



The City of Seattle

International Special Review District

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ISRD 104/22

MINUTES FOR THE MEETING OF TUESDAY, July 26, 2022

Time: 4:30pm

Place: Remote Meeting

Board Members Present

Lizzy Baskerville
Nella Kwan
Michael Le
Andy Yip
Ming Zhang

Staff

Rebecca Frestedt
Melinda Bloom

Interpreters

Hai Le
Barry Do

Absent

Ryan Gilbert
Adrian Lam

Chair Andy Yip called the meeting to order at 4:30 pm.

072622.1 PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

072622.2 BOARD BRIEFING

1237 S. Jackson St.

Applicant: Julian Weber, JW Architects

Briefing on Design and Use proposal for new construction of a six-story mixed-use development. The project will include approximately 84 apartments, ground floor retail and approximately 34 parking stalls. The proposal includes demolition of a single-story commercial building. This briefing will provide an update on the building massing, design and right-of-way improvements.

Julian Weber, JW Architects provided history of the site noting its use as market and then series of retail uses. He said the building was constructed in 1926 and has undergone alterations. He said here wasn't objection to demolition at the last briefing. He provided

context of the site noting several different building typologies and the construction of several new buildings in the last few years. The neighborhood is starting to change to 5, 6, 7-story mixed use or residential buildings. He said a one-story building would stand between this development and the new park. He mentioned that they're working with Friends of Little Saigon on community outreach, which revealed a desire for amenities and referenced safety concerns.

Mr. Weber said the new development will include parking and commercial space. He provided images of inspiration – Vietnamese tube houses, screening and patterns, variety and texture. He said three massing options were presented and, with input from board and client, they developed Option 4. He said the alley is one floor below Jackson which is good for locating all utilities. He said outdoor space was requested and they created articulated balconies to define space on Jackson and southern façades. He said there would be common outdoor space on the roof looking north. He said that basement level would be alley-accessed for 34 parking spots for residential and commercial and utilities. He said at first floor Jackson frontage will run full width of project and he noted the residential lobby. Floors 2-5 are typical residential and floor 6 is common amenity with indoor and outdoor space and a solar-ready area.

Mr. Weber went through renderings and noted the one-story commercial base with dividers at columns to break up retail space. Awnings at 9' allows for venting above if needed with clerestory above. He proposed to set up a dynamic and flexible community space. He said an entry element will clearly define entry using the language of the decks above and the language continues to the back of the building. He said a variety of signage exists throughout the neighborhood – awning-hung, awning top, vinyl decals, wall-mounted at entries. He proposed use of partition walls to create flexible tenant space at retail space with square footage from 318 square feet up to 2,290 square feet. He said three recessed entries are proposed and there could be up to 6 and he noted space for outdoor seating or outdoor produce.

Mr. Weber explained departure requests to support 14' offset, due to powerlines. He went through massing options and showed the elevation of the design. There was a discussion about a one or two-story commercial base and the location of residential entrance. He noted the preferred alternative allows much more flexibility in division/unification of commercial spaces. He said the project interacts with the surrounding neighborhood blocks and meets the draft ISRD guidelines: response to context, public realm, building orientation, parking and support services; public life, open space, storefront design, signage, safety and security, and lighting; building design – new buildings, character areas – public life and building design.

Ms. Frestedt noted that this portion of the ISRD boundary expanded in 2018 and that some adjacent development cited in this project has been permitted prior to that, not subject to ISRD Board review.

Ms. Baskerville appreciated that the team took board comments into consideration. She supported the preferred design and agreed that the one-story commercial as rendered. She asked about property north of this site.

Mr. Weber said it is a 45' wide building between site and park that eventually could be developed. He said they have set back 10' from that property line.

Mr. Yip asked the number of commercial versus residential parking space.

Mr. Weber said parking is not required but they are having a discussion with the owner about it. He said he was happy to hear direction from the board.

Mr. Yip said including parking is very helpful to small businesses. He supported the one-floor commercial, retail flexibility, and second floor balcony. He asked how many residential units on second floor have direct access.

There was discussion about the departure request, noting that the cost of having to relocated utilities underground.

Katie Luedeman said the light rail runs in front. She noted the balconies are away from the property line.

Mr. Yip said he supported the departure.

