

Docket Item #6  
BAR CASE #2004-0066

BAR Meeting  
April 21, 2004

**ISSUE:** Signs and alterations

**APPLICANT:** John Jones

**LOCATION:** 606 King Street

**ZONE:** CD/Commercial

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### STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of the application with the following conditions:

1. The applicant is to maintain \$1 million in insurance to hold the city harmless in the event of any accidents caused by the awning; and,
2. The applicant obtain Staff approval for the light fixtures prior to installation.

### DISCUSSION:

#### Applicant's Description of the Undertaking:

"Remove existing wood panel at ATM location & replace with glass panel and replace existing rear door with double door."

#### Issue:

The applicant is requesting approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness for signs and alterations for the western half of the two story commercial building at 604-606 King Street. The eastern half is occupied by Raul's Men's Wear. The western half was occupied by a succession of banks, most recently BB&T Bank, and will be now be occupied by a retail tenant, King Street Lighting.

#### Signage

The applicant proposes to re-use the existing shed awning framework. According to Ordinance 3714, passed on March 19, 1994, the existing awning measures 17' in length and is installed 9'6" above the sidewalk. The ordinance granted an encroachment for the awning to extend 4' into the public right-of-way. The new awning covering will be a forest green colored canvas type fabric. Centered on the valence of the awning will be signage reading, "King Street Lighting," in white script. The awning lettering will be 9" high and 7'-7 1/4" long. In addition, white script reading, King Street Lighting, will be located at the base of the proposed new west side window. This lettering will be 6" high and 4'-2 1/4" long.

#### Alterations

The west (right) side of the storefront, where an ATM has been located since 1997, will be replaced with glazing to match the rest of the storefront. Light fixtures will be installed on the masonry piers on either side of the storefront. As the applicant has not yet finalized the selection of these fixtures, they will be subject to Staff approval.

The existing single metal door at the rear of the building in the public alley off of South St. Asaph Street will be replaced by a new slightly larger flush double leaf metal door.

#### History and Analysis:

606 King Street is part of a two story brick building with cast stone trim and Art Deco detailing. The building dates from the 1930s. The first floor storefront has been altered on a number of occasions. The Board approved alterations in 1959, 1977, 1993, 1994, 1997, 1998 and 2002. In 1997, the Board approved alterations to the storefront including the installation of an ATM on the west side for the Bank of Alexandria (BAR Case #97-0058, 4/2/1997). The current awning

was originally approved in 1993 for the Bank of Alexandria (BAR Case #93-197, 11/3/1993) and reused by F & M Bank (BAR Case #98-0049, 5/20/1998) and BB & T Bank (BAR Case #2002-0005, 2/6/2002). In each of these cases, the awning was approved with signage.

The proposed awning sign, window sign and alterations comply with the zoning ordinance requirements. Section 9-202(B)(1) of the zoning ordinance states all signs displayed below 20 feet height on any building wall shall not exceed one square foot of building width. According to the drawings, the building width is 21 feet and thus the maximum signage allowed is 21 square feet. The proposed awning and window signs total approximately 7.7 square feet. Section 9-202(B)(4) of the zoning ordinance states a sign may be displayed flat against a building wall or at an angle so long as the sign does not project more than four feet from the building wall and is at least eight feet above a sidewalk. The awning with signage projects four feet and is over nine feet above the sidewalk. Awnings may be used as a sign background and may project over the public right-of-way no closer than two feet from the curb. The applicant is to maintain \$1 million in insurance to hold the city harmless in the event of any accidents caused by the awning. Section 9-202(B) of the zoning ordinance states no more than 20% of the area of any window may be occupied by signs. At approximately 2 square feet, the proposed window sign occupies significantly less than 20% of the approximately 42.5 square foot window.

The *Design Guidelines* state that generally only one sign per business is appropriate (Signs - Page 3). However, the Board on occasion does approve multiple signs and has in fact done so at this location. Most recently, in 2002, the Board approved an awning sign and lighted ATM header panel for BB & T Bank. The two signs currently proposed for King Street Lighting are smaller than those previously approved for BB & T Bank and, in the opinion of Staff, are appropriate. The reopening of the storefront will return the storefront to a more historically appropriate appearance. The *Design Guidelines* allow flush metal doors “in certain limited circumstances for 20<sup>th</sup> century retail, commercial and industrial buildings” (Doors - Page 2-3). Staff believes the proposed flush metal doors are appropriate as they are located at the rear of a 20<sup>th</sup> century retail building. The area where the doorway is to be expanded is a secondary elevation and appears to have undergone previous alterations.

Therefore, Staff recommends approval of the application as submitted but notes that the applicant must maintain \$1 million in insurance to hold the city harmless in the event of any accidents caused by the awning.

## CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

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

### Code Enforcement:

- C-1 New construction must comply with the current edition of the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC).
- C-2 Alterations to the existing structure must comply with the current edition of the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC).
- C-3 Construction permits are required for this project.

### Office of Historic Alexandria:

“No comment.”