



The City of Seattle

International Special Review District

Mailing Address: PO Box 94649 Seattle WA 98124-4649
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ISRD 141/08

MINUTES FOR THE MEETING OF TUESDAY, June 10, 2008

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

Board Members Present

Jerry Chihara
Misun Chung Gerrick
Robert Ha
Amalia Gonzalez-Kahn
Weng Chan

Staff

Rebecca Frestedt
Melinda Bloom

Absent

Joshua Osborne-Klein

Board Chair Gonzalez-Kahn called the meeting to order at 4:35 pm.

061008.1 APPROVAL OF MINUTES

April 22, 2008

MM/SC/JC/RH

4:0:1 Minutes Approved.

Weng Chan abstained as he didn't attend 4/22/08.

Review of the minutes for May 13, 2008 was deferred to an upcoming meeting.

061008.2 CERTIFICATES OF APPROVAL

061008.21

Gyro House

210 5th Ave. S.

Signage: Proposed business identification signage.

Ms. Frestedt explained the proposed changes to signage included: modification to business identification signage on the face of the 5th Ave. S. awnings; addition of white vinyl text adhered to entry doors; addition of business identification signage on the existing canvas projecting banner mounted to the west façade; and, addition of painted signage on the existing 4' x 8' sign face on the south façade. Photographs and drawings were distributed to the Board.

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

"Printed on Recycled Paper"

Ms. Frestedt stated that the amount of proposed signage on the south façade falls well within the Land Use Code. She summarized the history of the application. She introduced the applicants, Kifly Elwalid, Business owner and Salah Suleiman, Business manager

Applicant comments:

Mr. Elwalid explained that he was not aware of the process when he put up the banner and said that it will be removed. He said he is seeking Board approval to install the new proposed sign plan, which will consist of yellow lettering.

Board Questions:

Ms. Chung Gerrick thanked the applicants for returning with a new proposal (in reference to the Board's prior decision to defer review of the application until alternatives were presented). She said the application was a great improvement. She asked for clarification on the font size on the new banner and said she thought it looked much better. She said the relationship of text and background on the old one was jarring. She thought the font on the awning face could be smaller.

Ms. Frestedt said if the Board agrees, she would talk to Frank Garcia about reducing the size/scale of the lettering so the application could move forward. She said she could include the stipulation as a condition of the Certificate of Approval.

Mr. Chihara said that the concern with the original application was that the size of the lettering was not in compliance with the intent of Seattle Municipal Code 23.66.338 which states "large letter sizes and messages shall not be permitted on awnings". His interpretation of the Code's intent was to minimize the amount of lettering on awnings. He said some awnings start to resemble billboards if they include too much other information. He preferred a simplified, clear message. While he said he was fine with the other proposed signage he wondered about the need to display the phone number of the awning and thought it was another layer of unnecessary messaging. He said he was sensitive about setting a precedent for adding additional text on awnings.

Mr. Suleiman, the manager for Gyro House thought having the phone number on the awning was helpful to the business and it allowed business people to call in an order while looking for parking.

Mr. Chihara thought the phone number could be added to the storefront doors instead of on the awning.

Mr. Elwalid said having the phone number on the awning is good for his business but he was willing to remove it.

Ms. Gonzalez-Kahn echoed Mr. Chihara's concern about too much information on awnings. She said it's an issue the Board has addressed in the past.

Ms. Frestedt noted a recent case in which a business listed the phone number of the sign contractor on their awning. The Board requested that the phone number was removed or covered since it was in effect off-premises advertising, which is not allowed by Code. She said she was sensitive to the need in this case for the telephone number and asked if the Board might

be willing to consider inclusion of the phone number on either the banner sign or a south facade sign if the numbers were smaller. She said that this location has been a difficult one for business longevity.

Public Comment: There was no public comment.

The Board agreed to support allowing the telephone number to be on the banner with the size the same as the wording “Mediterranean Cuisine”.

