

Docket Item #6
BAR CASE# 2005-0012

BAR Meeting
February 16, 2005

ISSUE: Signs

APPLICANT: First Horizon, by John Martel

LOCATION: 833 South Washington Street

ZONE: CRMU-L Commercial

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of the three wall signs and denial of the vinyl door lettering.

I. ISSUE:

The applicant is requesting approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness for signage for the bank, First Horizon, at 833 South Washington Street. This is a corner building and a total of four signs are proposed:

Washington Street

Above Entrance - Individual pin mounted aluminum letter sign, "First Horizon, ATM" and includes the bank and ATM logos. This sign measures 7' 9 1.2" in length by 1' 5" in height.

Entrance door - vinyl lettering, "First Horizon, Home Loans" with the bank logo. This sign measures approximately 7" in height and 1.5' in length.

Above the retail storefront window - Individual pin mounted aluminum letter sign, "First Horizon" with the bank logo, 7" in height and 5' in length.

Green Street

Above retail storefront window - Individual pin mounted aluminum letter sign, "First Horizon, ATM" and includes the bank and ATM logos. This sign measures 8'6" in length by 12 1/2" in height.

The three wall signs area all proposed to use blue lettering while the door lettering is proposed to be white. In all of the proposed signs, the bank logo is red, white, and blue.

II. HISTORY:

833 South Washington Street is a two and a half story brick building constructed in a Colonial Revival design and dating from ca. 1962. The building is part of a row of one and two story buildings that make up the strip shopping center in the 800 block of South Washington Street.

The Board has approved a number of alterations and signs for this building during the last three decades. In 1993 the Board approved the installation of signage for First Union Bank (BAR Case #93-202, 11/3/93). In 1995 the Board approved alterations to the building for a retail tenant (BAR Case #95-119, 7/19/95) and retail signage in 1996 (BAR Case #96-0233, 10/16/96).

In 2000 the Board approved a new enclosure for a trash dumpster and screening for the rooftop HVAC equipment for this shopping center (BAR Case #2000-0129, 7/19/00) and an exterior stair addition (BAR Case #2000-0182, 9/6/00). Also in 2000, the Board approved signage for the previous retail tenant, Workbench (BAR Case #2000-0251, 11/15/00).

III. ANALYSIS:

According to the Sanborn maps, the subject building is approximately 20 feet wide on South Washington Street and approximately 80 feet wide on Green Street. The proposed signs comply with zoning ordinance requirements.

The Board is particularly concerned with the maintenance of the memorial character of the George Washington Memorial Parkway which passes through Alexandria as Washington Street. Therefore, requests for certificates of appropriateness for signs on Washington Street must be compatible with the memorial nature of the Parkway. The proposed signs comply with the 1929 agreement with the National Park Service that no freestanding signs be constructed on Washington Street.

The *Design Guidelines* recommend only one sign per business. However, for corner buildings the Board routinely approves signs for both business fronts. In this instance, Staff can support more than one sign. The Board approved three wall signs for the previous retail tenant “Workbench” and denied a banner sign and any window lettering. Staff believes that with two wall signs on South Washington Street, the proposed door lettering is unnecessary.

Staff believes that the proposed individual letter signs meet the recommendations of the *Design Guidelines* and are appropriate.

IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Therefore, Staff recommends approval of the three wall signs and denial of the vinyl door lettering.

CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

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

Code Enforcement:

C-1 Construction permits are required for this project.

C-2 Wall letters / signs must comply with USBC [H103-H111].

Office of Historic Alexandria:

“No comment”