



The City of Seattle

International Special Review District

Mailing Address: PO Box 94649, Seattle WA 98124-4649
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ISR 117/17

MINUTES FOR THE MEETING OF TUESDAY, May 23, 2017

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

Board Members Present

Eliza Chan
Stephanie Hsie, Vice Chair
Tiernan Martin, Chair
Herman Setijono
Valerie Tran

Staff

Rebecca Frestedt
Melinda Bloom

Absent

Carol Leong

Chair Tiernan Martin called the meeting to order at 4:30 pm.

052317.1 APPROVAL OF MINUTES

April 11, 2017
Deferred.

052317.2 CERTIFICATES OF APPROVAL

052317.21 511 S. Weller St. – Uwajimaya Village
Applicant: C.J. Williams, Western Neon

Ms. Frestedt explained the proposed replacement of a 2-sided blade sign for Aloha Plates. Dimensions: 4'w x 1' 2 1/2" h. Exhibits included plans, photographs and samples. She explained that this is a non-contributing building; this façade is located within the Asian Design Character District.

Applicant Comment:

C. J. Williams explained that the tenant is going through a remodel. They will remove the existing sign and replace it with a new design / brand that will be roughly the same size and shape. The framing will be in-kind.

Carol Alexander, Western Neon, said the sign will be non-illuminated.

Mr. Setijono asked if the support structure would be replaced.

Mr. Williams said that the stanchion will be removed and replaced in-kind.

Public Comment: There was no public comment.

Board Discussion:

Mr. Martin said looks similar to the existing sign and meets the clearance requirement.

Action: I move that the International Special Review District Board recommend approval of a Certificate of Approval for signage, as proposed.

The Board directs staff to prepare a written recommendation of approval, based on consideration of the application submittal and Board discussion at the May 23, 2017 public meeting, and forward this written recommendation to the Department of Neighborhoods Director.

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

SMC 23.66.338 - Signs

Secretary of the Interior's Standards #10

MM/SC/HS/VT 6:0:0 Motion carried.

052317.22 720 8th Ave. S. – International Community Health Services

Applicant: Ellen Hagen, Miller Hayashi

Ms. Frestedt explained the proposed replacement of the storefront system on the north façade to add a new 6” concrete curb at the base of the storefront and the proposed reconfiguration of the entry to meet ADA requirements. Proposal includes replacement of an in-filled panel with glazing and frosted window film on one of the openings. A canopy, which had previously been proposed, has been withdrawn from the application. Exhibits reviewed included plans and

photographs. This is a non-contributing building, located outside of the Asian Design Character District. Ms. Frestedt reported that the ISRD Board recommended approval for use for the clinic in February 2017.

Applicant Comment:

Ellen Hagen, architect, said they will replace the storefront in-kind due to damages from weather and the need to reconfigure the entry for ADA access. She said they have added a 6” concrete curb for weather proofing. They will put window film in the upper clerestory to filter the sunlight; the space has a south and western exposure. She said the primary windows will not have film – only the transom clerestory. She said that one window has film to hide mechanical equipment behind; that will remain.

Public Comment: There was no public comment.

Board Discussion:

Board members noted that it was replacement of existing storefront and the transparency requirements are being met. They raised no objections

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

The Board directs staff to prepare a written recommendation of approval, based on consideration of the application submittal and Board discussion at the May 23, 2017 public meeting, and forward this written recommendation to the Department of Neighborhoods Director.

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

SMC 23.66.336 – Exterior building finishes

A. General requirements

C. Exterior building design outside the Asian Design Character District

Secretary of the Interior’s Standards #10

MM/SC/VT/EC 6:0:0 Motion carried.

052317.3 BOARD BRIEFING

052317.31 616 8th Ave. S.

Applicant: Jeff Walls, Studio19 Architecture (on behalf of developer, Hotel Concepts)

Briefing on proposed Use and Preliminary Design (bulk/massing/scale) for new construction of a 14-story mixed-use building, to include 7 levels of hotel, 6 levels of apartments, 2 levels of condominiums and 3 levels of below-grade parking. The total building area is approximately 230,000 sq. ft. The proposal includes demolition of a one-story non-contributing commercial building.

