

Docket Item #17
BAR CASE# 2004-0116

BAR Meeting
June 16, 2004

ISSUE: Sign
APPLICANT: Simaly K. Eng
LOCATION: 1132 Prince Street
ZONE: RM Residential

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of the hanging sign and the window lettering with the following conditions:

1. The lettering “Custom Made & Beautiful” be eliminated from the hanging sign;
2. The hanging sign be attached to a new scroll bracket approved by Staff; and,
3. The size of the window lettering be reduced so that it fits within a single pane of glass on the entrance door.

Staff also recommends denial of the wall sign.

I. ISSUE:

The applicant is requesting approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness for signs at 1132 Prince Street. The proposed signs include a hanging sign, wall sign and window lettering. The proposed 2' by 2' double-sided hanging sign reads “Amara Fashions Custom Made & Alteration Beautiful.” The MDO sign will have a white background with burgundy lettering with an orange outline. The sign will be attached to an existing metal bracket at the corner of Prince Street and South Fayette Street.

The applicant is also proposing to install a flat wall sign, 1.5' by 8', above the picture window on Prince Street. This sign will be constructed of MDO and will read “Amara Fashions” in burgundy lettering with an orange colored outline on a white background.

The store hours in white vinyl lettering will be attached to the entrance. This window lettering measures approximately 15" by 12".

II. HISTORY:

1132 Prince Street was constructed between 1896 and 1902 according to the Sanborn Maps. A rear one story addition was constructed between 1921 and 1941.

In 1990, the Board approved an application for windows (5/7/80). Previously, the Board approved a wall sign for the applicant’s business “IUOL, Amara Fashions” located at 222 North Lee Street (BAR #2003-0087, 8/6/03).

Staff was unable to locate any previous sign approvals for this building.

III. ANALYSIS:

According to the *Design Guidelines*, generally only one sign per business is appropriate. Staff does not support both a wall sign and hanging sign for this building. The subject property is located in a residential zone. Staff notes that the commercial use for the building is grandfathered and therefore signs are permitted. However, Staff believes that a single hanging sign is more compatible with the neighborhood.

The *Design Guidelines* recommend that signs on masonry buildings be anchored through the mortar joints rather than through the masonry units themselves (Signs - Page 4). Although the applicant has indicated that the existing bracket will be reused, Staff believes that a new scroll bracket would be more appropriate. The existing bracket appears to have been installed upside

down so that the sign cannot hang properly. While the applicant could simply reinstall the bracket, Staff believes that a scroll bracket more typical of the historic district should be installed.

The *Design Guidelines* recommend that signs be as simple as possible and avoid repetitious and undue verbiage (Signs - Page 3). Staff believes that the text “custom made and beautiful” should be eliminated from the hanging sign, so that the sign simply reads, “Amara Fashions & Alterations”.

Staff also has concerns with the size of the proposed window lettering. Staff believes that the size of the lettering should be reduced so that it falls within a single pane of glass on the multi-light entrance door.

IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of the hanging sign and the window lettering with the following conditions:

1. The lettering “Custom Made & Beautiful” be eliminated from the hanging sign;
2. The hanging sign be attached to a new scroll bracket approved by Staff; and,
3. The size of the window lettering be reduced so that it fits within a single pane of glass on the entrance door.

Staff also recommends denial of the wall sign.

CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

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

Code Enforcement:

C-1 Projecting, hanging signs must comply with USBC [H103-H107, H112] for type of materials, maximum projection, vertical clearance below all parts of the sign, and additional loads.

C-2 Construction permits are required for the proposed project.

Office of Historic Alexandria:

“Not sure how much of the space is for this shop, or where the 96" sign is going. [alterations would be preferred].”