



The City of Seattle

## Pioneer Square Preservation Board

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

PSB 283/09

**MINUTES** for Wednesday October 7, 2009

### **Board Members**

Doug Ito, Chair  
Lorne McConachie  
Ryan Hester  
Elizabeth Read  
Ann Brown  
Erin Doherty  
Adam Hasson

### **Staff**

Genna Nashem  
Melinda Bloom

### **Absent**

Jeremie Lipton  
Catherine Person

Chair Doug Ito called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

**100709.1      APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** Draft minutes from September 16, 2009

**100709.2      APPLICATIONS FOR CERTIFICATES OF APPROVAL**

100709.21      **Wall Sign**

Installation of new off premise sign copy for November and new copy for December.

ARC Report: Mr. McConachie said that ARC reviewed the proposed sign changes and found the colors and design to be in keeping with the building and the District. ARC recommended approval.

Staff Report: This is the legal non-conforming off premise wall sign

Robert James explained the application and the copy change to "Miller". One sign copy is for November and one is for December.

Mr. Ito thanked the applicant for providing the drafts for review early. He noted the simple layout and said the colors are in keeping with the District.

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

"Printed on Recycled Paper"

In response to Board questions Mr. James explained the applied sign will go onto a black background.

Public Comment: There was no public comment.

Board Discussion:

Mr. McConachie noted the sign is in keeping with the character of the District and had no problem with it.

Action: I move to approve a Certificate of Approval for copy changes for a 14 foot by 48 foot legal nonconforming off premise sign for November and December as presented per

Code Citations:

SMC 23.66.160 Signs

MM/SC/LM/AH

7:0:0 Motion carried.

100709.22

**Wall Sign**

Squire Center Building  
901 Occidental Ave S

*Ms. Brown and Mr. Hasson recused themselves; Ms. Brown left the room.*

Installation of new on premise sign copy

ARC Report: Mr. McConachie said that ARC reviewed the proposed sign changes and found the colors combined with the cartoon graphics to be busy and chaotic. Some members did not think that the colors combined with the graphics were in keeping with the building and the District. ARC suggested exploring an alternative proposal or at least exploring alternative color options. ARC invited them to review other approved wall signs in the District. ARC did not make a recommendation.

Staff Report: This is the legal non-conforming on premise wall sign. The applicant provided a letter from the lottery saying they are authorized to sell the tickets and DPD has verified that they are selling the tickets.

Don McCord explained Washington Lottery's campaign theme is in keeping with the theme of the stadium area and the Seahawks. He provided changes to the background color per ARC recommendation. The colors he said were more in line with Seattle Seahawks theme and colors and the Clearwire sign.

Mr. McCord said the sign will be up through the first week in January and then there will be a change in copy but it will be there for a year. He said he didn't know if they would stay with the cartoon style or not.

Mr. McConachie asked if the graphics in the proposed sign were consistent with the Lottery's advertising campaign.

Mr. McCord stated they are on all the pull tabs at the stadium and throughout the City.

Mr. McConachie asked what Washington Lottery's feedback was when they were provided with ARC feedback that the graphics and colors were too chaotic in context of a historic district.

Mr. McCord said they were open to change on the colors but not the copy because it is part of a larger campaign.

Mr. Ito advised the applicant tell the client that in the future signage especially if they will be renting a sign for a year with different copy that this is too busy. He said it looks more graffiti-like then cartoon like and to have a giant graffiti wall on a building in Pioneer Square is not something the Board wants to encourage.

Mr. McCord noted to stay away from cartoon themes and do landscape themes.

Mr. Ito explained it is not that the Board wants landscape themes but the desire for something that is in keeping with the historic character of the District – simple and elegant.

Ms. Doherty added simplicity in color and design is what was stressed at ARC and that this is too chaotic. Some of the previous Pepsi products signs were pretty bold colorwise but were at least simple – a clear simple statement about a product without being chaotic and visually disruptive.

Mr. McCord said they are trying to develop a relationship directly to the product and said he would relay the information to the Lottery that for the possibility to be in this District they need to make some changes.

Mr. Hester clarified that the overall sign dimension would be 151 x 31 feet, including the Fourpoints' sign band at the bottom and it is a vinyl sign, stretched and anchored into the mortar joints.

