



The City of Seattle

Pioneer Square Preservation Board

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

Street Address: 600 4th Avenue, 4th Floor

PSB 309/24

MINUTES for Wednesday, November 20, 2024

Board Members

Maureen Elenga

Sage Kim

Karl Mueller

Jose Lorenzo-Torres

Henry Watson

Staff

Genna Nashem

Melinda Bloom

Absent

Steven Sparks

Chair Maureen Elenga called the meeting to order at 9:03 a.m.

Roll Call

112024.1 Public Comment

Chris Woodward, Alliance for Pioneer Square (APS) spoke in favor of the Water Front panels proposed as part of the East West connections project. They expressed concern about the Prefontaine Fountain and City Hall project's lack of public outreach. They said the proposed changes are significant to a historic feature.

Jeff Murdock, Historic Seattle said comments were sent from Eugenie Woo. They expressed concern about the proposal for Prefontaine Fountain. The fountain is unique and was designed by Carl F. Gould one of Seattle's most prominent architects. The fountain was designed in 1914 and installed in 1925. The fountain is a significant feature of the district, and it retains all seven aspects of integrity as defined by the National Park Service. They said none of the proposals to be presented meet the Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation (SOI).

Demolition or the reinterpretation of the monument as presented should not be approved.

Staff noted that letters were received from 4 Culture and from Historic Seattle saying they did not support the proposal for the Prefontaine.

112024.2 Meeting Minutes

August 7, 2024

MM/SC/KM/JLT

3:0:1 Mr. Watson abstained.

112024.3 Certificates of Approval

112024.31 Occidental Park

117 S Washington St

Installation of a temporary ice rink and storage shed in Occidental Park

Floretta Woart, Downtown Seattle Association proposed temporary installation of an ice rink, 50' x 90' tent to cover the rink, 8' x 8' storage shed. Two security guards will roam the area. The event will run from December 13 – 15, 2024. Cement blocks set on rubber mats will anchor the tent.

Ms. Nashem explained the proposal to install an ice rink in Occidental Park is the same as was installed last year. She said this is the event's third year.

Board members unanimously expressed support for the project.

Action: I move to recommend granting a Certificate of Approval for: installation of an ice rink and tent and storage shed as presented. The Board directs staff to prepare a written recommendation of approval based on considering the application submittal and Board discussion at the November 20, 2024 public meeting and forward this written recommendation to the Department of Neighborhoods Director.

Code Citations:

SMC 23.66.030 Certificates of Approval required

- A. 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.

RULES FOR THE PIONEER SQUARE PRESERVATION DISTRICT

III. GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR REHABILITATION AND NEW CONSTRUCTION

Rehabilitation is defined as the act or process of making possible a compatible use for a property through repair, alterations, and additions while preserving those portions or features which convey its historical, cultural, or architectural values. (7/99) In considering rehabilitation projects, what is critical is the stabilization of significant historical detailing, respect for the original architectural style, and compatibility of scale and materials.

Secretary of Interior's Standards

10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be taken 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/KM/JLT

4:0:1

Motion carried. **Ms. Kim abstained.**

112024.32

New England Building

96 S Main St

Final Design and installation of interpretive panels as part of the Pioneer Square East West Pedestrian Improvements Project

Presentation is for the New England, St. Charles, and Delmar buildings.

Therese Casper provided an overview of the East West Pedestrian Improvements Project and noted they now have building owner approvals for some of the informational panels. Ms. Casper clarified that it was not that the other building owners objected, they just didn't reply to request. She noted that she thought the proposed locations were the most important ones for the purpose of interpretation. The panels are graffiti resistant

Nicole Fischetti, Studio Matthews said the panels tie together the storytelling of the area and were created in collaboration with Valerie Segrest, Native Foods nutritionist, Muckleshoot tribe, and Paige Pettibon who did the illustrations. They said panels provide historical information on clam garden, duck hunting, flounder lagoon all of which actively happened in this region.

Therese Casper said panels would be mounted into mortar joints:

- Clam Garden at 96 S. Main

- Duck Hunting at 87 S. Washington
- Flounder Lagoon at 110 S. Washington

Staff report: The proposed interpretation panels were proposed as part of the East West Streets project, but the final design and installation was to come back to the Board for final design. The Board had supported the concept because it helps tell a fuller story of the history of the area and the indigenous people who were and are still here that is less present in the built environment.

Board member agreed the locations are good to show intent of design and are an important addition to Pioneer Square. They appreciated the installation and noted that the panels could have been bigger. They thought that this project is a model for other places.

Action: I move to recommend granting a Certificate of Approval for installation of interpretive panels per the applicant's submittal. The Board directs staff to prepare a written recommendation of approval based on considering the application submittal and Board discussion at the November 20, 2024 public meeting and forward this written recommendation to the Department of Neighborhoods Director.

