



## CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS STAFF REPORT

**TO:** Historical Affairs and Landmark Review Board (HALRB)  
**FROM:** Lorin Farris, Historic Preservation Planner  
**DATE:** April 14, 2023  
**SUBJECT:** CoA 23-06, 2910 Columbia Pike, Columbia Pike Form Base Code Project

### **Background Information**

The Arlington Hardware Building, which is identified in the Commercial Form Based Code (FBC) as a “Historic Façade,” was constructed circa 1920. The hardware store opened in 1931 and was operated by David Eisen and members of his family until the business closed in 2004. In 1996, there was an electrical fire that required the building be renovated. The architectural description of the historic façade is as follows:

The two-story historic facade has a flat roof with a simple cornice. Below the cornice are two rectangular brick reliefs. The cladding at the first story consists of a vertical metal paneling, and the second story is brick. Centered on the first story is a recessed, double-door entry filled with metal-frame and glass replacement doors that are topped by a transom. There are large plate glass windows located on both sides of the recessed main entry, and beyond the recessed entry alcove are large plate glass windows and single fixed windows, all of which are topped by transoms. Above the first story windows and centered entry is a continuous metal frieze and centered above the frieze is a horizontal sign for the previous restaurant. Based on historic photographs, there have been two signs located on the historic façade, with a horizontal sign located above the main entry and centered above that sign is a vertical blade sign. The second story consists of two pairs of one-over-one double-hung windows (material unknown) at the center bay, and single, one-over-one double-hung windows at the east and west bays. These windows have brick lintels and sills. Historic photographs indicate that the original second-story windows consisted of wood, six-over-one, double-hung windows.

The applicant consulted with the HALRB in February and March 2023 and received approval for the installation of foldable windows into the existing window openings located on the historic facade (CoA 23-03).

### **Current Proposal**

The applicant proposes to install new signage on the historic façade at 2910 Columbia Pike. The proposal includes removing the existing horizontal sign and the existing vertical blade sign from the previous business. The new horizontal sign, measuring 150” x 60”, will be installed above the main entrance and below the vertical blade sign and will feature the building’s address, 2910, and cursive lettering below which will read “Food Redefined.” The new vertical blade sign, measuring 22” x 120”, will be installed

into the historic facade, centered above the horizontal sign, and also will feature the business address of 2910 with text that will read “Food Redefined.” The signs both contain internally illuminated LED channel letters, which involves a white acrylic face with black trim, black aluminum returns. The font of the letters and numbers are meant to be complementary to the building’s simple design. The applicant has indicated that any punctures that could be exposed when removing the existing signage will be repaired, and that the existing power supply connections and remaining punctures for the installation of the two signs will be used. The applicant also indicated they will communicate with the HPP staff on properly cleaning the façade if it is necessary once the existing signage is removed prior to installation of the new signage.

### **DRC Review**

The DRC considered an application for a different signage design at its April 5, 2023, hybrid meeting. The DRC noted that the font for the two signs was out of character for the building and suggested a different approach with the design. Mr. Wenchel noted that the proposed text was not easily legible. Mr. Dudka indicated that attempts should be made to elongate the horizontal sign located above the main entrance and to evoke the style of the two known previous signs. Ms. Meyer asked which parts of the existing sign hardware would be reused and what the brick behind the sign looked like given that the proposed sign would be smaller than the existing. The applicant explained that he was unsure what was behind the current sign but planned to reuse the hardware as much as possible and only drill into the mortar for any changes. Ms. Farris outlined the recommended maintenance and cleaning procedures for historic brick. The applicant was receptive to this suggestion and submitted an updated package to be reviewed by the full HALRB. The DRC recommended placing the application on the Discussion Agenda for the April 19, 2023, hybrid HALRB public hearing.

### **Recommendation**

The Historic Preservation Program staff recommends approval of the subject application. The proposed materials and overall design of the new signs are consistent with other signage along the Commercial FBC corridor. Additionally, the proposed signage conforms with Standard #10 specified in *The Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation*, as it is an alteration which could easily be reversed without an adverse effect to the property.

Standard #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.