



The City of Seattle

International Special Review District

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ISRD 53/19

MINUTES FOR THE MEETING OF TUESDAY March 12, 2019

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

Board Members Present

Stephanie Hsie, Chair
Yuko Kunugi
Tim Lee
Sergio Legon-Talamoni
Russ Williams

Staff

Rebecca Frestedt
Melinda Bloom

Absent

Andy Yip

Chair Stephanie Hsie called the meeting to order at 4:30 pm.

031219.1 APPROVAL OF MINUTES
Meetings of October 8, 2018 and October 22, 2018
Deferred.

031219.2 CERTIFICATES OF APPROVAL

031219.21 621 S. Jackson St. – Bush Hotel
Applicant: Tom Johnson, Taec (on behalf of T-Mobile)

Ms. Frestedt explained the proposed installation of minor communication utility equipment, and the proposed establishment of a minor communication utility (for T-Mobile) on the roof, consisting of six (6) antennas and related equipment, to be installed on the rooftop. The Bush Hotel was constructed 1915. It is a contributing building located within the Asian Design Character District. SDCI determined that this project is SEPA exempt. This application is a revision of an earlier proposal, which would have placed large enclosed antennas on the four corners of the roof, near the parapet. Ms. Frestedt said the proposed revisions significantly reduce the visual impact of the earlier proposal.

Applicant Comment:

Tom Johnson, TAEC explained the work is driven by need to fill coverage gap. He noted it is a new site that will provide new coverage, upgraded service and e-911 network services. He said they have done a few iterations and propose six antennas on elevator penthouse; they will not be visible from the ground – only from above. He said some equipment will be on raised section of roof floor so the building owner can access beneath for maintenance. He said existing HVAC equipment is not painted. The plan showed all equipment.

Ms. Hsie said the mounted equipment on penthouse is partially visible but noted the ground ones are barely visible.

Mr. Johnson said the parapet obscures view although the tips of the antennae may show. He said they will paint to match the color of the building, an orange-yellow.

Ms. Kunugi suggested painting the equipment the color of the sky – light grey – to help them disappear.

Mr. Johnson said they've found that color jumps out and the building color will hide them better.

Public Comment: There was no public comment.

Board Discussion:

Ms. Frestedt said that where there is other similar equipment it has been painted to match existing to blend in. She said the exception was on equipment on faux-brick finish penthouse.

Mr. Legon-Talamoni appreciated the location adjustment. He wanted to point out what a difference options 1 & 2 would have been. He said he would have been less inclined to support those options.

Mr. Johnson thanked staff for the help in discussion options.

Mr. Williams arrived at 4:45 PM.

Ms. Hsie said it is helpful to know why the equipment is going up. She said it is straightforward.

Action: I move that the International Special Review District Board recommend approval of a Certificate of Approval for use and exterior alterations at 621 S. Jackson St.

The Board directs staff to prepare a written recommendation of approval, based on consideration of the application submittal and Board discussion at the March 12, 2019 public meeting, and forward this written recommendation to the Department of Neighborhoods Director.

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

SMC 23.66.302 – International Special Review District goals and objectives

SMC 23.66.320- Permitted Uses

SMC 23.66.332 – Height and Rooftop Features

SMC 23.66.336 – Exterior building finishes

- A. **General Requirements.**
- B. **Asian Design Character District.**
 - 1. Materials.
 - 2. Colors.
 - 3. Surfaces.

Secretary of the Interior’s Standards #9 & #10

MM/SC/SLT/TL 4:0:1 Motion carried. Mr. Williams abstained.

031219.3 BOARD BRIEFING

031219.31 Pedestrian wayfinding briefing
Presenter: Aditi Kambuj, SDOT

Briefing on proposed new wayfinding system.

