

Village of Skaneateles
Historical Landmarks Preservation Commission
December 14, 2011

In the matter of the consider an application for a Certificate of Approval from the Commission, submitted by Cate & Sally, to relocate the existing sign from 58 East Genesee St. to 4 East Genesee St. changing to black letters, and to add transom above center window, modify the sign location on the building and add two gooseneck lights over the East Genesee St. doors at the premises addressed as 4 East Genesee Street in the Village of Skaneateles.

Present: Charles Williams, Chairman
David Neibert, Member
Katharine Dyson, Member
Pat Blackler, Member
Mona Smalley, Member
Andrew Ramsgard, Member
Carol Young, Member

Dennis Dundon, Clerk to the Historical Commission

Robert Eggleston, Architect, on behalf of the Applicant

Ted Kinder, Skaneateles
Cate Davis, Skaneateles
Sally Mason, Skaneateles

Absent: Beverly White, Member
Karlene Miller, Member

Chairman Williams opened the public hearing at 8:10 pm announcing the application of Cate & Sally for Business Signage and modifications at 4 East Genesee Street.

Mr. Eggleston identified himself and presented, “Bob Eggleston, Architect, for Cate & Sally. They are the occupants of the retail space, and what they would like to do is to relocate the sign that they currently have further up Genesee Street and bring it down to the building. Originally in the design, we had proposed that this transom panel would be a solid panel – the sign would go there. Because of the proportion and size of the sign, what we have done is we’d like to put in the transom panel and then we have adjusted this frieze to have the molding come down to receive it, so we’ll have a 9 foot area by 15 inch area to receive the exact same sign. What we will be doing is, because of the light colors of the building, we are going to change that to black letters and do it just the opposite. So we will have the black letters of the sign placed on the building and put back the transom. And then something we hadn’t put in before – we’d like to have gooseneck lamps over the two doors on each end. What they’d like to do is to use this one here [R920/41/E4/CBC1], again it’s got the traditional gooseneck but it has a little different flair

with the crinkle base on it.” Member Neibert asked, “What kind of a bulb does that carry?” Mr. Eggleston responded, “That will probably have...” Member Neibert, “Does it have a globe or just a bulb?” Mr. Eggleston said, “I know that everyone is going to the compact fluorescent, that type of thing, but I think we can get a bulb – probably a clear bulb. That actually, I just realized that we had used that, not that it’s in the district, but on Bob and Nancy Lang’s house up on Academy Street. It’s the fixture that is on their garage.” Member Neibert asked, “How big is the bulb?” Mr. Eggleston indicated that it is just a standard bulb. Mr. Eggleston continued, “It will be basically a matte-black charcoal; it’s an anodized charcoal. We didn’t want the shiny black, so it will be just a matte finish of anodized charcoal.”

Member Neibert asked, “Now is there a change taking place to the windows, or not?” Mr. Eggleston replied, “No that’s all – everything else is all the same.” Member Neibert, “So the sign is going to be right below the cornice?” Mr. Eggleston, “What we had originally was a two-step cornice or frieze board there and with the molding dividing it; so we’re just bringing the molding down so that it feels right – making the architecture and the sign work together.” Member Neibert, “So the sign is just going to be between the cornice and the transom, basically?” Mr. Eggleston, “Correct.” Mr. Kinder interjected, “On an historical note, that’s really the way the building was originally, was three transoms all the way across there.” Member Neibert said, “I think that’s great, having the three transoms.” Member Dyson said, “I do too.” Mr. Kinder said, “We had the two in there and it just didn’t look right.”

Member Ramsgard asked, “Bob, are the doors recessed there?” Mr. Eggleston, “No.” Member Ramsgard, “The doors are out flush with the face of the building?” Mr. Eggleston indicated they were. Member Neibert asked, “How far are the lights going to stick out then?” Mr. Eggleston, “I’d have to look at the catalog.” Member Dyson asked, “Will that be substantial enough for that, or is there something like this?” Mr. Eggleston, “I think that gets a little too heavy for the space; it is coming down, we’d like to place it in the frieze and have it kind of level, more or less, with the top of the transom there. The size – I think we’re talking about something in the 18 inch range, because we have several sizes. I think 24 is going to be too big, but like 18 inches would be appropriate.” Member Smalley asked, “So that goes flat right there?” Mr. Eggleston, “Correct, and then it sticks out. So it’s going to be coming out about 24 inches or so from the building.”

