

Docket Item # 12
BAR CASE # 2006-0235

BAR Meeting
November 1, 2006

ISSUE: Signage
APPLICANT: Georgetown Optician by Old Town Sign Company
LOCATION: 1110 King Street
ZONE: KR/King Street Retail

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends approval of the application with the condition that the steps, decorative brick panel and front door are addressed in consultation with Staff within 6 months of this approval.

(Insert sketch here)

I. ISSUE:

The applicant is requesting approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness for a double sided hanging sign to be located on the right side of the first story window in the projecting bay on the front of the two story brick building. The sign will be 16” high by 40” wide and will be made of MDO plywood. It will read “Georgetown Optician” in white lettering on a black background with a green border. The 44” wide bracket will be of black painted steel. The contemporary style bracket will consist of two horizontal pieces, one longer than the other and two equal length vertical pieces which connect to the sign and function as the chains do in traditional hanging sign brackets. In addition, the bracket also includes a metal frame around the sign. The bracket will be mounted to the wall surface using 2.5” lag and shield hardware in the mortar joints.

II. HISTORY:

1110 King Street is one of a pair of semi-detached rowhouses. It is a two story, two bay Second Empire style building with ornate stamped brick work and was originally constructed in the late 19th century as a residence. It had been vacant for several years until the recent opening of the optician’s office.

In 2004, the Board considered alterations for a proposed restaurant, including a new metal staircase at the rear, a new rear door and screening for the rooftop HVAC (BAR Case 2004-0184, 9/24/2006). The restaurant never opened and the work was not completed. The Board considered alterations to the facade of the building and signage in 2000 (BAR Case #2000-209, 9/20/00). The Board approved the signage, but denied the alterations. The proposed work was never undertaken.

III. ANALYSIS:

The proposed sign complies with the zoning ordinance requirements.

Staff believes the proposed sign is appropriate. It is compatible with the building and surrounding district and complies with the *Design Guidelines*. Therefore, Staff recommends approval of the sign.

However, Staff notes that a number of inappropriate alterations were recently undertaken at the property without BAR approval. First, over the last year or so, several of the decorative pressed bricks were lost from the panel at the front of the bay below the first story window. The original bricks had a floral motif. The lost bricks have now been replaced with modern bricks with abstract forms. If the floral motif can not be matched exactly, bricks that more closely match the style of the originals should be used to replace the missing bricks. Secondly, the front steps, which were either stone or concrete have been paved over with ceramic tiles, in an apparent effort to match a similar alteration at 1112 King Street. The tile should be removed and the stone or concrete repaired or, alternatively, a more historically appropriate treatment be selected in consultation with Staff. Lastly, an inappropriate cottage style front door has been installed. The door should be replaced with a wood or wood and glass door that is appropriate to the late 19th century building.

According to the current owner, Joost Voorthuis, who acquired the building in September 2006, these alterations were made by the prior owner. Mr. Voorthuis has spoken with staff about these

issues and is willing to work with staff to ensure that they are corrected in a manner that is compatible with the historic character of this handsome late 19th century building.

IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of the application with the condition that the steps, decorative brick panel and front door are addressed in consultation with Staff within 6 months of this approval.

CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

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

Code Enforcement:

- C-1 Alterations to the existing structure must comply with the current edition of Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC).
- 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 A Building Permit is required for this project.

Historic Alexandria:

No comments.