Aditi Kambuj, SDOT, presented; handouts in DON file. She explained they are at the end of concept design stage for proposed wayfinding signage and she provided context for the Jackson Hub and Imagine Downtown (formerly “One Center City”). She said graphics and maps included in this presentation are conceptual and not resolved designs. They are meant to elicit feedback on direction in order to inform detail design approach. The project design phase deadline is June 2019. She said the pilot projects will be implemented later in 2019-2020. She said they are looking for feedback on our approaches to distinctiveness and how to balance contextualization with legibility and standardization of information standards to meet the pedestrian’s needs - legibility, predictability, reliability. Decision making and outreach is grounded in end-user input and inter-agency coordination. Advisory committee represents several different private and public organizations with a stake in pedestrian wayfinding. Presentation is built on input and feedback from end users, stakeholders, advisory committee members. She went over the outreach done to date and the coordination with Metro and Sound Transit.

Ms. Kambuj said the system is built around four pillars: modal integration, systemization, design for all, and local distinctiveness. She said the approach they are taking is map-based because research shows these systems are most successful at encouraging walking. This assumption together with the concept of seamlessness, creates the need to share consistent standards for graphic language, messaging and content and the location of information along journeys. Map-based projects also presume a central system for producing and updating detailed walking-scale maps across the different uses they are put to including signs, print and digital media.

Ms. Kambuj said the broader sign family has been further developed in order to define the information elements that will be included in the system. The core pedestrian system

comprises map-based sign types and directional signs. The overview sign provides a first point of contact at stations, transit hubs and other major arrival points in the city. Nudge signs allow for binary decision making, providing simple directional information. Tactile panels are included with nudge signs but can also be implemented as stand-alone signs at intersections. The sidewalk medallion gives qualitative information about specific routes and highlights easier / less steep alternative routes to specific destinations.

She said making cut-throughs and shortcuts through buildings clear is an important part of the system. These will be supported on the previously mentioned signs but will also have to be clearly marked on street to allow for a frictionless journey. The route marker will allow people to see where the entrances are for these shortcuts, while the route description would give more detailed information about the specific route/shortcut they're about to use. It could include basic mapping showing the route through the building, as well as information about the suitability for people with disabilities.

Ms. Kambuj went over individual sign elements and types:

Transit signs – Signs integrated in transit environments are providing onward journey mapping within existing transit infrastructure. The intention would be that these maps will use the same base information as that used on the core pedestrian system, but the focus could shift slightly more towards transit specific information for example including more detailed service information, local bus stops in the vicinity, bus bay information.

Overview map - Overview of the city core, highlighting the diverse neighborhoods and that Seattle is more than just the downtown core

Finder map - Detailed local view of streets and destinations in close vicinity to the user.

Planner map- Works in conjunction with the finder map, providing context, and using a similar overview scale as the overview map.

She explained the family of signs types: Overview sign, Area sign, Site specific/Interpretive signs, Nudge signs and Sidewalk medallions.

She said traditionally maps are north oriented. However, aligning the orientation of the map with the orientation of the user works well with detailed local mapping. Based on those principles, our recommendation is to use north up mapping for the overview map which occurs on the overview sign. For the area sign we recommend heads up orientation for both planner and finder maps.

Ms. Kambuj said they want to be opportunistic about sign locations and reduce the overall sign clutter where possible. From a scalability point of view the city system product will ideally be the foundation that can be adapted for use by other third parties in future.

Gabriel Sayo, SDOT, said they are exploring ways to make the signs distinctive, while not detracting from the character of the area where they are installed. The same approach can be used in terms of graphic system elements, where mapping can be common across a range of different applications. City generated base mapping, with consistent naming and information hierarchies can be shared and adapted/customized for used within transit information for example, or for areas such as parks. The level of adaptability is still to be defined exactly but the use of core elements such as mapping including consistent naming

will start to create connected information for users, whilst still allowing for individual branding and ownership.

The Jackson Hub pilot will provide an opportunity to test how the wayfinding system responds to:

- A location served by multiple transit modes including regional, national and international services
- A site with level changes and a busy road network
- A character area with a distinct identity
- An area where multiple languages are spoken

Board questions:

Ms. Hsie said she appreciated the presentation and that the Board was informed early on rather than as an afterthought.

