

HERITAGE PRESERVATION COMMISSION REPORT
Certificate of Appropriateness- Downtown Commercial Historic District.
Section 115-320(d)(2)

TO: Heritage Preservation Commission
FROM: Planning Staff
MEETING DATE: March 21, 2019

PROPOSAL: The applicant is proposing a sign on the exterior façade of the property located at 330 Pearl Street.

PROPERTY OWNER:

Stephen Harm
806 Starlight Dr.
Holmen, WI 54636

APPLICANT:

Matt Garves
c/oMatt Boshcka
La Crosse Sign Group
1450 Oak Forest Drive
Onalaska, WI 54650

BACKGROUND: The Downtown Commercial Historic District was established by Ordinance in April 2016 along with design standards that are specific to the styles of architecture found within. The local district designation of the Downtown Commercial Historic District was created to encourage preservation of the historic resources of the district, which was named to the National Register of Historic Places in 1994. The design standards and review procedures are used to guide preservation, rehabilitation, new construction, relocation and demolitions. Plans or requests must be approved by the Heritage Preservation Commission prior to any building/demolition permit being issued. In determining whether to issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for Demolition, the HPC shall:

1. Consider factors such as whether the structure is of historical significance, the state of repair of the building, and whether denial of a permit would create a significant economic hardship for the owner.
2. Issue the certificate only if the owner can demonstrate that the building is structurally unsound and/or that denial of a demolition permit would create a significant economic hardship for the owner.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The applicant is proposing to install two (2) wall signs on the exterior of 330 Pearl Street. One sign will be installed on the Pearl Street façade and one will be installed on the on the 4th Street façade.

The letters will be 15.2 inches in height and the graphic will be 4ft in height. The length of the entire sign will be 17ft 10inches. Sqft of each sign is 71.33. The signs are proposed to be mounted over the existing storefronts.

SEE ATTACHED PROJECT PLANS

ANALYSIS:

Design standards for signs are:

Signs . In historic commercial buildings, signs were typically mounted above storefronts flush with the façade, or projected perpendicularly from the façade. Signs were also placed in windows and appeared on awnings. All of these sign types are appropriate if designed with suitable materials and dimensions. Signs shall be placed where they would have historically been placed, and shall not cover significant architectural features or ornamentation.

- a. Sign installation shall be reversible - that is, it should leave no trace on the building after the sign is removed.
- b. Sign colors shall be compatible with those of the building; a limited palette of no more than four colors should be used.
- c. Traditional materials (wood and metal) are appropriate, while plastic is not. Neon signs may be used with the approval of the HPC. Other composite material may be approved by the Heritage Preservation Commission.
- d. Modern back-lit fluorescent signs, animated signs, awnings, or electronic billboards and signs with changeable letters are prohibited.
- e. Small free-standing or wall-mounted signs may be used to identify rear entrances or parking areas.
- f. Wayfinding, directional, or upcoming event signs that maintain the historic character of the Downtown may be approved by the Heritage Preservation Commission.
- g. All proposed signs must receive a sign permit from the Fire Department - Division of Fire Protection and Building Safety in accordance with [section 111-36](#) of the Municipal Code

The proposed signs are mounted over the existing storefronts in the same location as the signs for the previous business were. Each letter will be individually mounted to the building. The facades where they will be mounted are stuccoed and have been significantly altered. It is not a animated or lit sign. The material of the sign is painted polyvinyl chloride. Examples of this kind of sign used are below.



FINDING

The proposed sign meets the design standards for the district. It also meets the City's Municipal Sign Code. Although the sign material is a plastic composite, you would not be able to tell the difference between this material or if it was metal from the sidewalk. The sign, along with other exterior remodeling that will be completed by the applicant, will be an improvement to this building.

RECOMMENDED ACTION BY STAFF: This Certificate of Appropriateness is recommended for approval.