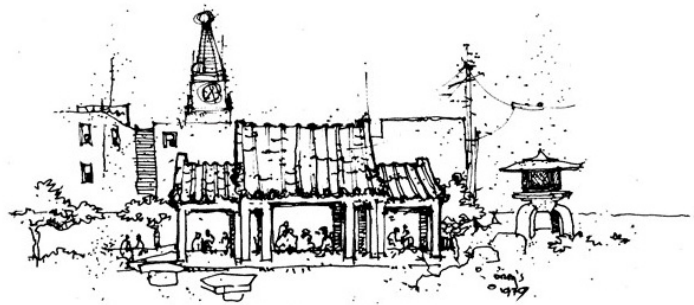




The City of Seattle

International Special Review District

Mailing Address: PO Box 94649, Seattle WA 98124-4649

Street Address: 600 4th Avenue, 4th Floor

ISRD 14/26

MINUTES FOR THE MEETING OF TUESDAY, January 27, 2026

Time: 4:30 p.m.

Place: Hirabayashi Place, 442 S. Main St., Donnie Chin Community Room (in-person)
Hybrid Meeting

Board Members Present

Heather Hargesheimer (HHarg), Chair
Hyan Ho (HH)
Kyle Jacobson (KJ)
Samantha Wong (SW), Vice Chair
Zhiyun Zhu (ZZ)

Staff Present

Rebecca Frestedt (RF)
Nelson Pesigan (NP)

Absent

Adrian Lam (AL)
Jade Yan (JY)

Key

BM Board member
AP Applicant
SM Staff member

Chair Heather Hargesheimer called the meeting to order at 4:33 p.m.

012726.1 APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

October 23, 2025

MM/SC/KJ/SW

2:0:3

The motion passed. Board members Kyle Jacobson, Zhiyun Zhu, and Hyan Ho abstained.

November 25, 2025

SM Rebecca Frestedt requested the board to defer approval until the next meeting.

012726.2 PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no public comments.

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

012726.3 CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

012726.31 1001 S. Jackson St. – Little Saigon Landmark

Applicant: Doug Leigh, Mithun, and Friends of Little Saigon
Record number: DONH-COA-01875

Final Design: Proposed final design for new construction of an eight story mixed-use apartment building consisting of 70 apartments above a two story podium (Vietnamese cultural center and residential amenity space). Proposal includes site and right-of-way improvements.

SM Frestedt noted that the Board reviewed the applicant's request for final design approval for the landmark project at 1001 South Jackson Street. The scope of review included materials, finishes, colors, landscaping, and right-of-way improvements. Building signage and artwork shown in the plans will be submitted under a separate application and are included only in context. Two departures are requested: one related to the common recreation area and another concerning façade width limits.

SM Frestedt noted that the Board has received four prior briefings on the project since November 2023. These briefings occurred on November 28, 2023, and May 28, 2024, during which the Board reviewed the preliminary design proposal and demolition plans. This project does not trigger SEPA review.

AP Josh Sellers Park, Director of Real Estate Development at SCIDpda, reported that the project secured full public funding as of January 20. The City, State, and County have each been awarded the requested amounts. The team is currently selecting an investor and finalizing letters, with financial closing anticipated for June or July, contingent on securing required permits. AP Park noted this as the primary update for the Board.

Board member Kyle Jacobson reminded the applicant and the Board that Beacon Place, noted on the presentation materials, is not a public park. Although it is owned by the Parks Department and provides green space, it is not open for general public use.

The applicant team went over the presentation materials, summarizing the landscaping plan, programming and requested departures.

Action:

I move that the International Special Review District Board recommend approval of a Certificate of Approval for Final Design and right-of-way alterations at 1001 S. Jackson St. The Board directs staff to prepare a written recommendation of approval, based on consideration of the application submittal and Board discussion at the January 27, 2026 public meeting, and forward this written recommendation to the Department of Neighborhoods Director.

The Board has also reviewed the proposed the following departures and recommends that the Director of the Department of Construction and Inspections approve the Departure, as proposed and detailed above.

Departure #1

SMC 23.49.010B Common Recreation Area

1. Required Area: 3,758 SF
2. Proposed Area: 2,875 SF
3. Reduction from Required: 23.4%, resulting in an additional floor of housing (12 units)

Departure #2

SMC 23.49.164 D.2 – Downtown Mixed Residential Maximum Width, Depth and Separation Requirements

As a condition of this approval the applicant shall submit to staff, in accordance with SMC 23.66.318, proof acceptable to the Director of Neighborhoods of a valid commitment for interim and long-term financing for the replacement structure has been secured.

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 23.66.050 – Departure from Land Use Code requirements

SMC 23.66.302 – International Special Review District goals and objectives

SMC 23.66.308 – International District preferred uses east of Interstate 5

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 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:

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.

