



The City of Seattle

International Special Review District

Mailing Address: PO Box 94649 Seattle WA 98124-4649
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ISRD 60/09

MINUTES FOR THE MEETING OF TUESDAY, February 10, 2009

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

Board Members Present

Robert Ha
Misun Chung Gerrick
Weng Chan
Joshua Osborne-Klein
Jerry Chihara
Bill Lee
John Bisbee

Staff

Rebecca Frestedt
Melinda Bloom

Chair Robert Ha called the meeting to order at 4:35 p.m.

021009.1 CERTIFICATES OF APPROVAL

021009.11 H&R Block
518 S. King St. (American Hotel)
Applicant: Diane Kline, H&R Block

Signage: Request for retroactive approval for a business identification sign.

Ms. Frestedt explained the request for retroactive approval for business identification signage. The dimensions of the internally lit sign = 3' x 3'. See attached photographs. The sign is currently hanging from the interior of the storefront window. The Board reviews the sign for its visual relationship to the storefront and impact on transparency. The Board issued a Certificate of Approval for exterior alterations on December 4, 2008.

Applicant Comment:

Diane Kline said she didn't know approval was needed. In response to Board questions she explained they can be flexible and raise or lower the sign as appropriate to allow more transparency.

The Board expressed concern about the lack of visibility into the storefront due to the size of the sign.

A member of the Board asked if Ms. Kline had thought of using adhesive letters on the window or gold leaf or painted-on letters. Staff recommended deferring action until applicant comes back with alternate signage.

Public Comment: There was no public comment.

Board Discussion:

A couple Board members agreed to defer and asked applicant to return with alternate solution that allows more transparency and is consistent with the neighborhood. Ms. Chung Gerrick recommended allowing the temporary sign to remain up in the interim.

Action: I move that the International Special Review District Board defer a Certificate of Approval for signage, as proposed.

The proposed alterations meet the following sections of the **International Special Review District Ordinance and applicable Guidelines:**

ISRD Design Guidelines for Awnings and Canopies, Façade Alterations and Signs

- I. Storefront and Building Design Guidelines**
- II. Design Guidelines for Signs**
 - a. Buildings with multiple tenants**
 - c. Internally lighted signs in all locations**

SMC 23.66.338 – Business identification signs

MM/SC/MCG/JC 7:0:0 Motion carried.

021009.12

H&R Block
518 S. King St. (American Hotel)
Applicant: Leann Crist, Graham Baba Architects

Use: Proposed change of use from restaurant/bakery to retail services.

Ms. Frestedt explained the proposal to change the use from bakery/café to retail services (861 sq. ft.). See attached plans. She said the Board issued a Certificate of Approval for exterior alterations on December 4, 2008.

Applicant Comment:

Ms. Crist stated the application was straightforward.

Public Comment: There was no public comment.

The Board determined they had enough information to make a decision.

Action: I move that the International Special Review District Board approve a Certificate of Approval for a change of use, as proposed. **This action is based on the following:**

Applicable Guidelines

SMC 23.66.320 – Permitted Uses

MM/SC/JC/BL 7:0:0 Motion carried.

021009.13

Sunny’s Boutique

524 S. King St. (American Hotel)

Applicant: Leann Crist, Graham Baba Architects

Use: Proposed change of use from office to retail.

Ms. Frestedt explained the proposal to change the use from office to retail services (426 sq. ft.). She distributed floor plans to the Board and introduced the applicant, Leann Crist from Graham Baba Architects.

Applicant Comment:

Ms. Crist said that the staff report covered the extent of the request.

A Board member asked if the building owner had developed a sign plan for the building. Ms. Crist explained they had no comprehensive sign plan for the building although she thought the owners would be open to it.

Mr. Chihara suggested she talk to the owners about looking at building signage comprehensively and developing a sign plan.

Public Comment: There was no public comment.

Action: I move that the International Special Review District Board approve a Certificate of Approval for a change of use, as proposed. **This action is based on the following:**

Applicable Guidelines

SMC 23.66.320 – Permitted Uses

MM/SC/JC/JOK 7:0:0 Motion carried.

021009.14

J&J Plaza (Fujisada Building)

510 6th Ave. S.

Applicant: David Wu, TSE Architects

Exterior alterations: Proposal to install a rolling security gate within the recessed entrance to the Plaza and addition of decorative planters to the entrance.

