

Docket Item # 11
BAR CASE #2012-0264

BAR Meeting
September 5, 2012

ISSUE: Signage

APPLICANT: Thomas Kennedy, Old Town Theater by Jeffrey Stoiber

LOCATION: 815½ King Street

ZONE: KR / King Street Urban Retail

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of the Certificate of Appropriateness with the following conditions:

1. That the proposed number (4) and type of signs are only appropriate for the building's use as a theater. If the building use changes in the future, a new sign master plan is required;
2. That the playbill monitors may only be changed only once per day and must have the visual appearance of traditional movie or theater posters (i.e., one predominant graphic and a clear title) and may not advertise the theater name or menu items, etc.;
3. That the marquee monitors may be changed in concurrence with the number of daily performances (i.e., two times: once for a matinee and once for an evening show) and that the graphics must be limited to show names and times using no more than two colors on a black or white background;
4. That no website or telephone number information be listed;
5. That no blinking, flashing or animated messages, or music or other sounds audible on the exterior may be used at any time; and
6. That illumination levels be minimal and relatively the same as the previous internally illuminated sign panels, with final approval and periodic inspection by Staff.

****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 final approval 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 siding or roofing over 100 square feet, windows and 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.



CASE BAR2012-0264



I. ISSUE

In January and April 2012, the Board approved alterations to the historic Old Town Theater. The second approval included approval of a sign master plan, in concept, with the condition that the future tenant return to the BAR for approval of final sign details, which is the subject of the present application.

The applicant is requesting approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness at 815½ King Street for:

1. Two playbill monitors, measuring 3'-8" by 2'-6" each, to be installed on the face of the building in the newly uncovered brick niches; and
2. Two show time monitors at the marquee ends, measuring 3'-5" by 5'-0" each.

Each video monitor will be enclosed in a matte black steel frame. The applicant has indicated that the playbill monitors will showcase upcoming and current shows and be changed on a monthly basis with content updated daily. The marquee monitors will face the sidewalk on King Street and will be changed up to two times a day (once for the matinee show and once for the evening show). The content on the marquee signs will be limited to a plain background and text with the name and time of the show, and occasionally a celebrity headshot.

As previously approved, the letters "OLD TOWN" on the marquee are being refinished and the Plexiglas face is being removed. The letters will be reinstalled and will visually appear as outlined or ghost letters, as shown on the previous proposal by the applicant.

II. HISTORY

The Old Town Theater began as the Richmond Theater in **1914** and was the first permanent theater constructed in Alexandria.¹ The original Permit to Build, dated April 16, 1914, was for the purpose of "moving pictures, bowling alleys and billiards." The owners, Mr. Steele and Mr. Reed, hired a Mr. Atkinson as architect and R.G. Steele as contractor to construct the theater at a cost of \$7500. A circa 1929 photograph shows a metal marquee with illumination and a blade sign added at the second story. The owners reportedly operated a vaudeville theater on the first floor and a dance hall on the second floor until around 1932.² At that time, the theater closed for renovation, the dance hall was removed, and the balcony added. In 1980, the theater closed for renovations, the second screen was added, and the theater reopened as the Old Town Theater. The theater has a history of changes over the years that include renovations and reuse at times as a venue for both movies and live theater.

In 1956 the Board approved unspecified alterations (January 11, 1956). In 2001, the Board approved alterations for ADA compliant access to the theatre (BAR Case #s 2001-0101 and 0102, May 16, 2001). In 2007, the Board approved an after-the-fact Permit to Demolish for removal of a section of brick on the front façade and alterations to the underside of the marquee with conditions for repair (BAR Case #s 2007-0119 and 0120, July 18, 2007).

