



The City of Seattle

International Special Review District

Mailing Address: PO Box 94649, Seattle WA 98124-4649
Street Address: 600 4th Avenue, 4th Floor

ISRD 202/18

MINUTES FOR THE MEETING OF TUESDAY, October 9, 2018

Time: 4:30pm
Place: Bush Asia Center
409 Maynard Avenue S.
Basement meeting room

Board Members Present

Eliza Chan
Stephanie Hsie, Vice Chair
Sergio Legon-Talamoni
Tiernan Martin, Chair
Russ Williams

Staff

Rebecca Frestedt
Melinda Bloom

Absent

Chair Tiernan Martin called the meeting to order at 4:30 pm.

100918.1 APPROVAL OF MINUTES
July 10, 2018
MM/SC/EC/SH 5:0:0 Minutes approved.

100918.2 CERTIFICATES OF APPROVAL

100918.21 450 S. Main St. - KODA
Applicant: Yang Lee, KMD Architecture

Mr. Martin recused himself.

Ms. Frestedt explained the proposed Use and Preliminary Design of a 17-story mixed-use building consisting of 203 condominium units, ground floor commercial (approx. 5,750 sq ft) and three levels of underground parking (75 stalls). The applicant has given seven briefings to the Board since February 2017. The briefings took place on: Feb. 14, 2017; June 13, 2017; September 12, 2017; November 28, 2017; January 9, 2018; March 24, 2018;

and August 20, 2018. Ms. Frestedt distributed a detailed copy off the staff report, with a chronology of past meetings (see original in DON file).

She said there is one departure requested:

Departure #1: Overhead weather projection – SMC 23.49.018 & SMC 23.53.035

Proposal to reduce depth of canopy to 5' to allow space for street trees.

She said a review of a second departure related to **Rooftop Coverage and Screen Setback** will be deferred until review of the Final Design application.

Applicant Comment:

Applicants presented via PowerPoint; for detail, see DON file.

Yang Lee, KMD Architects, provided an overview of the project, development objectives, site and zoning analysis, sun and shadow studies, street perspectives, and departure requests.

Jason McCleary, KMD, summarized departures.

Mr. Lee continued to go over massing and use and building perspectives.

Mr. McCleary said that the development includes 203 condo units with amenity space on roof top, interior, and outdoor. He went over ground floor plans and said that one live-work unit, one small and two large retail spaces are planned; retail spaces will connect via ramp for ADA. There is a small building lobby, mail center, storage, dog run, space for loading, and mechanical space. He said a security guard / concierge will be on site 24/7; retail, which has not yet been identified, will likely function 7:00 am – 7:00 pm and then the lobby will be locked and accessed via key card only. He said the garage access for 75 stalls is off the alley. Parking garage is two levels; the building is over the bus tunnel, so they can go down only three levels. He went over interior programming as it relates to exterior design including residential units, gym conference room/library, green roof.

Mr. Lee continued presenting detail on elevations, fenestration and setbacks.

Ms. Frestedt noted that the Board had previously requested an arborist report providing detail on the removal of Cherry trees. She asked the team to present findings of the report.

Mr. Lee went over arborist report by City Arborist and said the 10 Cherry trees are not heritage trees and there is no requirement to save them. He said they were planted in 1970 when the parking lot was built and they are not very healthy. He said they plan to imprint cherry blossoms into the canopy to preserve the memory of the trees.

Ms. Hsie reminded all parties that the ISRD Board does not have jurisdiction over affordability.

Public Comment:

Leslie Morishita, InterIm CDA, read from a written statement, the text of which follows below:

“For 50 years, InterIm CDA has led the struggle to preserve and protect the people and culture of the International District, especially on behalf of its low income limited English-speaking immigrants and refugees who built the neighborhood and are its heart, its soul, and its backbone. InterIm was instrumental in establishing the ISRD Board whose purpose is, to “promote, preserve and perpetuate the cultural, economic, historical, and otherwise beneficial qualities of the area...”.

We have the utmost respect for our ISRD board members who give of their own time and talents to carry out this purpose. With today’s onslaught of speculative high-rise developments in the neighborhood, this review process has become very frustrating. Our biggest concerns with profit driven developments like KODA, have less to do with massing, scale, and design expression (not to say these aren’t troubling), and more to do with development that does not advance equity for our community. We believe that equitable development outcomes begin with equitable community engagement processes in which the community and community interests are grounded in the project. While this project has been in front of the ISRD board numerous times, we feel that it still does not address community concerns such as: 1. Advancing economic opportunity for small community serving and immigrant owned businesses; 2. Preventing residential, commercial and cultural displacement; 3. Honoring and supporting local & cultural assets; 4. Promoting health and safety.

