



The City of Seattle

Landmarks Preservation Board

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LPB 349/07

MINUTES

Landmarks Preservation Board Meeting
Seattle Municipal Tower
700 5th Avenue, 40th Floor
Room 4060
Wednesday, October 3, 2007– 3:30 p.m.

Board Members Present

Vernon Abelsen
Molly Tremaine
Stephen Lee
Tom Veith
Christine Howard
Henry Matthews
Czarina Nicholas
John Schwartz

Staff

Sarah Sodt
Joanne Walby

Absent

Ron Martinson
Mark Hannum
Alyce Conti

Stephen Lee, Chair, called the meeting to order at 3:35 pm.

100307.1 APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Meeting of September 5, 2007

Mr. Veith made some corrections to the minutes.

Moved to adopt the minutes, as corrected.

MM/SC/MT/TV 3:0:3 Minutes adopted. Ms. Nicholas and Messrs.
Matthews and Abelsen abstained.

100307.2 CERTIFICATES OF APPROVAL

100307.21 Bon Marche/Macy's
Pine Street

Administered by The Historic Preservation Program
The Seattle Department of Neighborhoods

"Printed on Recycled Paper"

Application: Proposed loading gate design

Applicant Comment: Don Miles, architect with ZGF Architects presented drawings and photographs of the existing gate. He said the original 1925 gate was eventually removed to allow larger trucks to access the bays. He said they propose a new gate, with a steel tubing frame and 1” wire mesh in frames fastened to the main gate frame. He said that a barrel-hinge will allow the gate to swing in and out. He said the color would be a dark bronze and would pick up on the color of the granite base course of the building and vertical expression of the windows and horizontal expression of the awning.

Ms. Sordt said this was reviewed by ARC and found to be an acceptable and elegant solution.

Public Comment: There was no public comment.

Board Discussion: The Board agreed it was a good proposal.

Action:

I move that the Seattle Landmarks Preservation Board approve the application for the proposed design of the new loading gates.

This action is based on the following:

1. The proposed changes do not adversely affect the features or characteristics specified in Ordinance # 114772 as the proposed work does not destroy historic materials that characterize the property, and is compatible with the massing, size and scale and architectural features of the landmark, as per Standard #9 of the Secretary of Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation.
2. The other factors in SMC 25.12.750 are not applicable to this application.

MM/SC/VA/TV 6:0:0 Motion carried.

Christine Howard and John Shwartz arrived at 3:40pm

100307.22 El Rio/Julie Apartments
1922 Ninth Avenue

Application: Proposed storefront alteration: replacement of non-historic double doors with a single entry door and sidelights to match the two existing historic storefront entries on the same elevation.

Applicant Comment: John Gascon of LIHI said that they had originally received approval to replace the existing non-original entry door with a double

door, but have since discovered that the storefront historically had a single entry door

He said they would match the casework with two other entries and add new dark blue tiles at the two side lights that would also match with original tile that exists on the other storefronts.

Ms. Sodt confirmed that a double door replacement had previously been approved, but now the application has changed to a single door.

Board Questions:

Mr. Matthews asked if the blue tiles were original. Mr. Gascon said yes, He explained that their original color was dark blue, but had faded with time.

Public Comment: There was no public comment.

Board Discussion: Mr. Veith noted that any storefront system changes should reference the original storefront, as this one does. He said he supports the application. Other Board members agreed.

Action:

I move that the Seattle Landmarks Preservation Board approve the application for the proposed storefront alterations.

This action is based on the following:

1. The proposed changes do not adversely affect the features or characteristics specified in Ordinance # 121219 as the proposed work does not destroy historic materials that characterize the property, and is compatible with the massing, size and scale and architectural features of the landmark, as per Standard #9 of the Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.
2. The other factors in SMC 25.12.750 are not applicable to this application.

MM/SC/MT/CH 8:0:0 Motion carried.

