

PROPOSAL:

Tony Persons of Nebraska Sign Co. requests a certificate of appropriateness for work at 701 P Street, the Creamery Building, in the Haymarket Landmark District.

DISCUSSION:

The Creamery Building was constructed in two campaigns, 1900 and 1904, to house the Beatrice Creamery Company.



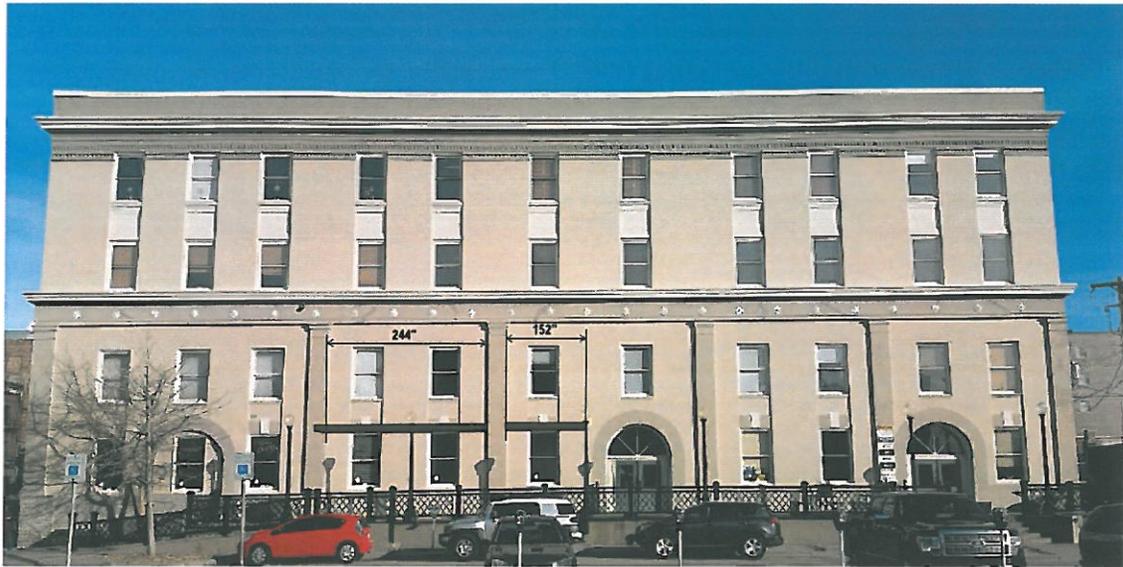
701 P Street, circa 1900



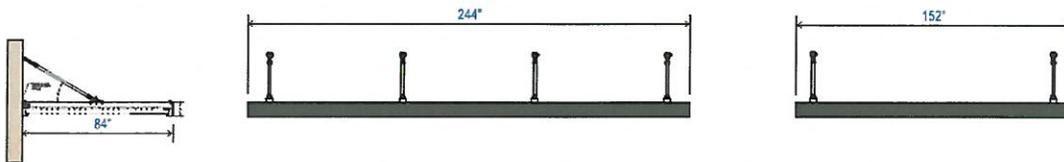
701 P Street, 1905

The principal façade of the building faces north towards the intersection of 7th & P Streets and the “forecourt” of Lincoln Station formed by 7th Street between P and Q Streets. The west side of the Creamery was a loading area facing the tracks, but was also treated architecturally as a major façade. A concrete dock provides pedestrian access across the west façade at the first floor level.

Last month the Commission approved insertion of a serving window into the lower sash of an existing window opening on the west façade, for the Indigo Bridge, a bookstore and coffee house that is expanding its menu in collaboration with Pepe’s Bistro.

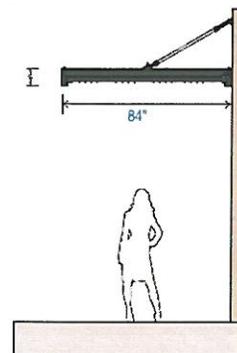


As a related improvement, the building management requests approval to install a system of two “Mapes” canopies over three of the west windows, north of the central doorway on the west side, to create a partially sheltered seating area on a portion of the dock.



The canopies would extend 7 feet out from the building. The north canopy would measure just over 20 feet long, the south one about 13 feet.

The height of the canopy over the surface of the dock is not dimensioned on the proposal but appears to be between 10 and 11 feet.



The west façade of the former Beatrice Creamery Building has a well-designed and well-finished appearance, but is not strictly symmetrical, presumably reflecting requirements of its original functions. The west side provided rail access to the building and three large, arched doorways are provided, positioned north, south, and not-quite middle. The eleven bays of the façade are grouped in pairs, except at the north where three windows are grouped together. Pilasters separate the groups of windows and frame the ends of the lower two floors, partially concealing that the widths of the grouped bays are uneven.

The relevance of this review of the building's design is that the proposed canopies are also asymmetrically placed and varied in length. On a strictly symmetrical façade, this might be a discordant note. On this façade, it does not seem to be a fatal defect. However, two details of the current proposal might be adjusted to better align with features of the façade.

- The vertical placement of the canopies just above the tops of the windows cuts across the decorative brickwork "jack arches" atop each window. Moving the canopies up to a point between the tops of those arches and the sills of the second floor windows would be more sensitive to the building features and would make the full arch visible from the seating area.
- Second, there are just two diagonal rods supporting the 152" of the south canopy while four are used on the 244" of the north canopy. If three rods were used on the north, the spans would still be less than on the south, one of the attachments to the masonry could be avoided, and the spacing of rods on the two canopies would be more similar.

A bronze-colored finish is proposed. The canopies are designed with drains on the front (west) for rain and snow. The building manager indicates that the seating area would be available to the general public, including Indigo Bridge and Ivana Cone customers.

A similar Mapes canopy is illustrated at right. Nebraska Sign Co. would install the canopy, while Mapes is the manufacturer.



With a few adjustments to minimize penetrations of the building and align the canopies with building features, it appears to be a modest adjustment to a strong façade, warranting a certificate of appropriateness.

