



The City of Seattle

Pioneer Square Preservation Board

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

Street Address: 600 4th Avenue, 4th Floor

PSB125/26

Staff Report

Board meeting May 6, 2026

Board Members Please Note: The citations from the District Ordinance, Rules for the Pioneer Square Preservation District, and Secretary of the Interior's Standards listed below are for your consideration in addition to any other citations you find relevant in considering each application.

050626.41 **Manufactures Building/ Railspur**

419 Occidental Ave S

DONH- COA-02092

Applicant: Forest for the Trees

Proposed: Installation of permanent art neon ladder on the fire escape

Staff report: This proposal is to attach the neon ladder to the fires escape using clamps, no penetration or welds. Other equipment is also clamped to the fire escape and no penetrations or attachments for the wiring are indicated.

Board review of art should primarily be guided by the Secretary of Interior Standards in terms of how the art physically impacts a building or site i.e. if it is attached to the building or interacts with a building, it should not cause harm – installation should not damage historic materials and installation should not cover or obscure architectural features, etc. Similar to other amenities in the public right of way or open spaces, the artwork should be durable, safe and not create any security issues or obstruct pedestrian flow. That the colors of the art are generally compatible with the history and character of the site/building and District. Board members should not consider if they personally like the style, quality, or theme of the art.

Draft Motion:

I move to recommend granting a Certificate of Approval for installation of permanent art neon ladder on the fire escape with the artwork and all

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

"Printed on Recycled Paper"

equipment clamped on to the fire escaped. No penetration or welds on the fire escape or building for the artwork or the electrical installation. A dimmer will turn down the light at night. All 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 May 6, 2026 public meeting and forward this written recommendation to the Department of Neighborhoods Director.

Code Citations:

Seattle Municipal Code

23.66.030 Certificates of Approval required

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.

23.66.100 Creation of district, legislative findings and purpose

A. During the City of Seattle's relatively brief history, it has had little time in which to develop areas of consistent historical or architectural character. It is recognized that the Pioneer Square area of Seattle contains many of these rare attributes and consequently is an area of great historical and cultural significance. Further, the regional sports stadiums, constructed in and near the Pioneer Square area, and the traffic and activities that they generate have resulted in adverse impacts upon the social, cultural, historic and ethnic values of the Pioneer Square area. To preserve, protect, and enhance the historic character of the Pioneer Square area and the buildings therein; to return unproductive structures to useful purposes; to attract visitors to the City; to avoid a proliferation of vehicular parking and vehicular-oriented uses; to provide regulations for existing on-street and off-street parking; to stabilize existing housing, and encourage a variety of new and rehabilitated housing types for all income groups; to encourage the use of transportation modes other than the private automobile; to protect existing commercial vehicle access; to improve visual and urban relationships between existing and future buildings and structures, parking spaces and public improvements within the area; and to encourage pedestrian uses, there is established as a special review district, the Pioneer Square

Preservation District. The boundaries of the District are shown on Map A for 23.66.100¹ and on the Official Land Use Map.

Pioneer Square Preservation District Rules

X. FIRE ESCAPES

Fire escapes are important character-defining features of numerous buildings in the District. They are particularly important in contributing to the special character of the District's alleyscapes. Proposals to remove or alter fire escapes shall be reviewed on a case by case basis with special consideration given to safety issues. However, as a general rule, fire escapes shall be retained. (7/99)

Secretary of Interior Standards for Rehabilitation

9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.

10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall 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.

Issued: April 28, 2026

Genna Nashem

Pioneer Square Preservation Board Coordinator
