



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 146/22

Staff REPORT

for Board meeting July 20, 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.

072022.22

1st and Columbia Garage

Julie Glen

721 1st Ave

Installation of antennae's and screening in two rooftop locations for Dish Wireless

Staff report: This application has not been reviewed at an ARC meeting. The parking garage was built in 1970. The existing staircase penthouse does not conform to the current code requirements for setbacks of stair penthouses. According to the drawings the front façade is set back 3 feet 5 inches at the location of the stairwell and stair penthouse. The current code would require a setback of 15 feet to 30 feet from the property line, depending on its height. The existing stair penthouse is built on the corner of the building in the 1st Ave façade of the building and prominently visible especially from Pioneer Park, 1st Ave and Cherry Street. The proposed equipment on the stair penthouse does not appear to be setback 15 feet from the property line as would be required under 23.66.140.4.d.4. There is a second location of proposed antennas is on top of a rooftop feature - penthouse located toward the center of the building set back 37 feet from the 1st Ave façade of the building and 68 feet from the Columbia façade of the building.

SMC 23.57.014 also regulates communication utilities and accessory devices. Because the equipment is proposed greater than 4 feet above the roof, section B. Administrative Conditional Use approval is required. While this section does not specify the setbacks required it specifies that they shall be sited in a manner that minimizes visibility from public streets and parks. It says that rooftop is the preferred location, set back toward the center of the roof as far as possible. Equipment shall be installed in a manner that does not hide, damage or obscure architectural elements of the building or structure. Visibility shall be further

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minimized by the less obtrusive means. Creation of false architectural features to obscure the device is discouraged.

The existing stair penthouse box extends 9 feet above the parapet at the corner of the building flush with the building facade. With the proposed antennas and screening it will extend 19 feet above the parapet. The Board can consider do they find that the screening creates a tower that changes the architecture of the building? Does the Board consider this a false architectural feature? Does the Board find the installation to be highly visible? Does the Board consider the 1st Ave S façade the primary façade? If so, would the Board want to see studies on alternatives without screening or with the screening set back from the front of the building to see if they are less obtrusive? Or are there other alternatives requested? Although not demonstrated, the applicant does provide some explanations of other options that were eliminated in the correction response letter included in the application. Does the information provided give enough information to determine that all alternatives would be visible on the stair penthouse? If the Board finds that the antennas and screening are not highly visible does the Board find that the proposed material matches the existing concrete?

For the consideration of the antenna on the rooftop penthouse in the center of the building are there is other information or alternatives needed?

The Board has previously approved antennas without screening in some cases where they thought the screening was more intrusive the antennas.

The applicant is aware that they can table the application if there are questions and concerns that they would like to address before the Board makes a decision.

Draft Motion 1: I move to recommend granting a Certificate of Approval for: Installation of antennas and screening as presented

The Board directs staff to prepare a written recommendation of approval based on considering the application submittal and Board discussion at the *April 20, 2022* public meeting and forward this written recommendation to the Department of Neighborhoods Director.

Draft Motion 2: I move to recommend granting a Certificate of Approval for: Installation of antennas and screening on the elevator penthouse in the center of the building. (only) as proposed or as amended.

The Board directs staff to prepare a written recommendation of approval based on considering the application submittal and Board discussion at the *April 20, 2022* public meeting and forward this written recommendation to the Department of Neighborhoods Director.

Draft Motion 3: I recommend denying a Certificate of Approval of installation of the antennas and screening on the stair penthouse because The proposed installation of

Antennas and screening does not comply with SMC 23.66.140 or SMC 23.57.014. in the following ways :

(Reasons that the Board discusses which might include...

Although the location is on the rooftop, the stair penthouse is a non-conforming rooftop feature which is located on the primary façade of the building. The proposed communication utility is not set back from the property line 30 feet. A modification to the set back is not granted because the feature is not minimally visible. The proposed location to add antennas and on this stair penthouse is already a prominent, highly visible location. The proposed screening increases the visual appearance of the height the non-conforming feature of the building and makes both the stair penthouse and the antenna and screening more visually prominent. The visual appearance of the increased height of the stair penthouse from the addition of the antennas and screening changes the appearance of the building by creating a tower that is out of proportion to the building and not compatible with the character of the district. The installation of the antennas and screening is highly visible from surrounding streets and parks.

