



The City of Seattle

## International Special Review District

Mailing Address: PO Box 94649, Seattle WA 98124-4649

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ISRD 22/25

### MINUTES FOR THE MEETING OF TUESDAY, February 11, 2025

Time: 4:30pm

Place: Hybrid Meeting

#### **Board Members Present**

Heather Hargesheimer (HH), Vice-Chair

Kyle Jacobson (KJ)

Adrian Lam (AL), Chair

Gary Lee (GL)

Samantha Wong (SW)

#### **Staff Present**

Rebecca Frestedt (RF)

Maribel Stephens (MS)

#### **Interpreters (Vietnamese)**

Tammy Dang

Celine Le

#### **Absent**

Eric Chan

Jade Yan

Chair Adrian Lam called the meeting to order at 4:33 pm.

#### **ROLL CALL**

#### **021125.1 PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no public comment at the meeting.

Ms. Frestedt provided an overview of interpretation for the briefing and operation of the online language channels.

#### **021125.2 CERTIFICATES OF APPROVAL**

#### **021125.21 800 Maynard Ave S. – RDA Building**

Record number: DONH-COA-01488

Applicant: David Neiman, Neiman Taber Architects and Ben Wong, Tourbineau Real Estate

The Board chair introduced the project and applicants.

Ms. Frestedt provided a summary of the project and read the staff report. She said the Board received a briefing on the proposal last fall. She summarized discussion at the briefing and specified the portions of the application that are subject to administrative review. She said the change of use and the proposed artwork (which will be deferred)

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The Seattle Department of Neighborhoods**

require Board review. Use is not listed as a “preferred use” therefore, the code does not permit administrative review.

Anton Dekom (AD), Neiman Taber, applicant, presented the proposal. He summarized current and proposed uses, noting the basement level use (wine storage) would not change. He mentioned they’re still looking for the operator of the self-storage facility which will determine signage and other deferred elements. He said 90-95% of modifications will occur within the building and went over floor plans. He summarized modifications to the exterior alterations that were informed by the briefing.

AL expressed appreciation for the applicants for hearing and responding to Board suggestions from the briefing.

AD confirmed that the change of use will only be for floors 1-4, from office to storage. Some portion of the basement could become part of the new storage use in the future.

KJ stated that the proposed change of use, although not prohibited, seems incompatible with the goal of creating the ISRD, although, recognizes the value of a self-storage facility. He asked if applicants have any mitigating ideas.

Ben Wong, applicant, stated that the building was constructed 100 years ago as a warehouse. There isn’t a market to continue office in this area right now. Current configuration, converted to office, isn’t conducive to other desirable uses such as residential or hospitality.

Ms. Frestedt said she appreciated the discussion. She confirmed that the building is located outside of the Asian Design Character District. She said she believes the code anticipated and therefore allows some other use types outside of the retail core. She said when she reviewed the application, she took this into account.

There was no further discussion.

Action: I move that the International Special Review District Board recommend approval of a Certificate of Approval for change of use from office to storage facility on the ground floor and upper stories, per the submitted application materials.

The Board directs staff to prepare a written recommendation of approval, based on considering the application submittal and Board discussion at the February 11, 2025 public meeting, and forward this written recommendation to the Department of Neighborhoods Director.

This action is based on the **following applicable sections of the International Special Review District Ordinance and relevant Standards:**

**Seattle Municipal Code (SMC)**

**SMC 23.66.030 – Certificates of Approval – application, review and appeals**

Certificate of approval required. 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.

**SMC 23.66.320 – Permitted uses**

**SMC 23.66.326 – Street-level uses**

**SMC 23.66.328 – Uses above street level**

MM/SC/HH/KJ

5:0:0

Motion carried.

The Board chair noted that Vietnamese simultaneous interpretation will be provided for the following briefing through the Vietnamese language channel.

**021125.3 BOARD BRIEFING**

**021125.31 1040 S. King St.**

*Presenter:* Chaohua Chang and Herman Sin, applicant representatives  
DON Project number: DONH-COA-00220

AL introduced the presenters. Ms. Frestedt read from the staff summary and provided background on the project. She said this is a briefing on proposed new construction on a vacant lot in Little Saigon. The project was initially proposed in 2017. This is the first presentation to the Board about the project. She said the zoning is DMR/C 75-95. King St. east of I-5 is a designated Green Street. The proposal is for new construction of a mixed-use building with 51 residential units, ground floor retail. No parking is proposed. The project does not trigger SEPA.

Ms. Frestedt noted that the project is fairly well-developed. She said she had asked the applicant for context studies and influences from the neighborhood. She noted the number of developments that have been constructed in Little Saigon since the application was first submitted. She added that there are limited massing options available due to the small size of the site.

Mr. Chaohua Chang (CC) presented the briefing materials (presentation in DON file). He summarized the context, proposed building massing and proposed uses. Residential above with ground floor commercial. He summarized community outreach and feedback received. He went over the site plan in relation to Beam “Market Passage” to the west and vacant lot to the east. There will be a breezeway for the residential entry and along the southeast corner.

