


# MIAMI BEACH

## PLANNING DEPARTMENT

### Staff Report & Recommendation

### Design Review Board

TO: DRB Chairperson and Members

FROM: Thomas R. Mooney, AICP   
Planning Director

SUBJECT: DRB16-0048 (a.k.a. DRB File No. 23233)  
**1824 Alton Road**

DATE: October 10, 2016

The applicant, Saber 1800 Alton LLC, is requesting modifications to a previously approved Design Review Approval for the installation of a new signage design.

#### **RECOMMENDATION:**

Approval of the building ID signage and blade signage with conditions  
Continue the ground floor wall signage program to a future meeting date

#### **LEGAL DESCRIPTION:**

Lots 1-3 of Block 12 of the "Island View Subdivision", According to the Plat Thereof, as Recorded in Plat Book 6, Page 115, of the Public Records of Miami-Dade County, Florida.

#### **HISTORY:**

On March 1, 2016, the Design Review Board approved the construction of a new four-story commercial building including a variance to reduce the minimum required rear setback to replace a one-story gasoline and service station, pursuant to DRB File No. 23233.

#### **SITE DATA:**

Zoning:	CD-2 Commercial, Medium Intensity District
Future Land Use:	CD
Lot Size:	24,000 SF
Proposed FAR:	1.0 – 35,726 SF Total Area as represented by the applicant
Permitted FAR:	1.5 (36,000 SF)
Proposed Height:	50'-0"
Permitted Height:	50'-0"
Total SF:	37,562 SF
Proposed Uses:	
Café:	160 Seats
Retail:	27,011 SF
Parking Required:	131 Spaces
Parking Provided:	128 Spaces

#### **PARKING REQUIREMENTS:**

1 space per 4 seats: 40  
1 space per 300 SF: 91

Grade: +4.09' NGVD  
Future Grade: +5.5' NGVD  
Base Flood Elevation (BFE): +8.00' NGVD  
Difference: 3.91' NGVD  
Adjusted Grade: +6.05' NGVD  
Finished Floor Elevation: +6.0' NGVD

#### **LAND USES:**

East: Two-story Chase Bank / Walgreens  
North: One-story Animal Hospital  
South: Vacant / Future new two-story retail  
West: One-story hand car wash

### **THE PROJECT:**

The applicant has submitted plans entitled "1824 Alton Road: DRB Signage Submission", as prepared by **Kobi Karp Architecture**, signed, sealed and dated 07/29/16.

The applicant is proposing design modifications to the exterior of the previously approved commercial building to install multiple signs. The following summarizes the proposed modifications:

1. New building id signage
2. Installation of multiple signs to be installed for the same licensed establishment, projecting blade signs and main use signs.
3. Ground floor signage with no relationship or continuity to one another.

The proposed signage program consists of:

- Two 40SF 'MICHAELS' building id signs, one facing Alton Road and one facing 18<sup>th</sup> Street.
- One 4.5 SF 'MICHAELS' (9SF for both sides) projecting blade sign at the ground floor perpendicular to Alton Road
- Multiple (four) 20 SF ground floor wall signs for future tenancy, including one wall 11 SF 'MICHAELS' wall sign for the portion of the second floor tenant that also occupies the ground floor facing Alton Road.

As proposed all signage meets Code requirements pertaining to size, placement and area. **However, at this time, the portion of the signage program pertaining to the ground floor signs cannot be reviewed as additional information and details are required for analysis.**

### **CONSISTENCY WITH COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

A preliminary review of the project indicates that the **commercial use** is **consistent** with the Future Land Use Map of the 2025 Comprehensive Plan.

### **COMPLIANCE WITH ZONING CODE:**

A preliminary review of the project indicates that the application, as proposed, appears to be inconsistent with the following sections of the City Code:

1. **Sec. 138-172:** Schedule of sign regulations for principal and accessory use signs.  
One sign per street frontage for each licensed principal and licensed accessory use, however, multiple signs for the same licensed establishment may be permitted through the design review procedure if the aggregate sign area does not exceed the maximum size permitted under this subsection.

