



The City of Seattle

## Pioneer Square Preservation Board

Mailing Address: PO Box 94649, Seattle WA 98124-4649  
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PSB 102/20

**MINUTES** for Wednesday, August 5, 2020

### Board Members

Lynda Collie  
Audrey Hoyt  
Olivia Price  
Felicia Salcedo

### Staff

Genna Nashem  
Melinda Bloom

### Absent

Kianoush Curran  
Alise Kuwahara Day  
Brendan Donckers  
Alex Rolluda, Chair

Olivia Price called the meeting to order at 9:06 a.m. There was no quorum; a quorum is not necessary to hear a briefing.

**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.**

**080520.1      APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** none

**080520.2      PUBLIC COMMENT**

Jeff Murdock, Historic Seattle, said he appreciated being able to review plans prior to meeting. He said he reviewed the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation #9 and #10 and Preservation Brief 14. He said it was not appropriate to add 1, 2, or 3 stories and that penthouse should be set back one full bay. He said the buildings are the cornerstone of the district. He said the height of the addition seems tall, taller than the original building's floor to ceiling height. The penthouse should be shorter. He said more sight line studies are needed. He said the railings for the

roof deck and people using the deck would be visible. He said the remnants of the fire escape should be preserved, the structure at the least as it is a 1904 feature. He said the alley elevation is almost as important as the primary elevation. He said the proposal to remove masonry between two windows on the east elevation leaves an odd-shaped opening; the windows should be rehabbed with no open space between. He said the penthouse windows should be more complementary to the historic buildings; the windows over Grand Central do not relate to it.

Ms. Price read letter from Dr. Jeffrey Ochsner (letter in DON file) who said that the buildings are in a prominent location. He wrote that the project is of “very high importance given its central location in the Pioneer Square Preservation District with its primary elevation facing First Avenue South. Given the significance of the Squire-Latimer Block, and given its prominent location on First Avenue South and South Main Street, please insist that the restoration work on the exterior of this building include reconstruction of a historically accurate cornice. Because there are multiple photographs illustrating the original cornice, an accurate reconstruction should be possible even without original drawings”.

**080520.3 PROJECT BRIEFING**

**080520.31** Grand Central, City Loan and Buttnick Buildings  
(Squire Latimer, Gottstein, Brunswick-Balke-Collender)  
(216, 206 and 202 1st Ave S)  
200 1<sup>st</sup> Ave S

Ms. Collie recused herself.

Briefing on proposed alterations to the building and a penthouse addition

Becca Pheasant-Reis, Clark Barnes presented the briefing packet (in DON file). She provided context of the site and the neighborhood. She indicated the penthouse addition will be minimally visible because of the trees. She said urban analysis of the site shows that even with penthouse on building, what is proposed is not out of scale for the area. View studies were provided. She said there would be no site work as the building takes up an entire block.

Scott Clark, Clark Barnes said the penthouses are in alignment with structural bays of historic building per National Park Service (NPS).

Ms. Pheasant-Reis said a green roof with pathways is planned; roof top coverage is at 53% now and will be reduced to 50%. Penthouse sections were provided showing setbacks and location of roofs and decks in relation to parapet. She said floor levels of buildings vary and they are working hard to make it accessible all the way across. She said they will keep existing floors where possible.

Mr. Clark said when the Buttnick and City Loan buildings were combined after earthquake there were lots of modifications including shared elevator and seismic upgrade. He said the new elevator will be placed close to existing elevator. He said they will maintain the un-modified character of the Buttnick Building and will take advantage of the heavily modified City Loan Building.

Ms. Pheasant-Reis said the Buttnick and Grand Central buildings are less modified. They will keep floors at City Loan section and will build up; the 5<sup>th</sup> floor will be set back from windows so not to be read. Shadow studies show minimal impacts. She proposed adjustments to ground floor to provide better office lobby and entry sequence. She said the arcade will remain.

She said there are no historic elements left under the City Loan Building and under the Grand Central there are some modified areas.

Mr. Clark said deterioration of the tree wells drives work in the area.

Ms. Pheasant-Reis said there is a lot of water infiltration into the areaway from the tree wells. She said an arborist is working on tree stabilization.

Mr. Clark said there is a Seattle City Light (SCL) vault at the east corner which will be removed; electricity must come from within the building. The SCL vault location will be used as an access way. A new SCL vault supplying the buildings will be constructed on other side of street.

Ms. Pheasant-Reis said the square footage of the area for the SCL vault will remain the same. She said there are no glass prism lights at Grand Central. She said Grand Central exterior elevation will remain as is but with new storefront system. Entry bars will be removed but iron columns will remain. Louvers will be added above store front to provide air. On the alley/park side the non-original green house and fire escape are proposed to be removed. A metal wrapped storefront is proposed for the arcade entry from the park; it will be slightly inset into brick wall to recess the doors from the property line. Ivy and non-historic lights will be removed. She proposed opening masonry between two windows to provide visual connection between restaurant space and park and a new storefront in the location of previous alterations. The proposed opening will not encroach on Rainier Beer ghost sign.

