



The City of Seattle

## Pioneer Square Preservation Board

Mailing Address: PO Box 94649, Seattle WA 98124-4649

Street Address: 600 4th Avenue, 4th Floor

PSB 97/22

### Staff REPORT

for Board meeting June 1, 2022

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.

050422.31

#### **Nugent Building**

164 S Washington St

Installation of signage, and lighting, recover existing awning and installation of sidewalk café with furniture to be submitted for approval at a later time and paint above the awning

Staff report: The applicant was not in attendance at the meeting of May 4, so the Board reviewed the application documents to provide feedback so that alternatives could be provided at a future meeting.

The applicant presented the business owners preferred option of the two alternatives at the ARC meeting of May 25, 2022. The revised alternative removed the proposed strip lighting in the filled in window area above the awning. This plan covers the filled in area with a metal panel to hide the various pipes and conduits. Wall signage is applied to the metal panels. Goose neck lighting lights the signage. A valence is added to the recovered awning. The neon window signage, wall sign on the side of the building and café railing remains the same as previously proposed. ARC thought that this proposal works better for the building, and compatibility with the District.

Draft Motion: I move to recommend granting a Certificate of Approval for:

The Board directs staff to prepare a written recommendation of approval based on considering the application submittal and Board discussion at the *June 1, 2022* public meeting and forward this written recommendation to the Department of Neighborhoods Director.

Code Citations:

**Administered by The Historic Preservation Program  
The Seattle Department of Neighborhoods**

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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.

SMC 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.

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.

6. Projecting signs and neon signs may be recommended only if the Preservation Board determines that all other criteria for permitted signs have been met and that historic precedent, locational or visibility concerns of the business for which the signing is proposed warrant such signing.

### **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)

#### **XIII. SIDEWALK CAFES**

Sidewalk cafes may not impede the flow of pedestrian traffic. Movable structural elements that can be brought back against the building wall or elements that can be removed when not in use will generally be required if some structural element is necessary. No walls or roofs of any kind are permitted to enclose sidewalk cafes. Free-standing and table umbrellas are permitted, however, the Board may limit their number and placement to ensure compatibility with transparency and signage regulations. (7/03) Planter boxes are discouraged and will be permitted only in exceptional circumstances.

Materials for any structural elements on the sidewalk should be of durable, weatherproof, and vandal-proof quality. The Board will consider the compatibility of the color and design of structural elements with the building facade and the character of the District. The maximum allowable height of structural elements, including fencing, is 42". (7/03)

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

The Pioneer Square Preservation Ordinance reflects a policy to focus on structures, individually and collectively, so that they can be seen and appreciated. Sign proliferation or inconsistent paint colors, for example, are incompatible with this focus, and are expressly to be avoided. (8/93)

##### **A. Transparency Regulations**

1. To provide street level interest that enhances the pedestrian environment and promotes public safety, street level uses shall have highly visible linkages with the street. Windows at street level shall permit visibility into the business, and visibility shall not be obscured by tinting, frosting, etching, window coverings including but not limited to window film, draperies, shades, or screens, extensive signage, or other means. (8/93, 7/99, 7/03)

#### 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)

#### 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)
3. Projecting Elements (e.g. blade signs, banners, flags and awnings). There shall be a limit of one projecting element, e.g. a blade sign, banner, or awning per address. If a business chooses awnings for its projecting element, it may not also have a blade sign, flag, or banner, and no additional signage may be hung below awnings. (6/03) Exceptions may be made for businesses on corners, in which case one projecting element per facade may be permitted. (12/94)
4. Blade signs (signs hanging perpendicular to the building). Blade signs shall be installed below the intermediate cornice or second floor of the building, and in such a manner that they do not hide, damage, or obscure the

architectural elements of the building. Typically, non-illuminated blade signs will be limited to eight (8) square feet. (12/94)

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)

#### D. NEON SIGNS

1. The number of neon signs shall be limited to one for each 10 linear feet of business frontage for the first forty feet of business, and one for each additional 15 feet of frontage for businesses over forty feet. For a business that has transom windows beginning at ten (10) feet above the sidewalk, one additional neon sign to be located within the transom windows would be permitted for every 30 feet of frontage. Signs need not be spaced one per ten feet, but may be clustered, provided the maximum number of approved signs is not exceeded and the grouping does not obscure visibility into the business. Permitted neon signs may be located in transom windows, according to the guidelines contained in this section. (12/94)
3. No more than three colors, including neon tubes and any backing materials, shall be used on any neon sign. Transparent backing materials are preferred. Neon colors shall be subdued. (8/93, 7/03)

#### E. AWNINGS AND CANOPIES

Awnings and canopies are structures attached to buildings above storefront windows and entrances to provide weather protection. Awnings are light-weight structures constructed of metal framing with fabric or vinyl covering. Canopies are heavier, more permanent structures constructed of rigid materials such as metal or metal framing with glass. (7/99) Those buildings wishing to use awnings or canopies shall adhere to the following requirements:

1. Awnings shall be sloped, rather than bubble type. No writing may be placed on the sloping portion of the awning. (12/94) Scalloped or cut-out valances are not acceptable, nor are side panels. (8/93) Return of valances on awnings shall be permitted, but no signage of any kind shall be permitted on valance returns.
2. Shiny, high-gloss awning materials are not permitted. Retractable awnings of a through color are preferred, i.e., the underside is the same color as the exposed face. Awning colors shall be subdued to ensure compatibility with the character of the District. (7/03)
3. Canopies that are compatible in design, scale, materials, color, details, and method of attachment with the building and that do not display a false historical appearance are permitted. (7/03)

4. Awnings and canopies covering more than one story are not allowed. Distinctive architectural features shall not be covered, nor shall installation damage the structure.
5. Awnings and canopies must serve a functional purpose, and therefore shall project a minimum of five (5) feet horizontally. (7/03)
6. Internally illuminated awnings or canopies are not permitted. Neon is not allowed on awnings or canopies. (7/03)

Issued: May 19, 2022

Genna Nashem  
Pioneer Square Preservation Board Coordinator