

CITY OF BETHLEHEM

HARB CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS

DATE: 3 November 2021

APPLICANT MUST ATTEND MEETING FOR CASE TO BE HEARD

Deadline for submittals is by noon, two weeks prior to the next scheduled meeting.

Submit original plus 10 copies.

HARB MEETING MINUTES AND SUBMISSION

MEMBERS PRESENT

Beth Starbuck
Marsha Fritz
Connie Postupack
Michael Simonson
Fred Bonsall
Joe McGavin
Rodman Young

VISITORS PRESENT

Jeffrey Parks, 223 East Church Street
Susan Parks, 223 East Church Street
Jove L. Lee, B&P Polish Deli
David Damkanski, B&P Polish Deli
Ed Courrier, Bethlehem Press

MEMBERS ABSENT

Diana Hodgson

STAFF PRESENT

H. Joseph Phillips, AIA, Historic Officer
E-Mail:
jphillips@phillipsdonovanarchitects.com

The 3 November 2021 meeting of HARB was called to order by Chairperson, Beth Starbuck at 5:04 PM.

MINUTES

There were no comments on the 6 October 2021 Minutes. A motion was made by Beth Starbuck and seconded by Fred Bonsall to approve the minutes as submitted. The Minutes were approved unanimously as submitted.

Item #1: The applicant/owner of the property located at 223 East Church Street proposes to replace the existing wood porch floor with Azek Porch Vintage Collection Coastline composite material and remove the existing wood porch railings and spindles.

Property Location: 223 East Church Street

Property Owner: Jeffrey A. and Susan F. Parks

Applicant: Jeffrey A. and Susan F. Parks

Proposed work: The applicant/owner of the property located at 223 East Church Street proposes to remove the existing wood porch floor and replace it with Azek Porch Vintage Collection Coastline composite material in a grey color, similar to the color the porch floor was painted prior to the current green color. The proposed tongue and groove Azek material will be 3-1/8 inches wide to match the existing porch floor boards. It is also proposed to remove the existing wood porch railings and spindles that are deteriorated from persistent carpenter bee infestation. The visibility of the existing wood porch railings and spindles is limited by the plantings that are around the porch. The porch floor is less than 30 inches above grade and therefore, railings are not required by the building code. The lattice work under the perimeter of the porch will be replaced/replicated in wood materials. The iron railing at the stairs will be repaired and/or replaced as required.

Character Defining Features: The two and one-half story structure is topped by a hipped roof with a central street facing gable. The roofs have an ample overhang with shaped rafter tails that are exposed. The smooth brick façade is punctuated by simple banding at relevant intervals, such as the heads and sills of windows and by segmental brick arches at the window openings. The central gable element is highlighted by a Palladian Window element containing Ionic pilaster trim between the windows. The windows are placed non-symmetrically and are one over one light with thick sills. The off-center, double, natural wood front door is topped with a transom window. The front door is framed by an off-center pedimented porch roof supported by simple Tuscan columns sitting on wood paneled bases. The porch railing has a top and bottom rail with turned balusters.

Discussion: The Historic Officer, Joe Phillips, gave an overview of the project. Marsha Fritz advised the Applicant that landscaping could not be used as an excuse for concealing or removing historic elements since the landscaping could die or be replaced over time and that this argument was not applicable at this time. Beth Starbuck requested to see the Applicant's sample of the proposed Azek flooring and stated that, if approved, she would want the smooth side to be installed up and the textured side installed down. Marsha Fritz stated that she felt strongly that the porch railing is a significant historic element and should not be removed. She further stated that the porch railing could be repaired and/or replaced in kind. Beth Starbuck agreed. Ms.

