

## PLANNING DIVISION STAFF REPORT

August 18, 2025

PREPARED FOR THE LANDMARKS COMMISSION



**Project Name & Address:** 823 Williamson Street

**Application Type(s):** Certificate of Approval for new signage

**Legistar File ID #** [89512](#)

**Prepared By:** Heather Bailey, Preservation Planner, Planning Division

**Date Prepared:** August 15, 2025

### Summary

**Project Applicant/Contact:** Kathy Ottinger, Rainbow Signs

**Requested Action:** The Applicant is requesting that the Landmarks Commission approve a Certificate of Approval for the installation of new signage.

### Background Information

**Parcel Location/Information:** The subject property is located within the Third Lake Ridge local historic district

#### Relevant Ordinance Sections:

#### 41.18 STANDARDS FOR GRANTING A CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

A certificate of Approval shall be granted only if the proposed project complies with this chapter, including all of the following standards that apply.

- (1) New Construction or Exterior Alteration. The Landmarks Commission shall approve a certificate of Approval for exterior alteration or construction only if:
  - (a) In the case of exterior alteration to a designated landmark, the proposed work would meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.
  - (b) In the case of exterior alteration or construction of a structure on a landmark site, the proposed work would meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.
  - (c) In the case of exterior alteration or construction on any property located in a historic district, the proposed exterior alteration or construction meets the adopted standards and guidelines for that district.
  - (d) In the case of any exterior alteration or construction for which a certificate of Approval is required, the proposed work will not frustrate the public interest expressed in this ordinance for protecting, promoting, conserving, and using the City's historic resources.
- (3) Signs. The Commission shall approve a certificate of Approval for signs if it finds that the following are true:
  - (a) Signs are located within the façade areas set aside for signs as part of the façade design or are integrated and compatible with the structure where the façade areas have not been set aside for signs;
  - (b) New signs shall be consistent with the traditional signage pattern locations on a structure or a property, and shall feature materials and style of illumination typical of the period of significance for the property or district;
  - (c) Signs shall comply with Chapter 31, MGO;
  - (d) Signs shall comply with specific standards and guidelines adopted for historic districts under this ordinance.

#### **41.25 STANDARDS FOR ALTERATIONS.**

- (1) General
  - (a) Alterations are defined as any change to any portion of the exterior of a building or site that replaces existing materials or changes its appearance. This section provides standards for building alterations.
  - (b) Materials and Features
    - 1. Alterations shall be in keeping with the original design and character of the building.

### **Analysis and Conclusion**

The proposed project is to install a new wall sign on the front façade of the recently completed structure at 823 Williamson. The new sign location is where we expect to see commercial signage on buildings in the historic district. The downcast lighting located on the building will illuminate the sign beneath, which is typical of signage on historic resources. The signage is of a style found on historic resources in the district and is in keeping with the architectural character of the structure.

A discussion of relevant standards follows:

#### **41.18 STANDARDS FOR GRANTING A CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL**

- (3) Signs. The Commission shall approve a Certificate of Approval for signs if it finds that the following are true:
  - (a) The proposed sign is located in the area on the building where we expect to find signage.
  - (b) This type of signage is typically found and the proposed style of illumination is also typical.
  - (c) Signs shall comply with Chapter 31, MGO;
  - (d) Signs shall comply with specific standards and guidelines adopted for historic districts under this ordinance.

#### **41.25 STANDARDS FOR ALTERATIONS.**

- (1) General
  - (a) Alterations are defined as any change to any portion of the exterior of a building or site that replaces existing materials or changes its appearance. This section provides standards for building alterations.
  - (b) Materials and Features
    - 1. The proposed sign uses a similar architectural vocabulary to the historic resources in the district and blends with the architectural character of the existing structure.

### **Recommendation**

Staff believes that the standards for granting a Certificate of Approval are met and recommends the Landmarks Commission approve the project as proposed.