

**HISTORIC ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD
CITY OF ALLENTOWN, PENNSYLVANIA
June 1, 2020**

FINAL REVIEW

Address: 302 N 9th Street –

- Proposal to continue the installation of the window signs that are a violation of the historic district ordinance (Disapproved by HARB on May 4)
- Proposed new design for window signs (Approved by HARB on June 1)

Property Owner:	Cemunus LLC	Owner Address:	c/o Empire Prop Mgmt, PO Box 20721, PA 18002
Applicant:	Sheriff Adewale	Applicant's Address:	302 N 9 th St, Allentown, PA 18102
Historic District:	Old Allentown	Case #	HDC-2020-00004
HARB Meeting date:	May 4, 2020 (Agenda Item #3)		

Building description, period, style defining features: This structure is a 3 bay, 3 story, painted brick, semi-detached mixed use building with a bracketed projecting cornice, shallow gable roof, rear flat-roofed rear extension, 1 over 1 double-hung windows, two side oriel windows, and an altered storefront. The building dates from c. 1880 and is Italianate in style. The building has a moderate level of historic integrity. The storefront is in deteriorated condition.



Proposed alterations: It is proposed to install window signs that are a violation of the historic district ordinance.

Staff Approvals: N/A

Violations: N/A

Background:

Guideline Citation: SIS 9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment

Allentown Guidelines for Historic Districts: 5.1.11 Guidelines for Existing Buildings and Structures, 1. Repairs, Replacement and Alternative Materials, 11. Signs

Evaluation, effect on historic district, recommendations:

The Design Guidelines state that signs located in historic districts must be compatible with and appropriate for the style and character of the historic building. Signs should not cover or conceal architectural features and must also comply with the City's zoning ordinance, which regulates, among other things, the size of the sign. These signs completely cover the storefront windows which is not historically appropriate. In addition, the area of signage likely does not comply with zoning regulations.

Smaller signs that are placed within the glass area are recommended. The main sign should identify the business name and be the largest sign(s). Business name signs could be on either side of the entry. Secondary signage might list services. It is recommended to remove the large scale images of people.

Scaled drawings of the storefront with new signage should be submitted for review. Sign companies often can provide scaled drawings of sign for approval purposes.

Discussions:

May 4, 2020 -- . *The applicants said they looked around and saw signage similar to what they installed so they thought it would be OK. Mr Fillman asked for the addresses of the properties the applicants referred to and it was pointed out they were not in the Historic District. The applicants said privacy was a concern which is why they covered all of the window glass with signage. They explained they were interviewing job applicants. The Historic Consultant said there were other, more appropriate ways to reduce visibility into the office space. All HARB members agreed with the Historic Consultant that the signs were too large and not historically appropriate.*

Mr. Fillman suggested installing a corner projecting sign and recommended the applicants look at the signs at 147 N 10th St and 347 N 8th as examples. There was some discussion about the amount of signage not meeting Zoning regulations and Mr Fillman said he thought the storefront signage was to be reviewed at the Zoning meeting on May 18.

There were additional issues discussed. It was pointed out that there was unpainted wood in the entry door recess. A representative for the property management company said they would take care of painting the wood. It was also pointed out that security cameras were also installed without review or approval. The HARB explained that the cameras would need to be placed in less conspicuous spots. Mr. Kimmerly said he would work with the applicants to help them with the cameras.

Motion: *The HARB upon motion by Mr. Brobst and seconded by Mr. Fillman agreed to table the proposal for more input on new signs, design, placement, and treatment of windows for privacy*

June 1, 2020 -- The applicants explained the new proposal was to install mini-blades in the interior of the storefront windows and install vinyl signage on two of the display windows and on the door. The signs on the windows would be 30" wide and 30" high and include the phone number and website. The sign on the door would be 12" x 12" and include the hours of the business. The colors would be green and blue. The HARB agreed that the new proposal was historically appropriate.

Mr Fillman offered salvaged storefront cornice brackets to the owner of the building. He said the brackets would be appropriate for the building and would enhance the storefront that had lost its cornice some time ago. The owner's representative said she would pass the offer to the owner.

New design submitted and approved on June 1.



Motion: The HARB upon motion by Mr. Huber and seconded by Mr. Fillman adopted the proposal that City Council issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for the proposed work described herein:

1. The proposal to install vinyl signage on the storefront at 302 N 9th Street was represented by Jennifer Doublin and Sheriff Adewale.
2. The new window signs will 30" x 30" and read "caresify, home care agency" in green and blue with phone number and web address.
3. The new door sign will be 12" x 12", similar to the windows signs, and include business hours.
4. Privacy for the business will be provided by interior metal mini blinds.

HARB ACTION: The proposal to issue a COA was unanimously approved. (5-0; motion carried; Fillman, Huber, Jackson, Roberts, Sell)