

**COMMISSION OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW
STAFF REPORT
October 28, 2014 Meeting**

6. **CAR No. 14-107** (Many Lives LLC) **310 N. 33rd Street**
Chimborazo Park Old and Historic District

Project Description: **Install frame for banner sign**

Staff Contact: **W. Palmquist**

The applicant requests approval to install a framed banner sign affixed to the exterior of this building in the Chimborazo Park Old and Historic District. The sign is already installed, and the applicant wishes to keep the sign in place. The sign is 10' by 3' with a 5" frame. The sign is printed on cloth and the frame is made of aluminum alloy stainless steel. The sign and frame are located on the east façade of the building, near the northeast corner. It is mounted between the 1st floor window's upper sill and the 2nd floor window's lower sill. There are a number of other signs located on the property. The first is a monument-style sign advertising for Lava Lofts, which is supported by wooden stakes and located near the sidewalk on the east side of the property, near the building's main entrance. The second is a projecting wall sign for Urban Farmhouse located near that entrance on the building's north façade. The third is a banner sign advertising for Urban Farmhouse on the building's west façade, between the 1st and 2nd floors.

Staff recommends denial of the project. The *Richmond Old and Historic Districts Handbook and Design Review Guidelines* states that, "Banner signs can provide welcome color accents to a retail district. They should only be used on a temporary basis, and their design and placement should be carefully reviewed. Individual banner signs are: limited to one per storefront, considered to be part of an individual business' maximum allowable signage, and cannot exceed eight (8) square feet in size" (p. 65).

The language in the *Guidelines* pertaining to banner signage suggests that such signage is more appropriate in retail commercial corridors, and not in a mostly residential neighborhood. The *Guidelines* note that they should only be used on a temporary basis, and the proposed framed signage suggests a level of permanence that would be in conflict with this *Guidelines*. Furthermore, the *Guidelines* note that such banners cannot exceed 8 sq. ft., whereas the proposed banner sign is 30 sq. ft. in total area.

It is the assessment of staff that the application is not consistent with the Standards for Signage outlined in Section 114-930.7(f) of the City Code, nor with the *Richmond Old and Historic Districts Handbook and Design Review Guidelines*, specifically the page cited above, adopted by the Commission for review of Certificates of Appropriateness under the same section of the code.