



The City of Seattle

## International Special Review District

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ISRD 47/15

### MINUTES FOR THE MEETING OF TUESDAY, March 10, 2015

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

#### **Board Members Present**

Stephanie Carrillo  
Ben Grace  
Carol Leong, Vice Chair  
Miye Moriguchi  
Martha Rogers, Chair  
Joann Ware  
Marie Wong

#### **Staff**

Rebecca Frestedt  
Melinda Bloom

#### **Absent**

#### **031015.1 APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

February 24, 2015

MM/SC/BG/JW

4:0:3 Minutes approved as amended. Mmes. Wong, Moriguchi and Carrillo abstained.

#### **031015.2 CERTIFICATES OF APPROVAL**

##### 031015.21 Woodrow's Jeweler

308 4<sup>th</sup> Ave. S.

*Applicant:* Woodrow Ng, business owner

**Design:** Proposed installation of horizontal blinds in nine (9) storefront windows and installation of a display case for display of artwork on the north façade. Exhibits included photographs, specifications and plans. The Board received briefings on the proposal on July 1, 2014 and January 13, 2015. Ms. Frestedt provided a summary of comments from past briefings. She said the Board recommended eliminating the blinds on the sidelite of the door to allow some transparency at the entrance. During the briefing the Board members did not

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support installation of blinds on the door. Members supported leaving blinds open as much as possible to allow transparency and light into the front space. The Board stated a preference for a window display design that had pedestrian interest and inquired about how the artwork within the display case would be accessed. Ms. Frestedt said a Certificate of Approval for Use was issued following the ISRD Board meeting on July 1, 2014. She stated that the Addison on Fourth (historically called: The Downtowner/New Richmond Hotel) is a contributing building located outside of the Asian Design Character District.

Applicant Comment:

Woodrow Ng explained the proposal to install blinds over nine windows. He said they will be open during business hours and closed after; they will be tilted, not pulled all the way up, to provide visibility yet still provide security. He proposed a slate gray color. He said that on the north facing 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> windows they will put in Chinese art; he showed the proposed art. He said that the last page of the packet shows how the display case will work with fixed panel with sliding panel to enable change out of art a couple times a year. He said that no lighting is proposed at this time. He confirmed that the business hours will be 8 AM – 5 PM.

Public Comment: There was no public comment.

Board Discussion:

Board members were supportive of the art display walls, but expressed concern about the potentially closed blinds and their impact on the efforts to create a vibrant pedestrian experience which is important to safety and security in the district. There was concern that the closed blinds at night would create a dark corner that would attract dark activity. There was concern about precedent setting in the district.

Mmes. Leong and Ware said that ideally it is nice to have the blinds open but Mr. Ng doesn't have control over safety concerns; he has modified his business already given the environment. There is still visibility into the space with the blinds tilted. They noted that applications are reviewed on a case by case basis.

Ms. Wong asked why the blinds would be tilted rather than open.

Mr. Ng said it is a security concern for his customers; tilting allows some visibility in but also discretion for his customers.

Public Comment:

Don Blakeney, CIDBIA, said that some businesses are better on an upper floor. He said that this is a corner location where they want activation and retail. He

said that closing off the space with blinds is in conflict with the goals of activation and contributes to a reduction in public safety.

Mr. Ng said it is a temporary solution as they will only be in that space one – two years.

Mr. Grace said that the motion should indicate that blinds should be open as much as possible to allow visibility into space.

Referring to the application exhibits, Ms. Ware said she preferred that windows 2, 3, 4 and 5 will be pulled up during business hours with windows 1, 6, 7, 8, and 9 tilted open.

Action: I move that the International Special Review District Board recommend approval of a Certificate of Approval for design at 308 4<sup>th</sup> Ave. S. *As a condition of this approval, the applicant may not pull down blinds behind the door and left side lite or entry vestibule windows (windows 2, 3, 4 and 5) when the business is open 8:00 am – 5:00 pm.*

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

**SMC 23.66.302 – International Special Review District Goals and Objectives**

The International District is the urban focal point for the Asian American community. The International Special Review District is established to promote, preserve and perpetuate the cultural, economic, historical, and otherwise beneficial qualities of the area, particularly the features derived from its Asian heritage, by:

- A. Reestablishing the District as a stable residential neighborhood with a mixture of housing types;
- B. Encouraging the use of street-level spaces for pedestrian-oriented retail specialty shops with colorful and interesting displays;
- C. Protecting the area and its periphery from the proliferation of parking lots and other automobile-oriented uses;
- D. Encouraging the rehabilitation of existing structures;
- E. Improving the visual and urban design relationships between existing and future buildings, parking garages, open spaces and public improvements within the International District;
- F. Exercising a reasonable degree of control over site development and the location of off-street parking and other automobile-oriented uses; and
- G. Discouraging traffic and parking resulting from athletic stadium events and commuters working outside the District.