In January 2012, the Board approved demolition of the existing marquee and other alterations. In April 2012 the applicant returned to the Board with a revised proposal that included retaining the

¹ History from cinematreaasures.org/theaters/77

² History Section www.oldtowntheater.com

marquee but making significant changes to it and adding illumination, a new storefront system, a conceptual sign master plan and other minor alterations. The Board made its approval with the condition that any future tenant submit an application to the BAR for final sign design details

III. ANALYSIS

The Alexandria Zoning Ordinance prohibits portable or moveable signs, flashing or animated signs, and signs which visually interfere with traffic. The proposed monitors (4) will replace existing noncomplying rooftop show time and playbill wall sign panels but will be smaller in size. The show time monitors cannot be located any higher above the marquee roof than the previous show time signs.

The applicant is proposing four signs: two wall mounted signs in the uncovered brick niches adjacent to the storefront and two rooftop signs on the restored marquee above the sidewalk, each of which will be LCD video monitors with internal illumination. While the proposed number of signs is more than the Board would typically approve for a retail establishment, Staff notes, that in this particular case, the number of signs requested is appropriate and consistent with historic theater design. Further, the proposed signs represent a reduction in size and improvement in quality over what existed most recently. Although internally illuminated signs are generally discouraged by the Board, and are not appropriate on most buildings in the district, Staff believes that in this case they are consistent with the historic theater use. Theaters often featured higher levels of illumination than traditional commercial establishments and functioned as a civic anchor on the main commercial street of historic towns throughout America.

This application is unusual in that the applicant is asking to use LCD video monitors to display the upcoming features and show times, rather than the traditional paper posters in a glass case or plastic letters on a backlit white sign panel. While Staff does not support video screens that show animated features or are overly bright to attract attention, and does not support this type of sign for any retail or other commercial uses in the District, Staff recognizes that this technology is simply a 21st century version of the traditional movie theater sign. For instance, gasoline stations now typically use video monitors on their pole mounted price signs in order to be able to change fuel prices without having employees go outside to change individual plastic numbers. In Staff's experience, these gas station signs are not overly bright and look much like the traditional internally illuminated signs.

With the proposed limitations on the illumination and the frequency of changing "posters" or show times, Staff believes that the signs can be tastefully accommodated. Staff notes that the levels of illumination must be minimal and subdued and advises that they be periodically checked by Staff.

Therefore, Staff recommends approval of the application, with the conditions listed above, for a theater use only.

STAFF

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

IV. CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

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

Code Administration

- F-1 The review by Code Administration is a preliminary review only. Once the applicant has filed for a building permit, code requirements will be based upon the building permit plans. If there are any questions, the applicant may contact Ken Granata, Plan Review Services Division Chief, at ken.granata@alexandriava.gov or 703.746.4193.
- C-1 A sign permit is required for this project. Five sets of *construction documents* that fully detail the construction as well as framing schematics shall accompany the permit application(s). If a Virginia licensed design professional prepares drawings, the plans shall bear the signature and seal of the Virginia licensed design professional in accordance with the Code of Virginia Section 54.1-410B.

Transportation & Environmental Services

FINDINGS:

- F1. The alley located at the rear of the building is a Public Alley. It is advised that if any work is to be performed from the alley that the applicant contact T&ES, Construction & Inspection at (703) 746-4035 to discuss any permits and accommodation requirements that will be required. (T&ES)
- F2. It appears that the existing Encroachment Permit for the outdoor seating (ENC2004-0009) is no longer applicable. However, an Encroachment will be required for the proposed canopy and associated monitors as they appear to extend into the Public Right of Way beyond the four foot allowed under Sec. 5-2-29(d) as noted below under the City Code Requirements, please include this information with the SUP Application. (T&ES)

RECOMMENDATIONS

- R1. The building permit must be approved and issued prior to the issuance of any permit for demolition. (T&ES)
- R3. Applicant shall be responsible for repairs to the adjacent city right-of-way if damaged during construction activity. (T&ES)
- R4. All improvements to the city right-of-way such as curbing, sidewalk, driveway aprons, etc. must be city standard design. (T&ES)
- R5. 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 all plans. (T&ES)