Mr. McCord agreed. The color samples provided are actual colors.

Public Comment: There was no public comment.

Board Discussion:

Mr. Hester said the color change is an improvement. He agreed with Mr. Ito's point that the busy-ness of the sign likened itself to graffiti. He said he understood the sign was part of an overall campaign. He said he agreed with the overall recommendations given by Mr. McConachie's ARC report but from a color standpoint this sign is more tolerable than the orange background sign.

Mr. McCord asked for Board criteria that he could give to the advertiser.

Mr. McConachie explained the question of "how does something fit in with the historic character of the District as a district of fairly muted earthtone colors?" He

said that is the pertinent questions for future signs as well. He said that there are very bold colors and a lot of chaos in this sign so it is “0 for 2” in this sign. He noted the simple elegance of the Historic District. He said downplaying the color is a good first step and noted additional steps as brought forth by Ms. Doherty: is it simple and clear graphics. He said that while one could juxtapose things or a bold color could be used it’s when there are three or four elements of a design that are in juxtaposition to this more subdued historic character it is “in your face”. He said that while he is trying to provide guidance and ideas, ultimately it is up to the advertiser to propose it to the Board and for the Board to approve.

Mr. Ito advised that coming before the Board earlier rather than later would provide an advantage in that if they brief the ARC they can provide early guidance.

Mr. McCord said they would do that but it is a struggle with the art director and on all fronts in planning with the engineering side and said it is hard to get it a week in advance because everyone is in a hurry. He said with these walls everyone looks at it as more entertainment and we have to shape their mind that it is an historic area that also has entertainment and they look at it as only entertainment. He said they would definitely pass that on and will be much stronger in their language to their clients.

Ms. Doherty said the Washington Lottery logo itself is sort of a classic brand and that working from that might be beneficial. She said she thought it simple in color and uses simple graphics but right now it takes up only about 3% of the actual square footage of the sign.

Mr. McCord said it is tough for them as well and that they are in discussions with them for next year and they will definitely convey that to them.

Ms. Doherty said the change in the color background helps but overall the character is inconsistent with the Pioneer Square Historic District environment – as she had previously stated at ARC.

Action: I move to approve a Certificate of Approval for copy changes for a 31 foot by 151 foot legal nonconforming on premise sign as amended.

Code Citations:  
SMC 23.66.160 Signs

MM/SC/RH/There was no second.

Having received no second to the motion Mr. Ito asked Board members for another motion.

Action: I move to deny a Certificate of Approval for copy changes for a 31 by 150 foot legal nonconforming on premise sign as amended.

Code Citations:  
SMC 23.66.160 Signs

MM/SC/LM/ER

7:0:2 Motion carried. Mr. Hasson and Ms. Brown recused themselves.

Mr. McCord asked under what terms it was denied and said it could not be on the basis of content.

Mr. Ito explained that the denial was based not on content but the graphic nature of graffiti-like design.

Mr. McCord said that is content and that can't be argued because part of their understanding or settlement with Pioneer Square was only to discuss color and orientation, not content.

Ms. Doherty explained the Board is not talking about content – which is Washington State Lottery - but about the character of the color and the graphics which Board members feel are inconsistent with the character of the neighborhood. She explained that the Board appreciated the attempt to improve colors and calm the tone of the sign but that graphically it is inconsistent with the District, noting that it has been referred to as a cartoon and as graffiti-like.

Mr. Pigeon asked if the Board has any involvement in approving the artwork that had been put up and down the sides of the buildings in Pioneer Square noting the childlike design at the Starbucks construction on Occidental-First Avenue-Railroad area.

Ms. Nashem explained that the Board had made its decision and discussion would cease; she encouraged the applicant to call her if they have questions.

Mr. Pigeon said he is looking for a yes or a no if the board approved that and was not looking to talk about it.

Ms. Nashem reiterated the decision had been made and the Board would move ahead with its agenda and that she would be available to discuss their application at another time.

100709.23

**King Street Center**

201 S Jackson St

Installation of one new awning and recover four existing awnings

ARC Report: Mr. McConachie said that ARC reviewed the drawings, photos and samples provided. The applicant explained that there are brackets for awnings already installed so they suspect that they had been approved before but were never installed. He also explained that the existing material is no longer available so they are recovering all the awnings. ARC recommended approval.

