

**ATHENS-CLARKE COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
STAFF REPORT**

APPLICATION NUMBER..... COA-2025-12-2463

DATE..... January 21, 2026

PETITIONER..... Sean Lee with Vision Printing & Signs

REQUEST..... New Wall Signage

LOCATION..... 202 College Avenue

PROPERTY INFORMATION.....Tax Parcel # 171B5 C005, Downtown, C-D

RECOMMENDATION..... Denial

REQUEST

Approval is sought for the placement of an internally lit wall sign.

BACKGROUND

Parcel Status: The property is considered a contributing resource to the Downtown Historic District. This means that changes are reviewed for their impact on the district as well as with concern for historic character on the subject property.

Parcel History: Previous Certificate of Appropriateness applications on file for this location include a 2017 staff level approval for a rooftop antenna, staff level signage approvals in 2010 and 2012, one 2020 and two 2019 staff level approvals for in-kind window replacement, and a minor HPC level rooftop antenna reconfiguration. Sanborn Maps indicate the existing building was under construction in 1908 to replace an earlier Southern Mutual Insurance Building located at the corner.

Lot Features: The subject property is located on the southern side of E. Clayton Street, between N. Lumpkin Street and College Avenue. The parcel has around 39’ of lot width and about 108 feet of lot depth. There is no topography change on the property.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Approval is sought for the placement of a wall sign above the main door entrance. It would cover a large section of the transom window above the door where an awning previously existed.

The proposed sign is 5’ x 13’ for a total square footage of 65. It is a panel sign shaped like the Parthenon that will be lit internally to light the business name, “ATHENA BAR & LOUNGE” written out in white lettering.

RECOMMENDATION

Review of this application would follow the Downtown set of Design Guidelines, specifically Chapter 8 regarding Sign Design Guidelines.

	Met?	Comments
8.1 Signs should be subordinate	No	Signs should not obscure architectural details or features – this sign covers most of a transom window.

8.11 Indirect lighting to be used	No	Lighting directed at signage is preferred. This proposal is for an internally lit message.
8.12 Internal illumination to be subordinate to building	Yes	The sign itself does not overwhelm the building and remains subordinate to the building, especially without much of the historic character of the building remaining. The internally lit portion is also not the entire sign panel.

While the internal illumination is only for the message of the sign, the placement of the sign conflicts with the Design Guidelines. Covering the transom window with the signage would be against guidelines. Because of these reasons, staff recommends that the project be **denied**.

This recommendation is made to address the design guidelines noted above, as well as Section 8-5-5 D (1) of the Athens-Clarke County Historic Preservation Ordinance regarding Acceptable Historic Preservation Commission Reaction to an Application for Certificate of Appropriateness.

REPORT FOR:	202 College Avenue	
In evaluating the attached report, the following standards, which are checked, were considered in making a recommendation. Items that are not applicable are marked as such. More detailed descriptions of each item are included in the attached report.		
REVIEWED	NOT APPLICABLE	
X		1. HISTORIC USES OF PROPERTY
X		2. NECESSITY OF PROPOSED CHANGES
X		3. INTEGRITY OF HISTORIC RESOURCE
		4. THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE CHANGE WILL AFFECT:
X		A. INTEGRITY OF THE BUILDING
X		B. INTEGRITY OF THE AREA
X		5. ORIGINAL AND CURRENT USES

202 College Ave Review Worksheet

	Met?	Comments
8.1 Signs should be subordinate		
8.11 Indirect lighting to be used		
8.12 Internal illumination to be subordinate to the building		