Action: I move that the International Special Review District Board approve a Certificate of Approval for a Signage, conditional upon the reduction of the size of the font along 5th Ave. S. and the elimination of the phone number on the face of the awning. This action is based on the following:

SMC 23.66.338 – Business identification signs

ISRD Design Guidelines

- I. Awnings and canopies
 5. Signage and graphics applied to awnings shall be reviewed for color, scale, and overall design compatibility. *Large letter sizes and message areas shall not be permitted on awnings.* Asian symbols or designs are encouraged elements.

MM/SC/RH/JC

5:0:0 Motion approved.

061008.22

Wraporoll

925 S. Jackson St.

Ms. Frestedt explained the proposal to remove awning and install an illuminated channel letter sign. She said the applicant proposes to remove the existing awning and install an illuminated channel letter business identification sign. She said the dimensions are 14’w x 30”h and the sign will be mounted to an aluminum raceway. She said proposed signage is within the allowed outlined in the Code. She explained that the business owner received a Certificate of Approval in May 2007 for exterior alterations, paint colors and new construction (addition to the south façade). She distributed photographs and drawings to the Board and introduced Lana Tran, Wraporoll owner, and T. R. Nguyen from Seattle Sign.

Applicant comment: Ms. Tran said she changed the name of the restaurant to reflect a new expanded menu and attract more business.

Ms. Frestedt explained that the storefront will be painted as part of a past approval for exterior design. She said the existing awning will be removed and a channel letter sign will be installed.

Mr. Nguyen said the raceway is 5” thick. He said there will be a complete enclosure metal box with surface letters of white Plexiglas and that will be internally lit. He said the lower portion will be covered with blue vinyl with cut out letters illuminated to read “provincial Vietnamese Restaurant”.

There was a brief discussion about the type of lighting proposed within the sign.

Public Comment: There was no public comment.

Board Discussion:

Ms. Chung Gerrick said that the proposed signage looked nice.

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

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

SMC 23.66.338 – Business identification signs

B. Permitted Signs.

D. Permitted Sign area.

E. Illumination.

MM/SC/JC/RH

5:0:0 Motion approved.

061008.3 BOARD BRIEFING

1017-19 S. Jackson Street

The Board briefing on proposed demolition and new construction of a mixed use project was postponed at the request of the applicants, Chris Koh, property owner, and Ed Linardic, architect.

061008.4 GUIDELINE REVISION WORK SESSION

Ms. Frestedt stated that the last Guideline work session took place on May 15. At that meeting, the Board reviewed other District Guidelines as examples to broaden the context of their discussion. She distributed an outline to the Board featuring elements that may be included in the revised guidelines. The outline featured key headings and provided a framework for future discussion. She asked the Board for feed back on the outline. She said the intent will be to continue to expand and modify the outline at upcoming work sessions.

The Board discussed a possible approach, by taking a few bullets on the outline (or topics) and discussing them at each meeting. Ms. Frestedt said she would put together a schedule of dates for upcoming work session that include topics to be discussed. She reiterated the Board's past request to create a set of user-friendly Guidelines that function as a stand alone document and refer to specific sections of the Ordinance. She suggested that one section could be dedicated to the Certificate of Approval process and could outline the general requirements of the review process, identifying elements of the Board's review, the approval process and the Board's schedule.

Ms. Frestedt said the Land Use Code (or ordinance) goes into more detail regarding International Mixed Zones and International Residential Zones and asked the Board how much detail they wanted to see.

Mr. Chihara said the document should be relatively broad and not go into specific details regarding zoning or a detailed explanation about the different portions of the District (for example, the core vs. the periphery, East of I-5). He said that level of detail could detract from the main intent of the Guidelines.

Ms. Gonzalez-Kahn said she likes the idea of keeping the introduction and beginning section simple and universal.

Ms. Frestedt said Mr. Chihara's comment is a good reminder to not be overly detailed/complicated in the document's wording. She said the goal to be to simplify and be clear. She said that there will be a reference to different portions of the neighborhood and that the guidelines should include a context statement about why consideration in the Asian Character District is different from other parts of the District.