KODA has not committed to supporting small community-serving businesses or community-based agencies. This project does not provide any affordable housing that this community needs, nor does it provide affordable commercial space. This project does not respect local community character, cultural diversity, or values - it does not strengthen existing networks or social cohesion. Lastly, this project has not committed to providing a public space that is truly accessible to the community - any provision in terms of access is completely up to the future condo association board.

We want to expand the purview of the ISRD review process to include equitable development principles and criteria, so we can have meaningful consideration here about those things that matter most to InterIm, and we look forward to working with our City officials on this.

Further, while we don’t believe that one glass high rise of luxury condos will doom the neighborhood, there are numerous similar projects in the works and we are gravely concerned about the cumulative impacts of these projects –Impacts not just on the physical character of the neighborhood, but on who will be able to live here, and on the neighborhood fabric woven from networks of social, cultural, and economic relationships that help our community members to thrive. Therefore, we also want to expand the purview of the ISRD review process to consider the cumulative impacts of specific types of projects. Lastly, we want to see the City of Seattle’s own Racial Equity Toolkit applied to the policies that shape the ISRD Board and process.

InterIm was founded to preserve and protect the people and culture of the ID. Therefore, we must oppose the KODA development, for reasons utterly outside the purview of the ISRD review process but very much at the heart of why InterIm exists at all.”

Midori Liu asked if community gardens will be included on rooftop.

Mr. Lee said the green roof is a requirement by the City; the specific use will be up to the home owners' association (HOA).

Cynthia Brothers said she echoed and underscored Ms. Morishita's comments. She said there is a lot of concern, there is no affordable housing and this development contributes to the gentrification to a community already in danger. She said there is no commitment to including small businesses. She said the International District has the least public green space in the City; she asked if there will be rooftop accessibility to public. She said the traffic study was 5-6 years old and didn't take into consideration future development, streetcar, pedestrian safety. She asked if there is an updated study. She said the mass, scale and design show no respect for the historic character of the neighborhood. She was opposed and said the design is not responsive to the needs of the existing community.

Gee Chan, who identified herself as a longtime community volunteer, agreed. She said that while she is not opposed to development, KODA developers have shown no interest in blending in with the community. She said she received a mailer advertising the development and there was nothing in the ad about the district. She said they are appealing to people not in the district and asked them to rethink that. She said they are not marketing to the existing community and she doesn't see how the project will serve the community.

James Lee, resident, agreed. He requested an updated traffic study. He said the illustration doesn't recognize 27-story building at Jackson and 5th and implications for traffic. He asked if that will be addressed.

Ms. Hsie asked the applicants to respond to the questions about the traffic study.

Mr. Lee, KMD, said the report used the most updated data for this city. They hired traffic consultant Heffron to do the study. He said, from the beginning they wanted a more widened sidewalk but SDOT required they provide provisions for bike lane on S. Main St. He said they have no control over City requirements.

Ms. Frestedt said SDOT hasn't provided details or briefings about the bike lanes yet. She said she would contact SDOT to request information.

Mr. Lee said they can't speak to the proposed Jackson & 5th project as it is not on the map yet.

Board questions: There were no further Board questions.

Board discussion:

Height/Bulk/Scale

Ms. Hsie noted that the massing and bulk not changed much since the beginning, but have been refined. She cited SMC 23.66.602 and noted this will be the first building of this height in the district. She said they were successful in delineating the first 5-6 story street wall and setting it apart from above. She said to continue to think about how to blend in with the neighborhood. She said it helps that the massing has been simplified. She noted

the decision to use glass and said she hopes it will fade away and look less heavy. She said they paid attention to the ground floor and thought about activation.

Ms. Chan noted concern about the corner and asked if it will be residential, lobby, or retail.

Mr. McCleary said it is just retail now.

Mr. Legon-Talamoni echoed Ms. Hsie's comments. He said the strategy for delineating the lower portion of the building from the top is an improvement and relates to Hirabayashi Place; it is holding the datum line. He noted the subtle moves in articulation to break down bulkiness. He said the use of more transparent materials above makes it seem lighter, less bulky, less solid. He said the ground floor use meets the goals and objectives of the district – commercial retail at ground level.

