

Docket Item # 2 & 3  
BAR CASE # 2010-0326/329

BAR Meeting  
January 5, 2011

**ISSUE:** Permit to Demolish/Encapsulate, Signage and Alterations (New Storefront)

**APPLICANT:** Tarek Moukalled (719 King St LLC)

**LOCATION:** 719 King Street

**ZONE:** KR / King Street Retail

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**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:** Staff recommends approval of the Permit to Demolish/Encapsulate and the Certificate of Appropriateness for alterations with the following conditions:

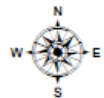
1. That the existing unused metal scroll bracket at the second story be removed from the building.
2. That the awning and signage be anchored through the mortar joints rather than into the brick.
3. That the applicant select a more discreet light fixture to illuminate the storefront and entrance under the awning, with final approval by Staff.
4. That the new metal door on the rear be painted oxide red to match the adjacent brick wall.
5. That all of the proposed aluminum on the storefront be replaced with wood or a wood composite that is millable, paintable and solid through the core.

**\*\*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.

**\*\*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, 703-838-4360 for further information.



**BAR CASE #2010-0326 & 329**



**Update:** At the December 15, 2010 hearing, the Board deferred this item for further study of the storefront. The Board asked the applicant to restudy the storefront and to propose a more traditional design with a more traditional material rather than the proposed modern aluminum storefront system. The Board also asked the applicant to reconsider the signage on the awning. The Board did not request a restudy of any alterations proposed on the rear elevation.

**Note:** Staff coupled the reports for BAR #2010-0326 (Permit to Demolish/Encapsulate) and BAR #2010-0329 (Certificate of Appropriateness) for clarity and brevity. This item requires a roll call vote.

## **I. ISSUE**

The applicant is requesting approval of a Permit to Demolish/Encapsulate and a Certificate of Appropriateness for alterations and signage at 719 King Street. The changes from the initial submission and related analysis are noted in **bold** below.

### Permit to Demolish/Encapsulate

- Demolish the existing storefront with center entry and projecting multi-light show windows.
- Encapsulate existing alcove on rear (north) elevation, approximately 8.5 feet in width and 7 feet in height.
- Demolish portion of rear (north) elevation to install new fire egress door.

### Alterations

- Install new side-entry storefront flush with existing front elevation. **The storefront window with panels below and transom above will have a dark bronze anodized aluminum frame construction. The single-light wood door will have a panel and transom in line with the storefront window.**
- Portions of the brick wall now covered by the existing storefront will be uncovered and, where necessary, brick will be patched to match the existing. All new brick will be painted to match the existing painted brick façade above.
- Install a new shed awning across the façade with gooseneck light fixtures attached above the awning as well as underneath the awning. The awning will project two feet from the building. A simple molding will be added above the awning.

### Signage

The shed awning will be a deep orange color and made of Sunbrella fabric. **The signage on the awning has been reduced in size and the design now matches the wall sign. The slope of the awning will read “The Pita House Restaurant” with cedar logo (30 inches by 42 inches) and on the valance “Lebanese Cuisine” (4 inches by 48 inches). Adjacent to the restaurant entrance will be a wall sign (30 inches in width by 24 inches in height) made of cut aluminum. Below this sign will be a menu board measuring 24 inches by 12 inches. At the Board’s request, the directory sign adjacent to the office door will match the menu board in size, location and materials (24 inches by 12 inches).**

## **II. HISTORY**

717-719 King Street, a three-story painted brick commercial building, was constructed in the early nineteenth century, according to Ethelyn Cox in *Historic Alexandria Street by Street*. It was substantially altered with its current Beaux Arts facade by local architect W. Leon Clark in 1920,

according to earlier Staff research. The alterations appear to have included a parapet wall and applied cornice. This building matches the adjacent building at 715 King Street as noted by the common stringcourse and jack arches above the windows. The upper level windows are 1/1 aluminum windows replaced several years ago, based on a conditions assessment. BAR staff has not been able to locate an approval for these windows and encourages the applicant to replace these windows in the future with wood windows which meet Alexandria's Window Performance Specifications.

An administrative special use permit for a change of ownership and minor amendment was recently approved for this location (SUP #2010-0077, 12/9/10).

*Previous BAR Approvals:*

The Board has approved a number of alterations to the building including new signage for the former Tandoor restaurant and a new awning and signage for the law offices on the upper floors in 1997 (BAR Case #97-0054, 4/2/97).

In 1998, the BAR approved an awning of burgundy "Sunbrella" material over a metal frame for the previous restaurant establishment, the "TAJ PALACE" (BAR Case #2008-0100). In 2008, the Board approved a new awning and signage for the restaurant, "Raw Silk" (BAR Case #2008-0227).

**III. ANALYSIS**

The proposed alterations comply with Zoning Ordinance regulations. The existing hanging sign for the second story tenant and proposed signage (awning, menu board and directory) currently comply with the Zoning Ordinance. However, only 4.43 square feet of signage remain for a future upper story tenant.

