



The City of Seattle

Pioneer Square Preservation Board

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PSB 1821

Staff REPORT

For Board meeting March 17, 2021

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.

Briefing

- 031721.31** 119 Yesler Way: Korn Building
109 Yesler Way: Sanderson
111 Yesler Way: Padden Block/Bohemian Café
107 Occidental Way S: Walker Block/Frye Market
117 Occidental Way S: J&H Hotel/Star Theater
124 S. Washington St: Pacific House/Hotel Interurban
116 S. Washington St: Clancy Building
118 S. Washington St: Scandinavian Hotel

This proposed project encompasses the eight buildings on the half block that is bounded by Yesler Way to the north, Occidental Avenue to the east, South Washington Street to the south, and the alley to the west. The scope of this project includes preservation and rehabilitation of existing buildings, reconstruction of floors that were removed after the 1949 earthquake, and new construction in targeted areas. The work will include façade restoration, seismic retrofits, and upgrades for energy efficiency, accessibility, and life safety.

Staff report:

This project involves buildings that are historic contributing and historic non-contributing to the National Register so that should be taken into account when considering the project as well as the considerations of the building history and architectural significance to the local Pioneer Square Preservation District so that the work proposed is compatible individually and collectively.

The Board was last briefed on October 7, 2020. The Building at 117 Occidental Ave S is non-contributing to the National Register and proposed for demolition and new construction. After reviewing the historical information and photos the Board found that the building had been highly altered and supported demolition and

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The Seattle Department of Neighborhoods**

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replacement of the building. In this case the replacement building will be the connector and primary entrance for the upper floors. The Board thought the visible staircase created texture and interest to the structure's exterior appearance. The Board wanted to see more details on the materials and the base of the new construction replacement building.

The District Rules include a consideration for an exception for additions to replace missing stories. Three of the buildings have missing stories that are proposed to be rebuilt. Two of those buildings are historic contributing buildings to the National Register and one is a historic non-contributing building to the National Register. During the previous briefing the Board supported the rebuilt floors, appreciated the fenestrations of the rebuilt floors related to the existing building below. The Board wanted to see more detail on materials and setbacks and where the new meets the old. The Board asked for more pedestrian level renderings of the proposed projects.

Code Citations:

SMC 23.66.030 Certificates of Approval required

SMC 23.66.100 - Creation of district, legislative findings and purpose

A. During the City of Seattle's relatively brief history, it has had little time in which to develop areas of consistent historical or architectural character. It is recognized that the Pioneer Square area of Seattle contains many of these rare attributes and consequently is an area of great historical and cultural significance. ... To preserve, protect, and enhance the historic character of the Pioneer Square area and the buildings therein; to return unproductive structures to useful purposes; to attract visitors to the City; ... to stabilize existing housing, and encourage a variety of new and rehabilitated housing types for all income groups; 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.

SMC 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.

SMC 23.66.140 - Height

- A. Maximum Height. Maximum structure height is regulated by Section 23.49.178 Pioneer Square Mixed, structure height.
- C. Rooftop features and additions to structures
 4. Height limits for rooftop features
 - f. Residential and office penthouses
 - 1) Residential penthouses may cover a maximum of 50 percent of the total roof surface and may extend up to 8 feet above the roof if set back a minimum of 15 feet from the street property line, or 12 feet above the roof if set back a minimum of 30 feet from the street property line.
 - 2) Office penthouses are permitted only if the footprint of the existing structure is greater than 10,000 square feet and the structure is at least 60 feet in height. When permitted, office penthouses shall be set back a minimum of 15 feet from all property lines and may cover a maximum of 50 percent of the total roof surface. Office penthouses may extend up to 12 feet above the roof of the structure and shall be functionally integrated into the existing structure.
 - 3) The combined height of the structure and a residential penthouse or office penthouse, if permitted, shall not exceed the maximum height limit for that area of the District in which the structure is located.
- D. New Structures. When new structures are proposed in the District, the Preservation Board shall review the proposed height of the structure and make recommendations to the Department of Neighborhoods Director who may require design changes to assure reasonable protection of views from Kobe Terrace Park.

SMC 23.66.150 - Structure setbacks

- C. New structures or portions of structures located within Subarea C on Map C for 23.66.122 and 23.66.150 shall cover the full width of the lot along street lot lines and have street-facing facades that abut street lot lines for the full width of portions of a structure that are up to 100 feet in height. For structures that

exceed 100 feet in height, all portions that exceed 100 feet in height shall be set back at least 15 feet from street lot lines.

