



Legislation Text

File #: 17-1004, Version: 1

DATE: September 21, 2017

TO: Members of the Northfield Heritage Preservation Commission

FROM: Scott Tempel, City Planner

Sign Permit - Aldrich Technology, 427 Division St.

SUMMARY AND ACTION REQUESTED:

The HPC is requested to approve a sign permit at 427 Division Street.

BACKGROUND:

Aldrich Technology is requesting a new wall sign for their business in the McClaughry Block. The applicable sections of the Downtown Historic District regulations in the sign ordinance include the following (Staff response is shown in **bold**):

1. Placement: Signs shall be positioned so they are an integral design feature of the building; signs shall complement and enhance the architectural features of the building. They shall be placed so that they do not destroy architectural details such as stone arches, glass transom panels, or decorative brickwork. Unless other placement is specifically approved by the Heritage Preservation Commission for reasons stated in the certificate of appropriateness by the Commission, signs may be placed only as follows:

- a. At or above the horizontal lintel, cornice, or beltcourse, or above the storefront windows;
- b. Projecting from the building;
- c. Applied to or painted on canvas awnings;
- d. In areas where signs were historically attached.

Staff response: The sign meets placement requirements. The wall sign will be located above the storefront windows. If properly installed, the sign will not destroy any architectural details of the building, and will complement the building.

3. Sign Shape: Signs shall be designed to match the historical time period elements and regional location of the City, which primarily exclude such features as cut corners and non-rectangular shapes. In most cases, the edges of signs shall include a raised border that sets the sign apart from the building surface or hanging space. Individual raised letters set onto the sign area surface are also preferred.

Staff response: The sign meets shape requirements. The wall sign is rectangular in shape and has a raised border.

4. Colors: Sign colors shall coordinate with the building façade to which the sign is attached and shall be compatible with the property's use. A combination of soft/neutral shades and dark/rich shades are encouraged in order to reflect the historical time period. No more than two colors shall be used for the sign letters.

Staff response: The sign meets color requirements. The sign is a dark rich color compatible with the building. The wall sign letters are white.

5. Material: Signs and sign letters should be made of wood or metal that is in keeping with the corresponding historical time period of the building. Brackets for projecting signs shall be made of iron or other painted metal, and shall be secured at the top of the sign and anchored into the mortar, not the masonry.

Staff response: The sign meets the material requirements. The sign is made of MDO board.

6. Message: The sign message shall be legible and shall relate to the nature of the business. These requirements may be accomplished through the use of words, pictures, names, symbols and logos.

Staff response: The sign meets message requirements. The sign is legible and relates to the business.

7. Lettering: Lettering styles shall be legible and shall relate to the character of the property's use and the era of the building. Lettering shall preferably include serif rather than strictly block type styles. Each sign shall contain no more than two lettering styles, and the lettering shall occupy no more than approximately 60% of the total sign area.

Staff response: The sign does not meet lettering requirements. The wall sign contains one legible lettering style. It does not utilize a serif font. The more modern font proposed is in character with the business, but not the district.

8. Illumination: External illumination of signs is permitted by incandescent or fluorescent light, but shall emit a continuous white light that prevents direct shining onto the ground or adjacent buildings. Exposed neon signs shall be permitted when installed inside windows of the interior of the building. The use of internally lit signs, such as but not limited to backlit plastic, is not permitted. Exceptions to this guideline shall be allowed for public service, time/temperature and theater signs.

Staff response: The sign meets illumination requirements. The wall sign will be down-lit with gooseneck type lighting similar to what has recently been approved on other downtown buildings.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of the Certificate of Appropriateness.