



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

L. Preston Bryant, Jr.
Secretary of Natural Resources

Department of Historic Resources
2801 Kensington Avenue, Richmond, Virginia 23221

Kathleen S. Kilpatrick
Director

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February 6, 2007

Theodore "Tad" Woods
PO Box 1210
Salem, VA 24153

Re: Vest Furniture Company, 109 Campbell Avenue, Roanoke
DHR # 2006-251

Dear Mr. Woods:

Thank you for submitting the State and Federal Historic Preservation Certification application, Part 2, "Description of Rehabilitation," for the above referenced property.

The proposed work is consistent with the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation* provided the following conditions are met:

- Carrara glass storefront must be retained. New storefront, front door, and signage design plans must be submitted to both the DHR and the NPS, via an amendment, for review and approval prior to commencement of work. Please see Preservation Briefs Number 11 & 12 "Rehabilitating Historic Storefronts" and "The Preservation of Historic Pigmented Structural Glass (Vitrolite and Carrara Glass)" (enclosed) for guidance. (Façade/Storefront: Number 1; Front Door: Number 3)
- Electric sign on façade must be retained, although wording/letters may be changed to reflect new business. (Façade, Upper Levels: Number 2)
- Plans and drawings for skylights and rooftop deck must be submitted to DHR and NPS for approval prior to commencement of work. Elevation drawing must demonstrate deck's visibility from street. (Roof: Number 6)
- Existing windows must be repaired rather than replaced. If windows are deteriorated beyond repair, that condition must be adequately documented. Replacement windows must match the appearance, size, design, proportions, and profiles of the existing

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windows. Comparable detailed drawings of both the existing and any proposed replacement windows should be reviewed and approved by DHR before proceeding with any window replacement. (Windows: Number 9)

- Terrazzo floors must be retained. Photographs showing the floor preserved in place must be submitted with the Request for Certification of Completed Work. (Interior woodwork: Number 12)
- Existing historic staircase from 2nd to 3rd floor must be retained in place and may not be moved. Photographs showing the staircase preserved in place must be submitted with the Request for Certification of Completed Work. (Staircases: Number 14)
- Only batt insulation is permitted to be installed in attic and ceilings. (Insulation: Number 19)
- Description of changes to floor plans for each floor must be submitted to DHR and the NPS, as the application takes precedence over the drawings in the review process. Of the floor plans submitted, our preference is for Option A, as it creates a more open floor plan that retains a sense of the original space

We look forward to receiving information that will satisfy the conditions stated above, which we will review upon receipt. All new work items or information should be sent to the Virginia Department of Historic Resources in the form of an amendment to the original application. Amendment/Continuation sheets may be downloaded from the National Park Service website at <http://www.cr.nps.gov/hps/tps/tax/hpcappl.htm> and should be submitted in duplicate.

We have forwarded your application to the National Park Service with our recommendation that the work be approved as conditioned. You will receive their response in a separate letter.

If you have any questions about the condition noted above or the tax incentive program in general, please feel free to contact me at (804) 367-2323, extension 135, or by e-mail: Karen.Brandt@dhr.virginia.gov.

Sincerely,



Karen L. Brandt
Architectural Historian
Office of Preservation Incentives

Tad Woods

From: Brandt, Karen (DHR) [karen.brandt@dhr.virginia.gov]
Sent: Wednesday, February 14, 2007 11:45 AM
To: tadwoods@gmail.com
Subject: RE: Vest Furniture (aka Bush Flora)

Tad,

I'm sorry if I wasn't clear enough in my previous emails. You may put a new floor on top of the one currently on the 3rd floor, and remove the asbestos tile. The wood underneath the tile should be repaired if possible, so that someone can come along later and remove the new floor from on top of the old if they so desire. The goal is that the new work should not be irreversible.

I will discuss the elevator with Elizabeth and the rest of the team and get back to you. Unfortunately, most of them are not in the office at the moment, but hopefully I will have an answer for you by tomorrow.

