

Village of Skaneateles
Historical Landmarks Preservation Commission Hearing
May 12, 2010

In the matter of the application submitted by Eileen Price for a Certificate of Approval from the Commission for business signage 'AXA Advisors' for locations on the Masonic Lodge building located at 13 East Genesee Street in the Village of Skaneateles.

Present: Charles Williams, Chairman
Pat Blackler, Member
Mona Smalley, Member
Karlene Miller, Member
David Neibert, Member
Andrew Ramsgard, Member
Beverly White, Member

Jorge Batlle, Clerk to the Historical Commission

Eileen Price, Applicant

Evan Dreyfuss, East Genesee Street
Linda Roche, West Lake Street

Chairman Williams opened the public hearing at 7:33pm announcing the application of Eileen Price for 13 East Genesee Street. He said, "she has provided us with signs and locations of same. Now that extends out from the building, is that right?" Eileen Price, applicant said, "yes." The Chairman said, "those are not permitted on the street side of the buildings?" Batlle said, "you can go out one foot." Member Miller said, "but this isn't on the street side." Batlle said, "it is on the Village's drive."

Member Neibert asked, "what is the actual business location?" Price said, "it's the little micro-office." The Chairman said, "they used to have a book shop in there." Batlle said, "it was the *Book Nook*." Price said, "it is a little micro office. It's a satellite office. My main office is in Syracuse. But, I've lived here for more than 20 years and I want a private place where I can meet clients – sit and chat and then walk for coffee. This is just for signing papers. I'm just going to use it so I can just walk down the street." Member Neibert asked, "and this is to direct people as to where you are?" Price said, "correct. The whole idea of it hanging out is you can see it from Genesee Street."

Member Ramsgard asked, "the second sign is mounted on a box, existing electrical box. But it's not lit in any way, right?" Price said, "no. It is just to cover up that box." The Chairman asked, "it is just mounted to the box." Price said, "it got a little frame around it." The Chairman

said, “then this other one – I read that you want to drill some holes into the stone?” Price said, “not me but yes. The people that know how to do that. I think they want to put it into the masonry and they have how they can replace it.” The Chairman asked, “into the masonry and not into the mortar?” Member Miller asked, “into the mortar and they can fill that if you take the sign out?” price said, “correct. What I did was I looked at the building and I found out who made 2 other signs – actually your sign, and the Educational one – so I called them to see as they have worked on the building before. So, I asked them to come out and give me a sign that would be appropriate and also know how to put it on.” The Chairman said, “mortar we can patch. Stone is different.”

Member Miller said, “I don’t see any problem with it.” Member Neibert said, “... I am not too crazy about signs hanging on the side of the building at street level sticking out into that driveway.” Member Ramsgard said, “it’s over the grassy area.” Member Neibert said, “it’s out to the driveway.” Price said, “I was concerned about that too because I was thinking that there are teenagers in the world. Obviously, why I want to do it just like the Thrift Store so you can see it from Genesee. They have signs, Charles Signs is the place that did this. They little do this in Syracuse because they know it would be batted down. But they have done this in Skaneateles and with no problems at all – getting hit or ruined. The Library has a sign in front. There’s places that have hanging signs. I don’t want an easy mark but we can’t move it anywhere else. There’s no other logical place.” Member Miller said, “and if you don’t have it there, people can’t see it from Genesee Street.”

Member Ramsgard asked, “what’s going to happen with the *NO PARKING* sign? That’s going to ruin it. It’s a private lane.” Batlle said, “it belongs to the Village.” Member Ramsgard asked, “does the Village own the sign?” Batlle said, “probably.” Member Ramsgard said, “then that would be the Village Board. You should talk to them.”

Member Smalley asked, “how wide is the grass?” Price said, “it’s exactly the 2 feet.” Member Neibert asked, “how high is that sign up from the street?” Price said, “a better place to see is the second picture. It’s before the step down, so it’s about my shoulder height – 4 feet high or 5 feet. But it doesn’t project into the drive.” Member Neibert said, “but it would be right to the drive.” Member White said, “people do park there even though they are not supposed to and they go into the Thrift Shop.” Chairman Williams said, “the bottom could be 4 ½ to 5 feet from the ground.” Member Smalley said, “people walking along could hit their head on it.”

Member Neibert asked, “are most of your clients that come by appointment. They are not really drive-by, coming in? You are basically setting up an appointment, so they know where you are and they are coming in to meet you specifically. They basically know where you are anyway. Right?” Price said, “the whole idea is really to make a presence here too. To be a part of this. The idea is to redo the office with patio furniture and nice office interior. It is trying to make my presence down here and be a part of the Skaneateles community.”

