



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 4/23

**MINUTES** for Wednesday, January 4, 2023

**Board Members**

Maureen Elenga  
Sage Kim  
Karl Mueller  
Jose Lorenzo-Torres  
Maggie Sean  
Steven Sparks  
Henry Watson

**Staff**

Genna Nashem  
Melinda Bloom

**Absent**

Kianoush Curran  
Lindsay Pflugrath

Chair Maureen Elenga called the meeting to order at 9:04 a.m.

**Roll Call**

**010423.1 PUBLIC COMMENT**

**010423.2 APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

September 21, 2022

MM/SC/HW/KM 5:0:1 Minutes approved. Ms. Sean abstained.

October 5, 2022

MM/SC/KM/SS 5:0:1 Minutes approved. Ms. Sean abstained.

*Mr. Lorenzo-Torres joined the meeting at 9:09 am.*

**010423.3 APPLICATIONS FOR CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL**

**010423.31 Drexel Building  
Rojo's Mexican Food  
217 James St**

Installation of signage  
Paint storefront

Daniel Pena proposed painting the storefront and added vinyl lettering to windows and letters in the sign band. He said that raised letters will be attached to steel backing in signband. He said no lighting is proposed.

Ms. Elenga said the storefront is already painted and adjacent storefronts are painted as well. She noted that two letters exceed 10" which is an exception allowed with a reduced sign package.

Mr. Mueller asked what the exception means.

Ms. Elenga said the idea is to avoid signage proliferation in district.

Staff report: Ms. Nashem said this is a storefront that has already been painted. This would be changing the color. The signage requests an exception to the letter height for one letter at 16 inches and one at 12 inches with the remaining 4 at 10 inches. Also to allow the signage in the sign band to extend beyond the sign band frame to be consistent with the company logo, which is the name on a curve. The storefront next door has a sign on a background that is larger than the sign band. However, the guidelines do say that the individual letters are preferred.

Staff did ask if the applicant had considered alternatives to the location of the signage so that the "Rojo's" was not over the straight sign band, but the applicant chose to stick with their original proposal. Granting an exception calls for a reduced sign package, in this case there is just the one larger sign on the sign band, a door sign with hours and the one window sign. The application includes repainting the storefront Cool Rain. The Secretary of Interior Standards do not recommend painting unpainted brick, but this brick has been painted previously along with three other storefronts on the James frontage of the building. The other colors are red, gold and white. She said there has been a desire for more color in the neighborhood – there has been a lot of black proposed. She said there have been two demonstration projects at the Florentine and Merrill Place buildings that have intentionally brought more color to the storefronts. She said those colors were thought to be consistent with historical color palette yet are still colorful and coordinate with each other.

*Ms. Pflugrath joined the meeting at 9:17 am.*

Mr. Lorenzo-Torres said to make sure that lettering is within limit.

Ms. Kim said the proposed color is consistent with other colors and should look fine.

Ms. Elenga said to avoid colors not available in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. She said the proposed color works with the neighboring red storefront.

Ms. Pflugrath said her office is near and the block could use extra color. She noted the proposed color works well.

Mr. Mueller said what is proposed looks good and brings color and vitality to the block. He said it is not historic or a direction the neighborhood wants to go in. He noted reservation about future direction with color.

Ms. Elenga said it is a small storefront and has already been painted so an exception is OK unlike unpainted brick.

Action: I move to recommend granting a Certificate of Approval for: Installation of signage (as proposed or if amended, specify the amendment) Including allowing one letter larger than 12 inches. Painting the storefront Cool Rain.

The Board directs staff to prepare a written recommendation of approval based on considering the application submittal and Board discussion at the *January 4, 2023* 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.

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.

### **Pioneer Square Preservation District Rules**

III. GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR REHABILITATION AND NEW CONSTRUCTION  
The following architectural elements are typical throughout the District and will be used by the Board in the evaluation of requests for design approval:

- 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)

### **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)

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)

Sign Materials: Wood or wood products are the preferred materials for rigid hanging and projecting (blade) signs and individual signage letters applied to building facades. (7/99)

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)

2. Sign bands. A sign band is an area located on some buildings in the zone above storefront windows and below second floor windows designed to display signage. (7/99) Letter size in sign bands shall be permitted to a maximum of 12 inches. Letters shall be painted or applied and shall not be neon. (12/94)

MM/SC/LP/KM            8:0:0    Motion carried.

