

Vice Chairman Report

CA2023-009

Case: CA2023-009 1422 K Avenue

Request for a Certificate of Appropriateness (CA) to make storefront alterations at the front (west) façade of 1422 K Avenue

Applicant: Tom McGill

Summary: The applicant requested to replace two accordion style, bifold doors with a single roll-up, garage style door. The property can be recognized locally as McNeal's Tavern & Eatery. The door provides separation between the indoor dining area and the outdoor patio. The door was installed in 2022 during renovation of the property.

Decision: The Certificate of Appropriateness request was denied by the Heritage Commission on March 28, 2023.

Comments from the Applicant:

The applicant was present, spoke and answered questions from the Heritage Commission on March 28, 2023. The applicant noted that the deteriorated condition of the existing door necessitated its removal and the installation of a new door. The applicant noted he was unaware of the requirement for a Certificate of Appropriateness; thus installation was completed without a CA request being made to the City of Plano. The applicant stated that the property owner did not notify him of this necessity, and that the contractor did not mention it during the permitting process.

In addressing the Heritage Commission, the applicant stated that the roll-up door provides an open-air dining experience, enhances the ambience of the property, and promotes business. He expressed that the door provides a view of the historic character of the indoor area and does not detract from the historic appearance of the building's exterior façade.

The applicant noted he has three other restaurant properties with a similar style of roll-up door. The applicant was asked if any of the other properties was historic in style and design. He replied, No.

Discussion Among Commissioners and Staff

Conversation among Commissioners focused on the history and style of the building and its role as a Contributing Structure in the Downtown Heritage District. A Commissioner asked, and it was confirmed that the District is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

A concern was raised that installation of the roll-up door was not a compatible alteration and might jeopardize the status of the building as a Contributing Structure. It was noted that the door does not utilize materials and design appropriate to the historic character of the building. The result is a mix of

elements from different styles affecting the overall character of the property. Staff confirmed to the Commission that this mix could jeopardize the status of the building as a Contributing Structure to the District.

A Commissioner asked if a change from Contributing Structure status could impact the property's heritage preservation tax exemption status. Staff noted that because the building is a Class D structure, a change to tax exemption status was unlikely.

A Commissioner asked if the roll-up door could be modified in material or design to become compatible with District Design Standards. Staff responded it would evaluate the door for modification; however, compatibility was unlikely.

In addition, staff was asked by a Commissioner if it had discussed other alternatives to make the door more consistent with standards. Staff replied affirmatively yet noted the applicant conveyed his desire to proceed with the existing door.

Commissioners expressed concern and consideration that the applicant was not notified of the need for a Certificate of Appropriateness. Staff responded that a building permit was issued for interior renovation, but the change to the door was not included in the scope of work. Had it been included, the Building Inspections Department would have required Certificate of Appropriateness approval prior to issuance of the permit. A Commissioner suggested that the applicant address the issue with the building owner and request compensation for a new door.

Motion:

A motion was made to deny approval of CA2023-009 1422 K Avenue for the following reasons:

- The style, design, and material structure of the roll-up door diminish the historic integrity of the building.
- The door does not meet Downtown Heritage District Design Standards and is not a compliant or compatible alteration.
- The installation of the door jeopardizes its status as a Contributing Structure to the District.
- Approval of the door may set a precedent for the Downtown Heritage District and influence future alterations to other properties and their contributing status.

The motion to deny was approved 7 – 0.

Respectfully Yours,

Nancy Baldwin
Vice Chair
Heritage Commission