



The City of Seattle

Pioneer Square Preservation Board

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

MINUTES OF MEETING

PSB 179/07

DATE: July 3, 2007
PLACE: City Hall, Room L280
TIME: 9:00 a.m.

Board Members Present:

David Strauss
Sara-Jane Bellanca
Sonja Sokol Furesz
Doug Ito
Rick Friedhoff
Tina Bueche
Lorne McConachie
John De Lanoy

Staff:

Genna Nashem
Joanne Walby

Absent:

Adam Hasson
Alex Bennett

070307.1 **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** Draft minutes from June 20, 2007
Moved to approve the minutes as presented.
MM/SC/RF/SB 4:0:2 Minutes adopted. Ms. Bueche and Mr. McConachie.

070307.2 **APPLICATIONS FOR CERTIFICATES OF APPROVAL**

070307.21 Modern Design Sofas Anthony Moscatel
210 S Washington

Change of Use: Change from a bar to a retail furniture store/gallery

Staff Report: Change of Use was not reviewed at the ARC. Retail store/gallery under 3,000 square feet is allowed under SMC 23.66.130B. Preferred Street level Uses.

Applicant Comment: There was no comment.

Administered by The Historic Preservation Program
The Seattle Department of Neighborhoods

"Printed on Recycled Paper"

Board Questions: Ms. Bellanca asked if the awnings system was approved for the previous business and if so, does this approval still apply. Ms. Bueche answered that the approval stays with the building.

Public Comment: There was no public comment.

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

Action:

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

Code Citations: SMC 23.66.130B. Preferred Street level Uses

MM/SC/DS/DI 7:0:0 Motion carried.

070307.22

Ratio Interactive

Chris Stapleton

Occidental Building/ Waltham Block
311 ½ Occidental Ave S

Application for new business signage.

ARC Report from June 27, 2007: ARC reviewed the documents provided. The applicant was not at the meeting. ARC had questions about the meaning of the dots in the logo, but found that the sign meet requirements. ARC recommended approval of the sign.

Applicant Comment: There was no comment.

Public Comment: There was no public comment.

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

Action:

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

Code Citations:

District Rules XX. Rules for Transparency, Signs, Awnings and Canopies

C.1. Specific Letter Size

8. Wall Signs

SMC 23.66.160 C.1

MM/SC/LM/SSF 7:0:0

Motion carried.

070307.23

Seattle Plumbing Building

Steve Johnson, Mark Blatter

589 Occidental Ave S

Application for amendment to final design approval for renovation of existing building and new addition to include one additional floor of loft residential units, for a total of seven floors with a total height of 109' 10."

ARC Report from June, 13, 2007: The ARC reviewed the drawings and renderings. Mark Blatter of Historic Seattle said that the new application includes design changes

but still includes an additional floor. Mr. Blatter said that he thinks that the application is consistent with the District's role per the code to bring unproductive buildings back to use and to encourage a variety of new and rehabilitated housing types for all income groups. Mr. Blatter showed the Board a diagram of the block and said that he thought with the additional floor, the building was still compatible in scale. Steve Johnson of Johnson Architecture, project architect, showed a model of the previously approved project that was approved and a new model containing the additional floor and design changes as proposed. Mr. Johnson said that since they have changed from a timber to a concrete frame the code allows the building to have additional height. He said that they designed a warehouse-like structure. He explained they propose to replace the cornice on the existing building. He showed an old photo of the building with the cornice. Mr. Johnson pointed out on the model where they found two original window openings that they plan to re-establish. He explained that they tried to clearly distinguish the new building from the old. ARC members commented that the color model made it easier to see the details of the proposal. Mr. McConachie asked if they have photos of the windows they found. Applicants said they would bring them to the next meeting. Mr. McConachie also asked for clarification on the width of the original cornice compared to the proposed cornice. Mr. Johnson said that the corbels on the party wall indicate that the original builders probably expected the building to have additional floors. Mr. Blatter said that the intent to add more floors was in the party wall agreement. Mr. Ito asked if the proposed concrete addition could still be removed without damaging the original building. Mr. Johnson said that it could because there is a concrete slab on top. Mr. Ito asked if it will also have the slab on PT levels. The applicants said it is and that the engineers believe that the building will hold it. Mr. Blatter explained that either construction method will require reinforcement. Ms. Appleby showed the outline of the concrete slab on the floor plans.

