

Docket Item #8
BAR CASE #2004-0075

BAR Meeting
May 26, 2004

ISSUE: Sign
APPLICANT: Jamil Ayouch
LOCATION: 809 Pendleton Street
ZONE: CL/Commercial

****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 the Code Enforcement Bureau (including signs). The applicant is responsible for obtaining all necessary construction permits after receiving Board of Architectural Review approval. Contact Code Enforcement, Room 4200, City Hall, 703-838-4360 for further information.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

1. Staff recommends approval of the sign with the following conditions:
 - a. That the individual letters of the sign be blind mounted; and,
 - b. That the letters be anchored through the mortar joints rather than directly through the brick.
2. Staff recommends deferral of the light fixtures for restudy, with the applicant to provide the Board with additional information on the design of the fixtures, number of lumens emitted, and hours of illumination.

I. ISSUE:

The applicant is requesting a certificate of appropriateness for one sign at the front of the single story commercial building at 809 Pendleton Street. The sign will have two centered lines reading, "Casablanca Dollar + ". The sign will consist of individual plastic letters 9.6" high and will be 6' long on the upper line and 4.8' long on the lower line. According to the applicant, several changes have been made since submitting the application. The brick building, previously painted green, has been painted white. The letters will now be in black rather than gold. The sign will be installed above the door in the center of the 20' building and will be illuminated by three light fixtures.

II. HISTORY:

The square in which 809 Pendleton Street is located was platted in 1877, but was slow to develop. The one story concrete block and brick store at 809 Pendleton Street was constructed in 1950 for use as a seafood store (Permit #4957, 12/11/50). The Board of Architectural Review approved the construction of a store in the 800 block of Pendleton Street on December 21, 1950. The adjacent one story concrete block and brick building at 807 Pendleton Street was constructed as an addition to 809 Pendleton Street for the Alexandria Sea Food Restaurant (Permit #10689, 2/2/53). On April 25, 2001, the Board approved an awning and wall sign for Old Town Seafood, located at 807 Pendleton Street (BAR Case #2001-87). More recently, on August 28, 2002, the Board approved a wall sign for Khendi, the previous tenant of 809 Pendleton Street (BAR Case #2002-217).

The proposed signage complies with the zoning ordinance requirements. The total signage proposed is less than the one square foot for every linear foot of building frontage allowed under Section 9-202(B)(1) of the ordinance. The proposed sign is approximately 8.7 square feet while the building frontage is 20 feet.

Staff believes that, in general, the proposed sign complies with the *Design Guidelines* for signs in the historic districts. While Staff would prefer a flat board sign similar to that next door at 807 Pendleton Street, the proposed individual letter sign is simple and appropriate to the mid-20th century date of the building. Staff notes that the Design Guidelines call for individual letter signs to be "blind mounted," or attached in such a way that the fastening hardware is not visible (Signs - Page 4). The installation detail provided by the applicant does not appear to show blind mounting. In addition, the Design Guidelines recommend that signs on masonry buildings be anchored through the mortar joints rather than directly into the bricks (Signs - Page 4). Lastly, Staff is concerned about the proposed lighting. The application provides inadequate information

to determine whether the design and light level will be compatible with the building and with the surrounding, largely residential, neighborhood. According to the applicant, the store hours extend to 9 pm and it is assumed that the lights would be on until closing. The applicant is requesting only three downlights and has assured Staff that the lights will be small. However, Staff would prefer to have more information on the appearance of the proposed fixtures and amount of lumens that will be emitted.

III. STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

Therefore Staff recommends approval of the sign with the following conditions:

- a. That the individual letters of the sign be blind mounted; and,
 - b. That the letters be anchored through the mortar joints rather than directly through the brick.
2. Staff recommends deferral of the light fixtures for restudy, with the applicant to provide the Board with additional information on the design of the fixtures, number of lumens emitted and hours of illumination.

CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

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

Code Enforcement:

C-1 Wall sign must comply with USBC [H103-H111] for type of materials, maximum projection, vertical clearance below all parts of the sign, and additional loads.

C-2 A construction permit is required for the proposed project.

Historic Alexandria:

“Would prefer the use of wood.”