



The City of Seattle

International Special Review District

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ISRD 77/08

MINUTES FOR THE MEETING OF TUESDAY, March 11, 2008

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

Board Members Present

Weng Chan
Jerry Chihara
Misun Chung Gerrick
Amalia Gonzalez-Kahn
Robert Ha
Joshua Osborn-Klein
Hoa Tang

Staff

Rebecca Frestedt
Melinda Bloom

Ms. Gonzalez-Kahn called the meeting to order at 4:35 PM

Ms. Frestedt welcomed and introduced two new board members who were elected during the March 4, 2008 Special Election: Joshua Osborn-Klein who fills position #1 (Resident, Tenant, and Community Participant) and Weng Chan who fills position #4 (Business Person or Property Owner). She said both will observe today's meeting and are welcome to provide input, but that both have decided they would abstain from voting during today's meeting. She said they will join the full Board during the March 25th meeting.

Mr. Ha arrived at 4:37 pm.

031108.1 APPROVAL OF MINUTES

January 8, 2008

Ms. Gonzalez-Kahn said she doesn't recall making a comment attributed to her on page two of the minutes. Ms. Chung Gerrick said she had asked the question. The minutes will be corrected.

MM/SC/JC/RH

5:0:2 (Messrs. Osborn-Klein and Weng abstained)

Minutes approved with amendments.

February 12, 2008

Approval of minutes was deferred.

Mr. Wu gave the board four dimension drawings showing the final mock-up of the plaques.

Board questions:

Mr. Chihara thanked Mr. Wu for changing the font size on the dollar amount; he said it was nice that Chinese Characters were included in a portion of the text.

Mr. Wu said the plaques will be attached to the columns using a strong adhesive and four screws will be used to temporarily hold the plaque in place until the adhesive dries.

Mr. Chihara asked if the adhesive was compatible with bronze. Mr. Wu said that it was.

Public Comment: There was no public comment.

Board Discussion:

Mr. Osborn-Klein asked for clarification on the placement of the plaques.

Mr. Wu explained the plaques would go on the four columns each with four faces. One would have plaques only on three faces due to an electrical box.

Action: I move that the International Special Review District Board approve a Certificate of Approval for signage, per the applicant's submittal.

This action is based on the following: The application meets the following sections of the **SMC Chapter 23.66:**

SMC 23.66.030 – Certificates of approval – Application, review and appeals
SMC 23.66.336(A) – Exterior building finishes - General Requirements.
SMC 23.66.336(B) – Asian Design Character District

MM/SC/JC/HT

5:0:1 (Messrs. Osborn-Klein and Weng abstained.)

031108.23

Fire Station #10
105 5th Ave. S.

Summary of proposed changes: Revision to Final Design rooftop mechanical detail

Ms. Frestedt read from the staff report and said the applicant proposed a revision to the Final Design detail for the rooftop mechanical screen. She said the details for the hood, vent and mechanical screen had not been finalized at the time that the Board issued a C of A for Final Design in 2005. She said the height of the screen from the roof's surface is 4'11". She confirmed that the Board issued a Certificate of Approval for Use and Final Design in December 2005. The SEPA determination of non-significance was issued on April 7, 2005. Ms. Frestedt introduced the applicants, Justine Kim, SOJ, Ed Weinstein and Milton Won, Weinstein Architects A/U.

Applicant Comments: Ms. Kim said that a change in project managers created a delay for this project. She said the mechanical screen is not visible from the street.

Mr. Weinstein said that the mechanical screen on the roof of crew quarters is set back and cradled between taller elements so is not visible from the street.

Ms. Frestedt said she didn't see anything that would conflict with the ordinance for the District.

Board Questions:

Ms. Chung Gerrick said she goes by it every day and doesn't see the mechanical unit. In terms of location and scaling it is sensitive to the neighborhood.

Mr. Chihara said the green roof is a nice addition and asked if the extent of the green roof was outside of the mechanical area.

Mr. Wan said it is also green on the higher area.

Mr. Tang asked about the benefit of a green roof.

Mr. Weinstein said it was drought tolerant vegetative area on a shallow room. It stores storm water on roof and emits it slowly. It is a sustainable design benefit and also provides insulation.

Mr. Tang asked if the water could stain the roof.

Mr. Weinstein asked Mr. Wan to describe the run-off process. Mr. Wan said the roof controls the water going into the drainage system; a filter fabric holds it in and delays the water going into the drainage system.

Ms. Kim said the roof water monitor system is funded by Seattle Public Utilities so they can measure the effectiveness of the project.

Mr. Chihara said he thought they would see something with radio towers on the upper roof and asked if they were meeting code.