ARC Public Comment: Dave Hancock of Graham and Dunn who represents the Provident Building said that the addition of the 7th floor is a 23% increase in massing. He said that he thinks that the maximum allowable height is irrelevant. Mr. Hancock said he thinks the additional massing should be consistent with the scale of the building rather than the scale of the block. He said that he thinks that this project will set a precedent and others will ask for it. He said there are rules about penthouses but the rules say additions are discouraged. Mr. Hancock thinks that the project will lose its historic status.

Bob Weaver said that he thought the charge of the Board "was education and historic". He said the Pioneer Square is small scale and pedestrian oriented and handed out a graph of floors in buildings. He said that he thinks that this application adds to a mistake. He showed pictures of the Florentine and Norfin buildings. He said that following a remodel they are no longer contributing and handed out a page from the National Register nomination. Mr. Weaver said that he didn't think any architectural detail was going to mitigate the height.

Mr. McConachie said that the rules do discourage additions and the Board had approved an addition as well as materials which are a more modern material. Mr. Ito said he recalled discussing those issues and determined that the corbels opened up the discussion for an additional floor and that the materials were discussed and found to be a warehouse type material so were appropriate.

Mark Astor of Martin Smith said that they believe the corbels to be beam seats for the Provident building.

ARC Discussion: Ms. Bellanca said that the district really needs housing and that she thinks that the addition is better than nothing being done with the building and it sitting unused for more years.

Ms. Beuche said that she didn't see this as a compromise because it brings the building into use, provides residential units and she thinks this design makes the original building look more strong and important.

Mr. Hasson said that he thinks that the design helps the building visually. He said that the stadium makes every building look small.

Mr. Strauss said that he thinks that this is a strategy for preservation because in order for older buildings to survive they need continued use. He thinks the change in scale is not for the worse.

Ms. Sokol Furesz said that she thinks the addition is not in scale and not in line with the Secretary of Interior Standards.

Mr. McConachie said that he values reinvigorating the District but thinks the project is too big with the additional floor.

Mr. Ito said he thinks it would be helpful to see the scale of the surrounding area.

ARC members said they would like to see the width of the proposed cornice explored.

Mr. Strauss said that the scale of the District was established by how tall they could build with brick.

Mr. Ito said that he thought that the scale was in line with what was normal in Pioneer Square.

Mr. McConachie and Ms. Sokol Furesz said that they were more concerned with the scale of the historic building compared to the scale of the addition.

Mr. Strauss said he wondered what different materials would have on the effect of the scale.

ARC members agreed that they would recommend approval of the waiver for the common recreational area, the re-establishment of the windows and the installation of the vent in the existing window. No other recommendations for approval or denial were given at ARC.

Staff Report: Ms. Nashem said the Board approved in a previous Certificate of Approval the following:

- Final Design Approval for the rehabilitation of an existing building and a new addition of 3 floors, per architectural drawings.
- The addition is set back and there is a total building height of 85 feet.
- Masonry joints will be repointed as needed. All vertical joints will be raked out using hand tools. Horizontal joints may be raked out using power tools.