Permit to Demolish

In considering a Permit to Demolish, the Board must consider the following criteria set forth in the Zoning Ordinance, §10-105(B):

- (1) Is the building or structure of such architectural or historical interest that its moving, removing, capsulating or razing would be to the detriment of the public interest?
- (2) Is the building or structure of such interest that it could be made into a historic house?
- (3) Is the building or structure of such old and unusual or uncommon design, texture and material that it could not be reproduced or be reproduced only with great difficulty?
- (4) Would retention of the building or structure help preserve the memorial character of the George Washington Memorial Parkway?
- (5) Would retention of the building or structure help preserve and protect an historic place or area of historic interest in the city?
- (6) Would retention of the building or structure promote the general welfare by maintaining and increasing real estate values, generating business, creating new positions, attracting tourists, students, writers, historians, artists and artisans, attracting new residents, encouraging study and interest in American history, stimulating interest and study in architecture and design, educating citizens in American culture and heritage, and making the city a more attractive and desirable place in which to live?

In the opinion of Staff, none of the criteria for demolition and encapsulation are met and the Permit to Demolish/Encapsulate should be granted. While a previous BAR staff report noted that the façade was Beaux Arts in style and designed by W. Leon Clark in 1920, Staff does not find that the current storefront retains much, if any, historic value due to alterations over time. However, a field visit confirmed that a Beaux Arts painted metal cornice was added as part of the 1920s alterations; this element will be retained. While projecting storefront windows were once encouraged by the City to enliven King Street, as activity on King Street has increased, it is now preferred that, where possible and historically appropriate, storefronts no longer encroach so as to allow maximum sidewalk space for pedestrians. The encapsulation of the rear alcove and demolition of a portion of the rear wall to add a fire egress door are minor changes, typical of appropriate alterations made to adapt historic buildings to modern commercial use. The areas proposed for demolition and encapsulation do not remove any portion of the building containing character-defining features of uncommon design or historic merit, and do not compromise the integrity of the building as a whole.

#### Alterations

The applicant and his architect met with BAR Staff prior to filing an application and twice revised the scheme to address concerns raised by the Planning & Zoning Staff. **After the Board's deferral at the December 15, 2010 hearing, Staff met with the applicant again to revise the design to address the Board's concerns.** The initial scheme, as shown in the images section of this report, illustrates the evolution of the design from a bifurcated pair of visually competing entrances to a much simpler, more unified ground floor elevation which whose forms are more compatible with the very simple historic façade above.

While the scope of the proposed changes to the storefront is significant at the street level, Staff is not concerned the integrity of the building will be compromised as a result of the proposed alterations. Although the retention of historic materials is a central tenet of historic preservation philosophy, Staff notes that the existing storefront has been so altered that little, if any, historic fabric will be lost with the installation of a new storefront. The proposed scheme retains all of the original portions of the front elevation, as well as the 1920s Beaux Arts style cornice. The proposed design also uncovers portions of the historic brick wall at the first story and allows the weight of the brick structure to be visually transferred to the ground so that it is not floating above a glass storefront. In addition, storefronts are a building feature typically altered over the life span of a building as they are modified to accommodate changing commercial needs. Staff initially supported the proposed aluminum and glass storefront system finding that while distinctly modern, it allowed one to "read" the evolution of the building over time. In addition, this type of storefront system can easily be reversed. **The Board found that the proposed aluminum storefront scheme was too modern and not compatible with the building and the district, and advised the applicant to look to a more traditional, wood storefront. While the design has become more traditional with the use of transoms and a paneled base, and the alignment and proportions of the menu boards, doors, transoms and panels are significantly improved, the applicant again proposes to use aluminum. Staff understands that a wood storefront has the potential to deteriorate at the base due to splashing and therefore would support wood composite trim, panels and framing that are millable, paintable and solid through the core.**

The use of a new flush metal door for the rear fire egress is consistent with the Board's previous decisions on the rear of commercial buildings. Many commercial buildings on King and Washington streets have metal doors on the rear elevations. Although the *Design Guidelines* state that "exterior flush or paneled metal doors may be appropriate in certain limited circumstances for 20<sup>th</sup> century retail, commercial and industrial buildings," Staff finds that this metal door, on what appears to be a 20<sup>th</sup> century addition at the rear of this building, will be minimally visible and is architecturally appropriate for this utilitarian location. Staff, nevertheless, recommends that the door and frame be painted an oxide red color to match the adjacent brick wall.

### Signage and Lighting

The *Design Guidelines* advise that "signs should be designed to be compatible with the historic building" and "should not overwhelm or obscure the architecture." Although the *Guidelines* state that "generally, only one sign per business is appropriate," the Board has regularly approved two signs for a business. In addition, the administrative sign program allows for Staff to administratively approve two signs (three in the case of a corner building). The administrative sign program also allows for the approval of a simple menu board adjacent to a restaurant's entrance. Regarding awnings, the *Guidelines* state that "awnings should not overwhelm or obscure the architecture" and that "shed or sloped awnings are more appropriate." **The Board expressed concern that the typeface on the awning did not relate to the wall sign and was oversized. The applicant revised the awning by reducing the size of the sign on the slope and using the same logo and typeface as the wall sign. Staff believes that the proportions of the proposed awning, with a shallow slope and modest valance, make the proposed signage preferable to the relocating all of the sign text to a larger valance in this instance.** Staff finds the proposed signage and awning for the restaurant to be appropriate and recommends approval.

There is a hanging sign at the second story for an existing law office. While hanging signs typically are at the first story, Staff notes that this is an existing condition and the owner has asked that it remain. However, a second, unused bracket exists at the second story which staff suggests is unnecessary. With the current proposal, the building will have only 4.43 square feet of signage left for another tenant. In addition, hanging signs at the second story, particularly above an awning, are nearly impossible for a pedestrian to see. Therefore, it is recommended that the unused bracket be removed.

