

Docket Item # 4
BAR CASE #2009-0209

BAR Meeting
October 7, 2009

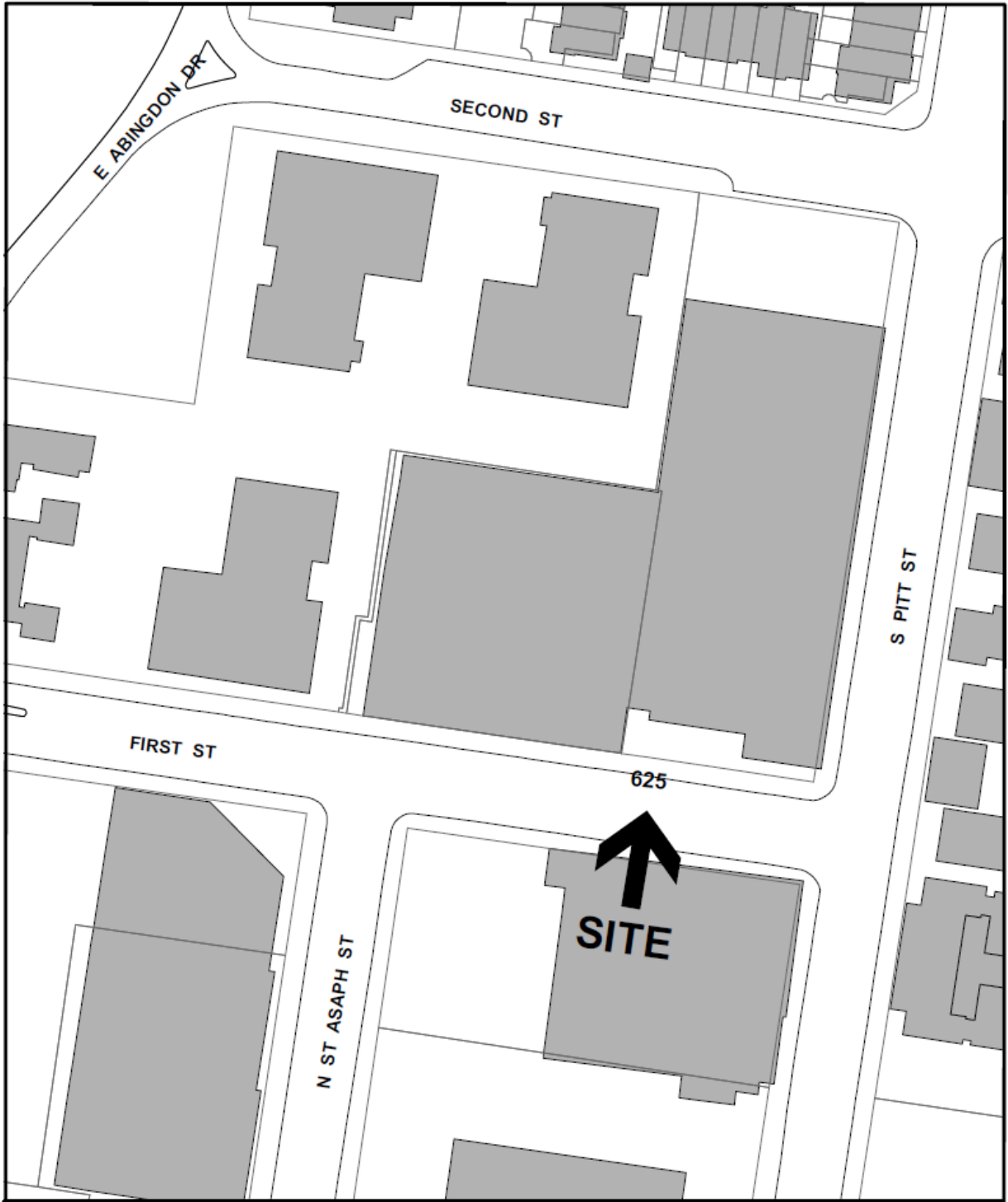
ISSUE: Signage
APPLICANT: Carr 625 First Street, LLC
LOCATION: 625 First Street
ZONE: CD/Commercial

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends approval of the Certificate of Appropriateness application with the condition:

1. That the bracket and wall signage be mounted to the building through the mortar joints.

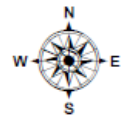
*EXPIRATION OF APPROVALS NOTE: In accordance with Sections 10-106(B) and 10-206(B) of the Zoning Ordinance, any official Board of Architectural Review approval will expire 12 months from the date of issuance if the work is not commenced and diligently and substantially pursued by the end of that 12-month period. In the case for a certificate or permit for a project that requires a development special use permit or site plan under section 11-400 of the zoning ordinance, the period of validity shall be coincident with the validity of the development special use permit or site plan as determined pursuant to section 11-418 of the ordinance.

