



The City of Seattle

International Special Review District

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ISRD 294/08

MINUTES FOR THE MEETING OF TUESDAY, November 25, 2008

Time: 4:30pm
Place: Bush Asia Center
409 Maynard Avenue S.
Basement meeting room

Board Members Present

Robert Ha
Misun Chung Gerrick
Weng Chan
Joshua Osborne-Klein
Jerry Chihara
Amalia Gonzalez-Kahn
John Bisbee

Staff

Rebecca Frestedt
Karen Gordon
Melinda Bloom

Chair Robert Ha called the meeting to order at 4:37 p.m.

112508.1 APPROVAL OF MINUTES Ms. Gonzalez-Kahn arrived at 4:38 p.m.

October 28, 2008
MM/SC/JC/WC

5:0:2 Minutes approved conditional upon review of Board member attendance. Ms. Gonzalez-Kahn and Mr. Bisbee abstained.

112508.2 SPECIAL TAX VALUATION

112508.21 Mar Hotel/Hong Kong 507-511 Maynard Ave. S.

Karen Gordon explained the Special Tax Valuation program for historic properties. She said contributing buildings in the District may be eligible to participate and can apply after work is complete. At least 25% of the assessed value of the building must be spent on rehabilitation within a 24 month period. She said the owner of the Mar Hotel/Hong Kong met the threshold and has substantiated costs of \$2,650,217.21. She explained that the Landmark Preservation Board will do the final approval following a recommendation by this Board.

Ms. Gonzalez-Kahn asked if the program applies to the rehab period.

**Administered by The Historic Preservation Program
The Seattle Department of Neighborhoods**

"Printed on Recycled Paper"

Ms. Gordon explained that the property owner would not pay tax on the cost of improvements for a 10 year period, beginning in 2010 and lasting through 2019.

Public Comment: There was no public comment.

Board Discussion:

The Board determined they had enough information to make a decision.

Action: I move that the International Special Review District Board recommend to the Landmarks Preservation Board to approve the following property for Special Tax Certification: Hong Kong Building/Mar Hotel, 507-511 Maynard Avenue South. This action is based upon the criteria set forth in Title 84 RCW Chapter 449; and based on the review and approval of the building exterior renovation by the International Special Review District Board; that the property is a contributing building located in the International Special Review District, and has not been altered in any way that adversely affects those features that identify its significance or contribution to the International Special Review District; that the property has been issued Certificates of Approval as required in the International Special Review District Board; and has substantially improved in the 24-month period prior to application, and that the recommendation is conditioned upon the execution of an agreement between the Local Review Board as required by Title 84 RCW, Chapter 449.

MM/SC/JOK/JC 7:0:0 Motion carried.

112508.3 CERTIFICATES OF APPROVAL

112508.32 Metro Transit bus shelter
5th Avenue S. and S. Main St.

Ms. Frestedt explained the request to extend the duration of the temporary alterations (illuminated sign panel) of the transit shelter for an additional twelve (12) months. Photographs were provided. Ms. Frestedt introduced Dale Cummings, from Metro Transit.

Applicant Comment:

Mr. Cummings stated they had monitored the lit display box in the shelter over the six month trial period and had received no complaints; there were no maintenance issues nor was there any vandalism. He stated that the sign adds a bit more security lighting to the bus stop. He said Metro would like to leave it up another 12 months.

Ms. Frestedt explained this was still a pilot program and recapped public safety concerns raised by the Board during the initial approval and had asked for a report back. Board members also stated that off-premise advertising was not desirable at this location because it would not be compatible with District regulations.

Mr. Cummings stated that the signage would consist of public service type information and confirmed there would be no advertising at this site. He said this site is being used as a prototype for possible expansion of similar shelters in other cities.

Ms. Frestedt explained the Guidelines don't address signage on bus shelters.

Mr. Ha appreciated the additional light on the shelter. Mr. Chan agreed.

Ms. Gonzalez-Kahn said her previous concern related to sight lines. She could support this for another 12 months because it is on a dark corner in front of a parking lot but she wouldn't support a similar proposal in front of main commercial corridor, such as Jackson.

