

Docket Item # 4
BAR CASE# 2006-0016

BAR Meeting
February 15, 2006

ISSUE: Sign

APPLICANT: Silk Road

LOCATION: 1121 King Street

ZONE: KR/King Street Urban Retail

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of the application with the following conditions:

1. That the letters in the wall sign be the same height as the letters in the existing BENMOL sign or alternatively if the Benmol sign is removed prior to installation of the new wall sign, the lettering height be approved as submitted; and,
2. That the hanging sign be anchored through the mortar joints rather than directly into the brick.

I. ISSUE:

The applicant is requesting approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness for signage at the commercial building at 1121 King Street. SILK ROAD will replace the long-time tenant, QUIMPER FAIENCE in the commercial space on the first story and proposes a wall sign and hanging sign, like the previous tenant. The wall sign will consist of 8" high flat cut aluminum letters in a brass finish reading "SILK ROAD." The letters will be mounted into the wood signboard above the storefront with blind stud mounts. The total length of the wall sign will be 57". The hanging sign will be mounted in the wall above the storefront on a black iron scroll bracket. The bracket will project 4' from the face of the wall. The double faced signboard will be 30" wide and 20" high. It will have a gold border on a turquoise background with a stylized image of an antlered animal above the words, "SILK ROAD."

An existing wall sign consisting of individual letters with a brass finish and reading "BENMOL," is located on the left side of the storefront above the door to the second floor office area.

II. HISTORY:

The two story brick Colonial Revival style commercial townhouse was designed to have a commercial space on the street level and offices on the second floor and was constructed on a vacant lot in 1988 (BAR Case#87-172, 9/16/1987). The BAR approved a projecting hanging sign for the commercial tenant, QUIMPER FAIENCE on 10/17/1990 (BAR Case #90-224). Later the same year, the BAR approved the existing brass letter sign reading "BENMOL" for the second floor tenant (BAR Case #90-254, 12/19/1990). The Board additionally approved an individual letter sign and lighting for QUIMPER FAIENCE on 3/4/1992 (BAR Case #92-39). In 1993, the Board approved the addition of a bay window at the front for the building QUIMPER FAIENCE (BAR Case #93-23, 2/17/1993).

III. ANALYSIS:

The proposed signage complies with zoning ordinance requirements.

Staff has no objection to the proposed signage. While the Board generally prefers one sign per business, the Board approved both a wall sign and hanging sign for the previous commercial tenant, QUIMPER FAIENCE. Moreover, the wall sign balances the existing "BENMOL" sign which will remain. Staff believes the proposed signage is attractive and compatible with the building and surrounding district. However, Staff notes that the 1990 approval for the "BENMOL" sign described those letters as 6" high, 2" less than the proposed "SILK ROAD" wall sign. Staff would prefer that the two signs be the same height and recommends that the

“SILK ROAD” sign be the same height as the existing sign.

The applicant is agreeable to the conditions set forth in the recommendation.

IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of the application with the following condition:

1. That the letters in the wall sign be the same height as the letters in the existing BENMOL sign or alternatively if the Benmol sign is removed prior to installation of the new wall sign, the lettering height be approved as submitted; and,
2. That the hanging sign be anchored through the mortar joints rather than directly into the brick.

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 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-3 Wall letters / signs must comply with USBC [H103-H111]

Office of Historic Alexandria:

No comment.