

HISTORIC LANDMARK COMMISSION
PERMITS IN NATIONAL REGISTER HISTORIC DISTRICTS
NOVEMBER 2, 2022
SB-2022-129156/129174; GF-2022-151135
CONGRESS AVENUE
1001 CONGRESS AVENUE

PROPOSAL

Install three signs to a noncontributing building.

PROJECT SPECIFICATIONS

- 1) Install an approximately 30 ft² flush-mounted sign to the south elevation. The proposed sign is internally lit with acrylic letters on an aluminum wireway.
- 2) Install two flush-mounted signs at the south and west elevations. The proposed signs are approximately 37 ft² in area and are internally lit, with acrylic letters mounted to the building fascia.

DESIGN STANDARDS

The Guidelines for Signs in Historic Districts or at City Historic Landmarks are used to evaluate projects within the historic district. Items not addressed in the guidelines below may be resolved by applying the appropriate regulations in [Land Development Code § 25-10-8](#). The following standards apply to the proposed project:

***Number of Signs:** The Commission allows one sign per building, unless the building has multiple tenants; in this case, the Commission may allow one sign per façade module, if the façade modules correspond to tenant spaces. The Commission may also allow one sign for each street frontage if the building is at an intersection. A single directory sign is appropriate for a large building with multiple tenants.*

The proposed signs are located on a building at the intersection of 10th Street and Congress Avenue. The south façade contains two proposed signs, while the west façade contains one.

***Sign Types:** The Commission may allow window signs, awning signs, projecting signs, and flush mounted signs for most commercial buildings. Freestanding signs are allowed for office and retail uses in historic residential buildings. City codes prohibit the Commission from approving the following sign types: (1) rotating, (2) off-premises, (3) roof signs, (4) portable, or (5) signs which flash or blink at intervals. City code also prohibits handbills, posters, or placards on a structure except inside a window or on a bulletin board.*

The proposed signs are flush-mounted.

***Sign Size:** 2. Flush-mounted signs: 7% of the overall façade area, with a maximum height of 2 feet and a maximum size of 20 square feet. Large commercial buildings (over 3 stories): Cumulative signage may not exceed 40 square feet per façade and must comply with a signage plan for the building.*

The proposed signs' areas are approximately 30 ft², 37 ft², and 37 ft².

***Sign Design, Coloring and Materials:** Use simple shapes, such as rectangular or oval signs. The Commission recommends painted wood or metal signs with matte finishes for all signs; plastic, reflective materials, and unfinished surfaces are not allowed. Limit the colors used in a sign to no more than three. For sites with multiple signs, all signs should have corresponding or matching designs, coloring, and materials. Signs should match or complement the existing color scheme of the building to the maximum extent feasible.*

The proposed signs appear simple in design, with corresponding materials and designs.

***Lettering:** No more than two typefaces are allowed.*

The proposed signs contain one typeface.

***Lighting:** Lighting must be indirect and may be accomplished through shielded incandescent lights attached to the top of the sign, "halo" lighting, or recessed can lighting in awnings. Internally lit cabinet signs are not allowed for signs on historic buildings or within the historic districts. Neon signs are prohibited on pre-1950 building facades; an exception may be made for existing pre-1950 neon signage, or with photographic proof of a historic (pre-1950) neon sign on the building, but only if the neon sign does not detract from the historic character of the building or area. The Commission may consider limited neon on a post-1950 façade but encourages backlit neon over exposed neon.*

The proposed signs are internally lit with LED lighting.

Sign Placement: Flush-mounted and projecting (blade) signs should be positioned near the business entrance immediately above the principal entry to the business. Single-tenant signs are not allowed over doorways serving multiple tenants. As required by the city land development code, the bottom of the sign shall be a minimum of nine (9) feet above the sidewalk. When feasible, place signs to align with others in the block. Signs should not obscure or cover architectural elements, such as windows, decorative banding, or other ornamentation.

The proposed logo signs are positioned at the top of the building. The remaining sign is positioned near the building entrance.

Sign Mounting: New signs should utilize existing mounting apparatus whenever possible. If new bolt holes or brackets are necessary for sign installation, care should be taken to ensure that installation does not damage historic building materials in any way. Bolting through mortar joints avoids damage to historic stone or brick.

The proposed sign will be affixed to a non-contributing building, so no historic material will be damaged.

Exceptions: The City Historic Landmark Commission may consider exceptions to the foregoing provisions when warranted, and not prohibited by city ordinance.

Summary

The project meets some of the applicable standards.

PROPERTY EVALUATION

The property does not contribute to the Congress Avenue National Register district.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Approve the application with the following conditions: 1) Amend the sign lighting to be halo-lit rather than internally lit. 2) Either reduce the size of the street-level signage at the south elevation or remove the south elevation logo sign from the application.