Code Citations:

Seattle Municipal Code

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MM/SC/KM/JLT

5:0:0

Motion carried.

112024.33 **St Charles Building**
87 S Washington St

Final Design and installation of interpretive panels as part of the Pioneer Square East West Pedestrian Improvements Project

Staff report: The proposed interpretation panels were proposed as part of the East West Streets project, but the final design and installation was to come back to the Board for final design. The Board had supported the concept because it helps tell a fuller story of the history of the area and the indigenous people who were and are still here that is less present in the built environment.

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MM/SC/KM/JLT

5:0:0

Motion carried.

112024.34

Delmar Building

110 S Washington St

Final Design and installation of interpretive panels as part of the Pioneer Square East West Pedestrian Improvements Project

Staff report: The proposed interpretation panels were proposed as part of the East West Streets project, but the final design and installation was to come back to the Board for final design. The Board had supported the concept because it helps tell a fuller story of the history of the area and the indigenous people who were and are still here that is less present in the built environment.

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MM/SC/KM/JLT

5:0:0

Motion carried.

112024.4

Project Briefings

112024.41 **Prefontaine Fountain and City Hall Park**

Briefing on proposed demolition of Prefontaine Fountain, retaining side panels and sign and construction of a new feature and redesign of City Hall Park

Morteza Behrooz introduced the briefing which would present challenges of current design and opportunities for change. They said the intent is to reduce crime, increase mobility and use of space.

Prefontaine Fountain

Andy Minten, Berger presented (presentation materials in DON file). They said the fountain is in bad shape and is behind a fence because of the crime. They went over the many changes to the area over the years including the addition of the bus tunnel and head house. They detailed existing conditions then shifted to their preferred design iteration which was developed with CPTED principles. They said the head house, fountain wing walls and urns block views and they propose to remove large portions of each. They proposed removal of the fountain and replacement with paved area. Trees would be maintained with unhealthy trees being removed.

They said that the majority of the project would be new construction and they provided two options:

1. Restoration of some units, removal of wall sections, need to find place for vault for fountain equipment. Any human contact with water would require adjacent restroom. New accessible ramp; planting areas; stone 'pebble' seating; stair access to water feature level; new concrete paving; zero-entry wet deck water feature.
2. Reconstruct bowl making it shallower; two 5' – 6' sections removed for ramps; grand staircase on west side of fountain; more landscaping brought in; integrated concrete seat steps; terraced built-in planters with new trees; accessible ramp; brick paving with concrete bands.

The intent is to energize the area. They noted the necessary functional systems (electrical, mechanical and civil systems) required. Access to mechanical room proposed via top-down hatch located on middle landing of new accessible ramp. If there is water, a nearby restroom is required.

The preferred option has no water option and is not as expensive.

City Hall Park

Andy Minten said three charettes were done for City Hall Park. He said design priorities and desired park features identified at multiple charettes included

restrooms, amenities for dogs, public art, expanded food service options, additional and flexible seating, and retention of green space. They provided site history and project context and went over existing conditions using photos. Three design studies were done:

Design Study 1:

Recognize the park is near original shoreline pre-development; consider how to reshape the space with more natural forms; the main structure has elements that form a background for the space; existing trees are preserved and service tunnel are preserved. Accessible pathways are provided along with new seating areas. Park amenities include dog area, restroom, concierge space, and informal seating.

Design Study 2:

Provide canopy walk experience through existing trees that connects to Yesler Way; look for ways to unify the larger park site with Prefontaine Fountain; preserves the large lawn space and repurposes Dilling Way.

Refined scheme moves the pavilion / restroom closer to 3rd Avenue and allows an under 5% canopy walk from 4th up to Yesler Way. Existing trees are preserved, and new setting areas are provided.

Design Study 3:

Looks to keep some of the existing trees, but formalize the park into a symmetrical layout that responds to the historic building; a small parking area is provided off 4th Avenue; the park is setup to function for large events or as a local neighborhood park.

Existing trees are retained, and accessible routes provided that minimize disturbance to the site. New pavilion and restroom is provided along 4th Avenue. A larger dog area is considered to activate the 3rd Avenue edge of the park.

Preferred Design Study:

Existing trees are mostly preserved; accessible pathways are provided along with optional Canopy Walk and new seating areas throughout the park; park amenities include a restroom, concierge pavilion space, and informal seating.

