HISTORIC AND DESIGN REVIEW COMMISSION
June 01, 2022

HDRC CASE NO:	**2022-286**
ADDRESS:	1009 S ALAMO ST
LEGAL DESCRIPTION:	NCB 744 BLK 3 LOT 3 & W 5.1 FT OF 2
ZONING:	C-3 IDZ, H
CITY COUNCIL DIST.:	1
DISTRICT:	King William Historic District
APPLICANT:	Kelly Welker/Bijou Betties LLC
OWNER:	Eric Schlather /1009 S ALAMO LLC
TYPE OF WORK:	Signage
APPLICATION RECEIVED:	April 30, 2022
60-DAY REVIEW:	Not applicable due to City Council Emergency Orders
CASE MANAGER:	Hannah Leighner

REQUEST:

The applicant is requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness for approval to install one, 21-square foot, aluminum wall sign featuring neon-lit lettering.

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

2. Awning and Canopy Signs
A. GENERAL
i. *Appropriate usage*—Limit the use of awning and canopy signs to building forms that historically used awnings, most typically commercial storefronts and apartment buildings.
ii. *Placement*—Place signs on the awning or canopy valance, the portion that is parallel with the window.
iii. *Mounting*—Install awning hardware in a manner that does not damage historic building elements or materials.
B. DESIGN
i. *Materials*—Fabricate awnings using fire-resistant canvas in a color that is appropriate to the period of the building.
ii. *Shape*—Select awning shapes that reflect the door or window openings they cover. Limit valances to approximately eight to twelve inches in length.
iii. *Lettering and symbols*—Lettering should generally be placed on the valance portion of the awning.
C. LIGHTING
i. *Internal illumination*—Do not use internal illumination or other techniques that cause awnings to glow; however, illumination may be concealed in the awning to provide directional light to illuminate sidewalks or storefronts.
D. METAL CANOPIES
i. *Placement*—Do not mount new signs or letters on historic metal canopies in a manner that destroys or conceals historic materials.

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.

4. Freestanding Signs
A. GENERAL
i. *Appropriate usage*—Freestanding signs are most appropriate in locations where building forms are set back from the street, such as in areas where historic residences have been adapted for office or retail uses, or in commercial districts where they may be used to identify parking areas or other accessory uses.
ii. *Placement*—Place freestanding signs near the public right-of-way where they are clearly visible to passing pedestrians and motorists, a minimum of five feet from the street right-of-way and ten feet from all interior side lot lines. No freestanding sign should be placed in a manner that obstructs the pedestrian walkway.
iii. *Number*—Limit the number of freestanding signs per platted lot to one, unless the lot fronts more than one street, in which case, one sign is allowed on each street on which the lot has frontage.
iv. *Monument signs*—Do not use ―suburban-style‖ monument signs or electronic messaging signs not historically found in San Antonio's historic districts.
B. DESIGN
i. *Height*—Limit the height of freestanding signs to no more than six feet.
ii. *Area*— The size of new signs should be appropriate within the historic context, and should not exceed 25 square feet on either side, for a total of 50 square feet. Appropriate size shall be determined by considering historic precedent, sign patterns within historic districts, and conditions specific to individual properties.
iii. *Structural supports*—Use subtle structural elements (in terms of their scale and mass) with historically compatible materials to support a freestanding sign.

5. Window Signs
A. GENERAL
i. *Location*—Limit the use of window signs to first floor windows where they may be readily viewed by pedestrians.
ii. *Appropriate building types*—Use window signs in high traffic pedestrian areas, such as on commercial storefronts or other buildings that have been adapted for non-residential use.
iii. *Historic signage*—Retain historic window signage if it reflects a historic building name, owner, or early business.
B. DESIGN
i. *Window coverage*—Do not cover more than 30 percent of the window area with signage.
ii. *Opacity*—Do not use window signs constructed of opaque materials that obscure views into and out of windows, either partially or completely.
iii. *Prohibited window signs*—Do not use paper signs, banners, or graphic films that adhere to the exterior of window glazing.
iv. *Symbols and lettering*—Incorporate lettering, symbols, and other design elements that reflect the type of business or institution at the location to increase a sign's impact.
v. *Temporary signs and banners*—Place temporary signs in a manner that is appropriate for the building scale and style, as allowed by UDC sec. 35-612(i).

