

Docket Item # 22
BAR CASE # 2007-0167

BAR Meeting
September 5, 2007

ISSUE: Signage
APPLICANT: Alexandria Times by Old Town Sign Co.
LOCATION: 300 South Washington Street
ZONE: CD/Commercial

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends approval of the wall sign and denial of the hanging sign.

(Insert sketch here)

I. ISSUE:

The applicant is requesting approval of signage for the new Alexandria Times office located at 300 South Washington Street. The applicant is proposing to install both a hanging sign and an individual letter sign. The double-sided hanging sign measures 24" by 36" and will be constructed of mdo. The sign has a white background with black lettering reading "The Alexandria Times". The sign will be attached to a 42" iron scroll bracket to the south of the building entrance.

The wall sign is comprised of ½" deep aluminum letters reading "The Alexandria Times." The white colored lettering measures 32" by 64" and will be attached to the northern end of the Washington Street elevation at the second floor level.

The existing signs for BB&T will remain.

II. HISTORY:

300 South Washington Street is a three story brick commercial and retail building that was designed by Milton Grigg and constructed in 1964 according to plans approved by the Board of Architectural Review on February 12, 1964. Milton Grigg, an Alexandria native, was one of the original architects for Colonial Williamsburg, later establishing his own firm and practicing for nearly 50 years. Grigg was responsible for numerous restoration, preservation and new construction projects throughout Alexandria, including the restoration of Ramsey House at the corner of King and North Fairfax Streets (1946-1956) and the design of the Parish Halls for Christ Church on North Washington Street (1950) and St. Paul's Episcopal Church on South Pitt Street (1947).

In 2003, the Board approved the existing signage for BB&T Bank (BAR Case #2003-0204, 9/3/03). In 2002, the Board approved an individual letter sign for "Prometric Testing Center & Computer Training" (BAR Case #2002-0124, 6/5/02). In 1997, the Board approved signage for the First Virginia Bank ATM (BAR#97-109, 7/16/97). In 1996, the Board approved a portico addition and ATM (BAR #96-0247, 11/20/96).

III. ANALYSIS:

The subject property is zoned CD Commercial. Per Sanborn maps, the building frontage facing South Washington Street is approximately 68 feet. Therefore, the maximum sign area allowed is 68 square feet. The proposed signs comply 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* recommend generally only one sign per business is appropriate (Signs – Page 3). Staff does not support two signs on the Washington Street elevation for the upper level tenant. Staff has no objection to the individual letter sign which is similar to the previously approved sign for the Prometric Testing Center. Staff believes that the individual letter sign is appropriate and that it meets the recommendations of the *Design Guidelines* for signs.

IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of the wall sign and denial of the hanging sign.

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.