

Docket Item # 7  
BAR CASE # 2007-0169

BAR Meeting  
September 19, 2007

**ISSUE:** Signage  
**APPLICANT:** Barbara Lee  
**LOCATION:** 110 South Columbus Street  
**ZONE:** KR/King Street retail

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**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:** Staff recommends approval of the hanging sign and deferral of the other signage.

(Insert sketch here)

**I. ISSUE:**

The applicant is requesting approval of a certificate of appropriateness for a hanging sign, a wall sign and a window sign to be installed at the front of the two story, brick building at 210 South Columbus Street. The applicant is proposing to reuse the sign formerly located at 118 South Royal Street. The sign has been refurbished for the move. The double-sided wood sign has a frame in the form of an architectural base, entablature and columns. The raised lettering reads, "Lee Design & Interiors." The frame is gilded, the background beige and the lettering green. The overall size of the sign is 25.5" high and 20" wide. It will be installed on the existing black metal scroll bracket located above the door of the shop.

The applicant is also requesting a wall sign to be installed above the bay window located to the right of the door. The sign will be on a wood panel secured to the flat area above the window frame. According to the applicant, the background will be beige with 4" high green lettering reading "Lee Design & Interiors." The submission does not provide a drawing of the proposed sign. In addition, the applicant is proposing window lettering for the bottom of the bay window. The 1.5" high lettering will read, "Custom Furnishings Decorative Painting Kitchen & Bath Design". The submission does not provide the color or typeface for the window lettering.

**II. HISTORY:**

110 South Columbus Street is the southernmost unit in a block of three attached townhouses (106, 108 & 110 South Columbus Street) constructed under a single mansard roof. The building appears to be extant on the 1877 Hopkins Atlas and to date to the immediate post-Civil War period. It has simple but handsome Italianate detailing including window hoods and frames and bracketed cornice. The unit at 110 South Columbus Street has been most altered as its two first story windows were removed and replaced with a bayfront shop window. Although the 1885 Sanborn map indicates that all three units served as a drug store, subsequent mapping indicates that the three were inhabited as dwellings well into the 20<sup>th</sup> century. BAR records indicate that commercial use had resumed again by the early 1970s.

In 1989, the Board approved two signs for Auburn Fine Arts Gallery to be installed at 110 South Columbus Street (BAR Case #89-39, 3/15/1989). More recently, on March 18, 2004, Staff approved a hanging sign and wall sign at this location for Columbus Shoe Repair and Dry Cleaning. The administrative approval was granted to allow a change in business name without change in the form, size or location of the signage.

**III. ANALYSIS:**

The proposed signage complies with the zoning ordinance requirements.

Staff believes the proposed hanging sign is appropriate in design and materials for the late 19<sup>th</sup> century building and surrounding district. Staff has more reservations about the wall sign and window lettering. The applicant has not provided a drawing showing how these signs will appear. In addition, Staff is concerned that this concentration of signage in the small area of the bay window will appear cluttered. The *Design Guidelines* recommend that generally only one sign per business is appropriate (Signs – Page 3). However, Staff does note that two signs, a hanging sign and wall sign, have previously been approved at this location. Staff believes the

applicant should choose either the wall or window signage and consider reducing the amount of verbiage.

To conclude, Staff recommends approval of the hanging sign and deferral of the wall and window signage to reduce the amount of signage and to allow the applicant to provide a more complete submission.

**IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends approval of the hanging sign and deferral of the other signage.

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.
- C-4 A Sign Permit is required for the proposed project.

Historic Alexandria:

No comments were received.