She said the typical tenant storefront will be similar to what is there now but will have taller doors and louvers above for air flow. She proposed removal of the fire escape for safety and visibility reasons. She proposed a single location on the south elevation be modified to create a secondary means of egress. She said roll up door on the Buttnick Building will be refurbished for trash location. She said exemptions are requested for interior vestibules and they want to avoid insulation.

Mr. Clark said they can pursue with NPS to get the outcome they want.

Ms. Nashem read the Staff Report and noted the applicant last briefed the Board on February 12, 2020. The code allows for a penthouse of up to 12 feet in height. In this case the penthouse on the Grand Central has a sloped roof and they are showing a midpoint of each side at a height of 11'11." The penthouse portion above the height of the Buttneck is 9'. If SDCI agrees that the measurement of the height of the penthouse can be measured in the same way that a building is measured i.e. from the mid-point this would comply.

The plans stated that the coverage is 53% which is over the 50% allowed in the code for use as an office or residential penthouse. SMC 23.41.012 lists measurements and maximum size of use as items that are not departable.

Code also requires that the penthouse be set back 15 feet. Some of the roof floor plans show a 15-foot set other show less of a setback. However, on the Buttneck building the setback does not comply with 15-foot set back requirement. The code does allow for the Board to modify the setbacks for rooftop features if the feature is minimally visible from 300 feet. The Board would first have to determine if the penthouse is minimally visible from 300 feet. It appears visible in what is provided.

#### Areaways:

The areaway for the Buttneck was reinforced with careful guidance from the Board to maintain the historical features it is rated substantially intact/minor alterations. City Loan building areaway is rated New or significantly altered, and the Grand Central is rated substantially altered. There is also an existing vault on the Main Street in the areaway. The Board will need to understand what historical features are remaining and what the proposed work has on those features and if there are alternatives.

#### Fire escapes:

In line with the District Rules, generally fire escapes have been allowed to be decommissioned by removing the floors, treads, and ladders to address safety issues, but the railing, frame and stringer remain as architectural features. The Board has allowed the removal of a fire escape on the front of a building when there was one on the alley façade that would remain. In the case of a building that had a fire escape in front of the building and the building was not on an alley the Board required the fire escape to remain even though it would require additional support. At a recent briefing where again a building had a fire escape on the front but not on the alley the Board discussed the possibility of the removing just the portion of the fire escape at the entry level, but the upper portion should remain. In this case the fire escape is the only remaining fire escape on this what was originally an alley façade. The Rules acknowledge fire escapes are "particularly important in contributing to the special character of the District's alleyscapes." In this presentation they have not provided information to determine that the fire escape is not repairable. Most fire escapes will not be original to the building but were installed soon after the building was built and gained significance, especially with the District history of rebuilding after a great fire. While most cities across the country passed regulations concerning fire escapes in the 1880's, iron and steel fire

escapes were not widely manufactured until 1900 and started phasing out after 1920.

Exemptions: The Board has to make a determination that any exemption to the energy code is necessary because it would negatively affect the exterior of the building or damage or replace historic materials. The Board has commonly determined that the addition of insulation would be visible through the windows and change the visual proportion of the windows and recommended an alternative to the energy code. We have reviewed on project where an exemption was requested for a vestibule, but it was determined to not affect the exterior or any ability to qualify for tax credits. If the applicant is seeking tax credits, the DAHP office may be to advise if a vestibule at the location of the historic stairs would jeopardize tax credits.

The Board has also determined that windows are character defining features that should be retained. Because there was not enough information for discussion on window replacement, I had suggested that they provide another briefing when they had more information.

Code Citations:

SMC 23.66.030 Certificates of Approval required

SMC 23.66.050 - Departure from Land Use Code requirements

A. An applicant seeking a certificate of approval for new multifamily, commercial or major institution development, that is not otherwise subject to design review pursuant to Section 23.41.004, may also seek land use code departures from the Special Review Board. A Special Review Board may recommend granting a departure where an applicant demonstrates that departure would result in a development that better meets the requirements of this Chapter 23.66, the district use and development standards, and the purpose for creating the district.

SMC 23.41.012

A. The Director may waive or modify application of a development standard to a development proposal if the Director decides that waiver or modification would result in a development that better meets the intent of adopted design guidelines.

B. Departures may be granted from any Land Use Code standard or requirement, *except* for the following

Measurements;

...

Maximum size of use;

SMC 23.66.140 – Height

C. Rooftop features and additions to structures

3. The setbacks required for rooftop features may be modified by the Department of Neighborhoods Director, after a sight line review by the Preservation Board to ensure that the features are minimally visible from public streets and parks within 300 feet of the structure.

