

NEW HAVEN CITY PLAN COMMISSION ADVISORY REPORT

RE: 786 CHAPEL STREET, Authorization for Sign over City Sidewalk (Wireless Wizard).
REPORT: 1437-26
ADVICE: Denial of Submitted Design

BACKGROUND

In behalf of Wireless Wizard, Barbara Diaz has petitioned the Board of Aldermen to install a sign which encroaches over the public right of way. The sign is proposed to be a banner type sign hung between top and bottom bars extending out from the façade of the building at 786 Chapel Street in the block between Orange and Chapel Streets. The banner sign is large (4' wide x 8' in height) and is proposed to hang at least 12' to 15' above the sidewalk projecting 4'-3" over the public right of way. The sign, stated to be double-sided heavy duty vinyl with printed graphic, will be hung from a black aluminum mounting system. No specifications for installation were submitted. Total signage proposed for the building frontage is approximately 40 square feet.

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

The Board of Aldermen controls encroachments on the public right-of-way under the general authority of Section 49 of the Charter and Section 9-2 of the Code or Ordinances. The Commission advises the Board in considering proposals for appurtenances over City sidewalks, and looks at suitability of design, scale, durability of product and its supports, quality of construction materials, and height above the sidewalk in the light of potential vandalism. In cases where the location is within a Historic District or the building is historic in nature, the Commission looks further at whether the appurtenance is complimentary to the architecture of the building. #786 Chapel Street is a contributing building within the Ninth Square National Register Historic District, and its owner has applied for Façade Grant funding from the City.

The Commission believes the sign is overly large for the historic area, and raises safety concerns because of size, materials and concerns about attachment to the structure. The excessive size of 32 square feet is inappropriate for this historic neighborhood, the oldest remaining commercial district in the City. No information has been provided as to whether a soft vinyl sign of such size will withstand subject wind loads or how the mounting brackets will be anchored into the building façade.

ADVICE

The City Plan Commission therefore recommends that the Board of Aldermen deny the proposed sign as submitted.

ADOPTED: February 17, 2010
Edward Mattison
Chair

ATTEST: 
Karyn M. Gilvarg, AIA
Executive Director