The above noted comments shall not be considered final zoning review or approval. These and all zoning matters shall require final review and verification by the Zoning Administrator prior to the issuance of a Building Permit.

### **COMPLIANCE WITH DESIGN REVIEW CRITERIA:**

Design Review encompasses the examination of architectural drawings for consistency with the criteria stated below with regard to the aesthetics, appearances, safety, and function of the structure or proposed structures in relation to the site, adjacent structures and surrounding

community. Staff recommends that the following criteria is found to be satisfied, not satisfied or not applicable, as hereto indicated:

1. The existing and proposed conditions of the lot, including but not necessarily limited to topography, vegetation, trees, drainage, and waterways.  
**Not Applicable**
2. The location of all existing and proposed buildings, drives, parking spaces, walkways, means of ingress and egress, drainage facilities, utility services, landscaping structures, signs, and lighting and screening devices.  
**Not Applicable**
3. The dimensions of all buildings, structures, setbacks, parking spaces, floor area ratio, height, lot coverage and any other information that may be reasonably necessary to determine compliance with the requirements of the underlying zoning district, and any applicable overlays, for a particular application or project.  
**Satisfied**
4. The color, design, selection of landscape materials and architectural elements of Exterior Building surfaces and primary public interior areas for Developments requiring a Building Permit in areas of the City identified in section 118-252.  
**Not Satisfied**
5. The proposed site plan, and the location, appearance and design of new and existing Buildings and Structures are in conformity with the standards of this Ordinance and other applicable ordinances, architectural and design guidelines as adopted and amended periodically by the Design Review Board and Historic Preservation Boards, and all pertinent master plans.  
**Not Satisfied**
6. The proposed Structure, and/or additions or modifications to an existing structure, indicates a sensitivity to and is compatible with the environment and adjacent Structures, and enhances the appearance of the surrounding properties.  
**Not Applicable**
7. The design and layout of the proposed site plan, as well as all new and existing buildings shall be reviewed so as to provide an efficient arrangement of land uses. Particular attention shall be given to safety, crime prevention and fire protection, relationship to the surrounding neighborhood, impact on contiguous and adjacent Buildings and lands, pedestrian sight lines and view corridors.  
**Not Applicable**
8. Pedestrian and vehicular traffic movement within and adjacent to the site shall be reviewed to ensure that clearly defined, segregated pedestrian access to the site and all buildings is provided for and that all parking spaces are usable and are safely and conveniently arranged; pedestrian furniture and bike racks shall be considered. Access to the Site from adjacent roads shall be designed so as to interfere as little as possible

with traffic flow on these roads and to permit vehicles a rapid and safe ingress and egress to the Site.

**Not Applicable**

9. Lighting shall be reviewed to ensure safe movement of persons and vehicles and reflection on public property for security purposes and to minimize glare and reflection on adjacent properties. Lighting shall be reviewed to assure that it enhances the appearance of structures at night.

**Not Satisfied; a lighting plan has not been provided.**

10. Landscape and paving materials shall be reviewed to ensure an adequate relationship with and enhancement of the overall Site Plan design.

**Not Applicable**

11. Buffering materials shall be reviewed to ensure that headlights of vehicles, noise, and light from structures are adequately shielded from public view, adjacent properties and pedestrian areas.

**Not Satisfied**

12. The proposed structure has an orientation and massing which is sensitive to and compatible with the building site and surrounding area and which creates or maintains important view corridor(s).

**Not Applicable**

13. The building has, where feasible, space in that part of the ground floor fronting a street or streets which is to be occupied for residential or commercial uses; likewise, the upper floors of the pedestal portion of the proposed building fronting a street, or streets shall have residential or commercial spaces, shall have the appearance of being a residential or commercial space or shall have an architectural treatment which shall buffer the appearance of the parking structure from the surrounding area and is integrated with the overall appearance of the project.

**Satisfied**

14. The building shall have an appropriate and fully integrated rooftop architectural treatment which substantially screens all mechanical equipment, stairs and elevator towers.

**Not Applicable**

15. An addition on a building site shall be designed, sited and massed in a manner which is sensitive to and compatible with the existing improvement(s).

