

Docket Item #9
BAR CASE #2004-0163

BAR Meeting
August 25, 2004

ISSUE: Signs and lighting
APPLICANT: M.R. Eslami
LOCATION: 224 North Henry Street
ZONE: CD/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:

Staff recommends approval of the application with the condition that the applicant select one of the two signs for installation.

I. ISSUE:

The applicant is requesting approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness to install two signs and lighting on the front of the one story commercial building at 224 North Henry Street. The larger sign will be a flat wall sign of wood measuring 3' high and 10' long. It will be anchored to the wall with expansion bolts through the mortar joints. The smaller sign will be a double faced wood hanging sign measuring 3' high by 2'6" long. It will be mounted on a metal scroll bracket. Both signs will have a white background and will read "IDEAL TILE" in black capital letters and will bear a logo consisting of the letters "i" and "t" in stylized lower case letters against a grid pattern representing tiles. In the case of the wall sign, the logo will be executed in tile, adhered to and grouted onto the signboard. The grout between the white tiles will be light colored while that between the colored tiles will be black.

In addition, the applicant proposes to install three gooseneck light fixtures above the wall sign. Based on the photograph provided, the lights will have a black finish. The lights will be pointed down to illuminate the sign. According to the applicant, the lights will be on a timer, but the hours of illumination were not provided to Staff. The applicant has also stated that the light fixtures will extend through the brick at each light location so that there will be no exposed electrical tubing or boxes.

II. HISTORY:

The one story concrete and brick structure at 224 North Henry Street was constructed in the late 1950s or early 1960s as part of a sprawling one story brick complex fronting on both Henry and Queen Streets. The commercial space at 224 North Henry Street has been vacant for some time. A year ago, the Board approved after-the-fact signs for Goody's Carry Out, the restaurant located just around the corner at 1104 Queen Street (BAR Case #2003-0183, 8/27/03).

III. ANALYSIS:

The proposed lighting, projecting sign and wall sign comply with the zoning ordinance requirements. The building frontage is 60' long and the total signage is 37.5' square feet, well within the requirement that signage not exceed one square foot for each foot of building width.

Staff believes the proposed flat wall sign and hanging sign are each appropriate. The use of tile on the wall sign is quite creative. However, the two signs in such close proximity seem redundant. The *Design Guidelines* state that, "generally, only one sign per business is appropriate." (Signs - Page 3) The Boards approved the two signs for Goody's Carry Out at 1104 Queen Street because the building faces both Queen and Henry Streets. Staff recommends that the applicant choose one of the signs and eliminate the other. Staff notes that any other signage not included in the current application, such as the yellow sign on the door, must be removed.

Staff has no objection to the proposed lighting, which will, according to the applicant, be installed so that the necessary electrical tubing and boxes will not be visible on the exterior of the

building. Staff is not concerned about the light levels at this location. The lamps are pointed down toward the sign and the building is located in a non-residential area on a heavily traveled street. Therefore, while it would make sense for the applicant to use the timer to ensure that the lights go out when the store is closed, Staff does not believe it is necessary to make that a condition of the approval.

IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Therefore, Staff recommends approval of the application with the condition that the applicant select one of the two signs for installation.

CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

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

Code Enforcement:

- C-1 A building permit and final inspection are required for installing the signs. Installation must be performed by a licensed contractor. A separate electrical trade permit is required for installation of the proposed lighting. (See Code Enforcement Memo to owners and contractors *Permits for Wood Signs* dated March 24, 2004.)
- C-2 Wall letters / signs must comply with USBC [H103-H111] Please indicate the method to be used for anchoring the letters to the wall – number & size of anchors and approximate weight of sign.
- C-3 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.

Historic Alexandria:

“Need information on the number of lumens from lights. Remove sign on the door?”