.

In addition to the disruption of the design of the building, Staff has a number of concerns with

the proposed application. According to the *Design Guidelines*, the lighting of ATM machines should be at as low a level as possible while meeting safety requirements (ATMs -Page1). The *Guidelines* further state that internally lit awnings are not appropriate in the historic districts and are strongly discouraged (Awnings - Page 4). The applicant has indicated that the awning will be internally illuminated by a row of high output fluorescent lamps. Staff cannot support the proposed internally illuminated awning.

Section 7-1800 A(1)(f) of the zoning ordinance states that: One bank identification sign shall be allowed abutting the top of the machine. The width of the sign shall not exceed the width of the machine, and the height of the sign shall not exceed one-third of the width of the machine. Backlit signs shall not be permitted. The existing bank identification sign is in violation of the zoning ordinance by exceeding the height limit and must be removed within 15 days.

Staff recommends denial of the application and the elimination of the existing bank identification sign above the ATM within 15 days.

CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

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

Code Enforcement

- C-1 Awnings must comply with all applicable requirements of USBC. Retractable and fixed awnings must have a minimum 7 foot clearance from a sidewalk to the lowest part of the framework or any fixed portion of any retractable awning is required. The bottom of the valance on canvas awnings must have a minimum clearance of 6'9" above the sidewalk. Retractable awnings must be securely fastened to the building and can not extend closer than 12" in from the curb line.
- C-2 Fixed awnings must be designed and constructed to withstand wind or other lateral loads and live loads required by the USBC. Structural members must be protected to prevent deterioration.
- C-3 Construction permits are required for this project.

Historic Alexandria

Does the ATM guideline include awnings, I m not inclined to want to add this configuration to the ATM.