Willard Park explained the application to recover the existing awnings and install one new awning. The existing fabric is not available anymore which necessitated a change; the proposed fabric is a shade of gray. He explained that there are

brackets for awnings already installed and he suspects that the new awning had been approved but not installed. He explained the construction details and said it was straightforward. He said there were no other projecting elements on the building. In response to clarifying questions he explained that the geometry of the new awning is a bit different to accommodate pitch changes due to the slope but noted that all awnings will match.

Public Comment: There was no public comment.

Board Discussion:

Ms. Brown commended the building owners for replacing the awnings before they became ripped and torn.

Ms. Doherty noted the gray color is consistent with the Pioneer Square palette and existing building color.

Action: I move to approve a Certificate of Approval for the project as presented per

Code Citations:

District Rules

III General Rules for Rehabilitation and New Construction

XX Rules for Transparency, Signs, Awnings and Canopies

3. Projecting elements

E. Awnings and Canopies

MM/SC/ED/AB

7:0:0 Motion carried.

100709.24

**King Street Center**

201 S Jackson St

Installation of minor communication equipment

Withdrawn.

**100709.3**

**PRELIMINARY PROJECT REVIEW**

100709.31

**North Lot**

201 S King Street

Briefing on proposed new construction – setback at corner of King and Occidental

Staff Report: Ms. Nashem explained the Board would review one specific topic. She explained the Board has looked at the proposed Code Amendment for the South Downtown specific to this lot. The set back has not changed since last reviewed by the Board however the wording of the code changed so that the setback now requires the Board to comment on it.

Code Citations:

SMC23.49.180.G4b(3)

John Chao, Architect said nothing in the drawings has changed but because of a change in the final version of the code amendment the board must comment on the setback.

John Chao pointed out on the plans the setback on Occidental where they want to create an open space. They want to provide a larger open space than what is required. He said they are trying to line it up with the end of the block across the street. He also pointed out an easement. He explained that this is really just a deeper sidewalk which will allow more walking space and could allow café space.

Mr. Ito noted the desire for recognition of the ending of the street and alley at that building and that he supported the larger open space as a gesture of the end of that street. He noted it also provides relief for the hoards of people during game days and it is a good opportunity for street activation.

Mr. McConachie agreed and said the terminus of Occidental and eddy of traffic flow and pedestrian engagement is appropriate.

Ms. Doherty said it is illustrated in the prospectus, shown set back.

Mr. Chao pointed out where it is set back and terminus of Occidental.

Ms. Doherty noted it made sense from a massing standpoint that it is a shorter building so setting it back at the corner is a better gesture.

Mr. Ito pointed out that the tree shown where the setback occurs seems to just “hang out there” and defeats the ending of the terminus and he was not sure it was the right place for it. He suggested that conceptually they may want to remove it; but removal will require Board, SDOT approval.

Mr. Hasson asked if this changed the definition of an open area.

Mr. Chao said the previous notion was that it should be twenty feet and although it has been changed to 15 feet, they want to keep it at twenty feet.

Ms. Doherty noted to be mindful of how landscape architecture and building at street level is designed because Occidental does have its own character with its trees so she recommended being mindful of that when responding to it on the other side of the street.

Public Comment: There was no public comment.

Ms. Nashem summarized Boards discussion of the ways that the setback was conforming to the Design Guidelines For the North Lot. The Board talked about connectivity to surroundings; context and pedestrian accommodation that are in the Guideline Goals (1.1). The setback responds to the Context (3.1)the terminus of Occidental and the changing of the street grid and being a throughfare on game days; Although the guidelines suggest building to street sidewalks the rules also said street level should relate to the street wall patterns which it

aligns with across the street(4.5), and under Streets and Sidewalks (10)the was a desire for creating areas for sidewalks cafes, vendors, and/or street furniture.

Board support for the setback was unanimous.

100709.32 **Replacement for the Alaskan Way Viaduct**

Briefing on proposed replacement plan

Ron Ponanen went through a PowerPoint report which is available in DON file; what follows are questions and comments by the Board.

Mr. McConachie asked about the area south of the south portal and Mr. Ponanen explained it showed the start of the tunnel and pointed out what is underground and what is at grade.

