



The City of Seattle

Pioneer Square Preservation Board

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PSB95/26

Staff Report

Board meeting April 15, 2026

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.

041526.42 **Occidental Mall**
117 S Washington
DONH-COA-02100
Applicant: SPU

Proposed: Replace water fountain with a water bottle filler

Staff report: This style water fountain was installed throughout the city prior to 1925 as documented in photos in the archives. Based on this information and the lack of information to the contrary, the fountain is assumed to be dated prior to 1925. There is not a specific photo of this location and because the road was turned into a pedestrian promenade in 1972 it could be that this water fountain was relocated to this location either moved from the sidewalk adjacent or from another location. No other historical information from the applicant was provided. The fountain was removed and a new one was installed without approval over a year ago, Staff notified SPU of the compliance issue and the historic fountain was returned. Staff have had conversations with SPU staff over the last year on the project, advised on some alternatives, thought the alternative submitted in the recent application was not previously discussed. Existing water fountains are painted the same dark green as the light poles, sometime referred to as "Pioneer Square" green. What is proposed is a mat green but not a custom match to the existing green. The applicant has not provided any historical information, but the application is desired for FIFA so it was put forward. Based on this information the Board should discuss if they have enough

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The Seattle Department of Neighborhoods**

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information to make a decision about the historical importance of the fountain being removed or if the proposed fountain is a compatible substitute, if more information is needed and if the Board has enough information to make a decision the bases for the decision.

Draft Motion to approve:

I move to recommend granting a Certificate of Approval replace water fountain with a water bottle filler with a brick base (or concrete base)

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 April 15, 2026 public meeting and forward this written recommendation to the Department of Neighborhoods Director.

Draft Motion to deny:

I move to recommend denying a Certificate of Approval to remove the existing fountain because (Reasons discussed for example, the Board finds the fountain to be a historical resource compatible with the district and that the proposed water bottle filler is not compatible in design with the district.

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.

Secretary of Interior Standards for Rehabilitation

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.
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.

10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall 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.

Issued: April 10, 2026

Genna Nashem

Pioneer Square Preservation Board Coordinator