

Docket Item #4
BAR CASE #2006-0195

BAR Meeting
September 20, 2006

ISSUE: Signage
APPLICANT: Lawrence Singer
LOCATION: 809 Cameron Street
ZONE: CD/Commercial

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends approval of the application with the condition that the sign be reduced in height with the final design to be approved by staff.

(Insert sketch here)

I. ISSUE:

The applicant is requesting approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness for a hanging sign to be located above the entrance at 809 Cameron Street. The double sided sign will be 30" high by 36" wide and will be made of MDO. The sign will have a tan background with brown lettering. There will be two levels of text. In the background in a slightly darker shade of tan than the background will be a large, diagonally oriented, "DC", and along the bottom, "smiles". Overtop this in brown lettering will be the primary text, reading from top to bottom: "Dr. Lawrence D. Singer, DMD PC, DC smiles, cosmetic implant reconstructive DENTISTRY". The primary text letters will range from 6" in height for the "DC" to 1" in height for the "cosmetic implant reconstructive". The sign will be installed on the fascia board above the entrance. It will hang from a 42" long black metal scroll bracket.

II. HISTORY:

809 Cameron Street was built as two separate but attached houses (809 & 807 Cameron Street) between 1877 and 1885. Between 1896 and 1902, a third floor addition was added to the westernmost building (809 Cameron Street).

The Board has recently approved a number of alterations to the property. Beginning in 2003, the Board approved a third story addition to the front eastern portion of the building and alterations to the front, rear and sides of the building (BAR Case #2003-0234/235, 12/3/2003). In 2004, the Board approved the reconstruction of the rear wall (BAR Case #2004-0007/8, 2/4/2004). In 2005, the Board approved alterations to the plans approved in 2003, including new window openings and skylights and alterations to the rear door (BAR Case #s 2004-0256/257, 1/5/2005 and 2005-0129, 7/6/2005).

III. ANALYSIS:

The proposed signage complies with the zoning ordinance requirements.

Staff believes the sign is generally acceptable but believes that the design would be improved by the elimination of what appears to excess height. The applicant originally sought to include telephone number and web site address but eliminated these when notified that the *Design Guidelines* and Board discourage the inclusion of these items on signage in the historic districts (Signs - Page 5). The large blank area at the bottom of the sign is a result of the deletion of these items and appears disproportional. In addition to approving the appearance of the sign, the reduction of the height of the sign will allow more of the entryway with its arched transom to be visible. Staff recommends that the sign be reduced in height by approximately 6" and that the background lettering be adjusted to fit the new dimensions of approximately 24" by 36". Staff is willing to work with the applicant on the final design of the sign.

IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of the application with the condition that the sign be reduced in height with the final design to be approved by staff.

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 Projecting, hanging signs must comply with USBC [H103-H107, H-112] for type of materials, maximum projection, vertical clearance below all parts of the sign, and additional loads.

Historic Alexandria:

The proposed sign obscures the tympanum and transom of the doorway. It appears to be a banner which detracts from the appearance of the entrance.