**ISRD Design Guidelines**

**III. Security Systems**

The following guidelines will be used by the board in the evaluation of requests for security systems that impact the exterior appearance of a facade.

- A. Permanent window and door security bars shall be discouraged on primary facades within the Asian Design Character District. Primary facades are those which front on a public right-of-way or can be viewed from a public right-of-way.
- B. Sliding scissor gates or roll-down panel systems are preferred to minimize the visual impact during business operating hours.
- C. Security systems shall not cover distinctive architectural features on the facade nor should installation damage the structure.
- D. Other security systems considered that do not have a negative visual impact to the exterior facade shall be utilized if feasible. Such systems may include internal alarms or transparent film coverings for windows.

MM/SC/JW/CL 7:0:0 Motion carried.

031015.22

400 S. Jackson St.

*Applicant:* Kathleen Warren, Urban Artworks

*Mr. Grace recused himself, as an employee of the CIDBIA. Ms. Carrillo disclosed that she sits on the CIDBIA board but was on a lengthy personal leave and was not involved with this project.*

Proposed mural sign (“Welcome to the Chinatown International District”) to be installed on the construction wall along S. Jackson St. Dimensions: 100’w x 8’h = 800 sq. ft. total. Exhibits included photographs, rendering and paint samples.

Applicant Comment:

Don Blakeney, CIDBIA, introduced artist Kathleen Warren, and said the proposed mural will beautify the wall and welcome people to the neighborhood. He said that it is temporary; it will be the exact size of the wall and will bolt on with screws to an already painted surface.

Ms. Warren explained that Urban Artworks was contracted by the BIA to beautiful the wall. She said the idea is that this is a portal into the district and welcomes people into the neighborhood. She said the mural was designed by Jesse Brown, an artist who works out of Inscape Arts. She said he took photos of the district and incorporated them into the panels.

Ms. Ware asked if the mural would have an anti-graffiti coat.

Ms. Warren said that it can if necessary but that it is easier for them to just come over and repaint.

Public Comment: There was no public comment.

Ms. Frestedt commented on the differentiation between art and signage and said that this mural also falls under the definition of a sign due to the inclusion of text. She said that although the maximum sign size for a sign in the downtown core is 672 square feet, the downtown sign code excludes the International Special Review District, so the size limitation doesn't apply to this application. She said it is considered a non-commercial message sign, since there is no business or product being advertised, just the neighborhood.

Ms. Leong referred to the cherry blossom mural in Little Saigon and noted that it was approved.

Ms. Frestedt noted that that mural did not include text.

There was a discussion about the differences between a mural and signage, in terms of the land use code. Ms. Frestedt reiterated that the Downtown Sign Code does not apply here and the board can make its decision based on the ISRD code and SMC 23.66.388 – Signs, including criteria for signs in this district.

Ms. Wong noted that the code does not include a maximum size limit and this mural is a wonderful addition to the neighborhood. She said it doesn't advocate for a person or business and has no commercial interest other than the celebration of the neighborhood by the neighborhood.

Ms. Ware agreed and said that the size is in character with the vacant site. She said it activates the pedestrian experience. She said the colors and style fits in with neighborhood elements and references elements of the neighborhood. She said it is temporary.

Ms. Rogers applauded community efforts and said that for reasons already stated she would support the application.

Ms. Leong agreed. She said it is a great job and a great representation of the neighborhood and community and that she supported it.

Ms. Moriguchi supported the application and agreed with other board members. She said that each application is reviewed case by case.

Ms. Carrillo said it is better than what is there now and is beautifully done.

Motion: I move that the International Special Review District Board recommend approval of a Certificate of Approval for design and signage at 400 S. Jackson St.

This action is based on the following:

The proposed design and signage meets the following sections of the **International Special Review District Ordinance and applicable Design Guidelines:**

**SMC 23.66.338 – Signs**

**I. Criteria for Approval**

**Secretary of the Interior’s Standards**

**#9.** New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property.

**#10.** New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be undertaken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

MM/SC/MM/JW 6:0:1 Motion carried. Mr. Grace recused himself.

Ms. Frestedt said that each application is different; this one is temporary and it is acceptable in this case. She said it is a unique situation.

**031015.3 BOARD BUSINESS**

Ms. Frestedt requested FIS forms from members.

**Adjourn**

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