



The City of Seattle

# Pioneer Square Preservation Board

Mailing Address: PO Box 94649, Seattle WA 98124-4649  
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PSB 171/23

**MINUTES** for Wednesday, June 21, 2023

**Board Members**

Kianoush Curran  
Maureen Elenga  
Sage Kim  
Karl Mueller  
Jose Lorenzo-Torres  
Lindsay Pflugrath  
Maggie Sean  
Steven Sparks  
Henry Watson

**Staff**

Genna Nashem  
Melinda Bloom

Chair Maureen Elenga called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

**062123.1 PUBLIC COMMENT**

Jessa Timmer, Alliance for Pioneer Square spoke in support of the Railspur art murals. She said the art will support activation efforts and local artists. She said there will be no impact to historic structures. She appreciated the owners' investment in the community and said it is a win-win-win.

**062123.2 APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

May 3, 2023

MM/SC/HW/MS 4:0:2 Minutes approved. Ms. Kim and Mr. Lorenzo-Torres abstained.

**062123.3 APPLICATIONS FOR CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL**

**062123.31 Furuya Corgiat Buildings/Pacific Commercial**

240 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave S  
Flatstick Pub

Applicant: Henry Walters, architect  
Record number: DONH-COA-00960

Signage including a neon sign, window signage, and a wall sign  
Sidewalk café with railing

ARC report: Ms. Nashem reported ARC reviewed the proposal on May 10, 2023 and asked for additional information including existing condition building photo that is easier to see, either larger or not greyed out; section drawing of the illuminated sign should show the lighting using LED tubes; the section drawing showing the lighting is also important to demonstrate that the sign is not an internally lit sign; revise the section drawing to show the windows and mullion instead of a flat surface and more clearly how the sign is attached; consider options that move the sign to the left or reduce size of the sign so that it is more responsive to the architecture of the building and in scale with the storefront; the ARC expressed concern that the sign also covered most of the transom windows; explain how the wall sign will be painted so it appears softer and weathered. ARC requested more information about if the existing wall sign had historical significance or not and when and how it was approved. ARC expressed that this is a highly unusual type of sign in the district and should be more thoroughly considered. The applicant indicated that they would return with a couple of options for consideration.

Staff report: Ms. Nashem said this project is not eligible for administrative review because the signage portion of the application includes a request for an exception to letter height that requires Board review. Board review is also required of a painted wall sign on top of an existing painted wall sign. She said she was able to locate the original Certificate of Approval for the wall sign - it was approved in 1987 prior to the rules that might have prevented approval of it. Those rules that prohibit upper-level signs and painting unpainted brick appear to have been added in 1993 and 1999. The Board approved a building renovation in 2008. The minutes reflect no discussion of the sign on the wall, the need for it to be removed or if the tenant would be returning after the renovation. I recommend that if the Board were to approve a new sign here that the approval stipulate that the sign has to be removed entirely if the tenant is no longer in the building so that it is clear an off-premise sign should not remain. Being this is a new sign, though painted on top of an existing sign, The Board should consider the existing rules for signage and painting and any exception needed to be clearly communicated as to the reason for the approval. The Board should discuss if the existing sign is a ghost sign? If the existing sign is an off-premise sign? On a building of this size what would be an upper-level sign? Is the Board considering how far from the ground or how far from the top or both. The proposed guidelines say a wall sign should be on the 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> floor. She said that because the sign is existing does that affect board consideration.

The guidelines state that "Letter size in windows, awnings and hanging signs shall be consistent with the scale of the architectural elements of the building (as per SMC 23.66.160) but shall not exceed a maximum height of 10 inches unless an exception has been approved as set forth." The Board had used this exception for when letters in the business logo are also a graphic or some other kind of embellishment, but the sign otherwise is in scale with the building. For example, a "t" that also looks like a

graphic fork. I can't think of an example where a graphic that looked like a letter and was used to spell the business name was not considered a letter.

The Board has previously denied a large, illuminated sign located on the top floor of a building that was 18 stories tall as upper floor signage is prohibited in the district. The Board recently did not support an illuminated sign on a penthouse addition because upper floor signage is prohibited.

