



The City of Seattle

Pioneer Square Preservation Board

Mailing Address: PO Box 94649 Seattle WA 98124-4649
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MINUTES OF MEETING

PSB 148/08

DATE: June 18, 2008
PLACE: City Hall, Room L280
TIME: 9:00 a.m.

Board Members Present:

Staff:

Doug Ito
Ann Brown
Adam Hasson
Catherine Person
David Strauss

Genna Nashem
Melinda Bloom

Absent:

Ryan Hester
Lorne McConachie
John DeLanoy

061808.1 APPROVAL OF MINUTES: June 4, 2008

MM/SC/DS/AH Minutes approved. Ms. Brown abstained.

061808.2 APPLICATIONS FOR CERTIFICATES OF APPROVAL

061808.21 **Imperial Parking** Ed Danyluk
112 Occidental Ave S

Applicant did not show up.

061808.22 **Butler Building** Steve Zamberlin
114 James St

Application tabled at the request of the applicant.

061808.23 **Fire Festival Banners** Ryan Romaneski

Genna Nashem explained the application is for installation of banners on various light poles for the Fire Festival and introduced Ryan Romaneski, Director, Pioneer

Administered by The Historic Preservation Program
The Seattle Department of Neighborhoods

"Printed on Recycled Paper"

Square Community Association and Sara Jane Bellanca, chair of the Fire Festival Committee.

Mr. Ito reported that ARC reviewed the application materials and recommended approval; they requested an updated text for banner which has been provided. They asked whether or not further light poles could get banners; it was explained that next season or the season after it would expand. They talked about approving the banners for three years rather than just one; they would have to come back if they changed anything in their signage and/or if they were adding more poles. ARC recommended approval.

Ryan Romaneski echoed Mr. Ito's comments and said this was an opportunity to take the community identification banners down, clean and repair them. This year their hope is the banners will go up next week; in the future they would go up no more than 30 days prior to putting the banners up and the banners will be removed 5 days after the festival.

Mr. Ito recommended applicant notify Pioneer Square Preservation Board Coordinator, Genna Nashem when the banners are going up each year.

Ms. Bellanca said the festival is the same general time each year; the exact dates would vary; it depends on which day the 4th falls and when they can get the combat challenge but basically they are slotted in at approximately the same time every year. She added that banner sales are going briskly this year.

Board Questions:

Ms. Person asked what the Fire Festival is.

Mr. Romaneski said the event started 30 years ago as a celebration of the neighborhood that developed after the 1889 fire. The festival lapsed after 2001 earthquake. It was revived in 2006 with more community association and fire fighter involvement.

Sara Jane Bellanca said it is to celebrate the rebirth of Seattle after the great fire and because the first fire station in the city was here. It is a family oriented event which is very good for Pioneer Square.

Mr. Romaneski said the banners will have a sponsor name and will be printed front and back.

Ms. Bellanca said the festival is a two day festival this year.

Action: I move to approve a Certificate of Approval for banners for the next three years. The banners will be hung no more than 30 days before the Fire festival and will be removed within 5 days after the festival. The date and sponsors will change each year but the remaining banner and overall design will stay the same. If any other changes are made to the banner an application for a revised design will be submitted. Per Code Citations:

SMC 23.66.160 B, C and D.b.

MM/SC/DS/CP 4:0:1 Motion approved. Mr. Hasson recused himself.

061808.3
061808.31

BOARD BUSINESS
PRELIMINARY PROJECT REVIEW Carol McMann, Megan Hoyt
Proposed flashing crosswalk at First Ave S and Railroad

Megan Hoyt, Pedestrian/Bicycle Program Manager, explained their request to install a flashing cross walk and reported a survey provided information about when marked crosswalks without signals are appropriate and when they can actually increase the likelihood of a pedestrian being hit without other measures being taken. The applicant has been working on addressing all marked crosswalks in the city and they are down to the last 15. There was a fatality at the subject crosswalk in March. Ms. Hoyt said they looked at options: a traffic signal but on typical day not enough people use the crosswalk to warrant a signal; removing the crosswalk but this was not feasible; and reducing the travel lanes but with the volumes on First Avenue S and with the possible viaduct repair it wasn't feasible. Ms. Hoyt said the propose in-pavement flashers which flash once activated. Ms. Hoyt noted the Board recently approved an alteration to the crosswalk which will provide better visibility for pedestrians crossing. They propose to add an advance stop bar along with sign "Stop Here for Pedestrians"; this has been used in conjunction with in-pavement flashers at other uncontrolled locations. They hope to stop the multiple threat collision where a motorist stops for a pedestrian but the motorist in the next lane does not; having the stop bar 30' back gives a driver 30' extra of reaction time. Shoulder crosswalk signs with flashing lights are also proposed. The timeline is driven by the repaving project; the earliest they can add the in-pavement flashers is 30 days after the pavement settles.

