



The City of Seattle

Landmarks Preservation Board

Mailing Address: PO Box 94649 Seattle WA 98124-4649
Street Address: 700 5th Ave Suite 1700

LPB 537/08

MINUTES

**Landmarks Preservation Board Meeting
Seattle Municipal Tower
700 5th Avenue, 40th Floor
Room 4060
Wednesday, August 20, 2008 – 3:30 p.m.**

Board Members Present

Vernon Abelsen
Jerry Finrow
Henry Matthews
Tom Veith
Stephen Lee
Ron Martinson
Czarina Nicolas
Marie Strong
Mollie Tremaine
Alyce Conti
Mark Hannum

Staff

Elizabeth Chave
Sarah Sodt
Melinda Bloom
Karen Gordon

Absent

Henry Matthews
Christine Howard

Chair Stephen Lee called the meeting to order at 3:34 PM.

- 082008.1 APPROVAL OF MINUTES**
Meeting of July 2, 2008
MM/SC/MT/JF 8:0:0 Minutes approved as amended.
- 082008.2 SPECIAL TAX VALUATION**
- 082008.21 US Immigration Building
84 Union Street

Karen Gordon explained the Special Tax Valuation program and process. She presented the staff report.

Board Discussion:

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

"Printed on Recycled Paper"

Mssrs. Abelsen and Lee spoke about the benefit of rehabbing old buildings.

Action: I move that the Landmarks Preservation Board approve the following property for Special Tax Valuation: U.S. Immigration Building, 84 Union Street, that this action is based upon criteria set forth in Title 84 RCW Chapter 449; that this property has been substantially improved in the 24-month period prior to application; and that the recommendation is conditioned upon the execution of an agreement between the Landmarks Preservation Board and the owner.

MM/SC/MH/VA 8:0:1 Motion approved. Mr. Veith abstained.

082008.3 CERTIFICATES OF APPROVAL

082008.31 Shafer Building/Sixth and Pine Building
515 Pine Street
Proposed new business signage

Summary of proposed changes: Proposed new business signage.

Sarah Sodt explained the application for a wall sign and a hanging sign. They will be using existing brackets for the hanging sign.

Board Questions:

The Board expressed some concern about how the sign would fit within the existing module above the door but determined that although awkward without double doors it is removable.

Public comment: There was no public comment.

Board Discussion: Board members determined they had enough information to make a decision.

Action: I move that the Seattle Landmarks Preservation Board approve the application for the proposed business signage.

This action is based on the following:

1. The proposed alterations do not adversely affect the features or characteristics specified in Ordinance No. 113430, because the proposed alterations do not destroy historic materials that characterize the property, and are compatible with the massing, size, scale and architectural features of the property, as per Standard #9 of the *Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation*.
2. The other factors in SMC 25.12.750 are not applicable to this application.

MM/SC/VA/MS 9:0:0 Motion approved.

082008.32

Wallingford Center

1815 N. 45th St.

Proposed signage for Trophy Cupcakes

Summary of proposed changes: Proposed freestanding sign for Trophy Cupcakes

Ms. Chave explained that the free standing lollipop style sign would be installed into the paved area; and it is confirmed that is not in the public right-of-way. She said the ARC asked for confirmation from the property manager (Lorig) that other signage that was proposed for this location in a previously approved sign plan is not going to be next to the sign; she said she received a letter from Lorig that this will be the only sign installed at this location and will be installed in lieu of the permanent Wallingford Center identify sign that at one point was being considered for this location. Photos of sign and location were provided to the Board for review.

Ms. Conti arrived at 3:47 PM.

Applicant Comments:

Steve Sampson, Heath Northwest Signs, provided a drawing, sample, colors and materials for Board review.

Board Questions:

Mr. Lee stated it was straightforward.

Public Comment: There was no public comment.

Board Discussion:

Mr. Veith expressed concern about the signs at this building and the potential for getting too many of these signs around the building.

Mr. Abelsen agreed with Mr. Veith.

Ms. Chave informed the Board that the applicant has made effort to get the property manager's cooperation on their sign.