**Not Applicable**

16. All portions of a project fronting a street or sidewalk shall incorporate an architecturally appropriate amount of transparency at the first level in order to achieve pedestrian compatibility and adequate visual interest.

**Satisfied**

17. The location, design, screening and buffering of all required service bays, delivery bays, trash and refuse receptacles, as well as trash rooms shall be arranged so as to have a minimal impact on adjacent properties.

**Not Applicable**

## **ANALYSIS**

### **DESIGN REVIEW**

On March 1, 2016, the Design Review Board unanimously approved a new four-story building distributed with two levels of retail and 128 parking spaces allocated on an additional two levels of structured parking to replace an existing one-story gasoline service center. All commercial uses are proposed to front Alton Road on the first and second floors and a glass continuous storefront system along 18<sup>th</sup> Street. The proposal was for a modern design with rich exterior finishes that would certainly be a welcome addition to Alton Road and a vast improvement to this corner parcel.

Condition **B1m** of the Final Order reads, *"All building signage shall require a separate permit. A uniform sign plan for the new building shall be required. Such sign plan shall be consistent in materials, method of illumination and sign location, in a manner to be reviewed and approved by staff consistent with the Design Review Criteria and/or the directions from the Board."*

Staff would note that the purpose of the signage ordinance, as stated in section 138-1 of the City Code, is "to permit signs that will not by their size, location, construction, number or manner of display, endanger the health, safety and general welfare of the public or the appearance of the city. It is also the purpose of this chapter to encourage signs that are architecturally aesthetic and compatible with the buildings they are placed on, to reduce traffic hazards and to preserve the right of free speech exercised through the use of signs."

Building identification signs are allowed on the tops of parapets of buildings provided that such signs adhere to a maximum of 1% of the surface façade where they are located. Corner buildings are permitted to have one building id sign per street façade. The applicant is proposing two, equally sized building id signs (40 SF), 'MICHAELS', along each street. These signs comport with the size and location requirement of building id signs, but based in the size, color, materiality and prominence, such signage may pose to be a visual nuisance, detract from the sculptural architecture and high quality finishes. Each 'MICHAELS' building id sign is proposed to be 3'-3" at its highest riser and spaced at 12'-4" length, constructed with bronze returns and containing a vibrant red vinyl face. The building id signs are proposed to be internally illuminated with red L.E.D. lighting. Without stifling creativity or limiting prospective commercial tenants, staff would recommend that both building id signs be designed as individual reverse channel letters with a brushed aluminum finish that can each be backlit with a color so desired by 'MICHAELS'.



With regard to the request for the installation of multiple signs to be installed for the same licensed establishment, proposed 'MICHAELS' projecting blade signs and 'MICHAELS' main



use signs to the existing building, in general staff has no objections to the proposed signage but notes the total aggregate sign area cannot exceed the maximum size permitted. Again, staff would recommend that the ground floor storefront sign be designed as individual reverse channel letters with a brushed aluminum finish that can each be backlit with a color so desired by 'MICHAELS'. Staff would also recommend that the blade sign be designed in a uniform manner consisting of an aluminum face with the tenant signage routed out, for a high quality aesthetic. As previously mentioned, the portion of this application pertaining to all ground floor signs cannot be approved at this time, as additional information and details are required. Staff can approve the projecting blade sign at this time.

Staff has some concerns with general scheme of the proposed signage program pertaining to the ground floor wall signs. The drawings do not depict precise location, method of installation, details of the electrical wiring, or need for structural supports. There is no indication of how each of the wall signs will interact with the glazing of the building, or the eyebrow of the building. The applicant has shown signage for ground floor tenants that differ in size, font style and color. A proper uniform signage plan should be designed to be consistent in materials, method of illumination and sign location. When a building has multiple uses or storefronts, signs should be of a consistent size, type and location. This is not to suggest that creativity in types of signs be impeded, only that a relationship between the various entities within a building be established.