Ms. Frestedt noted that the site is in the IDM 75/85-150 zone. She said there had been two previous briefings, in October 2015 and August 2016, respectively.

For details, PowerPoint Report in DON file.

Han Kim, Hotel Concepts, said they are anxious to start the project.

Jeff Walls, architect, provided context of the site and neighborhood and explained the intent to build seven stories of hotel, five stories of apartments, and two stories of condos. He said that three stories of below grade parking are planned. He recapped the first two briefings and went over massing options explored and which were preferred. He went over the results of a traffic study, indicating 127 vehicle trips and that 176 parking spaces are provided and should be adequate. He said, at the request of the Board, they explored locating access off of 8th Ave. S. He noted the existing programming and circulation on 8th Ave. S. and said that the proposed building façade on 8th is narrower and a garage entry would take up a lot of space. He said that locating the garage off of 8th Ave. S. was not ideal. He provided concept renderings from different angles. He went over the material palette and its compatibility with the district.

Mr. Walls said that Lane is a dead end and the best place for the entrance. He said they will have a drop off space, benches and trees along the green street, landscaping around 8th and Lane and a screening pattern. He noted that the residential entry is lower than the street. He noted upper level setbacks, landscape and buffer on the green street. He went over the shadow study; most shading will be from the south, projecting north and west. He went over the community outreach to date and noted the groups they met with, in addition to the briefings provided to the ISRD. He said they would like to conduct community meetings and said that they listed items community members had said were important. He went over ISRD goals and objectives and said they have worked at different ways to bring in Asian cultural elements, through patterns, textures, colors, art, sidewalk patterns, seating, etc. He said the planned use will be beneficial here and will provide jobs, street level activation, housing – both short term and long term. He said there is only other hotel in the area.

Public Comment: There was a significant amount of public comment. This is a summary of key points.

Frank Irigon was not in support of the project; he said it endangers the culture of the district. He said it is gentrification and it should not be built here.

Ms. Frestedt stated that the Board's jurisdiction is rooted in the land use code and design standards (Design Guidelines and Secretary of the Interior's Standards). She noted that there are copies of these at table.

Ada Lin, CID Coalition, explained how the CID Coalition came together in response to this development. She said there's concern about the hard it could cause and the opportunity it takes away from other developers. She said that the developer outbid nonprofits. She said this development removes the possibility of aging in place for elders and the preservation of the community there. She demanded a full public hearing.

Vic Vong, Beacon Hill resident, said we are all settlers, the Native People were here first. He asked, who puts a hotel in a community, unless they want it to die? He said it will be temporary housing because of proximity to Downtown. SRO were historically in the district; it was the only thing elders could afford. He questioned how this will help build community.

Cynthia Brothers said her grandmother was at Legacy House. The dead end needs to provide for continual access for ICHS, Denise Louie and Legacy House for pick up/drop off and emergency vehicles. She said seniors, children need to navigate cars, traffic. She demanded the board require traffic analysis.

Abby Lawlor, Unite Local 8, said there are two issues with the operations of a hotel. One is the cultural and economic impact on the neighborhood – who will live, work, come here. She said she is concerned about financial viability, including concerns about working conditions. She said that the proposed use won't activate the street.

Sue Kay, CID Coalition, urged the board to deny approval; the hotel should be outside the ISRD boundaries. She said her relatives grew up in Canton Alley. She cited Bob Santos' "Humbows Not Hot Dogs" and drew connections to "Humbows Not Hotels". She said the district is not a pass-through to the stadium.

Steve Sawada, CID Coalition and Evans School (UW) student, said the community needs community-oriented economic development. He said to keep the capital in the community. He said they want agency and support and health and safety of the most vulnerable who could easily be priced out of the neighborhood. He said that it is a massive development that will bring a lot of congestion.

Ms. Frestedt requested public speakers keep their comments to two minutes.

