

STAFF REPORT: 8/10/2022 MEETING

PREPARED BY: J. ROSS

ADDRESS: 1221 LABROSSE

APPLICATION NO: #22-7959

HISTORIC DISTRICT: CORKTOWN

APPLICANT: MARY COSTAKES/ARANAE INC

OWNER: ARCHDIOCESE OF DETROIT

DATE OF STAFF SITE VISIT: 7/27/2022

DATE OF PROVISIONALLY COMPLETE APPLICATION: 7/14/2022

SCOPE

NEW SIGNAGE

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Erected ca. 1955, the building at 1229 Labrosse is an International-Style school house building. The original portion of the building features a central, two-story high mass, which is flanked by lower 1- and 2-story wings. A 1-story addition with a rear high-bay wing was appended to the building's west elevation in 2019-2020. The central, 2-story wing has a glass curtain-wall system with buff brick at its rear elevations. Buff brick and a glass curtain wall system is also found at the on the lower side wings. The 2019-2020 addition features concrete block and metal panel exterior cladding. A small grassy lawn with trees is located to the front of the original building while a concrete ramp with steel balustrade leads from the sidewalk to the primary entrance of the recent addition. The building occupies the majority of the north side of Labrosse's 1200 block. The adjacent neighborhood surrounds is dominated by single-family detached homes with a small number commercial buildings and multi-family apartments and townhomes.



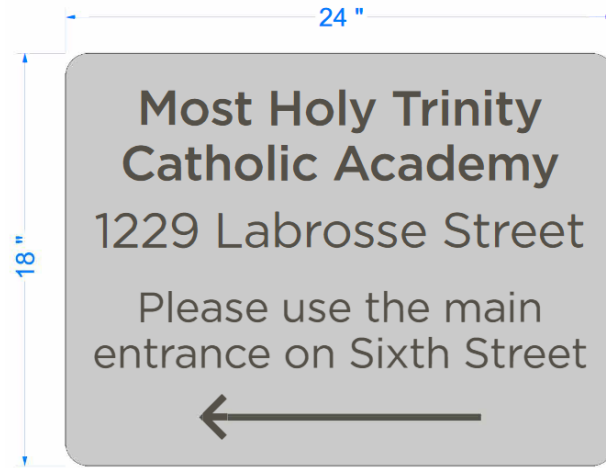


1221 Labrosse, current conditions, 7/27/2022 staff photos

PROPOSAL

Per the submitted materials, the applicant is proposing to install four new non-illuminated signs on the original portion of the building to include the following:

- A 24"x18" aluminum panel sign at the side elevation



- A 26"x48" aluminum panel sign at the side of the main entrance, 6th Street/east elevation



- A 54"x187" aluminum panel sign over the western entrance, Labrosse Street/north elevation



- 8.33"x 62.2" vinyl adhesive letters in the transom over the main entrance, 6th Street, east elevation



STAFF OBSERVATIONS AND RESEARCH

- Staff has the authority to administratively approve the installation of new signage as long as it conforms to the Commission's Signs and Awnings Guidelines. In re: to position, the guidelines recommend that new signage "...be located where architectural features or details suggest a location, size, or shape for the sign." Note that the guidelines recommendations for placement are more easily applied when reviewing signage proposed for installation at a rectangular-plan, historic commercial building which includes a first story storefront that is topped with a conventional sign band. As this building is a mid-century school building, the signage proposed for installation at the building in the current application does not easily conform to the guidelines. Staff has therefore forwarded this application to the Commission for review.

- Per the submission, the original building includes five signs. One sign is located at the addition's north elevation. See the below staff photos of the existing signage:



Current conditions, existing signage, staff photos taken 7/27/2022

- If the proposed new signage is installed a total of nine signs will exist at the building (at the north and east elevations). However, due to the building's large scale, the location of the four new signs (they will be grouped in two locations: the main/6th Street entrance and the north elevation entrance), and the type of new signage (unilluminated, small scale, panel signage and adhesive letters), the proposed installation will not overwhelm the building. Staff therefore Although five signs are currently extant at the building, its large scale. It is staff's opinion that the proposed new signage is appropriate and will not detract from the building's historic character.

ISSUES

None

RECOMMENDATION

Section 21-2-78. Determination of the Historic District Commission – Certificate of Appropriateness

HDC staff recommends that the Commission issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for the project as proposed because it conforms to the district's Elements of Design and meets the Secretary of the Interior's Standards.