

Docket Item #5
BAR CASE# 2004-0250

BAR Meeting
November 17, 2004

ISSUE: Sign

APPLICANT: Architectural Ceramics

LOCATION: 203 S Union Street

ZONE: W-1 Waterfront

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of the application with the condition that the existing window sign be eliminated prior to the installation of the hanging sign.

I. ISSUE:

The applicant is requesting approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness for signs for the retail business, "Architectural Ceramics," at 203 South Union Street. A 2.7' by 3.3' double sided hanging sign will be hung from a 4' decorative black iron bracket above the storefront. The upper section of the sign has a burgundy colored background with a beige (PMS 4545) colored logo while the lower section of the sign contains the business name, Architectural Ceramics, in burgundy lettering against a beige background. The dimensional acrylic lettering and logo attached to the MDO sign will be 1/4" thick. The hanging sign will be illuminated by an existing light fixture.

The applicant has also installed window lettering. The business name measures approximately 2 3/4" by 54" and the logo measures 15" by 12".

II. HISTORY:

According to Ethelyn Cox in *Alexandria Street by Street*, 203 South Union Street dates from the mid-19th century (p.168) and has an altered facade. The upper stories were badly damaged in a fire in 2002.

In 2002, the Board approved a replacement roof and alterations (BAR Case #2002-0205, 8/21/02). In 1991, the Board approved a hanging sign for "Utica's" (BAR Case #91-75, 5/1/91). The Board also approved a hanging sign in 1987 (#87-189, 10/21/87).

III. ANALYSIS:

According to Sanborn maps, the subject property is 20 feet wide. Therefore the maximum signage allowed is 20 square feet. The proposed signs comply with zoning ordinance requirements.

The existing signage for the building includes a small brass plaque for the upper level tenants, The Borden Group, Inc. and Meals on Wheels Association of America (SGN2004-38, 4/9/04). Each building within the historic district is permitted 1 square of signage that does not require BAR approval.

The *Design Guidelines* recommend generally only one sign per business is appropriate (Signs - Page 3). In this case, Staff believes that the window lettering should be eliminated so that views into the store are not blocked. Generally window signs approved by the Board are much smaller and are located at either the top or bottom of the window.

Staff believes that the design, size, color and material of the hanging sign is appropriate.

IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Therefore, Staff recommends approval of the application with the condition that the existing window sign be eliminated prior to installation of the hanging 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 A construction permit is required for the proposed project.

Office of Historic Alexandria:

“No comment.”