The proposal includes four gooseneck, wall wash light fixtures above the awning as well as smaller ones underneath the awning. While gooseneck lighting is architecturally appropriate above the awning, and is frequently approved by the Board, Staff recommends that a smaller, more discreet light fixture be used below the awning to illuminate the actual storefront, menu board, building directory and egress steps. The range of small, targeted light fixtures, whether as LED bars or targeted low voltage mini lights, has expanded significantly over the past few years. Staff recommends that a more subtle fixture be installed under the awning.

Staff recommends approval of the Permit to Demolish/Encapsulate and the Certificate of Appropriateness for alterations with the conditions noted above.

**STAFF**

Catherine Miliaras, Historic Preservation Planner, Planning & Zoning  
Al Cox, FAIA, Historic Preservation Manager

**IV. CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS**

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

**Zoning**

C-1 The building frontage is 27 feet. The proposed Pita House signs total 15.07 square feet and the existing hanging sign measures 7.5 square feet, totaling 22.57 square feet. Any additional sign for a future second floor tenant cannot exceed 4.43 square feet. The proposed menu board and office directory do not count towards the total square footage of allowed signs.

C-2 Proposed renovations to the storefront and the alterations to the side and rear building walls comply with zoning.

**Code Administration**

C-1 The following permits will be required prior to start of work;

- Building
- Electrical
- Fire Protection System

C-2 The distance from the relocated FD Siamese connection to the street fire hydrant(s) shall be no closer than forty (40) nor more than one hundred feet (100). Indicate distances on all site plans.

C-3 Identify size and material for lintel over new door opening in rear wall

C-5 Canopies must comply with USBC 3202.3.1 for support and clearance from the sidewalk, and the applicable sections of USBC's Chapter 11. Structural designs of fabric covered canopies must comply with USBC 3105.3. The horizontal portions of the framework must not be less than 8 feet nor more than 12 feet above the sidewalk and the clearance between the covering or valance and the sidewalk must not be less than 7 feet.

C-6 Canopies must comply with USBC 3105.1 and the applicable sections of USBC: Chapter 16. Structural designs of fabric covered canapés must comply with USBC 3105.3.

C-7 Wall letters / signs must comply with USBC [H103-H111] Please indicate the method to be used for anchoring the letters to the wall.

C-8 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.

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

**Transportation & Environmental Services:**

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- R1. The building permit plans shall comply with requirements of City Code Section 5-6-224 regarding the location of downspouts, foundation drains and sump pumps. Refer to Memorandum to Industry dated June 18, 2004. [Memorandum is available online at the City web site under Transportation\Engineering and Design\Memos to Industry.]. (T&ES)
- R2. Applicant shall be responsible for repairs to the adjacent city right-of-way if damaged during construction activity. (T&ES)
- R3. All improvements to the city right-of-way such as curbing, sidewalk, driveway aprons, etc. must be city standard design. (T&ES)
- R4. No permanent structure may be constructed over any existing private and/or public utility easements. It is the responsibility of the applicant to identify any and all existing easements on the plan. (T&ES)
- R5. An erosion and sediment control plan must be approved by T&ES prior to any land disturbing activity greater than 2,500 square feet. (T&ES)
- R6. Compliance with the provisions of Article XIII of the City's zoning ordinance for stormwater quality control is required for any land disturbing activity greater than 2,500 square feet. (T&ES)

**FINDINGS:**

- F1. Applicant shall comply with all other conditions or requirements from approvals under separate permit numbers; ex. SUP2010-00077. (T&ES)
- F2. Please contact T&ES/Construction and Inspections Permit Section to obtain information in regards to insurance documents that will be required for any permits, to include building permits, that involve the awning or any other items that may encroach into the public right of way. They can be contacted at (703) 746-4035. (T&ES)
- F3. An approved grading plan may be required at the time of building permit application. Insufficient information has been provided to make that determination at this time. In summary, City Code Section 5-6-224 requires that a grading plan be submitted to and approved by T&ES prior to the issuance of building permits for improvements involving:
- the construction of a new home;
  - construction of an addition to an existing home where either
    - the addition exceeds the area of the existing building footprint by 100% or more;
    - or, the construction of the addition results in less than 50% of the existing first floor exterior walls, in their entirety, remaining;
  - changes to existing grade elevation of 1-foot or greater;



- changes to existing drainage patterns;
- land disturbance of 2,500 square feet or greater.

Questions regarding the processing of grading plans should be directed to the T&ES Site Plan Coordinator at (703) 746-4064. Memorandum to Industry No. 02-08 was issued on April 28, 2008 and can be viewed online via the following link.

