

Docket Item # 11
BAR CASE #2006-134

BAR Meeting
September 6, 2006

ISSUE: Alterations and signage
APPLICANT: Kimpton Hotels and Restaurant
LOCATION: 480 King Street
ZONE: KR/King Street Urban Retail

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends approval of the application with the following conditions:

1. Elimination of the hanging sign proposed for the King and South Pitt Streets corner;
2. That the BAR Approval is conditioned upon approval of an encroachment ordinance by the Planning Commission and City Council; and,
3. That the BAR Approval is conditioned upon approval of the Special Use Permit for the restaurant use by the Planning Commission and City Council.

BOARD ACTION, JULY 19, 2006: The Board combined discussion of docket item #'s 12 and 13. On a motion by Mr. Smeallie, seconded by Ms. Quill, the Board deferred the application for restudy to address the proposed signage, exterior colors, and the number and function of doors in the new storefront to the restaurant along King Street. The vote was 4-0.

REASON: The Board found the proposed signage problematic, particularly the corner hanging sign, and were also concerned about the new door treatment along King Street, which appear to violate Board of Health regulations, which do not allow opening into an eating space without a screen. The Board suggested to the applicant to look at revising the proposed signage and address the issues of the doors in the new storefront.

SPEAKERS: Ken Reynolds, representing the applicant, spoke in support
Jeff Barber, project architect, spoke in support
Ellen Pickering, Roberts Lane, spoke in opposition

(Insert sketch here)

Update: In response to the Board's concerns at the July 19th public hearing the applicant has made a number of changes to the alterations proposed for the new Hotel Monaco. These include:

- Changing the new multiple entrances to the restaurant to include operable doors with single lights with wood panels below
- Providing alternative designs for the proposed hotel sign at the corner of the building at King and South Pitt Streets; Option A is the same 6' wide sign considered by the Board at the July 19th public hearing; Option B is a 3'5" wide sign; and,
- The color of the base of the hotel has been somewhat lightened.

NOTE: Docket item #10 must be approved before this docket item can be considered.

I. ISSUE:

The applicant is requesting approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness for alterations and signage for the six story hotel building at 480 King Street. This will allow the conversion of the building from a Holiday Inn Select to a Kimpton Hotel.

Alterations (All alterations will take place on the first level of the building)

- The existing green awnings on the west end of the King Street facade will be removed.
- The existing entry awning will be removed.
- The middle section of the King Street facade will be altered by removing the existing openings and replacing them with a new wood surround with cornice approximately 50' in length and with a new single light door with wood panels (a total of 11 operable doors are proposed). A metal awning will be installed below the cornice and run the width of the restaurant space.
- A new pair of double wood and glass doors 7' 4" in width are proposed for a new entrance way to the hotel restaurant.
- A metal marquee will be installed over the new entry which will be relocated three bays to the west of the current entry. The marquee is proposed to be approximately 31' in length and extend approximately 8' 2" from the face of the building and will be 5' 8" in height. The marquee will be indirectly lit with recessed lighting and downlighting. The marquee will have a black background and metallic gold borders.
- The new entry for the hotel will also have wall system opening with 6' wide double doors flanked by single light windows with a pair of multi-light sidelights on either side.
- New wall lantern light fixtures will be installed on either side of the hotel and restaurant entrances as well as between the panel for the new wall system.

- The westernmost window niche (at the corner of South Pitt Street) will be altered from a curvilinear opening to a rectilinear opening.
- New wood panels will be installed on either side of the first floor windows on South Pitt Street together with a new wood cornice above these windows.
- The base of the western section of the building will be painted a light gray color except for the panels flanking the restaurant area which will be painted a dark red color.

Signage

- The new marquee will read, "Hotel Monaco" on the front and includes the hotel logo on the sides. The King Street sign will be gold lettering and measure approximately 18' in length with 18" high lettering. The logo on the sides will have white lettering on a green background and a multi-color logo and be approximately 2'6" round.
- A sign for the restaurant will be installed on the awning band above the restaurant space. The restaurant sign will be individual metal lettering installed on the west end of the awning. The individual lettering will be approximately 14" in height. As depicted in the drawings, "Old Town Cafe" is a place holder for the eventual name of the new restaurant.
- A new hanging sign, "Hotel Monaco" and logo, is proposed to be installed at the South Pitt Street corner of the building. Two options are provided: Option A is is approximately 6' in width and 4'5" in height and will be installed between the first and second level on a curved metal bracket. Option B is approximately 3'5" in width and 2'7" in height and will be installed just above the first level on an existing metal scroll bracket.
- Another sign "Hotel Monaco" and logo, is proposed to be installed at the garage entrance on South Pitt Street. This sign is approximately 4'6" in width and 3'6" in height and will be illuminated by either external lamps or with white neon.

II. HISTORY:

The Kimpton Hotel (nee Holiday Inn) is a six story brick commercial building which occupies the south side of the 400 block of King Street. It was constructed as part of the urban renewal project in 1975. The Board has reviewed a number of alterations to this building over the years.

III. ANALYSIS:

Proposed alterations to existing hotel require review and approval of an encroachment ordinance for the marquee, awning and oversize projecting sign and Special Use Permit for the restaurant use by the Planning Commission and City Council. The Hotel was approved under SUP #931, granted on September 25, 1973. A change of ownership of the restaurant is in progress

(SUP#2006-0048). Intensification or modification of either the hotel or restaurant may require an amendment to the respective SUP.

In general, staff has no objection to the proposed changes to re-brand the hotel which are appropriate to a late 20th century commercial building. However, staff believes that the amount of signage proposed for the hotel itself is excessive. Specifically, staff does not believe that a hanging sign proposed for the King and South Pitt Streets corners are necessary. The proposed sign is quite close to the proposed marquee which will provide hotel identification and, thus, they appear to be redundant. In addition, the signs are situated where they would not be readily visible to automobile traffic which is the primary means of arriving at the hotel. The marquee itself provides an excellent and easily readable form of identification for automobile traffic. Staff has no objection to the illuminated sign above the garage entrance which staff believes is important to mark the entrance to the parking garage.

IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of the application with the following conditions:

1. Elimination of the hanging sign proposed for the King and South Pitt Streets corner;
2. That the BAR Approval is conditioned upon approval of an encroachment ordinance by the Planning Commission and City Council; and,
3. That the BAR Approval is conditioned upon approval of the Special Use Permit for the restaurant use by the Planning Commission and City Council.

CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

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

Code Enforcement:

- C-1 Canopies must comply with USBC 3202 for support and clearance from the sidewalk, and the applicable sections of USBC's Chapter 11. The horizontal portions of the framework must not be less than 8 feet nor more than 12 feet above the sidewalk.
- 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 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).
- C-4 New construction must comply with the current edition of the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC).
- C-5 Alterations to the existing structure must comply with the current edition of the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC).
- C-6 Construction permits are required for this project. Plans shall accompany the permit application that fully detail the construction as well as layouts and schematics of the mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems.
- C-7 Required exits, parking, and accessibility within the building for persons with disabilities must comply with USBC Chapter 11.

Historic Alexandria:

Generally, the proposal seems appropriate. However, the Art Deco styling of the hotel entrance and signage might not be preferable for the historic district. Historically, the present-day hotel is located on the site of the 19th century Marshall House, where Union commander Col. Elmer Ellsworth and local innkeeper James Jackson were killed during the Federal occupation of Alexandria on May 24, 1861. The historic marker on the exterior of the building cites this incident. This block of King Street was part of the urban renewal movement of the 1960s.