Arista Chen noted she is part of the block watch. She said as she wants to be able to live and work in the District, where she can be within her culture. It feels like

coming home. She said the ISRD's job is to take care of the community; she cited Seattle Municipal Code 23.66.302 – Goals and Objectives. She said a hotel doesn't do these things. She said this could turn into a 'taste for the exotic'. She said they want Asian aesthetic but not Asian people. She said the community needs affordable housing for elders and the most vulnerable. She cited 23.66.324 and said the board has the power and discretion to deny the development of a project. She asked for a public hearing before the vote.

Michelle Wong, CID Coalition & Seattle University student, said if the hotel is built there will be lasting repercussions. She said it will reshape the community structure negatively just as what happened in San Francisco's Chinatown. She urged reconsideration of the project and to demand public hearing for further community input.

Michael Lanthier said this is gentrification. He said affordable housing is needed. He said they are seeing a decline in retail and many businesses are barely holding on. He requested a community-led study to review impacts.

Omari Tahir, Africatown, said he was the owner of the Black and Tan at 12th and Jackson. He said this hotel is not for Asian people. He said that acceptance of the hotel opens up the door to gentrification and gentrification is genocide.

Tyrone Brown, said he is chair of the Historic Central Arts and Cultural district and works for Seattle University. He said he is a neighbor and former resident of the CID. He said change is coming; this proposal is problematic. He voiced concerns about the developer and design team. He said the board will make a recommendation, but ultimately the Department of Neighborhoods Director, Kathy Nyland, will decide. He questioned what power the Board will have if it's a done deal. He asked the board members to take a stand with this property and it is time to say the buck stops here. He said they won't allow the flood gates to open and said to look to the Central Area. He said the ancestors are here speaking to you.

Josephs Lachman, President-elect Japanese-American Citizens League (JACL), said he is speaking as a Japanese-American individual. He said his family lived in Nihonmachi and doesn't want to see any more removed. He said that the Asian aesthetic is not literal window dressing to appease the community and is not acceptable. He said most community groups have not heard from the design team. He said to say no to this project. He said to talk to the community. Responsible development should benefit the community.

Jan Johnson, Panama Hotel, said she bought the Panama 35 years ago to save it for history and education. She said her hotel is full of Asian visitors from all over the world and she sends them to local restaurants. She said the hotel is a National treasure and it could have been a parking lot. She said the current economy in the district is not sustainable. She supports the project. She would like to see the project include a community meeting room.

Brien Chow, Chong Wa, expressed frustration about people calling the district the International District. There are three areas: Japantown, Chinatown and Little Saigon.

Yi Hui said it is disingenuous to have community organizations speaking for the community. She said she is an international student and comes to the neighborhood because it feels like home. She said restaurants are full of white people. She said they colonize spaces like they always do. She expressed concern about new residents, mostly white people, coming into the neighborhood that don't reflect its Asian-American roots. The hotel is not part of the community.

<https://humbowsnohotels.wordpress.com/> was cited by public speakers.

Board Discussion:

Mr. Martin noted that this is a briefing only and no action will be taken. He said they are asking questions to help shape the design going forward.

Mr. Legon-Talamoni asked about south façade setback. He said, as proposed, it is a missed opportunity to integrate pedestrian activity and community focus.

Mr. Walls said the building was pulled back where the drive aisles are. He said it is at the S. property line.

Hui Tian, Studio19, said the corner treatment is prominent to anchor the corner.

Mr. Martin asked them to talk about the relationship with cars at street end on S. Lane St.

Mr. Walls said they will have a check-in lane and drivers won't have to come out into the street again to access the underground parking. He indicated where trash pick-up will be and said they have consolidated curb cuts. He said they probably won't offer valet parking.

Mr. Martin asked how cars will queue.

Mr. Walls said there will be no queue – parking will be based on demand. There will be just a small conferencing center.

Mr. Martin asked if drop off spots could be used by buses for senior center.

Mr. Walls said the drop off zone will be only for the hotel but they could look into it.

Ms. Tran asked about restaurant use at street level. What is the customer demographic?

Ms. Tian said it will be a restaurant for the hotel to providing dining to their guests but it will be open to the public. She said there will be a bar. She said they have gotten feedback from the community that there is demand for a bar here.

Ms. Chan asked what they will do to connect with local restaurants.

Ms. Tian said the dining will not be their primary business but will be an amenity to guests. She said they won't be in direct competition with local restaurants.