**BUILDING PERMIT NOTE: Most projects approved by the Board of Architectural Review require the issuance of one or more construction permits by Building and Fire Code Administration (including signs). The applicant is responsible for obtaining all necessary construction permits after receiving Board of Architectural Review approval. Contact Code Administration, Room 4200, City Hall, 703-746-4200 for further information.



BAR CASE #2009-0209

10/7/2009



I. ISSUE:

The applicant is requesting approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness for the installation of two, separate business identifier signs at the east end of the building located at 625 First Street. The application is for:

1. A new, double-sided hanging sign mounted on a new black metal sign bracket. This proposed twenty-four inch (24") wide by twenty-four inch (24") high by ½" deep square-shaped sign will be fabricated on MDO Plywood (Medium Density Overlay) with vinyl graphics applied to both sides of the sign. The proposed color scheme is a solid blue background overlaid with canary yellow graphics, identifying the restaurant name and logo "Café Monte Carlo."
2. A new, ½ inch wide, MDO, wall sign mounted above the restaurant's exterior entrance. The sign proposes a canary yellow background punctuated with blue vinyl lettering identifying the restaurant name "Café Monte Carlo." The rectangular sign measures two feet (2') high by eight feet (8') long.

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.

On March 18, 2009, the Board approved thirteen (13) awnings fabricated of black, Sunbrella fabric to be installed along the front (south) elevation of the building. Each awning is a shed roof form and measures 12 feet long by 3 feet wide. Additionally, the Board approved a new sign "Bistro on First" to be installed on the restaurant's awning. This sign was never installed.

III: ANALYSIS:

The proposed signs comply with zoning ordinance requirements.

The Board of Architectural Review's (BAR) main objectives when reviewing the installation of signage on contemporary resources within the Historic District are to ensure that the proposal will be compatible with the existing building and not have a negative impact on the existing building, existing streetscape or the historic district.

The *Design Guidelines* stipulate that signs should be "designed to be compatible with the historic building or structure," and "They should be designed in styles, materials, type faces, colors and lettering that are appropriate and sympathetic to the historic style of the building." The proposed signs for the restaurant are generally appropriate for this non-historic building in style, design, form and materials. They will be constructed out of MDO plywood, which is a stable wood product which resists warping and bending, as recommended in the *Guidelines*.

Regarding the color of the signs, the *Guidelines* note that "The color should be appropriate to the building. This hotel is modern and simplistic in its form and as such these small and simply detailed signs will complement its' "simple, unadorned" facade.

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, the location of the subject proposal will not be visible from the Parkway. Therefore, this proposal will not negatively impact the memorial nature or integrity of the Parkway.

The proposal will also have no negative impact on the existing streetscape or the integrity of the historic district. Therefore, Staff recommends that the Board approve the application with the condition that the bracket and wall signage be mounted to the building through the mortar joints.

IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of the Certificate of Appropriateness application with the condition that the bracket and wall signage be mounted to the building through the mortar joints.

STAFF:

Michele Oaks, Historic Preservation Planner, Planning & Zoning
Stephen Milone, Division Chief, Zoning and Land Use Services

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-1 Wall letters / signs must comply with USBC [H103-H111] Please indicate the method to be used for anchoring the letters to the wall.

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.

Office of Historic Alexandria:

No comments received.