**<http://alexandriava.gov/uploadedFiles/tes/info/gradingPlanRequirements.pdf>**

#### **CITY CODE REQUIREMENTS**

- C-1 The applicant shall comply with the City of Alexandria's Solid Waste Control, Title 5, Chapter 1, which sets forth the requirements for the recycling of materials (Sec. 5-1-99).
- C-2 The applicant shall comply with the City of Alexandria's Noise Control Code, Title 11, Chapter 5, which sets the maximum permissible noise level as measured at the property line.
- C-3 Roof, surface and sub-surface drains be connected to the public storm sewer system, if available, by continuous underground pipe. Where storm sewer is not available applicant must provide a design to mitigate impact of stormwater drainage onto adjacent properties and to the satisfaction of the Director of Transportation & Environmental Services. (Sec.8-1-22)
- C-4 All secondary utilities serving this site shall be placed underground. (Sec. 5-3-3)
- C-5 Pay sanitary sewer tap fee prior to release of Grading Plan. (Sec. 5-6-25)
- C-6 Any work within the right-of-way requires a separate permit from T&ES. (Sec. 5-3-61)

**V. IMAGES**



**Figure 1. Existing front (south) elevation**



**Figure 2. Existing storefront**

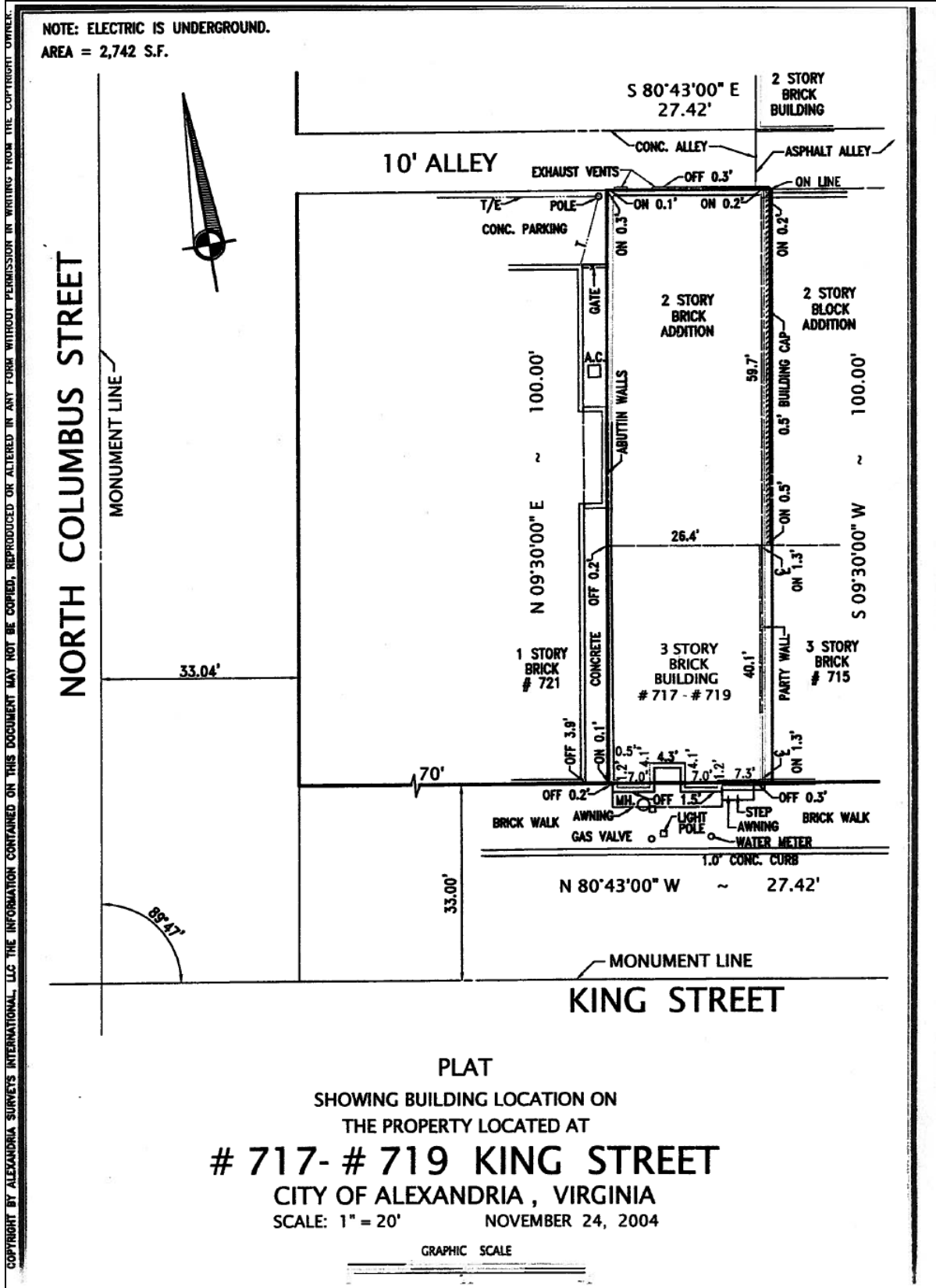


Figure 3. Plat.



Figure 4. Initial proposal prior to meeting with BAR Staff.

