



The City of Seattle

## International Special Review District

Mailing Address: PO Box 94649, Seattle WA 98124-4649  
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ISRD 137/22

### MINUTES FOR THE MEETING OF TUESDAY, August 23, 2022

Time: 4:30pm

Place: Remote Meeting

#### **Board Members Present**

Lizzy Baskerville, Vice Chair

Ryan Gilbert

Nella Kwan

Adrian Lam

Andy Yip, Chair

#### **Staff**

Rebecca Frestedt

Melinda Bloom

#### **Interpreter**

John Chan

Elvy He

#### **Absent**

Michael Le

Ming Zhang

Chair Andy Yip called the meeting to order at 4:30 pm.

#### **082322.1 PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no public comment.

#### **082322.2 CERTIFICATES OF APPROVAL**

##### **082322.21 214 5<sup>th</sup> Ave S. - Blossom**

*Presenters:* Scott Douglas and Han Beh, LINK Design Group; James Wong, Vibrant Cities

Ms. Frestedt provided the staff report and summarized the history of the project. The project was presented to the Board on July 12<sup>th</sup> for Use, Demolition and Final Design. The applicant presented three proposed departures and an alley exception. (See written staff report, in DON files and linked on the agenda)

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

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Following the presentation and deliberation by the Board a motion was made to approve the project on the condition that the applicant return with a proposed design that eliminated Departure #3. This recommendation from the Board was presented to the Director of the Department of Neighborhoods, who gave the applicant that option to return to the Board to present an Final Design alternative, in response to the conditions along side the original proposal and to allow the Board to make a recommendation based on consideration of both options.

Excerpts from the updated staff report follow:

**Use:** Proposed establishment of use for a mixed-use residential building (with ground floor commercial space (4,625 sq. ft)

**Demolition and Final Design:** Proposed demolition of the existing building and surface parking lot. Proposed final design for new construction of an 8-story mixed-use apartment building (184 units) with ground floor commercial space. Proposal includes: materials/finishes/colors, landscaping and right-of-way improvements. Building signage will be submitted under a separate application. Applicant will present revised drawings from what was shown at the ISRD Board meeting on June 28, 2022.

Ms. Frestedt introduced the proposed use and final design of an 8-story mixed-use residential development consisting of 184 apartments and 4,625 sq ft of commercial space. A loading dock will accessible off the alley. Parking for up to 10 vehicles is accessible off the alley. The proposal includes removal of three trees in the right-of-way. A new landscaping plan, including tree replacement, is proposed.

The proposal includes demolition of the existing building, which was constructed in 1968.

Historic property report by Studio TJP, arborist report, photos, plans, renderings, specifications and cut sheets were provided.

**Departures requested (under *Option A*):**

**Departure 1 – Upper Level Setback**

**SMC 23.49.242.D.1a** – International District Residential, Development Standards – Setbacks

*The applicant requests a departure from the required green street upper level building setback at 45'-0" along the eastern ½-block of S Main St. to allow the building to be developed within the required setback space.*

**Departure 2 – Upper Floor Lot Coverage**

**SMC 23.49.242.C.1** – International District Residential, Development, Development Standards – Coverage Limits

**SMC 23.49.242.C.2.** – International District Residential, Development Standards Coverage Limits

*The applicant requests a departure from the required coverage limits of 75% on the 8th floor of the building which is above 65 feet.*

**Departures requested (*Option B*)**

**The two departures listed above and a third departure detailed below:**

**Departure 3 – Structural Building Overhangs**

SMC 23.53.035.B.7 – Structural Building Overhangs and Minor Architectural Encroachments: Length

**SMC 23.53.035.B.9** - Structural Building Overhangs and Minor Architectural Encroachments: Separation

*The applicant requests a departure to exceed the maximum bay length by 10” for two units, and to reduce the minimum horizontal separation between 2 bay windows to zero at the Southeast corner of the building.*

**Proposed Alley Exception (applicable with both options):** PER SMC 23.53.030.G.5, The director may modify or waive the requirements for dedication if it is determined that the widening would be detrimental to the character and goals of the district.

As part of this proposal, the applicants are asking for ISRD Board support for an Alley Exception application to SDOT, to allow a waiver of the alley width requirement under **SMC 23.53.030F.1. – Minimum width for existing alleys.** A 2’ dedication will be provided for the height of the finished level at the alley (L1 to L3) with an approximate 12’-6” MINIMUM pinch point above alley grade. This is less than the recommended 26’ but more than the 8’ approved for the development abutting our development to the north (exception granted by the ISRD for the adjacent project on 10/27/2020). The alley slopes over 16’ from north to south. Above the proposed alley setback heights, the building will extend back two feet to the current alley property line.