The Chairman asked, “AXA is the former MONY, right?” Price said, “yes, absolutely.” Price said, “when I first asked the people to come look, they made this for me. They came and did this themselves without asking. They covered the Thrift Store sign. Obviously I can’t do that because the Thrift Store was there first. Second, I can’t put it behind it because then it can’t be

seen. We were looking with Chuck Chernoff of the Masonic Lodge and we were trying to figure out any other way to be different. It does make this the entrance to this little office.”

Member Neibert asked, “you don’t think a flush mounted sign – and I realize it isn’t going to stick out and be as noticeable, but it would be as obtrusive either sticking out off the building.” Price said, “no one would see it.” Member Miller said, “I don’t think it’s awfully obtrusive in as much as it’s over the grassy area. It’s not over the roadway.” The Chairman said, “it’s right at the edge of the sidewalk going toward your stairs. If the wind from the south blows it will be right into somebody’s head. 4 foot or so is at the bottom of the sign.” Price said, “I asked about wind and he said that was no problem. I don’t understand why. I don’t want to hit anyone in the head.” The Chairman said, “it is just a thought. I don’t know if that could be made rigid at the bottom.” (multiple conversations) Member Neibert said, “people walking up the driveway – when cars come in, they step off over into the curb into the grass because obviously, there’s traffic that comes and goes there. On the other side there’s a sidewalk. But on this side, people do, walking up along here. I walk there myself down to my shop. I think a sign that’s going to be – I think it has to be above head level.” Price said, “if it’s above it though, then it’s blocked by this porch-balcony.”

Member White asked, “is there room for it to be on a post on the other side, where the hedge is?” Chairman Williams asked, “in the middle of the hedge?” Member White said, “not in the middle of the hedge, but you can trim it back a little bit. Have a rigid sign. That’s just a suggestion.” Member Neibert said, “on the other side of the walk where the hedge is.” The Chairman said, “the hedge keeps people from stepping out.” Member Neibert said, “people don’t step off there because the hedge is there. But they do step off as soon as they get up past that hedge. I personally think that’s an excellent alternative – to put the sign on a post on the other side of the walk along the edge of the hedge line. I don’t know if it would be sticking out into the road or not.”

Member Ramsgard said, “I wouldn’t be worried so much about people walking into the sign or getting out of the way for traffic but there’s probably a potential for somebody actually walking out of the shop and not seeing a car coming down that right at their eye level and actually walking out into the car. That would be a realistic concern because I know when I come out of my driveway sometimes, most times I’m going to hit somebody because they are not paying attention. I have almost gotten clocked a couple of times too. They need to up that way. That might be a very realistic reason.”

Member Miller asked, “what would our recommendation be? That we have a sign on a post in the hedge?” Price said, “I guess you’d have to cut off part of the hedge because if it was in the hedge you couldn’t see the sign.” Member Neibert asked, “who owns the hedge?” The Chairman said, “the Masonic.” Member Smalley said, “the sign would be above the hedge.” Price said, “I don’t want anyone hit by a car or in the head.” Member Miller said, “I think the other sign is fine that’s on the building.” Member White said, “you don’t have to drill into the building.” Member Neibert said, “I am not crazy about a hanging sign on the side of that building at that level and at that location.” The Chairman said, “from a safety viewpoint and everything else.”

Member Blackler said, "Chuck Chernoff has signed for the Masonic Temple, not as the owner. He's signing for." Price said, "he's the representative."

Member Miller asked, "so should we say that you can have a sign that was on a post near the hedge that would be acceptable?" The Chairman said, "on the north side of the sidewalk going into your operation." Member Miller said, "it would still show. Would that be good for you?" Price said, "that would be OK. I don't know. I'm not a sign person." Member Ramsgard said, "I think it's pretty easy ... they really don't have to whack the hedge back very much, if they have the right tools." The Chairman said, "and that get's it away from the *NO PARKING* sign post as well." Member Miller said, "and it's not hanging out, OK. Can we go with that? The other sign on your building is fine."

The Chairman asked for a motion? Member Miller said, "**I'll make a motion that the one sign is put on a post closer to the hedge and we approve the second sign (between the windows) that's on the building, as presented in the renderings.**"

Seconded by Member Blackler. The vote was 7 to 0 in favor of the motion. The hearing was closed at 7:50pm.

email To: Williams
cc: Price