There was a discussion about the name of the District, following a question by Ms. Chung Gerrick regarding the differences between the National Register Listing and the Local District listing.

Ms. Frestedt said the National Register District is listed as the Chinatown Landmark District. She acknowledged that there has been a lot of discussion about the District's name over time. She said this is a reminder that the Board should be sensitive to how it is referred to in the Guidelines.

Ms. Frestedt commented that the Guidelines could recognize other significant planning documents for the neighborhood, such as the neighborhood plan and Vision 2030.

Mr. Chihara cautioned that the danger in referencing outside documents is the possibility of inconsistencies between. He said the Guidelines should be clear and consistent. He said he'd prefer to make it simple but still acknowledge common interests.

Ms. Frestedt understood Mr. Chihara's concern and said that perhaps acknowledgement of past community efforts could be made and there could be links or information about the location of other documents.

Ms. Gonzalez-Kahn said it would be helpful if the guidelines included history about how and why the ISRD was formed under Context/Goals. She said some business owners see the process as something that is imposed from outside instead of the result of community interest.

Mr. Chihara agreed that this is an important statement to make.

Ms. Frestedt stated there is a section in the Code that talks about creation of the Review Board. She said this information could be pulled in from existing documents and then refined for the Design Guidelines.

There was a discussion about whether or not to include a definitions section. The Board supported the inclusion of key terms, but suggested to keep it simple. The Board supported Ms. Frestedt desired to include drawings or photographs to provide visuals along with terminology. Ms. Frestedt stated that this is an approach used in other cities' historic Districts.

Ms. Gonzalez-Kahn said it would be helpful for non-architect members of the board.

Mr. Chihara said technical definitions could be part but also to include abstract, more subjective terms such as *compatibility*, *sympathetic* or *contextual*. He agreed that photographs may be useful.

A member of the Board suggested the inclusion of language to the effect of, it is the applicant's responsibility to study the context of the District.

Ms. Frestedt said that this would be a good topic for a future Board retreat. She said that she will work to schedule one once the Board vacancy is filled. She referenced recent briefings by architects who were inspired by contemporary Asian designers. She said she was encouraged that they were thinking creatively, but expressed concern that contemporary Asian design doesn't necessarily equal compatibility. She said the District has a clear, strong connection to the Asian community but has evolved differently than an Asian city.

Ms. Frestedt noted that the draft revised guidelines will be a living document and that the Board can go back and make modifications as it moves through sections.

A member of the community suggested translating commonly used terminology. This prompted a discussion about translation and the need for stronger multilingual outreach. Ms. Frestedt stated that the issue of translation is important. She said there needs to be greater discussion about which documents are translated and noted that a direct won't necessarily make them understandable to individuals without the technical background.

Ms. Chung Gerrick thought if the document were to be translated into Chinese it should be translated into other languages as well.

Ms. Frestedt noted that the two dominant languages in the District, Chinese and Vietnamese, may be sufficient for translation since many Japanese and Tagalong speakers also speak English. She said the adoption of the new Guidelines will most likely happen in the fall and she suggested a work session at each ISRD meeting. She said she will send out a schedule to break down into bite sized pieces what will be covered at each meeting. She requested the Board look at the 4 main headings and see how they are addressed in other district Guidelines and how we might want to do it here. She said it may not be feasible to include graphics in the first phase. She recommended solidifying text in this round of revisions and putting placeholders where graphics are desired for future revisions.

Dan Abramson, a professor from UW, stated that students may be available to help with the process as part of a thesis or other graduation requirements.

061008.5

BOARD BUSINESS

Ms. Frestedt announced that the Board that they would select a new Chair and Vice-Chair at the next meeting and asked member to consider volunteering for the positions. She reminded the Board that Ms. Gonzalez-Kahn accepted the role of Interim Chair upon the former Chair's Departure.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:04 PM.

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