Ms. Hoyt explained the options for the type of detection to activate the lights and said they don't want a button activated signal and prefer passive detection to force pedestrians to be more vigilant. One option is ramp domes that would set the lights off; the other option is bollard detection that would set the lights off as the beam between them is cut.

Carol McMann explained if pads were used, the material is rubber non-slip material that is activated by weight. If bollards are used, they have a modern look but they could design something with an historic look.

Mr. Hasson asked if barriers would be added.

Ms. Hoyt said yes; the only time when the south crosswalk gets a lot of use is on special events otherwise it is the north crosswalk that gets all the volume. The plan to have a barrier across the south crosswalk saying it is closed except that the Police can remove it on event days.

Ms. McCann explained the fencing that would go at the new crosswalk will be aluminum black railing that had been approved by the Board not chain link as noted on the plans.

Mr. Ito said that visually there will be a lot of items; they have the pedestrian sign with the flashing lights, lights in the street, bollards, a signal box, the stop bar and the stop for pedestrians sign and then the crosswalk blocking barrier (in the south cross walk). He said the Board will need the bollard spec and cut sheet and a cut sheet for the barrier that will block the south cross walk.

Mr. Strauss preferred the weight sensitive ramps over the bollards.

Mr. Hasson asked if the applicant had marked the proposed location for the bollards on the drawing.

Ms. Hoyt said they haven't marked it but it would be covering crosswalk area which is 10'; they would likely put it on the wings of the curb ramp.

Mr. Ito asked the dimensions of the bollard.

In response to Board questions Ms. Hoyt said the bollards would be approximately 3 ½ feet and that there would be no audible sounds.

Ms. Brown expressed concern about potential vandalism.

Ms. Hoyt said they would look at materials that can be cleaned but they haven't had maintenance problems at other locations.

Mr. Ito agreed with Mr. Strauss that the pad would be preferable if the bollards were large; but the board would specify it could only be used at this location.

Mr. Strauss asked if the Smart Cabinet would be mounted to a separate pole or an existing telephone pole.

Ms. McCann responded if there isn't an existing pole, one would need to be put up.

Mr. Strauss expressed concern about the clutter in Pioneer Square, even safety related stuff; in this case the Smart Pad would be preferable to the bollards.

Ms. Person asked if from a safety standpoint one was better than the other.

Ms. Hoyt said no, it gets back to with people cutting corners, which would actually get people to activate it. She thought the bollard was a bit more instinctual, that you need to go between them if you know how they work, where the ramp is much more passive but does require someone actually stepping on the yellow portion of the ramp. .

Ms. McCann said bollards technology allows bollards to be placed up to 80' apart which has the potential to catch more pedestrians.

Ms. Person asked about the possibility of a custom bollard being designed.

Ms. McCann explained they could be made to match existing Pioneer Square existing bollards in Occidental Park or the light pole casings.

Ms. Person said it is a safety issue and it is far enough from the heart of Pioneer Square that she would support which ever option works better. If bollards are pursued she would like to see another design; what she has seen looks institutional and she fears a vandalism problem.

Mr. Ito leaned toward the pad because of vandalism and the threat of cars smashing into the bollards.

Ms. Hoyt stated if a car drove over the pad it would need to be replaced.

Mr. Ito would like to see a way to incorporate the Smart Cabinet into the existing poles or onto the railings just to reduce the amount of stuff on the street. He is leaning toward the pad but he might be open to a small bollard.

Mr. Hasson thought there would be a vandalism problem with the bollards in this neighborhood. He understands the need for a safe system and prefers the pads but if there is a huge safety concern the bollards would be acceptable.

Ms. Brown preferred the pads and was concerned about the increase in traffic when the Plumbing Building is done. She thought the bollards would block visibility.

Mr. Strauss wondered if a couple of the pads could be wired in a chain so instead of 4' width you could have 8' width.

Ms. Hoyt said in some places they have widened the curb ramp.

Mr. Ito thought that might help increase the pad area people might step on but he suggested the pads might be grey on the outside and the ones in the curb ramp, yellow.

Ms. Hoyt said they will find a way to make pads work.

Mr. Ito said if there was a way to make a bollard small and elegant they might present that as an option to the pads.

Mr. Strauss recommended when the applicant presents to the full board they should bring in the two options stating which is the preferred.

