

Docket Item # 7
BAR CASE #2006-0056

BAR Meeting
September 6, 2006

ISSUE: Sign

APPLICANT: Bank of America

LOCATION: 600 North Washington Street

ZONE: OC/Office commercial

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends approval of the proposed sign and deferral of the lighting.

(Insert sketch here)

I. ISSUE:

The applicant is requesting approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness for the installation of a wall sign above the ATM on the Pendleton Street side of the building. The signage will consist of a 9'11" long by 1'2 ½" wide aluminum backer box. The box will project 2" from the face of the wall and will be finished to match the color of the brick wall. The 6" tall dark blue vinyl lettering on the backer box will read "Bank of America." A blue and red "flag" logo will follow the lettering. The signage will not be internally illuminated.

The applicant proposes to add four new light fixtures to illuminate the sign. The downlights are shown mounted on or between the dentils in the crown molding at the roofline. There are two existing wall-mounted lights in this vicinity. These lights will remain to illuminate the area of the ATM. The existing monument sign at the front of 600 North Washington Street will remain.

II. HISTORY:

The one-and-one-half story, brick veneer, Georgian Revival bank building at 600 North Washington Street was constructed in 1972 according to plans approved by the Board of Architectural Review on July 21, 1971. In 1972, the Board approved two freestanding signs (2/16/1972 and 4/19/1972) for the Virginia National Bank. The drive-in teller facility was originally approved by the Board in 1984 (BAR Case #84-3). The Board approved new signage for NationsBank on July 14, 1992 (BAR Case #92-111). In 1994, The Board approved a new drive through teller window (BAR Case #94-68, 5/18/1994). In 1999 the Board approved an application to change one freestanding sign from NationsBank to Bank of America by refacing the existing sign at the front of the building. At the same time, the ATM surround was repainted champagne metallic to match the color proposed for the freestanding sign (BAR Case #99-0117, 8/17/1999).

III. ANALYSIS:

The new sign complies with the zoning ordinance requirements.

Staff is not opposed to the proposed new sign. The design is acceptable and there are no other bank identification signs on the Pendleton Street side of the building. Although the *Design Guidelines* recommend that, in general, there be one sign per business, the Board often has approved more than one sign for a corner property such as this. On the other hand, staff believes the proposed new lights are not compatible with the traditional design of the building. Moreover, as shown in the drawing, they are mounted in such a way that they are visually obtrusive and interfere with the cornice, a significant architectural feature of the Georgian Revival style building. There are already a large number of obtrusive elements at this end of building: the existing lights, deposit box, ATM and ATM envelope box. Staff recommends the approval of the sign without the lighting. However, if the applicant believes the lighting is necessary, staff recommends consideration of ways to consolidate the ATM and sign lighting using a more compatible and sympathetically located fixture.

IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of the proposed sign and deferral of the lighting.

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 Wall signs must comply with USBC.

Historic Alexandria:

“No comment.”