

Docket Item # 9
BAR CASE #2008-0026

BAR Meeting
April 2, 2008

ISSUE: Sign
APPLICANT: Simpson Properties, Ltd.
LOCATION: 228 South Washington Street
ZONE: CD/Commercial

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends approval of the directory sign with the condition that the sign be anchored into the mortar joints and not into the brick.

BOARD ACTION, MARCH 19, 2008: On a motion by Dr. Fitzgerald, seconded by Mr. Spencer the Board deferred the application for restudy. The vote on the motion was 4-2 (Chairman Hulfish and Mr. Keleher were opposed).

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends approval of the directory sign with the following conditions:

1. That the building address be removed from the sign; and,
2. That the sign is anchored into the mortar joints and not into the brick.

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Update: At the March 19, 2008 BAR hearing the Board asked the applicant to consider moving the proposed directory sign to the north, between the two existing doors where the “LLOYDS ROW” sign is currently located. The applicant consulted with the building’s tenants about moving the sign to the location proposed by the Board, but they continue to prefer the location to the right of the two doors in order to direct visitors to the southern-most door, which is the building’s main entrance (the northern door is generally used by visitors to the silversmith shop). However, the sign has been modified to remove the name Lloyds Row and the building address, 228 S. Washington Street, because the Board felt that they were redundant. The applicant has supplied a photoshop graphic for the Board to see how the sign will appear after it is installed.

I. ISSUE:

The applicant is requesting approval of a directory sign at 228 South Washington Street. The sign will be located to the south of the building’s main entrance where a small brass plaque is currently located. The proposed sign will measure 18” wide by 29” high and will be constructed of a large brass plate with a black background affixed to a ½” MDO board. The sign will have individual brass plates for each of the building’s tenants.

II. HISTORY:

According to Ethelyn Cox’s Historic Alexandria, Virginia Street By Street, 228 South Washington Street is part of a row of two and three-story brick Federal townhouses constructed by Jonathan Schofield in 1812. The five three-story brick townhouses that make up Lloyds Row were purchased by John Lloyd in 1816.

The applicant proposes to install a directory sign in order to provide coordinated signage for all of the building’s tenants, especially the upper level tenants who currently have no exterior identification. The Board has reviewed signs for multiple tenants at Lloyds Row over the years, most recently for MBH SETTLEMENT GROUP on February 18, 1998 (BAR Case #98-0008).

III. ANALYSIS:

The proposed sign complies with the zoning ordinance.

The *Design Guidelines* recommend that buildings with multiple business and retail tenants have a sign plan for coordinated graphics and placement. Over twenty years ago, the Board approved a sign plan for Lloyds Row (BAR Case #85-0195, October 2, 1985). Although staff could not locate that report, it is obvious from reading other staff reports for Lloyds Row that the sign plan recommended hanging signs for all of the building’s first floor tenants. Staff could not find a reference to a directory sign in previous approvals; however, staff has no objection to the sign given its modest size and compatible design.

In addition to looking for compliance with the *Design Guidelines*, 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

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certificates of appropriateness for signs on Washington Street must be compatible with the memorial nature of the Parkway (Signs – Page 4). Staff believes the sign is compatible with the character of the Parkway.

The sign should be anchored into the building's mortar joints and not the brick.

IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of the directory sign with the condition that the sign is anchored into the mortar joints and not into the brick.

CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

Legend: C - code requirement R - recommendation S - suggestion F - finding

Code Enforcement:

F-1 The applicant shall obtain a sign permit for the proposed sign and/ or wall lettering.

C-1 Alterations to the existing structure must comply with the current edition of Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC).

C-2 Wall letters / signs must comply with USBC [H103-H111] Please indicate the method to be used for anchoring the letters to the wall.

C-3 A Building Permit is required for this project.

Historic Alexandria

No comments received.