

HISTORIC AND DESIGN REVIEW COMMISSION

February 01, 2023

HDRC CASE NO: 2023-021
ADDRESS: 1604 MCCULLOUGH AVE
LEGAL DESCRIPTION: NCB 1751 BLK 6 LOT S 136 FT OF 1, 2 & 3 OR A14, A15 & A16
ZONING: C-2, H
CITY COUNCIL DIST.: 1
DISTRICT: Tobin Hill Historic District
APPLICANT: Juan Ramos/Arcom Signage Solutions LLC
OWNER: Juan Ramos/Arcom Signage solutions LLC
TYPE OF WORK: Signage
APPLICATION RECEIVED: January 11, 2023
60-DAY REVIEW: Not Applicable due to City Council Emergency Orders
CASE MANAGER: Jessica Anderson

REQUEST:

The applicant requests a Certificate of Appropriateness for approval to:

1. Install an internally-illuminated 50"x50" cabinet sign on the awning.
2. Install perforated black vinyl window tint with incorporated logos on the windows and door.

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.

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.

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).

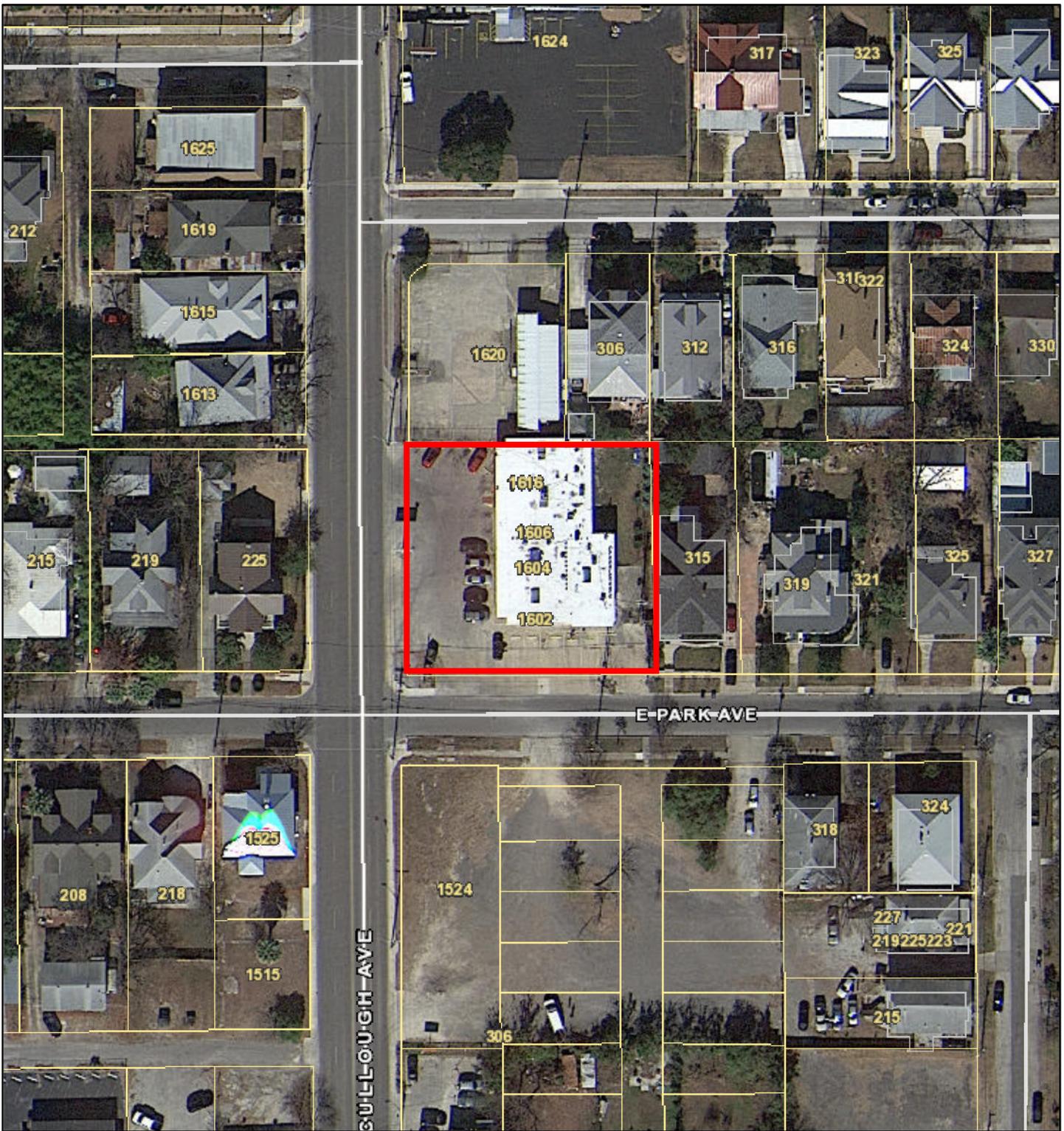
FINDINGS:

- a. 1604 McCullough is included multi-tenant one-part commercial block built c 1973. It is located on the southwest corner of a block bound by McCullough Ave, E Park Ave, St Mary's St, and E Myrtle St. The property is stone-clad with a wood and metal canopy and awning with fixed metal display windows and metal doors. The parcel is covered in concrete for surface parking. The property contributes to the Tobin Hill historic district.
- b. CABINET SIGN: DESIGN AND MATERIALS: The applicant requests approval to install an internally-illuminated 50"x50" aluminum cabinet sign with Plexiglass face above the storefront addressed 1604 McCullough. Historic Design Guidelines for Signage 1.A.ii states that new signage should be designed based on evidence of historic signs or sign attachment parts along the building storefront where possible. Guideline 1.D.i says do not use plastic, fiberglass, highly reflective materials that will be difficult to read, or other synthetic materials not historically used in the district. The current sign on the storefront is hand-painted on the wood awning. Other signs on site include a printed flat sign and three empty cabinet signs. Staff finds the proposed cabinet sign does not conform to guidelines and recommends the applicant proposes a flat wood or metal sign.
- c. CABINET SIGN: LIGHTING: The applicant proposes to install an internally-illuminated 50"x50" cabinet sign. Historic Design Guidelines for Signage 1.E.i says to 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. Staff finds the proposed cabinet sign does not conform to guidelines and recommends the applicant propose a sign with external illumination.
- d. PERFORATED VINYL WINDOW TINT AND SIGNAGE: The applicant proposes to cover the entire storefront window system, door, and transom, in black perforated vinyl with incorporated logos on the door and windows. Historic Design Guidelines for Signage 5.B.i states that no more than 30 percent of window area should be covered with signage. Guideline 5.B.ii states that window signs constructed of opaque materials that obscure views into and out of windows, either partially or completely, should not be used. Guideline 5.B.iii says that graphic films that adhere to the exterior of window glazing should not be used. Staff finds the proposed window film does not conform to guidelines. Should the applicant choose to propose vinyl logos for the door and windows without the black perforated vinyl tint, the request may be eligible for administrative approval.

RECOMMENDATION:

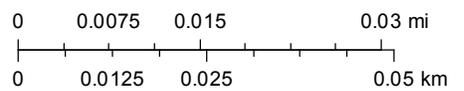
Staff recommends denial of items 1 and 2 based on findings a through d.

City of San Antonio One Stop



January 27, 2023

1:1,000



Project Name

LABTECH DIAGNOSTICS

Project address

1604 McCullough

San Antonio Texas 78212



Specification:

Manufacture and Install Perforated Printing Vinyl on windows without modify windows frame or glass will be applied direct to superficies.

front view

