

Docket Item # 5
BAR CASE # 2008-0067

BAR Meeting
May 21, 2008

ISSUE: Signage

APPLICANT: Brown Elk LLC/Hooray for Books!

LOCATION: 1555 King Street

ZONE: KR, King Street Urban Retail Zone

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends approval of the application for signage as submitted.

(Insert sketch map here)

I. ISSUE:

The applicant is requesting approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness for signage for a new business located at 1555 King Street. The proposed signage conforms to the size, scale and form of the existing signage for this space that was previously approved by the Board. The proposed signage consists of one double-sided projecting sign, two window signs, and lettering on the sign band above the entrance door. The hanging sign is proposed to measure 20" x 30" and will be mounted on an existing 36" black iron scroll bracket, attached to the building through the masonry joints, above the main entrance. The sign will read "Hooray for Books!" with an image of a frog prince reading, in green, red and yellow with a medium blue background and black lettering.

The two window signs are mounted on large plate glass display windows on King Street. Both proposed window signs will consist of white subsurface applied vinyl attached to the window. Each of the large display windows measures 10' x 6' and the proposed signage will occupy approximately 5.8 square feet in sign area for each window. The text is proposed to read "Hooray for Books!" with an image of a rooster juggling books in one window and a frog prince reading in the other. The center bay of the retail space has double doors framed with sidelights. The applicant has proposed for each of the sidelights that measure 2' x 6' a white vinyl graphic measuring 1.25 square feet. One window will feature the frog graphic and the other the rooster graphic.

On the painted metal sign band above the double entrance doors, the applicant is proposing white lettering reading "Hooray for Books!" The frontage of this building is approximately 50.5'.

II. HISTORY:

1555 King Street is a contemporary four-story brick retail and office building constructed circa 1987. The building was approved by the Board in 1986 (BAR Case # 86-122, 7/9/86). In June 1990 the Board approved a sign plan for the building (BAR Case #90-91, 6/6/90). According to the staff report (BAR Case # 93-162) for the signage for the previous tenant, A Likely Story Children's Books, the sign plan from 1990 restricted ground floor tenants facing King Street to white lettering applied to the metal spandrel above the entrance door to the storefront. Signs which met the requirements of the plan could be approved by staff. The sign plan did not address hanging signs. The staff report noted a concern about the compatibility of a hanging wood sign on a distinctly modern building. However, the Board did approve the hanging sign. The signage for the previous retail user, A Likely Story, used signage in conformance with the building's original sign plan as well as additional signage (hanging wood sign) approved by the Board.

III. ANALYSIS:

Proposed hanging and window signs comply with zoning ordinance requirements. The sign ordinance permits the total sign area on a building to be 1 square foot of signage for every linear foot of building frontage. The frontage of this building is approximately 50.5' which allows the applicant a maximum of 50.5 square feet of signage. The proposed signage is well below the maximum allowed.

The *Design Guidelines* recommend generally only one sign per business as appropriate. In addition, the *Design Guidelines* state that signs should be compatible in size and design to the building, as well as not overwhelm or obscure the architecture. The building at 1555 King Street is a modern building with a large scale. A single sign would be dwarfed by the scale and form of this building. The restrained signage proposed by the applicant complements the building and is suitable for a non-historic building. The signage proposed for the windows and sign band is of an appropriate scale. The uniform color of the graphics (white) contributes to a cohesive visual appearance. The hanging wood sign is an appropriate form as it is used throughout the historic district and contributes to the character of the streetscape. Staff supports maintaining the layout and size of the signage for the previous business at this location. Staff finds the proposed signage appropriate and recommends approval of the application as submitted.

IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of the application for signage as submitted.

V. CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

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

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

C-1 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.

Historic Alexandria:

Approve.

