



The City of Seattle

## International Special Review District

Mailing Address: PO Box 94649, Seattle WA 98124-4649  
Street Address: 600 4th Avenue, 4th Floor

1ISR143/20

### MINUTES FOR THE MEETING OF TUESDAY, October 27, 2020

Time: 4:30pm

Place: Virtual meeting via WebEx

#### Board Members Present

Matt Chan  
Matt Fujimoto  
Faye Hong  
Sergio Legon-Talamoni, Chair  
Tanya Woo  
Andy Yip

#### Staff

Rebecca Frestedt  
Melinda Bloom

#### Absent

Russ Williams

**In-person attendance is currently prohibited per Washington State Governor's Proclamation No. 20-28.5. Meeting participation is limited to access by the WebEx meeting link or the telephone call-in line provided on agenda.**

Chair Sergio Legon-Talamoni called the meeting to order at 4:30 pm.

Roll Call:

Matt Chan	Present
Matt Fujimoto	Present
Faye Hong	Present
Tanya Woo	Present
Andy Yip	Present
Mr. Legon-Talamoni	Present

#### **102720.1 APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

August 25, 2020

MM/SC/FH/MC

4:0:2 Minutes approved. Mr. Fujimoto and Ms. Woo abstained.

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

"Printed on Recycled Paper"

Mr. Legon-Talamoni welcomed Matt Fujimoto and Tanya Woo to the Board.

**102720.2 PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no live public comment.

Mr. Legon-Talamoni read Frank Irigon's public comment into the record. Mr. Irigon wrote that: this project provides no benefit to the elderly and low-income communities; it is gentrification; he was opposed to the project; he said they won't be driven into a small area like Africatown; developer should work with CID Coalition.

**102720.3 APPLICATION FOR CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL**

102720.31 206 5<sup>th</sup> Ave S.

*Applicant:* Rosa Folla, Hewitt

Ms. Frestedt introduced the project for proposed Use, Street Use and Final Design of an 8-story mixed-use development consisting of 66 apartments and 1,356 sq ft of commercial space. She said no parking is proposed. The proposal includes planting one street tree on 5<sup>th</sup> Ave S. and regrading a portion of the alley. The proposal includes demolition of the extant building. Exhibits included historic property report, photos, plans, renderings, specifications and cut sheets.

As part of this proposal, Ms. Frestedt said the applicants are asking for ISRD Board support for an Alley Exception application, to allow a waiver of the alley width requirement under SMC 23.53.030F.1. A 2' dedication would be provided up to a height of 8' at grade. The alley is unimproved on the north end of the block and unlikely to be approved due to the severity of the grade.

She said the following items have been deferred and will be part of a future application: building signage, design of the residential entry gate and final materials/color treatment on the south façade.

Ms. Frestedt said the applicant has given four (4) briefings to the Board since June 2018. She referred to a summary of the individual meetings in the staff report. The site is located outside of the National Register District and outside the Asian Design Character District and Retail Core. She said the project does not trigger SEPA.

Presentation documents in DON file.

Julia Nagele, Hewitt, presented the application. She provided context of the infill building in Japantown and noted historical analysis of the existing building has been done (in DON file). The existing structure was originally designed in 1924 by E.W. Houghton and was constructed shortly after by an unknown builder. The original blueprint plans indicate that the building was designed for Henry Ostrow. This property has undergone significant alterations to the exterior and interior in its 94 years of existence. The building is in a unique section of the district which borders both the Downtown neighborhood as well as Pioneer Square and contains many new, modern structures as well as historic structures. The two buildings on either side of this site are older structures which are in "Average" condition. The existing building contains two restaurants on 5th Avenue South (Tenoch Mexican Grill and Gyro House) and a commercial kitchen (Liberated Foods) in

the northern-most bay. The proposal is to demolish the existing, single story structure, improve the alley adjacent to the subject property. Currently the alley dead-ends and does not connect South Washington Street with South Main Street. The dead-end alley condition will remain. The existing power pole on 5th Avenue South will have transformers removed and be reduced in height to a streetlight pole.

The proposal is to construct 50,573 square feet, eight-story mixed-use residential in-fill structure. 1,797 square feet of commercial space would front 40 feet of the street level façade. The residential entry is accessed via an outdoor, covered passage along the north edge of the structure. The residential lobby is located behind the commercial uses to maximize an active street front. 66 residential units are proposed on levels 2 – 8. An outdoor, landscaped terrace for residents is proposed for the rooftop. Trash and recycling spaces will be stored on site within the structure and accessed from the alley. 70 spaces for bicycle storage is accessed from the alley within the structure adjacent to the trash and recycling room. No vehicle parking is proposed.

