



The City of Seattle

International Special Review District

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ISRD 62/07

MINUTES FOR THE MEETING OF TUESDAY, April 10, 2007

Time: 4:30 p.m.
Place: Bush Asia Center
409 Maynard Avenue S.
Basement conference room

Board Members Present

Jerry Chihara
Robert Ha
Jan Johnson
Hoa Tang
Freeman Fong
Austen Chan

Staff

Rebecca Frestedt
Joanne Walby

Absent:

Amalia Gonzalez-Kahn

041007.1 BOARD BRIEFING

041007.11 Livable South Downtown planning study

Susan McLain and Gordon Clowers, land use planners with the Department of Planning and Development (DPD) briefed the Board on potential height increases that may occur as part of the Livable South Downtown rezone. Ms. McLain and Mr. Clowers were joined by temporary planner, Betsy Severtsen. The Board was last briefed on the project in the summer of 2006.

Ms. McLain clarified that the areas currently under rezone consideration fall outside of the National Register Historic District boundaries. She presented a map, outlining the boundaries of the land use study. Ms. McLain expected that the draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) will be complete by June 2007. The DEIS will

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include transportation analysis and a land use study. Ms. McLain asked for feedback from the Board following the scheduled presentation, which included 3-D images of possible rezone scenarios.

Mr. Clowers reviewed each of the four alternative height and zoning scenarios:

- Alternative 1 - Focused development towards the west, with heights in Japantown (or Nihonmachi), potentially up to 150' and 240', and Pioneer Square up to 120' and 180' in the zone adjacent to the railroad.
- Alternative 2 – Focused development towards the south and east into Little Saigon, which would be rezoned to Downtown Mixed Residential (DMR) uses, retaining heights in the commercial corridor at 65'-85'.
- Alternative 3 – This alternative would distribute balanced growth throughout the study area, with 180' height alternatives on 4th and 5th Avenues. Under this scenario Little Saigon would be zoned NC3 (Neighborhood commercial) with heights up to 85' and the area south of Dearborn would be rezoned to Seattle Downtown Mixed (SDM), to promote a mix of commercial and residential uses.
- Alternative 4 – The “no change” alternative, assuming 2030 growth under existing zoning.

[More information about the study and the four alternatives is available on the DPD website, http://www.seattle.gov/DPD/Planning/South_Downtown/Overview/]

Mr. Clowers said DPD studied projected downtown growth trends until the year 2030, which anticipates 6000 new residential units and 15,000 new jobs. He said this is twice as fast as the region has grown in the past 10 years, but it is in line with the predictions put forth by the Puget Sound Regional Council. Ms. McLain presented computerized 3-D images to show how the different alternatives would look, some including buildings that are already proposed to be built.

Questions: Mr. Chihara asked if the proposed height increase at 180' presented in one of the 3-D images takes into account the topographical changes. He suggested that the proposed buildings would actually appear higher than shown and asked if the 125' height would apply south of Lane Street. Ms. McLain clarified that this height increase would apply south of Weller Street in alternatives one and two.

Board Comments:

Ms. Johnson asked if the 150' height limit in Alternative 2 would apply to the vacant lot on 7th Avenue and Main Street and the lot adjacent to the Freeway. Mr. Clowers said yes. Ms. Johnson

recommended that this area west of 6th Avenue and Main Street include a commercial zone so that residents would not have to travel by car find retail shops and services.

Mr. Chihara suggested that there be a buffer between the historic core of the International District and taller new development and that low heights on Lane Street be maintained. Mr. Clowers said they have discussed having bulk controls limit the size of the towers to allow for a more “stepped” design. Mr. Chihara said he thought that would help.

Ms. Johnson commented that the stepping back of heights would be best to keep water views. Mr. Gordon suggested that this could apply on Washington Street.

Mr. Chihara asked how they would limit the bulk of 240’ tall buildings. Mr. Clowers said they might use floor coverage limits so that tall buildings get narrower as they get higher. He said they could also mandate 15’ setbacks at certain heights.