Mr. Zhang said he wanted to see a massing alternative that meets the Code, without departure. He supported the first floor commercial. He said that Jackson is a Class I Pedestrian Street and he wanted the building close to street.

Ms. Baskerville said a departure allows an amenity deck and she noted it allows for more eyes on the street and better public safety. She suggested adding plantings.

Mr. Zhang noted that the deck could be covered to create more consistency with 2nd story. He said he supported the tube house concept.

Mr. Yip said more greenery and more eyes on the street are good and suggested removing amenity space on second floor to minimize departure request.

Mr. Weber said the powerline runs at an angle to the site and altering design may not be doable.

Mr. Zhang asked to compare one-story versus two-story base to be compatible with adjacent buildings.

Mr. Weber said it is a 45' building and he noted the interim view to the park.

Mr. Zhang suggested Juliet balcony on west and north sides.

Mr. Weber said they will look at what is possible from a code standpoint.

Ms. Frestedt asked board members if there was interest in further exploration in code compliant treatment for second floor.

Mr. Zhang concurred and said if they do two stories, they won't need it. He said balconies on the west side are more interesting. He suggested taking advantage of roof top.

Mr. Weber said there is some indoor common space, covered outdoor on northeast and uncovered on southeast; he said he would present in more detail next time.

Mr. Zhang asked why they would switch up outdoor space because they could gain more units on floor 6.

Mr. Weber said it has been scaled to a nice usable space for building occupants who will want some covered and uncovered space for a more livable feel.

Mr. Le asked if they had thought about two-story commercial space and asked what the materials and window strategy would be if both floors were not retail.

Mr. Weber explained that the entry and retail strategy are group together. He said the way it is set up now provides flexibility of retail spaces with retail sharing a bathroom. He said the upper core is organized similarly and the residential hallways are similar.

Ms. Kwan asked what is to the left of the building.

Mr. Weber said it is a one-story commercial building and then a part. He said to the south is tofu factory and Victorian Row Apartments. He said they are built up close to maximize eyes on the street and visibility in other directions.

M. Kwan said the L-shape layout in alley behind ends at this lot.

Mr. Weber said this lot needs to provide truck turnaround and the dead-end street allows that.

Mr. Yip said the south side with view of Mt. Rainier has area solar-ready. He said the Little Saigon Park is being built and there is a decline going that way.

Ms. Kwan said it is more for safety and an easy way to see something happening in the alley.

Mr. Weber said there will be balconies looking down into alley. He said the neighboring building has windows overlooking the alley.

Ms. Baskerville asked if the south façade was left blank in anticipation of future new development. She said there are opportunities to activate that wall and add interest.

Ms. Baskerville asked if a future home for Saigon Deli has been discussed.

Mr. Weber said they would be welcomed back in. He said they are working with business owners to find alternative space while construction is going on.

Mr. Zhang said the retail space is 13' feet and is on a major street. He encouraged to have that space as tall as possible.

Mr. Weber said they would study that but that most retail spaces are 8-9' tall; Pho Bac is taller.

Mr. Yip said whatever they do would be setting precedence for future development.

Mr. Weber said they will explore it. He said he appreciated the direction they have been provided and will have some more alternates.

Ms. Frestedt said a follow up briefing would be valuable. She noted Mr. Zhang's question regarding retail-level treatment. She said board would need materials samples, landscape review, and building signage plan. She it would be helpful for board members to understand the depth of the residential entry as it relates to safety factors and the perforated projecting element.

072622.3 STAFF SUMMARY and BOARD BUSINESS

Ms. Frestedt summarized administrative approvals granted. She said briefing requests have been received and the board will continue to hear updates on new construction.

Ms. Baskerville asked if there were any Sound Transit updates.

Ms. Frestedt said not at the moment, but something should be posted later this week. She said Historic South Downtown has regular updates on their blog and listserv and she would forward that to the board. She said if board members comment they may do so as an individual and not on behalf of the board.

Mr. Zhang said the Board is a voice for the community.

Ms. Frestedt said the Board may benefit from discussions with Sound Transit and she would reach out to set up discussion.

Mr. Zhang said it is important to discuss and the Boards' voice should be heard.

Ms. Baskerville said the next meeting is this Thursday at Union Station.

Adjourn

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