



## Legislation Text

---

**File #:** 17-833, **Version:** 1

---

**DATE:** May 18, 2017

**TO:** Members of the Northfield Heritage Preservation Commission

**FROM:** Scott Tempel, City Planner

Consider Sign Permit - 307 Water St South, Froggy's Hotel Suites

### **SUMMARY AND ACTION REQUESTED:**

The Heritage Preservation Commission (HPC) is being asked to review a sign permit for the Froggy Bottom's River Suites hotel business at 307 Water Street South. The River Suites are located in the Ebel Block building, originally constructed in 1894.

### **ANALYSIS:**

Jim Bohnhoff Design, representing property owner David Hvistendahl, is proposing new exterior signage to rebrand the business as Froggy's Hotel Suites. The wall signs are 1.83' x 16' = 29.33 sq. ft., 1.25' x 5.42' = 6.77 sq. ft., and 1.08' x 8' = 8.67 sq. ft.

**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 HPC for reasons stated in the certificate of appropriateness by the Commission, signs may be placed only as follows:

- a. At/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 proposed signs meet the current sign placement requirements. The wall signs will be located on the south wall of the building. The new signs match two existing wall signs approved by the HPC in 2009. The signs must be anchored in the mortar and not destroy any architectural details of the building.

**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 signs will be rectangular in shape.

They will not have a raised border or lettering, however, their location high on the wall minimizes the need for a decorative border. A painted border will be used.

**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 signs meets color requirements. The dark black color of the sign background, and the white lettering, are compatible with the brick building.

**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 signs meet the material requirements. The wall signs are made of MDO board.

**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 signs are legible and relate to the business.

**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 signs meet lettering requirements. The signs contain one legible lettering style -serif - which is the preferred lettering style.

**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 signs meet illumination requirements. The signs will not be lit.

## **RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends that the HPC approve the Sign Permit for 307 Water Street South.