CC showed other buildings in the CID and referenced influence of podium style of first two stories, referencing both historic and commercial buildings that have a similar style, with

brick at the base and stone veneer columns. Fiber cement and wood on residential stories. Balconies will add variety to the south façade. He presented the ground floor design at the west façade and said plantings will soften the transition between buildings. He walked the Board through the design and materials for each façade and landscape plan. He said they're in the second round of corrections with the Seattle Department of Construction and Inspections.

Ms. Frestedt referred to the construction documents and lighting plans that were posted on the agenda. She said that typically, the Board sees an initial presentation with a series of massing studies and then design details are added over time. She said that due to the amount of time that has passed, this project is pretty fully designed. She said that the applicants and developer were interested in presenting the complete application to the Board, but she recommended that since the Board had not yet seen it, they brief the Board to give the Board an opportunity to weigh in on the direction of the project and ask questions so that the Board's feedback and recommendations can be taken into consideration.

AL stated that as a first briefing the presentation is very comprehensive. He said it's slightly unusual in this process, because typically the Board's first briefing the applicant speaks to how they're responding to the current context of the site and how the proposal will address it. He spoke to the Market Passage at the Beam and expressed interest in how the proposed massing will complement or address the adjacent condition. He said it's not clear from the drawings how the scale and height of the proposed massing or the location of the proposed entrance relates to the adjacent building. He asked for clarification about what kind of comments they're seeking from the Board.

CC said he's hoping to hear comments that will help give guidance on minor adjustments to improve the building.

AL said that the zoning and massing context in relation to the proposed building massing is missing. He suggested that the applicant frame the proposed massing and how site and design constraints informed the current proposal, as though they were presenting at an earlier phase of the design development, so the Board can understand how they came to the proposal.

CC said the height of the proposed development is roughly the same height as the Beam. He said asked what additional information the Board would need to understand the proposal.

HH asked about the relationship of the Beam Apartments and the ground floor configuration of this proposal to see if there might be an opportunity for a connection. She said there could be mutually beneficial security.

CC said they have not yet talked to the Beam Apartments about their proposal. He said that the ground floor was recessed to provide more space at grade. Otherwise, they don't have much detail design about the ground floor façade that faces the Beam.

There was discussion about the grade, the current location of the trash and service, street-level uses and the location of the entrance.

CC said that they are not proposing an intentional connection between the two buildings, but they could explore options that do not conflict with each other.

Mr. Sin explained that there is a 2-3 feet grade difference between buildings. He noted the Beams planters and gate at the property line. He said opportunities to coordinate may be limited due to design constraints.

SW asked about proposed lighting and ground level height in relation to the Beam.

Ms. Frestedt said this is an example of why an earlier briefing would have been helpful. She asked the Board to identify what additional information is needed when the applicants return.

SW appreciated seeing examples of facades and elevations. She said that she's interested in seeing more rendered version of how the wood and stone frame the south elevation. She supports the podium massing. Asked about how the wood was selected to frame the south façade.

CC said they're looking to create a newer, Asian-influenced impression. Wood may not be accurately rendered. Influenced by bamboo.

Ms. Frestedt encouraged the Board and applicant to look at SMC 23.66.336 – Exterior building finishes, A. General Requirements and C. Exterior building design outside of Asian Design Character District and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards 9 and 10 and discuss how the project responds to this guidance.

GL asked if there are photos of similar buildings of a similar style that they're drawing influence from.

HH said she appreciates sensitivity to north façade and patterning. She encouraged looking at the east façade as well, since it could be a while before the adjacent property is developed. She asked where trash will be staged and how it will get to the street.

CC said that they are working with Seattle Public Utilities and that the final routing hasn't been determined.

AL recommended being attentive to the transitions between materials across the development and to look at the whole volume of the building.

HH requested sections showing the relationship between the Beam's Market Passage and the development site, in design and function.

CC said that the owner is not interested in building the project, but he wants to get permitted so that he can sell the site.

#### **021125.4 Staff Summary and Board Business**

Ms. Frestedt provided an update of applications that had been reviewed administratively since the last Board meeting, including the proposed installation of 20 CCTV cameras on utility poles in the District, both east and west of I-5. She said the record number is DONH-COA-01554 and that the detailed plans can be reviewed on the Seattle Services Portal. She understands there is great interest about cameras in the district. The section of the land use code that regulates administrative review (SMC 23.66.030) directs staff to review security systems administratively. She added that she had also issued a notice of decision for the addition of fencing on the north and south property lines at Hoa Mai Park.

AL asked who reviews the CCTV footage.

Ms. Frestedt responded that only the Seattle Police Department (SPD) has access to the footage and that it's not a publicly accessible feed or live stream. She added that SPD included details within the application that explains the digital shield that will block views into any residential units. She encouraged the Board, if interested, to look at the materials associated with the application, including locations of cameras and context provided by the applicant.

*Ms. Frestedt released the interpreters, Tammy and Celine.*

As directed by the Board's Rules and Procedures, the Board selected the Chair and Vice Chair for 2025. This selection had been deferred from the January ISRD Board meeting. The Board unanimously selected Heather Hargesheimer as Chair and Samatha Wong as Vice Chair for 2025. Ms. Frestedt also confirmed that Ms. Hargesheimer's reappointment had been finalized and that she will be serving a second 2-year term.

Adjourn