Mr. Chihara said if the bus shelter was located differently in relationship to the public right of way it would help; it is tight in terms of the pedestrian way. He stated that the proposal is appropriate.

Mr. Cummings acknowledged both the sidewalk and the public right of way there are narrow.

Despite her early skepticism about the visual connection, Ms. Chung Gerrick thought it fit well into the existing bus stop. She said the gap at the base that allows views of pedestrians is helpful.

Mr. Bisbee asked if Metro was seeking to make income from the signage and said it would be more acceptable to use the signage to promote ID-related community events.

Mr. Cummings concurred and stated they do some community service announcements in some cases. He confirmed that for now it would just be Metro self advertising.

Public Comments: There was no public comment.

Board Discussion: The Board determined it had enough information to make a decision.

Action: I move that the International Special Review District Board approve a Certificate of Approval for the shelter alterations, as proposed.

The proposed alterations meet the following sections of the **International Special Review District Ordinance and applicable Guidelines:**

SMC 23.66.334 – Streets and sidewalks

ISRD Design Guidelines for Signs

Section IV. Signage [for interior-lit cabinets]

MM/SC/AGK/JC

7:0:0 Motion carried.

112508.31

Key Bank

666 Dearborn St. S.

Applicant: Ray George, The Sign Post

Deferred at the request of the applicant.

112508.33

Hing Hay Park
411 Maynard Ave. S.

Ms. Frestedt explained the request for proposed repairs and rehabilitation of the pagoda and informational kiosk. Proposed work includes: replacement of the existing roof; changing the existing lights from 100 watt high pressure sodium (orange color) illumination to 100 watt metal halide (white color) lights; and installation of temporary construction fencing during the duration of the project. Exhibits included drawings, photographs, specification sheets, and material samples. Construction is expected to last three (3) months. She said the proposed work also includes repainting the two structures. Since the paint colors are not changing, this is considered an in-kind repair and does not need Board approval. Ms. Frestedt introduced Kelly Davidson, City of Seattle Parks Department.

Applicant Comment:

Ms. Davidson explained that Parks proposed to touch up the existing structures. She said the roof tiles were custom made in China and many are damaged. She said Lu Bond Construction, who finished the Chinatown Gate, will install all new tiles. She provided a sample tile and explained the glaze color is a little different than existing, but it matches the gate. She said they won't be able to exactly replace the figurines but found some that are close. The benches will be sanded and refinished.

Ms. Frestedt stated that the bench refinish would be an in-kind repair.

Ms. Davidson said they are using as-built drawings so the roof will be replaced following the existing plans. She said they have the opportunity to change the kiosk roof from wood to tile at this same time.

In response to a question from the Board about the existing figurines and what the cultural meaning is Ms. Davidson explained that it isn't possible to replace them in kind. She said she did not have documentation on the meaning of the figurines.

Messrs. Ha and Chihara said they would like to know the meaning of the proposed figures.

Betty Lau, active community member, shared her memories of the construction of the pagoda and stated the figurines came from China. They were donated from the then Counsel General of Taiwan, the Mayor of Taipei and she has a copy of the original letter. The intent was to have the most favorable symbols on top and at that time the dragon was the most powerful creature – to represent power and a lot of good fortune. She suggested in replacing the figurines to select something to represent those ideas or that concept.

Mr. Ha suggested rehabbing what is there rather than replacing.

Ms. Davidson stated she would look into that but the glazing is a problem and it would likely just be recast as new. In response to Board questions she explained the lighting will go on the existing pole. She said one of the proposed lights has already been installed as a demonstration model. She said Parks has its own light standard so she couldn't speak for SDOT or other departments that may have their own.

Public Comment:

Joyce Pisanont, from SCIDPDA, asked about the quality of the lighting because she was concerned about public safety.

Ms. Davidson assured her lighting levels would not be reduced and should improve and have no additional overflow. A fence will be placed around the pagoda during construction – for a duration of about three months - and will be kept as tight as possible to pagoda to discourage illicit activity.

Ms. Pisanont asked if the area would be monitored after hours during construction. She suggested that the Parks Dept. touch base with the BIA and Ms. Davidson confirmed she has been communicating with Maribeth Ellis, Executive Director of the BIA. And confirmed that construction activity would be will lit.

