



Detroit Local Historic District Commission

May 20, 2024

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VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

Historic District Commission
Detroit, MI

RE: 660 Woodward Ave
Detroit, Michigan

Dear Historic District Commission,

Bedrock is writing to request a Certificate of Appropriateness for the proposed exterior modifications to the First National Building, located at 660 Woodward Ave, Detroit MI. The First National Building is located in the Financial District local historic district. These proposed modifications are to accommodate a new tenant, Chick-Fil-A, to one of the ground floor retail spaces located along the Cadillac Square façade. The proposed changes include the addition of a new exterior door and accessible ramp as well as new signage. See below for additional information:

Brief History

The First National Building was constructed in 1920-1922 by notable local architect Albert Kahn. The building was constructed for the First National Bank of Detroit. The building consists of a steel frame faced in limestone and is twenty-four stories. The first floor along Cadillac Square and Woodward were re-faced with a grey granite cladding at some point, likely in 1960 based on the building permit index records located at BSEED. Additionally, the ground floor storefronts have been replaced and partially infilled where the transom was formerly located. The upper floors of the building contain offices while the ground floor consists of multiple retail tenants. The proposed scope of work is for a new retail tenant at the eastmost tenant space on the Cadillac Square elevation.

Exterior Door & Ramp

A new exterior door is proposed in an existing storefront bay on the north elevation of the building. The proposed door would be a storefront door system in an existing opening with an aluminum finish to match the existing storefront system. The current storefront and granite base located in the location of the proposed door is non-historic. The current storefront and granite base likely date to when the historic storefront was replaced and the transoms were infilled with granite. The proposed new door will be an aluminum storefront system in the existing opening. The system will consist of double doors centered in the opening with a transom and sidelites. The header of the new system will match the header of the adjacent existing storefront bays. The transom sills will match the sill height of the existing adjacent storefronts and granite to match existing will be installed below the sidelites.

The floor height of the retail tenant space is higher than the sidewalk level at this easternmost side of the north elevation. Because of this, an accessible ramp is required at the new exterior door. An accessible concrete ramp and stair is proposed running along the façade to provide access to the new door. The ramp and stair will use a simple, black metal tube style guardrail, as depicted in the provided renderings and elevation.

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Signage

Two exterior signs are proposed for the new retail tenant. The first script style sign is proposed above the new exterior door. The width of the sign will be confined to the width of the storefront bay and the height will be 36” and will consist of a metal “I Beam” element – to provide signage consistency with Shack Shake, another existing tenant on the first floor of the building – with script letter signage above spelling “Chick-fil-A”. The script lettering is to be internally illuminated (not color changing) as per the example shop drawing provided. The sign is to be mounted to the non-historic granite via a method determined with HDC, the signage vendor, and the AOR.

The second proposed sign is a small blade sign, 24” square in shape, featuring the Chick-fil-A logo. The sign will be centered on one of the pilasters between storefront bays and mounted to the non-historic granite via two bolted plates as shown in the submitted drawings. The sign will feature integrated LED lighting (not color changing).

Additional details regarding proposed signage dimensions are included and final shop drawings will be provided to HDC prior to signage installation for review and approval.

Conclusion

Please see attached documentation including existing condition photographs and architectural drawings and renderings. Do not hesitate to reach out with any questions as you review the application.

Sincerely,

Lillian Candela
Project Architect
Bedrock Management Services, LLC