VI. IMAGES



Figure 1. Existing conditions at 1555 King Street

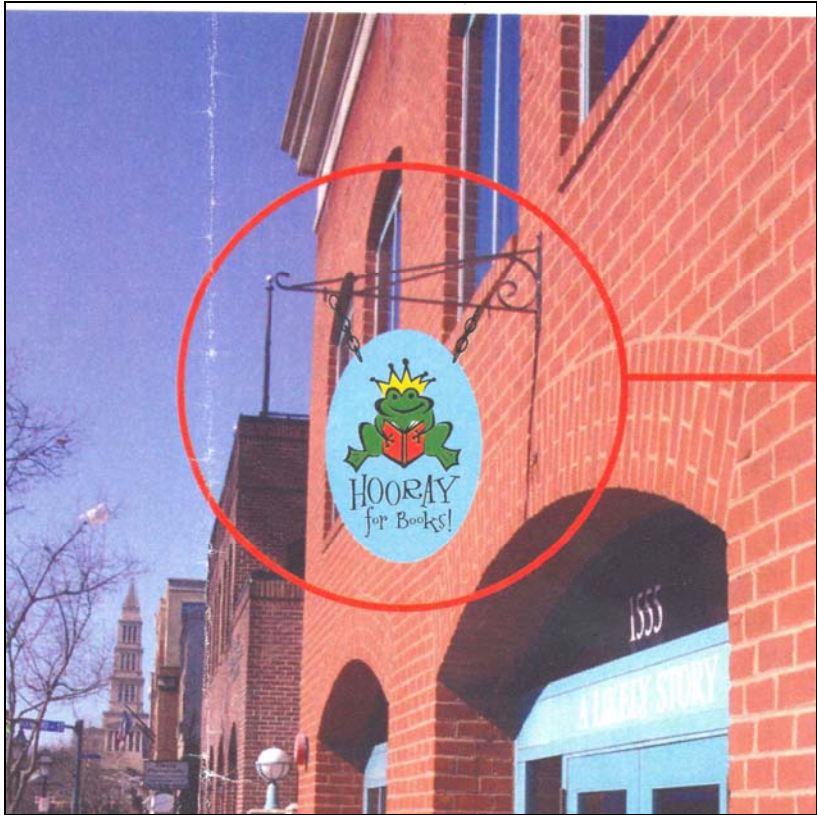


Figure 2. Proposed hanging sign.

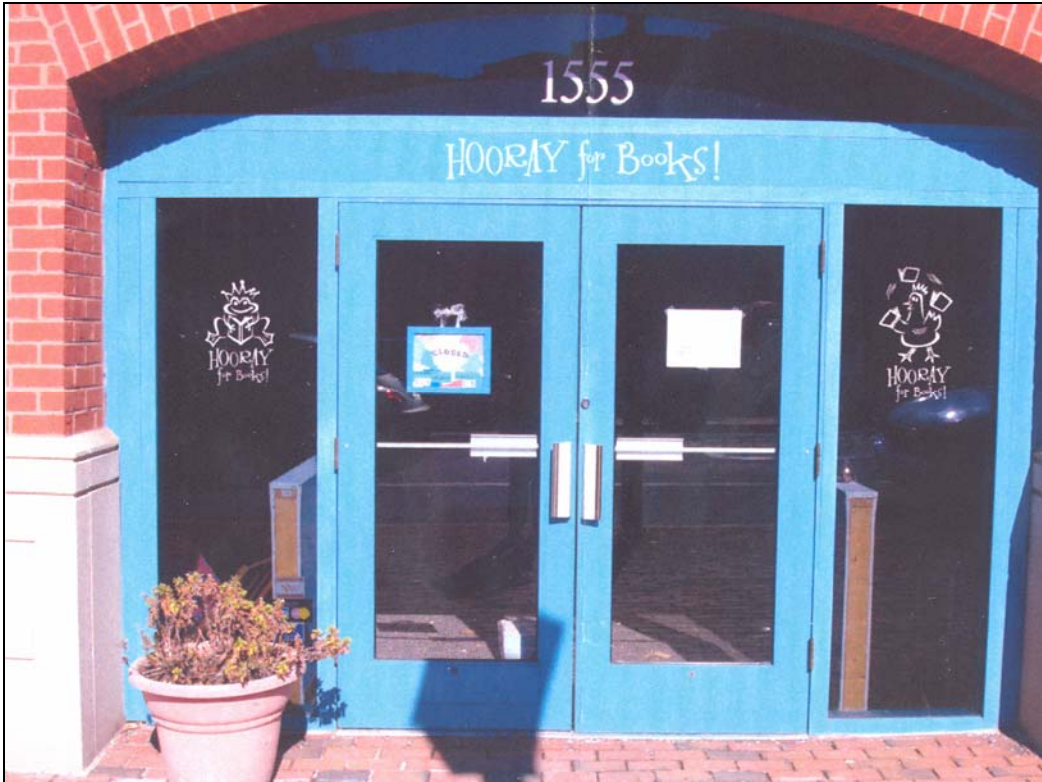


Figure 3. Proposed signage for entrance.



Figure 4. Proposed signage for display window.