



The City of Seattle

International Special Review District

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

ISRDR 113/19

MINUTES FOR THE MEETING OF TUESDAY, May 28, 2019

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

Board Members Present

Yuko Kunugi
Sergio Legon-Talamoni
Russ Williams
Tanya Woo
Andy Yip, Vice-Chair

Staff

Rebecca Frestedt
Melinda Bloom

Absent

Stephanie Hsieh
Tim Lee

Vice Chair Andy Yip called the meeting to order at 4:45 pm.

052819.1 CERTIFICATES OF APPROVAL

052819.11 Right-of-Way in two locations

- 4th Ave. S. between S. King St. and S. Weller St.
- 5th Ave. S. at S. Jackson St.

Applicant: Dawn Miles, King County Metro

Ms. Frestedt explained the proposed addition of bus zone striping on 4th Ave. S. and replacement of a bus information sign and modifications to existing paving on 5th Ave S., south of S. Jackson St. Exhibits reviewed included plans and photographs. The ISRDR Board approved removal of a guardrail along 4th Ave. S. at the May 14th ISRDR Board meeting.

Applicant Comment:

Dawn Miles, King County Metro, explained that the guardrail portion had been approved already. She proposed curb striping at stop #620 to allow another bus to stop there. She proposed installing a new bus sign at stop #843 to update to current sign standard.

Public Comment: There was no public comment.

Board Discussion:

Mr. Legon-Talamoni said the new is in line with what is there; it is part of a larger project and will be unified throughout the system.

Ms. Miles said the concrete will match banding and texture.

Action: I move that the International Special Review District Board recommend approval of a Certificate of Approval for site alterations, as proposed.

The Board directs staff to prepare a written recommendation of approval, as proposed, based on consideration of the application submittal and Board discussion at the May 28, 2019 public meeting, and forward this written recommendation to the Department of Neighborhoods Director.

This action meets the following sections of the **International Special Review District Ordinance and applicable Design Guidelines:**

SMC 23.66.334 – Streets and sidewalks

MM/SC/SLT/YK 5:0:0 Motion carried.

052819.12

423 Maynard Ave. S. – Hing Hay Park

Applicant: Victoria Schoenburg, Seattle Department of Parks and Recreation

Ms. Frestedt explained the proposed retroactive request for approval for installation of a stand-alone informational kiosk within the park. The red kiosk is located along the northern edge of the park. Exhibits included plans, drawings and photographs. The park is located within the Asian Design Character District. Ms. Frestedt reported that on Jan. 22, 2019 the ISRD Board recommended approval for an illuminated art piece, featuring text, for the northern edge of the park.

Victoria Schoenburg, Seattle Department of Parks and Recreation (SPAR), explained the kiosk installation was an oversight; it was purchased and installed without prior Board approval. She said it provides activation and materials storage for the concierge. In response to a question about the selection process, she said that it is the same design as those in other parks. She said it is sturdy, secure and easy to clean. She said the concierge is there 10:00 am until 4:00 pm in the winter; 10:00 am until 6:00 pm in the summer.

Ms. Woo asked if it is left out overnight.

Ms. Schoenburg said it is; it is painted with graffiti resistant material. She said it is cabled to its location and is very heavy.

Public Comment: There was no public comment.

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

The Board directs staff to prepare a written recommendation of approval, based on consideration of the application submittal and Board discussion at the May 28, 2019 public meeting, and forward this written recommendation to the Department of Neighborhoods Director.

This action meets the following sections of the **International Special Review District Ordinance and applicable Design Guidelines:**

Secretary of the Interiors Standards #9 and #10

MM/SC/YK/TW 5:0:0 Motion carried.

052819.2 BOARD BRIEFING

052819.21 614-620 Maynard Ave. S. – Bush Garden building and adjacent warehouse
Presenter: Li Alligood, Otak

Continuous interpretation, alternating between English and Cantonese, was provided through an interpreter hired from Dynamic Language Interpretation.