Mr. Weinstein said at the time it was presented the necessary communication equipment wasn't determined.

Ms. Frestedt said with regard to the towers she has a copy of the 2005 approved plans if anyone wanted to review them. She said the towers look considerably more built out than the drawings show; she asked the Board if they had concerns. She said that the communications equipment was not part of this application.

Mr. Chihara said no, not at this point.

Ms. Kim said they will be coming back with signage scope. She said DPD requires a letter from the Board/Historic Preservation speaking to the approval of the screen.

Public Comment: There was no public comment.

Action: I move that the International Special Review District Board approve a Certificate of Approval for revisions to the Final Design, per the applicant's submittal.

This action is based on the following: The application meets the following sections of the **SMC Chapter 23.66:**

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

SMC 23.66.332 – Height

c. Rooftop Features.

MM/SC/JC/HT

5:0:1 (Messrs. Osborn-Klein and Weng abstained.)

Prior to the Board briefing, Ms. Frestedt handed out the updated staff roster and said she would bring copies of the April 10, 2007 DPD report on heights presentation.

031108.3 BOARD BRIEFINGS

031108.31 On-street merchant vending and Livable South Downtown urban design planning Gary Johnson, Department of Planning and Development (DPD)

Ms. Frestedt introduced Gary Johnson from DPD and said he would provide a briefing on the South Downtown Urban Design elements with regard to consolidation of changes to merchant carts.

Mr. Johnson provided the context on the City Center “smart growth” strategy which is rooted in the understanding that region will grow and is focused on managing that growth. He said the population could double so they are planning now for “smart growth” rather than sprawl. He said areas impacted are City Center, International District, Pioneer Square, Denny Triangle, South Lake Union, west side of Capital Hill and part of Queen Anne. He said the area contains four of six urban centers.

He said they are trying to take a holistic approach and are looking at public safety and parks to try to create the type of urban environment the will support a sustainable neighborhood. He said DPD has been working with a 25 person advisory committee to analyze sub-areas and looking at possible height increase to make the area more attractive to new employees and residents. He said the sub-areas are very different from one another, e.g. Pioneer Square and the International District. He said they are looking at urban design improvements and mentioned consultant Kenichi Nakano’s urban design work in Pioneer Square. He said DPD is looking at designing additional green streets and that the City is underserved with parks and open space. He said if the Viaduct comes down that would open up some potential space.

Mr. Johnson said that Parks has a couple million dollars for park development and they hope to acquire the Post Office site to expand Hing Hay Park. He said they haven’t taken advantage of right of way opportunity that provides pedestrian possibilities and creates a more park-like right of way. He said there are shorter term ways to provide activation such as sidewalk cafes and bringing music and performance to the sidewalks. They would look to streamline the permit process. He said that display carts and merchant vending carts are very attractive and an asset to the International District. He said the store owners currently work with SDOT and ISRD Board to obtain a permit for display carts; however, none of the current stores have permits. He said the City has been reticent to enforce and wants to encourage the practice.

Ms. Frestedt provided the example of the Dong Hing Market/Dong Sing. She said the new business owner submitted the application for a Certificate of Approval for Signage and Street Use which triggered a discussion about the permitting process for display carts.

Mr. Johnson said DPD proposes to create an overlay for the ID which would allow DPD to legitimize merchandise displays. He said they would work with SDOT to make code changes to allow this to happen.

He said the sidewalk needs to be clear for pedestrian access and that DPD and SDOT want to develop more flexible guidelines regarding display forms within the ID. He said the “cookie cutter approach” is not desirable. He said even pallets may be OK. He noted that currently

curbside activity is not allowed but that some business owners currently place cards and displays in this area. Mr. Johnson said he is looking for Board feedback.

Ms. Frestedt said this is an opportunity for Board discussion about what is appropriate for the neighborhood and for DPD and SDOT to hear from the Board.

Mr. Johnson said part of the vetting process will be to come back again to the Board with a proposal.

Ms. Chung Gerrick asked if street vendors would still need a permit if an overlay was put into place.

Mr. Johnson said yes but they would provide a framework and guidelines that are a bit different from the current guidelines.

Ms. Frestedt said that produce displays are common but that most are out of compliance and do not have a permit. She said the Historic Preservation Program has not received any complaints. She said that the BIA is concerned that trash around displays gathers and piles up.

Mr. Osborn-Klein asked why current stands don't conform.

Mr. Johnson said the location of the carts, the size, and placement of awnings in most cases do not meet the Land Use Code.

Mr. Osborn-Klein asked if it would be allowed under the current guidelines.

