



The City of Seattle

Pioneer Square Preservation Board

Mailing Address: PO Box 94649, Seattle WA 98124-4649
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PSB 25/22

MINUTES for Wednesday March 2, 2022

Board Members

Lynda Collie
Kianoush Curran
Maureen Elenga
Lauren Kush
Jose Lorenzo-Torres
Lindsay Pflugrath
Alex Rolluda, Chair

Staff

Genna Nashem
Melinda Bloom

Chair Alex Rolluda called the meeting to order at 9:03 a.m.

In-person attendance is currently prohibited per Washington State Governor's Proclamation No. 20-28.5. Meeting participation is limited to access by the WebEx meeting link or the telephone call-in line provided on agenda.

Roll Call

030222.1 PUBLIC COMMENT

030222.2 Briefing

030222.2 3rd and Yesler Safety Improvements

3rd and Yesler

Proposed alterations to the public right of way including a pilot study for sidewalk widening

Louisa Miller, SDOT went over site and context of work. She said that the site has been a high collision location for the last three years for pedestrians. She said that shortening crossing distances and expanding turn restrictions are recommended. A traffic analysis

was done and showed that 3rd Avenue could be reduced on northbound lane north of Yesler and would be a net benefit to transit. She said per Metro any increase in delay or queuing resulting from reducing Prefontaine and 3rd Avenue to one northbound lane is offset by the improvements gained from being able to adjust the signal operations with the revised channelization.

Ms. Miller noted other projects in the neighborhood included the 4th Avenue protected bike lane which involved removing some parking on Dilling Way and Yesler Way; Low Income Housing Institute apartment building sidewalk repair was cost prohibitive due to areaways but other pedestrian infrastructure is intended here; King County Civic Master Plan which proposes to develop a strategic roadmap for improvements to County facilities and public spaces over the next 25 years and, courthouse vicinity improvement effort in response to safety and sanitation issues around the KC courthouse. Prefontaine Place S. sidewalk repair is on hold to participate in the Alliance for Pioneer Square Framework Plan.

Scope of this project includes:

- Road re-channelization of 3rd and Prefontaine Place, remove 1 NB lane
- Expand sidewalk space with curb extensions on 3rdAve to alleviate space constraints (especially on west sidewalk)
- Close Dilling Way to vehicles
- Realign bike crossing and add crossbike markings
- New curb bulbs, crosswalk, and back-in angle parking on 3rdAve S
- New pedestrian crossing islands on Yesler
- Bus stop on Yesler shifted further east

She noted risk of overhead bus wires.

Ms. Miller went over proposed schedule: Phase 1, the pilot period involves temporary paint and posts for channelization as shown on image; Phase 2: interim period, if pilot approved, replace all temporary markings with final channelization markings or pilot not approved, replace temporary markings on 3rd Avenue S and on Yesler only. She said phases 3 and 4 are dependent on budget: add crossbike markings, bike signal heads, remove northwest corner pedestrian island; construct curb bulb at 3rd Avenue S / Yesler and any concrete work needed to close Dilling Way to vehicular traffic; if pilot not approved, install a modified curb bulb at the northwest corner of 3rd Ave / Yesler. Phase 4 would include any remaining scope improvements that were not able to be built by crews in previous phases.

Ms. Collie appreciated the presentation and said that any improvement that can be done in this area is fantastic. She said 3rd Avenue has heavy transit and asked what impacts might be to busses.

Ms. Miller said 3rd will still be a major traffic corridor. She said it will widen out to four lanes once past Jefferson.

Ms. Kush asked how diverted traffic will impact other streets.

Ms. Miller said it is one lane northbound for just a half block. Signal time will be optimized to keep things moving. Closure of Dilling Street will not have a large impact to neighboring streets as it is currently closed off.

Ms. Curran asked if there are plans to activate City Hall Park; she noted safety and usability issues.

Ms. Miller said it is not part of this project.

Gabriel Seo said this project focus is safety, with better connection between park and station and to support overall streetscape. He said sidewalk space will be increased to further improve.

Ms. Nashem said the NW Framework Plan will address safety and activation and she will set up a briefing.

