

214 West Water Street (at La Cucina)

TM 28 P 80.1

Rooftop addition

Atwood Architects, Applicant

Approved (7-0 with Gardner recusing) the partial demolition of the rear façade given the heavily altered condition.

Approved (7-0 with Gardner recusing) the general form and materials of the addition in concept, including painting the recent one-story brick addition, with details to come back to BAR for approval.

8:25 M.

Preliminary Discussion

BAR 07-02-03

1003 West Main Street (Studio House)

TM 10 P 51

New construction at Under the Roof

Atwood Architects, Applicant

Made comments – generally favorable

8:40 N.

Preliminary Discussion

BAR 07-05-02

605 East Market Street

TM 53 P 80

Window replacement

City of Charlottesville, Applicant

General support for replacement wood sash with insulating glass; may support aluminum clad wood sash depending on muntin detail; keep original brick mold; check the original light pattern – may have been 2/2.

8:55 N.

Matters from the public not on the agenda (please limit to 5 minutes)

9:00 O.

Other Business

Mel's Diner sign



Keep arrow; keep circle shape within the original outline.

513 Dice Street - Osteen asked the date of Council meeting – they had discussion regarding the BAR's recommendation and if it was all for naught.

9:05 P.

Adjournment 10:25 p.m.

May 15, 2007

**CITY OF CHARLOTTESVILLE
BOARD OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW
STAFF REPORT
May 15, 2007**



Mel's Diner Sign

Background

Mel's Diner is a 1962 non-contributing building in the West Main Street ADC District.

Application

High Tech Signs is proposing to chisel the neon knobs off both faces, remove the arrow, repaint the structure, then attach the large circles with graphics.

Recommendation

Mel's is a unique design on West Main Street. The sign with lighted arrow is classic.

Staff needs advice from the BAR to work with the sign maker on the proposed changes.

Should the arrow be preserved? Can the outside shape of the sign be altered by adding the MDO circle?

Mel's Diner





Job Information
Location:
Date:
Total signs in contract:

Sign specifications
Sign type:
Number of sign type:

Size:

Material:

Color:

Text size:

Mounting:

Attention



2165 Seminole Trail
Charlottesville, VA 22901

Layout by: Beth Robinson
phone: 1-434-974-7900 x 112
fax: (434)974-6898
brobinson@htsva.com

Approved ☐
Approved with revisions ☐
Resubmit ☐

Signature

Date

All Concepts, Designs and Plans represented by this document are the property of Hightech Signs and are for the use on the project specified in this document.

HTS-1

Scala, Mary Joy

From: Scala, Mary Joy
Sent: Friday, April 20, 2007 2:31 PM
To: 'Ben Foster'
Subject: RE: Mel's Diner

Ben,

I spoke to Amy Gardner, who is on the BAR, in order to get a second opinion. She agreed that the shape of the sign should not be altered (by removing the arrow and adding the circle). She suggested that you could leave the sign intact and simply attach a painted MDO sign within the existing outline. That way, if someone wanted to restore the sign in the future they could. She also thought that would be a less expensive option than removing the neon knobs.

Again, if we cannot come to an agreement, I would be happy to put the sign request on the BAR's May 15 agenda. I won't charge you for the BAR review; just the usual sign permit fee. It's possible that the full BAR won't agree with Amy and me, but I do not feel comfortable with your current proposal.

Mary Joy

Mary Joy Scala, Preservation and Design Planner
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From: Ben Foster [<mailto:BFoster@htsva.com>]
Sent: Thursday, April 19, 2007 2:11 PM
To: Scala, Mary Joy
Subject: RE: Mel's Diner

Mary Joy,

In my mind, the word "historic" implies not only something that is old but also something that has aesthetic value and is worth preserving. Just as much of what is created today is ugly, vulgar and brash, much that was created 50, 100, 200 or more years ago was in the same category. If some of these ugly relics are worth preserving at all, they should be in a museum or private collection somewhere. In my view, Mel's sign had little to commend it from the beginning and has not improved with age.

Mel has been a hardworking and generous friend to the Charlottesville black community. Abundant Life Ministries wished to honor him with a gift of some sort, so they took up a collection for him. Eventually, they decided the best gift they could give him was to do something to improve the appearance of his sign and I agreed to match whatever they collected. The total amount of money available is not enough to replace the sign or to restore it. I propose simply to chisel the knobs off both faces (the mounts for the original neon), repaint the structure and then attach the large circles with the graphics to the repainted structure.

If I was proposing to restore the sign, it might make sense to keep the arrow. Whether or not it would be desirable to restore the sign is not my call but in any case, since it is not economically feasible to do so, I felt the arrow contributed nothing to its appearance, so I suggested to Mel that we simply remove it.

4/20/2007

Maybe if the BAR feels that this sign should be restored to its original glory, they could persuade the Council to fund the restoration.

Ben

-----Original Message-----

From: Scala, Mary Joy [mailto:scala@charlottesville.org]

Sent: Thursday, April 19, 2007 11:20 AM

To: Ben Foster

Cc: Brodhead, Read

Subject: RE: Mel's Diner

This is a historic sign including the arrow and original lights and neon tubes. I think it's important enough that it cannot be altered without BAR approval. Please submit an application by April 24 and I'll put it on the May 15 agenda.

I do not understand from your narrative what you are proposing. Is it all new construction? Is it lit? What is the material?

Mary Joy Scala, Preservation and Design Planner
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scala@charlottesville.org

From: Ben Foster [mailto:BFoster@htsva.com]

Sent: Friday, April 13, 2007 11:06 AM

To: Scala, Mary Joy

Subject: RE: Mel's Diner

Hello Mary Joy,

I'm sure you agree that virtually anything I do with this sign will be a huge improvement over what is there currently but I also have budget constraints.

Apparently, the sign originally had exposed neon and the faces are covered with knobs which were part of the original tube supports. Before I can do anything, I have to hammer off or chisel off those tube supports. The end result will be that the faces will be too uneven to use for sign faces and the budget constraints will not allow me to take off the existing cabinet and replace it with a new one.

We came up with this design because it retains the existing shape (which is rather strange and not very good for a conventional sign layout) but makes it more interesting and more signmaker friendly. The colors and design are compatible with the type of cheerful cafe business that Mel runs. I also persuade Mel to allow us to do away with the arrow with the Christmas tree lights.

Ben

4/20/2007

-----Original Message-----

From: Scala, Mary Joy [mailto:scala@charlottesville.org]

Sent: Friday, April 13, 2007 10:21 AM

To: Ben Foster

Cc: Brodhead, Read

Subject: Mel's Diner

Any sign located in a historic district or an entrance corridor district gets reviewed by me as well as the zoning administrator.

If the BAR approved the original building design they get to approve the signage. Otherwise, I can approve administratively.

On West Main Street I would not approve any internally illuminated sign. If you want to reface it, I'd like you to keep the original shape of the sign.

If you want to replace those little light bulbs we can talk about that. I'll be back in on Thursday the 19th.

Mary Joy Scala, Preservation and Design Planner

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4/20/2007