Alan Kurimura asked Ms. Lau if the figurines on the gate would be appropriate since they're dragons.

Ms. Lau agreed that some kind of dragon figure would be good. She shared that the Mayor of Taipei picked everything himself – in his letter he promised he would personally select and oversee the tiles.

Board Discussion:

Mr. Bisbee suggested that the applicant check with Wing Luke Asian Museum in case the museum would be interested in existing dragons, especially considering the story about their selection by the Mayor of Taipei and to make sure they are not thrown out.

Ms. Chung Gerrick supported the temporary construction and the changing of the lights but said it is hard to see how close to the existing the replacement roof will be to the original and that it seems much more vibrant. She supported Mr. Bisbee's suggestion to donate existing dragons to the museum. She is okay with the kiosk roof matching the tiles.

Mr. Bisbee said with regard to the figurines, it is difficult to match handcrafted items and he would need to see selection for comparison.

Mr. Ha supported the change in lighting and did not have a problem with the application.

Mr. Chan agreed with Mr. Ha and said that he thinks the selection of figurines is acceptable.

Mr. Chihara supported both roof replacements using the glazed tiles. He suggested approval of the figurines be conditional on more information and analysis of the figurines' meanings; whether or not they could they could be salvaged and reused; what is proposed and why selected; and suggested that proper consultation be obtained from community if relevant.

Mr. Osborne-Klein agreed with Mr. Chihara.

Ms. Chung Gerrick said it should be conditional approval on the color of the tile; if it doesn't match she would want to see other options.

Ms. Davidson said this is as close as they could get and said it is the same color as on the gate.

Mr. Osborne-Klein agreed it is pretty close.

Ms. Gonzalez-Kahn also supported Mr. Chihara's comments.

Action: I move that the International Special Review District Board approve a Certificate of Approval for the pagoda and kiosk rehabilitation, as proposed with the condition that Ms. Davidson come back with an assessment and analysis of the meaning of the figurines, including a consultation with cultural expert as to the cultural relevance of the figurines.

The proposed alterations meet the following sections of the **International Special Review District Ordinance and applicable Guidelines:**

SMC 23.66.030 Certificates of Approval – Application, review and appeals.

No person shall alter, demolish, construct, reconstruct, restore, remodel, make any visible change to the exterior appearance of any structure, or to the public rights-of-way or other public spaces in a special review district, and no one shall remove or substantially alter any existing sign or erect or place any new sign or change the principal use of any building, or any portion of a building, structure or lot in a special review district, and no permit for such activity shall be issued unless a certificate of approval has been issued by the Department of Neighborhoods Director.

MM/SC/JC/AGK 7:0:0 Motion approved.

112508.34

American Hotel
518 S. King St.

Ms. Frestedt explained the application for proposed exterior alterations to the storefront at 518 S. King St. The storefront is currently part of the Piece of Cake Bakery (514-518 S. King). The applicants propose to sub-divide the space and to create a new storefront at 518. Proposed alterations include: the addition of a recessed entry with a wooden door, selected to match the adjacent mezzanine door; the addition of a new storefront window system; and repainting the exterior trim. Exhibits included drawings and photographs.

Ms. Frestedt said the American Hotel was built in 1925 and is a contributing building within the District; the existing storefront at 518 is not original. A new tenant has not yet been identified for the space; therefore a change of use is not required at this time. On Tuesday, Nov. 18th, the Architectural Review Committee (ARC) reviewed the application and provided feedback on alternative glazing and color schemes. Committee members' comments have been incorporated into the final proposal. The ARC recommended approval of the application. Ms. Frestedt introduced Yara Veronese and Jim Graham from Graham Baba Architects.

Applicant Comment:

Ms. Veronese provided updated sheets and additional options for Board review and James Graham explained the intent is to more closely match the original.

Ms. Veronese explained their plans to create a new entrance to the 518 unit; the storefront would be narrower because of the stairs that go up to the mezzanine. Inside the ceiling drops 2'. They decided to keep the header because it helps to resolve the ceiling drop problem and they

112508.4 BOARD BRIEFING

112508.41 Gary Johnson, from the Department of Planning and Development (DPD), and Seth Geiser, U.W. Urban Planning Grad Student, Intern at DPD presented a briefing on changes to the Land Use Code and Permitting Requirements for outdoor merchandise displays.

