



The City of Seattle

Landmarks Preservation Board

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LPB 349/25

MINUTES

Landmarks Preservation Board Meeting

Hybrid Meeting via Webex Webinar or Room L2-80 Boards & Commissions

Seattle City Hall, 600 4th Avenue, Floor L2

Wednesday, November 5, 2025 – 3:30 p.m.

Board Members Present

Roi Chang Vice-Chair (RC)
VJ Kopacki (VK)
Ian Macleod, Chair (IM)
Lora Ellen McKinney (LEM)
Lawrence Norman (LN)
Becca Pheasant (BP)
Katie Randall (KR)
Erica Thomas (ET)
Harriet Wasserman (HW)

Board Members Absent

Taber Caton (TC)
Cameron Wong (CW)

Staff Present

Sarah Sodt (SD)
Erin Doherty (ED)
Nelson Pesigan (NP)
Rebecca Frestedt (RF)

Key

BM Board Member
AP Applicant
SM Staff Member

Chair Ian Macleod called the meeting to order at 3:33 p.m.

110525.1 ROLL CALL

110525.2 PUBLIC COMMENT

Melissa Riddington from District 6 addressed safety concerns at Gas Works Park and shared the story of Mattheis Johnson, a 15-year-old neighbor she had known since childhood. Melissa criticized the board for overriding proposed public safety modifications from Seattle Parks, noting that its members lack direct public safety expertise, and urged the board to reconsider its decision, allow park officials to implement safety measures and honor Mattheis' memory by protecting the community.

Heather Andersen, a registered nurse and Ballard resident, spoke about the recent fatal accident at Gas Works Park, emphasizing the severe and preventable nature of the injuries sustained by 15-year-old Mattheis Johnson, and noted a long history of falls, mostly among teenagers, and urged stronger safety measures give the documented hazards and disrepair of the structures.

BM Lawrence Norman joined at 3:37 p.m.

Roisin McGlynn, a District 4 parent, spoke on behalf of over 350 community members supporting Seattle Parks' safety proposal for Gas Works Park, and urged the board and City Council to prioritize public safety over aesthetics, overturn the rejection, and allow modifications to prevent further injuries and deaths.

Stephanie Gardner, a Ballard resident and neighbor of the Johnson family, urged the board to remove the ladders and catwalks at Gas Works Park, emphasizing the ongoing risk of accidents, speaking as both an engineer and a mother, she stressed that teenagers' impulse control makes fall inevitable and called on adults to act responsibly to prevent future tragedies.

Carrie Rees Johnson, mother of Mattheis, spoke about the loss of her son following the Gas Works Park accident and urged the board to take action so no other family endures such tragedy, asking the board members to consider what they would do if it were their own child.

Pete Looney, a District 6 parent, spoke about the loss of Mattheis Johnson, his daughter's close friend, and emphasized that the most tragic events are often preventable, and urged the board to reconsider safety measures at Gas Works Park, noting that Seattle parents would be grateful for changes that protect future generations.

Adam Johnson, father of Mattheis, spoke about his family's ongoing grief and emphasized the need to prevent similar tragedies, and urged the board to move forward with the planned and funded safety measures, noting there is no reason to delay action.

Ruthanne Swanson, a parent from Everett, emphasized that Mattheis' death has impacted communities well beyond Seattle, and urged the board to remove the climbable structures at Gas Works Park, stressing that every child's life is valuable regardless of character and that future tragedies must be prevented.

Jerrica Kostis, speaking on behalf of Carrie and Adam Johnson, urged the board to reconsider its decision regarding Gas Works Park safety, emphasizing the preventable nature of Mattheis Johnson's death and stressed that aesthetics should not outweigh lives and suggested at minimum modifying ladders and stairs to prevent access.

Eleanor Thompson, a Ballard resident, parent, and curator, emphasized that Gas Works Park's history can be preserved without retaining hazardous features and urged the board to remove the ladders noting that better signage and interpretation could honor the site's industrial past while protecting young people from preventable harm.

110525.3 MEETING MINUTES

October 15, 2025

MM/SC/BP/LEM

60:3

The motion to approve the minutes passed. BM Randall and Kopacki abstained. BM Norman was not present at the October 15 meeting.

110525.4 CONTROLS & INCENTIVES

110525.41 Horton House

627 14th Ave E

Request for extension

SM Doherty informed the board that the applicant is requesting a three-months extension and has been continuing to communicate with the owners of the house.

MM/SC/HW/VK

9:0:0

The motion passed and approved unanimously.