Ms. Nagele said the street-facing façade materials are proposed to be brick, glass, and metal trim detailing. Accent wood décor materials are proposed for the street level canopy and exterior wall and ceiling treatments along the north, outdoor residential exterior passage. A custom garden gate set back from the street is proposed to define and secure the exterior residential passage. Through the gate, the passage is proposed to have specialty concrete paving, gravel accents and landscaping. Improvements to the ROW and sidewalk would be adding a street tree, low shrub planting, bicycle parking and new 2' x 2' scored concrete sidewalk.

Ms. Nagele identified building entries and noted lobby space will be accessed via gate, and through outdoor passageway with greenery and hardscape aggregate walkway. She noted barbell shape of building and lightwells above residential entries. She explained west and east façade concepts – Echo, Overlap, and Horizon and noted Horizon relates to the adjacent Ascona. She said they toned down the gray material on the east façade. She explained the intention for art mural on the south elevation and noted that the elevation will eventually be covered when the south parcel is developed. She requested a deferment for the south wall to have art mural reviewed under a separate Certificate of Approval application.

Ms. Nagle said the west is the primary elevation and she noted brick piers between darker metal C-channel spandrels; louvers are inboard of face of channel flange. She said the north lightwell entry passageway is outdoor but covered by building; this gives the ability for corner visibility. The alley elevation has a simpler façade. She noted the landscaping material will create a 'still life' in the north residential entry. She said they want the north entry visible yet secured and it will be gated. She noted they have a utility vault to work around. She went over drawings and noted lighting locations. She said wood décor panels are on the west façade; steel outriggers match frame work.

She went over the deferred elements of the proposal, including building and blade signage; design of the residential entry gate; south façade treatment. She said the Architectural Review Committee requested more information on color schemes, wanted more planting in place of flexi-pave, and wanted fenestration calmed down. The responses to the ARC's feedback are, and reflected in this proposal.

Ms. Frestedt interjected and said she arranged for a Cantonese interpreter and realized that she neglected to have the interpreter provide interpretation at start of meeting, through public comment. She apologized for her oversight and asked the interpreter to summarize what had occurred.

Cantonese interpreter Lillian Young translated Ms. Frestedt's comments.

Ms. Frestedt said the intention is to provide interpretation when the Board reviews new construction projects to provide language access during virtual meetings. She said they are working out the best way to do that. A portion of the agenda is in Chinese so people could participate and provide public comment. She said the Department of Neighborhoods will continue to try to improve upon the process. She invited any community members who may be listening to submit public comment, in writing, and said that comments received in language would be interpreted and shared with the Board.

Mr. Legon-Talamoni thanked Ms. Young for interpretation service. He said he appreciated Ms. Nagle's clear and organized presentation. He advised board members they would be making a recommendation and taking action on the proposed demolition, use, final design, and alley exception.

Ms. Woo asked if they did any outreach and what they heard.

Ms. Nagele said the ownership group were leading efforts but noted it has been quite a while.

Mr. Fujimoto asked if there had been any further outreach regarding the December 2019 meeting that condos would become market rate apartments.

Don Mar, Edge Development, said they did additional outreach and said he would research and report back toward end of meeting.

There was a discussion about proposed modifications in the right-of-way, including the relocation of a utility pole.

Mr. Legon-Talamoni noted the glass rail on the roof and asked if there will be an amenity area there.

Ms. Nagele said it will not go right to the edge, there will be plantings there.

Mr. Legon-Talamoni asked if studies were done about impacts to Kobe Terrace Park views.

Ms. Nagele said they provided a series of diagrams at the first briefing.

Ms. Frestedt said no issues were raised by the board at that time.

Mr. Fujimoto asked what the 'alley exception' means.

Ms. Nagele said it is not a through-alley. She said the exception allows them to retain the 2' additional width up to 26' high and to bring the alley façade down to that point. She said on the alley façade there are four stories of gray and one level of a darker grey recessed at alley level.

Ms. Woo asked if the proposed awning at the front façade would be glass.

Ms. Nagele said there is a lot of light on the underside of the awning; it is wood veneer panel, and the lighting makes it appear glass-like.

Mr. Chan said the original building has three distinct retail spaces; he noted the proposed design shows one retail space.

Ms. Nagele said there is lots of topography to deal with at the site. She said they want to keep spaces regular and then need residential egress. She said they could do two smaller spaces with entry on north side.

Mr. Chan said he'd prefer to see smaller retail spaces are consistent with what is in neighborhood.

Ms. Nagele said they could divide into two spaces. She indicated that storefront glazing could wrap corners with potential for entrances there.

Mr. Legon-Talamoni asked if accommodation has been made for range hood or other restaurant exhaust.