- Painted signage will be removed with Prosoco paint stripper.
- On the Railroad Avenue façade, a new roll-up garage door and additional doors will be installed, new openings will be made on the upper level of the existing building and other doors will be restored or replicated. On the Occidental Ave S façade new roll-up doors will be installed in existing openings, existing doors will be enlarged and a new door will be installed. Louvers to vent the garage will also be installed.
- A metal band to block headlights will be installed on the parking level windows on the interior of the building so that it is set back from the windows.
- Building exterior materials and colors on the new addition include horizontal and vertical metal siding. Juliet and other balconies will have metal railings. Paint colors include dark green on the painted wood windows and doors; garage doors, louvers and man doors; black paint on the metal coping and parapet railings and metal balconies. Dark Bronze/Brown factory paint on fiberglass windows and metal cornice. The metal siding type 1 will be on the Cool Metallic Champagne color and metal siding type 2 will be Forest Green.
- Landscape plan will include the installation of brick paving in sidewalk, planting of Bowhall Red Maples on Railroad Ave and London Plane trees on Occidental.
- Lighting fixtures on Railroad Avenue will be single globe and cobra lights while the lighting on Occidental is three globe lights with the Chief Seattle base.

The proposal for discussion for at the July 3, 2007 Board meeting includes:

- One additional floor of 20' consisting of 16 loft residential units, for a total of seven floors with a total height of 109' 10."
- Change the cornice profile and location on the addition.
- Add horizontal bands at the 6th and 7th floor levels of the addition.
- Add one new window and enlarge one existing window at ground floor at location of original windows on the historic building.
- Replace one window with grille for electrical vault on the historic building.
- Add new cornice on existing building façade at same location as historic cornice.
- Waivers are requested for the common recreation area.

Applicant Comment: Mark Blatter of Historic Seattle introduced Alan Cornell of Nitze Stagen, the building owner, Kate Krafft, Preservationist and Steve Johnson, the project architect. He said they have come before this board many times and most recently their request for a revised Certificate of Approval to allow an additional floor was denied so they are returning with a revised application responding to the Board's concerns. Today's application would be for one additional floor for 16 additional condo units, for a total of 82 units. This additional floor would raise the building height to 110'. They are requesting a waiver for the common recreation area requirements and are proposing only 1850', or 42% of the required area. He said they will have 44 parking stalls. He said they aim to increase market rate housing to improve the viability of this area. He said they will replace the historic cornice, redesigning the new cornice and parapet of the building and reopen two historic windows in the old building. He noted that his part of the district is different from the core of the district and has a wider variety of buildings.

He introduced letters of support from preservation consultant, Mimi Sheridan, King County Council Member, Dow Constantine, Executive Director of the Washington Trust for Historic Preservation, Jennifer Meisner, and architect and former PSPB Chair, Kim Lokan.

Alan Cornell of Nitze Stagen reviewed the history of this project. He said they want to create high quality units at a reasonable cost. He said they had originally wanted a timber frame structure, but there were too many challenges related to the shape of the building and the wood structural code restriction, which would have limited the height to 65' over the concrete and the limit on the amount of area they could provide over the mezzanine. He said as a result, they had low ceiling heights, the mezzanine would not align with lower walls and the bearing walls would not allow them the flexibility to combine units or change their configuration. For these reasons he said they decided to change to a concrete frame, which allowed them to add more height and units to the building, provide higher ceilings and better structural stability. He said the both Pioneer Square Neighborhood plan and the South Downtown Livability Plan encourage housings in order to create a strong, viable neighborhood and he said he believes this addition of one floor is appropriate.

Steve Johnson, project architect, presented a model of the existing building and the proposed addition. He said they were pleased to explore the benefits that a concrete frame would offer, including allowing them to add more units and increase the ceiling height and open one new and one enlarged windows that were covered over on the old building. He said the pedestrian orientation of the streetscape and the ground floor retail spaces would remain as previously proposed and approved. He said a concrete framed building would be more flexible in the future and allow for a variety of uses. He said they could add even more floors per the code, but he said they like the proposed proportion of the ratios of the base, shaft and cap. He presented photographs of buildings with similar ratios in Pioneer Square. He said they proposed to replace the lost cornice and showed a historic photograph. He said the design was not replicated but similar because the details in the photograph were difficult to see. He said the proposed broken cornice on the new building would have rhythmic bays and would improve the shadow lines. He said the Railroad Avenue setback works with the industrial character along Occidental Avenue. He presented a slide show presentation of 3-d imagines of the buildings from various points of view.

