Reviewed for Code Compliance
Inspections Division
Approved with Conditions
Date: 05/07/13
Planner: Tammy Munson

HISTORIC PRESERVATION BOARD
CITY OF PORTLAND, MAINE

PUBLIC HEARING
522 CONGRESS STREET, 51 OAK STREET, 11 and 15 SHEPLEY STREET

TO: Chair Romano and Members of the Historic Preservation Board

FROM: Deborah Andrews, Historic Preservation Program Manager

DATE: April 23, 2013

RE: May 1, 2013

Application For:	Certificate of Appropriateness for Replacement Signage on Existing Marquee, Installation of New Banners/Projecting Sign
Address:	522 Congress (replacement signage) 51 Oak (banner or projecting sign) 11 & 15 Shepley (banners)
Applicant:	Maine College of Art
Represented by:	Raffi Der Simonian, Director of Marketing & Communications

Introduction

Raffi Der Simonian, representing the Maine College of Art, is requesting review and approval of replacement signage on the existing entrance marquee at 522 Congress Street (the former Porteous building that has served as the college's headquarters since 1993.) MECA is also requesting approval to install banners at the entrances to their residence halls just off Congress Street to clearly identify the buildings as part of MECA's campus.

The installation of new and replacement signage is planned in conjunction with a new branding program for the art college.

Mr. Der Simonian has provided computer-generated images of the proposed signs and banners, as well as specifications for the banner hardware and proposed lighting on the underside of the marquee.

Note: The enclosed submission does not include some of the dimensional information required for the review. Staff has asked that this information be made available at the meeting.

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Subject Structures, Existing Signage

This application affects 3 historic structures within the Congress Street Historic Di well as one residential structure immediately outside the district boundaries (15 Shepley).

Porteous Building Built in two phases (1906 and 1911), the Porteous Building was built as a department store in the Beaux Arts Classical style, which was popular from 1890-1920. The upper façade is exuberantly detailed and is little changed from its original construction.

During Porteous' ownership, the ground floor was thoroughly remodeled and a deep projecting canopy/marquee was added. Although MECA has made dramatic changes within the interior of the building, the ground floor exterior, including the large projecting canopy, remains essentially unaltered. Representatives of MECA have indicated that they hope to remodel the ground floor in the future, but there are no immediate plans for such.

Current MECA signage on the Congress Street façade consists of applied letters and decals on the front and side planes of the canopy. Note that the lettering on the front face does not fit within the depth of the canopy.

Residential Halls

Following a major rehabilitation in 2005, the former Hotel Everett at 51 Oak Street opened as one of MECA's residential halls. The ground floor of the Colonial Revival style building is occupied by several retail tenants and provides access to MECA's upper floor residences from Oak Street. Currently, there is no projecting sign identifying the building's association with MECA.

MECA also owns two multi-unit buildings at 11 and 15 Shepley Street. The former Miles Standish brick apartment building at 11 Shepley is located within the Congress Street Historic District; the wood frame structure at 15 Shepley is not. Currently there are no signs associating the buildings with MECA.

Proposed Signage

Porteous Building. The proposal calls for installing new graphics and MECA logo at the far sides and ends of the existing 56' wide x 32" tall metal canopy, as well as new applied letters to the center of the canopy. (Although the images show the graphics to scale, no specific dimensions are provided.) Above the canopy, individual metal letters are proposed to be mounted to the 2" leading lip of the canopy. The proposed letters will be 4' tall and 2.25" thick.

As proposed, LED lighting strips will be mounted to the underside of the canopy at the center and the ends to illuminate the signage areas. A detail has been provided of the fixture and mounted bracket.

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Note that the front face of the marquee currently features two wide strips of vents c shallow louvres. Given the presence of the louvres, the graphics at the corners mu: terminate a considerable distance from the center sign.

Residence Halls.

At the Shepley Street residence halls, banners are proposed to be mounted above the entrances. The size of the banner is not indicated in the applicant's submission. The submission does include a specification for the banner hardware, however.

Note: It is difficult to determine from the computer-generated image of the Miles Standish building where the banner bracket will be mounted. The Board will want clarification on this question.

At 51 Oak Street, two signage options are provided. Option 1 shows a banner like those on the Shepley Street buildings. Option 2 shows an oval projecting sign, consistent with all the other retail signs on this frontage. Given the strong consistency of signage on this frontage, staff is supportive of Option 2.

Applicable Review Standards

The historic preservation ordinance's sign standards and guidelines apply in the review of this application. Also applicable are the following general standards:

(9) Contemporary design for alterations and additions to existing properties shall not be discouraged when such alterations and additions do not destroy significant cultural, historical, architectural or archeological materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the size, scale, color, material and character of the property, neighborhood or environment.

(10) Wherever possible, new additions or alterations to structures and objects shall be undertaken in such a manner that, if such additions or alterations were to be removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property would be unimpaired.

Motion for Consideration

On the basis of plans and specifications submitted for the 5/1/13 Public Hearing and information included in the accompanying staff report, the Board finds that the proposed signage proposals for 522 Congress St., 11 Shepley Street and 51 Oak Street **meet (fail to meet)** the sign standard and guidelines within the historic preservation ordinance, **(subject to the following conditions...)** .

Attachments

1. Signage proposal submitted by applicant

MECA

MAINE COLLEGE OF ART

New logo Implementation & Proposed Signage Treatment
Submitted by Raffi Der Simonian
Director of Marketing & Communications
May 1, 2013

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Cut letters: MECA = 4' tall x 2.25" thick (affixed onto a 2" lip)

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TOKISTAR/REVELER NOT TO SCALE

RVCL Series
Adjustable Bracket

RVCL-EC
With Adjustable Bracket

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LED Lighting strips on either side (4')
and in front center(8') of marquee

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MECA

MAINE COLLEGE OF ART

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Proposed sample flagpole hardware:

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