Ms. Frestedt introduced the briefing by architect Li Alligood, Otak, and developer James Wong, Vibrant Cities, on proposed redevelopment plans for the properties at 614 Maynard S. (Elgin Hotel/Bush Garden) and 620 Maynard Ave. S. (warehouse). The briefing included a presentation of structural documentation about the 614 Maynard Ave. S. building and further exploration of potential massing options. Ms. Frestedt said no formal actions would be taken at this meeting. She encouraged those wishing to make public comment to sign in, since comments would be limited to 25 minutes. *(The time frame for public comment was doubled, to take into account time needed for interpretation.)*

Ms. Frestedt provided information about the design team, project and project background, reading from the staff report. She said the Elgin Hotel, 614 Maynard Ave. S., was constructed in 1910 and designed by Sabro Ozasa. The single story warehouse building (1946) at 620 Maynard Ave S. was designed as the foundation of a church that was never built. She said Maynard Ave. S. and S. Lane Street are designated Green Streets. She confirmed that the site is located just outside of the National Register District, and outside of the Asian Design Character District/Retail Core. She said that the Board received a briefing on July 24, 2018, which included a presentation of the historic property report by the Johnson Partnership and a presentation of massing schemes. The prior briefing was led by Graham Baba architects. There has since been a change in design teams. She distributed a staff summary of the meeting, which included recommendations from the Board to the design team, including a request for additional structural analysis of the Elgin Hotel, additional massing studies and request for identification of character-defining features of the Elgin Hotel.

Developer James Wong said his family has been in the area for four generations; he grew up here and went to the University of Washington. He said there are three reasons why this project is important: 1) The development team knows who they are- experienced real estate developers who come from hard-working immigrant families; 2) The team knows what they stand for. Looking to develop more housing in the CID, designing a building with mircoretail to inspire immigrant entrepreneurs; and 3) The team knows why it's building the project – Activating corner, creating safe, vibrant project that will bring residents who will support area businesses. He said keeping buildings empty is not the way to build a prosperous active community. Using space as a warehouse is not using it to its capacity. He said he is annoyed that people say Bellevue has better food and is safer. He said he wants the CID to be the destinate for the best Asian food. He envisions residents taking parents and grandparents here for Dim Sum. He said he is totally committed about getting the Jasmine built for all of us. He said they are looking at the structural integrity of the existing building and they want the board support of the plan. He said they will be more thoughtful of the foundation and base and want more input on what is proposed.

Mr Wong introduced Gary Reddick, Otak, and Bruce Zhong, DCI Engineers. He said Otak is a renowned architecture firm; Gary Reddick has been to China 59 times and have been designing there.

Mr. Reddick said this is a special project and they are honored to be brought onto the project and appear in front of this audience. He said it has been an amiable transition from the other architectural firm. He said he understood that the board had asked for more community outreach, structural analysis of existing building, and façade and massing of the building.

Mr. Reddick went over the design team's goals:

- Honor the history of Seattle's Chinatown International District
- Expand vibrancy, economic vitality, and increase safety
- Support and add locally owned businesses
- Support the creation of new social gathering spaces in the CID

Mr. Reddick went over the zoning envelope and the three options presented at the last meeting; noting preferred option - #3. He went over community outreach at 24 events.

Structural

Bruce Zhong, Structural Engineer, DCI, spoke about the firm's background. Referring to the Elgin Hotel, he said it is a 3-story Unreinforced Masonry Building, constructed in 1913. He said he's visited the site a couple of times. He reported that soils have settled by eight inches in some areas. It is sub-par and continues to settle. The column and wall footings are undersized. He noted that the column and walls were originally constructed for a 1-story building. Not big enough to support a 3-story structure. Pin pile foundation reinforcement would be

required to stabilize the building. Piles would, however, eliminate the possibility for construction below the existing basement level.

He said floor joists and beams have been severely deteriorated by water damage on all three floors. Almost all wood framing will need to be removed and replaced. The un-reinforced brick walls are in poor condition and show signs of spalling, cracking and mortar loss. The north, south and east walls were originally constructed of especially poor materials. The western façade can be preserved with strongback reinforcing. South wall is in especially bad condition. Bricks are broken, mortar is spalling and gone in some places. Percentage of poor brick condition is about 75% of the total based on visual inspection.

Mr. Zhong said diaphragms that are not suitably attached to brick walls for out-of-plane forces have little ability to restrain the walls from falling away, which can potentially lead to a partial building collapse. Diaphragms that are not suitably attached to brick walls for in-of-plane forces have little ability to transfer in-plane shear forces into the brick shear walls. The floor and roof diaphragms consist of timber decking. These types of diaphragms have low shear capacity and will require strengthening. Because almost all the wood framing is rotten and needs to be replaced, new plywood sheathing is needed. Condition of URM walls: The mortar was easily removed from the masonry joints throughout the building. This shows that the walls have minimal ability to resist shear loads and have a high potential to become overstressed in a seismic event. In conclusion, he said, this category of building performs poorly in an earthquake. He notes that in similar buildings retrofit can extend the life of the building, but the poor condition makes it almost impossible to retrofit.

