

HISTORIC AND DESIGN REVIEW COMMISSION

August 07, 2024

HDRC CASE NO: 2024-252
ADDRESS: 405 N ST MARYS ST
LEGAL DESCRIPTION: NCB: 403 BLK: 14 LOT: 13 TRAVIS BLDG.ON THE RIVERWALK
ZONING: D, H, RIO-3
CITY COUNCIL DIST.: 1
APPLICANT: Jaci Clemens/Keller Custom Signs
OWNER: ICONIC TRAVIS BLDG LLC
TYPE OF WORK: Signage
APPLICATION RECEIVED: July 12, 2024
60-DAY REVIEW: September 10, 2024
CASE MANAGER: Edward Hall

REQUEST:

The applicant is requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness to install signage at 405 N St Mary's. Within this request, the applicant has proposed the following:

1. One (1) set of internally illuminated channel letters to be installed within the existing signage band on the west (N St Mary's) façade. The proposed sign is to feature an overall width of 8' – 1" and an overall height of 1' – 6" for a total size of approximately 12 square feet. The proposed channel letters will be mounted flush to the building façade.
2. Two (2), double-sided blade sign to be located near the building corner; one sign will be installed on the N St Mary's façade and one will be installed on the E Travis façade. The proposed signs will each feature an internally illuminated cabinet to feature an overall height of 5' – 1" and an overall width of 1' – 6" for a total size of 15.26 square feet each, counting both sides.
3. Two (2), hanging medallion signs to be installed within the interior space, adjacent to the storefront system. One sign will be installed on the N St Mary's side and one will be installed on the E Travis side. Each sign will feature an overall size of approximately 3.14 square feet in size.

APPLICABLE CITATIONS:

Historic Design Guidelines, Chapter 6, Guidelines for Signage

1. General

A. GENERAL

i. Number and size—Each building will be allowed one major and two minor signs. Total requested signage should not exceed 50 square feet.

ii. New signs—Select the type of sign to be used based on evidence of historic signs or sign attachment parts along the building storefront where possible. Design signs to respect and respond to the character and/or period of the area in which they are being placed. Signs should identify the tenant without creating visual clutter or distracting from building features and historic districts.

iii. Scale—Design signage to be in proportion to the facade, respecting the building's size, scale and mass, height, and rhythms and sizes of window and door openings. Scale signage (in terms of its height and width) to be subordinate to the overall building composition.

B. HISTORIC SIGNS

i. Preservation—Preserve historic signs, such as ghost signs or other signs characteristic of the building's or district's period of significance, whenever possible.

ii. Maintenance—Repair historic signs and replace historic parts in-kind when deteriorated beyond repair.

C. PLACEMENT AND INSTALLATION

- i. Location*—Place signs where historically located and reuse sign attachment parts where they exist. Do not erect signs above the cornice line or uppermost portion of a facade wall, or where they will disfigure or conceal architectural details, window openings, doors, or other significant details.
- ii. Obstruction of historic features*—Avoid obscuring historic building features such as cornices, gables, porches, balconies, or other decorative elements with new signs.
- iii. Damage*—Avoid irreversible damage caused by installing a sign. For example, mount a sign to the mortar rather than the historic masonry.
- iv. Pedestrian orientation*—Orient signs toward the sidewalk to maintain the pedestrian oriented nature of the historic districts.

D. DESIGN

- i. Inappropriate materials*—Do not use plastic, fiberglass, highly reflective materials that will be difficult to read, or other synthetic materials not historically used in the district.
- ii. Appropriate materials*—Construct signs of durable materials used for signs during the period of the building's construction, such as wood, wrought iron, steel, aluminum, and metal grill work.
- iii. Color*—Limit the number of colors used on a sign to three. Select a dark background with light lettering to make signs more legible.
- iv. Typefaces*—Select letter styles and sizes that complement the overall character of the building façade. Avoid hard-to-read or overly intricate styles.

E. LIGHTING

- i. Lighting sources*—Use only indirect or bare-bulb sources that do not produce glare to illuminate signs. All illumination shall be steady and stationary. Internal illumination should not be used.
- ii. Neon lighting*—Incorporate neon lighting as an integral architectural element or artwork appropriate to the site, if used.

F. PROHIBITED SIGNS

- i.* An abbreviated list of the types of signs prohibited within San Antonio's historic districts and on historic landmarks is provided below. Refer to UDC Section 35- 612(j) and Chapter 28 of the Municipal Code for more detailed information on prohibited signs.
- Billboards, junior billboards, portable signs, and advertising benches.
 - Pole signs.
 - Revolving signs or signs with a kinetic component.
 - Roof mounted signs, except in the case of a contributing sign.
 - Digital and/or LED lighted signs, not to include LED light sources that do not meet the definition of a sign.
 - Moored balloons or other floating signs that are tethered to the ground or to a structure.
 - Any sign which does not identify a business or service within the historic district or historic landmark.
 - Any non-contributing sign which is abandoned or damaged beyond 50 percent of its replacement value, including parts of old or unused signs.
 - Notwithstanding the above, signs designated as a contributing sign or structure by the historic preservation officer shall not be prohibited unless or until such designation is revoked.

