

Docket Item # 14
BAR CASE # 2007-0123

BAR Meeting
July 18, 2007

ISSUE: Signage
APPLICANT: Piaggio's Loft Fabrication Studio
LOCATION: 307 S Washington Street
ZONE: CD/Commercial

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends deferral of the application for restudy.

(Insert sketch here)

I. ISSUE:

The applicant is requesting approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness for a sign for the new business located at 307 South Washington Street. The proposed sign is a banner type sign constructed of an acrylic material suspended between two steel brackets. The material is gold colored with black text reading, “Piaggio’s Loft, Fabrication Studio” and with the business logo also in black. The double sided sign measures 3’ by 4’ and will be mounted to the south of the business entrance.

II. HISTORY:

307 South Washington Street and its pair at 309 South Washington Street were constructed as two story dwellings around 1880. The buildings first appear on the 1885 Sanborn Map.

Staff was unable to locate any prior BAR approvals for 307 South Washington Street. The Board approved signage for 309 South Washington Street in 1990 (BAR Case #90-219, 11/21/90).

III. ANALYSIS:

The subject property is zoned CD Commercial. According to the applicant, the building frontage facing South Washington Street is 18.67 square feet. The maximum sign area allowed is 18.67 square feet. The proposed 12 square foot sign complies with zoning ordinance requirements.

The Board is particularly concerned with the maintenance of the memorial character of the George Washington Memorial Parkway which passes through Alexandria as Washington Street. Therefore, requests for certificates of appropriateness for signs on Washington Street must be compatible with the memorial nature of the Parkway (Signs – Page 4).

The *Design Guidelines* for sign state that “exterior cloth and plastic banner type signs, whether installed vertically or horizontally, are strongly discouraged. It is the policy of the Boards that this type of sign is inappropriate in the historic districts (Signs – Page 3).

Staff does not support the use of a banner type sign on Washington Street which does not meet the recommendations of the *Design Guidelines* for signs. Staff is also concerned with the amount of blank space at the top and bottom of the sign. Staff recommends that the height of the sign be reduced to no more than 3’.

Staff recommends that the application be deferred for restudy of the use of a more appropriate material such as mdo or metal with a traditional bracket and with the height of the sign to be reduced.

IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends deferral of the application for restudy.

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 were received.