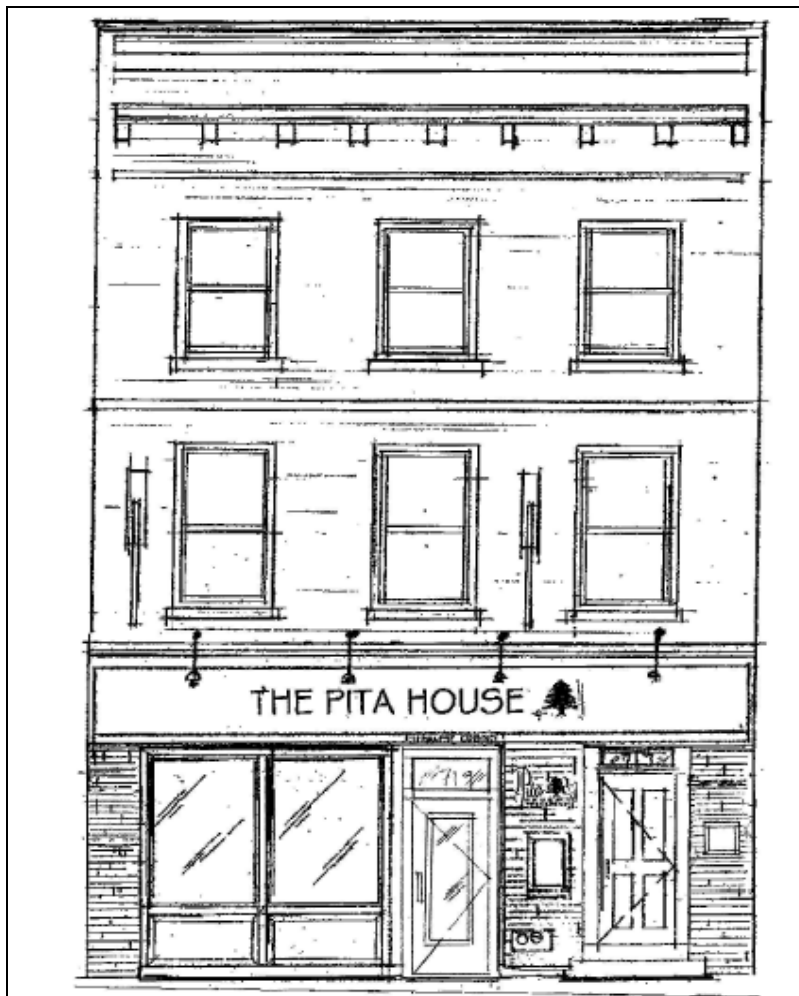


Figure 5. Second proposed storefront scheme.

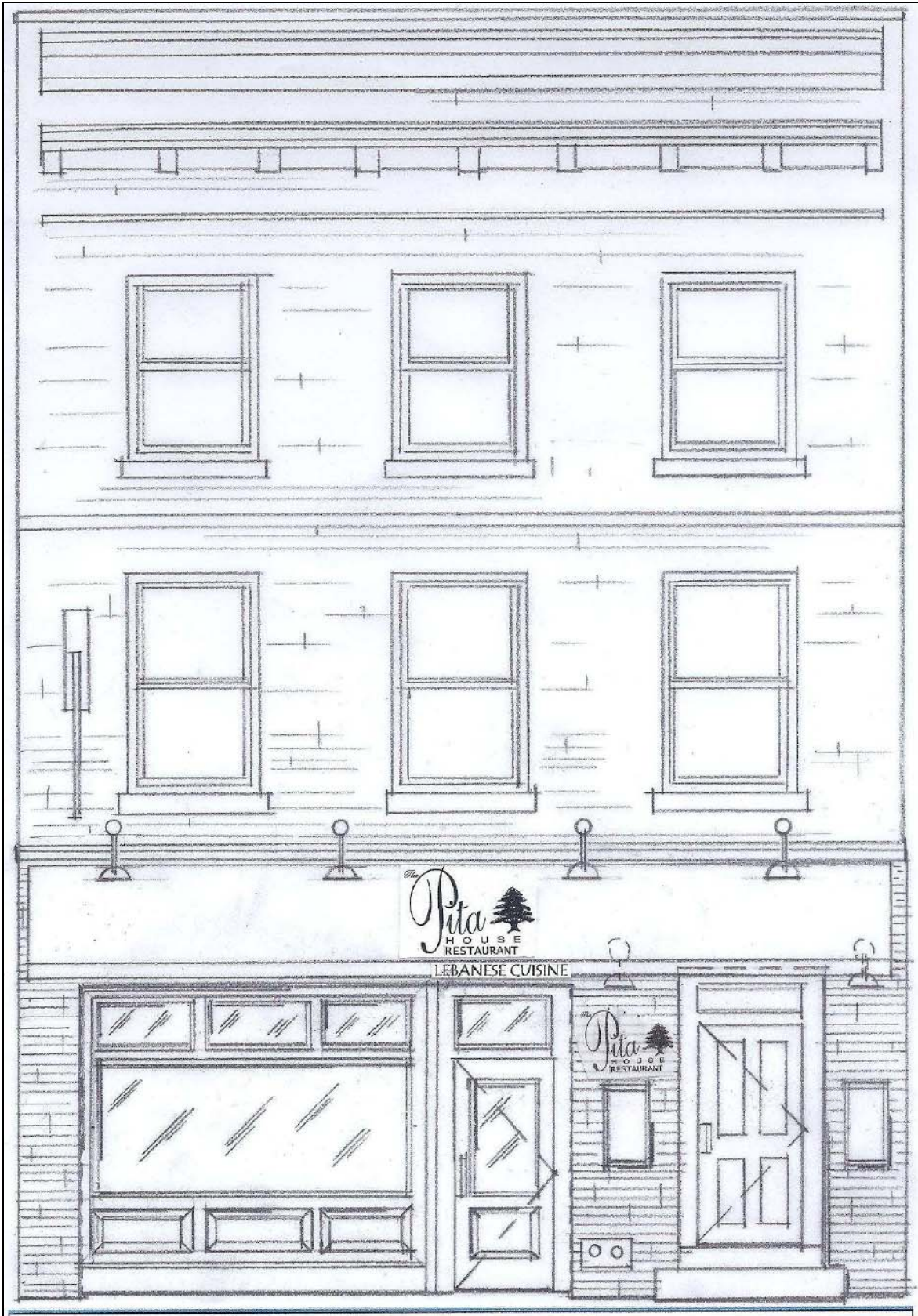


Figure 6. Third (current) submission for new storefront.