Mr. Williams agreed with his colleagues. He was interested in material selection for skin to soften the skyline.

Ms. Hsie asked them to define retail, what it looks like inside, outside, and how it is accessed. She asked them what the lobby will look like 24/7. She said the board seemed to have no issue with the canopy departure and rooftop.

Ms. Frestedt recommended deferment of Departure 2 until questions are resolved.

Ms. Hsie said she appreciated the willingness of the applicant to look at the first 5-6 levels and the approach to soften the top. She said it will look lighter. She noted the punched openings as they move up the building and reiterated that it is an opportunity to reconnect back to the district.

Mr. Williams said that there is opportunity in material selection to transition between downtown core and ID.

Mr. Legon-Talamoni said that now is a good time to introduce place-making elements. Fine details and refinements give identity to district. The Cherry tree blossoms are a nice element; introduce more strategies.

Ms. Chan said she appreciates comments about carrying the datum. That's the only connection she sees.

Ms. Frestedt said that the Board will consider the proposed use for three retail spaces as part of this application; specific tenants will need to come before board for approval.

Action: I move that the International Special Review District Board recommend approval of a Certificate of Approval for Preliminary Design and Use at 450 S. Main St.

The ISRD Board supports the proposed departure #1, as detailed about and in their presentation materials. The approval of departure #1 will result in a canopy depth consistent with others in the District.

The Board directs staff to prepare a written recommendation of approval, based on consideration of the application submittal and Board discussion at the October 9, 2018

public meeting, and forward this written recommendation to the Department of Neighborhoods Director.

This application does not include: Exterior building materials, colors and finishes, exterior lighting, construction details, exterior mechanical equipment on the face or rooftop, rooftop mechanical screening, right-of-way improvements or a building sign plan.

As a *condition of approval*, the applicant will submit an application for a Certificate of Approval for Final Design details.

This action is based on the **following applicable sections of the International Special Review District Ordinance:**

SMC 23.66.030 - Certificates of approval - Application, review and appeals

SMC 23.66.302 – International Special Review District goals and objectives

SMC 23.66.306 – International District Residential (IDR) Zone goals and objectives

SMC 23.66.320 - Permitted uses

SMC 23.66.332 – Height

SMC 23.66.336 – Exterior building finishes

General Requirements. To retain and enhance the visual order of the District, which is created by existing older buildings that provide unique character and form through their subtle detailing and quarter-block and half-block coverage, new development, including exterior remodeling, should respect the architectural and structural integrity of the building in which the work is undertaken, through sympathetic use of colors, material and style. 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 existing buildings in the immediate area.

SMC 23.66.342 – Parking and access

Secretary of the Interior Standards

#9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.

MM/SC/SLT/EC 4:0:0 Motion carried.

100918.3 BOARD BRIEFING

100918.31 450 S. Main St. - KODA
Following the presentation on Preliminary Design and Use the Board received an informational briefing on Final Design details, including, but not limited to materials/colors/finishes and landscaping.

Yang Lee, KMD Architects, presented via PowerPoint (detailed report in DON file). He provided photos which he said show the visual order in Nihonmachi; he commented on the 1900s industrial character of the buildings and noted the Addison, Panama Hotel, NP Hotel, HTK and Kubota buildings. He noted tones of grey and brick, simple window mullion lines, clear canopy with steel expression. He indicated the visual order with Hirabayashi Place and noted window proportions, floor to floor height and elevation. He said the base will be fiber cement panel and they propose a more solid material, Equitone, floors 2-6. He said the punched window expression aligns with many buildings in the district.

Jason McCleary, KMD, said two tones of glass will break down the bulk in some portions of the building.

Mr. Lee went over images of the elevations. He said the two tones of glass will create a pattern inspired by a Japanese tea house. He said they explored the visual order of Nihonmachi Square and searched for an aesthetic value and how to present it. He said the Cherry tree is significant in Japanese culture and they plan to use Cherry blossoms on canopy to remember the trees on the site which will be cut down.

Mr. McCleary said they wanted to plant more Cherry trees and the City wouldn't allow it as the Cherry is not on their list of acceptable trees. He said the perforated cherry blossoms on canopy will be backlit. He said a Gingko tree was approved by the City. He said both elements together along with some wood elements at the entry will emphasize connection.