Betsy Severtsen followed by presenting a review of potential streetscape and urban design elements, which are elements included in the EIS study. Ms. Severtsen said she worked on the design as part of her thesis at the University of Washington. She provided an overview of the history of the area and land modifications since 1957. She described the historical connection between immigration and transit in this neighborhood and referenced the anticipated population growth in the area.

Ms. Severtsen described a possible urban design plan that includes artistic lighting proposals and creative street improvements. She said that new development could be more transparent, incorporating “throughways” and a design that would allow for spill out of pedestrians in the summer. She proposed a paving inlay on Jackson Street to mark the original tideland boundary. She said there could also be arrival and departure transportation kiosk with public art features. She proposed the addition of a lighting scheme that would incorporate Asian constellations to represent the lost skyline and provide additional lighting to public art.

Ms. Johnson said she liked the connection to the tideflat boundary, the artistic lighting and the increased transparency. Mr. Chihara agreed and suggested that Ms. Severtsen expand the lighting and transit hub design. Mr. Ha said he also liked the proposed lighting.

Ms. Johnson called the full Board meeting to order at 4:30pm

041007.2 APPROVAL OF MINUTES: March 13, 2007

Moved to approve the minutes as presented.
MM/SC/JC/FF 6:0:0 Minutes adopted.

041007.3 CERTIFICATES OF APPROVAL

041007.31 Jackson Building
600 S Jackson St.

Application:

The applicant proposed the following repairs and restorations to the exterior façade of the former Public Optical storefront: Removal of iron security bars from the windows on Jackson Street and 6th Avenue; removal of Public Optical sign and plywood backing to expose original leaded glass windows; removal of air conditioning unit above store entrance and replace with original glass frame; and, strip and paint window frames and soffit.

Restorations will include in-kind replacement of rotted soffit above the front entrance and replacement of broken window on 6th Ave.

Applicant Comment: Paul Murakami presented photographs of the bars on Jackson and said he wants to remove the air conditioning above the entrance and restore the window with an original glass frame to the 1933 condition. He proposed to repaint the frames a dark, warm brown color that would complement the paint color visible in the photograph he presented to the Board. He said the broken windows would be replaced in-kind and re-caulked pending the removal of the bars. They would also be treated with an armor-proof protective film. He said the safety glass can easily be removed and replaced.

Board Discussion:

The Board discussed the fact that the owner did not have a proposed paint color yet. The owner said the paint color would match the color shown in the photograph he presented. A Board member suggested that the Board approve the paint color as long as it would match the color in the photograph. Ms. Frestedt agreed to follow up with Mr. Murakami on the color selection. [*On 4/23/07 Mr. Murakami submitted a paint chip that meets the Board's specifications. Staff gave the color administrative approval, based on the Board's recommendations.*]

Action:

I move that the International Special Review District Board approve a Certificate of Approval for the exterior alterations, pending administrative approval of the paint color selection. This action is based on the following: Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation #5, #6.

MM/SC/FF/JC 6:0:0 Motion carried.

041007.32 New Star Restaurant
516 S Jackson St

Application: Retroactive approval for new window on Jackson Street façade.

Staff Report:

In December 2006 a window was installed in the south façade of the New Star Restaurant without Board approval. The location where the window was installed had previously been a blank wall. The project involved cutting into the exterior wall of the building and installing a hollow metal steel frame with a double-pane window. The window consists of a ¼” transparent inner panel and a ¼” semi-transparent external panel, with a ½” gap between the two panes. The total window width is 1”. The size is approximately 4’ x 10’, with the longer dimension on the horizontal.

Ms. Frestedt read a letter from the Mai Chu, owner of the New Star Restaurant. In it, Ms. Chu requests approval of the window in order to provide additional privacy and security to restaurant patrons.

Applicant Comment:

The application was presented by Claudette Zimmer from Glacier Building Management. Ms. Zimmer was presenting on behalf of the property owners who were unable to attend. She said the restaurant owner wanted mirrored glass that is reflective during the day but allows for some transparency and visibility at night. She said the restaurant owners were unaware of the ISRD rules prohibiting this type of window and that they want to be in compliance. She confirmed that before this restaurant moved into this space, the wall was blank and the window was added to give natural light.