Ms. Frestedt explained the proposed installation of a roll down security gate and the addition of lighting and decorative planters in the recessed entry on the West façade. See attached drawings and photographs. She said the applicant presented the proposal for the security gate to the Architectural Review Committee on January 27, 2009. The ARC asked the applicant to return to the Board with details about the feasibility of alternative security systems (including an alarm

system and other gate designs); a proposed lighting plan to brighten the recessed entry; options for security gate finishes; and, alternative approaches to beautifying and activating the space with planters or seating. The members of the ARC did not make a recommendation to the ISRD Board. She explained the housing units for the roll down gate would be hidden; the gate would be up during business hours and will not be seen during busy hours. She provided two samples of material and drawings.

Applicant Comment:

David Wu described the three options presented as exhibits and stated he preferred Option #1. He said Option 1 features a roll down gate with open grill, the housing unit on inside, not visible; Option 2 features a sliding gate similar to the one at Purple Dot; and Option 3 consists of a high pitched alarm with camera security system. Mr. Wu expressed concern that with residential units above this could be bothersome.

Mr. Osborne-Klein asked Mr. Wu if he considered a decorative option. Mr. Wu responded that he had not.

There was general discussion about which gate looks best and which option would provide the most openness appropriate for the building. Mr. Chihara expressed concern that this is a very visible location and the impact of bars in the neighborhood is great. Applicant preferred the roll down gate because he thought it was the most out of site, durable and secure option.

Ms. Chung Gerrick suggested conditioning approval on the gate remaining open during specific hours. She supported Option 1 because it is out of the way and doesn't impact a lot of transparency.

Mr. Ha supported the roll down option.

When asked about the security alarm system option, Mr. Wu stated if it is real sensitive it could create bigger problems.

Board Questions:

Ms. Chung Gerrick stated she preferred Option 1 with the mill finish.

Messrs. Ha, Bisbee and Lee supported the roll down option with the clear finish.

Mr. Osborne-Klein said the gate has a negative impact on the neighborhood aesthetic and was opposed to all gate options.

Mr. Chihara said other gate styles, such as a hinged gate, would be more consistent with what has been approved in the past. He wondered if there were other options to the finish that might be more consistent with the windows.

Mr. Osborne-Klein said he might support a swinging gate.

Public Comment: There was no public comment.

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

Action: I move that the International Special Review District Board approve a Certificate of Approval for the security gate (Option 1), lighting and planters, as proposed. As a **condition** of this application, the gate must remain open during business owners and *must be removed* if the business vacates the premises.

The proposed exterior alterations meet the following sections of the **International Special Review District Ordinance and applicable Guidelines:**

SMC 23.66.030 – Certificates of approval – Application, review and appeals

ISRD Design Guidelines

III. Security Systems

The following guidelines will be used by the board in the evaluation of requests for security systems that impact the exterior appearance of a facade.

A. Permanent window and door security bars shall be discouraged on primary facades within the Asian Design Character District. Primary facades are those which front on a public right-of-way or can be viewed from a public right-of-way.

B. Sliding scissor gates or roll-down panel systems are preferred to minimize the visual impact during business operating hours.

C. Security systems shall not cover distinctive architectural features on the facade nor should installation damage the structure.

D. Other security systems considered that do not have a negative visual impact to the exterior facade shall be utilized if feasible. Such systems may include internal alarms or transparent film coverings for windows.

MM/SC/MCG/WC 5:2:0 Motion carried. Messrs. Chihara and Osborne-Klein opposed.

021009.15

Hong Kong Bistro

507 Maynard Ave. S.

Applicant: Tuan Nguyen, Spiral Sign

Awning and signage: Proposed installation of an awning featuring business identification signage on the Maynard Ave. façade.

Ms. Frestedt explained the proposed installation of an aluminum frame awning above the storefront on the Maynard Ave. façade. The awning will be covered with vinyl material, including business identification signage (consisting of adhesive vinyl letters). See attached drawings, photographs and attachment details. She said the business is allowed up to 69 sq. ft. of signage. The proposed signage totals 32.3 sq. ft. per SMC 23.66.338. No illumination is proposed. Ms. Frestedt said the Hong Kong/Mar Building is a contributing building within the Asian Character Design District and the applicant has been advised that the attachment should not penetrate the brick or damage historic materials.

Applicant Comment:

Tuan Nguyen, Spiral Sign, provided a salmon-colored vinyl sample and stated the color was chosen by the customer to be compatible with the brick.

Mr. Chihara advised that attachment of the awning should be in the grout/mortar joints.

A couple Board members expressed concern that the awning would cover the transom windows which are character defining features of the building; a discussion ensued about appropriate alignment of the awning on the storefront.

Mr. Nguyen said the graphic window film would be affixed to the awning and would not peel off with weathering.

Ms. Chung Gerrick observed the chosen color matches nothing on the façade and recommended selecting a color closer to the brick or the window frame. A discussion of the color ensued. The members said it was acceptable.