030222.3 BOARD BUSINESS

030222.31 Worksession

Discussion of revisions to Design Guidelines

Signs

Mr. Owens:

Ms. Nashem: Noted the Board needs to consider Code requirements, and what code says is required for an application as well as what is needed to determine if an application complies with the guidelines such as photos of existing conditions, size of the sign, location and attachments. She noted that sometime a business will apply for additional signs and not all at once.

Mr. Owens: if new building or recent renovation, package provides location of potential signs with new tenant having detail on size and attachment.

Ms. Elenga: Thought that individual sign request should include other signs on building for context.

Ms. Nashem: Agreed context is important. The reason for an existing photo is to understand the totality of how many signs there will be and determine if there becomes over proliferation of signs especially if there is not a sign plan for the entire building that is being followed.

Ms. Curran: encourage applicants to apply for all signage at once so they do not need to come back for more.

Ms. Nashem: Ideally but noted that experience is that some businesses apply for minimal signage at first – a small investment and then add signs as they understand their businesses' needs. An approved building sign plan could be easier for administrative review for consistency with the approved sign plan.

Upper Story Signage, Window Signs

Ms. Elenga: need correction on bubbled areas on page 5 – sandwich board, medallion.

Mr. Owens: will correct.

Mr. Lorenzo-Torres: suggested not crossing lines on graphics.

Mr. Owens: noted.

Blade Sign – 8' limit

Ms. Nashem: Noted that existing guidelines are max of 6' for neon and 8" or non-illuminated, this proposal makes both 8'.

Mr. Owens: is that enough?

Awning Sign

Ms. Elenga: 10" awning letters rationale based on what?

Mr. Owens: based on size of typical awning valance.

Window Signage

Ms. Nashem: Noted a need for an uncomplicated way to figure transparency.

Mr. Owens: Suggested counting the area around imagery is simpler. Encourage logo, graphics more than lettering.

Ms. Elenga: Keep as simple as possible.

Ms. Nashem: Cited Flora and Henri as example of lots of transparency though graphic was used. Noted band at bottom of window in many businesses; noted Good Bar with no additional window signage.

Mr. Lorenzo-Torres: Third Culture – large logo and band. Could discount below 30% for what on top of that.

Ms. Nashem: Noted Good Bar has solid band with 'Happy Hour' displayed in band; Zeitgeist Coffee has 'coffee' at bottom.

Mr. Owens: Diagram and photos to help show notion of lower band. And asked about neon signs.

Ms. Nashem: Noted Bail Bonds signage that complied with the number of neon signs in the existing rules but because of amount of signs and size of sign other have thought it was over proliferation of signs.

Mr. Owens: limit to neon signs??

Mr. Owens: Having neon count as part of coverage would make it easier to calculate.

Mr. Owens: neon wiring, connections, quality rather than number and size of sign. Be clearer when looking at proposal. In general signage – not cover or obscure architectural features, windows.

Mr. Lorenzo-Torres: could reference reason why not allowed – not obscure architectural features, windows.

Wall Signs

Ms. Nashem: The Board has previously noted while reviewing applications that the larger the sign is, the more difficult it is for the sign to be compatible, and the more distracting it is to district and building. How do we get more compatible design and size, Use photos??

Ms. Collie: Murals, is it a sign? Is it art?

Ms. Nashem: Murals that are art and not signage should be addressed in another section to be clear there is a difference. For the large non-conforming sign that is the entire side of a building, the Board has asked them to breakdown size of sign to appear smaller, make it simpler, make it more muted.

Ms. Collie: noted that a new sign is up – not reviewed by board. She said it stands out, may or not be appropriate. They stretch a lot.

Ms. Nashem: Our wall sign guidance would apply to all wall signs. How to help provide guidance to make larger sign more compatible.

Ms. Elenga: Suggested something to scale it to.

Ms. Curran: Said she can't think of others as large and egregious as that one.

Ms. Nashem: go by Code. Guidelines are to help review. Applicants have said it should not have to be reviewed because there are no guidelines to review against.

Mr. Lorenzo-Torres: seeing it across whole building – it even has lighting.

Ms. Collie: color palettes might help.

Ms. Nashem: said non-illuminated, color must be compatible with character of district - Whether muted, or blend with background. More ideas?

Mr. Lorenzo-Torres: see another on street there is a cigar company ghost sign.

