



The City of Seattle

Ballard Avenue Landmark District Board

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

BLD 43/22

MINUTES OF THE DECEMBER 1, 2022 MEETING

TIME: 9:00 A.M.
PLACE: Ballard Customer Service Center-Conference Room
5604 22nd Ave NW

BOARD MEMBERS

Sandy Wolf, Chair
Kaia Wahmanholm, Vice Chair
Richard Hiner
Joseph Herrin
Cass O'Callaghan
Tommy Patrick

STAFF

Minh Chau Le

Absent:

Angela Economou

As a quorum was present, the meeting was called to order at 9:08 am by Board Chair, Sandy Wolf.

120122.1 APPLICATIONS FOR CERTIFICATES OF APPROVAL

120122.11 Public Right of Way

Ballard Ave NW between 20th Ave NW and NW Market St
22nd Ave NW between Ballard Ave NW and NW Market St
Aditi Kambuj, SDOT

Proposal to install flexible porous surface material in existing sidewalk tree wells.

Staff Report:

The staff distributed the following materials: project description, site plan, written description of existing conditions, photos of existing conditions, and a physical material sample. The staff cited the following relevant guidelines: Guidelines/General (2), the proposal supports pedestrian and street level activity; Guidelines/Specific (9) – “Vehicular and Pedestrian Access”, the proposal supports pedestrian oriented public spaces and plant life. The proposed materials are conducive to pedestrian safety, the proposal does not involve damage to surrounding sidewalks or decorative sidewalk treatments.

Applicant Comment:

Aditi Kambuj of SDOT said the rubberized tree pit material had been successfully used in other areas of the city and brought improved pedestrian safety and water filtration benefits. She said installation would not involve disturbing surrounding sidewalk surfaces and existing planters in tree wells would be replaced following installation of rubberized material.

Public Comment:

City of Seattle Councilmember Dan Strauss said this proposal was one part of an overall desire to improve conditions and pedestrian safety on Ballard Ave NW.

Board Discussion:

Cass O’Callaghan asked how uneven existing tree roots would be addressed. The applicant said the work would be done by a professional arborist and installation would be customized in each well to provide level surface while respecting tree root health.

Tommy Patrick asked if there would be future caving and settling causing new tripping hazards. The applicant said that caving was not anticipated but any future caving would be monitored and filled. The applicant stated installation would take a few weeks and sidewalk access and mobility would be maintained during that time.

Motion:

Sandy Wolf made a motion to approve the application as presented. Cass O’Callaghan seconded the motion.

6 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstained. The motion carried.

120122.2 BOARD BUSINESS

Discussion of Right of Way temporary structures

The staff introduced Alyse Nelson and Joel Miller of SDOT who are planning for the next stages of right of way structure programming. The staff summarized the Board's primary questions distilled from its recent meetings: what is the next step for the structures, what associated timelines can be shared, how will existing structures be transitioned or revised for ongoing use, how can SDOT and the Board continue to collaborate?

Alyse Nelson, SDOT Public Space Manager, said SDOT was proposing legislation and revised Director's Rules outlining next steps. The pending proposals would require current structures to apply by April 2023, become permitted under revised standards by June 30, 2023, and any resulting required modifications to structures be made by end of year 2023.

Councilmember Dan Strauss said an additional community design charette focused on right of way structure design and their compatibility with District standards was being planned for spring 2023. He said the District would benefit from additional time to plan and prepare during this transitional stage.

Joe Herrin said the Board's role is to protect the historical qualities of the District as outlined in the National Register Nomination Form and the District guidelines. He said he was not supportive of structures that obscured pedestrian level visibility in the streetscape.

Sandy Wolf asked what the duration of new permits would be. Alyse Nelson said street use permits are annually renewed and revocable, and that many of the existing cafes would require modification to achieve longer-term approval.

Cass O'Callaghan said that the structures obscured transparency and detracted from the District's historical characteristics.

Sandy Wolf said the structures supported the portions of the guidelines related to increasing pedestrian level activation.

Richard Hiner said he appreciated the vibrancy and the evolving nature of street uses but the structures needed to better conform to historic standards.

Councilmember Strauss asked the Board to provide specific guidance on allowable materials and design. He asked that the Board also be flexible given that the next phase will still be temporary.

Public Comment:

Ragan Peck said that preserving the District's historic character is very important. She said obtaining a Certificate of Approval may be onerous but the process is necessary. She said the guidelines should be revised as needed to address the right of way structures and this should be done as soon as possible.

Chairperson Sandy Wolf requested that this topic be included on the next Board agendas and that the Board develop sharable guidance in preparation for the upcoming design charette focusing on the structures.

120121.3 APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Board reviewed the minutes of the April 7, 2022 meeting.

Sandy Wolf made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Tommy Patrick seconded the motion.

4 in favor, 0 opposed, 2 abstained. (Kaia Wahmanholm, Joe Herrin abstained because they were not present on April 7). The motion carried

The Board reviewed the minutes of the September 1, 2022 meeting.

Cass O'Callaghan made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Kaia Wahmanholm seconded the motion.

6 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstained. The motion carried

120121.5 REPORT OF THE CHAIR

There was none.

120121.6 STAFF REPORT

The staff reported one administrative approval had been made since the last report, for signage at 5205 Ballard Ave NW.

The staff reported that incoming members for the positions of Architect and Community Historian would begin service at the following month's Board meeting.

The staff provided copies of Council Bill 120456 and said the next milestone

in the legislative process would be a Council Committee hearing on December 9.

Sandy Wolf made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Joe Herrin seconded the motion.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:45 by acclamation.

Submitted by Minh Chau Le, Board Coordinator