CITY CODE REQUIREMENTS

- C-1 Any work within or performed from/within the right-of-way requires a separate permit from T&ES. (Sec. 5-2) (T&ES)
- 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. (T&ES)
- C-3 All secondary utilities serving this site shall be placed underground. (Sec. 5-3-3) (T&ES)
- C-4 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). (T&ES)
- C5. Roof, surface and sub-surface drains shall be connect to the public storm sewer system, if available, by continuous underground pipe. Where a storm sewer is not available, the 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. (5-6-224) (T&ES)
- C6. Canopies, awnings and marquees suspended from a building or structure with no ground supports, having a clearance of at least eight feet above a sidewalk, extending no more than four feet beyond the front property line and extending to no more than one foot from the established curb line, may be erected. (Sec. 5-2-29(d)) (T&ES)
- C-7 The owner shall obtain and maintain a policy of general liability insurance in the amount of \$1,000,000 which will indemnify the owner (and all successors in interest); and the city as an additional named insured, against claims, demands, suits and related costs, including attorneys' fees, arising from any bodily injury or property damage which may occur as a result of the encroachment. (Sec. 5-29 (h)(1)) (T&ES)

Please submit updated Insurance Certificate prior to submission of permits for any work within or from the Public Right of Way:

City of Alexandria

T&ES / Site Plans

Attn: Kimberly Merritt

301 King Street, Room 4130

Alexandria, VA 22314

V. ATTACHMENTS

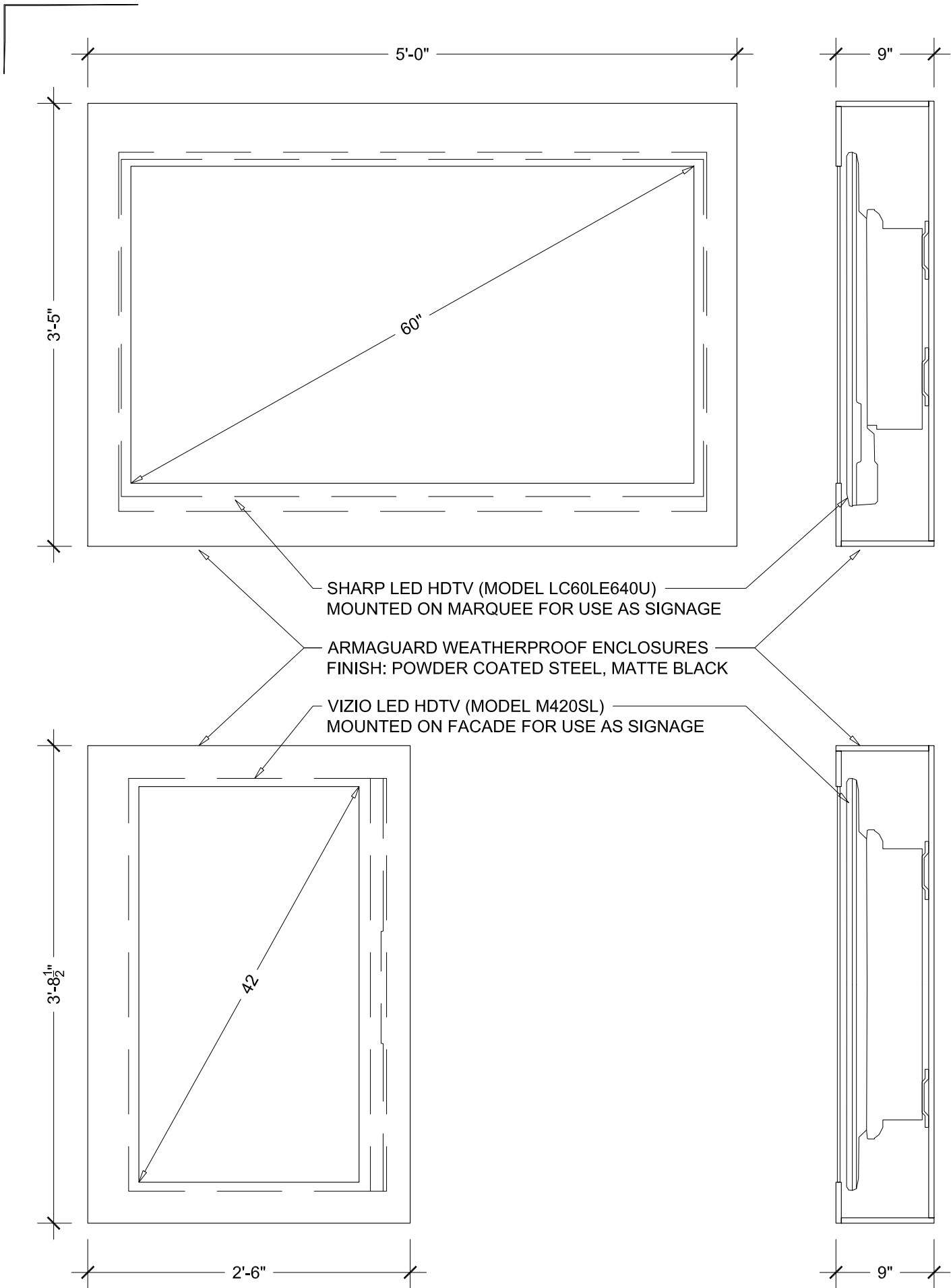
1 – Supporting Materials

2 – Application for BAR2012-00264 at 815½ King Street



43'-2"





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Home » LCD Enclosure » LCD Enclosure