Kate Krafft, architect and preservation consultant said she started working in Pioneer Square in 1978 and served on the PSPB from 1979-85, in addition to staffing it at one time, and has worked on the survey and inventory and completed the EIS for the Safeco Field, among other things. She said she reviewed the project in light of the Secretary of the Interior Standards and the District Rules and said she believes this design is an improvement, especially because it supports the goal to rehab an historic building and provide housing in the District.

Ms. Krafft said the boundaries of the district and the National REG have evolved. The local district originally consisted of the commercial, Romanesque buildings in the northern part of the District. In 1973, the Special Review District was created to mitigate the affects of the stadium construction and included the International District and S. King Street. In 1985, the International Special Review District was created and the S. King Street section was incorporated in the Pioneer Square Preservation District. She said the zoning code would allow for 140' of height on the Johnson Building, and she said this part of the district has a different design character than that of the District core

and features warehouses and railroad related structures. She said there are 6-9 warehouses in the surrounding area, many of which are under-utilized but are scheduled for redevelopment, such as the Starbucks building at 501 S. King Street, the WASKA site and the north lot of Qwest Field. She noted that Qwest Field is across the street from the Johnson Building, the latter providing a buffer between First Avenue and the stadium. She said the proposed project meets SMC 23-66.100, which states that the purpose of the District includes, “to return unproductive structure to useful purposes...” She said it also meets SMC 23.66.180 *Exterior Building Design, Section B Scale and the PSPB Rules, Section III General Rules for rehabilitation and New Construction*, stating that the revised design for the addition will utilize the same building materials, colors and architectural detailing as previously approved by the Board, with the exception of the change to the cornice to de-emphasize the building height. She noted that the Rules do not prohibit additions.

Ms. Krafft also said the application meets SOI Standards for Rehabilitation which she said call for establishing a compatible use for an historic property by making repairs, alteration and additions while preserving the essential features that convey the historic, cultural or architectural significance of the property. She cited the SOI Standards which notes “Rehabilitation, like Preservation acknowledges a building’s change over time; the retention and repair of existing historic materials and features is thus always recommended. However, unlike Preservation, the dual goal of rehabilitation is to – respectfully- add to or alter a building in order to meet new use requirements.

Ms. Krafft urged the Board to consider the SOI standards for Setting and noted that this building is a contributing building within the District and is not an individual City Landmark. Therefore she said, “the addition should be reviewed in light of its compatibility with the historic character of the specific setting and its immediate environment.” She said the proposed design will “preserve and rehabilitate an historic property and its historic relationship with the setting and would set a positive example for future redevelopment ...in conjunction with anticipated new housing construction along with this entire leg of the historic district and the First Avenue South.”

Board Questions:

Mr. McConachie noted that the ordinance calls for horizontal division between the base, shaft and cap. He asked why they chose a broken cornice.

Mr. Johnson said they designed the building so that the historic building is the base and the addition is the shaft. They wanted the historic portion to remain strong. He said a stronger cornice would emphasize the shaft and would simply reflect a weak imitation of the Romanesque style. He said they designed a parapet more in scale to the addition and fitting in character of the neighboring buildings.

Mr. McConache said the ordinance recommends that buildings terminate with a heavy cornice. He asked why Mr. Johnson thought this would not express the character of housing unit.

Mr. Johnson said they wanted the addition to match the visual rhythm of the pedestrian level with its broken scale and vertical elements. He said the notches are aimed to give light and air to shape of the site. He said if the size of the cornice would grow with the building, it would become a dominate element and he didn’t want this.

Mr. Appleby commented that the façade is 240' and breaking the cornice would diminish this length.

Mr. McConachie asked how the concrete frame expresses itself on the façade. Mr. Johnson said it does not and he said they are trying to make a modest building that "talks" of the character of its use and does not overwhelm its historic fabric.

