



The City of Seattle

Pioneer Square Preservation Board

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PSB 78/21

Staff REPORT

For Board meeting June 2, 2021

Board Members Please Note: The citations from the District Ordinance, Rules for the Pioneer Square Preservation District, and Secretary of the Interior's Standards listed below are for your consideration in addition to any other citations you find relevant in considering each application.

060221.21 Alaska Copper Works Building
902 1st Ave S
Anaconda Wire and Cable Co Building
904 1st Ave S

Matt Aalfs

Staff report: This is an initial briefing on the possible partial demolition and new construction of two buildings. Massing for both office and residential are provided. It is common when demolition is proposed that the Board way in as to if the building has any architectural or historic significance, if there are parts of the building that should be retained because they have significance based on the information provided or if additional information is needed. This building is not within the National Register District, so it has no previous "contributing or non-contributing" status associated with the National Register nomination. The Board will have to make a determination based on the history of the structure, alterations and current conditions. If the Board finds that the buildings have no architectural or historic significance or that only the 1st Ave façades need to be retained, demolition can still not be approved until it is approved along with proposed new construction. The developer also has to meet two additional criteria with the Director before the Certificate of Approval can be issued: Proof acceptable to the Department of Neighborhoods Director of a valid commitment for interim and long-term financing for the replacement structure has been secured and satisfactory assurance is provided that new construction will be completed within two (2) years of demolition.

The Board should also comment on the height and scale of the two proposals. When considering the appropriate height between the minimum and maximum height the Hearing Examiner has previously said that the Board should at least consider the scale of the surrounding blocks.

Code Citations:

SMC 23.66.030 Certificates of Approval required

23.66.100 - Creation of district, legislative findings and purpose

A. During the City of Seattle's relatively brief history, it has had little time in which to develop areas of consistent historical or architectural character. It is recognized that the Pioneer Square area of Seattle contains many of these rare attributes and consequently is an area of great historical and cultural significance. Further, the regional sports stadiums, constructed in and near the Pioneer Square area, and the traffic and activities that they generate have resulted in adverse impacts upon the social, cultural, historic and ethnic values of the Pioneer Square area. To preserve, protect, and enhance the historic character of the Pioneer Square area and the buildings therein; to return unproductive structures to useful purposes; to attract visitors to the City; to avoid a proliferation of vehicular parking and vehicular-oriented uses; to provide regulations for existing on-street and off-street parking; to stabilize existing housing, and encourage a variety of new and rehabilitated housing types for all income groups; to encourage the use of transportation modes other than the private automobile; to protect existing commercial vehicle access; to improve visual and urban relationships between existing and future buildings and structures, parking spaces and public improvements within the area; and to encourage pedestrian uses, there is established as a special review district, the Pioneer Square Preservation District. The boundaries of the District are shown on Map A for 23.66.100 ^[22] and on the Official Land Use Map.

C. Reasons for Designating the Pioneer Square Preservation District.

1. Historic Significance. The Pioneer Square Preservation District is unique because it is the site of the beginning of The City of Seattle. The area also retains much of the original architecture and artifacts of its early history. The District has played a significant role in the development of Seattle, the Puget Sound region and The State of Washington. It was the first location of industry, business and homes in early Seattle and the focus of commerce and transportation for more than a half century.

2. Architectural Significance. As a collection of late nineteenth and early twentieth-century buildings of similar materials, construction techniques and architectural style, the District is unique, not only to the City but to the country as well. Most of the buildings within the District embody the distinctive characteristics of the Late Victorian style. Many buildings are the work of one architect, Elmer H. Fisher. For these and other reasons, the buildings combine to create an outstanding example of an area that is distinguishable in style, form, character and construction representative of its era.

3. Social Diversity. The District represents an area of unique social diversity where people from many income levels and social strata live, shop and work. It is an area in

which social services, including missions, low-income housing and service agencies exist.