Starbuck further advised the Applicant that there are wood enhancers and fillers that help to strengthen and preserve wood and that maybe all of the railings do not need to be replaced, but just repaired and maintained. Ms. Starbuck also stated that, in this specific instance, she is not apposed to using the Azek porch flooring because the porch sits further back from the street. Joe McGavin and Marsha Fritz asked the Applicant if Azek manufactures standard edge pieces that replicate the more historical ¾" thickness. The Applicant was unsure. Rod Young asked the Applicant if they were going to use the quarter round trim where the porch floor meets the wall of the house. The Applicant responded in the affirmative. Rod Young asked the Applicant if they had looked into replacing the porch railings. The Applicant replied that they had and that it would be in the \$7,000.00 to \$8,000.00 range, which is cost prohibitive to them. Joe Phillips advised that HARB should review the porch floor material sample for width, finish, and thickness and noted that the existing wood porch flooring is approximately ¾" in thickness and the proposed Azek material is 5/4" in thickness. Marsha Fritz stated that HARB needs to be realistic about alternative porch flooring materials because wood has become expensive and hard to get. Beth Starbuck suggested that composite materials should be considered on a case-by-case basis. Ms. Fritz suggested that HARB consult with PHMC regarding the use of composite or alternate materials to see what they might suggest and see how other communities are handling the use of newer, alternative materials.

The HARB voted to deny this Application as submitted and as follows.

Motion #1: Beth Starbuck made a motion to approve the use of Azek composite porch flooring material with the smooth side facing up and the textured side facing down.

Additional discussion: Joe McGavin cautioned that installing the smooth side up would be slippery and pose a safety hazard. Marsha Fritz suggested contacting PHMC for guidance on the approval and use of composite materials. Connie Postupack asked if a grit finish could be applied if the smooth side was installed up.

Second: None

Result of vote: This Motion died for lack of a second.

Motion #2: Joe McGavin made a motion to approve the use of Azek composite porch flooring material with the textured side facing up and with a bullnose edge on all three sides of the porch.

Second: Rod Young

Result of vote: The vote was split, with 3 members voting to approve and four members voting to deny the use of Azek composite porch flooring material with the textured side facing up and with a bullnose edge on all three sides of the porch. Therefore, the Motion was denied.

Motion #3: Marsha Fritz made a motion to deny the removal of the porch railings, citing that the porch railings are a significant, contributing feature to the historic character of the home.

Second: Beth Starbuck

Result of vote: The vote was split, with 5 members voting to deny and two members voting to approve the removal of the porch railings, as per the motion. Therefore, the Motion to deny the removal of the porch railings carried.

Guideline Citation: Secretary of Interior Standards No.(s)

#2 The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.

#5 Distinctive features, finishes, (paint) and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property shall be preserved.

#6 Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary, physical, or pictorial evidence.

#9 Exterior alterations shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property.

Bethlehem Historic District Design Guidelines

Page 12: Porches: Because of the importance porches play in the perception of historic buildings and streetscapes, original materials and details should be preserved.

Page 21: To maintain the historic character of a porch, wood decking and steps should be retained; they should not be replaced with concrete. Never remove wood columns or balustrades.

Evaluation, Effect on Historic District, Recommendations: The proposed work does not conform with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation or the Bethlehem Historic District Design Guidelines and will have a negative impact on the historic district.

Item #2: The applicant/owner of the property located at 99 West Broad Street proposes to apply window decals on the storefront.

Property Location: 99 West Broad Street

Property Owner: Arthur & Tammy Schmidt

Applicant: B&P Polish Deli

Proposed work: The applicant/owner of the property located at 99 West Broad Street proposes to apply window decals on the storefront. The name and logo of the deli is proposed to be applied to the glass in both doors and the street-facing store front windows. A solid, colored band with text describing the products sold by the deli will be run continuously on the bottom $\frac{1}{4}$ of the street facing glass and the side glass that is perpendicular to the street and the entrance doors.

Character Defining Features: The two- and one-half story structure has a cross-gabled roof. The smooth brick façade has one over one light double hung windows on the second floor which are symmetrically placed with flat lintels and heavy sills. The first-floor store front is ornately detailed with recessed double doors that create two-sided glass display windows on either side of the doors. The storefront cornice is dentiled/modillioned with substantial brackets at each end.

Discussion: The Historic Officer, Joe Phillips, gave an overview of the project. Marsha Fritz questioned the status of window signage that was previously approved for this location. The Applicant advised that the previously approved signage was for a previous tenant. Fred Bonsall stated that the proposed letters are of an appropriate serif style and requested that the color of the letters be off-white. Mike Simonson questioned if the five-inch lower band was too high. The consensus of HARB was that five inches was acceptable. Beth Starbuck questioned if the band was located too high on the window and suggested that the Applicant have the option to lower the band approximately five to eight inches on the window so as not to block the view of displayed goods. Ms. Starbuck stated that this suggestion relates to the practicality, not the historic appropriateness, of the location of the band.

