

Docket Item #9
BAR CASE #2006-0009

BAR Meeting
February 1, 2006

ISSUE: Signage and alterations
APPLICANT: Sackville Galleries
LOCATION: 1001 Cameron Street
ZONE: KR/King Street Urban Retail

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends:

1. Approval of the gold leafing of sections of the railing;
2. Approval of the hanging sign with the condition that the sign be anchored through the mortar joints rather than directly into the brick; and,
3. Deferral of the awnings to consider alternative methods of identification and signage.

I. ISSUE:

1001 King Street is one of a row of three recently renovated rowhouses. All three properties (1001, 1003 and 1005 King Street) are before the Board for similar alterations (see docket #s 10 & 11).

At 1001 King Street, the applicant is requesting approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness for the following:

Awnings

The applicant is proposing the installation of two awnings or canopies: one at the front entrance facing King Street and another above an areaway and three windows on the Patrick Street side of the building. The shed style awnings will be of a maroon colored canvas type material. The awning over the door will have the street number in 8" tall white lettering on the valance. It will be 5'9-3/4" wide and 2' high, will project 3'4" and will have a 1' valance. The awning on the Patrick Street side will have "Sackville Galleries" in 8" tall white lettering on the valance. It will be 13'9" wide and 2' high, will project 3'2" and will have a 1" valance.

Alterations

The applicant proposes to highlight in gold leaf the balls at the top of the posts and the small, crown-shaped pieces at the top and bottom of each of the star-shaped forms in the railing. The black finished steel railings found at the front steps and around the areaway on the Patrick Street side of the building.

These railings were installed as part of the recent renovation of the building.

Signage

The applicant proposes a double faced hanging sign above the front window facing King Street. The sign will be made of painted MDO. The overall dimensions of the sign will be 18" by 36". It will have notched corners and an arch over the center section. The background will be dark green and the edge will be maroon. "Sackville Galleries" will be written in gold leaf. Beneath this, "paintings and decorative arts," will be written in gold leaf on a black cartouche. The street number will be located at the top of the sign in the arched portion. It will be in gold leaf on a black oval. The sign will hang from a black metal scroll bracket and will be 10' above the sidewalk.

II. HISTORY:

1001 King Street is a series of three buildings that are of contiguous construction, designed as a single composition. They reflect Second Empire influences and were constructed between 1902 and 1907. The buildings were originally constructed as separate residential dwellings. They

were consolidated into one building in the latter part of the 20th century and until recently served as a Second Genesis drug rehabilitation facility. The three buildings were renovated in 2004, restored to their original configurations as three separate structures and converted to commercial use. The Board approved the demolition and alterations for this project in 2004 (BAR Case #2004-0009, 2/18/2004, & BAR Case #2004-0010, 3/3/2004).

III. ANALYSIS:

The proposed awnings and signs comply with the zoning ordinance requirements.

Staff believes the proposed hanging sign is entirely appropriate to the late 19th century historic character of the building. However, Staff notes that the *Design Guidelines* recommend that the anchors for hanging signs be installed through the mortar joints rather than the bricks to avoid damage to the masonry wall (Signs - Page 4). Staff has reservations about the proposed gold leafing of portions of the railings, believing that it is an overly ornate treatment for a building of this type. While Staff believes the existing all over black finish of the metal railings is appropriate to the building and would prefer that portions of the railings *not* be gold leafed, Staff will not object to the proposed alteration as the gold leafing is confined to small sections of the railings and is a reversible treatment. Staff believes the awnings are out of character with the historic building and obscure significant architectural elements such as the door and window headers. According to the *Design Guidelines*: “[a]wnings should not overwhelm or obscure the architecture and decorative features of historic buildings.” (Awnings - Page 3) Staff recommends that the awnings be eliminated. If desired, the address numerals could be applied in gold leaf to the transoms over the doors. Similarly, the signage on the Patrick Street awning would be more appropriately handled by a flat board sign of similar character to the proposed hanging sign.

IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends:

1. Approval of the gold leafing of sections of the railing;
2. Approval of the hanging sign with the condition that the sign be anchored through the mortar joints rather than directly into the brick; and,
3. Deferral of the awnings to consider alternative methods of identification and signage.

CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

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

Code Enforcement:

- C-1 A construction permit is required for this project.
- C-2 Awnings must comply with all applicable requirements of USBC 3105 and 3202. Fixed awnings must have a minimum 7 foot clearance form a sidewalk to the lowest part of the framework.
- 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).
- C-4 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.

Historic Alexandria:

- F-1 The proposed awnings hide architectural details (i.e. transom and transom lintel and window and masonry work). The sign is attractive but the proposed location above the window is awkward; it would look better on the upper left side of the window. Detailing on the railings should not be gold-leafed.