



The City of Seattle

## Pioneer Square Preservation Board

Mailing Address: PO Box 94649, Seattle WA 98124-4649  
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PSB 101/20

**MINUTES** for Wednesday, July 15, 2020

### Board Members

Lynda Collie  
Kianoush Curran  
Alise Kuwahara Day  
Brendan Donckers  
Audrey Hoyt  
Olivia Price  
Alex Rolluda, Chair

### Staff

Genna Nashem  
Melinda Bloom

### Absent

Felicia Salcedo

Chair Alex Rolluda called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

**In-person attendance is currently prohibited per Washington State Governor's Proclamation No. 20-28.5. Meeting participation is limited to access by the WebEx meeting link or the telephone call-in line provided below.**

**071520.1 APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

December 18, 2019

MM/SC/KC/BD      6:0:1 Minutes approved. Ms. Hoyt abstained.

January 22, 2020

MM/SC/LC/AKD      7:0:0 Minutes approved.

February 5, 2020

MM/SC/LC/OP      6:0:1 Minutes approved. Ms. Hoyt abstained.

February 19, 2020

MM/SC/AH/AKD      5:0:2 Minutes approved. Mr. Donckers and Ms. Price abstained.

**071520.2 PUBLIC COMMENT**

Written public comment was received from Jeffrey Ochsner (letter in DON file) who commented on the significance of architect Elmer Fisher and that the Korn Building may be the first building constructed after the Great Fire. He stressed that reconstruction of a historically accurate cornice would be appropriate. Written public comment was received from Rich Freitas (letter in DON file) who wrote that two former taverns that catered to the LGBTQ community occupied the buildings and called the association significant.

**071520.3 PROJECT BRIEFING**

**071520.31** Half block that is bounded by Yesler Way to the north, Occidental Avenue to the east, South Washington Street to the south, and the alley to the west.

109 Yesler Way: Sanderson

111 Yesler Way: Padden Block/Bohemian Café

119 Yesler Way: Korn Building

107 Occidental Way S: Walker Block/Frye Market

117 Occidental Way S: J&H Hotel/Star Theater

124 S. Washington St: Pacific House/Hotel Interurban

116 S. Washington St: Clancy Building

118 S. Washington St: Scandinavian Hotel

Rehabilitation of existing buildings including include façade restoration, seismic retrofits, and upgrades for energy efficiency, accessibility, reconstruction of floors, and new construction.

Ms. Collie recused herself because Unico is a partner on the project.

Matt Aalfs presented (full presentation packet in DON file). He reported the proposed project encompasses the eight buildings on the half block that is bounded by Yesler Way to the north, Occidental Avenue to the east, South Washington Street to the south, and the alley to the west. The scope of this project includes preservation and rehabilitation of existing buildings, reconstruction of floors that were removed after the 1949 earthquake, and new construction in targeted areas. The work on all eight buildings will include façade restoration, seismic retrofits, and upgrades for energy efficiency, accessibility, and life safety. He said that this project will make a very significant contribution to the physical, commercial, and cultural revitalization of the Pioneer Square District. He said using the Secretary of the Interior's Standards For Treatment of Historic Properties and the NPS Guidelines and Preservation Briefs their approach is centered on the following goals and strategies:

1. Preservation and Rehabilitation of the Korn, Bohemian Café, Merchants Café, Walker, Box House, Clancy, and Stratton buildings.
2. Focus on saving the Korn Building in particular from further deterioration and damage and return it to a productive and occupied building in the District re-

- establish the Korn Building along with the Interurban Building, as the ‘gateway’ to the north entrance of Occidental Avenue and the route to Occidental Park.
3. Reconstruct the missing floors on the Stratton, Clancy, and Box House Buildings along South Washington Street which were removed after the 1949 earthquake.
  5. Replace the non-contributing Casco Antiguo building with a new.
  6. Design a modest addition to the Walker Building that connects the existing scale and massing of the north side of the block with the scale of the reconstructed south end of the block, while respecting the physical prominence of the Korn Building.
  7. Increase the safety and resiliency of the District by bringing eight URM buildings up to seismic code using an innovative seismic retrofit strategy that stabilizes all eight buildings comprehensively – rather than eight separate seismic retrofits.
  9. Environmentally responsive design strategies including LEED Gold Certification, Zero Carbon development, and design for occupant health and wellness.
  10. Improve and revitalize the pedestrian experience and the retail environment on Yesler, Occidental, and South Washington. Build-on and enhance the existing pedestrian experience of the Alley.
  11. Provide increased employment and activity in the District with new office uses in the upper floors, and new or revitalized commercial and retail uses at the street level of all eight buildings.

He described the block is comprised of eight adjacent buildings; six are considered *historic*, contributing buildings and two are considered *historic, noncontributing* to the Pioneer Square —Skid Row Historic District. All of the buildings at full development were constructed immediately after the fire, during the first period of significance in the district, and remained primarily intact until the earthquake of 1949 damaged three of the buildings enough to have resulted in the loss of upper floors. The following report details the history and architectural features of the following buildings.

