

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: April 27, 2023

PROPOSAL: The applicant is proposing to attach a fabric awning on the exterior façade of the property located at 303-307 Pearl Street.

PROPERTY OWNER:
Markos Wholesale Apparel
303 Pearl Street
La Crosse, WI 54601

APPLICANT:
Richard Markos

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 a non-lit, 10ft wide fabric awning that has a 42inch projection from the building, a 36” drop, and possibly an 8” floppy valance around it. x 3.33ft sign to the face of the existing awning that faces Main Street. Minimal lettering will occur on the awning. The awning will consist of a slant style aluminum frame. According to the awning contractor the awning will be attached to the building with approximately 8-10 Tapcon masonry screws that are designed to have minimal impact to the building. Plans state that the awning will be approximately 8.5ft above the sidewalk.



SEE ATTACHED PLANS FOR MORE INFORMATION

ANALYSIS:

Design standards for awnings are:

Awnings.

- a. When used, awnings shall be installed without damaging the building or visually impairing distinctive architectural features.
- b. Canvas or fabric awnings shall be used, rather than wood or metal. Vinyl awnings are prohibited unless approved by the HPC.
- c. Awnings shall be flat rather than curved in profile unless approved by the HPC.
- d. Internally illuminated awnings are prohibited.
- e. Exterior mechanical equipment such as ductwork shall not be located on primary building facades.

The proposed sign is proposed to be installed without physically impairing any significant architectural features and with minimally invasive masonry anchors. It will not visually impair any portion of the storefront. It consists of fabric. It is flat. It is not illuminated and there is no exterior mechanical equipment.

The Community Risk Management Department stated that they informed the applicant that the awning needs to be 9ft above the public sidewalk instead of the proposed 8.5ft indicated in the plans. The applicant stated that they would meet this requirement. This does not change the above analysis.

FINDING: The proposed awning is in conformance with the Downtown Historic District Design Standards.

RECOMMENDED ACTION BY STAFF: This Certificate of Appropriateness is recommended for approval with the condition that it is approved by the Community Risk Management Department.