Mr. Johnson provided an overview and said vendors are currently displaying fruits and vegetables on the sidewalk; the City wants to encourage more of this although the carts are not currently permitted. The City wants to legitimize the practice and is working to draft language.

Mr. Geiser provided handouts about the code language and said a 6' clearance for pedestrian passage along length of sidewalk and certain setbacks from bus handicap zones is required.

Mr. Johnson said that sidewalk vending is currently not allowed. He said the City Council recently approved sidewalk cafés as long as there is clear path for travel. He explained set back requirements and said displays would have to face the businesses so shoppers would not be on the curbside.

Mr. Geiser stated the width of sidewalks in the ID varies a lot.

Mr. Johnson added that most of the current displays would be allowed under the proposed guidelines. DPD doesn't want to be overly proscriptive about what displays have to look like and doesn't want a cookie cutter approach and would allow Board discretion to deal with display design. The intention is to let business owners be creative.

Mr. Osborne-Klein expressed concern about the issues like overhead tarps and weather protection.

Mr. Johnson agreed and said that would change as business owners would have to comply with code provision, such as using an awning or a free standing umbrella as long as it didn't extend beyond the display rack. A 6' minimum clear path of travel is codified in Sidewalk Café legislation and it is likely that would be the same here.

Mr. Chihara asked what display height would be allowed and brought up issues of side angles and cars. He said this element is similar to cars not being allowed to park 30' from a stop sign and the display element seems to fit within that and could impact cars/pedestrian safety at street corners. He suggested looking at these issues when determining what heights would be allowed. Higher than 3' could become a safety issue for pedestrians. Clarification of height near intersections is needed.

Mr. Chihara supported the idea and the overall concept because it would activate the streets and pedestrian environment. He agreed it is better to not be too proscriptive and to allow some creativity with displays especially if they are put away at night.

There was a brief discussion about A-frame signs and sandwich boards.

Ms. Frestedt stated that it is illegal to attach any signage or display to public properties and is a violation of district rules.

Mr. Johnson said they would incorporate Board comments and would meet with each store that has a display. They will draft Code language and submit the draft to Council for consideration and approval.

There was Board discussion about the 6' clearance requirement.

Mr. Johnson stated that a 6' clear path doesn't have to be linear just as long as a minimum 6' clear path is maintained. SDOT will retain the flexibility to require additional width in busier areas.

Mr. Bisbee said a 6' clearance seems reasonable.

Public Comment:

Ms. Pisanont asked if the allowable displays are associated with adjacent business and asked if sidewalk vending would be allowed.

Mr. Johnson said they will also explore sidewalk vending as it is a positive activation of sidewalks. He said this may end up with an overlay for this neighborhood or it might apply more broadly.

Bill Lee asked if there would be future flexibility to make changes to the sidewalk, such as in the case of green streets.

Mr. Johnson said there is increasing competition for the sidewalk and the neighborhood needs to decide what the right mix is.

Alan Kurimura said Uwajimaya supports sidewalk displays and asked if a street use permit and fees would be required.

Mr. Johnson said yes to both.

Mr. Kurimura said fees and associated costs of liability insurance will be of interest to business owners and the community.

Mr. Frestedt advised that is a current requirement that hasn't been enforced; current violations have not been enforced and so businesses have been given some leeway up until now.

112508.5

GUIDELINE REVISION WORK SESSION

Board discussion regarding Design Guideline revisions.

Ms. Frestedt passed out draft guidelines for Board review. She described the latest revisions. She added three primary areas for the District: Chinatown, Japantown, and Little Saigon. Historically there has been a lot of discussion about calling this the Chinatown/International District and it honors that discussion and history.

Ms. Gonzalez-Kahn liked the ambiguity; the neighborhood has always been a bit in flux and boundaries are not clear cut.

The Board discussed district sub-boundaries and guidelines vary based on whether you are in the core or not. She suggested including maps that show the ISRD boundary, Asian Character Design District boundary, and the National Register area.

Mr. Bisbee left at 6:33 p.m.