4. **Business Environment.** The District is an area of remarkable business diversity. The street level of the area north of S. King Street is pedestrian-oriented, with its storefronts occupied primarily by specialty retail shops, art galleries, restaurants and taverns. The upper floors of buildings in the historic core are occupied by professional offices, various types of light manufacturing, and housing for persons of many income groups. The area south of S. King Street includes the stadium's north parking lot, a number of structures occupied by light manufacturing and warehousing use, and several structures converted to office, residential and mixed use. The stadium's north parking lot may be redeveloped to accommodate a mix of uses, including a substantial amount of housing. The ongoing restoration and sensitive rehabilitation of many District structures, combined with proposed compatible new construction, will continue to enhance the District's economic climate.

5. **Educational Value.** The restoration and preservation of the District will yield information of educational significance regarding the way of life and the architecture of the late nineteenth-century as well as adding interest and color to the City. Restoration of the District will preserve the environment that was characteristic of an important era of Seattle's history.

6. **Geographic Location.** The District is uniquely situated adjacent to Seattle's waterfront, the central business district, the International District, and sports stadium and exhibition center facilities.

23.66.115 - Demolition approval

A. Demolition or removal of buildings or other structures in the District is prohibited unless approved by the Department of Neighborhoods Director. Except as provided in subsection B below, no approval shall be given for building demolition or removal unless the following prerequisites are met:

1. The Director of Neighborhoods, following a recommendation by the Preservation Board, determines that the building or structure has no architectural or historic significance; and
2. Use and design of the replacement structure has been approved by the Department of Neighborhoods Director; and
3. Proof acceptable to the Department of Neighborhoods Director of a valid commitment for interim and long-term financing for the replacement structure has been secured. In addition to other proof, the Department of Neighborhoods Director may accept a bond, letter of credit or cash deposit as a demonstration that the project has adequate financial backing to ensure completion; and
4. Satisfactory arrangements have been made for retention of any part of the structure's facade which the Department of Neighborhoods Director, following a recommendation by the Preservation Board, determines to be significant; and
5. Satisfactory assurance is provided that new construction will be completed within two (2) years of demolition.

23.66.140 - Height

A. Maximum Height. Maximum structure height is regulated by Section 23.49.178 Pioneer Square Mixed, structure height. (in this area the max height for office is 85 feet and the max height for residential is 120 feet)

B. Minimum Height. No structure shall be erected or permanent addition added to an existing structure that would result in the height of the new structure of less than 50 feet, except as allowed in the PSM 85-120 zone under the provisions of Section 23.49.180 for the area shown on Map A for 23.49.180. Height of the structure is to be measured from mean street level fronting on the property to the mean roofline of the structure.

23.66.180 - Exterior building design.

To complement and enhance the historic character of the District and to retain the quality and continuity of existing buildings, the following requirements shall apply to exterior building design:

B. Scale. 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 buildings in the immediate area.

Pioneer Square Preservation District Rules

III. GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR REHABILITATION AND NEW CONSTRUCTION

In addition to the Pioneer Square Preservation District Ordinance and Rules, The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation with Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings, and the complete series of Historic Buildings Preservation Briefs developed by the National Park Service shall serve as guidelines for proposed exterior alterations and treatments, rehabilitation projects, and new construction. (7/99)

New construction must be visually compatible with the predominant architectural styles, building materials and inherent historic character of the District. (7/99) Although new projects need not attempt to duplicate original facades, the design process ought to involve serious consideration of the typical historic building character and detail within the District.

The following architectural elements are typical throughout the District and will be used by the Board in the evaluation of requests for design approval:

A. Site. The property line is the line of the building mass. Street facades are uniformly located at the front property lines, thus there is a strong street edge definition. Building cornices, bay windows and ornament project beyond the main wall surface of some facades.

- B. Design. Building design is generally typified by horizontal divisions which create distinctive base and cap levels. Facades may also be divided vertically by pilasters or wide piers which form repetitive window bays. Street facades are also distinguished by heavy terminal cornices and parapets, ornamental storefronts and entrance bays and repetitive window sizes and placement.

Secretary of Interior's Standards

2. The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.
4. Changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right will be retained and preserved.
5. Distinctive materials, features, finishes and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.
9. New additions, exterior alterations or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work will be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.
10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be undertaken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

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Pioneer Square Preservation Board Coordinator