LCD Enclosure

Protection Of LCD Screens In Outdoor, Public Or Harsh Industrial Environments.

Designed to accommodate wide range of commercial LCD displays ranging from 24 (61cm) to 70 inches (178cm) and housing additional VESA mounts for thin client or dedicated PCs. An Armagard LCD enclosure is the ideal all-in-one digital signage protection solution.

Specifications & Guarantees:

All Armagard enclosures are protected from liquids and particulate matter and are constructed according to International NEMA standards as well as European IP standards.

Armagard LCD Enclosures - All In One Digital Signage Protection.



Max Screen Size:	Height(inches):	Width(inches):	Depth(inches):	Product Code:
24" (61cm)	20.5	28.3	8.3	PDS-24
32" (81cm)	24.8	35.2	9.1	PDS-32
42" (106cm)	29.9	44.3	9.1	PDS-42
46" (117cm) (built for the Samsung high bright monitor)	32.8	51.1	9.1	PDS-46
47" (119cm)	32	48.4	9.1	PDS-47
52" (132cm)	36.8	53.1	9.1	PDS-52
55" (139cm)	38.5	56.2	9.1	PDS-55
60" (152cm)	41.3	60.2	9.1	PDS-60
70" (178cm)	46.9	70.8	10.3	PDS-70



A3

SHEET 3 OF 5

OLD TOWN THEATER
815-1/2 KING STREET
ALEXANDRIA, VA 22314
RENOVATION
 SIGNAGE DETAILS
 06-AUG-2012

PROJECT:

TITLE:
 DATE:
 FILE NAME:

Stoiber + Associates
 Architecture • Interiors

www.stoiberandassociates.com

1621 Connecticut Avenue NW, #200
 Washington, DC 20009

F 202.986.7606
 P 202.986.4700

SAMPLE IMAGES FOR MARQUEE SIGN

DESCRIPTION: MARQUEE SIGNS ARE LOCATED AT BOTH ENDS OF THE CANOPY, FACING KING STREET AND THE SIDEWALKS. THE MARQUEE SIGN WOULD BE CHANGED TWICE DAILY: ONCE AT OPENING IN THE MORNING FOR THE BREAKFAST OR LUNCH SHO AND THEN AGAIN IN THE AFTERNOON FOR THE EVENING SHOWS. PROPOSED SIGN IMAGES ARE BELOW SHOWING EXAMPLES OF A SOLID BACKGROUND AND CONTRASTING TEXT OPTIONS. ON OCCASSION WE MIGHT ADD A HEADSHOT OF A CELEBRITY NEXT TO THE SHOWTIMES.