- D. For all Subareas, modifications to setback standards may be permitted by the Director of Neighborhoods following review and recommendation by the Preservation Board if the following criteria are met:
 - 1. A larger or smaller setback will be compatible with and not adversely affect the streetscape or publicly-owned open space; and
 - 2. A larger or smaller setback will be compatible with other design elements, such as bulk, size and profile, of the proposed building.

SMC 23.66.180 - Exterior building design.

To complement and enhance the historic character of the District and to retain the quality and continuity of existing buildings, the following requirements shall apply to exterior building design:

- A. **Materials.** Unless an alternative material is approved by the Department of Neighborhoods Director following Board review and recommendation, exterior building facades shall be brick, concrete tinted a subdued or earthen color, sandstone or similar stone facing material commonly used in the District. Aluminum, painted metal, wood and other materials may be used for signs, window and door sashes and trim, and for similar purposes when approved by the Department of Neighborhoods Director as compatible with adjacent or original uses, following Board review and recommendation.
- B. **Scale.** Exterior building facades shall be of a scale compatible with surrounding structures. Window proportions, floor height, cornice line, street elevations and other elements of the building facades shall relate to the scale of the buildings in the immediate area.
- C. **Awnings.** Awnings shall be functional, serving as weather protection for pedestrians at street level, and shall overhang the sidewalk a minimum of five feet (5'). Awnings may be permitted on upper floors for the purpose of climate control. All awnings shall be of a design compatible with the architecture of buildings in the area.

Pioneer Square Preservation District Rules

III. GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR REHABILITATION AND NEW CONSTRUCTION

In addition to the Pioneer Square Preservation District Ordinance and Rules, The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation with Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings, and the complete series of Historic Buildings Preservation Briefs developed by the National Park Service shall serve as guidelines for proposed exterior alterations and treatments, rehabilitation projects, and new construction. (7/99)

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.

New construction must be visually compatible with the predominant architectural styles, building materials and inherent historic character of the District. (7/99) Although new projects need not attempt to duplicate original facades, the design process ought to involve serious consideration of the typical historic building character and detail within the District.

The following architectural elements are typical throughout the District and will be used by the Board in the evaluation of requests for design approval:

- A. Site. The property line is the line of the building mass. Street facades are uniformly located at the front property lines, thus there is a strong street edge definition. Building cornices, bay windows and ornament project beyond the main wall surface of some facades.
- B. Design. Building design is generally typified by horizontal divisions which create distinctive base and cap levels. Facades may also be divided vertically by pilasters or wide piers which form repetitive window bays. Street facades are also distinguished by heavy terminal cornices and parapets, ornamental storefronts and entrance bays and repetitive window sizes and placement.
- C. Building materials. The most common facing materials are brick masonry and cut or rusticated sandstone, with limited use of terra cotta and tile. Wooden window sash, ornamental sheet metal, carved stone and wooden or cast iron storefronts are also typically used throughout the District. Synthetic stucco siding materials are generally not permitted. (7/99)
- D. 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)
- E. Building Base. Buildings are allowed a base of approximately 18-24 inches. Base materials should be concrete, sandstone, or granite, and may be poured, cut to fit or unit-paved. The color relationship between the sidewalk and building must be considered. Brick or tile materials should not be used except when existing walks are of the same material.

- F. Additions. Additional stories to existing buildings are discouraged unless they were original to the structure.

Secretary of Interior's Standards

1. A property will be used as it was historically or be given a new use that requires minimal change to its distinctive materials, features, spaces and spatial relationships.
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.
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.
7. Chemical or physical treatments, if appropriate, will be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials will not be used.

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.

[Preservation Brief 14 -New exterior Additions on historic buildings](#)

Designing a New Exterior Addition to a Historic Building

This guidance should be applied to help in designing a compatible new addition that that will meet the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation*:

- A new addition should be simple and unobtrusive in design, and should be distinguished from the historic building—a recessed connector can help to differentiate the new from the old.
- A new addition should not be highly visible from the public right of way; a rear or other secondary elevation is usually the best location for a new addition.
- The construction materials and the color of the new addition should be harmonious with the historic building materials.
- The new addition should be smaller than the historic building—it should be subordinate in both size and design to the historic building.

The same guidance should be applied when designing a compatible **rooftop** addition, plus the following:

- A rooftop addition is generally not appropriate for a one, two or three-story building—and often is not appropriate for taller buildings.
- A rooftop addition should be minimally visible.
- Generally, a rooftop addition must be set back at least one full bay from the primary elevation of the building, as well as from the other elevations if the building is freestanding or highly visible.
- Generally, a rooftop addition should not be more than one story in height.
- Generally, a rooftop addition is more likely to be compatible on a building that is adjacent to similarly-sized or taller buildings.

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