The HARB agreed to recommend that the Bethlehem City Council issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for the application of window decals on the storefront.

Motion: Fred Bonsall made a motion to approve the application of window decals on the storefront, in accordance with the discussion outlined above, the Guideline Citation outlined below, and with the following conditions.

1. The color of the letters shall be off-white

2. The Applicant have the option to lower the five-inch lower graphics band approximately five to eight inches on the window so as not to block the view of displayed goods.

Second: Marsha Fritz

Result of vote: The vote was unanimous to approve the application of window decals on the storefront, as per the motion.

Guideline Citation:

Secretary of Interior Standards No.(s)

#2 The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.

#9 Exterior alterations shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property.

Bethlehem Historic District Design Guidelines

Page 15: Signage: The HARB encourages signage that does not obscure or damage architectural features, identifies the business, complements the style of the building and is appropriately scaled for its location.

Evaluation, Effect on Historic District, Recommendations: The proposed work conforms with the intent of the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and the Bethlehem Historic District Design Guidelines and will have no negative impact to the historic district.

New Business

1. Marsha Fritz asked Joe Phillips to reach out to PHMC for guidance on the approval and use of composite materials, such as composite porch decking materials.

There being no further business, upon a Motion by Mike Simonson, a Second by Beth Starbuck and a unanimous vote, the meeting was adjourned at 5:56 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,



H. Joseph Phillips, AIA
Historic Officer

Attachments: Copies of Guidelines cited in above decisions.

- **Replace** missing or deteriorated historic materials and features when the extent of deterioration precludes repair. Similar to repair, the preferred approach is to replace the entire feature in-kind to match the original material, finish, detailing, and texture. Since this is not always technically or financially feasible, substitute materials may be acceptable when they convey the original appearance and finish of the original feature.
- **Reconstruct** missing historical features if adequate historical, pictorial and physical documentation exists so that the feature may be accurately reproduced. The addition of features from other historic buildings or addition of historical elements for which there is no documentation is not appropriate.
- **Alterations and additions** are sometimes needed to ensure the continued use of a building. An alteration involves returning a building to a useful condition while saving those parts that represent its historical, architectural or cultural significance. It is important that alterations do not radically alter, obscure or destroy character-defining spaces, materials, features or finishes. An addition, however, is new construction at the exterior of an existing building and should be avoided. If considered, new additions should be clearly differentiated but compatible in size, mass, form, fenestration, detailing and style with the historic building, and constructed at a less visible side or rear elevation, so the character-defining features are not radically obscured, damaged or destroyed.

THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR'S STANDARDS FOR REHABILITATION

The following *Standards for Rehabilitation* were developed in 1995 by the National Park Service of the U.S. Department of the Interior. They are the national standard to guide rehabilitation work on historic resources and are used by the City of Bethlehem's Historical Architectural Review Board when rendering their recommendations.

Rehabilitation is defined as the act or process of making possible a compatible use for a property through repair, alterations, and additions while preserving those portions or features which convey its historical, cultural or architectural values.

1. A property will be used as it was historically or be given a new use that requires minimal change to its distinctive materials, features, spaces, and spatial relationships.
2. The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.
3. Each property will be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or elements from other historic properties will not be undertaken.
4. Changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right will be retained and preserved.
5. Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.
6. Deteriorated historic features will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture, and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.
7. Chemical or physical treatments, if appropriate, will be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials will not be used.
8. Archeological resources will be protected and preserved in place. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures will be undertaken.
9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the historic property and its environment.
10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be undertaken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

Rehabilitation as a Treatment: When repair and replacement of deteriorated features are necessary, when alterations or additions to the property are planned for a new or continued use, and when its depiction at a particular period of time is not appropriate, Rehabilitation may be considered as a treatment. Prior to undertaking work, a documentation plan for Rehabilitation should be developed.