Public Comment:

Sara Jane Bellanca lives in the Florentine and thought the amount of truck traffic in that area was not being considered. Bollards can get knocked down, as the pergola was. She said the Board needs to be cognizant of what actually goes on in that area as far as actual vehicular traffic, excluding the game day part. On a daily basis there is a lot of traffic. She expressed concern about a tree that had been cut down and said the trees are important.

Ms. McCann stated that part of the median where the tree was had to be removed as part of the paving project; she is asking that another tree be planted in the median once the work is done. She asked Ms. Bellanca to let her know of suggestions for tree locations.

061808.32

South Downtown Livability Report

Susan McLain and Gordon Glowers from DPD provided an update.

Ms. McCain reported no changes to Pioneer Square since the last briefing, just a few adjustments throughout their recommendations documents. They came out with some draft recommendations and finalized their EIS in May. The draft recommendations are meant to be a prompt for the public to get feed back by the end of June if possible; the plan is to propose final recommendations for Council considerations and hope to be

done with that by the end of 2008. She reviewed the values outlined on page 16 in the Pioneer Square handout provided to the Board:

- Historic preservation as primary goal
- More residential in Pioneer Square
- Incentives for development of vacant parcels and parcels between historic contributing buildings
- Encourage employment density near the transit hub of King Street Station
- Facilitate redevelopment of the Stadium North Lot
- Improve pedestrian experience and quality of public spaces

They recommend an incremental level of change to heights in order to provide incentive for some residential and in particular infill development in Pioneer Square. The 100' height limit would be retained along 1st Avenue and are looking at mixed use development with retail at the ground floor and retaining all the historic standards and the development standards that currently exist in terms of street level environment and setbacks etc. Another 30' height would be allowed in non-historic contributing buildings throughout Pioneer Square for residential development. On buildings that are historic contributing they are developing an historic TDR program which would allow historic contributing buildings to transfer or sell up to 3 floor area equivalent to commercial developers elsewhere in south downtown or throughout the downtown area. This would allow those historic buildings to gain some financial resources for rehabilitation and improvements to the buildings.

Ms. McLain explained that at the over the tracks area suggested heights are up to 150'. They are looking at the possibility of up to 240' feet on portions of the North Lot. On the eastern side closest to King Street Station the 240' would be allowed only for the employment type uses; on the western side the 240' would be allowed for residential uses. They determined the more significant view is that of King Street Station.

Ms. Nashem thought an 85' setback was specified in the recommendation.

Ms. McCain said the Pioneer Square code prefers no setback. In the North Lot some setbacks are needed to control for bulk of buildings; they have suggested the possibility of a setback at 85' along King Street but how much of a setback or if that is the right height for a setback or if that is the right approach for the relationship between the development between the North Lot and King Street Station they would like to get feedback.

Mr. Hasson asked if in the main area PSM 100-130' if it goes up to 130' only for vacant lots.

Ms. McLain said they are still refining how it would be defined. The National Register District has an itemization of each and every historic contributing feature within Pioneer Square. She said they intend to define which of those parcels would be historic contributing therefore being able to take advantage of historic TDR but not be able to exceed the historic height and which of those buildings or sites are not historic contributing and could exceed 100' through the bonus floor area.

Mr. Hasson said if it is contributing it is 100' no matter what but if it is not it could go to 130'.

Ms. McCain concurred and said in general the historic height of the building is what guides the future height of the building. There was an interest in not creating an economic incentive for buildings that might not be in the best shape, to demolish those buildings and reconstruct something new. Obviously the Board has the authority to approve demolition and one of the things people have observed in the past is property owners could allow a property to degrade to the point where they can make an economic argument in favor of demolition. The goal was to retain the historic designation of the building but also surrounding it with economic reasons and not providing reasons to demolish by neglect.

Mr. Ito said the Board has never seen Appendix F, "Creating a Livable City through Sustainable Design". He said a lot of what was proposed may not be acceptable in an historic district; specifically called out is water storage in the areaways. He said the potential is very minimal so why promote it. He recommended a caveat to the whole section about being in an historic district and the need for compatibility.

Ms. Nashem said Board members had questions before about how the tanks would be installed without destroying the areaway.

Mr. Ito said the area way is the sidewalk, the walls, and the building wall; even if they are not used, they are historic. He said there are other items listed in the Appendices the Board has never seen.

Ms. McCain said they should have provided a better description of them but they are ideas.

Mr. Ito said he was concerned that including them in this report will suggest to developers that because these ideas are documented, that they are viable and have been accepted by the Board and by the City, so it seems disingenuous to include them.

