



The City of Seattle

International Special Review District

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ISRD 277/09

MINUTES FOR THE MEETING OF TUESDAY, November 24, 2009

Time: 4:30pm
Place: Bush Asia Center
409 Maynard Avenue S.
Basement meeting room

Board Members Present

John Bisbee
Weng Chan
Robert Ha
Bill Lee
Josh Osborne-Klein
Rich Murakami

Staff

Rebecca Frestedt
Melinda Bloom

Absent

Misun Chung Gerrick

Chair Robert Ha called the meeting to order at 4:37 p.m.

112409.1 APPROVAL OF MINUES

October 13, 2009

MM/SC/JOK/RM 5:0:0 Minutes approved.

October 27, 2009

MM/SC/RM/BL 4:0:1 Minutes approved. Mr. Osborne-Klein abstained.

112409.2 CERTIFICATES OF APPROVAL

112409.21 Danny Woo Community Garden
620 S. Main St.

Ms. Frestedt explained the proposal to convert a section of the center of the garden into a Children's Garden. The proposal includes the construction of a wooden tool shed and chicken coop on either end of the Children's Garden. The structures will be constructed of 2x4" and 4x4" Tight Knot Cedar timbers and feature cedar shake roof to match the existing structures in

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the garden. A path lined with wood chips, per existing throughout the garden, will weave through the Children's Garden. She explained that the Board issued a Certificate of Approval for Landscaping and Garden improvements in July 2008, a Certificate of Approval for the installation of two interchangeable murals in June 2008, and a Certificate of Approval for Final Design for expansion of the garden on the north side of Main Street between 6th and 7th Avenues S. in 2007. She passed out plans, drawings and photos to the Board and introduced the applicants, Jonathan Chen and Aaron White from Inter*Im Community Development Association.

Mr. Chen provided background information on the garden and the users of the garden and explained the importance of the transmission of knowledge of gardening from the elders to children. He explained the addition of chickens would be an important element to expanding children's understanding of the life cycle and the addition of a tool shed to house child-scale tools.

Mr. White summarized the drawings and the choice of materials noting that beveled siding on the lower portion of the buildings was selected for durability.

Mr. Chan arrived at 4:50 p.m.

Mr. White explained the roofing structure would allow air flow through and the wood door would match what exists. Wood material above the cedar siding would be exterior grade plywood; it will be painted with a clear stain.

Ms. Frestedt explained that the structures, while durable, were temporary and could be easily removed. She noted the proposal to add chickens was a departure for the District and stated that the applicants will need to work with DPD and Parks to make sure that code requirements are met.

Mr. Chen provided a photo mock-up of what the proposed changes would look like and responding to Board questions and explained that they would be following City Ordinance 23.42.052 C with regard to keeping animals. He explained that his position requires him to frequently be on site and that his position has oversight of the garden.

Mr. Osborne-Klein asked for clarification about the specific location of the structures and the run. Mr. Chen referred to locations on the site plan.

Board members expressed concern for the safety and well-being of the chickens and Mr. White explained that security was incorporated into design of the coop as well as the tool shed.

Mr. Chen expressed confidence with the design and underscored the importance of the chickens to the garden and that Inter*Im intends to follow code requirements especially with regard to noise and cleanliness.

Mr. White explained that an existing street lamp shines a lot of light onto the coop area so additional lighting would not be needed.

Ms. Frestedt advised that applicants would need to come back to the Board for approval of the chicken run design.

Discussion ensued about the number of children in the ID and that many of the children involved in the garden will come from Nihonmachi Terrace, International District Housing Alliance's WILD program, Community Center, Puget Sound School and Denise Louie.

Public Comment: There was no public comment.

Board Discussion:

Mr. Bisbee expressed concern about the use of alcohol and drugs in the garden, but he stated that the Children's Garden was a good use of the garden and a good opportunity for young and old to learn.

Mr. Chen explained his intent to make sure the gardeners feel comfortable in the garden.

Mr. White explained the proposed changes will provide more of an entrance to the garden and will add to the built environment.

Mr. Ha reiterated concern for the safety of the chickens and Mr. Chen explained a secure structure was created to protect them.

Ms. Frestedt noted that with regard to health concerns of keeping chickens the Department of Health defers to DPD. She explained the Ordinance states there will be no sale of chickens, their meat or eggs.

Mr. Osborne-Klein said the application is consistent with the goals and interests of the Board and the applicant has addressed Board concerns.

Action: I move that the International Special Review District Board approve a Certificate of Approval for Landscaping and Design, as proposed with the provision that additional structure of a chicken run must come back to the Board. This action is based on the following:

General Requirements Seattle Municipal Code (SMC) 23.66.336 - Proposed rehabilitation projects should respect the architectural and structural integrity of the building in which the work is undertaken, through sympathetic use of colors, material and style.

This project is in the Asian Design Character District. The general requirements of SMC 23.66.336(A) apply (see above) as well as the requirements of SMC 23.66.336(B):

Materials: Earthen materials such as brick, concrete, stucco and wood are preferred.

Secretary of the Interiors Standards #9 and 10

MM/SC/RM/JB 6:0:0 Motion carried.

112409.3

GUIDELINE REVISION SESSION

Board discussion regarding proposed design guideline revisions.

Ms. Frestedt passed out the most recent draft of the revised Guidelines and went over updates that had been made since the last review session. She noted the reordering of

the introductory sections based on feedback from the last revision session and from the consultants from LMN Architecture. The Board supported the reordered text.

Mr. Osborne-Klein suggested adding language explaining why a Certificate of Approval is needed, such as: “Certain modifications and use changes require approval by the Municipal Code”.

Ms. Frestedt continued summarizing updates to the draft and noted that the consultants have been helpful in articulating how heritage and culture can be expressed through the built environment.