Staff report: Ms. Nashem explained the briefing contains two projects but discussion around the demolition of the Prefontaine Fountain is a priority as it is the priority project for Parks. Staff have asked the applicant to be clear in this presentation about what portions of the Prefontaine fountain will remain and what portions are proposed to be demolished as staff did not think that it was clear in previous presentations. Both the Prefontaine Fountain and City

Hall Park are listed as Historic Contributing to the Pioneer Square Skid Row National Historic District. The historical report provided finds that the fountain and surrounding site of Prefontaine Place (Park) still retains integrity in its unmaintained state and that it continue to be considered contributing to both the National Register District and the local Pioneer Square Preservation District. In addition, it finds that the Prefontaine Place could be eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places and the Washington Historic Register as a stand-alone resource and that it could qualify as independently as a Seattle City Landmark. Included in that significance is that the Prefontaine Place including the Fountain was designed by prominent Seattle Architect Carl F. Gould. Likewise, the report indicates that City Hall Park continue to contribute to the National Register District and the Local Preservation District but that the changes over time have affected the integrity that would be needed to qualify independently for the National Register or a City Landmark. Though no decisions are to be made at the briefing today the Board should weigh in on the proposed demolition of Prefontaine fountain and indicate what additional information they may need before coming to a conclusion. The fountain has been in a state of disrepair for more than 18 years. Over the years Parks staff have approached staff about demolishing the fountain however no historic assessment, condition assessment or specific proposal has been put forth until now.

The code prohibits the demolition of a structure unless the Board finds that the structure has no architectural or historic significance. Historic Preservation Standards would be to maintain the historic resource, and then repair the historic resource. The Board should discuss if they have enough information about why the fountain is not working and what it would take to repair the fountain without replacing it? Does the Board have enough information to agree that it cannot be repaired?

The Board should discuss if they agree with the National Register listing and the provided historic report that Prefontaine Place including the fountain, has architectural and historic significance. The Board might specify if there are any features of the fountain that the Board finds not have significance or if they find that the entire site has significance. Are there parts of the structure that could be demolished without the structure losing its significance? For example the blue tile that were installed in 1967, does the Board find that they have gained significance over time or, because the tile is not original is it not significant.

Section B of the demolition code that says when demolition or removal is essential to protect the public health, safety and welfare the Board may recommend demolition whether the other prerequisites are satisfied or not.

Does the Board have enough information to determine that despite the fountain's historic status, even if repaired or modified it would be a health, safety and welfare concern.

While Parks is proposing to maintain the side panels and a portion of the paving and to modify and reuse the carved sign, are there other parts of the site that should be retained, does the design including the new items and what is salvaged from the fountain mitigate the loss of the historic structure? If the fountain is replaced by a new structure, is water important to the mitigation of the loss of the fountain?

The Board agreed that Prefontaine Fountain has significance and retains integrity and the condition does not diminish the fountain's integrity or ability to convey its significance. The Board cited SMC 23.66.115A and said the Code prohibits demolition of the structure. The design of the rehabilitation must meet Secretary of Interior's Standards (SOI). The Board agreed that the issues with crime are not bigger than the fountain but that neglect of the fountain and lack of programming has contributed to the issues. They did not see demolishing the fountain as necessary or redesigning the space as presented as a solution. They did not agree with the sight line argument and think there is a solution that retains the fountain and improves public safety. The Board noted that art drives the neighborhood and maintaining the fountain should be a focus because it could be enjoyed by all. The Board thought more compelling information is needed if any alterations are to take place.

Clarifying questions of the Board, Andy Minten said the fountain is viewed as aquatic facilities where a restroom within 100' is required and they would have to meet with King County Public Health to determine if a restroom across the street would qualify.

A Board member thought that shallowing the fountain bowl if the rest is restored would be less a diminishment of integrity than what is presented. One member noted that the ramp option was the closest to the SOI.

A Board member asked about the feasibility of maintaining the historical significance of the fountain as a water feature as part of City Hall Park.

Other Board member cited the seven aspects of integrity: location, design, setting, material, workmanship, feeling, association with the site that was donated by Father Prefontaine and said if the fountain moves it loses integrity and would not be in keeping with the standards.

The Board noted that 4Culture commented grants are available and they are eager to talk with SPAR about that to support rehabilitation of the Prefontaine Fountain.

Concerning City Hall Park redesign:

The Board thought the designs seems ultra modern and not in keeping with the historic character of the area. They thought that the design should be especially in keeping with the King County Courthouse building. The Board requested additional illustrations to better convey the appearance of the proposed redesign of the park. Including zoomed out views with buildings including the courthouse both during the day and at night. They supported the idea of more connections through the park.

Andy Minten noted the competing interests and said the primary driver is accessibility through the area. They noted the constraint of having to preserve trees. They said minimum footprint for a dog area is 2,500 square feet. They noted King County was looking at putting in an elevator.

Mr. Mueller wanted to see a zoomed-out view with buildings around the park and courthouse, during day and evening.

112024.5 **Board Business**

112024.6 **Report of the Chair**

112024.7 **Staff Report:** Genna Nashem
Administrative Review report

Genna Nashem
Pioneer Square Preservation Board Coordinator
206.684.0227