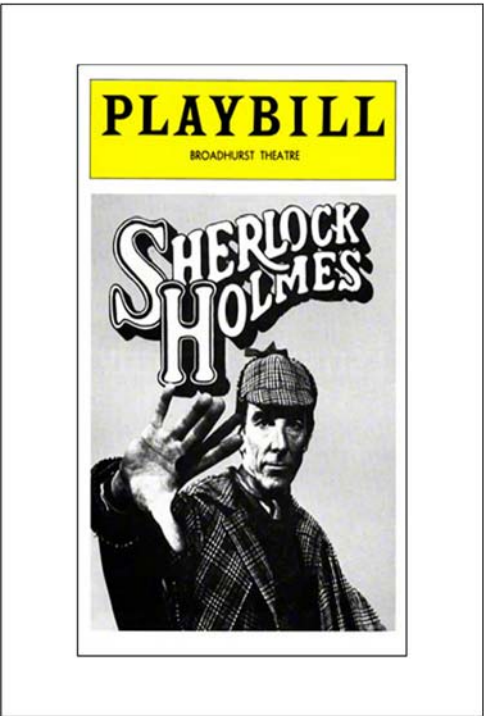
OLD TOWN THEATER
815-1/2 KING STREET
ALEXANDRIA, VA 22314
RENOVATION
MARQUEE SIGN DESCRIPTION
06-AUG-2012

PROJECT:
TITLE:
DATE:
FILE NAME:

Stoiber + Associates
Architecture • Interiors
www.stoiberandassociates.com
1621 Connecticut Avenue NW, #200
Washington, DC 20009
F 202.986.7606
P 202.986.4700

SAMPLE IMAGES FOR PLAYBILLS

DESCRIPTION: PLAYBILLS WILL BE LOCATED ON THE BUILDING FACADE IN THE EXISTING RECESSED NICHES INTENDED FOR THIS PURPOSE. THERE WILL BE ONE ON EACH SIDE OF THE ENTRY DOORS. THE PLAYBILLS WOULD BE CHANGED ON A MONTHLY BASIS WITH CONTEXT KEPT UP TO DATE ON A DAILY BASIS.



THEATER CIRCA 1929 SHOWING PLAYBILLS

OLD TOWN THEATER
815-1/2 KING STREET
ALEXANDRIA, VA 22314
RENOVATION
PLAYBILL SIGN DESCRIPTION
06-AUG-2012

PROJECT:
TITLE:
DATE:
FILE NAME:

Stoiber + Associates
Architecture • Interiors
www.stoiberandassociates.com
1621 Connecticut Avenue NW, #200
Washington, DC 20009
F 202.986.7606
P 202.986.4700

BAR Case # _____

ADDRESS OF PROJECT: _____

TAX MAP AND PARCEL: _____ **ZONING:** _____

APPLICATION FOR: *(Please check all that apply)*
☐ CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS

☐ PERMIT TO MOVE, REMOVE, ENCAPSULATE OR DEMOLISH
(Required if more than 25 square feet of a structure is to be demolished/impacted)
☐ WAIVER OF VISION CLEARANCE REQUIREMENT and/or YARD REQUIREMENTS IN A VISION
 CLEARANCE AREA (Section 7-802, Alexandria 1992 Zoning Ordinance)

☐ WAIVER OF ROOFTOP HVAC SCREENING REQUIREMENT
(Section 6-403(B)(3), Alexandria 1992 Zoning Ordinance)
Applicant: ☐ Property Owner ☐ Business *(Please provide business name & contact person)*

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ E-mail : _____

Authorized Agent *(if applicable):* ☐ Attorney ☐ Architect ☐ _____

Name: _____ Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

Legal Property Owner:

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

- | | | |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|--|
| ☐ Yes | ☐ No | Is there an historic preservation easement on this property? |
| ☐ Yes | ☐ No | If yes, has the easement holder agreed to the proposed alterations? |
| ☐ Yes | ☐ No | Is there a homeowner's association for this property? |
| ☐ Yes | ☐ No | If yes, has the homeowner's association approved the proposed alterations? |

If you answered yes to any of the above, please attach a copy of the letter approving the project.