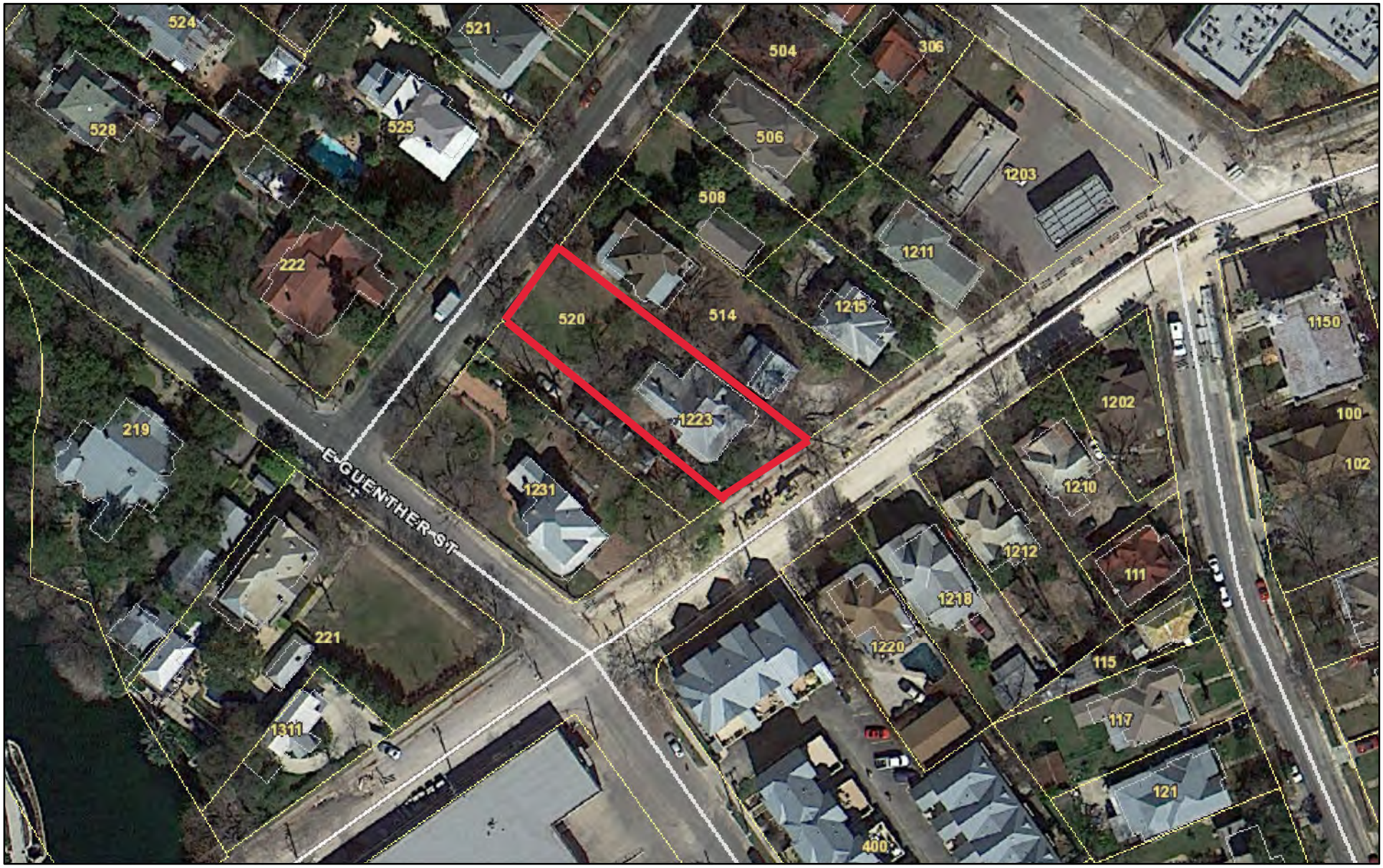
FINDINGS:

a. The applicant has proposed to install one sign at 1009 S Alamo. The sign will be located on the front façade of the structure facing the right of way. The historic structure at 1009 S Alamo was constructed circa 1900, is commonly known as the Pursch House and is first found on the 1912 Sanborn Map. The structure features a caliche stone structure with a plaster coat and both front and rear additions that are found on the 1952 Sanborn Map; both of which are contributing to the King William Historic District.
b. SIGNAGE SIZE – The Guidelines for Signage 1.A. notes that signage per application should not exceed fifty (50) square feet. The proposed sign will feature an overall width of 12' – 0" and an overall height of 1'-8" with a central logo that is 2'-6" to be projected from the main sign. The total size is approximately 21 square feet. This signage will be installed on the primary façade facing S Alamo St. Staff finds the proposed size and location of the sign to be appropriate.
c. SIGNAGE ILLUMINATION – The applicant has proposed to install one aluminum wall sign to feature neon-lit lettering of the words "Bijou Betties" on either side of a centered, printed logo. The Guidelines for Signage recommend against internal illumination. Guideline 1.E.ii for Signage states to incorporate neon lighting as an integral architectural element or artwork appropriate to the site, if used. The historic structure on which the signage will be installed pre-dates the use of neon lighting in the US; staff finds that the proposed neon lighting lettering to be non-contemporary and inconsistent with the design of the structure. Staff finds that a sign that uses 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. The backlighting for the centered logo is appropriate.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval for the installation of the proposed 21 square foot wall sign with the stipulation that the applicant uses only indirect or bare-bulb sources that do not produce glare to illuminate the sign, and does not incorporate internal illumination, to include neon lighting. All illumination shall be steady and stationary.

City of San Antonio One Stop



May 27, 2022

User drawn lines

1:1,000

0 0.0075 0.015 0.03 mi

0 0.0125 0.025 0.05 km

City of San Antonio GIS
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Bijou
Betties
1009
Come on in
We're Open

20"

144"

30"

Aluminum Signface (color matched to building) on raceway
Exposed neon (pink)
Logo is flat aluminum panel with digital print, neon outline (white)
Neon transformer mounted inside raceway
Electrical to be connected to existing service behind wall

EASE BE A
GOOD
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CLEAN UP
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