G. MULTI-TENANT PROPERTIES

- i. Signage Plan*—Develop a master signage plan or signage guidelines for the total building or property.
- ii. Directory signs*—Group required signage in a single directory sign to minimize visual color and promote a unified appearance.

3. Projecting and Wall-Mounted Signs

A. GENERAL

- i. Mounting devices*—Construct sign frames and panels that will be used to be attach signs to the wall of a building of wood, metal, or other durable materials appropriate to the building's period of construction.
- ii. Structural supports*—Utilize sign hooks, expansion bolts, or through bolts with washers on the inside of the wall depending upon the weight and area of the sign, and the condition of the wall to which it is to be attached.
- iii. Appropriate usage*—Limit the use of projecting and wall-mounted signs to building forms that historically used these types of signs, most typically commercial storefronts. To a lesser degree, these signage types may also be appropriate in areas where residential building forms have been adapted for office or retail uses, if sized accordingly.

B. PROJECTING SIGNS

- i. Placement*—Mount projecting signs perpendicularly to a building or column while allowing eight feet of overhead clearance above public walkways.
- ii. Public right-of-way*—Limit the extension of projecting signs from the building facade into the public right-of-way for a maximum distance of eight feet or a distance equal to two-thirds the width of the abutting sidewalk, whichever distance is greater.
- iii. Area*—Projecting signs should be scaled appropriately in response to the building façade and number of tenants.

C. WALL-MOUNTED SIGNS

- i. Area*—Limit the aggregate area of all wall-mounted signs to twenty-five percent of a building facade.
- ii. Projection*—Limit the projection of wall-mounted signs to less than twelve inches from the building wall.
- iii. Placement*—Locate wall signs on existing signboards—the area above the storefront windows and below the second story windows—when available. Mount wall signs to align with others on the block if an existing signboard is not available.
- iv. Channel letters*—Avoid using internally-illuminated, wall-mounted channel letters for new signs unless historic precedent exists. Reverse channel letters may be permitted.

FINDINGS:

- a. The applicant is requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness for approval to install signage at 405 N St Mary's, commonly known as the Travis Building. This property is an individual historic landmark, is located within the River Improvement Overlay, District 3, and is located within the Downtown Design District.
- b. ALLOWABLE SIGNAGE – The Unified Development Code recommends one major and two minor signs per application, not to exceed fifty (50) square feet total. Additionally, the UDC notes that signage should be designed to be in proportion to the façade. The Commission may approve additional signage and square footage.
- c. CHANNEL LETTER SIGN – The applicant has proposed to install one (1) set of internally illuminated channel letters to be installed within the existing signage band on the west (N St Mary's) façade. The proposed sign is to feature an overall width of 8' – 1" and an overall height of 1' – 6" for a total size of approximately 12 square feet. The proposed channel letters will be mounted flush to the building façade. Generally, staff finds the location and placement of the proposed signage to be appropriate; however, staff finds that the proposed channel letters should be indirectly lit as to not feature internally illuminated channel letters, as the Guidelines for Signage E.i. notes that internal illumination should not be used and that lighting should not result in a glare. Halo lighting would be appropriate.
- d. BLADE SIGNS – The applicant has proposed to install two (2), double-sided blade sign to be located near the building corner; one sign will be installed on the N St Mary's façade and one will be installed on the E Travis façade. The proposed signs will each feature an internally illuminated cabinet to feature an overall height of 5' – 1" and an overall width of 1' – 6" for a total size of 15.26 square feet each, counting both sides. Generally, staff finds the proposed signs and their locations to be appropriate; however, the Guidelines for Signage E.i. notes that internal illumination should not be used and that lighting should not result in a glare. Staff finds that metal sign faces with routed letters would be appropriate as this would result in only letters being illuminated.
- e. HANGING MEDALLION SIGNS – The applicant has proposed to install two (2), hanging medallion signs to be installed within the interior space, adjacent to the storefront system. One sign will be installed on the N St Mary's side and one will be installed on the E Travis side. Each sign will feature an overall size of approximately 3.14 square feet in size. Given the size and location of these signs, staff finds them to be appropriate, as proposed.

RECOMMENDATION:

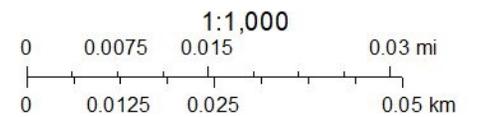
Staff recommends approval of items #1 through #3 based on findings a through e with the following stipulations:

- i. That the proposed channel letter sign feature indirect lighting, such as halo lighting, as noted in finding c.
- ii. That the proposed blade signs feature metal sign faces with routed faces to result in only text being illuminated.
- iii. That all signs feature lighting that does not result in a glare.

City of San Antonio One Stop



July 29, 2024





TRAVIS BUILDING

405

CADEAUX
jewelry | gifts

BARTLETT COCKE
harris bay

BARTLETT COCKE
harris bay

Here to help life go right.
Sta
Donna
Agent
210-922

FDC

EAUX

Public bench shelter with a person sitting on it.

© 2022 Curlyiff



N St Marys
300
400

E TRAVIS

Bus stop shelter sign with text and graphics.

Location pin icon

P
A
R
K