Action: I move that the Seattle Landmarks Preservation Board approve the application for the proposed freestanding sign for Trophy Cupcakes. This action is based on the following:

The proposed alterations do not adversely affect the features or characteristics specified in the Designation Report as the proposed sign does not destroy historic materials that characterize the property, and is compatible with the massing, size and scale and architectural features of the landmark, as per Standard #9 of the *Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation*. .

The other factors in SMC 25.12.750 are not applicable to this application.

MM/SC/MT/JF

10:0:0

Motion approved.

082008.4 NOMINATIONS

082008.41 MGM Building
2331 2nd Avenue

Sarah Sodt explained the MGM Building is a Category 1 building in the Downtown Survey and introduced Mimi Sheridan who would present the nomination for the City.

Ms. Sheridan provided the building context in the heart of Belltown (the full report is in the file). Most of the buildings along 2nd Avenue are from the 1920s; the block has a lot of intact 1920s buildings. The MGM Building was built in 1936 as a film exchange for MGM; the architect was Edmund Denle from San Francisco. Interior alterations were done in 1941 by local architect Bjerne Moe. In the 1960s the building was converted to offices. Currently the building is used as a store and restaurant.

The film industry was very important to local culture. MGM was one of the most important studios for many years and was formed in 1924 by the merger of Metro, Goldwyn, Mayer. It was a vertically integrated company which means it controlled everything: writing, casting, production, marketing, distribution and it had its own theaters, the Loews Theater Chain. In 1954 they were forced by the Federal Government to sell their theaters and by the 1960s the studio system was falling apart and they had to release their contract players. In the 1970s the whole company fell apart and the main assets (Culver City lot and Film Library) were sold. MGM still exists as a production company but is only vaguely related to the original MGM.

Ms. Sheridan explained that about thirty film rows existed across the country in mid-sized cities and Seattle was important because this film row handled the distribution of films for Alaska, Idaho, Washington and western Montana and was the largest for the area it served. Moving pictures started taking off early in the century and the first film exchange was identified in 1905 downtown. By 1920 they moved near 3rd and Lenora and by 1928 there was a full block film exchange building was built at 3rd and Battery. In addition to the film exchanges there were a lot of related businesses that located near them.

Ms. Sheridan explained the building was a special building type and was constructed to house nitrate film which was extremely flammable and explosive. The exchange buildings were concrete construction with special vaults with fire proof doors that housed the film. The front of the building was office and sales where theater managers who would come from throughout the region would come to talk about the movies and figure out what they would show next week. There was a poster room that housed the posters and marketing materials. The film examination room was a high security area where films were inspected upon return before being sent out again. The shipping room has an alley exit. One window has been converted to a door.

Ms. Sheridan talked about film row today and stated the intact Roc La Rue Gallerie was an RKO film exchange. The Paramount exchange is somewhat altered. One of

the most important, the Rendezvous, has been altered but inside has an intact screening room which is the only one existing.

Ms. Sheridan stated the expression of Art Deco in this building is important as it is unusual in Seattle. Art Deco became popular here in the late 1920s and 1930s after the exposition in Paris where these ideas were brought out into the world. They were a more modern approach that moved away from the classical columns and ornamentation. It is extremely varied and combines both geometric and naturalist motifs. Ms. Sheridan provided Seattle examples of this style as well as examples of Moderne. The setback is important and there are only a few local buildings that exhibit that: Harborview, Public Health Hospital and the Northern Life Tower.

Ms. Sheridan explained this is the only building in Seattle with black terracotta. The combination of the black and yellowish brick is dramatic and is emblematic of the film industry. The parapet steps up above the entry and is flanked by terra cotta pieces that extend down to the top of the entry. Arrow-shaped medallions project above the parapet at regular intervals, four on each side of the entry. Arrow-shaped pilasters mark the building corners, extending above the parapet, which is capped with black terra cotta. The parapet and terra cotta extend about one-third of the way around the north elevation. Much of the façade is currently covered with vines, obscuring the terra cotta.