Member Young said, “I can see why they want to use the sign that they already have, but it seems to me that it would look far better if it were the same width as this, which is about 7 feet, and went between this molding and this molding.” Mr. Eggleston responded, “Actually, I respectfully disagree with you, because I think that having it longer acts more like a lintel, that’s kind of spanning over the window, instead of just chopping it up. It stands proud to take ownership of the three windows by having it extended out. So I think it actually looks better, and I think it’s better than having it kind of crammed in there. Obviously, we were working with the letters that they already had, and the image and their logo and all that stuff, and we felt that this was a good proportion to let it set on those two outside windows and to visually be supported.” Member Dyson asked, “What about on the ends of each sign? It looks like it just comes down straight. Is there going to be any kind of a... anything at all?” Mr. Eggleston, “I don’t think we want to get real distracting with it.” Chairman Williams said, “That’s right, plus with the building.” Mr. Eggleston, “And again, this is three dimensional panel mold that comes

across the side.” Member Dyson, “The letters are three dimensional?” Mr. Eggleston, “Exactly, they are sticking out.” Member Neibert said, “And these light fixtures will not extend below the transom lights then?” Mr. Eggleston, “Not much, if any, below the transom. So they will be up in the transom area.”

Member Young asked, “So it’s really going to stop here right? It’s not going to go up beyond that?” Mr. Eggleston, “Exactly.” Member Blackler asked, “Bob, if you’re changing it from white letters to black letters, what’s the background?” Mr. Eggleston said, “It’s the P-2 color, which is Philadelphia Cream.” Chairman Williams said, “And you’re going to have to mention that, because it just says change to black colored letters, and on a black background they’re not going to show.” Mr. Eggleston clarified, “It’s not a black background, it’s already P-2. You see this is a P-2 finish. That’s the other building.” The Chairman said, “That’s what I mean. What you are requesting on here is just to change the black colored letters, not the background.” Mr. Eggleston said, “We can’t because that belongs to the building.” Chairman Williams, “No I mean...” Member Blackler, “You’re both saying the same thing.” Mr. Eggleston said, “What they have at their current location is individual letters screwed into the building. So the building stays and the letters come and we paint them. And it will be Philadelphia Cream behind them.”

Member Neibert said, “From a selfish standpoint, I’m going to nix all of this because I don’t want them to move.” [Laughter] He went on, “They are my neighbors, yes, and they are good neighbors.” Mr. Eggleston said, “Dave can now get more exercise...” Chairman Williams, “We’ll get you a pair of hiking shoes, Dave.”

Member Neibert said, “I don’t see any problems and I would make a motion to approve this application for a Certificate of Approval.”

Member Blackler seconded the motion.

Chairman Williams asked if there was any further discussion. Member Ramsgard said, “The transom and sign I don’t have any problem with and the idea of lighting the doors is fine. I think there should be a drop specified, because I think the one that we are looking at looks like it has a 24 inch drop and there is one with a zero drop, which is sort of what you drew, but not really. I think that’s probably the right thing if you want it to line up with the transom.” Member Neibert said, “I don’t think the light should be below the transom.” Member Ramsgard suggested, “So that’s more like the 12 inch width.” Mr. Eggleston, “What we’d sooner do is to go over to this type of a gooseneck rather than this, and not have it hang down so much.” Mr. Kinder said, “I don’t like it hanging down that much.” Mr. Eggleston said, “You have to be a Rhodes scholar to understand the numbering system as to which gooseneck it is...I don’t want the fixture to hang down below half-way in the transom. It could be a little bit into it...” Chairman Williams, “That’s available in black too?” Mr. Eggleston said yes.

Mr. Ramsgard asked, “Is the property line at the face of the building?” Mr. Eggleston responded, “No, I think it’s actually the face of the building.” Member Ramsgard continued, “Face of the building, so you need a permit from DOT and you’ve got to rent the space that the light fixture has.” Mr. Kinder said “Yeah, right.” Member Ramsgard continued, “You do actually. You have to rent it...it’s projecting out into the State’s right of way. They actually

charge you rent.” Mr. Kinder, “Oh my God; I’m not going to ask them.” Mr. Eggleston said, we actually do have squatters’ rights because the building has been in the right of way.”

Chairman Williams said, “Just an information point; are these transoms over the doors, are they fixed or openable?” Mr. Eggleston, “They’re fixed.” The Chair went on, “We have a motion and a second, we have had discussion, maybe changing the light.” Member Ramsgard said, “I think you’ve got to specify the drop, the size and the shape and what size shade are we going to use.” Mr. Eggleston, “The drop won’t come below the mid-point of the transom and we’re using an 18 inch shade.” Mr. Kinder observed that 18 inch is big. Several sidebar comments were offered, dealing with the size of the shade. Chairman Williams used a sheet of paper to illustrate 11.5 to 12 inch size. Mr. Eggleston said, “We’ll go 16 inches, because once you get into the 12 you are into a different shade material.” Chairman Williams asked, “A zero drop over the transom?” Mr. Eggleston, “It will be no more than mid way below – we won’t come below the center of the transom.”

