

ANN ARBOR HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

Staff Report

ADDRESS: 314 South Main, Application Number HDC 18-073

DISTRICT: Main Street Historic District

REPORT DATE: May 10, 2018

REPORT PREPARED BY: Jill Thacher, Historic Preservation Coordinator

REVIEW COMMITTEE DATE: Monday, May 7, 2018

	OWNER	APPLICANT
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BACKGROUND: This storefront occupies the center bay of a two-story building containing 312, 314, and 316 South Main Street. The three-bay building was built by 1925. (It does not appear on 1916 Sanborn Maps.) Schumacher's Hardware was located in the northernmost storefront from at least 1899 until 1940. Schumacher's probably built the current building. Sears Roebuck & Co. took over the three storefronts in 1941 after extensive remodeling. Kline's department store took over the building in the mid-1970s until the 1990s. (See photos at end of report.) In January 1996, the Historic District Commission approved plans for the remodeling of the façade, and in 2012 an entry awning was approved.

LOCATION: The site is on the east side of South Main Street, south of East Washington Street and north of East Liberty Street.

APPLICATION: The applicant seeks HDC approval to: remove an existing decorative stucco feature with lighting on the second floor and most of the existing storefront; and install a new storefront window and door system, a 6' fixed canopy, "Blue Llama Jazz Club" signage, and accent lighting.

APPLICABLE REGULATIONS:

From the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation:

- (1) A property will be used as it was historically or be given a new use that requires minimal change to its distinctive materials, features, spaces, and spatial relationships.
- (2) The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.
- (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.

From the Secretary of the Interior's Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings (other SOI Guidelines may also apply):

Storefronts

Recommended: Designing and constructing a new storefront when the historic storefront is completely missing. It may be an accurate restoration using historical, pictorial, and physical documentation; or be a new design that is compatible with the size, scale, material, and color of the historic building.

Not Recommended: Introducing a new design that is incompatible in size, scale, material, and color.

Building Site

Not Recommended: Removing or radically changing buildings and their features or site features which are important in defining the overall historic character of the property so that, as a result, the character is diminished.

From the Ann Arbor Historic District Design Guidelines:

Design Guidelines for Storefronts

Appropriate: Designing and constructing a new storefront when the historic storefront is completely missing. It may be an accurate restoration using historical, pictorial, ad physical documentation; or may be a new design that is compatible with the size, scale, and material of the historic building. New designs should be flush with the façade and be kept as simple as possible.

Not Appropriate: Installing a new storefront that is incompatible in size and material with the historic building and district.

Signs

Appropriate: Installing signage in the historic sign band area of the building, typically the area above the transoms or just above the storefront.

Installing signage that is compatible in size, style, material, and appearance to the historic resource and district.

Placing signs to align with others along the commercial block face.

Installing signage that is subordinate to the overall building composition.

Not Appropriate: Installing signs that are too large or that are made from a material that is incompatible with the historic building or district.

Installing signs that are overly complex, use more than three or four colors or use fluorescent colors.

Lighting

Appropriate: Attaching light fixtures so historic fabric is not damaged or destroyed.

When installing a new fixture where there is no historic light fixture, using a fixture that is inconspicuous or complements the style and character of the resource.

When introducing new site and street lighting using fixtures that are compatible with the scale and historic character of the district.

Not Appropriate: Introducing flood lighting on front or side building faces. All floodlights should have shields and be aimed down.

Cutting through character-defining features to install lighting.

Illuminating building facades in residential areas with harsh floodlights.

STAFF FINDINGS:

1. The official status of the building in the Downtown Historic Districts Survey is contributing. Should the question arise, staff feels that the status is more appropriately non-contributing. The only similarity between the current building and the c.1925 building is the massing. The entire front façade has been replaced twice, and no remnant of the c.1925 building is apparent. This was briefly discussed last November with the Ark's storefront application, but the building status was not changed.
2. *Decorative Stucco Feature.* Staff has no reservations above removing this olive-branch design and repairing and repainting the underlying stucco.
3. *Storefront.* The existing storefront is modern, with inset wood and glass doors and windows, a stone base flanking the storefront, and stucco. The proposed storefront maintains the basic proportions of the current storefront while replacing the glazing, installing wood paneled side walls and a new tile floor in the recess, and covering the first-floor stucco with metal panels, including a strip of perforated metal backlit panels. The proposed storefront is sleek and modern, and designed to be proportionate with The Ark's new storefront next door, which is about to start construction. The horizontal lines of The Ark storefront are maintained across the Blue Llama storefront.
4. *Canopy.* A new 6' deep metal canopy is proposed across nearly the full-width of the storefront. It is 14" tall. The canopy is 2' shallower than that of The Ark next door, and is a reasonable alternative to a fabric awning.
5. *Signs.* Two "Blue Llama Jazz Club" signs are proposed, one on the front of the canopy and one hanging beneath it. Sign dimensions are not provided, so staff measured them based on the drawing scale. The larger sign says "Blue Llama" in neon, and is approximately 9'8" wide by 2'1" tall, with "Jazz Club" in 6" halo lit letters beneath. The pedestrian-scaled blade sign is 42" wide by 24" tall. To remain consistent with other pedestrian-scaled signs in the vicinity, staff recommends that the width of the sign not exceed 30" and the height 24", or 720 square inches. The signs