Mr. Martin cited 23.66.304C and asked if they have a plan for small retail.

Ms. Tian said because of the nature of the hotel the restaurant will take up the whole space. She said she can talk to their client to see if there is an option to incorporate more.

Ms. Hsie expressed concern about the programing. It will be important to be creative. She noted how small business model was rethought at the Publix Hotel with interior pass throughs with small retail spaces. She noted the burger place on the ground floor that provided views into the kitchen to activate the street. She commented on the S. Lane parking and check in and curb cuts take up a lot of space and cited 23.66.342 – street level uses should be pedestrian oriented. She asked if check in can occur below grade or if the lobby can be on the 2nd level.

Mr. Martin said the residential lobby need not face outward and to replace that space with something that gets at the code's goals and objectives.

Ms. Hsie said to give consideration to inclusion of affordable housing.

Mr. Kim, Hotel Concepts, said they have not considered affordable housing. He commented on the lack of respect in some public comments and said he was ashamed of the racism being displayed by some of the young people giving comment.

There were heated comments by community-members opposed to the project. Ms. Frestedt attempted to restore order so the Board could provide feedback to the applicant.

Mr. Irigon said low-income, rather than affordable, is needed here.

Mr. Martin asked what level of affordability is planned.

Mr. Walls said the housing will be market rate.

Mr. Kim added that to get to affordable housing means building more housing.

Ms. Hsie said, as an architect, she appreciated the team taking time to respond to Board feedback. She said it will be helpful to provide an exhibit showing the massing of the zoning envelope of all buildings in the area were built to max. She said the board needs to understand scale in relation to future development. She said this is the first project of this scale. She said to break up the massing and noted the podium with recessed towers split.

Mr. Legon-Talamoni asked if the idea is that the hotel portion occurs within the brick massing?

Ms. Tian said yes.

Mr. Legon-Talamoni asked how they will represent darkness or shade of brick material.

Ms. Tian said that they studied the context of the site and there is lots of brick in the neighborhood. She said they have responded to the context at the lower level with brick with lighter materials – glass – to reduce the massing on the upper stories.

Ms. Hsie said the land use code favors earthen natural materials. Said that the scale of the brick at the bottom is the scale of existing brick buildings. She directed the applicants to look at how the area buildings are detailed, the texture of the cornice lines and how they transition from brick to what is above. She said it looks flat now. She said she would like to see options for how to express whole volume. She said the development is stepping into new territory and they need to come with a clear statement of what that is. She said this is the first building here that will be this tall. She said it looks “heavy” which adds to the bulk. She said to study window patterning and opacity and how does it enhance the district and add to the character. She said there is lots of glass in Downtown buildings.

Mr. Martin cited 23.66.336 A and C and reiterated the call for earthen colors and materials. He said to keep focus on the base and reduce the visual impact as you go up.

Ms. Hsie noted the preference for sympathetic use of colors as noted in 23.66.336. She said to provide color options and to look at color and its meaning. She suggested looking at a material that does not have to be painted.

Mr. Legon-Talamoni suggested a gesture toward the community on the ground floor. He said the way the hotel as represented looks “dominant and fortified”. He said the explore breaking down the brick portion more. He said to add more transparency. He noted the lack of community amenities at the ground floor.

Mr. Martin cited 23.66.328 B, noting that hotel is a preferred use above street level and said to explore uses at the ground floor.

Mr. Legon-Talamoni said the hotel dominates the use and asked if they have looked at other programming.

Ms. Tian said the top two floors are condo – the client and his family will live there.

Mr. Legon-Talamoni asked what kind of units are planned.

Mr. Walls said studio, one and two-bedroom.

Ms. Tran asked if they considered three to four bedrooms that would accommodate families.

Mr. Walls said they could look into that.

Mr. Martin said add more breaks in the north façade massing.

Ms. Tian said on the north façade there is a recess in the mid-section to provide an illusion of reduced massing. She said there is the option of adding balconies but they may increase perceived massing. She said they have balconies at the corners.