Mr. Osborne-Klein suggested calling out “provisions of Chapter 23.66 of the Seattle Municipal Code”. He suggested that on page 7 under the Board Review section “oversee” should be “review” and also suggested combining the two sections regarding the Architectural Review Committee (ARC) noting the similarity between “board review” with “review with ARC”. This led to a discussion of the design review process and the specific role of the ARC. Ms. Frestedt said that she would review this section again for clarity.

Mr. Bisbee left at 5:40 p.m.

Ms. Frestedt noted the importance of allowing the guidelines to be flexible enough to address the uniqueness of each site while still providing guidance and specific direction. She proposed including a brief paragraph at the beginning of the General and Specific Guidelines section that provides an overview of what elements will be covered. She stated that some requirements will apply district-wide, while others will be site specific.

Mr. Osborne-Klein questioned if the current baseline should be described.

Mr. Murakami asked if the baseline should describe characteristics that are desirable and should be retained.

Ms. Frestedt said these are good topics for Board discussion. She added that the current baseline is different in different parts of the historic district, noting differences between the Asian Design Character District and Little Saigon, for example. She questioned whether or not adding a baseline could be unintentionally limiting.

Discussion ensued about providing baseline information. A member of the Board suggested that baselines are a reference point only and should not be frozen in time. New elements – cisterns, green streets and street vending - were noted and it was suggested that more recent desired elements be included in the discussion about baselines.

There was a discussion about “historic character” and how the term should be defined. Ms. Frestedt suggested including a reference to historic character in the introduction

and addressing its context within the District. Mr. Osborne-Klein agreed and suggested adding a general paragraph about historic characteristics that we like.

When talking about desirable characteristics, the Board agreed to focus on the “preferred” elements rather than highlighting those that are “discouraged”.

Ms. Frestedt referred to the extended outline for Specific Guidelines. Discussion ensued about including alleys and areaways. It was noted that although there aren’t a lot of areaways it would be helpful to have a survey of the existing areaways in the district. A member suggested adding a definition of areaways to the glossary. Another member suggested including a reference to “Dumpster Free Alley” and including “safe” into “more hospitable and ‘safe’ alleys”.

The Board discussed streetscape characteristics, such as the width of sidewalks and whether or not they are wide enough for vending uses, green streets etc.

Ms. Frestedt reviewed the remaining categories.

There was a discussion about category headings and whether or not “Architectural Components” needed to be differentiated from Site design. Ms. Frestedt described the differences between each of the proposed sections and said that she could add a brief introductory paragraph under the heading “Architectural Components” that would describe the type of elements covered under that section, such as cornices, parapets, roof form, materials, etc.

Mr. Ha preferred putting materials and paint colors first.

Ms. Frestedt noted the most commonly reviewed applications are for paint colors, signs, lighting and awnings.

Discussion ensued about the order and Ms. Frestedt suggested starting broader and moving to finer level of detail. A Board member suggested that the guidelines help business owners to understand how their proposed changes will impact the building, noting that business owners often don’t think about the relationship of the proposed changes to adjacent storefronts or the building as a whole.

A Board member suggested including “things to consider” such as how will sign/change integrate into the storefront and other adjacent signs.

Mr. Murakami asked if Section 3 –Criteria for New Construction - repeats some of the earlier information.

Ms. Frestedt said that some of what is included earlier in the draft will also apply to new construction. She noted that New Construction guidelines provide greater direction for architects and property owners to think about what is appropriate for new development.

Mr. Osborne-Klein suggested changing the heading to “Additional Criteria for New Construction” to make it clear.

Mr. Murakami said the current environment was largely developed without guidelines and has chaos that provides a visually rich environment. He questioned how to write guidelines that perpetuate the good parts of the chaos and the layering of things that happens over time.

Ms. Frestedt stated that is a challenge to create guidelines that allow for that character without over-regulating.

Mr. Murakami said that in Asian cities where there is a mix of old and new you may find a very modern development up against an historic building and this can provide additional richness to the community. He asked when it comes to infill – new construction – doe the new construction need to reflect the historic character or should it reflect the time it was built?

Ms. Frestedt commented that the compatibility of old and new construction is an important discussion for the Board and the neighborhood. She said that caution should be exercised when writing the guidelines for new construction so as not to restrict creativity. She said it may be valuable to invite someone, such as from the State Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation, to provide an informational briefing to the Board on the application of the Secretary of Interior Standards for infill and to discuss examples of what has been done in other historic districts. It could be helpful in determining how to appropriately incorporate modern, contemporary design next to a contributing historic structure.

Mr. Osborne-Klein noted seeing the juxtaposition of an old building with new skyscrapers while on a recent vacation in Kuala Lumpur.

Discussion ensued about old buildings surrounded by new ones in Little Saigon and Nihonmachi and the potential for much development in the future.

Mr. Ha expressed concern that lots of restriction may encourage owners to not fix up buildings or to go elsewhere.

Ms. Frestedt noted the challenge of striking the balance of creating guidelines that will be inviting for investment without putting at risk the historic resources that are here.

Mr. Chan asked if there is a requirement to do inspections on buildings because some owners do not do repairs or upkeep.

Ms. Frestedt noted that there is a minimum maintenance clause in the District Ordinance, but that enforcement is a challenge. She noted the importance of educating community members of the financial incentives and programs available to owners of historic properties.

112409.4 BOARD BUSINESS

Ms. Frestedt announced the election results noting two new Board members were elected: Marvin Rosete and Brien Chow. She thanked exiting members John Bisbee and Weng Chan for their service and stated that they may run again in the future if they choose to.

Ms. Frestedt reminded the Board that there would be only one meeting in December, on December 8.

Adjourn The meeting adjourned at 6:40 p.m.

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