



Town of Fort Myers Beach

Memorandum

To: Local Planning Agency
From: Leslee Chapman, Zoning Coordinator
CC: Walter Fluegel, Community Development Director
Date: October 3, 2012
Re: HDD2012-0001, The Big M roof sign

As directed by the LPA at the August 14th hearing, the applicant for the Moss Marine sign variance (VAR2011-0007) applied for designation for a Historically Significant Sign per LDC Section 30-57 for the roof sign on one of their storage barns. That request and justification will be heard under case number HDD2012-0001.

However, upon review of the request (see attached), Staff has determined that there is not sufficient information provided for Staff to evaluate the historic merits of the roof sign. Staff must review the request based on the provisions found here:

Sec. 30-57. Designation of Historically Significant Signs. Any existing sign may be nominated for designation as historically significant as provided herein.

(a) Nomination of a sign for designation as historically significant shall be made on an application provided by the director. The application should document the historical background of the sign.

(b) The historic preservation board will hold a public hearing on the nomination and will use the historic preservation element of the town's comprehensive plan as a guideline to consider the nomination. The following criteria will be considered where applicable:

- (1) Whether the sign is associated with historic person(s), event(s), or location(s);
- (2) Whether the sign provides significant evidence of the history of the product, business or service represented;
- (3) Whether the sign is characteristic of a specific historic period;
- (4) Whether the sign is an outstanding example of the art of sign-making, through its craftsmanship, use of materials, and/or design; and
- (5) Whether the sign is a local landmark that is popularly recognized as a focal point in the community.

(c) The historic preservation board will, after hearing public comment, vote to recommend that the Town Council either approve or deny historically significant status to the nominated sign.

(d) Following the historic preservation board public hearing, the Town Council will hold a public hearing to consider the nomination. In order to approve the designation of a sign as historically significant, the Town Council must find that the sign meets one or more of the criteria in § 30-57(b) and is consistent with the Town comprehensive plan historic preservation element.

(e) A sign that has been designated historically significant may remain as a legal non-conforming sign notwithstanding the provisions of §30-56 (non-conforming signs). If a sign that has been designated as historically significant is damaged or destroyed, it may be reconstructed, but such reconstruction must duplicate in all respects the sign that was damaged or destroyed.

The applicant's request is probably best considered under the provision of 30-57(b)(5) and possibly (b)(2) if there is enough evidence to support it. Specifically, Staff is looking for more confirmation as to the historic nature of the roof sign, particularly if there is photographic evidence of the sign dating back to the late 1960s.

Staff is requesting that LPA continue the application request to allow the applicant time to conduct further research on the historic nature of the roof sign. Staff recommends at continuance to the December 11, 2012 LPA meeting with materials due to Staff by November 13, 2012.



Town of Fort Myers Beach
2523 Estero Blvd
Fort Myers Beach Fl

Re : Moss Marine "Big M" Roof Sign Designation of Historically Significant sign
Strap # 24-46-23-W3-00027.0000

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To Whom it May Concern,

Please accept this letter as our formal request to have the roof sign on our a/b barn deemed historical significant to the Town of Fort Myers Beach. We believe that the roof sign qualifies for this historic designation under the provisions found in Chapter 30, Section 30-57(b)2 of the Town's Land Development Code.

Attached is an informational history of the property, which should help determine if we qualify for such determination.

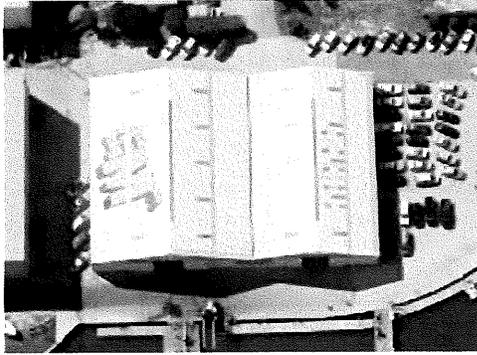
Sincerely yours,

Emily McDaniel

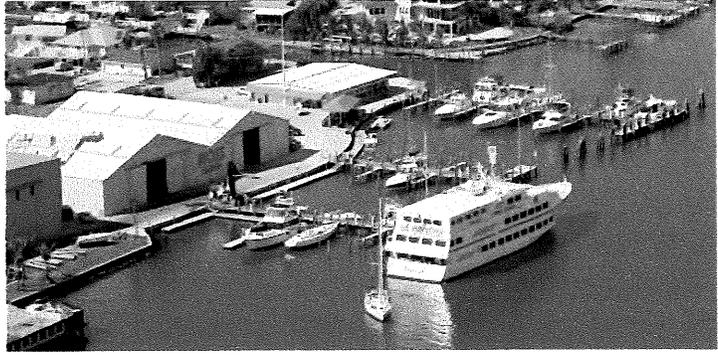
Emily McDaniel

For George Freeland and Moss Marine

Moss Marine aka “The Big M”



Direct overhead view



View from the Mantanzas pass bridge

The Original “Moss Marina” was started by the Moss Family in 1969. The original Moss Marina owners, John P & Betty B Moss, husband & wife, purchased the original property on December 22, 1966 from Arrow Structures, Inc., followed by the purchase of an additional adjoining parcel in January 11, 1967. They filed a notice of commencement to construct a storage marina, a sales office and docks on March 25, 1968 and so became “MOSS MARINA”. The Moss Family had the original “Big M” painted on the roof of the storage barns shortly after construction because it is what the locals nick named the marina based on the “big M” shape of the storage barns. It has remained the nick name of Moss Marine ever since and the “Big M” on the roof has been repainted a time or two, but remains the original format the Moss Family put place in the late 60’s

The property has changed hands a few times since its origin; the sale from the Moss Family to Texar Enterprises on November 3, 1977, the sale from Texar Enterprises to Carl G Dubois on December 28, 1978, the sale from Carl Dubois to current owner George Freeland on January 31st 1983. All the while, keeping the original Moss Marina name, the “big M” nickname & Company Logo.

There are not many people who grew up here, or have even visited here in the last 40+ years that don’t recognize the “big M” on the roof of our barns when you head onto the beautiful Fort Myers Beach.

So you can see why we consider the roof top sign to be quite iconic to the Fort Myers Beach area and a landmark to those who live here and have been coming to Fort Myers Beach since the late 60’s.

Thank you for considering our application for historic preservation.