110525.5 SPECIAL TAX VALUATION

110525.51 International Special Review District 611 8th Ave S.-Eng Family Homestead

SM Rebecca Frestedt, coordinator for the International Special Review District Board (ISRD) and the Columbia City Landmark District, presented two special tax valuations for the ISRD and Columbia City.

SM Frestedt provided an overview of the City of Seattle Special Tax Valuation Program. The program allows property owners of designated landmarks or contributing buildings within a local or national registered district to apply for tax benefits. For eligibility, renovation work must be completed, approved by the respective board or commission, and the renovation expenses must be equal or exceed 25% of the assessed value of the improvement. A special tax valuation application has been received for the Eng Family Homestead located at 611 8th Ave S.

SM Frestedt presented a brief overview and walkthrough of the renovations for the Eng Family Homestead including structural, architectural and systems work as well as interior work.

Chair Macleod expressed appreciation for the current exterior and interior work being done, noting that the photos presented reflect the project's faithfulness to the original structure.

BM Wasserman agreed with Chair Macleod's comments and added that it was nice to see the remodeling work, noting the effort to keep the house consistent with its original form.

Action:

Proposed Motion: I move that the Landmarks Preservation Board approve the following property for Special Tax Certification: Eng Family Homestead, 611 8th Ave S. This action is based upon the criteria set forth in Title 84 RCW Chapter 449; and based on the recommendation of the International Special Review District Board which made the following findings at its meeting of October 28, 2025; and that the property is a contributing building located in the International Special Review District, and has not been altered in any way that adversely affects those features that identify its significance or contribution to the International Special Review District; and has substantially improved in the 24-month period prior to application, and that the recommendation is conditioned upon the execution of an agreement between the Local Review Board as required by Title 84 RCW, Chapter 449.

MM/SC/LEM/KR

8:0:1

The motion passed and was approved. Vice Chair Roi Chang recused from the voting.

110525.52 Columbia City Landmark District 4820-4828 Rainier Ave S. - Rainier Edmunds Building

SM Frestedt presented an overview and walkthrough of the renovations and improvements for the Rainier Edmunds Building, including interior work to make the restroom ADA compliant, the addition of parapet bracing, installation of a heat pump and heating system, and interior and park renovations.

Vice Chair Chang asked whether the current work was being carried out for the entire building or limited to a specific space.

SM Frestedt noted that some seismic work had already been completed in the previous retail spaces and referred the question to property owner Frank Buchanan for further information.

Frank Buchanan noted that the work began at the corner of the building and extended through the Molly Moon space into the retail bay on the north end, which includes a brace frame tied back to the concrete beam spanning all three storefronts. Frank explained that this type of work serves as a global stabilization and stiffening device for the entire building, along with the addition of parapet bracing on the west, south, and east sides.

Chair Macleod was curious how much uncovered original material was found at the Olympic Coffee space which was remodeled when it was a Starbucks store.

Frank Buchanan noted in the photos that some of the floors are original, while others are concrete with original tiles, and explained that efforts were made to maintain consistency, even though not all of the floors are original.

Chair Macleod expressed appreciation for the current work, especially with the seismic improvements across the whole building.

Vice Chair Chang echoed Chair Macleod's comments and expressed appreciation for this type of improvement in an existing historic building, noting its role in keeping tenants and the public safe despite challenges with cost and coordination among tenants and neighboring spaces.

Other board members expressed their appreciation for the current work, emphasizing the importance of seismic upgrades and improvements made possible through the special tax valuation.

Action:

Proposed Motion: I move that the Landmarks Preservation Board approve the following property for Special Tax Certification: Rainier Edmonds, 4820-4828 Rainier S. This action is based upon the criteria set forth in Title 84 RCW Chapter 449; and that the property is a contributing building located in the Columbia City Landmark District, and has not been altered in any way that adversely affects those features that identify its significance or contribution to Columbia City Landmark District; and has substantially improved in the 24-month period prior to application, and that the recommendation is conditioned upon the execution of an agreement between the Local Review Board as required by Title 84 RCW, Chapter 449.

MM/SC/BP/ET

9:0:0

The motion passed and was approved unanimously.

110525.6 CERTIFICATES OF APPROVAL

110525.61 Pacific Science Center

200 Sue Bird Court N

Proposed installation of doors at former exterior wall

Applicants Madchen Beltrie and Owen Richards presented a brief overview of the proposed changes to the Pacific Science Center. The proposed changes include installation of a pair of doors at the 1962 exterior wall, between Buildings 2 and 2A.