Discussion: Mr. Chihara stated that had the application come before the Board before the work was done, the addition of a window may have been allowed, but the glazing could not be approved based on the guidelines. He commented that the current exterior façade was an in-fill done in the 1970s. Ms. Frestedt confirmed that wall was a later alteration. A discussion followed about signage. Ms. Frestedt said that she is working with the business to address recent signage changes and suggested that the Board focus on the issue of transparency, per the guidelines.

Mr. Fong agreed and stated that mirrored glass is not allowed, per the guidelines. He added that he believes the window size is too small and out of proportion with the building. He asked if the property owner would be amenable to changing the window. Ms. Zimmer said the property owner would consider other alternatives. Ms. Johnson added that she would like to

see a proposal for a replacement window with transparent glass and different framing.

Action:

I move that the Board approve the request to penetrate the Governor Building and install a window on the southwest corner, along the Jackson Street façade. This approval is *conditional upon the replacement of the existing mirrored glass and steel frame* with materials that are permitted under the ISRD Guidelines and meet the Secretary of the Interior Standards. The applicant must submit a replacement proposal by **April 30, 2007**.

This action is based on the following:

SMC 23.66.336 – Exterior Building Finishes;
Guideline II. Storefront and Building Design Guidelines; and
Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation #9 and #10.
MM/SC/JC/AC 6:0:0 Motion carried.

041007.33 NP Hotel Residential Apartments
308 6th Avenue S.

Proposed replacement of rooftop flag pole.
Application postponed.

041007.34 International District Community Center
701 8th Avenue S.

Application: Proposed change of use and façade alterations.

Staff Report: Ms. Frestedt said the applicant is proposing a change of use for the vacant storefront adjacent to the Community Center, from a retail space to a fitness room. The proposed work includes relocation of the entrance to the interior of the building and alterations to the exterior door, including removal of hardware (handle and lock mechanism). The mail drop slot would also be removed and replaced with a cover plate made of the same metal frame material. The proposal includes removal of the vinyl numbers above the doorway indicating the street address. Ms. Frestedt confirmed that the proposed use is permitted, per the guidelines.

Applicant Comment: Kelly Goold presented the application on behalf of the Seattle Parks Department, which currently owns the space. He said the space was originally proposed for commercial/retail use; however, the Parks Advisory Council received a grant to purchase and renovate the space into a fitness center.

Board Questions:

Dr. Chan asked if the fitness room would be open to the public. Mr. Goold confirmed that it would. Dr. Chan asked if there had previously been a fitness room in the building before. Mr. Goold said no, because the space was not originally designed as a community center. Mr. Fong asked if the exterior door was going to be removed. Mr. Goold confirmed that the door frame would remain intact. They are only proposing to remove the hardware.

Board Discussion:

The Board asked about the transparency of the floor to ceiling windows. Ms. Frestedt said that a film was proposed for the window but that is not part of the application at this time. Mr. Goold said they had not been aware of the transparency requirements.

Mr. Ha supported the application and said that, given the location and existing entry it would be hard to use the space for something else (such as retail). Mr. Chihara said he approves of the application and said the space is well suited to a fitness center.

Ms. Johnson departed at 5:30pm

Action:

I move that the International Special Review District Board approve an Certificate of Approval for the change of use and exterior alterations, as proposed. This action is based on the following:

SMC 23.66.326 – Street Level Uses

SMC 23.66.336 – Exterior Building Finishes

MM/SS/RH/JC 5:0:0 Motion carried.

Ms. Frestedt suggested the Board provide suggestions on how the owner could comply with transparency concerns. Mr. Goold expressed concern that some of their elderly clients may not be comfortable working out in areas visible from the sidewalk. Mr. Fong suggested they use portable privacy screens. Mr. Ha suggested they use screening materials that could be closed at night. Mr. Chihara said that having more “eyes on the street” could benefit the neighborhood as a whole and improve public safety. The applicant may submit an application for proposed window treatments or security measures.

Meeting adjourned at 5:52pm

Issued: April 24, 2007

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