

Docket Item #4
BAR CASE # 2007-0058

BAR Meeting
April 18, 2007

ISSUE: Signage
APPLICANT: Decorium Design
LOCATION: 116 King Street
ZONE: KR/King Street retail

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 a new projecting sign at 116 King Street. Decorium, a retail shop specializing in decorative items and home furnishings, is located in the first floor of the building. An interior design studio associated with the retail shop will be occupying the second floor. The proposed sign for this design studio will be located above the entrance on the left side of the building which leads to the second story space. There are presently two other signs on the building, both for Decorium, the retail shop: a wall sign of silver colored pin mounted letters located above the shop window and a projecting sign located above the entrance on the right side of the building which leads to the store.

The proposed double faced MDO projecting sign will be 2' high by 3' long. It will hang from an existing black metal scroll bracket. The sign will have a white background and dark brown lettering reading "d2 decorium design interior design". The sign will match the hanging sign on the other side of the building in size and will be hung at the same height.

The building has a total frontage of 31 feet. The existing wall sign is 8 square feet while the hanging sign is 6 square feet. The proposed new sign will also be 6 square feet. Thus, the total existing and proposed signage will be 20 square feet.

II. HISTORY:

The two-story brick commercial structure at 114-118 King Street was constructed sometime between 1885 and 1891 as a warehouse. The property was formerly part of the 1975 Small Mall. It has housed a home furnishings store since 2001. On May 16, 2001, the Board approved two signs for Rugs to Riches at this location (BAR Case #2001-0103). Staff administratively approved changing the two signs from Rugs to Riches to Decorium in 2005.

III. ANALYSIS:

The proposed sign complies with the zoning ordinance requirements. Section 9-202(B)(1) of the zoning ordinance states that all signs displayed on a building wall facing a street may not exceed one square foot for each linear foot of building width facing such street. The subject building is 31' wide. The existing signage is 14 square feet in total. The proposed sign will be 6 square feet. Thus, at 20 square feet the combined area of signage is well within the area allowed.

In the opinion of Staff, the proposed new sign is appropriate for this building. While the *Design Guidelines* do state that "[g]enerally, only one sign per business is appropriate" (Signs- Page 3), it should be noted that the proposed new sign is for a separate, but related, business located on the second floor. Moreover, the Board has frequently approved more than one sign for a retail business when it deemed it appropriate. In fact, the Board approved a flat and a projecting sign for Rugs to Riches at this same location in 2001. At that time there was also a projecting sign above the left side entrance for House of Tarot Cards, then located on the second floor. This building has historically had three signs, including a projecting sign over each entrance and a flat sign over the show window. The three signs function well as an ensemble. The three signs do not compete with each other visually and each serves a different function. The appearance of the street façade with the addition of the proposed sign will be clean and balanced.

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 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 comment.