must also meet City of Ann Arbor Sign Code for size and placement.

6. *Lighting.* An LED lighting strip along the top edge of the first floor storefront would shine downward, a few inches above the perforated metal panel accent lighting. The perforated accent lighting surrounds the storefront on three sides. Details on the intensity of either lighting feature is not provided. Staff believes that the accent lighting does not detract from the historic character of the district, at the low light level represented in the nighttime view drawing.
7. In summary, staff finds that the redesign of the storefront is appropriate and meets the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines, and the Ann Arbor Historic District Design Guidelines, with the exception of the size of the pedestrian-scale blade sign. A condition is included in the possible motion to address this.

POSSIBLE MOTIONS: (Note that the motion is only a suggestion. The Review Committee, consisting of staff and at least two Commissioners, will meet with the applicant on site and then make a recommendation at the meeting.)

I move that the Commission issue a certificate of appropriateness for the application at 314 S. Main Street, a contributing property in the Main Street Historic District to remove an existing decorative stucco feature with lighting on the second floor and remove most of the existing storefront; and install a new storefront window and door system, a 6' fixed canopy, "Blue Llama Jazz Club" signage, and accent lighting, on the following condition: the pedestrian-scaled blade sign does not exceed 30" x 24" or 720 square inches. The work as conditioned is compatible in exterior design, arrangement, texture, material and relationship to the rest of the building and the surrounding area and meets the *Ann Arbor Historic District Design Guidelines* for storefronts, signs and lighting, and *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation* and *Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings*, in particular standards 1, 2, and 9 and the guidelines for storefronts and building site.

MOTION WORKSHEET:

I move that the Commission issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for the work at 314 S. Main Street in the Main Street Historic District

Provided the following condition(S) is (ARE) met: 1) STATE CONDITION(s)

The work is generally compatible with the size, scale, massing, and materials and meets the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, standard(S) number(S) (*circle all that apply*): 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10

ATTACHMENTS: application, photos, drawings, renderings

312-316 S Main Street, 1939 (Ann Arbor News photo, courtesy Old News)



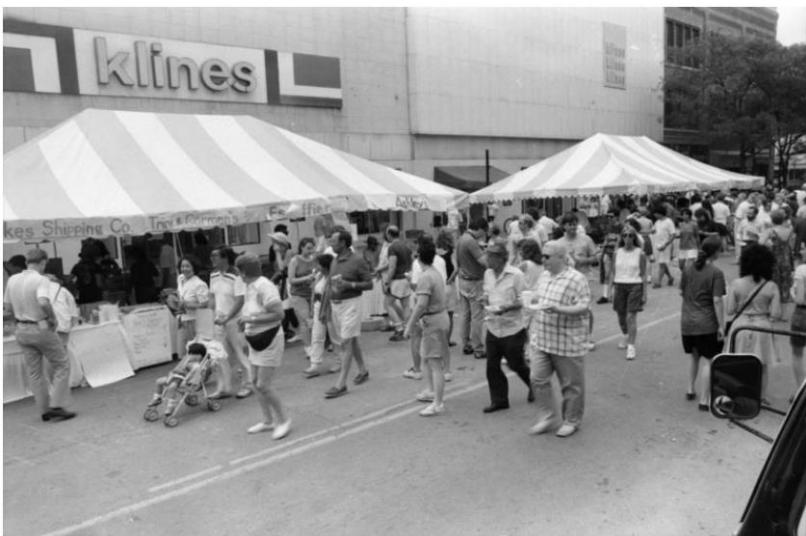
312-316 S. Main, December 1940 (Ann Arbor News photo, courtesy Old News)



312-316 S Main Street, August 1950 (Ann Arbor News photo, courtesy Old News)



312-316 S Main Street ("Klines" at left), June 17, 1990 (Ann Arbor News photo, courtesy Old News)



312-316 S Main (April 2007 staff photo)