In response to a question from the Board, Ms. Tian went over shadow study findings and said they are to the north of Legacy Housing so shading is not a concern. She said they are to the north of elder care building (Kin On) as well. She said they are below the height limit.

Ms. Hsie reiterated the importance of understanding future massing. She said 3-D massing is needed for this and potential projects. She said she would like to see options that lighten the top up.

There was discussion about the overhang at the roof. It was recommended that they reduce the visual impact of the overhang.

Ms. Tian said that Asian architecture has a roof overhang and they too inspiration from Japan buildings and abstracted their interpretation.

Ms. Hsie said to provide context photos and depth. She asked if it will be an opaque overhang or a trellis and what the visual affect will be.

Mr. Legon-Talamoni said it looks like a cap is stuck on. He said the explore integrating the language throughout as opposed to a crown.

Ms. Tian noted the pedestrian level experience and said the canopy at the lobby is inspired by windows of Asian architecture. She said there is a way to introduce Asian language with introduction of public art. She noted the visibility from the freeway and want to draw attention to the roof.

Mr. Martin said seeing the process would be helpful.

Ms. Tian said the site is outside the Asian Design Character District and said that sometimes Asian design is literal as in the case of the dragons but that here they want to be more abstract. She said they used brick because it is prevalent in the neighborhood. She said they injected red color in the windows with a metal insert to brighten up the dark brick material; she said they will show this at the next presentation. She said they drew windows from Asian architecture. She said a few patterns were summarized together to inject Asian architectural character at street level. She said this meeting covered bulk and massing and later they will explore options with community.

Mr. Martin said that bulk, mass and scale are reviewed at part of Preliminary Design; He wanted to learn more about the window pattern and asked the design team to provide more details about the influence they're drawing from. He said material and architectural detail will be reviewed later, as part of Final Design.

Mr. Legon-Talamoni asked if they had any workshops with the community about architectural character, a design charrette.

Ms. Tian said that next they will explore options with the community.

Ms. Hsie said the restaurant takes up a lot of storefront and said there are creative ways of making hotel uses friendlier. She said the curtain wall looks long and flat. She suggested finding ways to break it up to create more of a hierarchy.

Ms. Chan said to open up ground floor for more community-oriented opportunities.

Mr. Martin suggested more diversity of uses at street level.

Ms. Hsie said hotels are not preferred use at ground level and said there is too much hotel program there now. She suggested looking at ways to reprogram the carport to turn the paving into something else.

Ms. Tian said they will explore other opportunities.

Ms. Tran said to look at King Street green street, Little Saigon Street Concept, Health community, Maynard Avenue Greenway. She said that all had gone through extensive community engagement and to look at them to bring that into what is being done here. She said what they do should be friendly and welcoming to the community.

Mr. Walls said they are working with SDOT on sidewalk paving treatment in green street. He said SDOT wants curb bulbs because they are safer and more inviting.

In response to a question Mr. Walls said they will have bicycle parking.

Mr. Legon-Talamoni asked if vehicle parking is required.

Ms. Tian said it is not required but they plan one parking stall per four rooms.

Mr. Legon-Talamoni asked if they have strategies to reduce public parking.

Ms. Tian said there are traffic and parking concerns on both sides.

Mr. Martin said parking at grade on Lane is an opportunity for more exploration. He said this is adjacent to affordable care community and he suggested a more welcoming frontage. He suggested green spaces above street level and said it is a missed opportunity for public space.

Ms. Hsie said the corner entry of the restaurant seems very private.

Mr. Legon-Talamoni said the residential lobby doesn't have to command such a street presence.

Ms. Frestedt suggested that they look at circulation patterns.

Ms. Hsie said to study pedestrian, vehicle, bike circulation. She suggested looking at what was done at the Publix Hotel with interior public through-ways.

Ms. Frestedt said that Marlin provided comment in paper form; it is in DON file.

Mr. Legon-Talamoni asked about the roof.

Ms. Hsie requested all three departure requests be provided with diagrams.

Ms. Frestedt said she will summarize comments and noted that there is a place on the signup sheet to request being added to the ISRD meeting agenda distribution list.

052317.4 BOARD BUSINESS

Adjourn

Rebecca Frestedt, Board Coordinator
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