Mr. Hasson asked why the buildings on First Avenue South on the opposite side of the street as the historic district, were 50' apart and wondered how that might feel to a pedestrian.

Ms. McCain said the area would be zoned as industrial/commercial and would likely be developed in office type uses with ground floor retail; they wanted to ensure the street level would be friendlier to pedestrians than it is now. They wanted to look at development that would follow the block pattern seen elsewhere in Pioneer Square; rather than one long building, there would be a break between buildings. They would look for opportunities for public spaces between buildings for workers to hang out and also on game days to allow pedestrians to move through the area. They want to ensure light and air were accessible from First Avenue South. Heights in the area would be lower in the very northern and the very southern portions (85'); over the rest of the site allowing 120'. In 20% of the lot height could go up to 160' to allow for one taller tower; as a point of reference Smith Tower is about 400'.

Mr. Hasson asked if there would be any analysis on how compatible the project would be with the district as he did not think that the recommendations were compatible.

Mr. Ito said historically there are big long blocks in the area; making 50' wide open space off the sidewalk may not be a workable solution and it may end up being a space for vagrants. He asked what the intent for the space would be and he thinks the drawing

calls for too many. He would rather have longer buildings and few breaks or one larger break in the middle that was actually useful.

Ms. McLain said the pattern and development across the street are small parcels and the thought was if additional height is pursued, it seemed likely a larger very bulky building could go into that area which would be in scale inconsistent with the historic district but probably consistent with the stadium. They want development that would be more reflective of the smaller scale of Pioneer Square, allow for some density but would kind of break up the block.

Mr. Ito said on the historic side of the street one would see continuous buildings but on the other side it would be different.

Mr. Glowers said the Board has the opportunity to influence or provide guidance so that the design relates better to Pioneer Square. Currently it is zoned industrial commercial, 65' height.

Mr. Hasson said going from 65' to 160' height is a big change and then also changing the grid is substantial. He thought he would prefer one strategically sited high tower over a bunch of medium height buildings.

Ms. McLain said the height is 120' with one exception of one tower that could go to 160'. She said there is a lot of floor area allowed and allowing that floor area in one building may not be compatible. The Board's feedback is helpful as they move forward with their planning.

Mr. Strauss asked the genesis of the livability study.

Ms. McLain said it comes from a lot of different places but both the Pioneer Square and International District neighborhood plans called for adjustments that would bring in more residents and retention of affordable housing resources among other things. The zoning part had never taken place. South downtown hasn't seen new development the way other areas of the center City have. In combination with concerns about social and environmental issues and public behaviors combined with the challenges of the stadiums, the thought was there needed to be some additional residents for balance.

Mr. Strauss asked what in the existing land use code precluded adding residential units.

Ms. McLain said they looked at what kind of development would be desirable and what zoning could change to encourage the right kind of development. They did some economic analyses about what would work and what are some of the challenges. Two challenges they found were that Pioneer Square has a high water table so it makes underground development difficult and there was a concern about relational height limits.

Mr. Glowers said since the study was started some infill building has been done.

Mr. Strauss said planning for Pioneer Square and its immediate vicinity is a much bigger issue than what appears to be a contingent planning effort. The open spaces represent a significant change to the pattern and texture of Pioneer Square. He said the issue with the area west of 1st Avenue South as well as with the entire district is a remarkably complex design opportunity. Someone needs to conceptualize the whole district in a

way that it hasn't been yet; it is not just about looking at individual parcels; the whole district is an opportunity. There is potential for open spaces, for certain scale relationships; new construction needs to be viewed in relation to adjacent buildings. Some areas of the plan are too vague and others are specific to the point that they don't seem workable.

Ms. McLain thought it was useful to hear in an informal way; the land use code is a fairly crude tool that sets forward some parameters in terms of uses and heights, but also relies on private developers and design review and review of the Board to do a good job to create the right thing in the right place. They are looking at the land use code to provide the right parameters. She asked for specific feedback from the Board for example, the idea that having spaces between buildings might result in a less desirable form of development on 1st Avenue South.

Public Comment:

Sara Jane Bellanca expressed a need for a walk-through for people to get east to west. The Florentine is the equivalent of two city blocks; the new Starbucks buildings across the street will be longer than that and it has a walk through.

Mr. Strauss said the texture and character of Pioneer Square is related to street frontage and light on the street; by providing gaps between buildings that is being changed.

Ms. McLain said even though there is continuous development along the Pioneer Square street frontage; it is varied by the nature of the smaller parcels and buildings that have character. Modern buildings are just going to read different.

Mr. Glowers said at this point the code is changeable in terms of mandatory gaps.