Ms. Frestedt noted that the code currently says little about what is appropriate and allowed outside the Asian Character District; for example, which materials preferred and which are prohibited.

Mr. Osborne-Klein said the Guidelines should provide guidance where there is ambiguity in the ordinance.

Ms. Frestedt suggested that the Board review the existing code and determine which parts are successful and whether or not characteristics of the Asian Design Character area should be applied to other parts of the District.

Mr. Osborne-Klein said there are parts that should have similar requirements; for example the way we approach Nihonmachi and Little Saigon would be different from how we approach 8th or south of Weller.

The Board discussed the organization of the guidelines and stated a desire to incorporate graphics and/or photographs.

Mr. Chihara suggested a balance between verbal and graphic tools/available line drawings and photos that help explain concepts and provide more clarity.

Ms. Frestedt suggested looking at what other districts and cities have done regarding building materials, colors, elements. For example, Vancouver has two separate sections within its Chinatown (historic core and outside the core) with details about materials about infill and construction for each. She asked the Board how they'd like to discuss specific guidelines.

Mr. Osborne-Klein suggested finding points in the minutes where there has been ambiguity and how the Board has voted.

Ms. Frestedt said she will identify some examples from recent applications that can be used as a starting point for discussion.

Ms. Gonzalez-Kahn recommended including artistic elements.

Ms. Frestedt referred to the mural at Danny Woo Community Garden and said it is important to allow flexibility.

Mr. Osborne-Klein asked what are the issues that keep coming up, window coverings, gates, bars, etc.

Ms. Frestedt agreed security systems need to be discussed.

Mr. Chihara said when the Guidelines were originally written the emphasis was more on preservation. The concept of cultural preservation is emphasized over details about new construction. With regard to the South Downtown properties, he asked what is really important

about the District and what is acceptable regarding new materials. He said the Board should also consider materials and whether or not certain new materials fit into the historical fabric of the District.

Ms. Frestedt said there are two facets: the need for larger view of what is important for the neighborhood as a whole, in anticipation of future land use and zoning changes; and updating guidelines to reflect new construction materials and techniques.

Ms. Gonzalez-Kahn said the relationship between buildings is important; the proportions at the street level create seamless street level experience.

Mr. Ha added how to provide seamless transition between the ISRD and Pioneer Square historic District.

Mr. Chihara said there are elements that transcend all parts of a district whether old or new, such as massing and scale.

Mr. Ha said he doesn't want to create stark contrast between new construction and historic buildings. He suggested minimizing contrast.

Ms. Gonzalez-Kahn suggested being open to new materials.

Ms. Frestedt said she has heard the community voice fears about creating a wall around an unchanging center that will create a barrier between the core and the rest of the District. She suggested that the Board discuss how new and old relate to one another. Regarding new construction, she referred to language in the Secretary of the Interior's Standards to be differentiated but compatible. She asked the board to identify key elements that transcend all parts of the District and look at goals and provide feedback.

Mr. Chan left at 7:01 p.m.

Public Comment:

Ms. Lau commented that the first paragraph (re: History) on page two of the draft gives the impression that everyone is working together for a common purpose. She offered a correction to the reference to the name of the National Register District. She asked how the guidelines respond to safety concerns in the neighborhood.

Mr. Osborne-Klein recommended incorporating Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) safety principles.

Mr. Kurimura supported the incorporation of CPTED principles. He asked about the inclusion of a bullet within the Purpose and Intent section that addresses the promotion and encouragement of private ownership (for businesses). He said many Asians start formula fast food shops and see becoming a franchisee as a means to moving up the ladder. He asked how the Board would consider a proposal from a local family who wants to open a "Subway" franchise.

Ms. Frestedt explained the intent was to encourage locally owned businesses and limit corporate ownership.

The Board discussed the term “private ownership” how to continue support for local, family-owned and small, non-chain businesses.

Mr. Osborne-Klein commented that formula fast food businesses compete with local business.

112508.6 BOARD BUSINESS

Ms. Frestedt recognized Ms. Gonzalez-Kahn for her service to the Board and welcomed Bill Lee, as the newly elected at-large member.

ADJOURN

Rebecca Frestedt, Board Coordinator
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