100307.3 NOMINATIONS

100307.31 NCR Building
1923-1927 Fifth Avenue

Staff Report: Sarah Sodt, Downtown Landmarks Board Coordinator, recommended the nomination of the NCR Building at 1923-1927 Fifth Avenue based on the following designation standards:

D. It embodies the distinctive visible characteristics of an architectural style, period, or of a method of construction.

Staff recommends that the features and characteristics proposed for preservation include the exterior of the building.

Applicant Comment: Amy Kosterlitz, attorney representing the owner, Multicapital. She introduced Alec Carlin, the owner's representative.

Alec Carlin asked the Board not to nominate the property. He said he has a background in architect and has been a Seattle resident for 25 years and appreciates the importance of preserving old buildings. He said the owners bought this building from the Monorail Authority and hired Larry Johnson to determine whether it meets the landmark criteria. He said he agrees with Mr. Johnson's findings that it does not meet the landmark criteria. He noted that their development plans include the entire block and since this building is so small and located mid-block it would be difficult to integrate it into a full-block design. He said it would be unfortunate to landmark this building simply for its terra cotta façade.

Larry Johnson, architectural historian, presented the nomination report. He said the National Cash Register Building is located on Fifth Avenue near the Times Square Building, on a block dominated by the Westin Towers. He said the east façade is detailed with polychrome terra cotta and a marble base. He said the main entrance retains its integrity, except for the upper transom windows that have been changed out.

He said he doesn't believe it meets criteria A nor B, but may meet criterion C because of its indirect association with the development of the Denny Regrade area. He said the Colony Club, a jazz club formerly located on the second floor, was mentioned in the city inventory. Mr. Johnson said this building may meet criterion D because it is a good example of mid-1920's low-rise, commercial building featuring terra cotta cladding with vaguely Renaissance Revival detailing. He said the level of craftsmanship is typical of its time and the original storefront and glazing remain, with the exception of the transom window and doorway that had been replaced. He said there are better examples of buildings with terra cotta facades nearby, such as the Mann, Bergman Luggage, Doyle and Centennial buildings. Regarding criterion E, Mr. Johnson said the architect, John E. Creutzer, also designed the El Rio Apartments and the Medical Dental building. He showed slides of drawings of buildings that were never built, such as the Swedish Tabernacle and the Swedish All Saints Church. Mr. Johnson said he does not think this building meets criterion F since it is located mid-block and the surrounding views are dominated by the Monorail. Mr. Johnson said in his opinion it may just minimally qualify under criterion D.

Amy Kosterlitz summarized by saying she does not believe this building meets the threshold criteria. She said it is simply a minor example of a commercial building with an indirect association with the development of the Denny Regrade. She noted that during the Monorail Project a Section 106 review was done and this building was found not to meet the National Register criteria. She also said that criterion C has the double significance requirement but she said she does not believe this building meets this requirement since it was built as a speculation and has had many uses over the years. Further, she said she does not believe it qualifies for criterion D because the cladding is not distinctive and the building itself has not been preserved well, noting its loss of the upper transoms on the storefront and the replaced doorway. She said she does not consider it to be a prominent building and therefore does not meet criterion F.

Board Questions:

Mr. Veith noted that the rear elevation had been modified a lot. Mr. Johnson agreed and said there is also nothing significant left of the original interiors.

Ms. Nicholas asked about the design on the terra cotta. Mr. Johnson described it as a diapering effect.

Public Comment:

Art Skolnik said he opposes this nomination on principle because it does not have the owner's support. He said he respectfully requests that the Board not act on it because there is no administrative appeal for the designation process and therefore he considers this process to be unconstitutional.

Board Discussion:

Mr. Hannum said he would support the nomination because he believes it meets the threshold criteria and the marble cladding on the storefront is original.

Ms. Howard agreed that it meets both the threshold and criterion D.

Mr. Schwartz said he was not convinced this building meets threshold criteria. He said although the marble is original, he said a landmarked building should have an architectural design that is well executed and he said he wasn't sure the use of marble creates a cohesive design.

Ms. Nicholas said she was intrigued in the terra cotta, but was undecided and wanted to hear the other Board members' opinions.