Karen Brandt

Architectural Historian
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From: Tad Woods [mailto:tadwoods@gmail.com]
Sent: Wednesday, February 14, 2007 11:28 AM
To: Brandt, Karen (DHR)
Subject: RE: Vest Furniture (aka Bush Flora)

Karen,

I will investigate what it will take to retain/restore the electric sign. I spent 2+ hours at the October open house and never saw any pink sheets?

I would like to talk with you and Elizabeth about the 3rd floor in more detail. It was clear to us after Elizabeth's visit that we could install a new floor on top of the 3rd floor, but if that is not correct I want to be clear about what we can do.

When I spoke with Elizabeth on the phone last week (you were out), I got the impression that we might be able to replace the elevator. Two elevator companies don't recommend it, and I cannot afford to spend the kind of money it will cost to restore. Originally the elevator companies quoted around \$20K but that was to bring the elevator up to required code in the existing building; with the re-use it will require much more. We need to discuss this in more detail. Can I not somehow put in a new residential elevator while keeping some historic elements of the old one?

-Tad

From: Brandt, Karen (DHR) [mailto:karen.brandt@dhr.virginia.gov]

2/15/2007

Sent: Wednesday, February 14, 2007 11:09 AM
To: tadwoods@gmail.com
Subject: RE: Vest Furniture (aka Bush Flora)

Tad,

Your plans for the third floor sound fine—the asbestos tile is not considered a significant feature even if it were installed during the period of significance. If the original wood floor is restored where possible, that work would fit within the guidelines.

As for the rear windows, you must submit documentation that they are irreparable in order for them to be replaced. You may convert one window on each floor to a door, if you keep the original window opening.

As for the elevator, it needs to be retained so it looks as it did originally. As I stated in the letter I wrote on your behalf to the City, the elevator is a very important character-defining feature. In order to approve any replacement, I would have to see plans detailing what would be preserved—the doors, grills, control panel, etc. It would be our preference that the elevator be retained entirely, and a new elevator installed elsewhere in the building, so long as the new elevator does not have a negative impact on any other historic structures or features.

As for the sign, I cannot comment on what was said to you in October—do you have this in writing? You should have been given a pink sheet at the Open House with the reviewer's recommendations.

Finally, please be aware that the approval for all these proposed changes is ultimately up to the reviewer at the National Park Service. I suggest waiting until you hear her comments on the proposed work as submitted before taking any other actions.

Regards,

Karen Brandt

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Virginia Department of Historic Resources
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For additional info see:
www.dhr.virginia.gov

From: Tad Woods [mailto:tadwoods@gmail.com]
Sent: Tuesday, February 13, 2007 10:33 AM
To: Brandt, Karen (DHR)
Cc: 'Peter Clapsaddle'; 'Michael Gray'
Subject: Vest Furniture (aka Bush Flora)

Karen,

Thank you for reviewing the Vest-Furniture (aka Bush-Flora) certification application. I received your letter and would like to discuss a few of the conditions. I appreciate your feedback and working with me. Let me know of a good time when we can discuss these over the phone with my architect.

Is the condition to leave the electronic sign a make-or-break issue for DHR? The sign is too extreme for the new

2/15/2007

use of the building (i.e. it's not a shoe store anymore!), not safe, and too expensive to rehabilitate. This issue is a shock and a serious one. I have said before that I would take it down, including at the October 2006 open house; taking it down was never an issue??

I recognize that the guidelines recommend preserving or repairing existing windows before replacing them. I went to great care to examine the condition of all windows and explain that in my application. There is no question that the front windows can be preserved or repaired. However the rear windows present two problems for repair: First, they are in badly deteriorated condition on the exterior. Second, because we are asking Roanoke City to allow the fire escape to count as the required second means of egress, we need at least one window per floor to become a "door." As I described in my application, the architects would create a "door" made to look compatible with the existing windows. There is precedence for this at the "Campbell Garage Lofts," just down the street, where a door was allowed to "replace" (inset) a window to access rear balconies.

I think we can make the remaining conditions work for the project, assuming the project works overall.