Porches

Porches remain one of the most visible house elements and play a significant role in the appearance of the house and the streetscape. They can act as an extension of a home providing a welcoming feeling for visitors. Because of the importance porches play in the perception of historic buildings and streetscapes, original materials and details should be preserved. Typically, areas covered by a porch roof tend to require less maintenance; however, steps, railings and roofs are usually exposed to the weather and might require additional maintenance. One of the best ways to preserve wood porch features is regular re-painting.

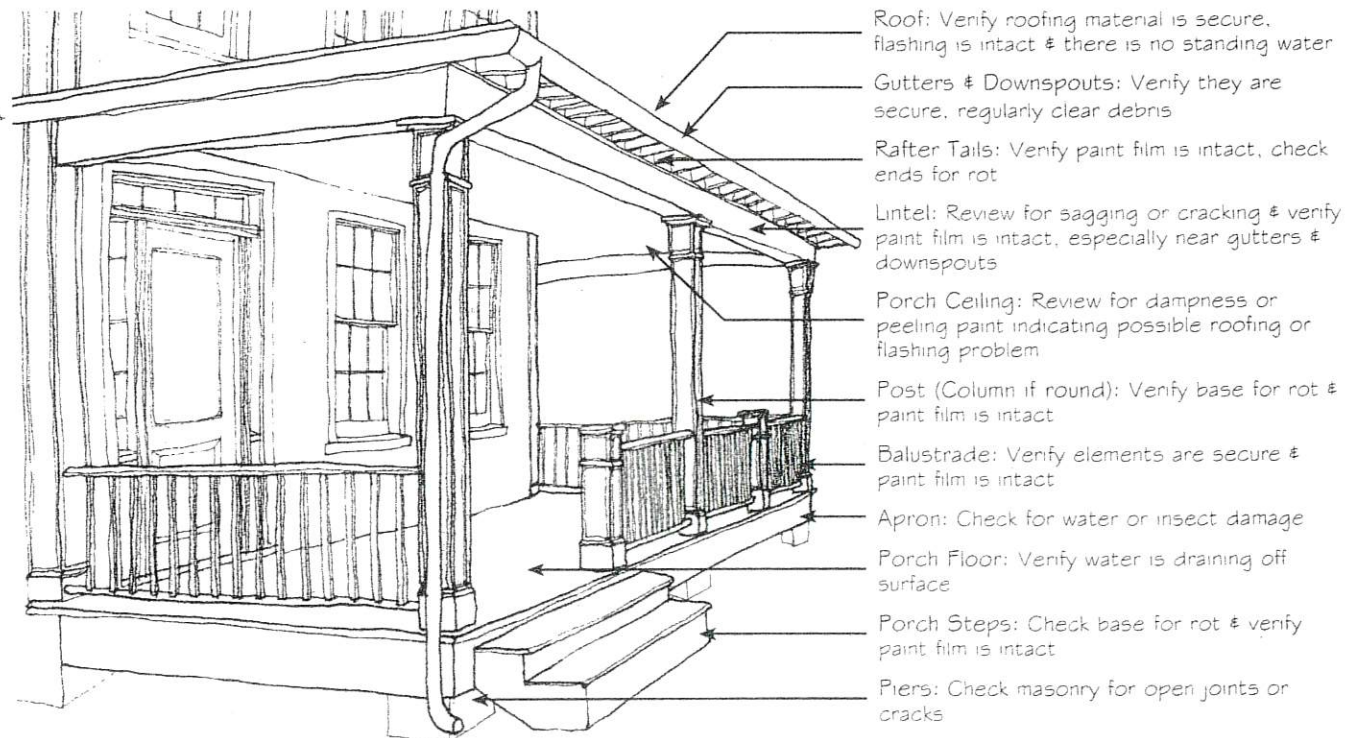
The HARB encourages:

- Identifying deteriorated elements, finding and correcting sources of deteriorated elements, such as deteriorated, cracked, blocked, inappropriately hung, broken or missing gutters or downspouts
- Replacing only those parts which cannot be repaired - in some instances, such as columns and posts, the base can be replaced at a fraction of the cost without replacing the entire column or post
- Repairing or replacing deteriorated or missing materials with similar new materials - avoid replacement of a wood railing with a metal or vinyl railing system
- Replacing only the original elements that cannot be repaired using elements of the same material, size, profile and other visual characteristics

