

STAFF REPORT 8/10/2022 REGULAR MEETING

PREPARED BY: J. ROSS

APPLICATION NUMBER: 22-7957 (REVISION TO 19-6411 & 21-7112)

ADDRESSES: 445 LEDYARD STREET

HISTORIC DISTRICT: CASS PARK

APPLICANT: EDWARD POTAS, CINNAIRE

PROPERTY OWNER: EDWARD POTAS, CINNAIRE

DATE OF PROVISIONALLY COMPLETE APPLICATION: 7/14/2022

DATE OF STAFF SITE VISIT: 7/29/2022

SCOPE: REVISION TO PREVIOUSLY APPROVED APPLICATION TO INCLUDE INSTALLATION OF NEW SIGNAGE

EXISTING CONDITIONS

The building located at 445 Ledyard Street is a 2-story structure that was constructed in 1956 as the Mariners Inn. The horizontal massing is clad in variegated light red/orange brick and features cast stone details. A single-story addition was constructed in 1995 directly east (toward Cass Avenue) of the original structure. The addition is simple in design and is clad in a red/orange brick similar to that of the original building and features buff-colored bands above and below window openings and around the top of the parapet. The original structure includes a symmetrical front façade with the main entrance located at the center of the façade. Landscaping exists between the front façade and the sidewalk. The building addition is surrounded on the south, west, and east sides with surface parking. A paved and fenced-in recreation area exists at the rear (west) of the structure.



445 Ledyard, current appearance. Staff photo, taken 7/29/2022

PROPOSAL

With the current proposal, the applicant is seeking the Commission’s approval to revise the previously approved **design** of a new mixed-use building. Specifically, the Commission approved an application for the erection of a new 6-story, mixed use building at the September 2019 regular meeting. The applicant subsequently revised the application to decrease the building’s height to 4 stories. The revised application was received and approved by the Commission at their regular March 2021 meeting. With the current submission, the applicant is seeking the Commission’s approval to add signage to the new building’s side elevations (at the northwest and northeast corners at the parapet, directly above the 4th story windows) at the front/primary entrance. Per the submitted materials, this signage will consist of custom cast metal dimensional letters that will be backlit.

STAFF OBSERVATIONS & RESEARCH

- Cass Park Historic District was designated in 2016
- 445 Ledyard has not yet been erected
- Staff has the authority to administratively approve the installation of new signage as long as it conforms to the Commission's Signs and Awnings Guidelines. In re: to position, the guidelines require that new signage "...be located where architectural features or details suggest a location, size, or shape for the sign." The new signage will be installed above the 4th story windows, at the building's northwest and northeast corners. Also, a sign will be installed next to the primary entrance. Staff has therefore forwarded this application to the Commission for review because the proposed locations do not conform to the guidelines.
- In re: to position, the guidelines require that new signage "...be located where architectural features or details suggest a location, size, or shape for the sign." Note that the guidelines are more easily applied when reviewing signage proposed for installation at a rectangular-plan, historic commercial building which includes a first story storefront that is topped with a conventional sign band. As 445 Ledyard is a new building that presents a modern edifice and irregular plan, any signage proposed for installation at the building will not easily conform to the guidelines. It is staff's opinion that the proposed signage is appropriate and meets the standards
- The applicant has noted that they are still in the process of determining the final design for the signage and that the application reflected the desired location of the signage.

ISSUES

- None

RECOMMENDATION

Section 21-2-73, Certificate of Appropriateness

It is staff's opinion that the proposal should qualify for a Certificate of Appropriateness. Staff recommends that the Commission approve a COA for the proposed application, as it meets the Secretary of the Interior's (SOI) Standards and the Cass Park Historic District's Elements of Design. However, staff recommends that the Commission issue a COA for the project with the condition that staff has the authority to review and approve the final proposal for the signage prior to the issuance of the project's permit. Should staff determine that any aspect of the signage not meet the SOI's Standards and/or the district's Elements of Design, staff shall forward the proposal to the Commission for review at a regular meeting.