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## Historic Landmarks and Preservation Districts Commission

### Report to the Committee

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To: Old Louisville Architectural Review Committee  
Thru: Cynthia Elmore, Historic Preservation Officer  
From: Katherine Groskreutz, Historic Preservation Specialist  
Date: June 15, 2020

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**Case No:** 20-COA-0095  
**Classification:** Committee Review

#### GENERAL INFORMATION

**Property Address:** 1310 S. 3<sup>rd</sup> St.

**Applicant:** Cynthia Miles Brown  
Signarama Dixie  
4436 Dixie Hwy.  
Louisville, KY 40216  
(502) 448-2134  
[cynthia@signaramadixie.com](mailto:cynthia@signaramadixie.com)

**Owner:** The Filson Historical Society  
Julie Scoskie  
1310 S. 3<sup>rd</sup> St.  
Louisville, KY 40208

**Estimated Project Cost:** Not provided

#### Description of proposed exterior alteration:

The applicant is seeking approval to install a flush-mount marquee sign that is 5' H x 16' long, with letters that range between 18.2" and 30.5" high. The sign is proposed to be installed over the primary entrance to The Filson Historical Society, which is located on an internal building façade on the campus, parcel number 032E00100000.

Currently there is no large signage which indicates the main doors to The Filson Historical Society. The proposed marquee sign will complement the existing signage on the adjacent parcel and clearly identify which door is the main entrance. The marquee is part of an overall proposed campus signage plan which includes two additional monument signs on the opposite sides of the four-parcel campus, but only the marquee sign requires ARC review.

## **Communications with Applicant, Completion of Application**

Staff attended a pre-application meeting with the applicant on March 12, 2020, where the applicant was advised the marquee sign would require ARC approval.

The initial sign permit application was received on April 14, 2020. There was a delay in assessing the proper workflow procedure when only one sign of a three-sign application package would require ARC.

Staff contacted the applicant on May 13, 2020 requesting they fill out additional COA applications, separating the three signs into two separate COA requests: one that could be completed at a staff level, and one that would require ARC approval. The completed COA applications were received on June 3, 2020.

The case is scheduled to be heard by the Old Louisville Architectural Review Committee (ARC) on June 24, 2020 at 4:30 pm, via WebEx video conference, and will be televised at 444 S. 5<sup>th</sup> Street in Conference Room 101.

## **FINDINGS**

### **Guidelines**

The following design review guidelines, approved for the Old Louisville Preservation District, are applicable to the proposed exterior alteration: **Sign**. The report of the Commission Staff's findings of fact and conclusions with respect to these guidelines is attached to this report.

The following additional findings are incorporated in this report:

### **Site Context/ Background**

The subject property is part of a four-parcel campus zoned TNZD in the Traditional Neighborhood Form District. The campus is bordered by South 4<sup>th</sup> Street to the west, West Ormsby Avenue to the north, and South 3<sup>rd</sup> Street to the east. The parcel in question faces South 3<sup>rd</sup> Street and is three parcels south from West Ormsby. The campus buildings are a mix of the Beaux Arts Ferguson Mansion built in 1902, an accompanying brick carriage house where the sign will be located, and a newer, modern design brick and glass building. The campus is surrounded by a mix of 2 ½- to 3-story masonry Victorian residences, a Greek Revival masonry church, and Mid-Century to modern-era apartment buildings.

The Filson is uniquely situated, spanning a block with an alleyway running through the middle of the campus. The main entrance is blocked from Ormsby by buildings on adjacent parcels, and their primary drive is difficult to find. The façade of the building where the sign is proposed is not directly street adjacent and can be partially seen from West Ormsby, and less directly from South 3<sup>rd</sup> Street (see attached pictures.)

### **Conclusions**

The proposed sign does not completely meet the **Sign** design guidelines for Old Louisville due to its size. However, the site poses challenges for a flush-mount sign

that falls within the size guideline SG6 as written, which only allows a flush-mount sign less than 2.5' in height and with lettering between 8" and 18" in height.

Since the main entrance to the Filson is located internally to the campus and is not directly street adjacent, a smaller sign would be difficult to see from West Ormsby and would not serve to direct visitors as well as the larger sign as proposed. Staff finds the overall design to be compatible with existing signage on the campus and is appropriate for the site and district.