The application provides photos from the district (left to right, up then down) Photos 1, 4, 5, and 9 are historic ghost signs. Not only do those signs not comply with the District rules and Seattle Municipal Code, the Board has considered ghost signs as remnants of "historical advertisements painted on the exterior of a building wall heralding an obsolete product, an outdated trademark, the name of a business previously located on a site, or the service or product offered by a prior building occupant," and have not considered them as signage, but as architectural features of historic buildings and not a precedent for new signs. Photo 2, the Café Hue wall sign is located on the second floor of the building and is painted on wood and applied to the building. I believe it is the only sign in these photos that was reviewed for a Certificate of Approval and complied with the current regulations. Photo 3 I do not know the full history of the "Howl at the Moon", but there is not currently a business there with that name. Barneys Loans sign which is on a one-story building has been there approximately 80 years and the business is still in operation. The 7<sup>th</sup> photo of "the Lofts " is a building name sign that replaced another building name sign. Seattle Lighting is both the name of the building and the name of the business, it is another non-conforming sign that is larger than what would be allowed today.

Henry Walters and Molly O'Donnell, Atelier Drome presented the application.

Ms. O'Donnell provided context of the site in the block and oriented board members to the subject building and storefront. She noted how the proposed hanging sign fits in the context of the elevation and provided examples of other placement options explored. She said the hanging sign would be hung on the mullions. The solid green portion of the sign is non-illuminated and serves as backing for white neon letters that are less than 10" tall.

Mr. Walters said the rendering is in correct scale and they have presented their preferred option.

Ms. O'Donnell proposed vinyl banding at bottom of storefront windows to help cover casework and back of house activity.

Mr. Walters said Flatstick Pub occupies the basement and has little storefront exposure.

Ms. O'Donnell said they want to retain the faded white circle sign on side of building. She said they would keep the aged condition and add Flatstick Pub to it. She provided images of ghost signs as precedent.

Ms. O'Donnell proposed a sidewalk café and provided images of proposed metal frame/fence and metal furniture. She said buffers around light pole, parking pay station were built into design.

Mr. Walters said the fence will be black powdercoated.

Ms. Elenga expressed concern about painting on brick and asked for clarification about the proposed process.

Pablo Guerrero, Amigo Arts said they plan a faux finish with a more diluted paint that has a higher opacity. He said the goal is to see the brick and preserve the look and feel of what is there now. He discussed the proposed process.

Ms. Elenga said she was concerned about precedent and that the old ghost signs are from the period of significance of the district. The existing sign was installed in the 1980s prior to the historic district's current regulations.

Mr. Mueller said this sign was painted on in the 1980's, outside the period of significance, language about removing it when business vacated was not included at that time. He said watered down paint is not a good option because the early paints were lime based and allowed the brick to breathe. He expressed concern that the existing sign would read through the diluted paint.

Mr. Guerrero said he would use mineral-based paint. He said shrinking down what is there might look starker, worse.

Mr. Mueller said the sign should fit within the current rules as much as possible. He said the sign is on the wrong side of size, scale, and scope. He suggested reducing the diameter of the circle and noted there are lots of discolored bricks in the neighborhood, it would be a worthy tradeoff.

Ms. Elenga said she agreed. She said she had no problem with the rest of the application, just painting on brick. She was concerned about the wear of the materials and possible precedent. She suggested taking a board poll and the applicant could decide to table this portion or not.

Mr. Watson said he had nothing further to add. He said he supports saving ghost signs balanced with care of the brick. He said good suggestions were provided; he suggested further board discussion about fading ghost signs.

Mr. Walters said it is complicated and he was open to tabling the painted wall sign.

Ms. Elenga reiterated she was uncomfortable painting over the sign and asked for a motion from the Board.

Action: I move to recommend granting a Certificate of Approval for:  
Sidewalk café with railing; installation of signage - neon sign and window signage; the painting of a wall sign over the existing painted sign is tabled.

The Board directs staff to prepare a written recommendation of approval based on considering the application submittal and Board discussion at the *June 21, 2023* public meeting and forward this written recommendation to the Department of Neighborhoods Director.

Code Citations:

SMC 23.66.030 Certificates of Approval required

- A. 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.