Rosa Folla, Hewitt said no hood going all the way to roof is proposed for a restaurant. She said no provisions have been made for a restaurant; exhaust would have to go through storefront.

Mr. Legon-Talamoni cited SMC 26.66.302 B. He said planning for a hood might be helpful and add flexibility of use to this space.

Mr. Mar reported that in December and January they attempted to schedule meetings in February and March which were nixed due to Covid. He said the intention was there, but it did not happen. He said that letters were written to community members asking to schedule meetings. He said they reached out to NW Asian Weekly. He said the public meetings were not held due to Covid.

Ms. Frestedt said the change of unit type came up during briefing. She noted there was issue with change from condominium to apartment use. She said the board has no jurisdiction over types of units or affordability. She said the board can consider use: commercial, residential, institutional, etc.

Mr. Mar said they were trying to bring in condos to get some affordable home ownership units. He said Covid impacted that and they are not as confident they could finance and sell condos. He said they felt safest with developing an apartment building.

Mr. Legon-Talamoni cited SMC 23.66.302 A and reiterated that the board has no jurisdiction over types or affordability.

Board Deliberation

Use

Mr. Chan said the size of retail space should be consistent with other retail in the neighborhood.

Mr. Legon-Talamoni agreed and noted the applicant said it is possible to divide commercial space. He said there is strong support for dividing commercial space.

Mr. Fujimoto appreciated the flexibility of the space in the design. He appreciated Mr. Chan's comment about need for varying sized retail. He cited SMC 23.66.326. He encouraged study of Type 1 hood and shaft and if restaurant use could be supported.

Mr. Legon-Talamoni said that many businesses in the district can't afford to pay for that build out; it would be great if that could be added. He noted the clever layout with residential entry location being aware from street and the preference of street level uses being retail. He said the main entry to the building is nicely designed. He said the vegetation and natural light provide a nice balance for an urban infill building.

Mr. Hong said he supports the project and said it is needed here. Regarding community outreach, he said he hadn't heard about this project. He said that this is far from the central core of the CID.

Mr. Chan said he was not at a majority of the briefings. He said the goal is to activate the neighborhood. He expressed concern about community outreach. He said successful outreach depends on the applicants creating an opportunity for dialog.

Mr. Legon-Talamoni concurred. He said there may be opportunity to do some level of outreach related to the gate and art. He wanted to hear of a plan on how community will be brought in for art elements.

Ms. Frestedt said that outreach is not a requirement for developer / applicant because the ISRD is not overseen through the Design Review Boards, which has mandatory outreach. She said the board has emphasized reinforcing goals of the district.

Mr. Fujimoto reiterated his concern about condo versus apartment, but said he supported the project. He said he was aware of outreach to SCIDPDA and others. He said he hoped that during Covid they would find other ways to still conduct outreach. He appreciated the thought process about street level elements.

Mr. Yip agreed with his colleagues and commended applicant for working with the board and for taking ARC recommendations to heart. He said he likes the commercial spaces. He said moving the residential lobby to give space to retail use is good. He said he understands the decision to move from condo to apartment use. He said that outreach is not mandatory, but the board is consistently asked about it because the community wants to know. He said that many community constituents are elderly and without technology; he said public event would be unsafe. He said the art on the south wall is a good opportunity for engagement.

Ms. Woo said she understands the need for flexibility for storefront retail space. She said the entry way and safety issue was tackled earlier. She said that you see this type entry in Asia; she said it is clever. She said there is a great opportunity to build excitement with the elderly – perhaps include a flyer with food delivery. She said there are many ways for the

community to learn more about the project. She said she understands the difficulty of financials with market rate housing and said it must have been arduous.

#### Demolition of Existing Building

Mr. Legon-Talamoni said the existing building houses commercial only and residential use is welcome. He agreed the integrity is gone.

Mr. Chan said after reviewing the documents (Historic Resource Report) he had no problem with demolition.

Mr. Hong said the building had no significance and he had no problem with demolition.

Mr. Yip said initially he had concerns, but the applicant has demonstrated that significance diminished over the years.

Mr. Fujimoto said residential use will re-establish the district as a stable housing area. He said the existing building has no historical significance.

Ms. Woo said she read the documents provided and said that it is sad to lose the building but that she supported demolition. She said the building doesn't have significance; it is just in a historic neighborhood.

Mr. Legon-Talamoni appreciated the applicant listened to board comments. He said that the 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue façade has been nicely resolved. He said he appreciated the design of the middle area and sees it as an homage to the Ascona. He said the building is in scale with others. He said he likes that proposed design considered building to the north and future project on the south. He likes that the residential entry is tucked away. He said the integration of mechanical louvers into C-channel is clever. He said toning down the alley façade is nice; he said it is cleaner and the louvers are nice in contrast to the gray area.