Mr. McConachie noted that this Board previously approved the addition without the top floor. He asked whether she though adding height above the adjacent roofline would be setting precedent.

Ms. Krafft noted that when she mentioned precedent she was referring to the fact that the materials and fenestration pattern are already approved by the Board. She said this area is zoned different in the District and targeted for housing development. She said the environment and setting around the Johnson Building is different from the northern part of the District. She added that the addition does not destroy the relationship with Railroad Avenue. She said its adjacency to Qwest Field's massing is also significance in the re-design.

Mr. Strauss asked why these particular materials were chosen.

Mr. Johnson said the materials above the base are outside of the pedestrians reach and are no longer "tactile" but only visually accessible. He said they wanted a "modest" material appropriate for residential use that provides a counterweight to verticality.

Ms. Sokol Furesz asked whether the Park Service has seen the project and if so, would it remain a contributing building within the District.

Ms. Krafft stated that consultation with the Park Service is not required and would only be honorary. Mr. Blatter said that he discussed it with the Steve Mathison at WA DAHP and that properties are not de-listed because of changes in design, but as part of another action taken by the Park Service.

Public Comment:

David Bruner, said he is a resident and property owner in Pioneer Square, and is glad to have more housing and residents that would improve public safety. He said housing is the single most important factor in Pioneer Square's viability.

Jennifer Meisner, Executive Director of the Washington Trust for Historic Preservation referred to her letter submitted to the Board in support of this application. She said the Trust believes it meets the Rules and SOI Standards and brings an underutilized building into use, increases housing and complies with height limits. She said the SOI standards are about re-use and vitality and the new design differentiates with the old design.

Art Skolnik noted that the District gets expanded over time and he felt this application represented "historic prostitution" rather than "historic preservation". He said the Board should be protecting historic fabric and rescind their previous approval. He said since the owner is the county they should come before the Board. He warned the Board to be careful of speculators who want to push the limits in order to make a profit. He said the Board should "get back on track" and review this proposal directly with the property owners.

Mark Astor, of Martin Smith Inc, referred to a letter from Michael Houser, State Archeology Office, and stated that he was opposed to the application regardless of whether it would be a contributing building in the future. He said he represents Jeff Raush managing member of MSI Provident, owner of the Provident Building. Mr. Raush letter states the Board needs to adhere to the PSPB Rules and the SOI Standards. He said he is not opposed to this because of "Not-In-My-BackYard" (NIMBY) reasons, that is, because it would impact his building. He explained that he has respect for historic preservation and has worked on several historic preservation projects in Seattle, including Coliseum Theatre, 1201 Western, Bailey Building, Dexter Horton Building, among others. He said he believes this proposed addition on the Johnson Building would be out of character with the District and the rules clearly discourage additions to historic buildings, especially those not altered through the addition of floors. He said this does not meet the District Rules because it lacks setbacks, uses inappropriate external materials and is out of scale with the building it sits upon. Mr. Astor presented a study of existing and proposed housing that will be built in the District.

Robert Weaver said he spent his career in historic preservation in Seattle and noticed that there seemed to be a redefinition of the SOI Standards here in Seattle. He said he has friends at the Parks Service and they said they do not believe this application meets the SOI Standards. He said he agrees with Michael Houser's letter and that at its original height he building gives educational value and shows the scale of the areas. He said the Board should know the standard and guidelines or Pioneer Square will be lost. He said the Johnson building's utilitarian architecture is as important to the history of Seattle as the buildings in the core of the District.

