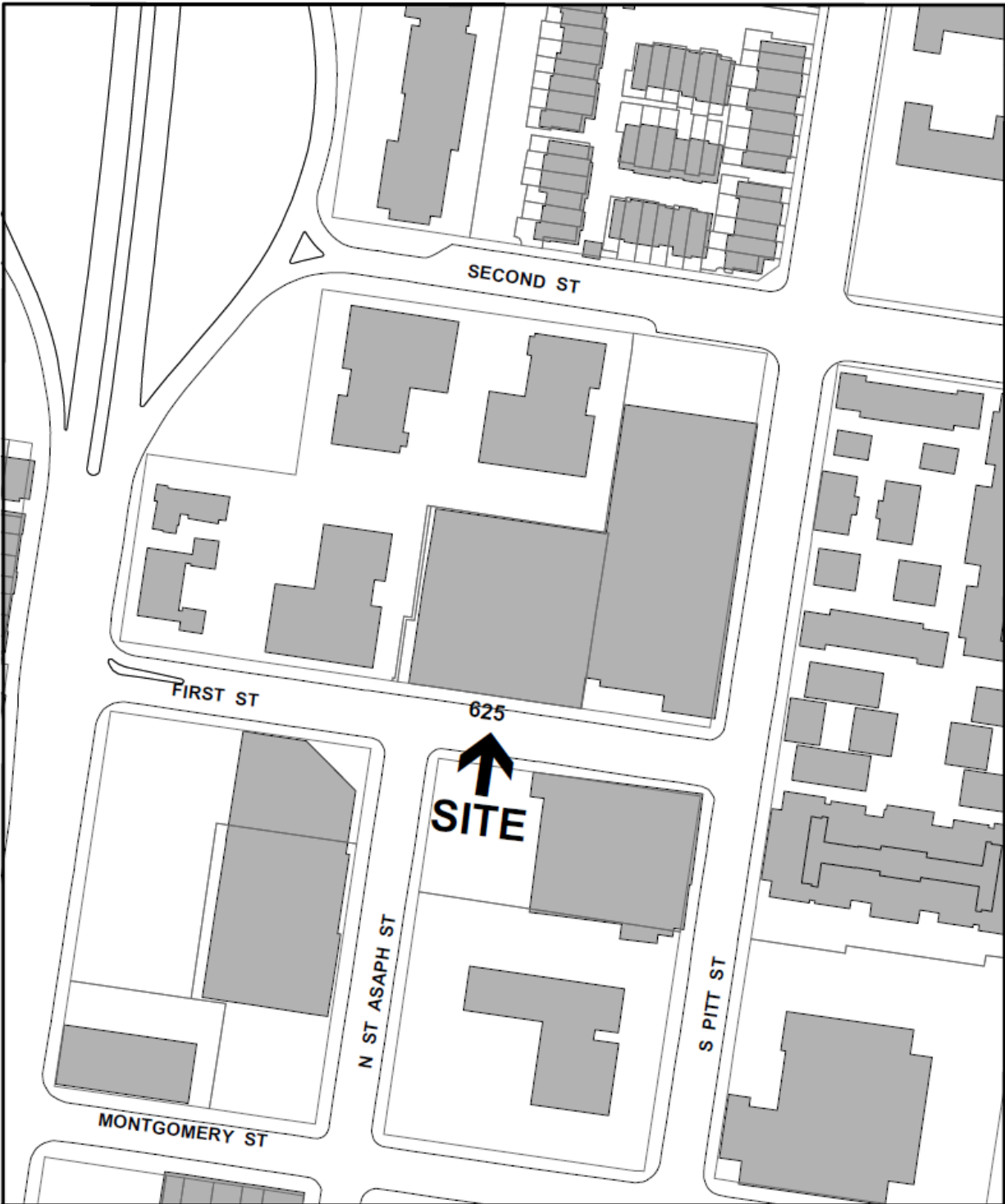


Docket Item # 3
BAR CASE #2009-0028

BAR Meeting
March 18, 2009

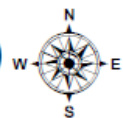
ISSUE: Awnings
APPLICANT: Carr 625 First Street, LLC
LOCATION: 625 First Street
ZONE: CD/Commercial

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends approval of the application with the condition that the awnings be mounted through the mortar joints and not through the brick masonry.