VI. IMAGES:



Figure 1: Existing Conditions



Figure 2: Existing Conditions



Figure 3: Proposed Blade Sign



Figure 4: Proposed Blade Sign Location

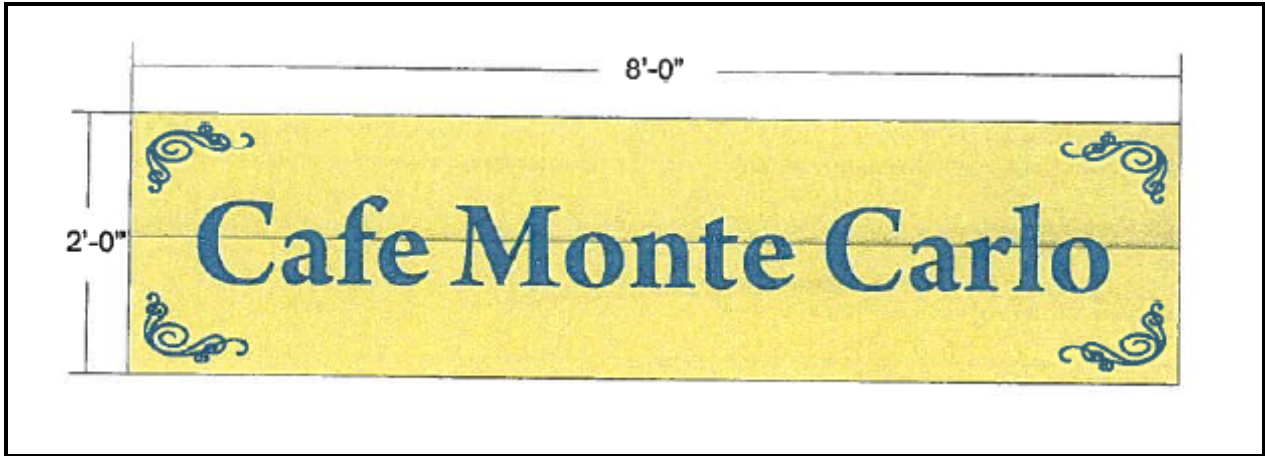


Figure 5: Proposed Wall Mounted Sign

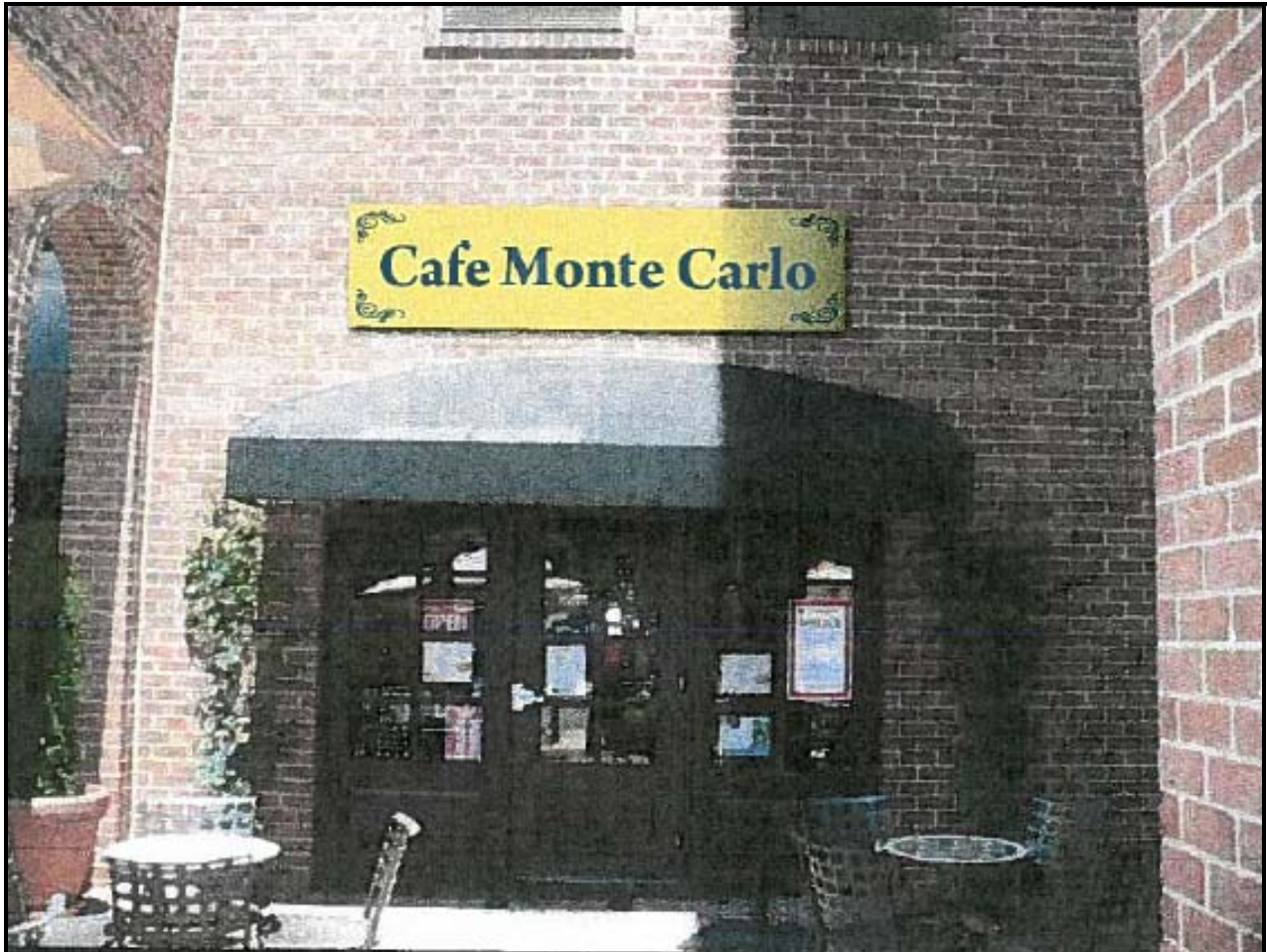


Figure 6: Proposed Wall Mounted Sign Location