

# CITY OF SAN DIEGO HISTORICAL RESOURCES BOARD

## DESIGN ASSISTANCE SUBCOMMITTEE

Wednesday, February 3, 2010, at 4:00 PM

12th Floor Conference Room 12B

City Administration Building

202 C Street, San Diego, CA

## MEETING NOTES

### 1. ATTENDANCE

Subcommittee Members	Alex Bethke (Chair); Salvador Aréchiga;
Recusals	None
Other Boardmembers	Ann Jarmusch
City Staff	
	HRB Kelley Saunders; Jodie Brown; Jeffrey Oakley
City Attorney	Nina Fain
Guests	
	Item 3A Curt Bauer, Integrated Signs
	Item 3B Rusty Middleton, Andaz San Diego; Marie Burke Lia
	Other Bruce Coons, SOHO

### 2. Public Comment (on matters not on the agenda)

None

### 3. Project Reviews

- **ITEM 3A:** Estimated time 30 minutes

Listings: HRB Site #127-060

Address: 840 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue

Historic Name: San Diego Hardware

Significance: Gaslamp District Contributor

Mills Act Status: N/A; Redevelopment Area

PTS #: 197480

Project Contact: Curt Bauer, Integrated Sign Associates, on behalf of Chris Berdine and American Apparel

Treatment: Rehabilitation

Project Scope: Install a new blade sign and relocate the existing San Diego Hardware sign to the top of the building.

Existing Square Feet: 4583

Additional Square Feet: 0

Total Proposed Square Feet: 4583

Prior DAS Review: None

Staff Presentation: The applicant has presented two proposals: (1) relocate the SD hardware sign from above the first floor to the top of the building and (2) install a blade sign. Staff has already informed the applicant that relocation of the SD hardware sign is not consistent with the Standards. The sign is a reconstruction of a sign that had been on the building since 1912 and is an accurate reconstruction per the Standards. Staff does not have a concern with the placement of the blade sign at the second floor; however, the placement of the blade sign at that location is not consistent with the Gaslamp PDO. Placement above the ground floor is not permissible under the PDO because American Apparel only occupies the ground floor of the San Diego Hardware building.

Applicant Presentation: The store is one of American Apparel's largest and one of the poorest performing. American Apparel feels that this poor performance is a signage issue. The placement of the San Diego Hardware sign is confusing to shoppers. Relocation of the sign to the top of the building would more appropriately identify the building as the San Diego Hardware building. In addition, there is no place to install the blade sign at the first floor in conformance with the Gaslamp PDO because of the placement of the existing San Diego Hardware sign. The applicant is seeking input and assistance from DAS.

Public Comment:

<b>Name</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Bruce Coons	Agrees with staff that the San Diego Hardware sign should not be moved. Similar issues in other areas of Downtown. Would a horizontal blade sign hanging under the fire escape work? It would need to be shorter than the top of the San Diego Hardware sign, but could work in that location.

Q&A:

<b>Subcommittee-member Issue or Question</b>	<b>Applicant's Response</b>
Any examples nationwide where American Apparel has worked with historic buildings and signage?	Unsure.
What about a projecting blade sign under the awning?	Concerned about visibility.
Would it be possible to re-think the awning and utilize that better as a sign?	Staff: that gets into CCDC requirements and the PDO

Subcommittee Discussion and Comment:

<b>Subcommittee-member</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Aréchiga	The Standards are there for a reason. Would consider the option that Bruce presented.
Bethke	Agrees with staff. The San Diego Hardware sign is a character defining feature of the building and relocation of it would not be appropriate.

Staff Comment:

Staff Member	Comments
Brown	American Apparel should think more globally and play off the San Diego Hardware building location (i.e. “American Apparel at the Historic San Diego Hardware Building”)

Recommended Modifications: Pursue a shorter blade sign or horizontal blade sign that projects further over the right-of-way and can be located within the guidelines of the PDO. Relocation of the San Diego Hardware sign to the top of the building is not consistent with the Standards.

Consensus:

- Consistent with the Standards
- Consistent with the Standards if modified as noted
- Inconsistent with the Standards and needs revision and additional review
- Inconsistent with the Standards but is the best feasible alternative
- Inconsistent with the Standards

▪ **ITEM 3B:** Estimated time 30 minutes

Listings: HRB Site #701

Address: 612 F Street

Historic Name: Maryland Hotel

Significance: Criterion C (Neoclassical Architecture with Italian Renaissance Revival elements) and Criterion D (Master Architect William Sterling Hebbard)

Mills Act Status: N/A; Redevelopment Area

PTS #: N/A

Project Contact: Michael Marks, Kelly Capital

Treatment: Restoration

Project Scope: The painted “Maryland Hotel” sign that was located on the north masonry wall of the hotel was inadvertently painted over with a much larger black background Ivy Hotel sign. At a prior DAS meeting options were discussed regarding incorporating a copy of the historic Maryland Hotel sign as part of or in the area of the new large Ivy Hotel sign. The issue was never resolved and the item is returning to DAS for discussion.