Chair Macleod expressed appreciation to the presenters for providing additional details that had been presented at the Architectural Review Committee (ARC) meeting and was favorable to the proposal.

BM Wasserman noted that the presenters summarized the presentation well and addressed the ARC's request and was happy to move forward and approve the proposal.

Vice Chair Chang asked about the arches and how the steel pieces will preserve the façade and when was the Pacific Science Center designated as a landmark.

AP Richards described the modifications being made to the west side of Building 2's courtyard, noting that the east side is similar. Owen pointed out the existing single doors are being replaced with double-wide doors to facilitate movement and exhibits. The new opening will be wider and taller, requiring some cutting into the arch at the center, but the sides will remain intact.

AP Beltrie noted that the Pacific Science Center was designated as a landmark in 2010.

SM Erin Doherty noted that the entire exterior of the building has been designated as a landmark feature and emphasized that it should be reviewed as part of the building's exterior since it is an original element of the exterior of the historic structure.

BM Pheasant noted that the details requested by the ARC were answered and agreed that the revised proposals are reasonable.

BM Erica Thomas asked about the construction timeline for the project.

AP Richards noted the process is straightforward and simple, with the goal of starting the work as soon as possible potentially by the end of the year.

AP Beltrie noted that the construction is planned to begin in January of next year in order to minimize the impact on guests and visitors.

BM VJ Kopacki expressed appreciation for the reversibility of the feature and was pleased to see this acknowledgement, given the prior changes made in the 1990's and the improvements to the process reflected in the plans for this project.

BM Randall noted that the proposal is reasonable and understandable, recognizing that an additional door may be needed to address circulation needs and appreciated the thoughtfulness of the design, which makes the change potentially reversible in the future.

Other board members echoed their support for the proposal, noting that it is minimally invasive and reversible.

Action:

I move that the Seattle Landmarks Preservation Board approve the application and issue a Certificate of Approval for the proposed doors at the Pacific Science Center, 200 Sue Bird Court N, as per the attached submittal.

This action is based on the following:

1. With regard to SMC 25.12.750 A, the extent to which the proposed alteration or significant change would adversely affect the features or characteristics described in Ordinance 124932.
 - a. The new doors and necessary structural supports are located in a manner to minimize the number of decorative concrete ribs affected. Although these details will be recovered by the furred-out gypsum wallboard partition, they may be exposed in the future if the partition is removed.

2. With regard to SMC 25.12.750 B, the reasonableness or lack thereof of the proposed alterations or significant change in light of other alternatives available to achieve the objectives of the owner and the applicant.
 - a. The new doors are needed to support circulation between the exhibit spaces, and no alternatives were requested.
3. The factors of SMC 25.12.750 C, D and E are not applicable.

MM/SC/VK/RC

9:0:0

The motion passed and approved unanimously.

110525.7 NOMINATION

110525.71 American Can Company Factory Building
2601 Elliott Avenue

Presenter Ellen Mirro of Studio TJP introduced Applicant Matt Hardy of the Vanbarton Group to present a brief history and walkthrough of the building.

The site and building exterior were presented as significant features and characteristics for consideration in the nomination. Ellen Mirro described the building's history and physical evolution in detail.

BM Thomas expressed appreciation for the beautiful presentation and acknowledged the time and effort invested in the work.

BM Kopacki expressed appreciation for the original drawings, newspaper clippings, and photos from various development phases, noting that they characterize the building's history and bring it to life in a wonderful way.

BM McKinney asked about the trees and whether there were any issues related to their position along the building.

Presenter Mirro mentioned that there were no concerns with the building façade near the trees and stated that further investigation would be conducted if any issues were identified.

Chair Macleod inquired about the building's history, noting that it had once operated as a can factory before reopening as the city's first major convention center.

Presenter Mirro explained that, due to changes in trade, the factory transitioned its operations and began focusing on apparel and garments.

Chair Macleod inquired whether any research had been conducted on the building's transition from a canning facility.

Presenter Mirro explained that the building shifted directly from serving as a canning facility to becoming the Seattle Trade Center, where a group of investors collaborated to repurpose it as a trade center.

BM Pheasant asked whether the east side of the building still has the stepped parapets on the original portion, and whether the west side facing the water and the railroad tracks remain flat.

Presenter Mirro explained that the east side served as the main entry to the building, with another full entrance located at the northeastern corner near Elliott. The water side functioned as the working side, where massive rolls of aluminum were transported across the skybridge to be used in can production. Materials arrived both via the pier crossing the skybridge and by train. In essence, the east side was the public face of the building, while the west side was its industrial hub.