23.66.160 Signs

- B. To ensure that flags, banners and signs are of a scale, color, shape and type compatible with the Pioneer Square Preservation District objectives stated in Section 23.66.100 and with the character of the District and the buildings in the District, to reduce driver distraction and visual blight, to ensure that the messages of signs are not lost through undue proliferation, and to enhance views and sight lines into and down streets, the overall design of a sign, flag, or banner, including size, shape, typeface, texture, method of attachment, color, graphics and lighting, and the number and location of signs, flags, and banners, shall be reviewed by the Board and are regulated as set out in this Section 23.66.160. Building owners are encouraged to develop an overall signage plan for their buildings.
- C. In determining the appropriateness of signs, including flags and banners used as signs as defined in Section 23.84A.036, the Preservation Board shall consider the following:
  1. Signs Attached or Applied to Structures.
    - a. The relationship of the shape of the proposed sign to the architecture of the building and with the shape of other approved signs located on the building or in proximity to the proposed sign;
    - b. The relationship of the texture of the proposed sign to the building for which it is proposed, and with other approved signs located on the building or in proximity to the proposed sign;
    - c. The possibility of physical damage to the structure and the degree to which the method of attachment would conceal or disfigure desirable architectural features or details of the structure (the method of attachment shall be approved by the Director);

- d. The relationship of the proposed colors and graphics with the colors of the building and with other approved signs on the building or in proximity to the proposed sign;
  - e. The relationship of the proposed sign with existing lights and lighting standards, and with the architectural and design motifs of the building;
  - f. Whether the proposed sign lighting will detract from the character of the building; and
  - g. The compatibility of the colors and graphics of the proposed sign with the character of the District.
- 2. Wall signs painted on or affixed to a building shall not exceed ten percent of the total area of the façade or 240 square feet, whichever is less. Area of original building finish visible within the exterior dimensions of the sign (e.g., unpainted brick) shall not be considered when computing the sign's area.
  - 4. When determining the appropriate size of a sign the Board and the Director of Neighborhoods shall also consider the function of the sign and the character and scale of buildings in the immediate vicinity, the character and scale of the building for which the sign is proposed, the proposed location of the sign on the building's exterior, and the total number and size of signs proposed or existing on the building.

### **Pioneer Square Preservation District Rules**

#### **III. GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR REHABILITATION AND NEW CONSTRUCTION**

- A. Color. Building facades are primarily composed of varied tones of red brick masonry or gray sandstone. Unfinished brick, stone, or concrete masonry unit surfaces may not be painted. Painted color is typically applied to wooden window sash, sheet metal ornament and wooden or cast iron storefronts. Paint colors shall be appropriate to ensure compatibility within the District. (7/99)

#### **XX. RULES FOR TRANSPARENCY, SIGNS, AWNINGS AND CANOPIES**

##### **B. General Signage Regulations**

All signs on or hanging from buildings, in windows, or applied to windows, are subject to review and approval by the Pioneer Square Preservation Board. (8/93) Locations for signs shall be in accordance with all other regulations for signage. (12/94)

The intent of sign regulations is to ensure that signs relate physically and visually to their location; that signs not hide, damage or obscure the architectural elements of the building; that signs be oriented toward and promote a pedestrian environment; and that the products or services offered be the focus, rather than signs. (8/93)

Sign Materials: Wood or wood products are the preferred materials for rigid hanging and projecting (blade) signs and individual signage letters applied to building facades. (7/99)

C. Specific Signage Regulations

1. Letter Size. Letter size in windows, awnings and hanging signs shall be consistent with the scale of the architectural elements of the building (as per SMC 23.66.160), but shall not exceed a maximum height of 10 inches unless an exception has been approved as set forth in this paragraph. Exceptions to the 10-inch height limitation will be considered for individual letters in the business name (subject to a limit of no more than three letters) only if both of the following conditions are satisfied: a) the exception is sought as part of a reduced overall sign package or plan for the business; and b) the size of the letters for which an exception is requested is consistent with the scale and character of the building, the frontage of the business, the transparency requirements of the regulations, and all other conditions under SMC 23.66.160. An overall sign package or plan will be considered reduced for purposes of the exception if it calls for approval of signage that is substantially less than what would otherwise be allowable under the regulations. (12/94)
6. Upper Floor Signage. Upper floor signage is not permitted, except for temporary signage as per SMC 23.66.160D or when it is proposed as part of an overall integrated sign plan for the building.
7. Internally Lit Signs. Internally lit or backlit signs are prohibited. (8/93)
8. Wall Signs. The Board recommends that wall signs be painted on a wood or metal backing and attached in such a manner that the building surface is not damaged. Colors and graphics of wall signs shall be compatible with the character of the District, and letter sizes shall be appropriately scaled to fit the overall design and dimensions of the sign. (7/99, 7/03)