Responding to Board questions Mr. Aalfs said many existing or former openings on the alley could be re-established as windows or food service or micro retail.

Mr. Aalfs said he thought the height limit was 85' and they were staying below that at 75'. Ms. Nashem noted height limit might be 100' on this block.

Mr. Aalfs showed design studies with a variety of heights on the blocks. He showed existing architectural references prompting new design in pattern of bays and proportion of windows. He said new floors should reference to original bay patterns, window proportions and materials. He said the new building at Casco Antigua site could be a gasket or differentiator; it could signify the main entrance to the building. At the south end of the block he showed concept of gasket or seam between existing architecture and proposed. He provided options for seismic retrofit: a standard retrofit of each building and full block seismic retrofit.

Responding to questions, Mr. Aalfs provided an early photo of the Korn Building showing its parapet.

Mr. Aalfs said he is studying how high and how deep the seam horizontal seam on south elevation of the “Box” new addition should be and noted there would be no flimsy sheet metal.

Mr. Aalfs said there is an interest in outdoor amenities with a possible outdoor terrace on the south end and potential for penthouse over Walker Building with amenity space. He said railings would be held back so they would not be visible from the street.

Ms. Nashem asked board members to speak to proposed demo.

Mr. Rolluda asked to see photo of Casco Antigua building and The Box.

Mr. Aalfs said it looks like the building was altered post-1949 earthquake and there is no appearance of original façade elements.

Mr. Aalfs requested input on proposed strategy for addition on Walker Building. He said he felt there was some precedent in Preservation Brief 14. He said the connection of the masses is significant.

Mr. Donckers asked if the board concludes that four stories on the Walker side is inconsistent with Preservation Brief 14, what would it look like. He said there are good arguments in proposal.

Mr. Aalfs didn't know. He said a two-story addition with penthouse setback could be considered a three-story building. He said they could discuss having no penthouse. He said there are constraints between rentable area and development costs.

Mr. Donckers said the general approach and the design of each of the four buildings is appropriate; it looks at each building individually and harmonizes the block. It is a step in the right direction.

Mr. Aalfs said they could do further studies and show what is visible from pedestrian view. He noted the unique circumstances of working with multiple buildings and reconstructed floors. He said Walker Building is bookended from the north and the south; it is a unique condition.

Ms. Kuwahara Day said pedestrian-level views would help understand prominence of the Walker addition and penthouse. She said the Korn Building should be anchor and asked why the new building would be the tallest on the block.

Mr. Aalfs directed board members to page 10 of the presentation packet. He said the proposed addition to the Walker Building respects the mass of the Korn Building and is subservient to it. He said Casco Antigua building will be replaced with new construction and is an opportunity to further differentiate the mass. He said it is an opportunity to break the plane of overall mass and to differentiate new construction and provide less of a monolithic mass.

Ms. Kuwahara Day said the approach to treat the buildings as separate buildings seems compatible and adds to the character of the block.

Ms. Nashem asked what additional information was wanted.

Mr. Aalfs said he would follow up on the Rich Freitas letter and would respond.

Ms. Curran said she didn't need anything beyond what other board members had discussed.

Mr. Aalfs confirmed the request for pedestrian studies and more information on proposed massing on addition. He asked board members if there was a pathway forward with the proposal.

Mr. Rolluda said that pedestrian level views will influence how they look at the massing.

Ms. Kuwahara Day said it is helpful to evaluate the addition using Preservation Brief 14 and if it would be possible to do the project without it. She noted the benefit to the district to rehabilitate buildings that are not being used. She said to show benefits provided for other buildings as well.

Mr. Aalfs said the Yesler side buildings are a key part of the project functionally. The project allows continuous floor plates and functional benefit. He said other benefit is that all eight buildings will be brought up to Code compliance from high risk / hazard and will be brought back into use.

Responding to questions, Mr. Aalfs said the Walker building is 6400 square feet per floor plate.

Ms. Hoyt said the new building is on a narrower lot which reduces the scale of the building. She said the staggered look of heights helps a lot. She agreed with Ms. Kuwahara Day's request to identify the need for the height. She asked for more pedestrian views. She said the new building would feel larger if the footprint were wider; the narrowness mitigates any heaviness.

Mr. Rolluda asked if there was any thought about setting back upper floors on new building on the east side and how that would affect the block and views.

Mr. Aalfs said there is a vertical seam between.

Mr. Rolluda said the setback might create modulation and accentuates new from. He asked about recess on alley side.

Mr. Aalfs said it is existing, and the Casco Antigua footprint doesn't go all way out to alley. He said the recess is now used by the restaurant as outdoor seating. He said they hope to maintain the setback and re-establish openings for micro retail, food

service etc. to enhance alley. He said there is focus on alley activation; a bike amenity is planned and could provide access to it from alley.

Mr. Aalfs said it makes sense and they will study that as they proceed and find authentic ways to break the mass.

**071520.4** **BOARD BUSINESS**

**071520.5** **REPORT OF THE CHAIR:** Alex Rolluda, Chair

**071520.6** **STAFF REPORT:** Genna Nashem

Genna Nashem  
Pioneer Square Preservation Board Coordinator  
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