The Board directs staff to prepare a written recommendation of approval based on considering the application submittal and Board discussion at the *April 20, 2022* 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.

SMC 23.66.140 - Height

4. Height limits for rooftop features

- d. The following rooftop features may extend up to 8 feet above the roof or maximum height limit, whichever is less, if they are set back a minimum of 15 feet from the street and 3 feet from an alley. They may extend up to 15 feet above the roof if set back a minimum of 30 feet from the street. A setback may not be required at common wall lines subject to review by the Preservation Board and approval by the Department of Neighborhoods Director. The combined coverage of the following listed rooftop features shall not exceed 15 percent of the roof area:
 - 1) solar collectors, excluding greenhouses;
 - 2) stair and elevator penthouses;
 - 3) mechanical equipment;

- 4) minor communication utilities and accessory communication devices, except that height is regulated according to the provisions of Section 23.57.014.

- h. See Section 23.57.014 for regulation of communication utilities and accessory devices.

SMC 23.57.014 Special review, historic and landmark districts

Communication utilities and accessory communication devices for which a Certificate of Approval may be required in IDR, PSM, IDM, PMM (see SMC [Chapter 25.24](#)) zones, the International Special Review District, the Pioneer Square Preservation District, and the Ballard Avenue (SMC [Chapter 25.16](#)), Columbia City (SMC [Chapter 25.20](#)) and Harvard-Belmont (SMC [Chapter 25.22](#)) Landmark Districts shall be sited in a manner that minimizes visibility from public streets and parks and may be permitted as follows:

A. Minor communication utilities and accessory communication devices may be permitted subject to the use provisions and development standards of the underlying zone and this chapter, with the following additional height allowance: communication utilities and devices may extend up to four (4) feet above a roof of the structure, regardless of zone height limit.

B. An Administrative Conditional Use approval shall be required for communication utilities and accessory devices regulated per [Section 23.57.002](#), and which do not meet the requirements of subsection A above. Any action under this section shall be subject to the Pioneer Square Preservation District and the International Special Review District review and approval and the Department of Neighborhoods Director; in the Ballard Avenue Landmark District by the Ballard Avenue Landmark District Board and the Department of Neighborhoods Director; in the Pike Place Market Historical District by the Pike Place Market Historical Commission, and in the Columbia City Landmark District and the Harvard-Belmont Landmark District by the Landmarks Preservation Board, according to the following criteria:

1. Location on rooftops is preferred, set back toward the center of the roof as far as possible. If a rooftop location is not feasible, communication utilities and accessory communication devices may be mounted on secondary building facades. Siting on primary building facades may be permitted only if the applicant shows it is impossible to site the devices on the roof or secondary facade. Determination of primary and secondary building facades will be made by the appropriate board or commission.

2. Communication utilities and accessory communication devices shall be installed in a manner that does not hide, damage or obscure architectural elements of the building or structure.

3. Visibility shall be further minimized by painting, screening, or other appropriate means, whichever is less obtrusive. Creation of false architectural features to obscure the device is discouraged.

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)

VIII. MECHANICAL SYSTEMS

The preferred location for mechanical systems is in the building interior. In cases where locating systems in the interior is not possible, exterior mechanical systems equipment, including but not limited to air conditioning units, compressors, boilers, generators, ductwork, louvers, wiring and pipes, shall be installed on non-primary building facades and/or roof tops. Mechanical equipment shall be installed in such a manner that character-defining features of the building are not radically changed, damaged, obscured, or destroyed. Screening and/or painting of equipment may be required to diminish negative visual impacts. (7/99)

Issued: July 14, 2022

Genna Nashem
Pioneer Square Preservation Board Coordinator