



The City of Seattle

Pioneer Square Preservation Board

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PSB 133/20

Staff REPORT

For Board meeting September 2, 2020

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.

090220.32 Benches and Tree Pits

Briefing on an installation of benches and tree pit improvements

Staff report: While street furnishings were delegated to Administrative review in emergency legislation, staff thought the bench design and color of flexipave needed Board input. Staff thought that Option 1 bench was modern and that although the circle design on the sides of Option 2 coordinated with other circle patterns in Pioneer Square railings, that the cross pattern on the back of the bench gave the bench a county appearance. Neither appear to match the benches in Pioneer Place Park. Each of the benches has in common that they are a combination of the wood and metal.

The existing rules indicate that the cast iron and wood benches in Pioneer Place Park and Occidental Park are the standard for the District. However, the benches were removed from Occidental park long ago. There is some confusion as to what benches were referred in the District Rules as Park provided SDOT with the 1930's World's Fair bench information but that design does not match what is currently installed in the park. I do not have any background as to why the benches in Pioneer Place Park were chosen to be the standard or if these are the same benches that were referred to in the District Rules. The ones currently installed have a simple crest design with unknown relationship to Pioneer Square.

The Board reviewed a street concept plan in 2016. The Contractor recommended the following:

- Create or choose a simple and clean series of seating options allowing for multiple social configurations and street conditions

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The Seattle Department of Neighborhoods**

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- Designs should include universally accessible options and support comfort for many different types of users.
- Keep with the Historic District Character for permanent seating options

Given this information what is the Board's recommendation for bench styles?

It is proposed to remove the grates which are choking some trees. The Board has approved black asphalt looking flexipave because it provided a clean tree root covering compared to bark or gravel, however had expressed interest in something more aesthetic. The Board was not previously presented with alternatives. Staff became aware that the flexipave is available in a brown. Staff thought the brown flexipave appeared more the color of bark and had a more quality appearance than asphalt. This proposal is to use brown on Occidental where there are bricks and black in all other location where the tree pit in in a concrete sidewalk. While the existing rules have direction on street tree planting and concrete color, it does not have direction for tree pits. The Board should give feedback as to which color, or the combination of color that are most compatible with Pioneer Square's historic character and pedestrian use.

Code Citations:

SMC 23.66.030 Certificates of Approval required
SMC23.66.100

...To preserve, protect, and enhance the historic character of the Pioneer Square area and the buildings therein; ... to attract visitors to the City; ... to encourage the use of transportation modes other than the private automobile; ... to improve visual and urban relationships between existing and future buildings and structures, parking spaces and public improvements within the area; and to encourage pedestrian uses, there is established as a special review district, the Pioneer Square Preservation District.

Pioneer Square Preservation District Rules

XI. STREET FURNITURE

The cast iron and wood benches located in Pioneer Place Park and Occidental Park are the standard for the District. Approval to install benches will be determined by need and availability. All other elements of street furniture will be reviewed by the Board as to their specific compatibility within the Preservation District. This review will be extended to all bus shelters, bollards, signal boxes, mailboxes, pay phones, trash receptacles, newspaper stands, and vending carts which are both permanent and mobile. Pay phones, mail boxes, trash receptacles, and newspaper stands shall be located in the sidewalk zone adjacent to the curb, in line with street trees and light standards to reduce impediments to pedestrian flow and to avoid obscuring visibility into street level retail storefronts. (7/99, 7/03)

Secretary of Interior's Standards

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.

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