

**HISTORIC LANDMARK COMMISSION**  
**SEPTEMBER 24, 2012**  
**APPLICATION FOR A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS**  
**C14H-1990-0007**  
**Nelson Davis Warehouse**  
**117 W. 4<sup>th</sup> Street**

**PROPOSAL**

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Signage for the Capital Grille and the installation of planters along the outside railing of the front walkway to the building.

**PROJECT SPECIFICATIONS**

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The applicant proposes to install the following signs for the new Capital Grille in the Nelson Davis Warehouse:

1. 30" channel letters to be mounted on the wall of the north wall of the building (facing 4<sup>th</sup> Street), reading "Capital Grille". The letters will be halo-illuminated. The sign is approximately 77.25 square feet.
2. A pole-mounted sign to be erected in the Great Streets beautification area adjacent to the principal entryway. The free-standing pole sign will be approximately 7 square feet.
3. Non-illuminated brass plaques on either side of the main entrance to the restaurant. The plaques are approximately 4.6 square feet.

The applicant further proposes the installation of planters along the outside railing of the front walkway to the building.

**STANDARDS FOR REVIEW**

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The Commission's Standards for Review of sign applications include:

**I. SIGN TYPES**

**A. FLUSH-MOUNTED SIGNS**

A flush-mounted wall sign is one that is mounted flat to the wall.

**LOCATION**

- Locate a flush-mounted wall sign just above the display window. Do not locate a flush-mounted wall sign above second-floor windows.
- When feasible, place a wall sign such that it aligns with others in the block.
- When planning a wall sign, determine if decorative moldings exist that could define a "sign panel." If so, locate flush-mounted signs such that they fit within panels formed by moldings or transom panels on the façade. In no case should a sign obscure significant façade features.

**SIZE**

- In general, the maximum wall sign area on a building should not exceed 7% of the overall façade area; in some cases, however, the Commission may consider approving a maximum of 10%, if overall compatibility with the District is demonstrated.
- The maximum height of an individual flush-mounted sign shall be 2 feet.

**NUMBER OF SIGNS**

- Only one flush-mounted sign shall be allowed for each distinct façade module.

**II. SIGN MATERIALS**

- Use materials that are compatible with the materials of the building façade.
- Painted wood and metal are appropriate materials for signs. Do not use unfinished materials, including unpainted wood.

- Use plastic only in limited amounts. Plastic may not be the predominant materials on any sign.
- Do not use highly reflective materials.

### **III. SIGN CONTENT AND DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS**

- Use symbol signs when appropriate for the business.
- Use colors for the sign that are compatible with those of the building front. Limit the number of colors on the sign to no more than three (3).
- Use a simple sign design and typeface, and a style and size of lettering that will be compatible with the building front. Avoid sign types that appear too contemporary.

### **IV. SIGN LIGHTING**

- Use an external, shielded lamp to direct light at the sign.  
DO NOT USE:
  1. Internal illumination
  2. Fluorescent lights
  3. Sodium vapor lights.

### **VI. GENERAL DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS**

- Consider the building front as part of an overall sign program. Coordinate signage with the composition of the façade, including ornamental details. Signs should always appear to be in scale with the elements of the façade.
- Signs should be in proportion to the building and must not dominate the façade.
- Develop a master sign plan for the entire building front and coordinate signage for different businesses within the same building.
- Locate a sign on a building to emphasize design elements of the façade. In no case should a sign obscure architectural details or features.
- Mount signs to fit within existing architectural features. Signs should help reinforce the horizontal lines of moldings and transoms seen along the street.

### **COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS**

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The Committee recommended approval of the Certificate of Appropriateness, noting that the applicant had reduced the size of the flush-mounted sign so as to avoid obscuring an architectural feature of the building.

### **STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

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Approve the application as proposed for the signage and the planters, with the recommendation that the applicant work with staff to determine the design of the planters. The applicant's proposal is appropriate for the building in terms of the character, lighting, and placement of the signs. Further, the applicant has mentioned the installation of lights on either side of the entry door; those lights do not appear to be a part of this application, so staff recommends that the applicant work with staff to determine an appropriate fixture to light the entry to the building. Finally, staff recommends that the signage be installed on the brick building through the mortar joints rather than risk damage to the historic masonry, and that the free-standing pole sign have a minimum clearance of at least 9 feet above the sidewalk to comply with City Code.