Specifically, a regimented uniform sign program, consisting of the exact same style, color and type of sign, is strongly discouraged. All signage should embrace the following: 1. A combination of some form of individual or channel letter such as front lit, back lit or open face; 2. Variations in letter style, size, color and material; 3. All signage should be located in a similar vicinity, unique to each storefront; 4. Clear and precise detailing regarding method of connection and installation to building façade or architectural element; and 4. Details of methods of illumination, conduits and wiring. Staff would recommend that all the storefront signs be designed as individual reverse channel letters with a brushed aluminum finish that can each be backlit with a color so desired by each future tenant. Staff would recommend that the ground floor signage portion of this application be continued to a future meeting date, in order to address the aforementioned concerns.



The signage for a building is integral in achieving the desired objective of the City of Miami Beach to both enliven and improve the pedestrian experience along Alton Road and notes that this corner site is one of the gateways into the Sunset Harbor neighborhood. Currently staff finds that the all of the signs do not individually complement the signage program envisioned for the building and are excessive in size or composition and the proposed placement and appearance, may result in "visual clutter." Staff is confident the project architect can successfully address the concerns raised herein, as well as the additional concerns enumerated in the attached draft order.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

In view of the foregoing analysis, staff recommends the application for design review approval be **approved** for the building id and blade signage only, subject to the conditions enumerated in the attached Draft Order, which address the inconsistencies with the aforementioned Design Review criteria. Additionally, in view of the foregoing analysis and the inconsistencies with the aforementioned Design Review criteria and/or Practical Difficulty and Hardship criteria, staff recommends the portion of the application, pertaining to all of the ground floor tenancy signage, be **continued** to a date certain of November 1, 2016 in order to address the concerns herein.

TRM/JGM

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**DESIGN REVIEW BOARD**  
**City of Miami Beach, Florida**

MEETING DATE: October 10, 2016

FILE NO: DRB16-0048 (a.k.a. DRB File No. 23233)

PROPERTY: **1824 Alton Road**

APPLICANT: Saber 1800 Alton LLC

LEGAL: Lots 1-3 of Block 12 of the "Island View Subdivision", According to the Plat Thereof, as Recorded in Plat Book 6, Page 115, of the Public Records of Miami-Dade County, Florida.

IN RE: The Application requesting modifications to a previously approved Design Review Approval for the installation of a new signage design.

**ORDER**

The City of Miami Beach Design Review Board makes the following FINDINGS OF FACT, based upon the evidence, information, testimony and materials presented at the public hearing and which are part of the record for this matter:

**I. Design Review**

- A. The Board has jurisdiction pursuant to Section 118-252(a) of the Miami Beach Code. The property is not located within a designated local historic district and is not a individually designated historic site.
- B. Based on the plans and documents submitted with the application, testimony and information provided by the applicant, and the reasons set forth in the Planning Department Staff Report, the project as submitted is inconsistent with Design Review Criteria 2, 3, 5, 8, 9, and 17 in Section 118-251 of the Miami Beach Code.
  1. Revised elevation, site plan and floor plan drawings shall be submitted to and reviewed by staff, at a minimum, such drawings shall incorporate the following:
    - a. The uniform signage plan for the ground floor wall signage of the building shall not be approved as proposed. The ground floor signage program requested herein shall be continued to a future meeting date, and shall be resubmitted, in a manner to be reviewed and approved by the Design Review Board.
    - b. The building id plan for the building shall not be approved as proposed. All building id signage shall require a separate permit. The building id signage shall consist of brushed or anodized aluminum reverse channel, back-lit letters, scripted in the 'MICHAELS' font, in a manner to be approved by staff. No exterior raceway or exterior disconnect switches



shall be allowed. Intermittent lights, moving or revolving lights shall not be permitted. All electrical wiring and power shall be routed through the parapet and not be visible from the right-of-way.

- c. The blade sign be designed consisting of an powder coated aluminum face with the tenant signage either routed out or metal lettering with a minimum projection of 3" from the face of the sign, for a high quality aesthetic, in a manner to be reviewed and approved by staff consistent with the Design Review Criteria and/or the directions from the Board.
- d. A copy of all pages of the recorded Final Order shall be scanned into the plans submitted for building permit, and shall be located immediately after the front cover page of the permit plans.
- e. Prior to the issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy, the project Architect shall verify, in writing, that the subject project has been constructed in accordance with the plans approved by the Planning Department for Building Permit.

