

Docket Item # 4
BAR CASE #2006-0083

BAR Meeting
May 17, 2006

ISSUE: Signs
APPLICANT: Ann Taylor Loft by Alberto Gaitan
LOCATION: 423 King Street
ZONE: CD/Commercial

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends approval of the application as submitted.

(Insert sketch here)

I. ISSUE:

The applicant is requesting approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness for signs for Ann Taylor Loft at 423 King Street. The current application is a change in the design of the signage previously approved by the Board for Ann Taylor Loft. Previously the Board had approved illuminated individual pin mounted lettering for the signs "Ann Taylor Loft." The lettering for the signage now proposed to be mounted to a one inch thick metal panel which will then be installed on the sign band. Two signs on the metal raceway are proposed: one to be installed on the sign band above the entrance on King Street and the other above the show window on North Pitt Street. The raceway will be 50" in length and approximately 24" in height with slightly smaller individual lettering. The design of the illuminated black signs has not changed.

The applicant has supplied an actual sample of the metal raceway housing which will be made available to members at the public hearing.

II. HISTORY:

423 King Street is located in Tavern Square. Tavern Square is a complex of two to five story brick buildings built around a central courtyard. It was constructed in 1967 as part of Phase I of the Gadsby Urban Renewal Project and was designed by the architectural firm of Vosbeck and Vosbeck. While the overall architectural character of Tavern Square is firmly within the pattern of 1960s urban renewal architecture, it does make use of traditional building materials with brick, standing seam metal roofing and punched window openings and Alexandria building forms. The shed roof forms clearly recall Alexandria's flounder building type and the second floor dormers mimic those on the Ramsay House.

Last year the Board approved signage for Ann Taylor Loft (BAR Case #2005-0272, 12/7/05).

The Board has approved numerous alterations and signage for businesses located in Tavern Square over the years.

III. ANALYSIS:

The proposed signs comply with zoning ordinance requirements.

The applicant proposes to change the method of attachment because of the extreme difficulty in installing individually pin mounted lettering on the pre-cast stone sign band with the attendant need for multiple penetrations of the stone. Staff believes that a change in the design of the signage from individually pin mounted lettering to installation of the signs on a metal raceway is a significant change in the design. However, staff is supportive of this design change for a number of reasons. First, attaching the signage to a metal raceway will significantly reduce the necessity of multiple penetrations of the precast sign band. Second, attaching signs to a metal raceway is a modern method of sign attachment and is appropriate on a late 20th century building. Third, signs attached to a metal raceway are in use for other retailers in this building complex

including the Pendleton store. Finally, in the opinion of staff a 1" thick metal raceway to house the electrical wiring is minimal and will not be an obvious visual element on the facade of the building. Thus, Staff has no objection to the change in design proposed for these signs.

IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

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.

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

Historic Alexandria

No comment.