Ms. Nashem: Said that is an original sign now ghost sign. While signs used to be painted on, now they use frame with vinyl copy. Board thought that it was more protective of the building than being constantly painted.

Ms. Collie: Suggested compatible palette to neighboring buildings. Product, service, must be sold on site.

Ms. Nashem: Agreed on premise signage is required in the code and has to apply to all signs.

Mr. Owens: will add verbiage. Only on premise signage. Color – board should determine what compatible means. Add sentence about larger sign. Must not use vibrant colors.

Ms. Elenga: no neon or fluorescent colors, shades; earth tones and compatible with materials of building, subject to approval by board.

Ms. Curran: sign shall not be obtrusive – to help guide discussion – in relation to surrounding signs.

Mr. Owens: viii – asked about paint on a backing rather than on the building.

Ms. Nashem: paint is not good for brick; it is discouraged. If already painted, might consider it painted sign fit in with character better than a backing.

Canopies

Ms. Nashem: 200 Occidental, 450 Alaskan Way, 74 Jackson are new building with signage allowed to hang from the canopy.

Mr. Owens: Recommend that it break up longer canopy, adds color and light to building façade.

Ms. Nashem: Noted that existing guidelines say that signs should not hang from awnings. Awnings are often thought of something that is already applied to the building where canopies are permanent built on to the building. Awnings can have sign applied to the valance.

Mr. Owens: Said he will use photos so it is clear.

Lettering

Ms. Collie: Suggested there should be a border around lettering in a sign.

Mr. Lorenzo-Torres: Letter size depends on size of canopy.

Mr. Owens: new buildings have thin profile canopy with lettering floating above or extended beyond. Is this OK for new building but not historic buildings? Should we make distinction between contemporary and historic?

Mr. Lorenzo-Torres: Union Stables – canopy is contemporary on historic building. 200 Occidental has a sign band but none of the signs are within that. Must be clear to establish rule.

Mr. Owens: Suggested is it a historic District so the requirement for new and existing buildings could be the same.

Mr. Treffers: Noted that new canopies are sometime added to historic building. Have recommended having consistent guidelines across board.

Existing Building

Ms. Nashem: Prefers Additions to be at the end of this section and more common alterations at the beginning. She recommended using a photo of a building that was not removed from 'contributing' status because of an addition.

Mr. Lorenzo-Torres: Asked about additions and penthouses.

Ms. Nashem: Preservation Brief 14 talks about what is allowed so as not to detract from original building. Existing guidelines as say that additions are discouraged, unless the proposal is to add back missing floors. The Code says that penthouses can be allowed at certain heights and setbacks. A penthouse compliant with the code would be compatible on most buildings. The change proposed here is to allow compatible additions on non-contributing buildings.

Mr. Owens: Asked about windows?

Ms. Nashem: Suggested adding photos of storefronts with original storefront windows.

Mr. Owens: Said some contemporary canopies may be appropriate on some building but not others.

Ms. Nashem: Suggested to show what is wanted rather than what is not for example if retractable awning is preferred for historic district, then show a photo of that.

Mr. Owens: Suggest that we show a photo of a preferred gate as well.

Ms. Nashem: Said there is a nice gate at space between Maynard Building and Butler Garage.

Ms. Pflugrath: gate should be designed so that accumulation of trans and debris is prevented.

Mr. Owens: what about roll up gates. Less obtrusive when up; new building can require them. Roll down gate for any location?

Ms. Nashem: Noted the example photo provided is not compliant with existing rules. Past project discussions have asked for something that allows transparency, allow visibility to see business and architectural features of the building. Gates at storefront doors are usually open when the business is open but still visible.

Mr. Owens: Will add provisions to require gates be opened during business hours.

Ms. Nashem: Yes but here, a residence with gates also. She recalled a previous application that took an architectural detail from building and incorporated into gate.

Mr. Owens: Gates that look and operate like a door made of ornamental iron work, not scissor type are preferred.

New Buildings

New buildings – Preservation Brief 14 – apply as applicable for a new to the new building added to the District (block)

030222.5 **REPORT OF THE CHAIR:** Alex Rolluda, Chair

030222.6 **STAFF REPORT:** Genna Nashem

Ms. Nashem: next guidelines work session March 30, 2022.

Adjourn 11:04 am.

Genna Nashem
Pioneer Square Preservation Board Coordinator
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