

Docket Item #11
BAR CASE# 2004-0139

BAR Meeting
September 23, 2004

ISSUE: After-the-fact awning & signage

APPLICANT: James Paulik

LOCATION: 106 N St Asaph Street

ZONE: CD Commercial

BOARD ACTION, JULY 21, 2004: On a motion by Mr. Wheeler, seconded by Mr. Smeallie the Board approved the Staff recommendation which was:

Deferral of the application for restudy with the applicant to return to the Board on August 18, 2004 with a proposal to replace the vinyl awning with a new canvas awning with appropriately sized lettering.

The vote on the motion was 4-0.

REASON: The Board agreed with the Staff analysis.

SPEAKER: Timothy Bud, owner, spoke in support

UPDATE:

The application has been revised to reduce the size of the block lettering on the awning.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends deferral of the application for restudy of a new canvas awning with the applicant to submit drawings accurately depicting the revised design of the lettering and graphics.

I. ISSUE:

The applicant is requesting after-the-fact approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness for an awning with signage for the new retail business, Eagle Eye Antiques, at 106 North St Asaph Street. The applicant requests approval for the installation of a “dome”-type awning over the main entrance. The frame is aluminum covered by a red colored PVC laminated polyester material. The front of the awning reads “Eagle Eye Antiques” and includes the business logo, a picture of an eagle. Both sides of the awning read “Antiques,” with the lettering measuring 5" in height. The awning is illuminated by two spotlights located on the corner of the building.

II. HISTORY:

The two-story brick building at 106-108 North St. Asaph Street was constructed in the 1920s. The Board approved a canvas awning for the previous tenant, Bowhe and Peare in 1999 (BAR Case #99-0013, 5/5/99). In 1998, the Board approved a hanging sign for Bowhe & Peare (BAR Case #98-0167, 10/7/98).

III. ANALYSIS:

The proposed awning and signage complies with zoning ordinance requirements.

The *Design Guidelines* for the historic districts state that “for historic buildings, appropriate shed awnings (both retractable and non-retractable) are preferred in the historic districts, especially for mid-19th to mid-20th century buildings. However, other awning configurations on rigid or fixed frames may be considered for late-20th century buildings.” Given the rhythm of the arched windows on the facade, the dome awning is aesthetically preferable to the historically more appropriate shed awning. The current awning replaces a dome shaped awning approved by the Board in 1999 for a previous retail tenant. Staff therefore has no objection to the shape of the proposed awning.

Staff does however have a number of concerns with the design and material of the awning. The *Design Guidelines* state that awnings should be made of a canvas type fabric. Awnings made from plastic fabric are strongly discouraged (Awnings - Page 3). The *Guidelines* further state that “translucent and/or internally lit awnings are not appropriate in the historic districts and are strongly discouraged (Awnings - Page 4). Staff does not support the existing plastic awning material.

The Board has consistently approved canvas awnings for properties within the district. This year the Board has approved awnings for “King Street Lighting” at 606 King Street (BAR Case #2004-0066, 4/21/04), “Territory” at 1212 King Street (BAR Case #2004-0024, 4/7/04), and “Mai Thai” at 6 King Street (BAR Case #2004-0005, 3/17/04). All of the approved awnings are

a canvas material.

While Staff appreciates the fact that the applicant has revised the size of the lettering, Staff still has concerns with the design of the awning. In order to properly evaluate the design of the awning, Staff requires an accurate representation of the design and layout of the lettering. The *Design Guidelines* state:

A drawing must accurately portray the size and type face of the lettering, logo, etc. as it will appear on the sign. Drawings which merely use handwriting to portray what the sign will say are not acceptable (Signs - Page 7).

In addition, the applicant has indicated that the existing lettering will simply be removed, and replaced with the new smaller lettering. Staff is concerned that the removed stickers may leave a residue, detracting from the appearance of the awning.

IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends deferral of the application for restudy of a new canvas awning with the applicant to submit drawings accurately depicting the revised design of the lettering and graphics.

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. Plans shall accompany the permit application that fully detail the construction as well as layouts and schematics of the mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems.
- C-4 Awnings must comply with all applicable requirements of USBC 510.0. 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 of 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 (USBC 510.2).
- C-5 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 (USBC 3105.2).

Office of Historic Alexandria:

"No comment."