Mr. Lee said that they spoke with Sonny Nguyen, SCIDPDA, and Barb Biondo, Crime Prevention Team (CPT) Officer with SPD, about safety issues and were advised to put lighting at sidewalk, have visibility from front desk, encourage activation, improve alley, reduce recessed doorway. Both said lighting is the most important. He went over how they will implement lighting and said there will be no lighting on the north elevation because of future development. On the 5th Avenue S. side columns will be lit; lobby corner will be transparent and brightly lit.

The landscape architect went over proposed landscaping and said there is a power utility duct bank below so they will utilize planter boxes for plants and trees. She identified proposed tree species – Gingkoes on Main Street and Tupelos on 5th at grade. She said the trees were required by SDOT. She said they were selected for seasonal qualities, but safety was considered as well. She said on the upper level deck they will put in a garden and planting space, green roof with low plantings and taller ones behind that. The library is a viewing garden and there will be a Cherry tree there. The roof is a green roof and mostly low-level landscaping is planned there; there will be usable space for tenants.

Signage

Mr. McCleary said there will be entry signage and retail signage will be part of a separate application.

Ms. Frestedt said that with three or more tenants it is advisable to adopt a sign plan.

Public Comment:

Don Liu, resident, said it looks good but noted they didn't mention Japanese landscape.

Rie Shintani, InterIm asked about use of corner space.

Mr. Lee said that retail is shown. On the interior space they show the possibility of retail because it is not rented out yet. He said to look at the image and said they envision a juicery-type business there. He said there is the possibility to have smaller retail on either corner or a small coffee type shop.

Ms. Shintani said their promotional material is not clear about who they're marketing to

James Lee, resident, said having the lobby be public open space was well-intended but impractical. He said people wouldn't be thrilled to have it open to unwanted activities; it sounds good but, in this neighborhood, it doesn't make sense.

Cynthia Brothers asked what would invite elders to come in and use the space.

Mr. Lee said that Hing Hay park has to have regular power washing because of negative activities happening there.

Nina Wallace, said she was speaking as an individual and that she works at Densho, said they are legitimate concerns. She said that affordable housing is needed, not everyone can afford to live inside. She noted the lack of green space at the ground floor and said she wanted to see more. She wanted to see an acknowledgement of the history and ongoing history of Japanese who are still a part of the community.

Dalen Summer, works at the Wing Luke Museum, noted the lack of response to history of the neighborhood in the presentation. He asked how many Japanese Americans were involved in design process, were consulted, or will live in the building? This proposal had nothing to do with Japanese American history or incarceration and shows a lack of respect.

Board Discussion:

Ms. Chan asked if retail spaces would have planned outdoor seating.

Mr. McCleary said there is limited frontage on the sidewalk and planting width. He said there is no chance of outdoor seating. He said early on they had outdoor garden in front and were told that retail was most important.

Ms. Chan asked if the raised planters at the entry could double as seating.

The landscape architect said it would be a challenge, but they will look at it.

Ms. Chan asked if they will include interpretive language about the Cherry blossom on canopy and why it's important to history. She asked about activation at night.

Mr. Lee said they could provide text or a plaque.

Mr. McCleary said there are 203 units, there will be dog walking (he noted a lack of dog ownership now in rented apartments), there will be a 24-hour concierge who will have direct visibility.

Mr. Lee said the cherry blossom lights will light under the canopy and the building will be a destination for the neighborhood to see the lighting. He said the lighting consultant advised they can change the color of the lighting as desired.

Ms. Chan asked if all retail spaces are accessible from exterior.

Mr. McCleary said they are.

Mr. Legon-Talamoni asked the thickness of the canopy material.

Mr. Lee said there are two types: thin steel plate over 5th Avenue opening and the one on Main has I-beam inside covered by steel plate.

Mr. Legon-Talamoni was concerned about material choice at pedestrian level. He appreciated the tie back to industrial, but the cladding seems a bit cold and harsh. He asked if other options were explored. He asked if wood at pedestrian level could be explored.

Mr. Lee showed a sample of the proposed wood and said it has been treated with vinegar and guaranteed to last 25 years. He said it is what they propose for exterior elements.

Ms. Frestedt asked for information on the Equotone cladding.