MM/SC/KJ/SW

5:0:0

The motion passed and approved unanimously.

012726.32 650 S. Dearborn – Spic N Span Dry Cleaners
Applicant: Joshua Sellers Park, SCIDpda
Record number: DONH-COA-01645

Demolition and Site alterations: Proposed demolition of a one story commercial building, constructed in 1963. Application includes proposed installation of a chain link fence around the perimeter of the lot. No construction or alternate use is proposed as part of this application.

SM Frestedt noted that Joshua Sellers Park of SCIDpda would present on behalf of the applicant and clarified that the project site lies outside the Asian Design Character District and retail core and explained that the existing 1963 building has not received a formal determination of contributing or non-contributing status, but based on its age, staff considers it non-contributing, a factor for the Board to evaluate.

SM Frestedt highlighted that the staff report includes demolition analysis and guidance for the Board to consider alternative site uses and right-of-way changes associated with the proposed demolition. SM Frestedt also referenced land use code provisions directing the Board to review demolition alongside a replacement structure, while noting exceptions for public health, safety, or welfare concerns and cited two recent examples in Little Saigon, the Pearl Warren Building and a single-story warehouse, where demolition was approved due to safety issues as development teams determined future plans for those sites.

Rino Hamanishi, Real Estate Development Intern with SCIDpda, presented the application for a Certificate of Approval to demolish the Spic-and-Span site at 650 South Dearborn Street.

Rino noted that although the business served the community for many years, the historic report concluded that the building does not meaningfully contribute to the district's architectural, cultural, or social character.

AP Park explained that the building has been vacant since 2019 and, like many former dry-cleaning sites, contained significant soil and groundwater contamination and noted that the previous owners undertook remediation at their own expense using electric-resistance heating, which successfully removed solvents; the site has now produced more than four quarters of clean samples.

SCIDpda has entered the property into a Prospective Purchaser Consent Decree with the State Attorney General's Office and the Department of Ecology, which requires ongoing management of down-gradient pollution but provides financial support due to SCIDpda's public-development-authority status.

AP Park emphasized that the vacant structure has become a public safety concern, citing repeated break-ins, vandalism, loitering, and reports from a nearby school about unauthorized entry through damaged walls. Maintenance staff have had to regularly secure openings and remove encampments and presented current site conditions,

including fencing breaches and boarded-up access points, and reviewed the site survey and monitoring wells.

AP Park concluded by outlining the interim plan to install a six-foot fence to prevent unauthorized use until SCIDpda returns with a redevelopment proposal, anticipated to be an affordable-housing project with Asian Counseling and Referral Service as the prospective ground-floor food-bank tenant.

Chairperson Heather Hargesheimer asked the applicant to elaborate further on their future plans for the site and noted her familiarity with the organization but requested additional details about their intended direction and proposed uses moving forward.

AP Park explained that SCIDpda is exploring the possibility of incorporating homeownership opportunities into the future redevelopment, though this remains an aspirational and emerging area for the organization.

AP Park noted that the most feasible path, based on SCIDpda's recent experience, is likely a low-income housing tax-credit rental project similar in scale and programming to the Landmark project and Uncle Bob's Place.

SM Frestedt advised the Board to limit discussion to the demolition request before them, noting that consideration of a replacement structure is outside the scope of this application and acknowledged that understanding future intentions can provide helpful context but emphasized that the Board's focus should remain on evaluating the building's potential historic or architectural significance and the specifics of the proposed demolition plan.

Chair Hargesheimer asked the applicant to clarify how the site would be managed following demolition and inquired whether the property would remain an empty lot and requested information about any interim plans for maintaining the site during the period before redevelopment proceeds.

AP Park explained that following demolition, the site would remain fenced and secured, with no additional interim uses planned and noted that SCIDpda had explored temporary options such as surface parking but understands that a change of use to "no use" would prohibit such activities.

AP Park added that limited community activation such as occasional events might be possible if allowed, but no concrete interim programming has been developed.

Board member Hyan Ho asked whether the applicant had a plan for maintaining the site after demolition and expressed concern that, without active management, the vacant lot could attract illegal dumping or accumulate trash.

AP Park acknowledged that the site already requires frequent cleanup and explained that ongoing maintenance will continue after demolition and emphasized that the primary concern is preventing a fire in the vacant building, as fire-suppression water or disturbed hazardous materials could jeopardize the site's environmental remediation progress and groundwater sampling.

AP Park noted that SCIDpda is currently allocating staff resources to manage trash and secure the property and also added that the project has existing public funding tied to future affordable-housing requirements and the site’s long-term use will be consistent with those obligations.