To continue addressing an earlier question about the 3rd floor, the builder, based on their experience with a similar historic restoration, is recommending that I NOT take down the tin ceiling above the 2nd floor. Instead they are recommending that insulation and utilities be installed from above. They assure me that this is a better preservation plan (vs. trying to take down and put back up fragile tin ceiling). Furthermore, the building is recommending that I not try to refinish the hardwood under the asbestos tile on the 3rd floor, which is entirely covered with glue. The asbestos tile has covered the floor since the historic period and the hardwood underneath appears rotted in several areas from water damage. The bulider will remove the asbestos tile, temporarily remove some of the existing hardwood to install utilities and insulation, preserve or replace the hardwood, then overlay sub-floor and a new hardwood overtop.

The elevator has become an issue. I have brought several companies on site to evaluate and estimate how they would restore it, which I have advocated up to this point. It looks like the elevator is not upgradeable in such a way that will make it safe and compatible with the new use. The best case scenario is that it will cost \$100,000 to restore, and we would still be left with an elevator that would be unapproved or have an irreplaceable part break rendering the "investment" worthless. The elevator companies are highly highly recommending that I replace the elevator with a hydraulic elevator. I believe that I could do that and retain some cosmetic components from the original elevator, such as the control lever and door frames.

-Tad

Tad Woods

From: Brandt, Karen (DHR) [karen.brandt@dhr.virginia.gov]
Sent: Thursday, February 15, 2007 11:52 AM
To: tadwoods@gmail.com
Subject: RE: Bush-Flora, 1st floor walls & timeline
Attachments: THE REAL MEANING OF THE 24.doc

Tad,

I have discussed some of the project issues with the team, and have some answers for you.

Elevator: you may replace the elevator IF you do not widen the current opening, or make any other visible changes to the elevator space. You must keep the grill, door, and the door surround. Your plan to keep the doors, jambs and sills, with a similar interior to the original is ok. **

Rear Windows: must be retained and repaired, although one on each floor may be converted to door if original window opening is kept.

Sign: if the cost of repairing the electric sign is prohibitive, you may remove it. **

Also, in response to your most recent email:

1st Floor Walls: walls should be replastered where there is currently plaster, but you may use drywall on areas below the "line" that are drywall. You may also plaster this area. Because the walls would have been finished in their original use, the brick cannot be left exposed.

Mold: If the remediation measures undertaken involve the removal or treatment of historic features or finishes, we must be informed prior to work. The expense involved in removing the mold will be considered an eligible expense for the tax credit, provided you document its necessity.

Timetable: You must meet the substantial rehabilitation test within two years; normally that is measured from when construction ends, counting backwards, rather than from the start-- forward. I've attached a document that explains it further.

**Please note that these replacements/removals must also be approved by the National Park Service reviewer.

I hope this helps,

Karen Brandt
Architectural Historian
VA Dept. of Historic Resources

From: Tad Woods [mailto:tadwoods@gmail.com]
Sent: Wednesday, February 14, 2007 9:16 PM
To: Brandt, Karen (DHR)

2/15/2007

Subject: Bush-Flora, 1st floor walls & timeline

Karen,

Thank you for all of your responses so far. Soon I will compile everything into an official amendment. I have a couple new questions.

At the time I wrote my DHR Part 2 application, the 1st floor walls were largely inaccessible. Now that things are cleared off the shelves and away from the walls, we see there is a "line" that spans both side of the 1st floor. At least below the line, instead of plaster, there is drywall or other types of wallboard in some sections. See attached photos of the west wall. What is recommended that we do with these walls? Plaster over? Or remove drywall and leave exposed brick?

Another issue that is becoming apparent is that the building has a mold problem. I thought it was isolated to the crawlspace but the initial environmental phase 1 and lead paint inspections, which wrapped up field work today, found surface mold on the 1st and 2nd floors, leading me to order a full mold inspection with air and surface samples. That analysis will be complete in about in two weeks. I am not sure whether or not this affects any historic issues.

If I am unable to finish this project, assuming someone else takes over and goes after tax credits, how is the timeline affected as far as DHR is concerned? Does the two year requirement start now (with Part 2), or when construction begins?

-Tad