Mr. Bisbee agreed with Ms. Chung Gerrick that the color may stand out more than intended.

Public Comment: There was no public comment.

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

Action: I move that the International Special Review District Board approve a Certificate of Approval for the installation of an awning and signage, as proposed.

The proposed alterations meet the following sections of the **International Special Review District Ordinance and applicable Guidelines:**

ISRD Design Guidelines for Awnings and Canopies, Façade Alterations and Signs

- i. Awnings and Canopies
- ii. Storefront and Building Design Guidelines

Design Guidelines for Signs

II. A. Buildings with Multiple Tenants

The following design guidelines apply to buildings with multiple tenants:

1. All signs on a single building shall be coordinated as to size, shape, color and location. They shall be of shapes, colors, and textures compatible with each other and with the architecture and exterior finish materials of the building.

SMC 23.66.336 – Exterior Building Finishes

B. Asian Character Design District

5. Awnings

SMC 23.66.338 – Business identification signs

MM/SC/JOK/JC

7:0:0 Motion carried.

021009.16

Bush Asia Hotel

409 Maynard Ave. S.

Applicant: Maiko Winkler-Chin, Seattle Chinatown Int'l District Preservation Development Authority (SCIDPDA)

Temporary fencing: Proposal to erect temporary fencing during the construction of the retail spaces on the South and West façades.

Ms. Frestedt explained the proposal to erect temporary chain link fencing (standard 6'x12' panel construction fencing) on the Northwest corner and the South side of the building during the construction of the retail spaces and sunroom (over Hing Hay Park). This proposal includes a temporary dumpster enclosure on the South side of the building. Exhibits included drawings and photographs. The proposed duration is for approximately three (3) to four (4) months from the start of the construction. The applicant plans to place green knit fabric behind the fencing for screening purposes. The scaffolding is standard construction scaffolding and will consist of piping, clamps and plywood.

Applicant Comment:

Maiko Winkler-Chin indicated on the drawing the area to be resurfaced, the construction staging area and the sunroom to be demolished. She said they will close off the active construction zone and dumpsters and showed where the work was happening and explained that the fencing was needed for public safety purposes during construction.

Ms. Frestedt noted that it impacted the right-of-way and therefore was subject to review by the ISRD Board. She added the demo of the sunroom had already come through the Board for review under a separate application.

Ms. Chung Gerrick said she appreciated the addition of a screen around the fence.

Public Comment:

Betty Lau, from Chong Wa, asked for details about the proposed exterior alterations.

Ms. Winkler-Chin explained that the SCIDPDA is rebuilding the sunroom in a more squared-off style. Ms. Frestedt showed Ms. Lau a drawing of what the proposed sunroom will look like.

Action: I move that the International Special Review District Board approve a Certificate of Approval for the temporary fencing and scaffolding, as proposed.

The proposed temporary fencing and scaffolding meets the following sections of the **International Special Review District Ordinance and applicable Guidelines.**

SMC 23.66.030 – Certificates of approval – Application, review and appeal

MM/SC/JC/JB 7:0:0 Motion carried.

021009.17

Seattle Oriental Art
661 S. Jackson St.

Applicant: Thu Tang, business owner

Exterior alterations: Request for retroactive approval for installation of security gates in the interior window on the East facade.

Ms. Frestedt explained the retroactive request for approval for the relocation of the fixed metal security gate on the east façade to the interior of the window along the alley. See attached photographs. On January 27, 2009 Board approved a Certificate of Approval for security gates on the North façade, conditional upon the removal of the gate when the business vacates the premises. At the meeting of Jan. 27, 2009 the Board denied a request for retroactive approval

for the fixed security gates on the East façade, along the alley on the basis that the proposal did not meet the District Guidelines for Security Systems. The Board approved a Certificate of Approval for retroactive approval of decorative window film on October 28th, 2008.

Ms. Frestedt explained that the T&C Building is a contributing building within the Asian Design Character District. She said the storefront's east façade abuts an alley and is visible from the public right-of-way. The staff opinion is that security systems located on the interior are preferred to the exterior; however, staff expressed concern about the visual impact of the security bars through the window along the alley and Jackson Street right-of-way. Concerns may be mitigated by the installation of window treatments between the security bars and existing window film.

Ms. Frestedt said it was preferable that the bars be removed. She explained that she had conducted a site visit and that she and Mr. Tang discussed the option of placing a curtain between the window and the security bars. She thought this may be a reasonable compromise since the window is on a secondary façade.

