



The City of Seattle

Pioneer Square Preservation Board

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PSB236/26

Staff Report for briefing

Board meeting Sept 2, 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.

090226.41 **Areaway 98 (1202) and Areaway 99 (1203)**

207 1st Ave S and 209 1st Ave S

DONH-COA-02249

Applicant: Kit Loo, SDOT

Briefing regarding proposed alterations to two areaways

Staff report: Areaways are historic features that were created at the street were raised after and during the time buildings were rebuilt following the Great Fire. In early 2000 a survey was conducted and then reconducted following the 2001 earthquake. More recently the another survey was done, renumbering the areaways, and omitting any historical analysis. Therefor the Board also has to rely on the 2001 created map for historical rating. These two areaways are rated as "substantially intact, Notable", the highest historical rating. The areaway map indicates that the areaways also at the time had an adequate street wall but areaway 1203 had a critical sidewalk. The construction status has not been updated since 2007. There was a survey that was part of this map that lists the features present in each of the areaways; that survey has been provided. Our department has not had a copy of the entire report. A different study was provided but it does not include any details about these particular areaways.

Because not all areaways were built the same, have the same features or materials nor have the same deficiencies, the solution for the areaways has been highly individualized. The Board has looked at the features, uses, and

issues, including safety issues and opportunities to find a solution that least affects the areaway while resolving what is necessary. For example:

The areaway at Seattle Steam, was built in such a way that the building the building was supported by the sidewalk. The best solution for the over all preservation of the building was determined to be filling the areaway but defuncted features that were important to the character of the building were required to be left exposed.

The areaway wall at the Buttnick Building was a unique areaway with a rubble wall and round metal prism panels but the wall was bulging. The areaway was open to the basement and previously had been occupied space. The solution was to install a metal structural grid that allowed visibility of the street walls and prisms and kept the space open.

The Metropole, areaway was also open to the basement was planned to be used for space in support for the building's nonprofit. Because of the water intrusion, the options were to seal off the areaways from the rest of the building, or to seal the areaway street walls, covering the historic materials. The solution was to allow sealing of the street wall, but mitigate it by reinstalling the missing sidewalk prism panels.

The Board has often done a site visit to see the areaways prior to decision making.

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

XVIII. AREAWAYS

Areaways are usable areas constructed under the sidewalk between the building foundation and street wall. Areaways were created after the Great Seattle Fire of 1889 when the District was rebuilt and the street elevations were raised. Building standards adopted shortly after the fire required fireproof sidewalk construction to replace the pre-fire wooden sidewalks. Areaways are part of the City's right-of-way area, however, the space is often available for use by the adjacent building owner. (7/03)

The most significant qualities of an areaway are its volume of space, which provides a record of its history, and the architectural features that render its form, character, and spatial quality. These features include use of unit materials (brick or stone), bays articulated by arches and/or columns, ceiling vaults, and other special features including tilework or skylights (sidewalk prism lenses). The historic characteristics of areaways shall be preserved. (7/03)

In 2001, the Seattle Department of Transportation completed a survey of approximately 100 areaways in the District. Each areaway was rated in terms of its structural condition and presence of original historic characteristics. A range of structural repairs options were proposed based on the structural and historical ratings. The 2001 Seattle Department of Transportation Areaway Survey shall serve as a guide for the Board's decision making on future alterations or repairs to areaways in the District. (7/03)

Secretary of Interior Standards for Rehabilitation

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.
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.

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Genna Nashem

Pioneer Square Preservation Board Coordinator