



The City of Seattle

Pioneer Square Preservation Board

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

PSB 280/25

PIONEER SQUARE PRESERVATION BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Date: Wednesday, December 17, 2025

Time: 9:00a.m.

Hybrid Meeting via Webex or Room L2-80 Boards and Commission

Board Members

Maureen Elenga, Chair, (ME)
Montana Houston (MH)
Katrina Plewinski (KP)
Sage Kim (SK)
Maya Spotted Bear (MSB)
Jose Lorenzo Torres, Vice-Chair, (JLT)
Catherine Walker (CW)

Staff

Genna Nashem (GN)
Nelson Pesigan (NP)

Absent:

Henry Watson (HW)
Sean Obrien (SO)

Key:

BM: Board Member
SM: Staff Member
AP: Applicant

Chair Maureen Elenga called the meeting to order at 9:02 a.m.

121705.1 ROLL CALL

New board members were introduced.

121705.2 PUBLIC COMMENTS

Ron Wright, architect for the Western and Polson property owners, requested that the Board amend its agenda to add an item related to screening for recycling and waste containers at 600 Alaskan Way. He noted that the hearing examiner directed the Board to reopen the review. Chair Elenga, said that the code requires the agenda to be noticed three days in advance and the agenda was already released. That is for the public to be able to respond or comment on items on the agenda. She looked forward to reviewing the application when it is on an agenda. Mr. Wright said that he disagreed and thought the Board could amend their agenda at anytime. He said that he would be back with his legal team.

121705.3 MEETING MINUTES

August 20, 2025

MM/SC/MH/JLT

4:0:3

The motion passed, and the minutes were approved. Board members Katrina Pluinski, Maya Spotted Bear, and Catherine Walker abstained.

October 1, 2025

MM/SC/SK/JLT

3:0:4

The motion passed, and the minutes were approved. Board members Montana Houston, Katrina Pluinski, Maya Spotted Bear, and Catherine Walker abstained.

October 15, 2025

MM/SC/JLT/SK

3:0:4

The motion passed, and the minutes were approved. Board members Montana Houston, Katrina Pluinski, Maya Spotted Bear, and Catherine Walker abstained.

121705.4 CERTIFICATES OF APPROVAL

121705.41 Prefontaine Place

450 3rd Ave

Applicant: SPAR presented by Berger Partnership

AP Andy Mitton, Berger Partnership, presented a project overview of the Prefontaine Fountain's existing conditions to address its aging infrastructure issues, public health and safety and create a user-focused public open space.

SM Genna Nashem explained that the proposal is being advanced in phases. The Architectural Review Committee (ARC) was briefed in December

following two years of briefings. SM Nashem encouraged board members who participated to reflect on how the project has evolved and how it now aligns with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards compared to the original proposal of complete demolition.

Chair Maureen Elenga clarified that the project under review is rehabilitation rather than restoration, noting that under the Secretary of the Interior's Standards, rehabilitation permits certain alterations while maintaining the majority of the design, materials, and overall character. Chair Elenga provided this background to help frame the discussion and invited new board members to ask questions or share their thoughts on the project.

BM Catherine Walker asked whether the references to safety and visibility in past presentations were supported by formal studies or data, or if they were based primarily on anecdotal observations.

AP Mitton responded that the Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) conducted a lengthy study which focused primarily on mobility, with safety addressed in terms of comfort and defensible space. As part of community engagement for City Hall Park, outreach was conducted with the Seattle Police Department (SPD) and Parks Rangers, including meetings with their lead, John Jainga. AP Mitton noted that while police did not provide formal incident reports, they noted challenges in visibility and apprehension around the fountain area. These concerns were conveyed verbally rather than through quantifiable data.

Vice Chair Jose Lorenzo Torres observed that the renderings appear to capture the earlier suggestion of leaving a small portion, or "sliver," of the fountain's base rather than extending the stone fully to the bottom and recalled that the original proposal showed the stone reaching the base, but the intent was to retain some of the base elements for continuity.

Vice Chair Torres noted that the fountain's border measures about three to four inches, and the current plan involves removing one block and lowering the capstone to that level and emphasized that the adjustment would not increase the stone's height but would allow part of the base to remain visible, preserving visibility of the inscription elements and further suggested that carving the stone to create a small base could be a possible solution.

AP Mitton confirmed that the intent of the design was consistent with prior discussion and noted that the presentation was left unchanged to show the requested view and explained that the blocks involved are quite large and may be difficult to cut but suggested working with Pioneer Masonry to create a base approximately four to six inches in height. Mitton added that this approach seems practical as the team reviews the design together.

BM Walker suggested considering approval of only the first phase of the project, which focuses on improvements around the fountain, rather than approving the entire plan at once and noted that since the city intends to proceed in two phases, it may be more appropriate to evaluate the impact on visibility after phase one before committing to the second phase involving the back wall and height reduction, as that portion of the plan could still change.

SM Nashem noted that the board could delay the decision on Phase Two pending the review.

Vice Chair Torres expressed concern that, based on the diagram, the plan does not include tuckpointing, cleaning, or repairs to the masonry on the walls, but instead leaves them in their current condition without additional treatment.