Design approach since last meeting

Mr. Reddick presented design changes since the last meeting. He said that Options 1-3 were designed by the previous architect (Graham Baba) in response to Board's comments not to bring the tower to the ground at corner. This move emphasizes the height of the tower. He presented two new massing options (4 & 5). In both options, the tower does not meet ground and has deeper setbacks to reduce its height from a pedestrian experience. Option 5 will form the foundation of further options.

He said a 3-story podium feels most appropriate to retain a pedestrian scale at the base and relate to the Bush Garden facade. The Board asked that they explore the urban relationships of the podium massing. Active ground floor retail is maximized with the driveway entry located off the alleyway. The board asked they consider the typical street wall height within the district. Typical heights within the neighborhood range between 2 - 5 stories. The Board asked to include a study that meets the code requirements.

Mr. Reddick said no departures for the podium are requested for Option 5. He asked the Board to consider how datum relates to the existing New Central and Bush Garden buildings. The new base will be compatible with but distinct from the Bush Garden façade, likely masonry with retail on the ground floor and 2 floors of residential at the podium level. He went over the massing at the tower, with a 10' set back on the north wall, 20' along Maynard Ave. S. and 14' along S. Lane St. He said the garage access has been moved from Layne St. to the

alleyway and the 2' alley dedication is accommodated. He said the person walking along the sidewalk would feel the presence of a 3-story building, not a tower.

The Board requested further structural analysis of existing structure and clarification on which portions of the existing building are to remain. Based on the structural and masonry reports provided, the design team is proposing to retain the western façade only.

There was discussion of the gasket proposed between the façade of the Elgin Hotel and the new façade. The Board supported the gasket approach but would like further exploration and refinement. The Board requested additional information about the programming behind the gasket.

Regarding the tower massing, the board said they supported the setback on the north façade, at 10'. Mr. Reddick presented a 20' west setback and 14' south setback to enhance the pedestrian experience. The Board said the setback along the south façade (Land St) is too small and asked for alternate options on this façade and to work on the push and pull. Mr. Reddick said the tower footprint has been reduced from "L" shape to maximize setbacks. Tower articulation will be expressed with varying smaller undulations. The Board asked for alternate options for tower modulation.

Public Comment:

Tomio Moriguchi, Uwajimaya and property owner, spoke in support of the project and that the team has done a wonderful job. He said he has been here since 1946. His seven siblings worked at the store and went to school. He took over the store in 1962 when his father passed. He said they just celebrated the 90th anniversary and his daughter is the third generation CEO. He said Uwajimaya will stay here the next 90 years. He said all their success is due to the neighborhood customers. He said this project will provide 170 units of market rate housing and will add to the vibrancy of the district.

Brien Chow, Chong Wa, read from a letter from the Chong Wa Benevolent Society in support of adaptive reuse Option 5. He said that Chong Wa was formed in 1800 and was incorporated in 1912. He said it is an umbrella organization for Chinese family organizations, tongs, societies. He said they support the Jasmine project. He said it honors and preserves the culture and character of the community, it combines old with new; it blends modern Asian aesthetic with traditional elements; it revitalizes underutilized and unsafe area; it provides mixed housing, affordable, mixed, market rate; it is the only project to date to make outreach to non-English speakers. He said the community needs mixed income to support local businesses.

Dennis Su (spoke in English and Cantonese), community member and architect, held up a planning document from 1983, prepared with Interim, in partnership with Vera Eng and Kip Kobuta. He said it had the blessing of Uncle Bob. He

said he is looking forward to the future development of housing and business through community meetings, hard work.

Anna Hau, Global Travel, (Dr. Minh Chau, chiropractor, interpreted for her) referenced a letter of support, signed by 21 organizations and business leaders, including Seniors in Action and several family associations. She said increasing market rate and affordable housing will support economic vitality of the district. She said safer pedestrian experience as a gateway to the neighborhood.

Jessie Tam (spoke in English and Cantonese), a longtime resident active with the Chinese Chamber of Commerce. Said this is an exciting project. The Jasmine is the next most important project for the district and they have been looking forward to it. It is the right mix of residential, retail, and balances culture in the area. It is part of downtown. The growth rate is behind downtown. Chinatown is way behind. It will bring quality of life for residents. It is wonderful to see a project like this.

Auntie Peng (in Cantonese) spoke in support of the project and said it is not a safe building now. She is happy it will be developed with apartments and retail. She said Mr. Wong lived here for four generations. They are Chinese. They are good people. She said she represents elders to relate message to board: please approve.