Ms. Frestedt noted that the updated plans reflect additional revisions to the design of the southwest corner of the south façade, in response to a code-required setback that wasn’t presented at the July meeting. The setback is required due to the proximity of a utility pole that will not be undergrounded, as initially proposed.

Han Beh, Link Design Group, shared how the design has evolved in response to board guidance related to elimination of need for Departure 3. He went over the refinements.

Mr. Beh said they received new information on existing power pole which, per Seattle City Light, must remain. As a result, additional utility setbacks are required. The layout changes due to refinements included flipping of exhaust vents and minor tweak to windows and panels. To eliminate the need for the departure the bay window widths were reduced and an 8’ wide slot introduced along with continuous parapet. He said glazed edges were introduced. He said to accommodate the power pole they stepped the entire corner back and created a jog in the building. He said vent locations on east and west façades were flipped, some interior unit plans were modified. He said vents were painted white on east façade and vent housings span the entire length of the panel. He

said the main change to the southwest corner is the notch was shifted southward. He said the southeast corner building edge was setback to accommodate the pole. He went through all renderings and said there were no street level changes to the podium.

Mr. Beh said the alley exception proposal remains the same. He said graphics would be updated to include the southeast notch which will reduce the amount of departure; floor plate sizes to reflect jog in corner. He said the updates enhance the design and opened up opportunities for massing, articulation. He said they met the challenge of responding to board request and conditioned motion. He confirmed that signage is deferred to a later date.

Ms. Frestedt spoke to the rationale of two alternative motions on the staff report, to honor the DON Director's desire to allow Board to support the optional design, without the departure response OR the original design, as proposed.

Mr. Yip said the project Certificate of Approval was approved with condition to eliminate Departure 3 after comments from Mr. Zhang. He read an email from Mr. Ming (in DON files), who could not attend the meeting. He said the revised façade is an improvement and he supported the revised design.

Mr. Lam said both options are handsome designs and asked design team about original option.

Mr. Beh said originally, they tried to create a corner emphasis to overall massing and stick within structural gridding. He said the re-looked at the corner and introduced a separation between the bay windows. He said they pushed corner units and provided a more glazed corner which is an improved design. He said the design team "fell in love" with the revised design, which is their preferred option now.

Mr. Lam concurred and said the subtle articulation is skillfully done.

Mr. Beh said it is more functional from an interior layout.

Mr. Gilbert had nothing to add but he agreed that the team had done a wonderful job and the structure is elegant looking.

Ms. Baskerville said she was glad Mr. Zhang's comments were explored. She said she had no strong opinion and noted it is great that there are just two departures. She said the southeast corner is an improvement.

Ms. Kwan said the team did well and is glad that something mandatory was an inspiration for the designers.

Mr. Yip concurred and was glad the departure was eliminated.

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 214 5<sup>th</sup> Ave. S., in support of the applicant's preferred design (*Option A*).

The Board directs staff to prepare a written recommendation of approval, based on consideration of the application submittal and Board discussion at the August 23, 2022 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 Departures, as proposed.

**Departure 1 – Upper Level Setback**

**SMC 23.49.242.D.1a** – International District Residential, Development Standards – Setbacks

**Departure 2 – Upper Floor Lot Coverage**

**SMC 23.49.242.C.1** – International District Residential, Development, Development Standards – Coverage Limits

**SMC 23.49.242.C.2.** – International District Residential, Development Standards Coverage Limits

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

**Alley Setback Exception**

**SMC 23.53.030 F1** - Minimum width required for existing alleys

*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.
- B. 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.

*This is a non-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/AL/LB 5:0:0 Motion carried.

**082322.3 STAFF SUMMARY and BOARD BUSINESS**

Administrative approvals since August 9, 2022

Ms. Frestedt reported there were no new administrative approvals although there is one pending for the mural at 714 King. She said the election would be held by mail in ballots again this year.

Ms. Frestedt noted the release of the Little Saigon Action Plan, which involved large community effort and was initiated by community to develop a vision for what the district can continue to be and can become.

Mr. Lam suggested a board retreat.

Ms. Frestedt agreed and said it is hard to find time to plan but it is on her radar. She said because there would be a quorum, the retreat must be properly noticed. She asked board members to suggest topics of interest and noted that no active applications can be discussed. She said the meeting cannot be in conflict with OPMA.

The meeting adjourned at 5:39 PM.

Rebecca Frestedt, Board Coordinator  
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