Mr. Lee said this is an alternative to brick. He said it is a higher quality cladding and can be installed up to 17 stories. He said the elevator core will have a fluted texture and the elsewhere on the building will be smooth. He went over material at the tower level, streetscape, and signage

Mr. Williams said at the pedestrian level there is opportunity to have transition between downtown community to low rise community, to meet both worlds. He encouraged outreach to community in a manner to foster and develop trust in the project in the ID and in future projects.

Ms. Hsie agreed. She said the bones are there. It is a modern experience of industrial style. She appreciated the use of Equotone and noted it is a better-quality material. She cited SMC 23.66.302. She had no problem with cherry blossom and noted it reference trees that used to be there. She encouraged to approach every access with lens of welcoming people of Asian descent here. She said the 5' spacing on the storefront design is generic and they have an opportunity to do something unique. She said it is great they are using a warmer material like wood at the entry but said she didn't understand the entry and how it works. She said it looks like the wood piece is a barrier because people have to go around it. She asked to explore seating there.

Ms. Chan suggested exploration of seating not designed for sleeping.

Mr. McCleary noted challenges with grade.

Mr. Hsie asked if there is an opportunity for landscaping in the flat area.

Mr. McCleary said it is yet to be defined.

Mr. Williams left at 6:35 pm.

Ms. Hsie asked about live-work unit access.

Mr. McCleary said they may not do the build out until it is purchased to let the owner determine how to use the space.

Ms. Hsie noted opportunity to extend cherry blossoms further.

Mr. Lee said it might conflict with entry where there are many things happening.

Ms. Hsie said it is worth looking at. It seems minimal and if you are doing the gesture, do it all the way. She said they could do lovely column wraps with same strategy.

Mr. Legon-Talamoni agreed and said to continue all the way through. He said maybe only part is lit and another part is an impression. He wondered if light could be projected on the sidewalk.

Ms. Hsie asked proposed storefront color.

Mr. Lee said charcoal; only the canopy will be black.

Mr. Legon-Talamoni asked about signage strategy and said that could inform canopy.

Mr. Lee said they are working with signage consultant.

Ms. Hsie said to come back with profile of canopy when they come back with signage.

Mr. Legon-Talamoni asked if there is different opacity of glass in podium as well. He said it is a nice strategy to tie into teahouse typology.

Ms. Hsie asked the meaning of KODA.

Mr. Lee said a Japanese tree or rice field.

Ms. Hsie encouraged them to think about signage and think carefully about the font and the use of Japanese characters that correspond.

Landscape

Ms. Hsie noted the great comments by the public. She said she supported the proposed use of Gingko. She said there should be more influence by Japanese gardens and landscaping. She said the sculptural stone piece should be influenced by Japanese aesthetic as well.

Mr. Legon-Talamoni said to be mindful of ratio of landscape to transparency. He said to explore strategies to help person feel invited in, especially to elders walking by.

Lighting

Ms. Chan noted safety and suggested retail that stays open later to add activation.

Mr. McCleary said the larger space could be a restaurant which could be open until 1:00 am.

Ms. Hsie said that lots of beverage places stay open later.

Midori Liu, resident, said she doesn't feel safe walking in the area at night. She said lighting is good.

Ms. Hsie said to continue with lighting plan, sight lines.

Mr. Legon-Talamoni said to scale figures and suggested adding diversity in renderings.

Ms. Frestedt said there has been lots of feedback. She said another briefing is appropriate. She said public comment was heard that should inform the response.

Ms. Hsie said to show glass type and expression at podium; show where joint lines are at podium tower and how they are expressed with Equitone; do refinements on horizontals on storefront design; explore entry lobby and why the use of wood there; see plan and elevation for corner retail; rendering with scale, demographics; corner retail and now landscape, canopy all tie together; canopy, art proposed, extent and details; sign plan; lighting plan; seating where possible.

Mr. Legon-Talamoni said to explore influence of Japanese landscaping

Ms. Hsie noted Nihonmachi – great art installation using rigorous Japanese American patterns, youth and hope, recognition of past. The mural at gardens is a great example – explore that. Recognize what happened in the district, but that there is a lot of hope. Want to see community thrive. Community outreach is positive.

100918.4 BOARD BUSINESS

Ms. Frestedt said ISRD election is November 20, 2018 and nominations are accepted until October 23, 2018. She said the mayor selected two appointees one of which is no longer viable due to job change.

Adjourn

Rebecca Frestedt, Board Coordinator
206-684-0226
rebecca.frestedt@seattle.gov