

Docket Item #4  
BAR CASE #2005-0079

BAR Meeting  
May 4, 2005

**ISSUE:** Entrance canopy

**APPLICANT:** National Center for Missing and Exploited Children

**LOCATION:** 699 Prince Street

**ZONE:** CD/Commercial

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### **STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends approval of the application as submitted with the condition that an encroachment ordinance be approved by the Planning Commission and City Council.

### **I. ISSUE:**

The applicant is requesting approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness for the construction of an entrance canopy at the main entrance to the office building at 699 Prince Street. The new canopy will project 11' from the face of the building and will be 12'2" in width. The sidewalk width at this location is 13'8". The canopy will be constructed of wood and will be painted to match the existing trimwork on the building. It will be supported by two overhead metal tie rods and will not have columns or poses resting on the sidewalk. The signage indicated on the drawings for the canopy is not included in this current application.

### **II. HISTORY:**

The building at 699 Prince Street was constructed in 1926 as the George Mason Hotel. At the time of its construction, the building was widely praised for its Colonial design vocabulary.

Last month the Board approved a new addition for a computer server room at the rear of the building (BAR Case #2005-0037, 4/20/05). The Board approved signage for the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children in 1999 (BAR Case #99-0116, 7/21/99) and in 2001 for alterations to the adjacent garage (BAR Case #2001-0223, 12/19/02). In 2002, the Board approved new replacement columns at the Prince Street entrance (BAR Case #2002-0219, 9/4/02).

### **III. ANALYSIS:**

The proposed canopy requires approval of an encroachment ordinance by the Planning Commission and City Council.

As noted above, this building was originally constructed as the George Mason Hotel. The original entrance into the hotel was from South Washington Street and it had an elaborate canopy over its entry doors. The current proposal basically replicates the historical entrance canopy, but on Prince Street rather than on South Washington Street. Because the canopy follows historical precedent Staff recommends approval. Small urban hotels such as the George Mason almost always had large entrance canopies which served both utilitarian functions by protecting guests from the weather, but also had aesthetic functions by bringing the focus of a building to ground level with a substantial protrusion from the building. The canopy also served as identification for the hotel and a secondary function as advertising. The currently proposed canopy will replicate these attributes of a ground level entrance canopy.

No signage is being proposed for the canopy and it is not anticipated that signage will be proposed.

### **IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends approval of the application as submitted with the condition that an encroachment ordinance be approved by the Planning Commission and City Council.

## CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

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

### Code Enforcement:

- C-1 Construction permits and plans are required for the proposed project.
- C-2 Awnings must comply with all applicable requirements of USBC 3105 and 3202. 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.
- C-3 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).

### Historic Alexandria:

I prefer this without the proposed overhang. The new design does not seem to be appropriate to the rest of the design scheme for walls/door.