

Docket Item # 3
BAR CASE #2006-0159

BAR Meeting
July 26, 2006

ISSUE: Request for approval of new gasoline pumps and signage, SHELL

APPLICANT: Steve Stookey, by Duncan Blair

LOCATION: 442 North Henry Street

ZONE: CL/Commercial Low

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends approval of the application with the condition that the signs on top of the pumps be removed within 30 days of the date of this hearing.

****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.

(Insert sketch here)

ISSUE:

The applicant is requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness for re-branding the gasoline service station at 442 North Henry Street from Texaco to Shell. These alterations are:

- Re-paint the sign band above the existing garage with the Shell logo yellow color and the sign "Service Center";
- Re-paint the existing canopy yellow with a red band in the Shell logo colors and the "Shell" logo lettering on the north and east elevations;
- Reface existing three pumps with Shell brand logo and colors on front of pumps; at dispensers and above pumps;
- Reface existing price sign with Shell colors and logo; and,
- Reface existing freestanding sign with Shell colors and logo;

HISTORY:

The property located at 442 North Henry Street is a one story, painted brick commercial building. The first filling station on the site is shown on the 1941 Sanborn Insurance map. The 1891-1931 Sanborn maps show the western side of the 400 block of North Henry to be vacant.

In 1999, the Board approved re-branding this service station to Texaco. In 1993, the Board had waived the zone transition setback and approved the existing service island canopy and signs on 2/10/93 (BAR-93-3-PG). At that hearing, the Board also waived the vision clearance setback for the freestanding price sign, required the tire display box to be painted the same colors as approved for the building and required that the illuminated canopy sign be turned off between the hours of 10:30pm and 6:30am. Also, at that time the Board reminded the applicant that exterior vending machines were contrary to the *Design Guidelines*.

ANALYSIS:

Proposed wall sign, awning, pump canopy signs comply with zoning ordinance requirements. Signs atop pumps are not permitted pursuant to staff guidance memorandum date November 3, 1999.

Staff has no objection to re-branding the service station from Texaco to Shell. Staff notes that the Board has previously approved a re-branding of this station. However, Staff notes that the existing signs above the pumps are prohibited under the terms of the zoning ordinance and staff has included a condition that they be removed expeditiously.

Staff also reminds the applicant that the zoning ordinance prohibits outdoor display of merchandise, and that window signs, allowed on up to 20% of the window area, count toward the total sign area allowed on the building. Staff also notes that the vending machines with their text and lighting, while not clearly prohibited under the zoning ordinance, are within the province of the Board and are strongly discouraged under the Design Guidelines.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of the application with the condition that the signs on top of the pumps be removed within 30 days of the date of this hearing.

CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

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

Code Enforcement:

C-1 A construction and electrical permit is required for the proposed signage.

Office of Historic Alexandria:

No comment.