

Docket Item #4  
BAR CASE# 2005-0007

BAR Meeting  
March 16, 2005

**ISSUE:** Sign

**APPLICANT:** Momentum Marketing, by Fastsigns

**LOCATION:** 727 North Washington Street

**ZONE:** CDX Commercial

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**BOARD ACTION, FEBRUARY 2, 2005:** On a motion by Mr. Keleher, seconded by Ms. Neihardt the Board deferred the application for restudy. The vote on the motion was 5-0.

**REASON:** The Board agreed with the Staff analysis. The Board believed that there should be additional discussions between the applicant and the community on the design of the signs.

**SPEAKERS:** Brad Beckstrom, building owner, spoke in support  
Sally Ann Greer, 1168 North Pitt Street, member, Old Town North Urban Design Advisory Committee, spoke in opposition

Update: Since the last public hearing, the applicant has revised the design of the sign to eliminate the red colored LED lights and has reduced the overall square footage of the sign from 52.5 square feet to 23.4 square feet.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends approval of the application as submitted.

**I. ISSUE:**

The applicant is requesting approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness for the installation of a sign for the office building at 727 North Washington Street. The proposed sign, “Redpeg Marketing,” measures 2.34' by 10' and includes the new business logo. The sign will be mounted above the garage entrance on the west elevation of the building, facing Washington Street. The colors of the reverse channel lettering and logo are red, black and white. The sign will be backlit with white LEDs.

**II. HISTORY:**

727 North Washington Street is a four story freestanding brick office building with a large metal mansard roof and imbedded surface parking that was constructed in 1979, according to information on the Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps.

The Board recently approved new window openings on the second, third and fourth floors of the south wall of the building (BAR Case #2003-0030, 3/5/03, BAR CASE #2003-0274 12/17/03). The Board also approved the current sign for Momentum Marketing (BAR Case #2003-0086, 6/4/03).

**III. ANALYSIS:**

727 North Washington Street has a building width of 70 ft +/- facing North Washington Street; maximum sign area allowed is 70 square feet. The proposed wall sign complies with zoning ordinance requirements.

The *Design Guidelines* state that 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” (Signs - Page 4).

According to the *Design Guidelines*, halo or back lit signs are permitted, however, the appropriateness of the signs is considered on a case by case basis. In this case, Staff believes that the white colored back lit sign is acceptable for this late twentieth century building. Staff notes that the Board recently approved back lit signs for Commerce Bank at 119 South Washington Street (BAR Case #2004-0261, 3/2/05).

Staff believes that the sign meets the recommendations of the *Design Guidelines* and is appropriate.

**IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

Therefore, Staff recommends approval of the application as submitted.

## CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

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

### Code Enforcement:

C-1 A construction permit is required for the proposed project.

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

### Office of Historic Alexandria:

“The use of lighting on this sign needs to be reviewed in relation to the guidelines for signs.”