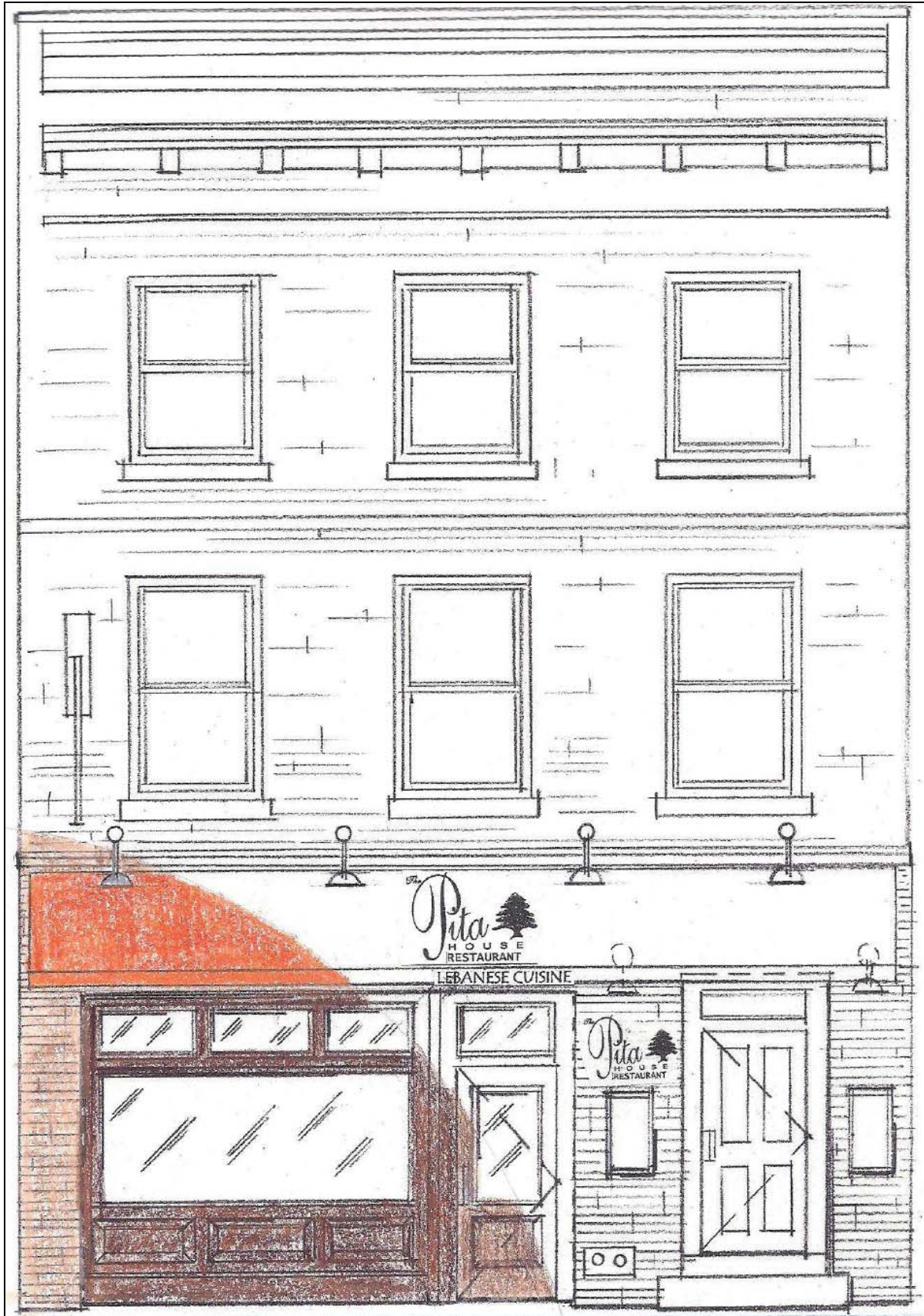
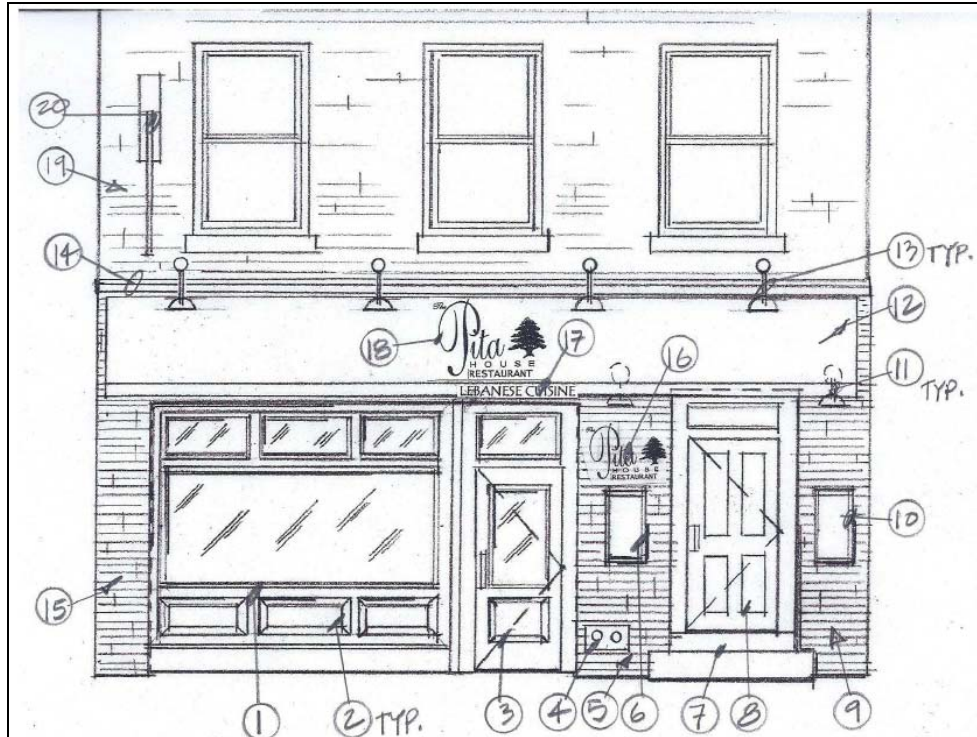