The front of the building was a storefront with sales area and poster room with the rear of the building having a strong industrial aesthetic. Ms. Sheridan wasn't sure what the original use of the courtyard was. The entry to the courtyard is clearly original, as it is flanked by brick and terra cotta that marches the building. It has a decorative metal gate that may have been added later. In contrast to the decorative front facade, the rear two-thirds of the building are essentially industrial in character, reflecting the warehouse and storage function of the building. The rear of the building is straightforward with two doors, one being the shipping door and the other one to the examination room.

Board Questions:

Ms. Tremaine asked if there was ever an explosion.

Ms. Sheridan didn't know of one.

Ms. Conti asked if the windows and the courtyard were original and Ms. Sheridan replied she was not sure but that the brick entry gate appears to be. The door from the building to the courtyard is not on the drawings but looks to be original; it could have been something that was put in by Moe. She thought it might have been a place for socializing and schmoozing; it may have been a place for entertaining customers.

Mr. Hannum asked if this building had been a prototype for other buildings.

Ms. Sheridan found a description of the MGM film exchange in Charlotte, North Carolina that is supposed to have yellow brick and black terracotta but she has been unable to find a photograph.

Mr. Finrow asked if any other film buildings had been nominated yet and stated one could make a case for a film district.

Ms. Sheridan stated the Roc La Rue Gallery is intact enough to be nominated. She agreed a case could be made for a film district and there has been interest in doing that. The Paramount Building, aka The Catholic Seamen's building would be likely be considered contributing in a district and most of the buildings in that two block stretch have some connection to film. The MGM Building expresses the exuberance of the Art Deco idea. The Roc La Rue Building has its own special features and she has prepared a nomination for it for the City.

Mr. Veith explained there have been a couple thematic designations such as the clocks and boats and thought this would work as a thematic group as well. The more altered or less interesting could more easily be included in a district than a thematic group.

Ms. Sheridan said the Paramount Building was determined eligible for National Registry even though it had been altered but then they put in a new front entrance which was probably one alteration too much.

Ms. Chave said with other buildings that have been designated as groups have been contiguous and these are nearby but not contiguous.

Ms. Sheridan said this block is almost all theater related so it could be a district and she considers the William Tell as part of that. The nomination for the William Tell Hotel has also been prepared for the City.

Owner Comment:

Lyle Snyder, MGM Building owner, stated he has owned the building for four months. He said it is a lovely building. They are in for permit for interior alterations for a larger restaurant and will relocate the kitchen. They want the gate to swing out rather than in for fire-life safety issues.

Ms. Sheridan stated the opening was original but she is not sure the gate itself is.

Mr. Lee stated that life-safety issues would trump.

Public Comment: There was no public comment.

Board Discussion:

Mr. Finrow supported nomination and that C and D are appropriate. He thinks it is a great building and Belltown needs historic buildings.

Ms. Conti agreed and supported the nomination based on C and D. She is interested in the idea of a district.

Mr. Hannum agreed with the Staff Report; it is a unique building and adds character to the neighborhood.

Ms. Nicolas supported nomination based on C and D.

Ms. Strong stated it is her favorite building in Belltown and supported nomination based on C and D.

Ms. Tremaine supported nomination based on C and D.

Mr. Abelsen supported nomination and stated in its former use it had a significant impact on Seattle much like auto row.

Mr. Martinson supported nomination based on C and D.

Mr. Veith supported the nomination based on C and D. The architectural style and period covered by Criterion D also supports Criterion C; this is a case where the style is so connected with the industry it strengthens the ability of the building to talk about its history and its purpose and character.

Mr. Lee supported nomination based on C and D and stated it is a gorgeous little building. The connection between the style and the use is fantastic; he is thrilled the owner is supporting nomination. He said the building stands out and could be nominated on F as well.

Action: I move approval of the MGM Building at 2331 Second 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 exterior of the building; that the public meeting for Board consideration of designation is scheduled for October 1, 2008; that this action conforms to the known comprehensive and development plans of the City of Seattle.

