

Docket Item #3
BAR CASE #2004-0088

BAR Meeting
August 18, 2004

ISSUE: Signage
APPLICANT: The Holladay Corporation
LOCATION: 1101 North Washington Street
ZONE: CD/Commercial

BOARD ACTION, JUNE 16, 2004: On a motion by Ms. Neihardt, seconded by Mr. Smeallie the Board deferred the application for restudy. The motion passed on a vote of 5-0.

REASON: The Board believed that the sign should not encroach on the balustrade and that it detracted from the overall building design. The Board believed that the sign could be stretched out so that it did not obscure building details.

SPEAKER: Lee Weber, Holladay Corporation, spoke in support

BOARD ACTION, JUNE 2, 2004: This docket item was removed from the Proposed Consent Calendar by Alan Voorhees. On a motion by Mr. Wheeler, seconded by Ms. Neihardt the Board deferred the application for restudy. The vote on the motion was 6-0.

REASON: The Board agreed with Mr. Voorhees that the sign was too big and obscured the colonnade on the second story of the building. The Board believed that a narrower sign that would spread out the lettering and logo could be designed and that this would not obscure the architecture of the building.

SPEAKERS: Lee Weber, Holladay Corporation, spoke in support
Alan Voorhees, Chairman, Old Town North Urban Design Advisory
Committee, spoke in opposition

Update: Since the last public hearing regarding signage for the Best Western motel on North Washington Street the applicant has revised the location of the proposed sign and also requests approval of flag poles.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of the application as submitted.

I. Issue:

The applicant is requesting approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness for a new sign with lighting for the existing Old Colony Inn Best Western located at 1101 North Washington Street. The sign is proposed to be installed on building wall directly to the south of the main entrance. The sign is approximately 12'6" in overall length and 4' in height and will use the Best Western logo colors of blue, yellow and red with the words "Old Colony Inn" in white. The signs will be sandblasted wood and will be illuminated by two 6' long uprights to be installed below the sign. In addition, the applicant proposes to install three flag poles at the piers directly over the entrance.

II. History

1101 North Washington Street is the new location of the Old Colony Inn. It was originally constructed at the Conference Center that had been attached to the Old Colony Motel. It was built in 1967 and was designed by the architectural firm of Vosbeck & Vosbeck. It was approved by the Board on January 11, 1967.

Last year the Board approved a sign for this motel that was located at the rear of the building and faced onto Second Street (BAR Case #2003-0040, 3/19/03). In 2002, the Board approved an accessibility ramp for the front of the motel (BAR Case #2002-0306, 12/18/02).

III. Analysis

The proposed wall sign complies with zoning ordinance requirements.

The new sign and flags are an effort to provide a greater visual identity to this building as a functioning motel now that the Old Colony Inn across Second Street has been demolished.

Staff has no objection to the proposed sign or flag poles. They are well removed from the George Washington Memorial Parkway and located on the east side of East Abingdon Drive and, while illuminated, the illumination is no greater than that approved for many other signs on both North and South Washington Streets.

IV. Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends approval of the new sign, lighting and flag poles.

CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

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

Code Enforcement:

C-1 Wall letters / signs must comply with USBC [H103-H111].

C-2 A construction permit is required for the proposed project.

Historic Alexandria:

No comment.

Old Town North Urban Design Advisory Committee:

F-1 Violates Old Town North guidelines, p. 14. Signs should not obscure other building elements such as windows, cornices, etc.

F-2 Same document. Location of sign and design of sign should be pedestrian oriented.

R-1 Flags OK. Use flag to identify building or reduce size to stretch across arches. This is a very bad sign under any circumstances. This is not a sign oriented to pedestrian traffic.

R-2 Perhaps remove flags and have single letters in brass/bronze and light from above or from the ground. This in proposed location or over arches.