



Legislation Text

File #: HPC Res. 2023-008, **Version:** 1

Meeting Date: May 3, 2023

To: Members of the Heritage Preservation Commission

From: Reeve Needham, Assistant City Planner

Certificate of Appropriateness for Signage at 508 Division St S. - Onstad Building 2.

Action Requested:

The Heritage Preservation Commission is asked to review and approve the Certificate of Appropriateness (HPC Resolution 2023-008) for a wall sign for Tolle Fine Art at 508 Division St. S. - Onstad Building 2.

Summary Report:

The applicant, Jim Bohnhoff, is applying on behalf of the owner of Tolle Fine Art, Rebecca Tolle. The proposed signage is a 12' x 46" wall sign, utilizing the existing signboard. The property is located at 508 Division St S. and the historic inventory form is attached. Attached are images of the current building and supporting documentation.

The Northfield city ordinances outline, in Chapter 34 - Land Development Code (LDC), Section 8.5.8, the Heritage Preservation Commission's Certificate of Appropriateness process and approval criteria. The HPC shall consider the following in evaluating an application for a certificate of appropriateness for a zoning certificate and/or building permit. Criterion (A) below must be met and criteria (B) through (G) shall be considered:

Criteria A, For all applications, the proposed action fully complies with all applicable requirements of this LDC;

Findings: The proposed signage complies with the LDC. Further details on the applicable sections of the Northfield LDC is included below.

1. Size

A total of one and one-half square feet of signage for each lineal foot of building frontage shall be permitted. One additional square foot of signage shall be permitted for each lineal foot of land frontage. Not more than ten percent of each façade in the C1-B, C2-B, or NC-F districts may be used for wall signage. The façade area shall be determined by multiplying the total building width by the height of the wall or surface area.

Findings: The maximum allowed sign area is approximately 55 sq. ft. The maximum allowed wall signage is approximately 55 sq. ft. The proposed sign is approximately 46 sq. ft. and meets the size requirements.

2. Placement

Signs shall be positioned so that they are an integral design feature of the building, i.e., 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 issued by the Heritage Preservation Commission, signs may be placed only as follows:

- (a) At or above the horizontal lintel, storefront cornice, or beltcourse, or above the storefront windows;*
- (b) Projecting from the building;*
- (c) Applied to or painted on canvas/fabric awnings only on the valance;*
- (d) In areas where signs were historically attached (see Figure 6-3); or*
- (e) Wall signs for first floor businesses shall be beneath the second floor windows.*

Findings:

The sign meets the placement requirements. The wall sign will be placed at the horizontal lintel.

3. Sign Shape

Signs shall be designed to match the historic time period elements. Wall signs shall include a raised rectangular border that sets the sign apart from the building surface or hanging space. Wall signs shall make use of individual raised letters. Projecting signs may be fabricated in a variety of shapes appropriate to the building or business

Findings:

The wall sign meets the sign shape requirements as it contains a raised rectangular border and has raised individual letters.

4. Colors

Sign colors shall coordinate with the building façade to which the sign is attached. A combination of soft/neutral shades and dark/rich shades will best reflect the historical time period. No more than two colors shall be used for the sign letters.

Findings:

The sign meets the color requirements, containing contrasting shades with one color used for lettering.

5. Material

Signs and sign letters should be made of wood, metal or weatherproof material that is in keeping with the corresponding historic period of the building. Signs that appear to be made of plastic are prohibited. 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.

Findings:

The sign will be made of MDO.

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. Logos, if used, shall be

incorporated into signage designs compatible with the Historic District.

Findings:

The sign meets the message requirements of being legible and relating to the nature of 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 on wall signs is encouraged to be of a serif lettering style. Wall signs shall contain no more than two lettering styles, and the lettering and any logo shall occupy no more than 60 percent of the total sign area and shall not extend outside of sign borders. If telephone numbers and websites are desired, the heritage preservation commission encourages them to be located on window and door signs. Telephone numbers and websites may be included on other sign types, provided they are clearly secondary to the primary message of the sign and occupy no more than 12 percent of the total sign area.

Findings:

The wall sign has one lettering style and does not contain telephone numbers or websites. The lettering will account for under 60% of the sign area.

Total sign: ~46 sq. ft.

Total lettering: approximately 18 sq. ft.

60% limit: ~27 sq. ft.

8. Illumination

External illumination of signs is permitted by incandescent, LED, 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 or the interior of the building. With the exception of lighted "open" signs, or temporary window displays of products sold using non-twinkling, non-intermittent, non-flashing lighting strings, internally illuminated signs are not permitted. For purposes of this clause, internally illuminated sign means the illumination of a sign by self-illumination or by an artificial source of light either on the face of the sign, such as light emitting diodes (LEDs) or light bulbs, or contained within such sign, including, but not limited to, fluorescent and neon signs. Flashing, intermittent, rotating signs or signs that create the illusion of movement are prohibited. Exceptions to this guideline shall be allowed for public service, time/temperature and theater signs.

Findings:

The sign will not be illuminated.

Criteria B, That the proposed action is in harmony with the purpose of the H-O district for sites located in the H-O district;

Findings: The proposed action is in harmony with the intent of the H-O district. Within the LDC Section 2.5.3, Historic Overlay District (H-O) purpose is defined “(a) Safeguard the heritage of the city by preserving sites and structures which reflect elements of the city's cultural, social, economic, political, visual or architectural history; (b) Protect and enhance the city's appeal to residents, visitors and tourists and serve as a support and stimulus to business and industry; (c) Foster civic pride in the beauty and

notable accomplishments of the past; and, (d) Promote the preservation and continued use of historic sites and structures for the education and general welfare of the people of the city.”

- a) The applicant is proposing maintenance and investment to preserve the building.
- b) The proposed signage enhances the building’s appeal to residents and visitors.
- c) The proposed signage will highlight the beauty of the building and foster more pride in the building’s history.
- d) The proposed signage promotes the continued use of the historic building with its new tenant.

Criteria C, That the proposed action would complement other structures within the H-O district for sites located in the H-O district

Findings: The changes will complement other structures within the H-O district.

Criteria D, That the proposed action is consistent with the Downtown Preservation Design Guidelines for sites located in the H-O district, and consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Treatment of Historic Properties for sites located within or outside the H-O district;

Findings: The changes are consistent with the Downtown Preservation Design Guidelines, as follows. The proposed sign is sized appropriately to the building, placed in a traditional location and does not conceal any architectural features, meeting the Downtown Design Guidelines and more thoroughly described under Criteria A.

Criteria E, Consideration should be given to the amount and quality of original material and design remaining in the building or structure when applying criteria, guidelines and standards;

Findings: Not applicable.

Criteria F, For new construction, the building or addition should be compatible with: (i) scale, texture, materials, and other visual qualities of the surrounding buildings and neighborhoods; (ii) the height, width, depth, massing and setback of the surrounding buildings; and (iii) the amount of solid wall to window and door openings, and the replacement of window and door openings, should be proportional to that of the surrounding buildings and neighborhood;

Findings: Not applicable.

Criteria G, Consideration shall be given to clear cases of economic hardship or to deprivation of reasonable use of the owner's property.

Findings: Not applicable.

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends approval of the Certificate of Appropriateness to install a wall sign per the attached documentation.

Attached is a resolution draft for the HPC to review. If there are any proposed changes, HPC members can make edits.

Alternative Options:

The HPC could approve the COA with conditions or deny the COA, both of which would require modifying the resolution with additional justification and findings.

Financial Impacts:

N/A

Tentative Timeline:

N/A