Mr. Sayo said they are thinking on the local distinctiveness part – how to integrate into the district in an elegant, robust, yet subtle way without detracting from it.

Ms. Kambuj said they will take the best practices of what has been done and carry those forward. She said they plan another round of community workshops and open houses.

Board members recommended a focus on local distinctiveness rather than what is happening elsewhere.

Mr. Legon-Talamoni said he gravitated to the modular option and said to take cues from historic district for allowable materials. He said “preferred materials” will integrate subtly to root them in the district. He said he also liked the sculptural aspect of the shapely option and suggested further exploration.

Ms. Hsie agreed and said the modular option makes sense. She encouraged SDOT to think carefully about where the large signs will go to complement existing signs/features in the neighborhood. She said there are lots of bold colors and look to complement colors here. She said that different languages in the district are an opportunity to provide indicator of local distinctiveness. She recommended putting it in front of the community.

Ms. Kunugi said there are many strong signs, shapes, and designs in the neighborhood.

Ms. Hsie said comments from Pioneer Square board focused on having a high-quality product, sign be subtle and not detract from the built environment, be durable, and that there be no proliferation.

Ms. Frestedt said there was a lot of emphasis on quality; the board did not want quality sacrificed and noted the importance of sustainability of signage over time.

Mr. Lee said noted that graffiti is a problem here.

Ms. Kambuj said that one of the design considerations is maintenance and durability. She said they will work out a maintenance system.

Mr. Legon-Talamoni appreciated the different scales of maps. He said to pay attention to information conveyed at different scales as you zoom in. He said to take advantage of being more than wayfinding and to address safety with emergency buttons, cameras. He suggested thinking about how the signage could serve beyond wayfinding. He said signage should be recognizable and in a predictable location. He encouraged SDOT to consider lighting and public safety if there is a “phase II” of the program. He said they could become more than just wayfinding.

Public Comment:

Robert Lohman, resident, asked how they will gather information about local distinction and how they will customize.

Ms. Kambuj said they will start with Citywide workshops to gain community input and will then go to boards. She said they won’t be able to solve all problems, but the litmus test will be with the end user (pedestrians). She said evaluation will be done through observational studies; from that they will form final design standards.

Ms. Frestedt said from past experience there has been lots of discussion about which language, which side of the street, and where. She said it will be critical to get buy in from the community so there is acceptance of program as a whole. She said it is early on, so it is useful.

Ms. Kambuj said they will build on decision-making that has already happened.

Ms. Frestedt said in past application there have been strong opinions from the community about which cultural places and where highlighted on which maps in district, so getting input from community is important.

Ms. Kambuj said they will define rules for information that goes on map and will ground that in the end-user experience. She said they will define decision-making and criteria used. She said that the system used in London has been able to navigate with landmark districts.

Mr. Sayo said it is about the end user and ways to bring people in.

Ms. Kambuj said it is a pilot so if the map isn’t functional, it can be upgraded.

Mr. Legon-Talamoni said communicating distance via parameter of time is good.

Ms. Kambuj said grade is important too. She said they will use graphics to show the gradient of slope and direction of slope for wheelchair users.

Ms. Kunugi said there is lots of useful information on the map. She asked how that will be maintained, updated.

Ms. Kambuj said one criterion is utilizing the stuff that doesn’t change: infrastructure, landmarks. She said they are in pilot phase and will build a case for what works and a plan for maintenance and updating. She said an entire set of maps will change with the convention center and waterfront projects.

Ms. Kunugi asked how they will show construction closures especially for wheelchair users.

Ms. Kambuj said there will be a route planner for pedestrians, wheelchairs that will perhaps tie in to permits. She said they will come back in April or May.

031219.4 BOARD BUSINESS

Ms. Frestedt reminded board members about FIS statements and the Race, Power of Illusion training.

Adjourn 6:00 pm.

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