Figure 7. Current proposal with color splash.



**Figure 8. Proposed scheme with material key.**

Material Key for the Revised Street Elevation	
1.	New 4" wide frame dark bronze anodized aluminum frame storefront for windows and door frame. All glazing clear insulated glazing.
2.	New Insulated dark bronze anodized aluminum panel, finish to match the storefront frame.
3.	New 36" wide by 84" high wood and glazed door.
4.	The relocation of the existing fire department fire sprinklers connection.
5.	New brick to match existing brick in size & shape, then paint to match the painted brick on the upper levels.
6.	New menu board. Glass with a aluminum frame to match the storefront. Size: 12" x 24". See signage #S-5.
7.	Existing steps to remain.
8.	Existing entry to the existing offices on the upper floors. Repainted to match the updated building color scheme.
9.	Re-expose the existing brick, repair as required, then paint to match painted brick on the upper levels.
10.	New Office Directory. See Signage #S-6.
11.	New L-2 light fixture above in the awning to light the face of the menu board, directory and entry ways.
12.	New Shed Type awning frame.
13.	New wall mounted light fixtures: L-1.
14.	New wood exterior molding to replace existing damaged molding. Model "Virginia - AF160" 4-1/2" high by maximum projection 1-1/2". See below.
15.	Re-expose the existing brick, repair as required, then paint to match painted brick on the upper levels.
16.	New aluminum signage wall mounted. See Signage # S-2.
17.	New signage to be screened onto vertical face awning. See Signage # S-3.
18.	New signage to be screened onto the sloped face of the awning. See Signage # S-4.
19.	Existing painted brick above.
20.	Existing exterior hanging signage. See Signage # S-1

