



## DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENT SERVICES – PLANNING DIVISION

REPORT: 597 Farmington Avenue Hartford, CT

For consideration: September 15, 2021

### STAFF REPORT

**TO:** HARTFORD PRESERVATION COMMISSION  
**FROM:** Aaron Borngraber, Senior Planner  
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**PROJECT:** 597 Farmington Avenue  
COMM-2021-0469  
PARCEL ID: 111-375-081

**ZONE:** MX-1 **HISTORIC DISTRICT:** Westend South

**TYPE:** ARTICLE XII HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION  
Sec. 28-170 through 28-221

**APPLICANT:** Sign Pro Inc.

**OWNER:** 597 Farmington Avenue LLC



Figure 1. Location Map

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

The office building at 597 Farmington Avenue was built in 1894 in the Queen Anne/Colonial Revival style.

**Proposed Project:** The proposed project includes refacing an existing monument and wall sign.

**LEGAL STANDARD**

The Commission reviews and acts upon all applications for Document of Suitability. No person or entity may, without first applying and obtaining the approval of the Commission, file an application for a demolition permit, or for a building permit for any protected property as designated in the Historic Preservation Ordinance Sec. 28-219.

**STANDARD SPECIFIC TO THE USE**

The commission shall adopt the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and the Hartford Guidelines for Renovations and Additions to Historic Buildings.

According to Standards 9 and 10 of the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation (SOIS), which states, *“New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work will be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.”* Standard 10 states, *“New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be undertaken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.”*

According to page 38- *“Storefronts”* of the adopted ***Guidelines for Renovations and Additions to Historic Buildings***; *“When planning a storefront renovation, remember that the storefront is a part of a larger structure and its design should relate to the building’s overall character, the nature of the business and the identity of the owner. This can be accomplished by the introduction of small elements such as signs, awnings and window boxes.”*

**FINDING OF FACTS**

<b>CURRENT USE:</b>	Office	<b>PROPOSED USE:</b>	Office
<b>YEAR BUILT:</b>	1894	<b>STYLE:</b>	Queen Anne/Colonial Revival

**Particular Mention in historic nomination:** *“(1894, Albert W. Scoville) 2-story, Queen Anne/Colonial Revival, brick and frame house with pavilion and hipped slate roof, cross gables. Tan glazed brick on first floor, wood shingles above. Corner tower. Front Porch, partially enclosed, has clustered Ionic columns and molded cornice.”*

**Current Conditions:** The building appears to be in good to excellent condition.

**Condition of other properties in neighborhood:** Other properties in the neighborhood are in fair to excellent condition. The surrounding properties are mix of office and residential uses. The office uses have primarily monument signs.

**COMMENTS RECEIVED** (None received as of September 7, 2021)

## ANALYSIS

The applicant has indicated that the monument signage, which could have been approved at an administrative level is aluminum, a material allowed by the Zoning Regulations. The “wall sign” is a direct print with laminate. The signage has already been installed by the applicant. Development Services has no record for the “wall sign” on the structure. In Figure 3, Google Streetview from October 2020 shows no signage on the partially enclosed porch. The installation of this sign is not architecturally consistent with the physical nature of the structure. Other structures in the immediate area that share a similar physical nature and similar uses do not have a wall sign.



Figure 2. 597 Farmington Avenue – Staff Photo – August 6, 2021



Figure 3. 597 Farmington Avenue – Google Street View October 2020

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends **approval** of the refacing of the existing monument sign and **denial** of the wall sign. Given the recommendation two separate resolutions are attached.

**Draft resolutions follows.**

**ATTACHMENTS**

1. Application Form(s)
2. Plans and Photos of the signage submitted August 10, 2021.

**REVIEWED,**

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Paul Bengtson, Principal Planner



**CITY OF HARTFORD  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION RESOLUTION  
597 FARMINGTON AVENUE  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION PROPOSAL**

**Whereas,** The City of Hartford Historic Preservation Commission reviewed the proposal to reface an existing monument sign and install a wall sign; and

**Whereas,** The structure is located within the Westend South National Historic District; and

**Whereas,** The structure is currently an office use in a Queen Anne/Colonial Revival style built 1894; and

**Whereas,** The proposed work of refacing the monument sign is consistent with the historic character of the building; and

**Whereas,** The proposed work of refacing the monument sign is consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and City's Historic Design Principals;

Now therefore Be It

**Resolved,** The City of Hartford Historic Preservation Commission hereby approves the refacing of the monument sign.

Be It Further,

**Resolved,** This 15th day of September 2021.



**CITY OF HARTFORD  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION RESOLUTION  
597 FARMINGTON AVENUE  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION PROPOSAL**

**Whereas,** The City of Hartford Historic Preservation Commission reviewed the proposal to reface an existing monument sign and wall sign; and

**Whereas,** The structure is located within the Westend South National Historic District; and

**Whereas,** The structure is currently an office use in a Queen Anne/Colonial Revival style built 1894; and

**Whereas,** The proposed work of refacing the wall sign, a sign with no previous approval is not consistent with the historic character of the building; and

**Whereas,** The proposed work of refacing the wall sign, a sign with no previous approval is not consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and City's Historic Design Principals;

Now therefore Be It

**Resolved,** The City of Hartford Historic Preservation Commission hereby denies the proposed refacing of the wall sign, a sign with no previous approval.

Be It Further,

**Resolved,** This 15th day of September 2021.