Existing Square Feet: N/A

Additional Square Feet: N/A

Total Proposed Square Feet: N/A

Prior DAS Review: October 2007

Staff Presentation: The Maryland Hotel historically had a painted wall sign on the north wall along the interior property line which read “Maryland Hotel”. In 2007 that wall sign was inadvertently painted over by the owners at the time. The issue was discussed at DAS in October 2007, at which time subcommittee members recommended repainting all

or most of the historic sign and incorporating the new hotel name somehow. Agreement was not reached on how this was to be accomplished. The item was set to be reheard by the DAS in November 2007, but was continued at the owner's request to allow additional time to work on the sign's design. The item never returned. The hotel has recently changed hands within the last few days, and the new owner and their representative are here today to listen to the discussion and the direction from the Subcommittee. Staff's position is that the original historic sign should be repainted as it appeared historically. Because the sign is located along an interior property line and not the main facades where most of the signage occurs, there should be limited confusion caused by the painted wall sign. A historic photograph which clearly shows the historic sign does exist; however, staff was unable to locate the photo in time for this meeting.

Applicant Presentation: Michael Marks represents the owner. Rusty Middleton represents Andaz, a branch of the Hyatt, and is the new management of the hotel. At the October 2007 DAS, then-Subcommittee Member Marshall recommended incorporating "Formerly Maryland Hotel" on the sign, which is what the applicant mocked up. The applicant is currently proposing new wall signage which does not incorporate reference to the Maryland Hotel. The applicant feels the HRB plaque with the historic name would be more appropriate than restoring the painted signage. The painted wall sign can only be seen by pedestrians on 7<sup>th</sup> Street; and the applicant is hoping the plaque would better achieve public information goals.

Public Comment:

Name	Comments
Bruce Coons	Supports staff. What he understood after last DAS meeting was that the historic sign would be repainted. As the applicant noted, it's not a good spot for advertising, but a great spot for maintaining historic signage.

Q&A:

Subcommittee-member Issue or Question	Applicant's Response
How was the sign inadvertently painted over?	It was brought forward for designation and it was designated in 2005. The painted sign was not identified in the designation or in the report. In the course of going to DAS for other modifications, it was noted that this sign had been there historically. In the course of completing the major rehabilitation, the applicant painted the sign during the rush to finish. The Subcommittee's recommendation was to incorporate "Formerly the Maryland Hotel" on the sign.

Subcommittee Discussion and Comment:

<b>Subcommittee-member</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Aréchiga	Too bad that it happened and he regrets the comments of the prior subcommittee. Agrees with staff that it should be reconstructed/repainted. Thinks that the red "Maryland" may be the original part of the sign.
Bethke	Not pleased at the minor reference to the historic name in the new painted sign. Agrees that the painted sign was a character defining feature. Does not agree with the prior comments that if it's gone, it's done, especially if it was done without permits. Installation of a plaque is not adequate mitigation. The subcommittee could look at restoring the sign, or other options of mitigating its loss. Recommendation would be to restore it to how it appeared before it was inadvertently painted. Per the Standards, we shouldn't speculate as to what it might have looked like. It should be restored based on the documentation we have.
Jarmusch	Important to restore. Not a voting member today, but would be open to compromising by incorporating the new hotel name.

Staff Comment:

<b>Staff Member</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Brown	Any objection to adding new signage within the "L" – shape created by the two painted "HOTEL" signs? (Yes)

Recommended Modifications: Sign should be re-painted/restored to its historic appearance. Incorporating new signage into the historic signage could be supported.

Consensus:

- Consistent with the Standards
- Consistent with the Standards if modified as noted
- Inconsistent with the Standards and needs revision and additional review
- Inconsistent with the Standards but is the best feasible alternative
- Inconsistent with the Standards

4. Adjourned at 4:55 PM

The next regularly-scheduled Subcommittee Meeting will be on March 3, 2010 at 4:00 PM.

For more information, please contact Kelley Saunders at [KMSaunders@sandiego.gov](mailto:KMSaunders@sandiego.gov) or 619.236.6545