Mr. Fujimoto supported the project. He noted admiration for design ideas off 5<sup>th</sup>. He said he would like to see building response to light gray panel as final thought, allowing for more substantial facades in alley rather than in tertiary way.

Ms. Frestedt said there was a stronger contrast between dark and light on the alley; board feedback was to soften that contrast to be more in character of the district.

Mr. Hong asked if alley would be used for garbage.

Ms. Nagele said trash and recycling is inside and will be staged on exterior south side for pick up.

Mr. Hong said the design is compatible with the area.

Ms. Woo said the project has been reviewed over the past two years and it looks good.

Mr. Legon-Talamoni appreciated the applicant thinking about proposed south façade as an opportunity for art.

#### Street Use

Mr. Legon-Talamoni appreciated more natural greenery and said it was a good compromise.

Alley Exception due to steep slope

Mr. Fujimoto said it is a good example for granting an alley exception.

Mr. Legon-Talamoni said it is a nicely resolved composition. He said a 2' setback at the second floor would not look good. He supported the exception.

Mr. Hong and Mr. Chan had no comment.

Mr. Yip said he had no issues with the final design and said he understands why the alley exception is needed given the topography.

Ms. Woo had no comment.

Mr. Legon-Talamoni said deferred elements include outreach, art on south façade, gate, and signage.

Ms. Frestedt said those items will come back before the board.

Mr. Legon-Talamoni noted board support for the project and asked for a motion.

Action: I move that the International Special Review District Board recommend approval of a Certificate of Approval for Demolition, Use, Street Use and Final Design at 206 5<sup>th</sup> Ave. S.

The Board directs staff to prepare a written recommendation of approval, based on consideration of the application submittal and Board discussion at the October 27, 2020 virtual public meeting, and forward this written recommendation to the Department of Neighborhoods Director.

The Board has also reviewed the proposed Alley Exception and recommends that the Director of the Department of Transportation approve the Exception, as proposed.

- Minimum width required for existing alleys – SMC 23.53.030 F1

*The Board acknowledges the conditions on the north end of the alley make it unlikely that the alley connection to S. Washington Street will be restored due to the steep grade. Granting this exception will not alter spatial relationships or the historic character of the district*

This action is based on the **following applicable sections of the International Special Review District Ordinance:**

- SMC 23.66.030 - Certificates of approval - Application, review and appeals**
- SMC 23.66.032 – Contributing structures; determination of architectural or historic significance**
- SMC 23.66.302 – International Special Review District goals and objectives**



**SMC 23.66.306 – International District Residential (IDR) Zone goals and objectives**

**SMC 23.66.318 - Demolition**

**SMC 23.66.320 - Permitted uses**

**SMC 23.66.326 – Street level uses**

**SMC 23.66.328 – Uses above street level**

**SMC 23.66.332 – Height**

**SMC 23.66.336 – Exterior building finishes**

**A. General Requirements.** To retain and enhance the visual order of the District, which is created by existing older buildings that provide unique character and form through their subtle detailing and quarter-block and half-block coverage, new development, including exterior remodeling, should respect the architectural and structural integrity of the building in which the work is undertaken, through sympathetic use of colors, material and style. Exterior building facades shall be of a scale compatible with surrounding structures. Window proportions, floor height, cornice line, street elevations and other elements of the building facades shall relate to the scale of the existing buildings in the immediate area.

**C. Exterior Building Design Outside the Asian Design Character District**

**SMC 23.66.342 – Parking and access**

This action is also based on the **following applicable sections of the Secretary of the Interior Standards:**

**2.** The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.

*The Board determined that the building lacks the historic and architectural significance and architectural integrity required for a contributing building. Removal will not adversely impact the integrity of the International Special Review District.*

**9.** New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.

*Here, the new work is differentiated from the old and is compatible with the massing, size, scale and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the surrounding environment, because the Board has determined that the scale, massing, materials/colors and proportions respond to the surrounding context and do not adversely impact the character of the International Special Review District.*

MM/SC/AY/MF            6:0:0    Motion carried.

#### **102720.4      BOARD BUSINESS**

Ms. Frestedt said the emergency legislation has been extended to allow administrative review on smaller applications such and signage, storefront, and not for new construction or demolition. She said there is language in the Code to extend until the Governor’s order is in Phase 4.

Ms. Frestedt said she is working on language access for large projects. She said there is nothing complete at this point.

Ms. Frestedt said the election would have been next month and that she would issue a formal notice soon.

Regarding board member terms up at the end of November, she consulted City Attorney's office who said that both appointed and elected members can continue to serve until replacements are found.

**Adjourn      6:25 pm.**

Rebecca Frestedt, Board Coordinator  
206-684-0226