**Figure 9. Material description for proposed storefront.**

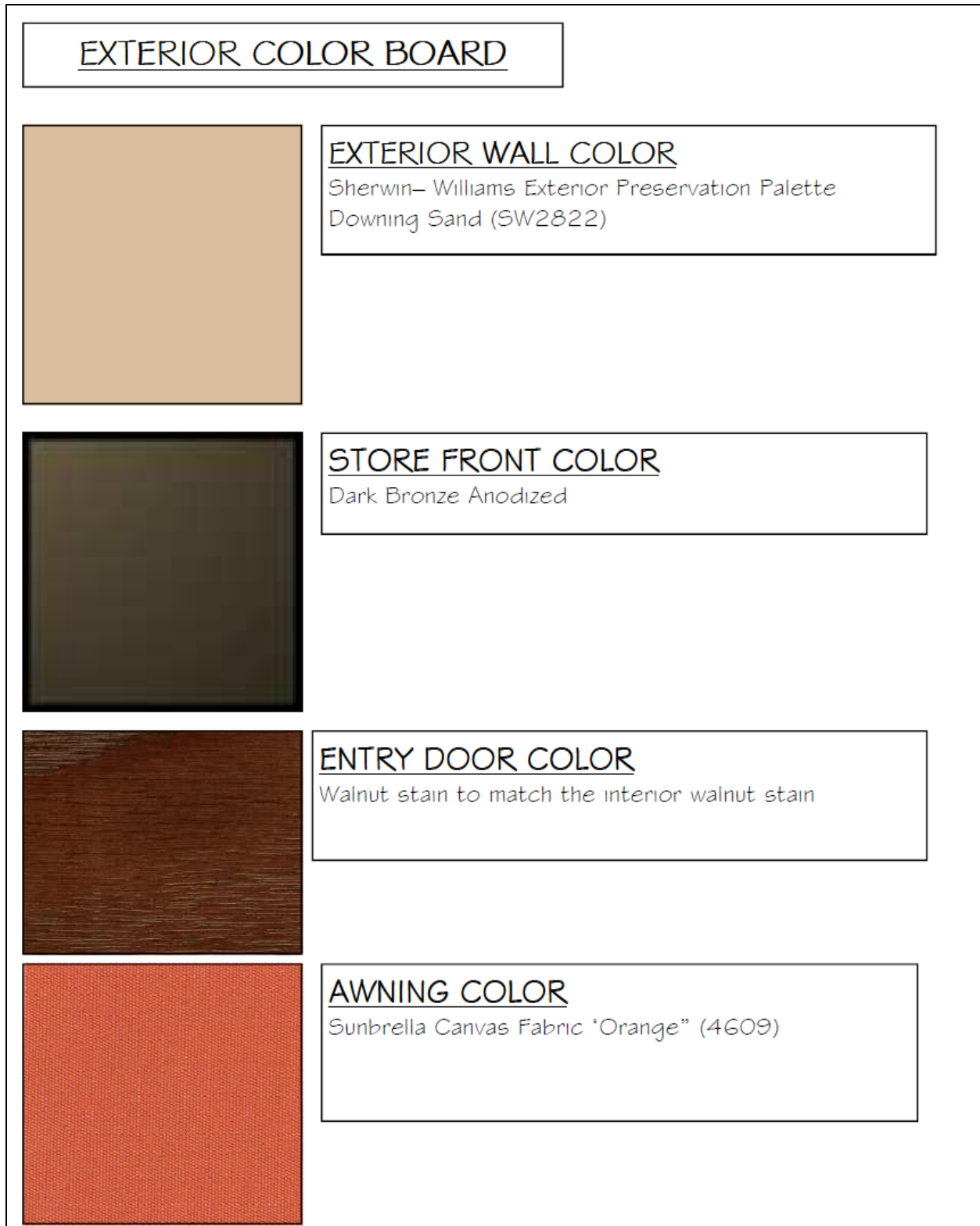


Figure 10. Exterior color board.



## PROPOSED SIGNAGE

- S-1 Existing Tenant Hanging sign to remain. (size: 30" x 36").
- S-2 New Restaurant Signage. (size: 24" high x 30" wide).  
Cut aluminum wall mounted signage. Finish to match the storefront.
- S-3 New Restaurant Signage. (size: 30" high x 42" wide).  
Signage to be screened onto the sloped face of the awning.
- S-4 New Restaurant Signage. (size: 4" high x 48" wide).  
Signage to be screened onto the vertical band of the awning.
- S-5 Menu Board Size. (size: 24" high x 12" wide)
- S-6 Office Directory Board. (size: 24" high x 12" wide)



S-1



S-2 & S-3

LEBANESE CUISINE

S-4

Figure 11. Revised proposed signage.

## LIGHTING FIXTURES

L-1 Exterior Gooseneck Light

**Above Awning**

Manufacturer: Sign Bracket Store; model: SL-AE3-ANG810

Size: Arm - 24-3/4" Long x 1 1/4" High x 1/2" Dia.

Angle Shade 10" Dia.

Material: Aluminum

Finish: Polished # 48

Lamp: 1 Fluorescent (18 watts)

Mount: as shown on documents

L-2 **Below Awning**

*(Pending selection as requested by staff. We are researching a discreet light fixture to illuminate the entry ways from under the awning.)*

Manufacturer:

Size:

Material:

Finish:

Lamp:

Mount: as shown on documents



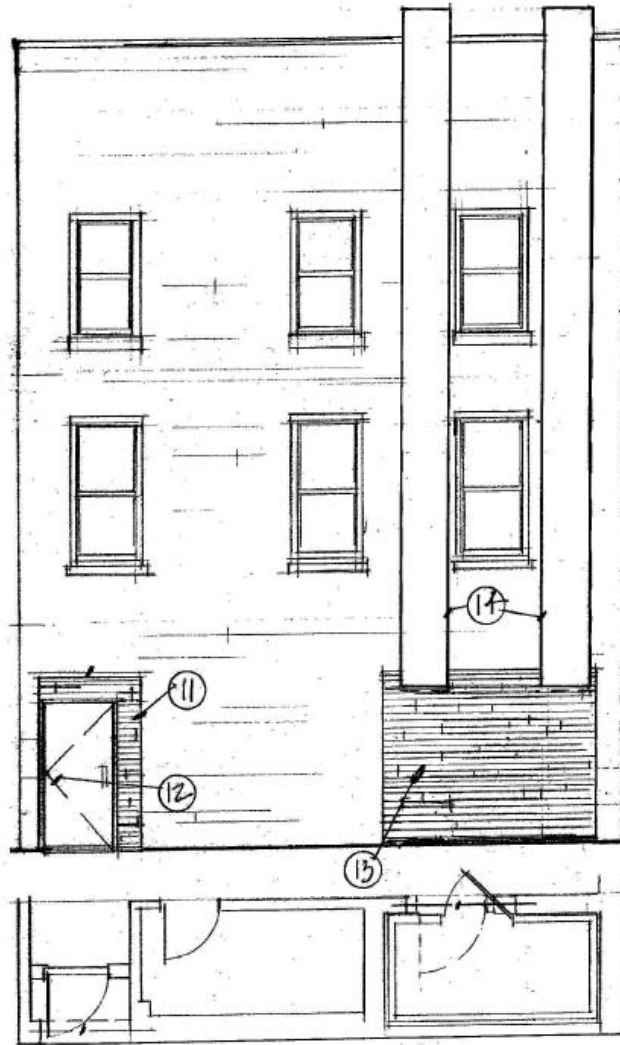
L-1

Figure 12. Proposed light fixture.



Proposed Work Key

11. New Opening in the existing brick wall for recessed new Fire Egress Door.
12. New Fire Egress Door.
13. Enclose Existing Opening. Brick to match existing.
14. Existing Kitchen Exhaust Hood Duct to remain.



PROPOSED ALTERATION TO THE REAR WALL

Scale: 1/8" = 1'-0"

Figure 13. Existing rear (north) elevation from alley and proposed alterations.