**In accordance with Section 118-262, the applicant, or the city manager on behalf of the City Administration, or an affected person, Miami Design Preservation League or Dade Heritage Trust may seek review of any order of the Design Review Board by the City Commission, except that orders granting or denying a request for rehearing shall not be reviewed by the Commission.**

## **II. Variance(s)**

- A. No variance(s) were filed as part of this application.

## **III. General Terms and Conditions applying to both 'I. Design Review Approval and 'II. Variances' noted above.**

- A. The proposed projecting sign that extends above and encroaches within the City sidewalk may require a revocable right-of way permit to be obtained from the Public Works Department and approved by the City Commission.
- B. A Construction Parking and Traffic Management Plan (CPTMP) shall be approved by the Parking Director pursuant to Chapter 106, Article II, Division 3 of the City Code, prior to the issuance of a Building Permit.
- C. The final building plans shall meet all other requirements of the Land Development Regulations of the City Code.
- D. The Final Order shall be recorded in the Public Records of Miami-Dade County, prior to the issuance of a Building Permit.
- E. Satisfaction of all conditions is required for the Planning Department to give its approval on a Certificate of Occupancy; a Temporary Certificate of Occupancy or Partial Certificate of Occupancy may also be conditionally granted Planning Departmental approval.

- F. The Final Order is not severable, and if any provision or condition hereof is held void or unconstitutional in a final decision by a court of competent jurisdiction, the order shall be returned to the Board for reconsideration as to whether the order meets the criteria for approval absent the stricken provision or condition, and/or it is appropriate to modify the remaining conditions or impose new conditions.
- G. The conditions of approval herein are binding on the applicant, the property's owners, operators, and all successors in interest and assigns.
- H. Nothing in this order authorizes a violation of the City Code or other applicable law, nor allows a relaxation of any requirement or standard set forth in the City Code.

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED, based upon the foregoing findings of fact, the evidence, information testimony and materials presented at the public hearing, which are part of the record for this matter, and the staff report and analysis, which are adopted herein, including the staff recommendations, which were amended and adopted by the Board, that the **application** is GRANTED for the above-referenced project subject to those certain conditions specified in Paragraph I, II, III of the Finding of Fact, to which the applicant has agreed.

PROVIDED, the applicant shall build substantially in accordance with the plans, entitled "1824 Alton Road: DRB Signage Submission", as prepared by **Kobi Karp Architecture**, signed, sealed and dated 07/29/16, and as approved by the Design Review Board, as determined by staff.

When requesting a building permit, the plans submitted to the Building Department for permit shall be consistent with the plans approved by the Board, modified in accordance with the conditions of approval that must be satisfied prior to permit issuance, as set forth in this Order, have been met.

The issuance of the approval does not relieve the applicant from obtaining all other required Municipal, County and/or State reviews and permits, including final zoning approval. If adequate handicapped access is not provided on the Board approved plans, this approval does not mean that such handicapped access is not required. When requesting Building permit, the plans submitted to the Building Department for permit shall be consistent with the plans approved by the Board, modified in accordance with the conditions set forth in this Order.

If the Full Building Permit for the project is not issued within eighteen (18) months of the meeting date at which the original approval was granted, the application will expire and become null and void, unless the applicant makes an application to the Board for an extension of time, in accordance with the requirements and procedures of Chapter 118 of the City Code, the granting of any such extension of time shall be at the discretion of the Board. If the Full Building Permit for the project shall expire for any reason (including but not limited to construction not commencing and continuing, with required inspections, in accordance with the applicable Building Code), the application will expire and become null and void.

In accordance with Chapter 118 of the City Code, the violation of any conditions and safeguards that are a part of this Order shall be deemed a violation of the land development regulations of the City Code. Failure to comply with this **Order** shall subject the application to Chapter 118 of the City Code, for revocation or modification of the application.