Secretary of Interior's Standards

10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be taken 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/MS/SK

6:0:0 Motion carried.

Agenda reordered.

062123.33

**Fisher building, Manufactures building (Railspur) and alley (Railspur alley)**

117 S Jackson St, 419 Occidental Ave S and alley east of 1<sup>st</sup> Ave S between S Jackson St and S King St

Applicant: Henry Watson, Urban Villages

Record number: DONH-COA-00911

Installation of murals in the alley

Installation of mural panels in the alley to accommodate rotating artwork. First art rotation is proposed.

*Mr. Watson recused himself.*

Structure

Mr. Watson explained the intent to activate the alley with art and lighting. He said new businesses have entries in the alley. He proposed using salvaged lumber/timbers from adjacent construction projects to build structures for rotating art displays at various locations. Structure will be attached to building with hex head lag bolts into pre-drilled holes that will be filled with epoxy. The art will be durable outdoors and will be rotated often. The MLB art will be changed out not long after the event but the usual rotation will occur quarterly and they are still working through details.

Staff report: Ms. Nashem said this is part of a larger proposal to activate the alley but just the mural installation is moving forward first to accommodate mural installation in time for the All-Star game. The Board typically centers discussion of artwork on the placement, attachments, colors and assuring that the artwork does not contain any commercial message and how it fits in to the district generally and not whether the art or subject matter is of personal taste. The Board may discuss if they would want to see every mural prior to installation or if they would like to approve rotating murals with staff review of the artwork to assure that there is no commercial messaging. The Board might discuss if there are parameters that they would want to be included in the rotating art.

Mr. Watson said the average size of the structure will be 8' x 5' but will be adjusted on site to account for slope of alley. He said the actual dimensions can be represented in a final drawing. He said the structure is a way to bring art into the alley without attachment to the buildings. He said use of the salvaged wood will keep historic fabric in the district.

Action: I move to recommend granting a Certificate of Approval for: Installation of panels to install murals.

The Board directs staff to prepare a written recommendation of approval based on considering the application submittal and Board discussion at the June 21, 2023, public

meeting and forward this written recommendation to the Department of Neighborhoods Director.

Code Citations:

SMC 23.66.030 Certificates of Approval required

B. 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.

Pioneer Square Preservation District Rules

XIV. STREET TREES AND VEGETATION

Hanging baskets with seasonal flowers are recommended.

Secretary of Interior's Standards

11. New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be taken 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/KM/SK            5:0:1    Motion carried. Mr. Watson recused himself.

Artwork

Dominic Nieri explained the alleys will be used as space to create immersive thematic takeovers to activate the whole outdoor space with art, performance art. He said spreading activity through the space allows the conversation to continue as one moves through the space. He said he is not familiar with what to expect from the MLB event. He said they have teamed up with the MLB planners to allow that event use of the structure panels. He explained that the planned art rotation will work under a series of themes and then find local artists to work within those themes. He went through the artist biographies for the first installation, related to the MLB event. He said following the MLB event, the art pieces would have a second life somewhere with the hope of their donation to another space.

Discussion ensued. The MLB event is sponsored by Major League Baseball; artwork is baseball themed. No logos or advertising images are allowed in the art as then it would be considered off-premises signage. T-Mobile Park or Lumen Field would be allowed as they are names of buildings, T-Mobile or Lumen would not.

Mr. Nieri assured the board there would be no logos.

Mr. Watson asked board to discuss if administrative approval could be applied to future mural Certificate of Approvals.

Mmes. Elenga, Sean, and Kim and Mr. Mueller supported administrative approval and noted the absence of advertisement of any kind.

