



## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Architectural Review Committee

**FROM:** Andrew Perez, Planning Manager

**BY:** Patrick Holub, Associate Planner

**SUBJECT:** Substantial Conformance Determination for Administrative Sign Permit 22-007; Location – 201 East Branch Street; Applicant – Aaron and Taneesha Regez, Monarch Books

**DATE:** June 26, 2023

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### **SUMMARY OF ACTION:**

A determination of substantial conformance will allow the business owner to repaint the existing commercial tenant space in the Historic Character Overlay District (D-2.4).

### **IMPACT ON FINANCIAL AND PERSONNEL RESOURCES:**

None identified.

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

Review the proposed paint color and make a substantial conformance determination.

### **BACKGROUND:**

The subject property is zoned Village Mixed Use (VMU), is located in the D-2.4 Historic Character Overlay District and requires review by the Architectural Review Committee (ARC) for compliance with the *Design Guidelines and Standards for the Historic Character Overlay District* (“The Guidelines”).

On May 2, 2022, the Architectural Review Committee reviewed proposed signage at the subject location and recommended approval of the application by the Community Development Director. The approval allowed the business owner to install a total of 19.5 square feet of signage. The existing signage is still in place and no changes are proposed at this time regarding the business’ signage. The approval letter for the signage is included as Attachment 1.

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**ANALYSIS OF ISSUES:**

Since approval of the sign permit for the subject business, the applicant has contacted staff with a desire to repaint the commercial structure in an effort to improve the visibility of the business’ sign above the front entry. The building façade is currently painted white and the sign’s three-dimensional gold letters can be difficult to read due to the lack of contrast between the wall and signage colors. The applicant is proposing a navy-blue color for the façade called “Hale Navy.” A color swatch showing the proposed façade color is included as Attachment 2. A physical sample of the proposed façade color will be available at the meeting for review by the ARC.

The existing building has a combination of painted white brick, painted yellow brick and unpainted brick. The yellow and unpainted brick sections will remain unchanged, while the white bricks are proposed to be painted navy. The white trim along the top of the building and the black trim around the windows will also remain unchanged.

Design Guidelines

According to the Guidelines, building colors in the VMU zone should be compatible with the historic character of the area, and should not conflict with other colors in the surrounding areas. The building colors in the historic districts primarily include tones that match the natural environment such as earth tones. Furthermore, the Guidelines state that neon or day-glow colors are not appropriate and that bright colors, such as those on Victorian homes, shall be limited to accent details or portions of the buildings. Staff is seeking a recommendation from the ARC as to whether the proposed paint color is consistent with the Guidelines. The applicable section of the Guidelines are included as Attachment 3.

**ALTERNATIVES:**

1. Review the proposed paint color and make a substantial conformance determination;
2. Review the proposed project and do not make a substantial conformance determination; or
3. Provide other direction to staff.

**ADVANTAGES:**

A recommendation that the proposal is consistent with the approval for Administrative Sign Permit 22-007 will allow the business owner to re-paint the existing white brick façade with a navy-blue color to improve visibility of the business’ signage.

**DISADVANTAGES:**

None identified.

**ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW:**

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The project was reviewed in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and determined to be categorically exempt per Section 15301(a) of the Guidelines regarding minor alterations to existing structures.

**PUBLIC NOTIFICATION AND COMMENTS:**

The Agenda was posted at City Hall and on the City’s website in accordance with Government Code Section 54954.2.

Attachments:

1. Approval Letter
2. Paint Color Swatch
3. Design Guidelines Excerpt