Dave Hancock asked why members of the public only have three minutes to made comments while the applicant had a half hour. He said at the June 13, 2007 meeting the applicant admitted that they want to add this extra floor for economic reasons, but this was not mentioned today. He quoted from the meeting minutes in which Mr. Chaney said the project would not be feasible without the addition height. He read from SMC 23.66.100 which mentions the preservation and economics goals of the District. He said this is a Preservation Board and they should give precedence to preservation over economics. He said although some people may think this area around the Johnson Building was degraded so this kind of addition to an historic building should be allowed, he said he believes the opposite is true. He said the Board was created as result of the King Dome's construction in an effort to protect the adjacent buildings. He said they should keep this in mind as the Qwest Field and the north lot is across the street and they should be more careful about retaining the integrity of the nearby buildings. He said the Board should consider why they would want to approve this project, giving that there are so many proposed housing projects in the pipeline.

Kevin Daniels, President of Nitze Stagen, said he recently met with the Dick Moe, President of the National Trust for Historic Preservation and discussed revitalization of commercial districts. He said the Trust President said that this revitalization is not just about saving a building but varies in different communities. He said Heather McIntosh, president of Preservation Action said that building up is part of Pioneer Square's adaptation overtime. He showed an example of this in the Hearst Tower in New York, which features a 46 story addition to a landmark building. He said the New York landmarks board approved this project because they found it to be in keeping with the surrounding structures.

Kym Allen, said she is speaking on behalf of Dow Constantine, who wrote in a statement that the application is appropriate solution for vacant warehouse building across from the Qwest Field. As a long time advocate for historic preservation he said this application will protect historic features of the building and infuse new life in the neighborhood.

Board Discussion:

Ms. Sokol Furesz said she was not in favor of this application because the size of the addition is out of scale with the rest of the building, not with regards to the surrounding area. She said although housing is important, she does not think it meets the SOI standards.

Mr. Strauss said his concerns related to the fact that the materials have been extruded and how one could define “scale”. He said the scale was impacted by the material selection which hasn’t changed since the original application was approved. He said he would prefer to reconsider the skin of the building, but would vote in favor of the application because housing in the District is so important.

Mr. Freidhoff said he would vote in favor as well because it provides housing which is named as a priority in the neighborhood plan. He said as the building sits now, it detracts from the neighborhood but with the proposed renovations, including the preservation of the streetscapes, he said he believes it would contribute to the vitality of the District.

Ms. Bellanca also stated that she would vote in favor of the application. She said the scale has changed with the addition of the new floor but she said the Board had already approved the three stories for housing and revitalization and sees no reason to revisit this decision. She said she doesn’t think any other possible proposal for this building would be significantly different.

Mr. Ito said he agreed with Mr. Strauss in regards to the “extrusion” of materials. He said he had no problem with the height, but he disliked the proportion. He said the increased size of cornice is an improvement and the metal siding does differentiate between the old and new buildings.

Mr. McConachie thanked everyone for their passionate discussion of this project. He said he is concerned about “incrementalism”. He said he is in support of housing in the District but felt this addition was out of scale with the original building.

Ms. Bueche cited SOI #9 in support of this application. She said she believes the addition is appropriate in scale and context and the building’s re-use will prevent it from being lost. She also said she believes the application meets District Rule #3. She said the cornice is minimized and this strengthens the base.

Action:

I moved to approve the application as presented.

MM/SC/SB/FF 5:2:0 Mr. McConachie and Ms. Sokol Furesz opposed.

Code Citations:

District Rules III General Guidelines for Rehabilitation and New Construction
SMC 23.66.100 Creation of the district

SMC23.66.120 Use
SMC 23.66.140 Height
SMC 23.66.155 Waiver of common recreation area requirements
SMC 23.66.180 Exterior Building Design
Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation 1, 2, 5, 6, 9 and 10

070307.3 PRELIMINARY PROJECT REVIEW
Overview of upcoming WSDOT projects in Pioneer Square Ron Paananen
Postponed until the next meeting.

070307.4 BOARD BUSINESS There was no Board business

070307.5 REPORT OF THE CHAIR: Tina Bueche, Chair
There was no report.

070307.6 STAFF REPORT: Genna Nashem
There was no report.

Issued: August 1, 2007

Genna Nashem
Pioneer Square Preservation Board Coordinator
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