Member Young asked, “And the base of the light fits within here, correct?” Mr. Eggleston, “Yes, it’s just like a 6 inch round escutcheon.” Member Young asked, “Did you look at any historic light fixtures?” Mr. Eggleston, “We looked through a number of them and they have some various...” Member Young, “Rejuvenation catalog?” Mr. Eggleston, “No, we didn’t.” Mr. Ramsgard observed, “It’s interesting that there’s really not very many buildings that are lit on Genesee St. There are a couple of buildings that have lights, there’s only 3 signs on Genesee St. that have lights on them, two of which are older than the historic board itself, and the other one doesn’t even have light bulbs in it. Rolands is before the historic board and Pomodoro dates back to before...that’s when Betty Congel used to have the building. And then the other one is next to Rolands where the antique place is – that has lights on it but there are no light bulbs in the fixture.” Member Young asked, “Would it look too dark with no lights?” Mr. Eggleston, “Actually with the street lights that we have, really you don’t need lights on. And we talked about do we get something to light this up, but you have to come out, because these have some thickness – it’s about an inch thick and the black letter, it would be all shadows and you wouldn’t read the signs. So we felt that the street light would be enough for lighting the sign itself.” Member Neibert said, “Yes that’s a bright corner, really.” Others agreed. Member Young asked, “Could you wait and not put these lights in until it’s finished, and then see if you really need it?” Mr. Eggleston said, “Obviously what we’re looking to do is accentuate the doors just a little bit, but I think it’s more just to give it a little detail.” Member Young, “It seems like it looks more in keeping with the historic look of the community not to have something like that.” Chairman Williams asked, “What’s an anticipated date for the siding on the Genesee St. side?” Mr. Kinder stated, “The sider actually started today but he’s on the back side. Probably within the next couple of weeks.” Member Dyson said, “I have to agree with the lighting; I’m just struggling with it a little. I like the idea of the lights, I’d like to see something that’s more in period. And I don’t know if that is or isn’t. Maybe they had lights like that then.” Member Ramsgard said, “It’s about 50 to 70 years too early, cause that building is back when gas acetylene...” Member Dyson, “More in keeping with the colonial...” Member Ramsgard, “Like a coach light. Well the one thing to limit would be the wattage of the bulbs, because the problem is that the glare there; it might get a little too hot. If the building had lights back then they would have been just a tiny flicker of a bulb. They wouldn’t have been electric obviously. You wouldn’t want to go over a 40 watt bulb there; it would be way too much.” Member Dyson,

"I'm not hung up on it." Mr. Kinder stated, "There were carriage lights, colonial-type lights on the building when we tore it down, but they were actually very old. They weren't obviously original, 110 years old..." Member Dyson said, "The lights look nice, I think the light's a good idea." Several sidebar discussions ensued. Member Young asked, "Is there a reason you couldn't put the gas lights back?" Mr. Kinder said, "We don't have those, they were in pretty bad shape. I would agree that we would probably put the box in, but we could always put a plate on it. Let's just wait for right now until we get the front done, and we'll think about it a little bit more..."

Member Neibert said, "I think that any light fixture you have should not drop below the top of the transom. The other thing you have to think about is teenagers going down the street love to jump up and..." Mr. Kinder, "You'd have to be an NBA player, because it's over 10 feet." Member Neibert said, "I'm telling you, the kids they do that. They just jump up to tap. They just jump up and the next thing you know, you've got a broken light fixture."

Chairman Williams said, "I'd like to make one comment before we go on too further. People talk about the original. I've seen a big map that Randy Marshall brought in that has this house on it – which has a hip roof front to back." Mr. Kinder asked, "Before the hotel got built; the building was there before that?" The Chair responded, "Well it looks just like this building before they mansarded the roof." Mr. Kinder said, "I think we've got the original drawings in 1870..." Mr. Eggleston said, "a lithograph." Chairman Williams said, "I found that on e-bay for Jackie." Member Ramsgard said that, "Even in 1870 it could have been 100 years earlier. My building is 1797."

Member Young said, "But this would have looked like the 1870 building with the patterned slate. Are you doing the patterned slate?" Mr. Kinder, "Patterned slate, yes." Member Young asked are you using old slate?" Mr. Kinder said, "We're using real slate." Member Young, "Old slate though? Antique slate?" Mr. Kinder, "Not old slate. It's real slate, but it's new slate." Mr. Eggleston said, "It's just the slate is real brittle." Member Young continued, "We just did this in our house, the patterned slate, but we found some in the Midwest that was the antique slate. So if you can, I think it makes a difference."

Chairman Williams said, "We had a motion and second on the floor and had a discussion." Member Smalley asked, "Does this include the lights?" The Chairman clarified, "They are on hold." Mr. Eggleston said, "We'll put the lights on hold, we'll come back and see if we can get a sample and have you look at it." Member Neibert said, "I think the light should be as minimal as you can do, really, to have a light, but not to be something...just so you have light but not some big feature."

The Chairman asked for the vote. On the unanimous vote of those members present in favor, the Chairman called the motion "Carried."

This public hearing was closed at 8:30 pm.