BM Pheasant asked for context about the building's interior, specifically, the activities originally took place inside compared to how the spaces have been adapted over time.

Presenter Mirro explained that the interior history of the building is difficult to fully understand. While it is known that the facility included a cafeteria, produced cans, packed them, and manufactured canning equipment, the specific locations of these activities within the building are unclear.

Presenter Mirro noted that records indicate that the female workers packed cans and that the American Can Company processed products such as fish, beer, and other beverages. Due to later conversions, first into a trade center and then during the 1996-2000 renovations, much of the original evidence has been obscured by structural changes and the addition of drywall and floor coverings.

Chair Macleod asked about the Ralph Anderson era, specifically regarding the atrium and inquired whether it existed prior to the Trade Center era and if it had been carved out of the original floor plates or was created at a later time.

Presenter Mirro explained that the floor plates were continuous factory floor.

Vice Chair Chang asked whether any seismic retrofits or renovations have occurred, particularly in connection with the noted change of use and how long the building has been vacant and whether its vacancy could trigger a substantial duration of requirement once a new use is introduced.

Presenter Mirro noted that the only visible seismic upgrades in the building are on the fifth-floor penthouse, where fireproofing and brace frames remain from the 1990's, and changes from that era were mostly cosmetic, such as drywall and carpeting.

Regarding future use, Presenter Mirro confirmed that AP Hardy and his team are planning an adaptive reuse project to convert the building from commercial to residential. Discussions with SM Sarah Sodt suggest that, since exterior changes will be minimal, most permit approvals will be administrative, though some exterior details may require full board review. For now, the focus is on recognizing the building's ongoing presence and its contribution to the city, with the belief that it merits landmark status.

BM Pheasant commented that there was a new ordinance passed that removed the 24-months issue for substantial alterations.

BM Thomas remarked that the building is one of the most beautiful in the area, and suggested that converting it from commercial to residential use could raise question about preserving its landmark status and integrity, and while such change would require future approval, it is an idea worth considering.

Vice Chair Chang expressed appreciation for the report and the historical perspective it provided on the building, noting the impressive scale captured in aerial photographs, and agreed with Presenter Mirro that criteria C and F stand out most prominently and supports including all listed criteria at the outset.

BM Kopacki voiced strong support for the nomination, emphasizing the building's consistent care and attention to detail over time, as well as the commitment to preserving it into the future, and expressed enthusiasm about continuing the conversation and seeing how collective thoughts develop around the nomination.

BM Randall noted that the property appears to meet criteria C and possibly F and looks forward to furthering discussion. BM Randall highlighted the building's strong connection to Seattle's canning history, emphasizing how this

industry shaped local communities and felt the nomination captures this history well and expressed support for it.

BM Wasserman expressed strong support for the nomination, noting her surprise that the building had not been considered earlier given its historical significance and looks forward to seeing the nomination advance to designation.

BM Norman voiced support for the designation and agreed that the property clearly meets criteria C and noted that criteria F is less commonly applied but is appropriate given the building's size and visibility and expressed strong support for the nomination.

BM Pheasant expressed support for the nomination, noting the building's strong historical connections and integrity, and found it especially compelling that the property represents an early example of modern preservation standards following the passage of the Preservation Act. BM Pheasant remarked that the nomination provides sufficient information and did not feel additional details were necessary and would welcome a tour out of personal interest in historic buildings.

BM McKinney appreciated that the presentation highlighted how the building's history reflects multiple generations adapting its use to meet evolving needs and emphasized that the building's layered stories are fascinating and were well presented.

Chair Macleod agreed with the points raised by other board members and expressed support for moving forward with the nomination, stating that the site and exterior should be nominated, while the interior does not appear to warrant inclusion unless other board members feel strongly.

SM Sodt will follow up with Ellen Mirro and Matt Hardy to arrange a building tour.

Action:

I move that the Board approve the nomination of the former American Can Company Factory at 2601 Elliott Avenue for consideration as a Seattle Landmark; noting the legal description in the Nomination Form; that the features and characteristics proposed for preservation include: the site, and the exterior of the building; that the public meeting for Board consideration of designation be scheduled for December 17, 2025; that this action conforms to the known comprehensive and development plans of the City of Seattle.

MM/SC/LEM/RC

9:0:0

The motion passed and was approved unanimously.

110525.8 BOARD BUSINESS

There was no board business.

Meeting adjourned at 5:53 pm