- Rebuilding a porch with appropriate documentation
- If a substantial portion of the porch is deteriorated and cannot be repaired or replicated, or if a porch is missing, creating a simplified design using stock lumber and moldings that convey similar visual characteristics as the original porch, duplicating the dimensions and materials but not necessarily the detailing
- Painting porches regularly to preserve the wood with a finish that complements the architectural characteristics of the house - Refer to *Page 8* for addition information regarding painting
- Installing wood tongue and groove flooring at porches

The HARB discourages:

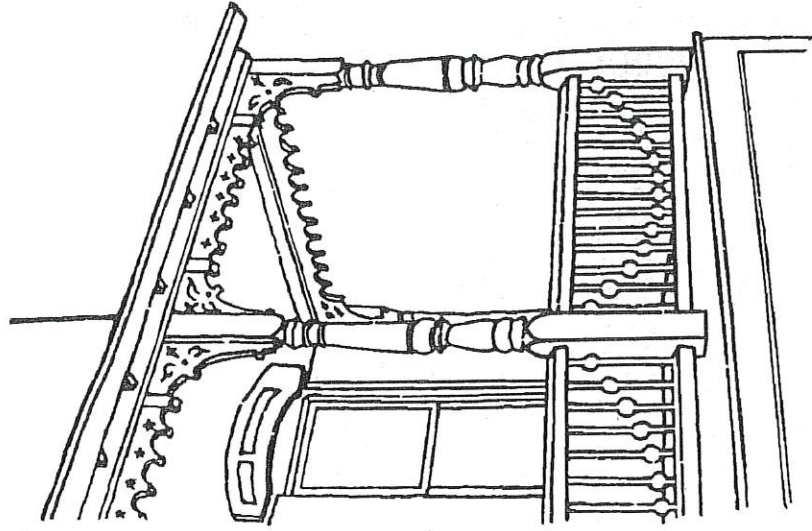
- Replacing wood porch posts and railings with metal
- Replacing wood steps with concrete or brick - wood steps are typically appropriate for wood porches
- Enclosing porches that are visually prominent from the streetscape
- Encasing historic porch elements in aluminum or vinyl
- Using "natural" or stained wood at a porch; this is generally not appropriate for a porch on a painted historic building
- Installing a deck that is visually prominent from the streetscape - railings are not always required for decks below a certain height



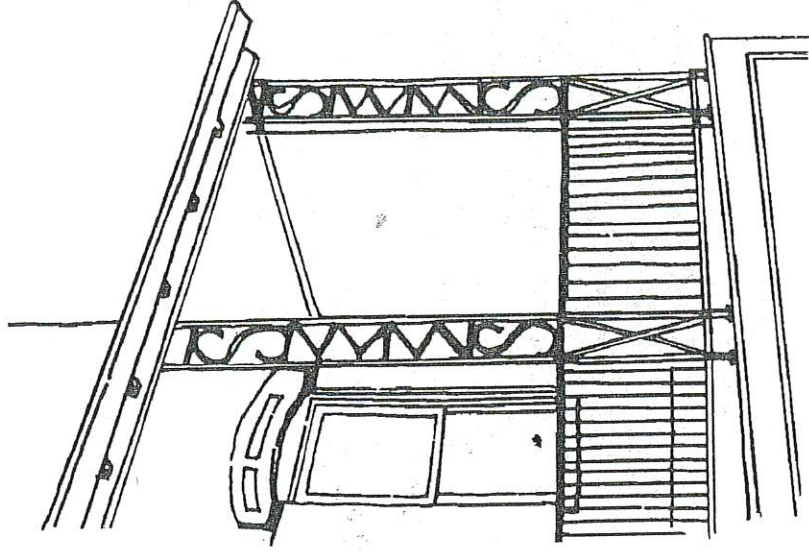
Porches

When porches are found on historic buildings, they often become the dominant element of the facade. Porches consist of decks, steps, balustrades, columns, entablatures, and roofs.