There was a discussion about the functionality of the bars as a deterrent. Mr. Tang noted that the glass could still be broken, even if a burglar couldn't gain entry into the store.

Mr. Chihara stated he supported the staff report and emphasized if the business changes the motion should include the removal of the bars on the alley side. He said this application is a good example of how the Board reviews proposals on a case-by-case basis and should not preclude the Board from voting differently on a separate proposal.

Public Comment: There was no public comment.

Action: I move that the International Special Review District Board approve a Certificate of Approval for a security gate on the interior of the east facade, as proposed. As a **condition** of this application, the gate *must be removed* if the business vacates the premises.

This action is based on the following:

The proposed alteration meets the following sections of the **International Special Review District Ordinance and applicable Guidelines:**

SMC 23.66.030 – Certificates of approval – Application, review and appeals

ISRD Design Guidelines

III. Security Systems

The following guidelines will be used by the board in the evaluation of requests for security systems that impact the exterior appearance of a facade.

A. Permanent window and door security bars shall be discouraged on primary facades within the Asian Design Character District. Primary facades are those which front on a public right-of-way or can be viewed from a public right-of-way.

B. Sliding scissor gates or roll-down panel systems are preferred to minimize the visual impact during business operating hours.

C. Security systems shall not cover distinctive architectural features on the facade nor should installation damage the structure.

D. Other security systems considered that do not have a negative visual impact to the exterior facade shall be utilized if feasible. Such systems may include internal alarms or transparent film coverings for windows.

MM/SC/JC/BL 7:0:0 Motion carried.

021009.18

HTK Building

513 Main Ave. S.

Applicant: Jerry Chihara, Chihara Architect

Mr. Chihara recused himself since he was the applicant.

Exterior alterations: Proposal to remove the neon “noodle bowl” sign, located on the Northeast corner of the building.

Ms. Frestedt explained the proposal to remove the neon noodle bowl sign at the NE corner. Exhibits included photographs. The HTK Building was constructed in 1924. The building is located within the Asian Character Design District and listed as a contributing building within the National Register District. She said the neon noodle bowl sign has been modified over time and is not original to the building. The Board approved a Certificate of Approval for exterior alterations on January 30th, 2009. A decision on the sign removal was deferred until additional information was received regarding the proposal to remove the sign. Ms. Frestedt confirmed Board does not have the authority to place a condition on how and where the sign is relocated if the approval for removal is granted.

Applicant Comment:

Jerry Chihara presented on behalf of the property owner who was out of town. He said the owner was supportive and is willing to relocate the sign within the District – to Wing Luke or another building in the District.

Mr. Osborne-Klein asked if keeping the sign on the building would prevent other work from being done. Mr. Chihara said it would not.

Ms. Frestedt noted that the sign is a unique and character-defining feature of the District, however she said it had sustained many alterations over time and had lost much of its original integrity. She said it was appropriate for the Board to make the recommendation to the owner to keep the sign in the District, but the Board does not have the authority to condition removal upon retaining the sign in the District.

Mr. Lee asked if there had been an assessment of the sign’s condition. Mr. Chihara said that a structural assessment had not been done.

Mr. Bisbee asked if the original missing pieces are in storage. Mr. Chihara said that they had not been retained to the best of his knowledge.

Ms. Chung Gerrick and Mr. Osborne-Klein each expressed a desire to deny removal of the sign.

Messrs. Bisbee and Chan supported removal of the sign and its placement elsewhere in the district. Mr. Bisbee recommended that the owner assess the condition of the sign and the attachment points.

Discussion ensued about the sign. Mr. Ha supported removing it and donating it to Wing Luke and Mr. Osborne-Klein responded there was no way to make sure that would happen once the sign was removed. He said he would be interested in a report from structural engineer regarding condition.

Public Comment:

Ms. Lau said she remembered when the lights on the sign worked but she thought it wasn't as attractive now. She understood the building owner's desire to remove the sign and recommended donating it to Wing Luke. She said she supported removal.

Mr. Osborne-Klein made a motion to deny the application for sign removal.

MM/SC/JOK/MCG 3:3:0 Motion defeated. Messrs. Lee, Ha and Weng opposed.

Ms. Frestedt reviewed the procedures that a majority vote is required to pass a motion; the motion to deny was defeated by virtue of a tie. The motion as it stood was defeated.

Mr. Osborne-Klein moved to defer and requested more information on current condition of wall and sign and safety issues as well as information on feasibility to rehabilitate sign to varying levels of its historic condition.

Mr. Bisbee said the issue is not so much the historic nature of the sign as it is the character it contributes to the neighborhood. He said it doesn't have to be perfect, just safe and to keep its character.