**010423.32**

**Libby Building**  
**Evergreens**  
**106 1<sup>st</sup> Ave S**

Installation of a pickup window in a nonoriginal storefront  
Installation of an awning over the pickup window with signage

Henry Walters, Atelier Drome said the business site has been closed for months and they are ready to open. He proposed installation of a walkup window with awning for 'pick up' of online orders. He walked through the package and noted context of storefront and identified the window to be replaced. He said the business has an existing blade sign. He proposed installation of a sliding window to the non-original wood storefront system. He said he was unable to find a wood slider so proposed a painted fiberglass to match existing paint. He said the existing glass panel would be removed. The existing transom window will remain but will be covered by black awning with white letters; awning will be screwed into existing storefront. He said the work is easily reversible.

Ms. Elenga said it is a new way to do business post Covid and noted it is reversible. She asked how it would function and if there would be queuing on the sidewalk.

Angela Tam said there is precedent for queuing on sidewalk and she noted that all orders would be placed online and picked up at window.

Mr. Sparks asked if the proposed window is fiberglass.

Mr. Walters said it is economical and paintable. He said there is no affordable completely wood slider.

Mr. Mueller said there is already queuing on the sidewalk and the sidewalk handles the volume easily and he saw no concern.

Mr. Sparks asked if color would match existing windows.

Mr. Walters said it would.

Mr. Mueller said adjacent storefronts have walkup sliding windows as precedent. He said it is not the worst modification with only the glass being changed.

Ms. Pflugrath noted the in-person adaptation to Covid restrictions and said she preferred a professional remedy rather than what some had during the pandemic.

Staff report: Ms. Nashem explained the Department of Neighborhood records indicate that the storefront system was replaced during a 1980's remodel so though the storefronts are compatible, they are not original. The Board might want to consider some condition such as that the existing window be salvaged and stored for replacement of the pickup window and that if the pickup window is no longer in use or that if the tenant leaves that the window be reinstalled. This would not preclude a new tenant from applying to keep the window installed. If the Board thinks the pickup window is acceptable for a permanent condition regardless of the use in the space, then a condition is not necessary.

Mr. Mueller asked if awnings were historic.

Ms. Elenga said awnings are consistent with the period of significance. She said they typically are over the whole storefront and are allowed.

Ms. Nashem said the original application only extended 4'; code says 5'. She asked if board members wanted to match other awning on block for consistency or comply with code.

Mr. Mueller said there is no need to enforce consistency. He said variation is within parameters and are not too inconsistent.

Ms. Kim asked about placement of the slider.

Mr. Walters explained that 36" high is needed from the surface of the sill. He said the top is infill centered in window. He said they if they eliminate that, a larger slider would be an unwieldy proportion.

Ms. Tam said the window can be set forward or back and is consistent with existing.

Ms. Sean asked if the transom is visible.

Mr. Walters said yes.

Ms. Kim asked if the applicant thought about maintaining clear glazing below the pickup window instead of solid panels.

Mr. Walters said the sill of the window is at 36" and there might be a table inside of which they would not want a view of the underside. He said a full height slider is not workable and they still need the 36" sill.

Ms. Tam said there are ADA considerations as well.

Mr. Lorenzo-Torres said there is no need to salvage the glass as the system is non-original.

Ms. Elenga agreed and noted it is not historical material.

Action: I move to recommend granting a Certificate of Approval for: Installation of a pickup window as proposed and installation of an awning above the pickup window with signage "pick up."

The Board directs staff to prepare a written recommendation of approval based on considering the application submittal and Board discussion at the *January 4, 2023* public meeting and forward this written recommendation to the Department of Neighborhoods Director.

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SMC 23.66.180 - Exterior building design.

- C. Awnings. Awnings shall be functional, serving as weather protection for pedestrians at street level, and shall overhang the sidewalk a minimum of five feet (5'). Awnings may be permitted on upper floors for the purpose of climate control. All awnings shall be of a design compatible with the architecture of buildings in the area.

### **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)

Rehabilitation is defined as the act or process of making possible a compatible use for a property through repair, alterations, and additions while preserving those portions or features which convey its historical, cultural, or architectural values. (7/99) In considering rehabilitation projects, what is critical is the stabilization of significant historical detailing, respect for the original architectural style, and compatibility of scale and materials.

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#### 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)

#### Secretary of Interior's Standards

6. Deteriorated historic features will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture and, where possible,

materials. Replacement of missing features will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.

9. New additions, exterior alterations or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work will be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.
10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be taken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

MM/SC/KM/SK            8:0:0    Motion carried.

**010423.4        BOARD BUSINESS**

**010423.5        REPORT OF THE CHAIR:**

**010423.6        STAFF REPORT:** Genna Nashem  
Administrative Review report  
Ms. Nashem went over administrative approvals.  
She said she is working on tour of the Metropole site.

Genna Nashem  
Pioneer Square Preservation Board Coordinator  
206.684.0227