Erin Demmon, resident, spoke in support of the project and noted she represented residents of the Pacific Rim community. She said they reviewed the project and are happy with Option 5 of the project. She said it is a beautiful fusion of traditional and modern. She noted challenges of safety and crime and drug dealing and that they could be overcome if we work together on same team. She said she represents 50 units who all support the project.

Frank Irigon, OCA (Organization of Chinese Americans), said OCA was founded in 1973, dedicated to the advancement of Chinese Americans. He said the Board is charged with preserving the character of the District and it pains him that they Board is not concerned with the affordability of apartment space. He said the OCA is vehemently opposed to the project until Vibrant Cities signs a Community Benefits Agreement to ensure no displacement of residents or businesses.

Cynthia Brothers, Vanishing Seattle, resident and volunteer with Chinese Information Service Center, and the Wing Luke Museum. She said she has elder family members who live in the District. Bush Garden is one of the only places that feels like home for her and her family. She said being born and raised here in one of the most expensive cities in the nation; she has seen people pushed out because they can't afford to live here. She noted the history of being welcoming to all, regardless of how much money you make. She spoke of actions taken in Chinatowns across the country to fight against displacement. She questioned the sincerity of the developers' commitment to building something for the community. She said the development is modeled after buildings in Capitol Hill that are very expensive. She said she wants to live closer to her pawpaw. She said it's supposed to be for people like her, but she could not afford to live there. She said the Bush Garden is not empty, people still meet there. She said there is

over 100 years of Asian-American history in the building. She said that lots of other buildings are in worse shape. She said 17 stories is way out of scale for the neighborhood. It will lead to increased rent and displacement; affordability for all is needed and the Jasmine won't do that.

Susan Yang, Denise Louie Education Center (DLEC), said DLEC was founded by Uncle Bob 40 years ago when he was Executive Director at Interim and folks like Donnie Chin, who wanted a space for children in the neighborhood. She said she has mixed feelings about the project. She said that James Wong and Vibrant Cities are working toward a solution in a changing community in CID and housing and businesses. She said DLEC has served many children and families and they have no plans to leave. She said she worries about safety and she wants to see more business opportunities in the neighborhood. She said this project is in the best interest.

Eugenia Woo, Historic Seattle, said they are a non-profit preservation organization to save historic places and foster community. She referenced a letter provided to the Board and thanked community members for being in attendance. She said she wants a project that meets the Secretary of Interior Standards (SOI) as that is what the board is charged with. She said the Elgin Hotel has historical and cultural significance and that the Board should not assume it can be torn down. She said the current project does not meet the SOI. She said they provided incorrect information on the Standards. She listed rehabilitation projects that Historic Seattle has been involved in, including work on the Cadillac Hotel. She said there are other buildings in the District that are in works condition and could be renovated. She said she believes that the Elgin Hotel could be renovated. She said if one of the reasons to demo the building is to add parking, she expressed concern about valuing parking over historic preservation. She said a 17-story building is way out of scale with the neighborhood. She asked the Board to look at the building and decide if they want support façadism or do real historic preservation, which is the goal of this district.

Board Discussion:

Mr. Legon-Talamoni read SMC 23.66.302, part one, "...encourage rehabilitation of existing structures...." He expressed concern that the term 'adaptive reuse' was being used. He said retention of only west façade doesn't justify calling it an adaptive reuse project. He said he wants to know what it will take to rehabilitate the existing building given research and conclusions presented today.

Mr. Reddick said they don't see this as 'adaptive reuse'. He said they are saving the front of the building and have to rely on expertise of structural analysis.

Mr. Zhong said that in 25 years of professional experience he worked on many buildings in Pioneer Square and the ISRD. He said that his firm doesn't generally recommend tear-down, but this building is not salvageable. He said the building next door (New Central) is different; the brick and framing are in good condition. He said the Elgin Hotel was built as a one-story and was added to. He said they didn't reinforce the footing or tie to the floor plate. He said if he had a choice, he'd recommend tearing down the whole building. James wants to save the set side, so we're working to do that.

Ms. Woo said noted that this building is like so many others and asks why it cannot be saved. She asked if demolition is the only option at this point.

Mr. Zhong said that not many buildings are built this way; the second and third floors are not attached to the first floor. He said they want to save the building, but they have respect for public safety.

Ms. Woo asked if they explored saving and reusing the brick.

Mr. Zhong said the bricks are poor quality. They will break.

Ms. Kunugi asked if there was ever discussion about bring the building back to a one-story and if it would be possible to structurally retain the existing single-story building.

Mr. Williams asked if the existing structure solid enough to support 17 stories.

Mr. Zhong said as of today, it is not safe.