Ms. Elenga said the process should be for art that is closer to final, the better.

Ms. Nashem said the art is meant to be temporary, so this is a bit different. She said a permanent mural was reviewed for durable colors, relation to Pioneer Square and tells a story from point of view of underrepresented communities. She said color exception was supported given it replicated colors in Native American beadwork. She said design should be pretty close to what it is going to be as the Certificate of Approval language is for exactly what is presented. She said it is hard to anticipate what could come up but the closer to what is expected, the better.

Mr. Nieri said he would work with that. He said with a written statement of intent, it is helpful having flexibility.

Ms. Nashem said anything that is questionable would be referred to the board.

Action: I move to recommend granting a Certificate of Approval for: Installation of murals and approval of the first murals *(and future murals on the proposed mural panels)* *Mural is to be sized to fit the black wall space and not to over- lap with the windows.* Art on the construction fencing is temporary, All as proposed.

The Board directs staff to prepare a written recommendation of approval based on considering the application submittal and Board discussion at the June 21, 2023, public meeting and forward this written recommendation to the Department of Neighborhoods Director.

#### Code Citations:

SMC 23.66.030 Certificates of Approval required

- C. 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.

Pioneer Square Preservation District Rules

Secretary of Interior's Standards

12. New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be taken 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/MS/KM 5:0:1 Motion carried. Mr. Watson recused himself.

062123.32

**Occidental Park**

Applicant: Wes Dorn, Seattle Downtown Association

Record number: DONH-COA-00959

Installation of a roller-skating rink July 8<sup>th</sup> – 11th

Staff report: The beer garden will be open from July 8 – July 11.

Floretta Woat and Wes Dorn presented.

Mr. Dorn said 40' x 20' space would be set up for a beer garden. He provided photos of proposed fencing and noted there would be no attachment to the pavers. He said there will be DJs, arcade games and lots of activities, and keepsake memorabilia. He said the beer garden has successfully been done before.

Ms. Nashem noted there was no approval for that beer garden.

*Ms. Sean left at 10:55 am.*

Ms. Nashem said that Anheuser Busch and DSA vendor signage must meet codes and dimensions allowed and items advertised must be for sale, specifically as shown.

Mr. Mueller asked who is profiting.

Mr. Dorn said Anheuser Busch is donating beer and DSA will receive 50% of profit for their operations. He said DSA is spending \$50,000 for this work.

Mr. Mueller said when lunch trucks were allowed, local businesses were angry because the trucks drew the focus away from full-time Pioneer Square businesses. He asked why a beer garden is needed. He asked about the impact to full-time businesses.

Mr. Dorn said they moved away from food trucks for that reason. He said a ton of people will come through and the activities would encourage people to stay longer and check out local restaurants.

Mr. Mueller asked if business owners had been briefed.

Mr. Dorn said he spoke with the London Plane but no others.

Mr. Mueller asked that all businesses within a one-block radius be contacted.

Mr. Dorn said they would do that.

Ms. Elenga was supportive of the applicant contacting business owners per Mr. Mueller's suggestion.

Mr. Mueller said it is important to know who is profiting, and how the money is flowing.

Action: I move to recommend granting a Certificate of Approval for: Use and Construction of beer garden in Occidental Park for July 8 - 11.

The Board directs staff to prepare a written recommendation of approval based on considering the application submittal and Board discussion at the June 21, 2023, public meeting and forward this written recommendation to the Department of Neighborhoods Director.

Code Citations:

SMC 23.66.030 Certificates of Approval required

D. 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.

**Pioneer Square Preservation District Rules**

III. GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR REHABILITATION AND NEW CONSTRUCTION

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's Standards

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/HW/SK            4:1:0    Motion carried. Mr. Mueller opposed because of potential negative impacts to businesses.

**062123.4 BOARD BUSINESS**

**062123.5 REPORT OF THE CHAIR:**

**062123.6 STAFF REPORT:** Genna Nashem  
Administrative Review report  
Ms. Nashem said three administrative approvals had been issued. She said she is anxious to see painting of fire escape to make it a focal point.

Genna Nashem  
Pioneer Square Preservation Board Coordinator  
206.684.0227