Ms. Tremaine said the terra cotta banding is interesting and this is a good example of the classical Renaissance Revival style but she said the building is

less significant in her opinion than the 8th and Lenora building that the Board did not designate last year.

Mr. Abelsen said he was leaning towards supporting the nomination because it contributes to the light-industrial area and has architectural integrity. He noted that the marble is common on buildings of this era, but that its mid-block location hinders its ability to meet Criterion F.

Mr. Veith said the terra cotta is nicely worked around the detailing and still has the original windows.

Mr. Matthew pointed out that the Board has a duty to protect the terra cotta heritage of Seattle, but he agreed with other Board members who doubted that this building meets the threshold criteria.

Mr. Lee stated that he believed this building did not convey its significance and he did not support the nomination.

Action:

“I move that the Board not approve the nomination of the Old IBM Building at 1929-1933 Fifth Avenue as a Seattle Landmark, as it does not have the integrity or ability to convey its significance, as required by SMC 25.12.350.”

MM/SC/JS/MT 7:2:0 Motion carried. Messrs. Hannum and Abelsen opposed.

100307.32 Old IBM Building
1929-1933 Fifth Avenue

Staff Report: Staff does not recommend the nomination of the Old IBM Building as it does not have the integrity or ability to convey its significance, as required by SMC 25.12.350.

Applicant Comment: Larry Johnson, architectural historian said the Old IBM Building used to house the Atlas Necktie Company but is now home to the Icon Grill. He said there have been many alterations to this building: the cornice, storefront windows and doors have been replaced, the back entrance inserted and the marquis added more recently. He said much of the interiors have been replaced and a finial was lost sometime before a 1953 photograph was taken. He said it was probably lost in the 1948 earthquake.

Mr. Johnson reviewed the landmark criteria and said it only minimally met criterion C because of its association with the Denny Regrade development. He said regarding criterion D, this building is a “fair” example of a commercial store/loft built in the 1920s. He said this building has lost much of its integrity, citing the replaced storefront fenestration and cornice and the

missing finial. In addition, he said the building had also been painted and there were major floor plan alterations in the interior. He showed slides photographs of other commercial/loft style buildings in the surrounding neighborhood: 2003 4th Ave, 2005 5th Ave, 2041 3rd Ave and 2004 Westlake Ave. He said the Old IBM building was designed by the architecture firm Schack, Young and Myers as a speculation building for investment. This firm also designed Hansey Hall dormitory on the University of Washington campus, the First United Methodist Church in downtown Seattle and much of the town of Longview in southwest Washington. Regarding criterion F, he said this building's corner location gives it some prominence, but is also obscured by the Monorail.

Ms. Kosterlitz said she does not believe this building meets landmark criteria because its integrity has been lost.

Board Questions: There were no questions.

Public Comment:

Art Skolnik said he opposes this nomination on principle because it does not have the owner's support. He said he respectfully requests that the Board not act on it because there is no administrative appeal for the designation process and he considers the process to be unconstitutional.

Eric Midley said this building is recognizable on 5th Avenue and has original architecture, but it has developed "iconic status" and he believes the alterations over the years are significant in and of themselves.

Board Discussion:

Mr. Matthews noted that had this building retained its integrity it may have influenced the nomination of the NCR building. However, he said the architectural quality is not sufficient and he opposes the nomination.

Mr. Veith agreed that it did not rise to the level of landmark status because it has lost its integrity and some architectural features have been removed.

Mr. Abelsen said this building has lost its integrity and does not meet the landmark criteria.

Ms. Tremaine agreed, stating that in her opinion this one did not reach the level of landmark status.

Mr. Schwartz said he does not believe it meets the threshold criteria and would not support the nomination. Ms. Howard, Mssrs. Hannum and Lee agreed.

Action:

“I move that the Board not approve the nomination of the Old IBM Building at 1929-1933 Fifth Avenue as a Seattle Landmark, as it does not have the integrity or ability to convey its significance, as required by SMC 25.12.350.”

MM/SC/TV/VA 9:0:0 Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 4:45 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah Sodt, Landmarks Preservation Board Coordinator