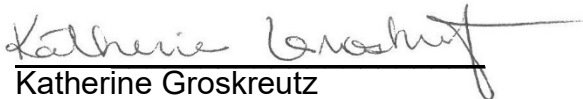
The design is simple with dark bronze, dimensional lettering, with a thinner font that does not overwhelm the building façade. The sign will be non-illuminated. Staff believes the proposed size will help the Filson address some of the siting and directional issues they face for their visitors.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

On the basis of the information furnished by the applicant, staff recommends the application for a Certificate of Appropriateness be **approved** with the following conditions:

- 1. If the design or material changes, the applicant shall contact staff for review and approval.**

*The foregoing information is hereby incorporated in the Certificate of Appropriateness as approved and is binding upon the applicant, their successors, heirs or assigns. This Certificate does not relieve the applicant of responsibility for obtaining the necessary permits and approvals required by other governing agencies or authorities.*

  
Katherine Groskreutz  
Historic Preservation Specialist

06/15/2020  
Date



*View of Starred Sign Location from W. Ormsby Ave.*



*View of Starred Sign Location from S. 3rd St.*



# SIGN

## Design Guideline Checklist

+	Meets Guidelines	NA	Not Applicable
-	Does Not Meet Guidelines	NSI	Not Sufficient Information
+/-	Meets Guidelines with Conditions as Noted		

	Guideline	Finding	Comment
<b>SG1</b>	Design signs to complement their surroundings. Signs should be integrated into the architectural design of the building and should not dominate the façade or interfere with adjacent buildings. Installation must comply with all other applicable city sign regulations.	+	
<b>SG2</b>	Keep sign designs simple and easy to read. Use a limited number of lettering styles and colors, which reflect the character or the business and/or the building.	+	
<b>SG3</b>	Design storefront-level signs that are primarily oriented to pedestrians and scaled appropriately.	+/-	Scaled appropriately for the sign's internal campus location so it can be read from the street
<b>SG4</b>	Consider the following issues when installing a sign; its size, shape, and materials; where it will be positioned on the building; if and how it will be illuminated; and what typeface will be used.	+	
<b>SG5</b>	Place attached wall signs over the unadorned frieze of a cornice or along the top of the storefront below the sill of the second-story windows. For residences, attach signs near doorways or on porches, where such features exist.	+	
<b>SG6</b>	Keep flush-mounted signs under 2.5 feet in height. They should be installed above the display windows and below the second-story window sills. Lettering should be between 8 and 18 inches high and occupy around 65 percent of the sign board.	-	The sign is proposed to be 5' H x 16' W with lettering between 18.2" and 30.5" in height due to the sign's internal campus location so it can be read from the street
<b>SG7</b>	Install window signs in such a way that lettering does not obscure the display area. The color of the letters should contrast with the interior space.	NA	
<b>SG8</b>	Generally, signs should project no more than 5 feet or half the width of the sidewalk, whichever is less. Consult the Department of Public Works for any licensing requirements for projecting signs.	NA	
<b>SG9</b>	Generally, do not install more than two signs on any storefront.	+	
<b>SG10</b>	Do not install roof-top signs.	NA	
<b>SG11</b>	Use appropriate materials for signage, including painted or carved wood signs, painted wall signs, signs applied to canvas awnings, smooth-surface sheet metal signs, and lettering applied to glass using gold leaf, paint, or etching.	+	
<b>SG12</b>	Do not install plastic, over-scaled, or back-lit or internally-lit fluorescent signs or awnings. Individual lettering and small logos may be illuminated within an opaque background. Signs that flash, move, or have inappropriately-scaled graphics should not be use. Reader boards are generally not appropriate.	NA	
<b>SG13</b>	When using neon, use it sparingly and judiciously.	NA	

<b>SG14</b>	Do not install a free-standing sign where an attached sign will accomplish the same end. They should be low to the ground and appropriately landscaped.	NA	
<b>SG15</b>	Do not install billboards within a historic district.	NA	
<b>SG16</b>	Use of portable signs may be approved with certain restrictions; however, such a sign is subject to a licensing agreement from the Department of Public Works	NA	
<b>SG17</b>	Do not install marquees on any building other than an operating theater or hotel.	NA	
<b>SG18</b>	Do not light signs in a harsh manner. Lighting should enable the sign to be easily read, but should not be overdone. Concealed incandescent lighting is recommended. Internally-lit, plastic box signs, bare spot lights, or high-wattage metal halide lights are inappropriate and should not be used.	NA	
<b>SG19</b>	Place signage in a location that benefits from existing interior lighting and street lighting.	NA	