

**HISTORIC LANDMARK COMMISSION
APPLICATION FOR A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS
DECEMBER 16, 2019
C14H-1986-0008
SCARBROUGH BUILDING
522 CONGRESS AVENUE**

PROPOSAL

Install signage on the ground floor of the building for Velvet Taco, a new restaurant.

PROJECT SPECIFICATIONS

The applicant proposes the installation of 2 exterior signs that require review and approval by the Commission. Both signs are letters to be mounted on the inside of the glass on both the Congress Avenue and the 6th Street sides of the building, and will have LED lighting behind push-through plexiglass letters in an open channel letter frame, presenting a similar appearance to neon. The letters will spell out “Velvet Taco” and will be mounted inside the plate glass on the building at the top of the ground story windows on the Congress Avenue elevation and vertically in the sidelight of the entry on 6th Street. The applicant has proposed an additional sign – as a refacing of the existing blade sign that is in keeping with the overall signage program for the building, and which will be administratively approved. The blade sign is close to the corner of 6th Street and Congress Avenue.

STANDARDS FOR REVIEW

The Downtown Sign Guidelines state:

NEON

- Exposed neon lighting is strongly discouraged, but may be permitted where the Commission determines it is appropriate to the context of the building and does not impede interpretation of the historic character of the building. Neon may be used to highlight reverse-channel lettering on a sign to create a “halo” effect.
- Applications for signs with exposed neon lighting must show through photographic documentation that the building had a sign with exposed neon in the historic period.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

Not reviewed.

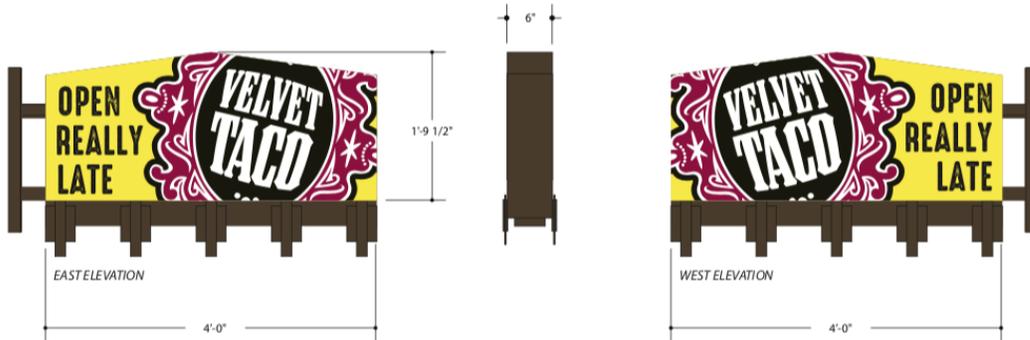
STAFF RECOMMENDATION

While staff appreciates that the illuminated signs will be mounted inside the plate glass, the effect will be the same as or similar to, a neon sign, and therefore, does not qualify as a candidate for administrative approval. The Downtown Sign Guidelines advise against neon unless there is a demonstrated precedent for it on a building, and staff believes that the Scarbrough Building, with all its Art Deco dignity and prominent position on Congress Avenue, should be the standard-bearer for appropriate signage. Staff recommends that the applicant consider a signage proposal that is completely in compliance with the sign guidelines and have indirect lighting or halo-type lighting and a more appropriate character for comporting with the dignity of this building.

Thanks Steve

Yes on the existing sign, we will be affixing panels that are 1'9.5" H at the highest point, as depicted below. This will leave the existing metalwork at the bottom of the sign exposed.

We are using dimensions off the sign that we took last month - as shown in the attached image



The above sign is a refacing of the existing blade sign on the building that comports with the overall sign program for the building and will be approved administratively.