- To maintain the historic character of a porch, wood decking and steps should be retained; they should not be replaced with concrete.
- Never remove wood columns or balustrades. Again, selective repair is generally all that is required to restore a porch.
- Light weight wrought iron supports and railings are never appropriate replacements for heavy wood features.
- Enclosing a historic front porch is not recommended. Enclosing a porch on a minor facade, however with multi-paned glass and low wood walls recessed behind porch posts and balustrades may be an acceptable solution.
- Always maintain porch roofs and roof flashing to avoid deterioration of the wood structure.
- Never cover porch features in aluminum or vinyl.



Appropriate



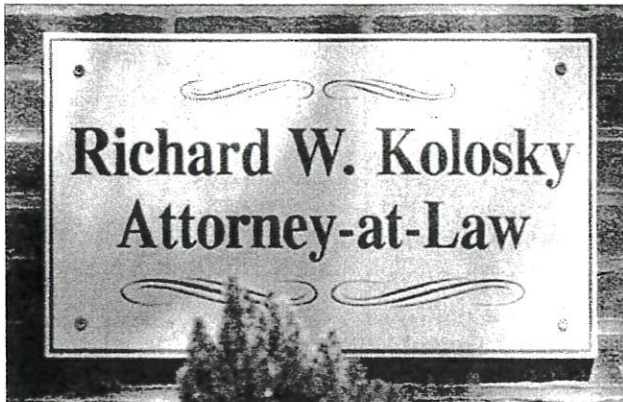
Inappropriate

Sign Material: Early signs were typically made of wood, either attached directly to the building or suspended from metal brackets. As technology advanced and building styles changed, a wider range of materials were used. These included bronze, cast iron, stainless steel, etched or painted glass, leaded glass, gold leaf, tile, terrazzo, concrete, stone and enamel and metal panels. Each material was popular during particular time periods, and might not be appropriate at all building locations.



Window signage can be a creative means of attracting customers. All signs, including those located at the interior face of windows, are subject to HARB review.

Illumination: In many instances, available ambient street or storefront lighting can illuminate signs, which is preferred to the installation of additional lighting. The use and placement of sign illumination is subject to approval. Gooseneck lighting or other unobtrusive light fixtures are often the most appropriate choice to illuminate wall signage.



This small-scale, professional services sign includes a clear message, serif-style lettering and a pin stripe border, providing a finished appearance. The screws are fastened into mortar joints.

Lettering: Similar to selecting a color, when considering letter style for signs and awnings, applicants must balance the need to make them legible, convey the business identity or logo, and complement the historic character of the building and environment. Excessive amounts of text or highly stylized type styles can overwhelm a viewer and make the message effectively illegible.

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p q r s t u v w x y z

Serif Alphabet

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p q r s t u v w x y z

Sans-Serif Alphabet

Awnings: Historically, awnings project at a continuous angle away from the face of the building on a metal frame, terminating at a skirt or valance. Awnings can be fixed or retractable in configuration. Retractable awnings tend to be open sided, while fixed awnings can be either open- or close-sided.



These closed-sided awnings are sized to fit between the masonry piers and provides shelter for pedestrians, advertisement for the businesses, and reduces the effect of the sun's rays at the interior.

The HARB encourages:

- Signage that does not obscure or damage architectural features, identifies the business, complements the style of the building and is appropriately scaled for its location
- Sign design and color that reflects the architectural characteristics with materials that are consistent with the historic character of the building - Colonial scrollwork is not appropriate at Victorian storefronts
- Serif-style lettering, subtle logos and borders at the perimeter of signs located at Victorian storefronts
- Incised lettering in lieu of raised lettering at signage
- Existing ambient street light or storefront lighting in lieu of lighting whenever possible
- Signage lighting styles that are consistent with the character of the historic building including location, orientation and brightness
- Canvas awnings, with straight valance, in shapes that correspond with the openings they protect
- Installing signage or awning designs that are sympathetic to the style of a building and in a manner that minimizes damage to historic features including installing fasteners at mortar joints and not stone faces

The HARB discourages:

- Signage that obstructs views into the store through storefront windows and glazing or architectural features
- Exposed conduit, boxes or raceways for signage or lighting
- New billboards, internally illuminated box signs, LED reader boards, flashing or changeable message signs, neon signs
- Contemporary or glossy awning materials such as vinyl, plastics or leatherette; internally illuminated awnings; and waterfall awnings