MM/SC/TV/RM 10:0:0 Motion approved.

082008.43

Oroweat Distribution Warehouse
1550 N 34th Street

Applicant Comment:

Henry Friedman, Seattle Public Utilities, provided relevant background on the City's waste transfer station just north of the Oroweat site and the need for this site for future landfill use. Oroweat moved out about 10 years ago and SPU has used it since. He introduced consultant Beth Dodrill.

Ms. Dodrill, Architectural Historian, provided context of the building and area. She said the south façade was the main entry and used to be an entry to an outlet store. The front section is two-story that was constructed almost as a separate structure from the back warehouse building. The west façade has been significantly altered. The west façade has all new windows, a new vestibule, original roll up doors have been changed to windows. The north rear façade exists as originally designed and presents a blank wall. The east façade was originally blank wall but windows, fire door and stairwell have been added.

Ms. Dodrill stated the interiors of the front office area have been reconfigured with partitions. The front and rear sections of the building are separated by a fire door. She said the lower warehouse level has glu-lam beams supporting the structure. The south end of the warehouse originally had a large freezer in the southeast corner; the southwest corner was later partitioned and used for offices.

Ms. Dodrill explained the building was constructed in 1969 for the Oroweat Baking Company from California. The designer was structural engineer Thomas McKenzie in Portland. His early works were institutional and industrial. He successfully expanded his firm over the years adding associates and is now McKenzie-Saito and Associates. In 1996 the firm became known as Group McKenzie; between 2004 and 2006 an office was added in Seattle and Vancouver and it is now a large multi-disciplinary firm with a diverse portfolio of commercial buildings, public works, and manufacturing facilities.

Ms. Dodrill reported that Oroweat started in the 1930s in California. The company moved to Portland in 1965 and in 1968 expanded to Seattle. In 1971 it had been bought out by Continental. They stopped using the Seattle facilities in 1977 and Seattle is now serviced by the Beaverton, Oregon facility. The North Lake Union area was known for manufacturing and industry and was served by railroad line and spurs. The area developed as a warehouse and distribution district. By the late 1960s the railway was in demise, the gas plant was no longer in operation.

Mr. Friedman stated the site is zoned Commercial.

Board Questions:

Ms. Chave asked if Mr. McKenzie was still alive.

Ms. Dodrill said he is and she has made several attempts to reach him.

Mr. Veith asked if the tunnel between the two buildings was built when the new building was put up.

Ms. Dodrill concurred and said a tunnel was constructed as part of the new construction but it had to be closed off on both ends when there were new uses and there was a problem with the street right of way.

Public Comment: There was no public comment.

Board Discussion:

Mr. Veith thought it a generic warehouse building; it is a very system-oriented type construction. He said it is not remarkable in comparison to anything nearby nor does it have a significant on the development of the neighborhood, district or business. He said the building does not warrant a nomination.

Mr. Martinson said it was unremarkable and voted no.

Mr. Abelsen did not support nomination as there is nothing structural or architectural significant.

Ms. Tremaine did not support nomination.

Ms. Strong agreed with the Staff Report to not nominate the building; there is nothing that warrants nomination.

Ms. Nicolas agreed with the Staff Report.

Mr. Hannum did not support nomination.

Ms. Conti did not support nomination as it does not meet the threshold.

Mr. Finrow said no.

Mr. Lee said it does not rise to the level of significance.

Action: "I move that the Board not approve the nomination of the Oroweat Distribution Warehouse at 1550 N. 34th St. as a Seattle Landmark, as per the reasons given in the Staff Report."

MM/SC/RM/MH 10:0:0 Motion approved.

082008.5 BOARD BUSINESS

Ms. Chave reminded the Board about two Board openings because Mr. Martinson and Mr. Matthews' terms are about to expire; an historian and a structural engineer are needed.

Ms. Sodt said the deadline has been extended.

082008.6 STAFF REPORT

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Chave, Landmarks Preservation Board Coordinator

Sarah Sodt, Landmarks Preservation Board Coordinator