NATURE OF PROPOSED WORK: *Please check all that apply*

- ☐ NEW CONSTRUCTION

☐ EXTERIOR ALTERATION: *Please check all that apply.*

☐ awning

☐ fence, gate or garden wall

☐ HVAC equipment

☐ shutters

☐ doors

☐ windows

☐ siding

☐ shed

☐ lighting

☐ pergola/trellis

☐ painting unpainted masonry

☐ other _____

☐ ADDITION

☐ DEMOLITION/ENCAPSULATION

☐ SIGNAGE

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED WORK: *Please describe the proposed work in detail (Additional pages may be attached).*

SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS:

Items listed below comprise the **minimum supporting materials** for BAR applications. Staff may request additional information during application review. Please refer to the relevant section of the *Design Guidelines* for further information on appropriate treatments.

Applicants must use the checklist below to ensure the application is complete. Include all information and material that are necessary to thoroughly describe the project. Incomplete applications will delay the docketing of the application for review. Pre-application meetings are required for all proposed additions. All applicants are encouraged to meet with staff prior to submission of a completed application.

Electronic copies of submission materials should be submitted whenever possible.

Demolition/Encapsulation : *All applicants requesting 25 square feet or more of demolition/encapsulation must complete this section. Check N/A if an item in this section does not apply to your project.*

- ☐ ☐ N/A

☐ Survey plat showing the extent of the proposed demolition/encapsulation.
- ☐ ☐

Existing elevation drawings clearly showing all elements proposed for demolition/encapsulation.
- ☐ ☐

Clear and labeled photographs of all elevations of the building if the entire structure is proposed to be demolished.
- ☐ ☐

Description of the reason for demolition/encapsulation.
- ☐ ☐

Description of the alternatives to demolition/encapsulation and why such alternatives are not considered feasible.

Additions & New Construction: *Drawings must be to scale and should not exceed 11" x 17" unless approved by staff. All plans must be folded and collated into 12 complete 8 1/2" x 11" sets. Additional copies may be requested by staff for large-scale development projects or projects fronting Washington Street. Check N/A if an item in this section does not apply to your project.*

- N/A
- ☐ ☐ Scaled survey plat showing dimensions of lot and location of existing building and other structures on the lot, location of proposed structure or addition, dimensions of existing structure(s), proposed addition or new construction, and all exterior, ground and roof mounted equipment.
 - ☐ ☐ FAR & Open Space calculation form.
 - ☐ ☐ Clear and labeled photographs of the site, surrounding properties and existing structures, if applicable.
 - ☐ ☐ Existing elevations must be scaled and include dimensions.
 - ☐ ☐ Proposed elevations must be scaled and include dimensions. Include the relationship to adjacent structures in plan and elevations.
 - ☐ ☐ Materials and colors to be used must be specified and delineated on the drawings. Actual samples may be provided or required.
 - ☐ ☐ Manufacturer's specifications for materials to include, but not limited to: roofing, siding, windows, doors, lighting, fencing, HVAC equipment and walls.
 - ☐ ☐ For development site plan projects, a model showing mass relationships to adjacent properties and structures.

Signs & Awnings: *One sign per building under one square foot does not require BAR approval unless illuminated. All other signs including window signs require BAR approval. Check N/A if an item in this section does not apply to your project.*

- N/A
- ☐ ☐ Linear feet of building: Front: _____ Secondary front (if corner lot): _____.
 - ☐ ☐ Square feet of existing signs to remain: _____ **new signs = 37sf**
 - ☐ ☐ Photograph of building showing existing conditions.
 - ☐ ☐ Dimensioned drawings of proposed sign identifying materials, color, lettering style and text.
 - ☐ ☐ Location of sign (show exact location on building including the height above sidewalk).
 - ☐ ☐ Means of attachment (drawing or manufacturer's cut sheet of bracket if applicable).
 - ☐ ☐ Description of lighting (if applicable). Include manufacturer's cut sheet for any new lighting fixtures and information detailing how it will be attached to the building's facade.