Mr. Williams asked if the City is aware the building is not safe. He asked if a new foundation was proposed and how would existing wall be supported or preserved? He asked if other elements of the building could be approached similarly.

Mr. Zhong said they are still doing the study. He said they will save the west façade. He said they propose two levels underground and by digging deeper and doing shoring that will extend up and hold up the west façade.

Many of the elders left; interpretation was still needed.

Mr. Williams said he wants to see additional information regarding preservation of existing structure and what the possibilities would be.

Mr. Reddick said that further studies are needed about methods and whether it's possible to retain the wall. Serious structural investment needs to be done on front façade; it may be feasible with support from behind to save it.

Mr. Williams noted slide 25 and said he needs more information about the team's approach before he can take a position.

Mr. Legon-Talamoni said the Board would support preservation of the west at least, but more information is needed to understand if more can be saved. He said it sounds like integrity is compromised because it was built in a phased process. He said the Board needs to have information on if we are able to preserve as much as possible and what would that look like; we must do due diligence. He said the Board needs full information.

Ms. Frestedt said the discussion is important. She said a site visit may be helpful following submission of additional documentation.

Mr. Zhong asked what board is looking for beyond his report. He said the brick is poor quality – the worst he has seen.

Mr. Reddick said we have more information than what has been presented, including a full masonry report was done with emphasis on the brick; the timber and footing are not salvageable. He said if renovation is attempted, they will need it to be up to current building code and they can't get that with rehabilitation of a URM building. He said at some point it is economically unfeasible. It is unsalvageable. He said it may seem like you are not looking at two preservationists, but you are. We have a fiscal responsibility.

Mr. Yip said the Board is putting the ball in your court to document that. He asked if they are saying it is beyond reasonable and not possible, or are they picking the easiest option. He said if you have further info, please provide it to staff.

Mr. Legon-Talamoni commended the team on a seamless transition between architectural firms and noted that past board comments had been incorporated. He said he would like more aligning of new podium with existing building to provide a pedestrian experience.

Ms. Kunugi agreed. She said alignment with the cornice makes the scale feel better. The upper level is slick and white and she wanted to gain a better sense of the tower design.

The interpreter departed at 7:45 PM.

Mr. Reddick said they added detail to the first three floors and have nothing beyond massing for the tower at this point.

There was some initial discussion of potential materials.

Mr. Yip noted page 9 and said they have come a long way. He said the cornice is the same height as the current building and with the 20' setback on the west it gives the same pedestrian experience.

Mr. Legon-Talamoni asked what it would look like if they retain the west façade.

Mr. Reddick said a whole new structure would be required.

Mr. Zhong said they would extend the slab for the tower all the way to wall to hold it up. He said at every floor a new concrete slab would be extended to the brick.

Mr. Legon-Talamoni said it would be helpful to see the division of small retail units; use is under board purview.

Mr. Reddick said they have done retail layout; units would be 800 - 1,000 square feet.

Mr. Yip asked that the information be brought to a future meeting.

Mr. Williams noted the public comment regarding SOT Standards. He said the team only spoke to 2 of the 10. He'd like the team to comment on the other 8 and why they may or may not apply.

Ms. Alligood said they focused on SOI 9 and 10 because they are specific to new construction which is what is being proposed.

Mr. Legon-Talamoni asked how they envision programming to function in the gasket between old and new.

Mr. Reddick said they haven't gotten to that level of detail yet but said maybe doors. He said it will be a lighted glass three-story element.

Mr. Legon-Talamoni said to keep in mind public accessibility. He asked about residential entry.

Ms. Frestedt asked how far set back the gasket is. She noted issues of public safety and asked if they have had CPTED analysis.

Mr. Reddick said 15 or 16'. He said they are aware of safety concerns.

Mr. Wong said the team is not tied to the gasket approach.

Mr. Legon-Talamoni liked the separation of old and new. He said it would come down to how the area is programmed, lit.

Mr. Williams said that conceptually the gasket creates a pedestrian experience of scale so there is merit. He said it is also a safety issue and he said the board needs to see how it advances. He said he doesn't want a gate there. He said the gasket is intriguing.

Mr. Reddick said they will be back regularly.

052819.3 BOARD BUSINESS

Ms. Frestedt thanked community members for their attendance.

She said a board retreat will be scheduled. She said she is accepting comments on the guideline revisions.

Mr. Williams wanted a site visit of the Bush Gardens site. Board members concurred.

Adjourn

Rebecca Frestedt, Board Coordinator
206-684-0226
rebecca.frestedt@seattle.gov