

Docket Item #14
BAR CASE # 2007-0107

BAR Meeting
June 20, 2007

ISSUE: Signage & alterations
APPLICANT: Red Barn Mercantile by Old Town Sign Co.
LOCATION: 113 South Columbus Street
ZONE: KR/King Street Urban Retail

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends approval of the application with the condition that the logo and lettering be eliminated from the ends of the awnings.

(Insert sketch here)

I. ISSUE:

The applicant is requesting approval of awnings and signage for the new retail business at 113 South Columbus Street. Two awnings are proposed above the storefront windows. The awnings measure 11' by 4' with a 3' projection. The awnings will be covered in red Sunbrella fabric with white lettering. The lettering on the valance is 9 inches high reading "Red Barn Mercantile." The business name and logo on the ends of the awning is proposed to be 1'5" high. A double sided mdo hanging sign is proposed to be located to the south of the building entrance, extending below the northern awning. The 18" by 24" sign includes the name "Red Barn Mercantile" and the business logo, a brown and red rooster.

II. HISTORY:

The office building at 113 South Columbus Street was constructed in 1948. Conceived by the architect Joseph Saunders, the building design was approved by the Board of Architectural Review on 8/21/1947. During the 1940s, 50s, 60s and 70s Saunders was one of the most active architects in the city, with work ranging from residential additions to large scale projects that included the seven story office building at 900 North Washington Street, the Old Colony Motor Inn, T.C. Williams High School, and a number of ecclesiastical structures.

The westernmost section of the building is an addition that was constructed in 1954 as part of a major remodeling of the Hopkins furniture store on King Street. This addition was designed by Robert A. Wilgoos. Wilgoos was an active architect in Alexandria during the 1940s, producing a wide range of projects. He was responsible for the design of the bank building at 119-121 North Washington Street, Cora Kelly Elementary School, the education building for the Washington Street Methodist Church in the 100 block of South Washington Street and the office building at 300 Montgomery Street. Notably, during the 1940s and 50s, Wilgoos was an architect member of the Board of Architectural Review.

In 1998 the Board approved alterations to the building including new lighting, a decorative rail at the roof and awnings (BAR Case# 98-075, 6/3/98). The approved plans were later revised to represent a more sympathetic design for the modernist building (BAR Case# 99-021, 3/3/99). In 2002, the Board approved a hanging sign for the Miller Fine Art Gallery (BAR Case #2002-0250, 10/16/02). In 2004 the Board approved the existing hanging sign for Video Vault (BAR Case #2004-0175, 9/1/04)

III. ANALYSIS:

The proposed awnings and signage comply with zoning ordinance requirements.

Staff has no objections to the proposed hanging sign. Staff also believes that shed style awnings are appropriate for this building. The awnings do not overwhelm or obscure the architecture and decorative features of the building. Staff believes that the awnings will provide some visual interest to the building. Staff is however concerned about the amount of signage proposed. The *Design Guidelines* recommend "generally only one sign per business is appropriate (Signs – Page 3). The applicant is proposing a total of five signs. Staff believes that the hanging sign and the signs on the ends of the awnings are repetitive. Therefore, staff recommends that the signs on the ends of the awnings be eliminated.

IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of the application with the condition that the logo and lettering be eliminated from the ends of the awnings.

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 the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC).
- C-2 Canopies must comply with USBC 3202.3.1 for support and clearance from the sidewalk, and the applicable sections of USBC's Chapter 11. Structural designs of fabric covered canopies must comply with USBC 3105.3. The horizontal portions of the framework must not be less than 8 feet nor more than 12 feet above the sidewalk and the clearance between the covering or valance and the sidewalk must not be less than 7 feet.
- C-3 Wall letters / signs must comply with USBC [H103-H111]. Please indicate the method to be used for anchoring the letters to the wall.
- C-4 A Construction permit will be required for the proposed project.
- C-5 New construction must comply with the current edition of the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC).

Historic Alexandria:

No comments were received.