Alterations: *Check N/A if an item in this section does not apply to your project.*

- N/A
- ☐ ☐ Clear and labeled photographs of the site, especially the area being impacted by the alterations, all sides of the building and any pertinent details.
 - ☐ ☐ Manufacturer's specifications for materials to include, but not limited to: roofing, siding, windows, doors, lighting, fencing, HVAC equipment and walls.
 - ☐ ☐ Drawings accurately representing the changes to the proposed structure, including materials and overall dimensions. Drawings must be to scale.
 - ☐ ☐ An official survey plat showing the proposed locations of HVAC units, fences, and sheds.
 - ☐ ☐ Historic elevations or photographs should accompany any request to return a structure to an earlier appearance.

ALL APPLICATIONS: *Please read and check that you have read and understand the following items:*

- ☐ I have submitted a filing fee with this application. (Checks should be made payable to the City of Alexandria. Please contact staff for assistance in determining the appropriate fee.)
- ☐ I understand the notice requirements and will return a copy of the three respective notice forms to BAR staff at least five days prior to the hearing. If I am unsure to whom I should send notice I will contact Planning and Zoning staff for assistance in identifying adjacent parcels.
- ☐ I, the applicant, or an authorized representative will be present at the public hearing.
- ☐ I understand that any revisions to this initial application submission (including applications deferred for restudy) must be accompanied by the BAR Supplemental form and 12 sets of revised materials.

The undersigned hereby attests that all of the information herein provided including the site plan, building elevations, prospective drawings of the project, and written descriptive information are true, correct and accurate. The undersigned further understands that, should such information be found incorrect, any action taken by the Board based on such information may be invalidated. The undersigned also hereby grants the City of Alexandria permission to post placard notice as required by Article XI, Division A, Section 11-301(B) of the 1992 Alexandria City Zoning Ordinance, on the property which is the subject of this application. The undersigned also hereby authorizes the City staff and members of the BAR to inspect this site as necessary in the course of research and evaluating the application. The applicant, if other than the property owner, also attests that he/she has obtained permission from the property owner to make this application.

APPLICANT OR AUTHORIZED AGENT:

Signature: _____

Printed Name: _____

Date: _____

OWNERSHIP AND DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

Use additional sheets if necessary

1. Applicant. State the name, address and percent of ownership of any person or entity owning an interest in the applicant, unless the entity is a corporation or partnership, in which case identify each owner of more than ten percent. The term ownership interest shall include any legal or equitable interest held at the time of the application in the real property which is the subject of the application.

Name	Address	Percent of Ownership
1.		
2.		
3.		

2. Property. State the name, address and percent of ownership of any person or entity owning an interest in the property located at _____ (address), unless the entity is a corporation or partnership, in which case identify each owner of more than ten percent. The term ownership interest shall include any legal or equitable interest held at the time of the application in the real property which is the subject of the application.

Name	Address	Percent of Ownership
1.		
2.		
3.		

3. Business or Financial Relationships. Each person or entity listed above (1 and 2), with an ownership interest in the applicant or in the subject property is required to disclose **any** business or financial relationship, as defined by Section 11-350 of the Zoning Ordinance, existing at the time of this application, or within the 12-month period prior to the submission of this application with any member of the Alexandria City Council, Planning Commission, Board of Zoning Appeals or either Boards of Architectural Review.

Name of person or entity	Relationship as defined by Section 11-350 of the Zoning Ordinance	Member of the Approving Body (i.e. City Council, Planning Commission, etc.)
1.		
2.		
3.		

NOTE: Business or financial relationships of the type described in Sec. 11-350 that arise after the filing of this application and before each public hearing must be disclosed prior to the public hearings.

As the applicant or the applicant's authorized agent, I hereby attest to the best of my ability that the information provided above is true and correct.

Date Printed Name Signature