AP Mitton explained that the project is currently at 90% design and unresolved in some areas, noting that phase two is unfunded and without a timeline. Given existing damage to the block and the need to preserve the monument, he recommended proceeding now with all tuckpointing and cleaning. Mitton added that while work on elements slated for modification could be deferred, completing the remainder of the masonry repairs would ensure the majority of the structure is preserved and would not require future rework.

BM Walker asked whether the proposed changes to the fountain, if later removed, would leave the original structure intact.

AP Mitton explained that installing the trench drain will require cutting into the existing bowl and making minor penetrations, but approximately 80% of the original structure will remain intact.

BM Montana Houston asked for clarification on the updated timeline for phase two and inquired to what extent changes to the monument side of the fountain would extend the overall reconstruction and restoration schedule.

AP Mitton estimated that once funding is secured and a start date is set, phase two of the project would likely take about four months to complete, extending to six months if unforeseen conditions arise.

AP Mitton noted that some aspects of the fountain's construction remain uncertain, which may require field work to identify footings and adjustments to construction methods, but overall, the timeline should not exceed six months.

SM Nashem recommended that the amended motion include a condition requiring any brick replacement necessitated by plumbing work to be reviewed by either the board or staff prior to installation, ensuring that any new brick is appropriately approved before use.

Action:

I move to recommend granting a Certificate of Approval for alterations to Prefontaine Fountain (Place

for Phase One, including retaining the side panels and 3rd Ave hardscape and altering the remaining site including adding an inverted bowl above the existing bowl with a new water feature plumbing, fountain masonry repairs including tuck pointing and cleaning of the back wall (inscription wall), and replacing the turtles.

Later phases of the work will be brought back to the Board for review and approval including reduction of the height of the back of the of the fountain wall, construction of new tiered planter walls, and plaza paving around the fountain.

Any pavement brick replacement needed for the installation of plumbing will be reviewed for match confirmation by staff prior to the installation.

All per the applicant's submittal.

The Board directs staff to prepare a written recommendation of approval based on considering the application submittal and Board discussion at the December 17, 2025 public meeting and forward this written recommendation to the Department of Neighborhoods Director.

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.

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.

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.
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.
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.

MM/SC/JLT/CW

7:0:0

The motion passed and approved.

121705.5 BRIEFING

121705.51 King Street Station

303 S Jackson St

Briefing on proposed monument sign/art

SM Nashem reminded new board members, this is an introductory briefing only, with no decisions to be made, but rather an opportunity to provide advice and identify elements to be addressed in the final application. SM Nashem noted that while signage is typically reviewed administratively, this case requires board review due to its size and components.

AP Kate Fernandez, Office of Arts and Culture, briefed the board on a project that will soon be brought forward for a certificate of approval, providing background on King Street Station as a historic landmark. The project aims to increase visibility while celebrating the arts in Pioneer Square, strengthening King Street Station's identity as a historic and cultural site, and contributing to downtown's vitality by creating moments of wonder and curiosity.

Presenter Jemma Radick presented the design concepts developed with Kate Fernandez, emphasizing sculptural forms and vibrant colors to create a strong visual connection between King Street Station and its arts programming.

Presenter Radick explained that two color versions were studied to complement the plaza and station context, one vibrant and one aligned with the neon tones of the station's signage.

Chair Elenga asked about tripping hazard and nighttime visibility and requested that a future presentation includes an image showing how the monument would appear at night.

AP Fernandez acknowledged the board's helpful recommendations regarding lighting details and ADA considerations, noting that these will be incorporated into the project. Kate added that the board will likely also want to review the final color choices as part of the approval process.

BM Walker asked about the height of the structure.

Presenter Radick explained that the proposed sculptural forms are designed at a human scale, with dimensions of approximately 4 feet 6 inches in height and proportional widths, set back from the property line. The intent is to encourage physical interaction, allowing people to engage in the artwork, take photos, and experience it as part of their visit to King Street Station.

Presenter Radick emphasized that the scale was carefully chosen, larger forms would overwhelm the planter and distract from the building's architecture, while smaller forms would lose the intended interactive quality. The design aims to let individuals move around the sculptures, appreciating the transition from abstract shapes to legible forms.

BM Sage Kim commented on the site plan, noting the varying dimensions of the horizontal extensions that sit flush with the gravel, with one nearly touching the planter behind. For accessibility and pedestrian circulation, BM Kim recommended providing clearer and more detailed dimensions for the spacing between the sculptural pieces and the existing planters.

BM Kim also requested that future presentations include exact placement details for both the lighting associated with each sculpture and the horizontal extensions on the ground to ensure clarity and proper review.

BM Houston acknowledged the value of the surveys conducted, noting they provided helpful context for how the color choices were determined.

121705.6 BOARD BUSINESS

SM Nashem noted that there will be no board or ARC meeting next week and none scheduled for last Wednesday in December due to the holiday. She confirmed that the next board meeting will take place on January 7th.

121705.7 REPORT OF THE CHAIR

121705.8 STAFF REPORT

SM Nashem provided an administrative review summary report.

Meeting adjourned at 10:30 am.