



The City of Seattle

Pioneer Square Preservation Board

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

Street Address: 600 4th Avenue, 4th Floor

PSB034/25

Staff Report

Board meeting February 19, 2025

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.

021924.41 Prefontaine Fountain

450 3rd Ave

SPAR

Briefing on proposed alterations to Prefontaine Fountain (Place) retaining the side panels and altering the remaining site including removing two panels and reducing the height of the back of the of the fountain and altering the bowl or demolishing the bowl and removing the turtles, construction of a new plaza.

Staff report: The Board last saw this project Nov 20, 2014. The proposal at the time was to demolish the fountain and surrounding plaza and building a new plaza. The Board agreed with the historic report provided that indicated that the Prefontaine Fountain (Place) was a historic structure with integrity despite it current unmaintained condition. The Board did not support the proposal to demolish the fountain as it was not consistent with the Secretary of Interior Standards for Rehabilitation to demolish a historic structure rather than repair the structure. The Board noted that 23.66.225 prohibits the demolition of historic structures. The Board agreed that there are issues of crime and safety and that the fountains conditions and lack of programing contribute to it but did not see the demolition of the fountain as a solution to the problems at the site. They did not agree with the site line argument and think there is a solution that retains the fountain and improves public safety. The Board noted the significant role of art in the neighborhood and that maintaining and repairing the fountain should be the focus.

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

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This proposal retains a water feature but highly alters the fountain and plaza. This proposal removes the turtles. Staff have asked for clarification because the historic report attributes them as original from 1926, but SPAR thinks they were donated by the Committee of 33 which did not exist until the 1960s. The Committee did provide some funding for rehabilitation of the fountain in the 1970s. The group was organized by the daughter of Carl Gould, the original designer and designer of the rehabilitation. This proposal lowers the back wall. If acceptable, the Board should discuss which section remains the remove the bottom so the finished top remains or remove the top and make a new finished top. This proposal either demolishes the bowl for a new flatter bowl or fills in the bowl. The material of the fill or the reversible nature of the fill is unclear. The proposal does not provide any information on the repair of the fountain as is.

Code Citations:

Seattle Municipal Code

23.66.030 Certificates of Approval required

Certificate of approval required. No person shall alter, demolish, construct, reconstruct, restore, remodel, make any visible change to the exterior appearance of any structure, or to the public rights-of-way or other public spaces in a special review district, and no one shall remove or substantially alter any existing sign or erect or place any new sign or change the principal use of any building, or any portion of a building, structure or lot in a special review district, and no permit for such activity shall be issued unless a certificate of approval has been issued by the Department of Neighborhoods Director.

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.

B. When demolition or removal of a building or other structure in the District is essential to protect the public health, safety and welfare or when the purposes of this ordinance 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 23.66.115 are satisfied or not.

Rules for the Pioneer Square Preservation District

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)

Rehabilitation is defined as the act or process of making possible a compatible use for a property through repair, alterations, and additions while preserving those portions or features which convey its historical, cultural, or architectural values. (7/99) In considering rehabilitation projects, what is critical is the stabilization of significant historical detailing, respect for the original architectural style, and compatibility of scale and materials.

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.

Secretary of Interior Standards for Rehabilitation

1. A property will be used as it was historically or be given a new use that requires minimal change to its distinctive materials, features, spaces and spatial relationships.

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.
3. Each property will be recognized as a physical record of its time, place and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or elements from other historic properties, will not be undertaken.
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.
6. Deteriorated historic features will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.
7. Chemical or physical treatments, if appropriate, will be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials will not be used.
8. Archeological resources will be protected and preserved in place. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures will be undertaken.
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.

Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Structures pages 77 - 87

<https://www.nps.gov/orgs/1739/secretary-standards-treatment-historic-properties.htm>

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Genna Nashem

Pioneer Square Preservation Board Coordinator