Ms. Strauss thought there is a provision for preservation of some kind of view corridor to King Street Station Tower.

Ms. McLain read from page 16 of the handout, "retain the prominence of the iconic King Street Station Clock Tower requiring a set back above 85'....." She said while it is specific about location it doesn't identify how much of a set back that might be. She said it would be helpful to get Board feedback about what might make sense.

Mr. Strauss said the tower was built at a time when they didn't have set back requirements above 85' because they probably assumed no one would build over 85'.

Ms. McLain said it is about views but also about the prominence of the tower with respect to surrounding buildings.

Ms. Person asked about how working class housing will be ensured though the incentive zoning program to.

Ms. McLain said in the full report, the section on incentive zoning starts on 108. Office for Housing is the lead on this but they are working establish the cost of paying a fee in lieu would be more in order to encourage the actual construction of those units instead of paying a fee and that a fee in lieu would mean it would have to be built within a certain distance.

Mr. Ito asked what is the process of this adopting the plan.

Ms. McLain said this is a legislative amendment to the land use code. She said they will take section of the existing land use code and cross out parts and add in new language. They will change the land use map as well. The legislation proposal will go to City Council toward the end of this year. City Council will schedule public hearings and public meetings to discuss aspects. There is some possibility they will be looking at this in chunks.

Mr. Ito suggested the draft Pioneer Square code be brought before this Board.

Ms. McLain agreed they would and would appreciate any thoughtful feedback from the Board.

Mr. Strauss asked where the building on Occidental stood at this point.

Ms. Nashem said they are not moving forward at this time; The current code is specific to a building with a trolley barn so if the trolley barn is not being built the project either needs these amendments to the heights to go through or would need a different code amendment.

Mr. Hasson said that is a proposed block long building at 130' shading the park. This is a good chance for this Board to determine if that is what is wanted.

Mr. Ito stated a problem is will the developer hire someone who is halfway decent at designing a building in a historic district; he was concerned that a bargain basement designer will do a sketch design and they make it work and it will be undesirable no matter what the zoning is. He mentioned the importance of the Board to be able to massage and change a design to be better.

The Board requested better visuals of what lots would look like in the district.

Ms. Nashem brought up the issue that preservation is a sustainability strategy and the Board would like to break down the myth that only new buildings can be sustainable.

Mr. Glowers said they found that in an energy study Pioneer Square buildings are already performing better than new buildings.

Mr. Ito recommended including a paragraph stating that in the report; that if you want to be green and sustainable, keep the building.

Mr. Glowers asked about the level of design treatment the Board would require on an infill building in Pioneer Square.

Mr. Ito said a lot of that information could be found in the code they developed for the North Lot code.

Ms. Nashem said they ask for detailed sections of the windows to know how deepset it is, the material, the quality of the material; the Board holds strong to the sense of quality.

Mr. Ito mentioned the issue of blank party walls needing some sort of treatment.

Public Comment:

Erin Doherty asked for clarification on exactly which buildings qualified for historic TDRs. She asked if DON and the Board has reviewed the list to make sure it is complete and reflects all the buildings that should potentially be included.

Ms. McLain said that DON has; when we get to code we should ensure we have a complete list.

Ms. Nashem said that the list generated in the last National Historic District update that the buildings are classified as contributing or non-contributing and historic or not historic.

Ms. Doherty asked if buildings that have been restored can also use the TDR program.

Ms. McLain said property owners who have already done the right thing by restoring their buildings should have the same opportunity to TDR.

Mr. Ito said the TDRs that we want to use are TDRs specifically to maintain the building. If a building had been completely restored at the owner's expense and never used any TDRs, they could sell TDRs to someone else in perpetuity because that would limit the construction on that site.

Ms. Doherty said how LEED Silver was chosen as a benchmark. She said LEED Silver and Built Green to 4 stars are fundamentally different models and the Built Green would necessarily be as helpful as LEED Gold.

Mr. Ito said LEED and Built Green or any of these standards are great but they may not be things that you want to base your code on because things change. Code should not be based on someone's arbitrary naming rights.

Ms. Nashem will work on a draft letter to be reviewed by the Board at the next meeting.

Ms. McLain said they would like feedback by June 30 but the Board should take the time they need to review.

Ms. Nashem said the next Board meeting is July 2.

061808.4 **REPORT OF THE CHAIR:** Doug Ito, Chair

061808.6 **STAFF REPORT:** Genna Nashem

The meeting was adjourned at 10:55 am.

Issued: June 4, 2008

Genna Nashem
Pioneer Square Preservation Board Coordinator
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