BAR CASE #2009-0029

3/18/2009



I. ISSUE:

The applicant is requesting approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness for the installation of thirteen (13) awnings along the front façade of the Holiday Inn located at 625 First Street. All of the proposed awnings will be located along the First Street (south) elevation.

The proposed awnings will be located above existing fixed sash windows along the south elevation. The awnings will be generally rectangular in shape but will have an arch top where the awning meets the brick façade, to correspond to the arched top of the window opening. The applicant is proposing a new sign for the “Bistro on First” to be placed above the restaurant window. Except for the black Sunbrella awning for “Bistro on First”, the awnings will be detailed in loden and ivory striped Sunbrella fabric.

Each awning will be a shed roof form and measure 12’ long by 3’ wide and not exceed a height of 2’.

II. HISTORY:

The Holiday Inn and Commonwealth Center was constructed beginning in 1982. The boundary line for the Old and Historic Alexandria runs through the building, as amended in November of 2000.

In 2007, the Board approved alterations to convert a window opening to a door (BAR Case #2007-00228, 11/14/2007).

In 2008, the Board approved signage and lighting along the south elevation of the hotel (BAR Case #2008-0191, 11/05/2008). The conditions of this approval were:

1. That the applicant relocates the freestanding directional signs onto the subject property or seek approval of an encroachment by City Council.
2. That the building-mounted signage be anchored through the mortar joints.
3. That the applicant revise the directional signs to be externally illuminated, pending final approval by Staff.
4. That the proposed green-colored up lighting and down lighting on the brick piers be eliminated.

III: ANALYSIS:

The proposed awnings comply with zoning ordinance requirements.

The BAR’s main objectives when reviewing alterations to contemporary resources within the Historic District are to ensure that the proposed changes will not have a negative impact on existing historic resources, the existing building and the surrounding streetscape.

The *Design Guidelines* advise that “awnings should be appropriate and sympathetic to the historical style of the building to which they are attached.” The proposed awnings are generally

appropriate for this non-historic building in style, design, form and materials. They are a reduction in square footage from the previous walkway canopy which measured 4' 6" wide by

120' long for a total of 540 square feet (see photos Figures 3 and 4). The new awnings will be constructed in a metal shed roof form wrapped in fabric—specifications recommended in the *Guidelines* and occupy 468 total square footage of space.

Regarding the color of the awnings, the *Guidelines* note that “The color should be appropriate to the building. Single color awnings are usually appropriate for buildings with extensive façade ornamentation. Striped awnings are generally only appropriate on buildings with simple and unadorned facades.” Twelve (12) of the awnings proposed are to be fabricated of a loden and ivory striped Sunbrella fabric. These awnings are to be mounted above the fixed-sash windows along the hotel’s south elevation. This hotel is modern and simplistic in its form and as such the striped awnings will complement its’ “simple, unadorned” façade.

The proposed single, black awning to be mounted above the restaurant window will be ornamented with 5" white letters denoting the restaurant name “Bistro on First”. This separate awning design breaks up the awning’s repetition on this very linear façade.

Proximity to George Washington Memorial Parkway:

The *Design Guidelines* also note that 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 changes to facades on Washington Street must be compatible with the memorial nature of the parkway.” Although not located on Washington Street, segments of the subject property’s façade are visible from Washington Street and alterations and changes to this façade need to be evaluated in terms of their potential impact to this important resource. After an evaluation of the site from the Washington Street corridor, only a few of the window bays will be visible. Based on evaluation of the site, Staff has determined that this limited visibility of the proposal will not negatively impact the memorial nature of the parkway. The proposal will also have no negative impact on the existing streetscape or the integrity of the historic district, and as such Staff recommends that the Board support the application.

IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends approval of the application with the condition that the awnings be mounted through the mortar joints and not through the brick masonry.

V. CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

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

Code Administration:

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

C-2 Awnings must comply with all applicable requirements of USBC 3105.3 and 3202.3.1. Retractable and fixed awnings must have a minimum 7 foot clearance from a sidewalk to the lowest part of the framework or any fixed portion of any retractable awning is required. Retractable awnings must be securely fastened to the building and cannot extend closer than 24 inches in from the curb line (USBC 3202.3.1).

C-2 Fixed awnings must be designed and constructed to withstand wind or other lateral loads and live loads required by the USBC. Structural members must be protected to prevent deterioration (USBC 3105.3).

Office of Historic Alexandria:

R-1 Approve.

IMAGES



Figure 1: Existing Conditions



Figure 2: Existing conditions



Figure 3: Existing conditions



Figure 4: Existing conditions



Figure 5: Existing conditions

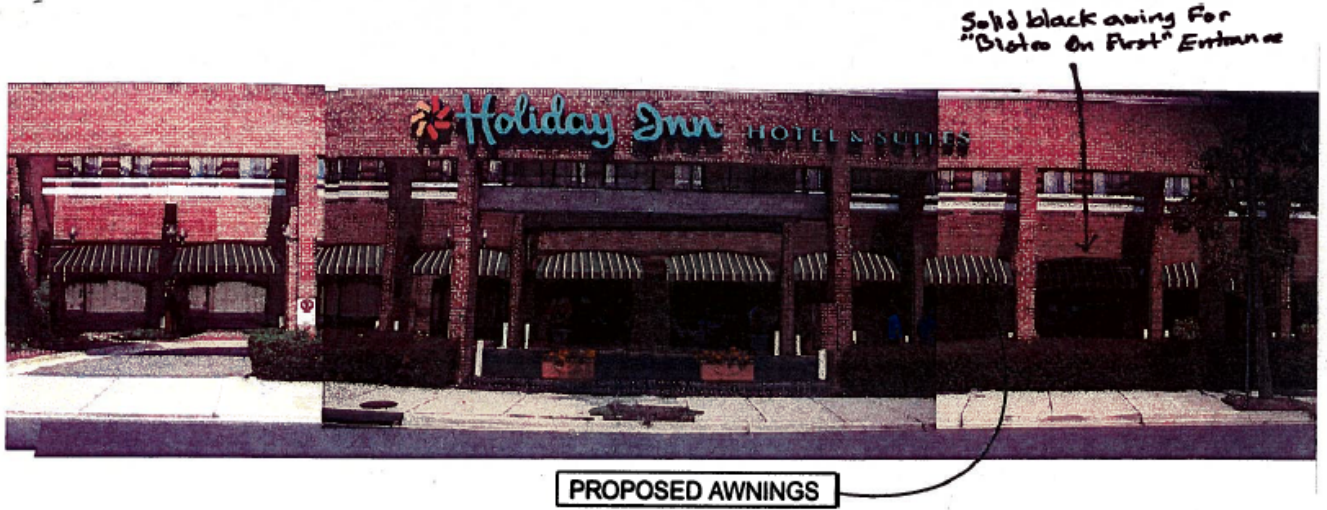


Figure 6: Illustrative of Front Elevation showing proposed awnings

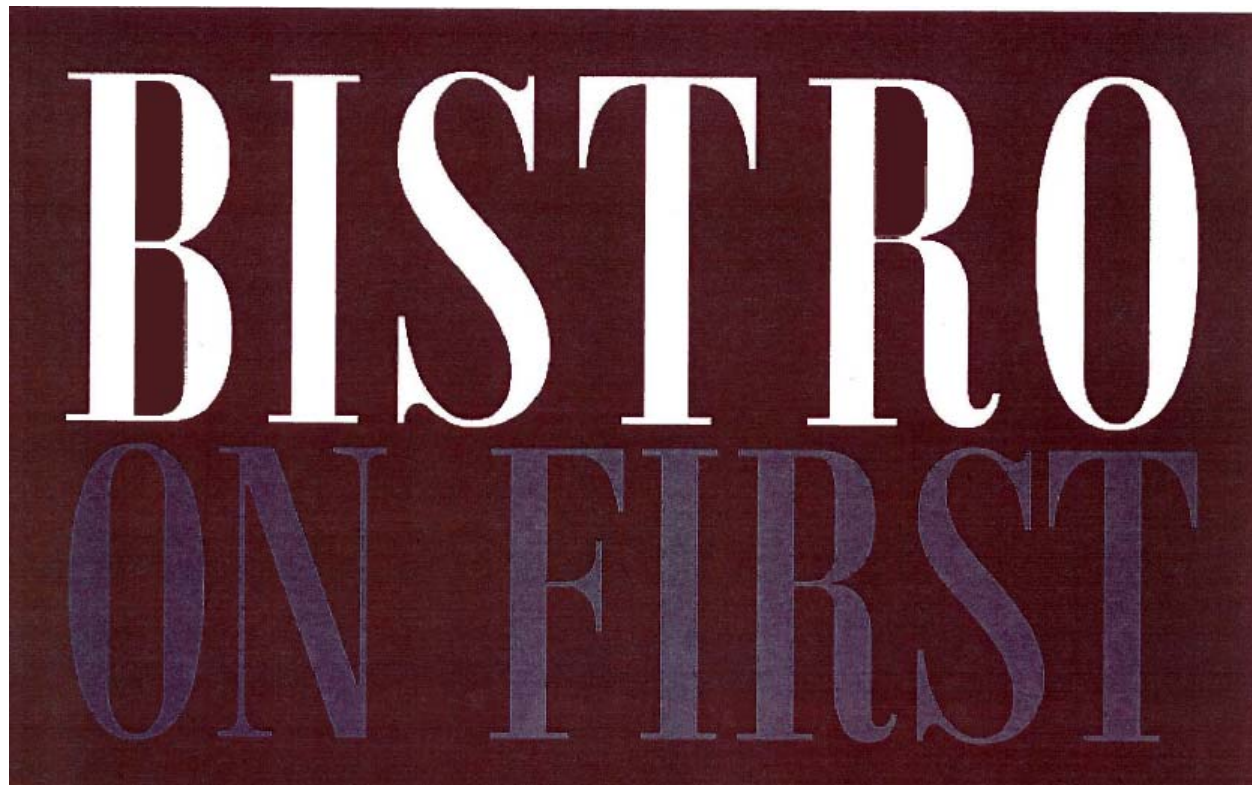
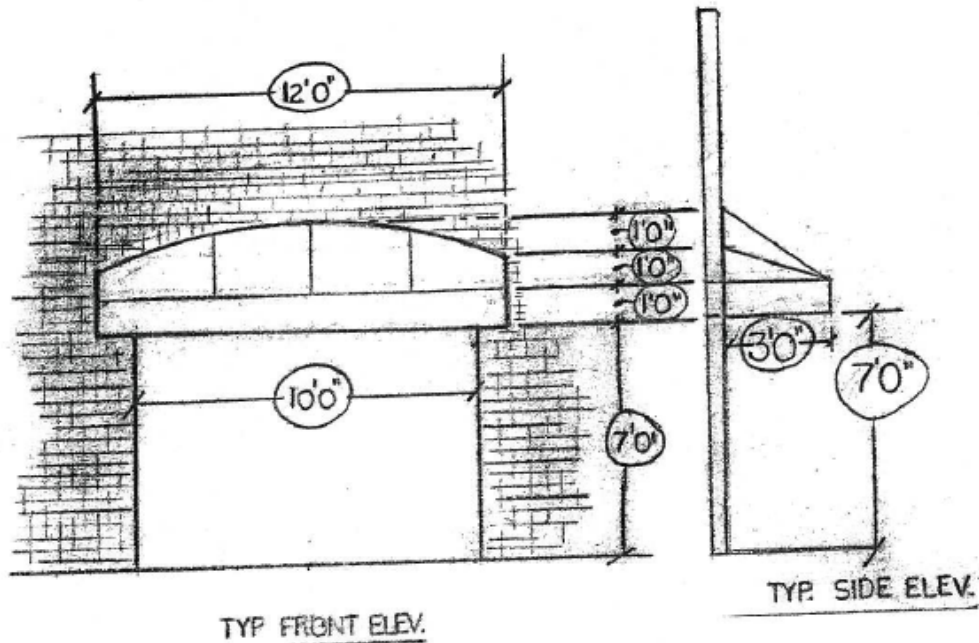
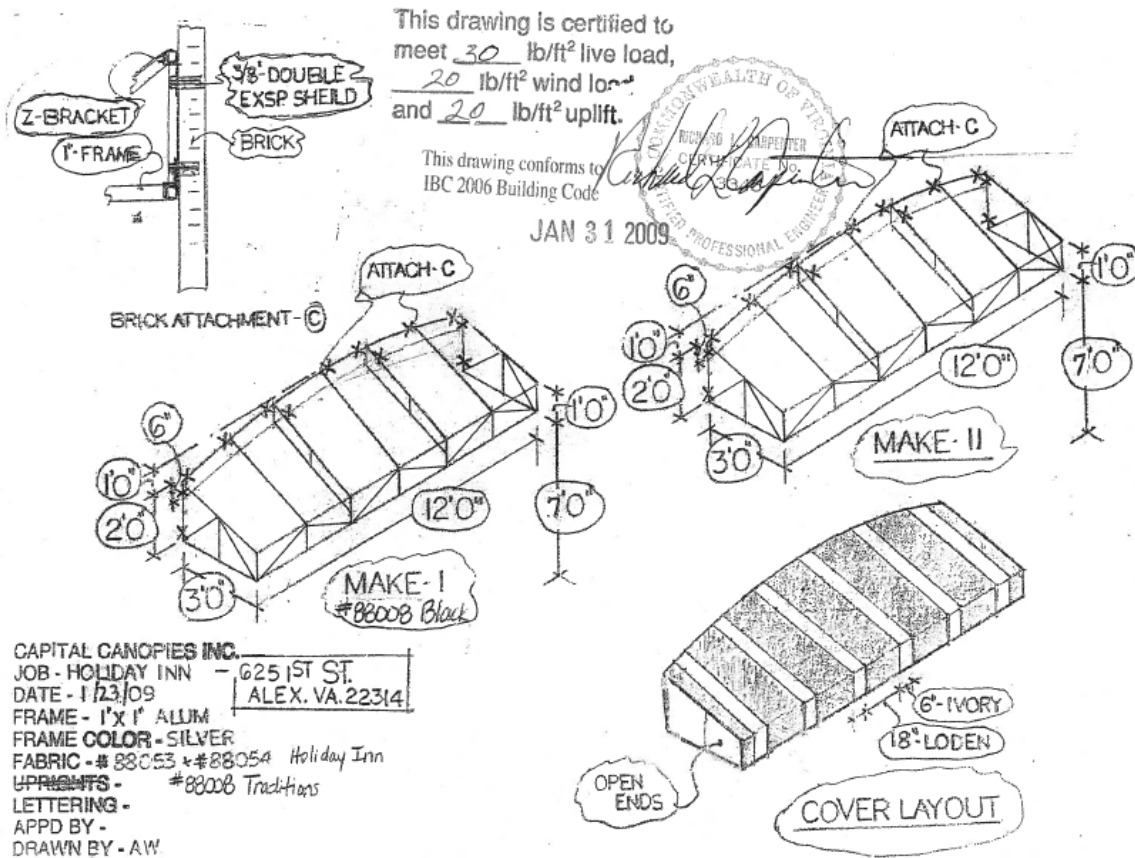


Figure 7: Lettering Font for Restaurant Awning



Figures 8: Specifications for Awnings