Ms. Doherty asked if they planned to bore under First Avenue the entire length of Pioneer Square; Mr. Ponanen responded they would.

Mr. McConachie asked where northbound 99's last option to exit south of King will come into Pioneer Square. Mr. Ponanen explained Alaskan Way would meet at Yesler.

Mr. Pierce added that most traffic will go on to Alaskan Way which will be a new boulevard. He said that Jackson could change. They will improve the grid, provide options and spread traffic over the grid.

Mr. McConachie asked about the character of the "U-tube" use patterns. Mr. Ponanen noted the hard to predict future of the railroad and the lengthy blockages and was unable to predict the uses.

Mr. Hasson asked about exiting to the stadiums; Mr. Ponanen explained one would have to back track a few blocks.

Bruce Nebbit, WSDOT, explained that at the First Avenue south end, due to the poor soils and timber by-products they would remove the poor soil and replace it with good soil. They would cut and cover near Starbucks up to south of King St.

Mr. McConachie asked about the footings and Mr. Nebbit responded that only at the south end where the tunnel starts. He noted the 2012 finish when the roadway would be restored. He said they will check in with residents and businesses so they will know what to expect. He drew a diagram to help illustrate, noting piles to lend support to buildings including the Triangle and Starbucks Building. He said the tie backs have been decommissioned from the Starbucks Building. He indicated on the drawing where they would put in a steel strut across the roadway with decking on top.

Ms. Doherty asked why there was no point of entry further south.

Mr. Nebbit said this is as far as they can go and yet still make all the necessary connections; he noted the amount of room needed for ramps and tapers.

Discussion ensued about the work being done on the utilities now and that any utilities movement associated with the tunnel project has not been determined. They will look first to maintain utilities where they are. With regard to the areaways – specifically the one at 83 King – they are contributing elements in the district; Mimi Sheridan, Architectural Historian, said they are listed in the analysis. She said the Triangle Building is closer to the tunnel and discussed the possibility of having to move it during the work.

Mr. McConachie asked if there was an overlay of historic resources with roadways and if any old streetwalls/part of areaway would be impacted. He noted bricks, the granite curbs and the lights in the sidewalks.

Mr. Ito: when the viaduct comes down he asked about transit staging – layovers on First would adversely impact Pioneer Square. He asked for clarification about City Light and trunk line along Alaska and asked where that would go. He asked about the Washington Street Boat Landing.

Mr. Ponanen said the transmission lines are not likely going down on First and they would likely be underground on Alaskan Way.

Mr. Pierce, SDOT said the Washington Street Boat Landing rehabilitation will be part of the seawall repair/rehab – they will be looking for how to preserve structure and a more productive use. He said the state is leading development of the tunnel project – doesn't address waterfront. The City will lead design effort for whole waterfront and it will be a separate EIS process.

Ms. Doherty asked if this is the final solution.

Mr. Ponanen said a lot of efforts are focused on this alternative and it will be the preferred alternative in the Draft.

Ms. Doherty said First Avenue is not great due to not so great soil.

Mr. Ponanen said the soils are suitable. There is sewer under 2<sup>nd</sup>, transit under 3<sup>rd</sup> so First Avenue works the best.

Ms. Doherty asked what happens if there is settlement or damage.

Mr. Ponanen said it is designed to prevent settlement and damage but if it happens there will be repairs.

Ms. Sheridan explained there will be a MOA including if historic properties are damaged it would all be repaired according to the Secretary of Interior Standards and would go through the Board approval process.

Mr. Hasson expressed concern that with the increased car traffic the character of the District will change dramatically.

Discussion ensued about traffic concerns and it was explained that a traffic analysis is being done. The challenge that Seattle does not have good geography and has a bad grid was raised.

Public Comment:

Chris Gibbs, manager of Tashiro Kaplan Building, asked why the U-tube was designed the way it was and said it seems redundant.

Mr. Ponanen said moving the railroad track is not an option and he noted the grade issues on Atlantic. Mr. Pierce said there is not enough room to get under the tracks in another way.

**100709.4 BOARD BUSINESS**

**100709.5 REPORT OF THE CHAIR:** Doug Ito, Chair

**100709.6 STAFF REPORT:** Genna Nashem

Genna Nashem  
Pioneer Square Preservation Board Coordinator  
206.684.0227