Mr. Johnson said no.

Mr. Chihara said the existing businesses using street rights of way have been using for a period that predates the tenure of all members of the Board. He said he could like to see a continuation of vendors but noted the variation of sidewalk widths. He asked if the overlay zoning was developed would the City begin to consider a street vacation to provide wider sidewalks. He said some areas may be too physically limited without looking at sidewalk width.

Mr. Johnson said that an adopted approach would identify specific dimensions. He added that the question of widening sidewalks is getting more attention. He said the question of the Viaduct alternative will drive interest in preserving capacity on the streets, including on-street parking.

Mr. Chihara said merchants resisted reducing parking.

Mr. Johnson commented on the proposal to extend the waterfront street car up Jackson and a consideration of a two way street car couplet on Jackson and King. He said a one-way street car would affect parking so it is something for the neighborhood to think about.

Ms. Chung Gerrick said the night street market is very successful in Vancouver. She said the BIA is talking about doing the night street market here to bring in more activity, which may include a proposal to temporarily close streets.

Mr. Osborn-Klein said there were three or four night markets last year.

Ms. Frestedt said the BIA is planning another night market for three weekends in August.

Mr. Johnson said the City supports the market concept.

Mr. Osborn-Klein asked about the utilization of the alley space.

Mr. Johnson said they are proposing a mandatory ban on dumpsters. He said many buildings do not have space for dumpsters. He said there was a voluntary dumpster free pilot project in Pioneer Square. He said new solid waste contracts will be signed in 2009 creating an opportunity for changes. He said the BIA likes the dumpster ban and that the ID would benefit more than other areas.

There was a discussion about the ISRD and the possibility of adjusting the boundaries to include a portion of the area south of Dearborn. The Board discussed future changes in and around Little Saigon. Mr. Johnson said DPD is considering a special character district at 12th and Jackson.

Mr. Chihara said that historically the only reason east and west are split had to do with the construction of I-5. He said there are significant buildings and businesses on both sides so there needs to be some common oversight. He said if an overlay district is created for Little Saigon managing two overlapping districts could be challenging.

Ms. Frestedt said that there are some unanswered questions about the contributing status of buildings east of I-5 and that this is an area that needs further discussion.

Mr. Chihara said he would like some additional information about those buildings.

Ms. Frestedt said the district is unique in that it was created to preserve architectural as well as cultural fabric.

There was a discussion about the definition of formula fast food restaurants and where special review of this use was required within the District. Ms. Frestedt referred the Board and Mr. Johnson to review Seattle Municipal Code 23.66.324 – Uses subject to special review.

Ms. Gonzalez-Kahn asked if there were any last questions on street merchants.

Ms. Chung Gerrick asked if the new proposed heights would amount to creating a wall around the district and if the rezone was a result of the proposed Dearborn Street project and Goodwill redevelopment.

Mr. Johnson said that is what is motivating the Little Saigon community, since they see a negative impact and potential loss of Vietnamese character.

Mr. Chihara asked about whether or not a vendor overlay would include independent vendor carts.

Mr. Johnson said no, the goal is to legitimize street vendors directly related to neighborhood businesses. He said with regard to other vending, it is narrowly restricted due to Public Health department requirements and business community objections due to competition.

Mr. Osborn-Klein asked about sidewalk cafes.

Mr. Johnson said narrow sidewalks are an issue but DPD would like to encourage where appropriate.

Ms. Frestedt asked if the Board was supportive of carts being located on the sidewalk and curb, and if the Board is supportive of the City's effort to legitimize vendors.

Ms. Chung Gerrick said yes.

Mr. Chihara said yes, but said he wouldn't encourage blue tarps.

Mr. Johnson showed photos of tarps and trash in the public right-of-way within the ISRD.

Ms. Frestedt said a regarding a structured awning or canopy, would the board be in favor of overhead protection.

Ms. Chung Gerrick said yes if it were permanent or retractable.

Ms. Gonzalez Kahn said it would have to be next to the building; she doesn't like the idea of a tarp going across the sidewalk.

Mr. Chihara said he doesn't care for any form of overhead protection on vending carts.

Ms. Frestedt said it could be part of the guideline review and said the Board will continue the discussion.

Mr. Johnson said if we want to encourage this use in a rainy city it might be good to think about awnings.

Mr. Osborn-Klein asked if covered space was a liability with temporary structures, city permits.

Mr. Johnson said permits require liability insurance; the guide would have to cover that.

031109.32 BOARD BUSINESS

There was no further Board Business

ADJOURN The meeting was adjourned at 6:10 pm.

Issued: April 8, 2008

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