Action:

I move that the International Special Review District Board recommend approval of a Certificate of Approval for Demolition and Site alterations at 650 S. Dearborn St., per the submitted application materials. The Board directs staff to prepare a written recommendation of approval, based on considering the application submittal and Board discussion at the January 27, 2026 public meeting, and forward this written recommendation to the Department of Neighborhoods Director.

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

Seattle Municipal Code (SMC)

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 23.66.318 – Demolition

B. If demolition or removal of a building or other structure in the District is essential to protect the public health, safety and welfare or if the purposes of this Chapter 23.66 will be furthered by the demolition or removal, then the Director of Neighborhoods, following review and recommendation by the Board, may authorize such demolition or removal whether the prerequisites of this Section 23.66.318 are satisfied or not.

SMC 23.66.334 – Streets and sidewalks

Secretary of the Interior Standards

#9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property.

MM/SC/SW/HH

5:0:0

The motion passed and approved unanimously.

012726.4 BOARD BRIEFING

012726.41 800 Maynard Ave S. – RDA Building
Applicant: David Neiman, Neiman Taber Architecture
Record number: DONH-COA-0914

SM Frestedt introduced a briefing on the RDA Building, noting that the Board recently reviewed and approved changes to the property and clarified that no action would be

taken in response to this presentation, as it is informational and intended to give the Board an opportunity to offer feedback on potential ground-floor activation.

Benjamin Wong provided a brief update on the RDA Building project and noted that the team has begun interior work and is moving forward with project kickoff activities.

Presenter Wong emphasized that a major component of the effort will involve incorporating art and activating the ground-floor space, and expressed enthusiasm about the project's progress.

Anton Dekom, Neiman Taber Architecture, provided an overview of the RDA Building project to reorient the Board, noting its location at the corner of Dearborn Street and Maynard Avenue South, directly across from the Spic-and-Span site.

Presenter Dekom highlighted the areas where artwork is proposed, explaining that it will be installed on an interior wall approximately five feet behind the ground-floor glazing and visible along the north façade with portions wrapping the east and west sides.

Presenter Dekom reviewed perspectives showing daytime and nighttime visibility, the building entry on Maynard, and the extent of the display area and also described the dimensions of the artwork zone approximately 107 feet along the north wall, with additional lengths on the east and west sides, at a height of about 14 feet.

Artist Lawrence Pitre presented the conceptual design for the proposed mural, explaining that the long interior wall inspired a unifying theme centered on a multi-cultural Asian dragon and described the dragon as a symbol of strength and wisdom common across many Asian cultures, making it an effective framework for representing diversity and shared heritage.

Pitre outlined how the mural will incorporate cultural elements from Chinese, Japanese, Filipino, Vietnamese, and potentially additional Asian communities, depending on available space.

The final artwork will be brightly colored, painted at full scale after approval, and fabricated for installation on the interior wall behind the ground-floor glazing and noted that the team will assess the wall's suitability for installation and welcome further suggestions from the Board.

SM Frestedt reminded the Board that its review of artwork is limited to placement, scale, materials, and general color palette, but not on the specific artistic content.

SM Frestedt noted that understanding the cultural context is valuable, but the Board should avoid delving too deeply into content-related feedback and added that, for projects where the artwork is not yet finalized, applicants typically provide a separate document illustrating the intended color palette and media to help the Board assess compatibility with the building and surrounding environment, and offered to share examples from past applications.

Vice Chair Samantha Wong looks forward to reviewing the finalized mock-ups and color palette for the proposed mural and acknowledged the Board's limitations regarding content review but encouraged continued refinement of the design.

Vice Chair Wong noted that the draft rendering blends multiple cultural and historical elements and suggested the artist consider the consistency of timelines represented and also raised a question about the inclusion of wings on the dragon, observing that wings are not typically associated with Asian cultural depictions of dragons, and offered this as a point of consideration as the artwork continues to develop.

012726.5 STAFF SUMMARY AND BOARD BUSINESS

SM Frestedt provided an update on administratively reviewed applications and noted that several items have advanced since the last meeting.

SM Frestedt reminded the Board that, in accordance with its rules and procedures, the annual selection of chair and vice chair typically conducted at the first meeting of the year had been postponed allowing new members time to acclimate.

SM Frestedt noted that both Samantha Wong and Heather Hargesheimer had expressed willingness to continue serving in their respective roles, and that no other Board members had indicated interest in being considered for chair or vice chair.

After the Board's deliberation, SM Frestedt concluded by recommending that the Board postpone the chair and vice-chair selection to the next meeting so all members can participate.

SM Frestedt also informed the Board that the first February meeting—scheduled for the second Tuesday—will likely be canceled due to a lack of agenda items and other scheduling considerations.

Chair Heather Hargesheimer adjourned the meeting at 6:28 p.m.