



The City of Seattle

International Special Review District

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

ISRD 185/24

MINUTES FOR THE MEETING OF TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 24, 2024

Time: 4:30pm
Place: Hybrid Meeting

Board Members Present

Heather Hargesheimer
Nella Kwan
Kyle Jacobson
Adrian Lam
Gary Lee
Samantha Wong

Staff

Rebecca Frestedt
Melinda Bloom

Absent

Eric Chan

Chair Adrian Lam called the meeting to order at 4:30 pm.

ROLL CALL

092424.1

PUBLIC COMMENT

Diane Sugimura spoke in support of the proposed murals, which she described as great art that represents the culture and legacy of Bruce Lee along with that of the Coast Salish people. She said Louie Gong is the founder of 8th Generation and has both Chinese and Indigenous heritage. She said the design reflects feedback from the community.

092424.2

CERTIFICATES OF APPROVAL

The following two applications for Certificates of Approval were presented, by Michelle Kumata and Louie Gong, out of agenda order. The applicants presented both applications together and then the Board voted on each, individually.

092424.21

655 S. King St. – Rex Apartments (Rex Hotel)

Record number: DONH-COA-01405

Ms. Frestedt explained the application for proposed installation of 10 x 10 printed aluminum mural, honoring Bruce Lee. Title: "The One with Water".

The artwork is by Louie Gong and would be installed on the Maynard Ave S. side of the building. The artwork will be on display from November 2024-December 2026. The Rex Hotel was built in 1909 and is listed as a contributing building to the Seattle Chinatown National Register District. It is located within the Asian Design Character District. When reviewing artwork, the Board considers placement, materials, colors, scale and method of attachment.

092424.22 657 S. Weller St. – New Central Building
Record number: DONH-COA-1391
Applicant: Michelle Kumata, representative

Ms. Frestedt explained the application for proposed installation of a 10 x 10 printed aluminum mural, honoring Bruce Lee, Title: "Journey Begins Here".

The artwork is by Louie Gong and would be installed on the Maynard Ave S. side of the building. The artwork will be on display from November 2024-December 2026. The New Central was built in 1909 and is listed as contributing building to the Seattle Chinatown National Register District. It is located within the Asian Design Character District.

Ms. Frestedt reminded the Board, when reviewing artwork, the Board considers placement, materials, colors, scale and method of attachment.

Presentation:

Michelle Kumata proposed installation of two murals by local artist Louie Gong celebrating the life of Bruce Lee. She identified the buildings and locations the art will be displayed for a period of two years. She noted that the New Central Building was the site of Lee's first studio. She said the mural project is a collaboration of the Wing Luke Museum and the Bruce Lee Foundation. She said there will be a celebration once the murals are installed. She described community engagement performed and the artist selection process.

Ms. Kumata went over the attachments and explained that the murals were funded by Hope Corps, through the Office of Arts and Culture.

Louie Gong, artist, explained the thought behind the art, the fabrication – a UV print on aluminum, and precedents in the neighborhood. He said the work is an interpretation of the outcome of a life lived according to Bruce Lee's philosophy. He explained that the mural titled, "The One with Water" references the confidence Mr. Lee gained on his internal journey. He noted local Pacific Northwest flora including sword ferns, salmonberries, and a dragon confidently sipping water to represent Coast Salish and Chinese dragon themes. Responding to clarifying questions he said the application of a clear coat has worked well on other murals where graffiti was able to be cleaned off. He said those murals have been up for three to four years now.

Board questions:

Ms. Hargesheimer asked when the murals would come down.

Ms. Kumata said that would be a collective decision of Wing Luke, the artist, and the Bruce Lee Foundation.

Mr. Lam asked why the murals would be temporary.

Ms. Kumata said it is related to the grant agreement but that they would like them to be up longer.

Ms. Frestedt noted the two-year maintenance agreement with the artist.

Mr. Jacobson asked about treatment of the wall when the murals are removed.

Ms. Kumata said the attachment would be into the mortar, with a 1" offset from the building.

Ms. Frestedt noted that the work is reversible and said the applicant confirmed that any penetrations would be filled and repaired when art is removed.

Mr. Lam said he was in awe of the artist's interpretation and the sophisticated way he embraced the Bruce Lee story with a whole new take. He appreciated having art in the community. He asked if the installation would be recorded.

Mr. Gong said he records a lot of his process. He said he would discuss it with Wing Luke but that nothing is in place yet. He said he would use visually striking, fluid acrylics. He said Wing Luke and the Bruce Lee Foundation may be interested in sharing his process.

Mr. Lam asked if there would be an interpretive plaque or QR code.

Ms. Kumata said there would be a plaque at each mural with description and website information. She said there are so many layers and there is so much to this story.

Motions:

092424.21 655 S. King St. – Rex Apartments (Rex Hotel)
Record number: DONH-COA-01405

Action: I move that the International Special Review District Board recommend approval of a Certificate of Approval for exterior alterations for the application of a 10x10 mural, from 11/1/2024-12/31/2026, per the submitted application materials.

The Board directs staff to prepare a written recommendation of approval, based on considering the application submittal and Board discussion at the September 24, 2024 public meeting, and forward this written recommendation to the Department of Neighborhoods Director.

In addition, the Board supports the inclusion of a plaque describing the murals with submission to staff for final review of layout and attachment prior to installation.

This action is based on the following applicable sections of the International Special Review District Ordinance and relevant Standards:

- Seattle Municipal Code (SMC)
- SMC 23.66.336 - Exterior building finishes
- A. General Requirements
- B. Asian Design Character District

Secretary of the Interior Standard #9 and #10

MM/SC/HH/KJ
6:0:0
Motion carried.

092424.22 657 S. Weller St. – New Central Building
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Secretary of the Interior Standard #9 and #10

MM/SC/HH/NK
6:0:0
Motion carried.

092424.3 Staff Summary and Board Business
Administrative approvals issued or pending since date of last meeting

Ms. Frestedt said election documents were going out in the next day's mail. She went over open positions, election process and relevant deadlines.

Ms. Frestedt said a retreat would be planned to focus on general best practices and procedures as well as Parliamentary Process and Robert's Rules.