Action: I move that the International Special Review District Board defer action on a Certificate of Approval for exterior alterations at 513 S. Main St., pending submission of details regarding condition of sign and attachments.

The proposed alteration meets the following sections of the **International Special Review District Ordinance and applicable Design Guidelines:**

SMC 23.66.030 – Certificates of approval – Application, review and appeals

ISRD Design Guidelines

II. Storefront and Building Design Guidelines

Secretary of the Interior's Standards

#2. The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.

#5. Distinctive features, finishes and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a historic property shall be preserved.

MM/SC/JOK/MCG 6:0:0 Motion carried.

Ms. Frestedt said the Board's discussion reinforces the value found in historic features and stressed the importance of retaining and keeping these elements in good repair.

021009.2 SOUTH DOWNTOWN CODE AMENDMENTS

Ms. Frestedt said this is a briefing on proposed land use code text amendments, including an expansion of the southern ISRD boundary to S. Charles Street, zoning changes, and new height and bonus programs. She introduced Susan McLain and Gordon Clowers, City of Seattle Department of Planning and Development

Ms. McLain provided a handout to Board members (see handout in file) and she explained the different zoning designations.

A couple Board members expressed concern that the height in the Nihonmachi area would overshadow parts of the neighborhood.

Ms. McLain stated that some property owners would like heights increased in the core in order to benefit from Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) programs. She explained that setbacks are proposed at street level and green streets are proposed as well.

Mr. Chihara said he was comfortable with the controls (set backs, floor-area ratios, lot sizes) that have been built in and noted that increasing heights won't likely result in a maximum build out scenario. He was comfortable with the proposed language in the zoning ordinance that would establish what parameters must be met to have height.

Mr. Osborne-Klein said he was more concerned with bulk and scale than with the proposed height increase.

Ms. McLain stated that in order to get to 240' height the lot must be 21,000 square feet. She said residential use/density is desired to bring more life and vitality into the area. She explained that the intent was to create an incentive for residential development. She described the location of each proposed zoning designation, referring to the exhibits distributed to the Board. She expressed hope for a lot of variety in building types and an improved street experience.

Mr. Osborne-Klein said it would be good for retailers in the area, as it would bring more people in. He said he didn't think that street level residential was a good fit in the area south of Weller.

Ms. Chung Gerrick said the majority of the proposal was attractive and it would enhance the neighborhood. She also expressed some concern about the potential for excessive development. She hoped new residents would support the core businesses.

Mr. Chihara noted that there is very little opportunity for infill and said there would be a "weaving in" of new and old starting at the core and radiating to the periphery of the neighborhood to make it more livable.

Board members expressed some concerns about the rezone resulting in a "big long wall of new buildings". Ms. Frestedt reminded the Board that all new development would be subject to the design review process; she said the authority of the Board is woven into the Land Use Code.

Public Comment:

Ms. Lau stated that there is a tendency for traditional communities to disregard formal letters. She cautioned that the fact that there was no response does not mean that there is support or approval for the proposal. She said that additional outreach is needed.

Board Discussion:

Mr. Bisbee asked the presenters if provisions had been made to avoid negative shadow impacts on sidewalks and green streets. He said sun and shade are important to the pedestrian enjoyment of the area. He would like to see more discussion on this.

Ms. Lau agreed with Mr. Bisbee's statement about sun.

Mr. Clowers said that there was a study of shadow affects as part of the Environmental Impact Statement study. He stated that sun and shading is not protected in city policy.

There was a discussion about the outreach that had been conducted to date. Ms. McLain said that the City conducted a real estate study to help identify the proper balance of housing types. She said DPD anticipates that the rezone will result in a variety of building types.

Mr. Ha said the greatest concern is the viability of the retail in the core and change that does not result in a loss of businesses.

I move to recommend that the International Special Review District Board support expansion of the southern District boundaries to S. Charles St. MM/SC/JOK/JC 7:0:0

Ms. Chung Gerrick stated that she needed more time to review the details about the proposal. There was a discussion about whether or not the Board had enough information to make a recommendation for the proposed rezone.

Ms. Frestedt reminded the Board has 30 days to make a recommendation and that the Board's response to the proposal did not have to be determined at today's meeting. She said it is important that the Board's comments on the proposed rezone are documented and included in the final proposed legislation that is presented to the City Council. She asked that Board members send additional thoughts to her individually.

Mr. Chan left at 7:45 p.m.

Ms. McLain referred the Board and community to the website for additional details and graphics.

021009.3

BOARD BUSINESS

There was no Board business.

Mr. Ha adjourned the meeting at 7: 50 PM

Rebecca Frestedt, Board Coordinator
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