4. Height limits for rooftop features

b. For existing structures, open railings, planters, clerestories, skylights, play equipment, parapets, and firewalls may extend up to 4 feet above the roof of the structure or the maximum height limit, whichever is less. For new structures, such features may extend up to 4 feet above the maximum height limit. No rooftop coverage limits apply to such features regardless of whether the structure is existing or new.

c. Solar collectors, excluding greenhouses, may extend up to 7 feet above the roof of the structure or the maximum height limit, whichever is less, with unlimited rooftop coverage, provided they are a minimum of 10 feet from all lot lines. For new structures, solar collectors may extend up to 7 feet above the maximum height limit, except as provided in subsection 23.66.140.C.4.j.1, and provided that they are a minimum of 10 feet from all lot lines.

d. The following rooftop features may extend up to 8 feet above the roof or maximum height limit, whichever is less, if they are set back a minimum of 15 feet from the street and 3 feet from an alley. They may extend up to 15 feet above the roof if set back a minimum of 30 feet from the street. A setback may not be required at common wall lines subject to review by the Preservation Board and approval by the Department of Neighborhoods Director. The combined coverage of the following listed rooftop features shall not exceed 15 percent of the roof area:

- 1) solar collectors, excluding greenhouses;
- 2) stair and elevator penthouses;
- 3) mechanical equipment;
- 4) minor communication utilities and accessory communication devices, except that height is regulated according to the provisions of [Section 23.57.014](#).

Additional combined coverage of these rooftop features, not to exceed 25 percent of the roof area, may be permitted subject to review by the Preservation Board and approval by the Department of Neighborhoods Director.

f. Residential and office penthouses

1) Residential penthouses may cover a maximum of 50 percent of the total roof surface and may extend up to 8 feet above the roof if set back a minimum of 15 feet from the street property line, or 12 feet above the roof if set back a minimum of 30 feet from the street property line.

2) Office penthouses are permitted only if the footprint of the existing structure is greater than 10,000 square feet and the structure is at least 60 feet in height. When permitted, office penthouses shall be set back a minimum of 15 feet from all property lines and may cover a maximum of 50 percent of the total roof surface. Office penthouses may extend up to 12 feet above the roof of the structure and shall be functionally integrated into the existing structure.

3) The combined height of the structure and a residential penthouse or office penthouse, if permitted, shall not exceed the maximum height limit for that area of the District in which the structure is located.

- g. Screening of rooftop features. Measures may be taken to screen rooftop features from public view subject to review by the Preservation Board and approval by the Department of Neighborhoods Director. The amount of rooftop area enclosed by rooftop screening may exceed the maximum percentage of the combined coverage of rooftop features listed in subsection 23.66.140.C.4.d. In no circumstances shall the height of rooftop screening exceed 15 feet above the maximum height limit or height of an addition permitted according to subsection 23.66.140.C.4.i or otherwise, whichever is higher.

#### **23.66.180 - Exterior building design.**

To complement and enhance the historic character of the District and to retain the quality and continuity of existing buildings, the following requirements shall apply to exterior building design:

A. Materials. Unless an alternative material is approved by the Department of Neighborhoods Director following Board review and recommendation, exterior building facades shall be brick, concrete tinted a subdued or earthen color, sandstone or similar stone facing material commonly used in the District. Aluminum, painted metal, wood and other materials may be used for signs, window and door sashes and trim, and for similar purposes when approved by the Department of Neighborhoods Director as compatible with adjacent or original uses, following Board review and recommendation.

B. Scale. 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 buildings in the immediate area.

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.

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. Site. The property line is the line of the building mass. Street facades are uniformly located at the front property lines, thus there is a strong street edge definition. Building cornices, bay windows and ornament project beyond the main wall surface of some facades.
- B. Design. Building design is generally typified by horizontal divisions which create distinctive base and cap levels. Facades may also be divided vertically by pilasters or wide piers which form repetitive window bays. Street facades are also distinguished by heavy terminal cornices and parapets, ornamental storefronts and entrance bays and repetitive window sizes and placement.
- C. Building materials. The most common facing materials are brick masonry and cut or rusticated sandstone, with limited use of terra cotta and tile. Wooden window sash, ornamental sheet metal, carved stone and wooden or cast iron storefronts are also typically used throughout the District. Synthetic stucco siding materials are generally not permitted. (7/99)
- D. 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)
- E. Building Base. Buildings are allowed a base of approximately 18-24 inches. Base materials should be concrete, sandstone, or granite, and may be poured, cut to fit or unit-paved. The color relationship between the sidewalk and building must be considered. Brick or tile materials should not be used except when existing walks are of the same material.

F. Additions. Additional stories to existing buildings are discouraged unless they were original to the structure.

X. FIRE ESCAPES

Fire escapes are important character-defining features of numerous buildings in the District. They are particularly important in contributing to the special character of the District's alleyscapes. Proposals to remove or alter fire escapes shall be reviewed on a case by case basis with special consideration given to safety issues. However, as a general rule, fire escapes shall be retained. (7/99)

XIV. STREET TREES AND VEGETATION

London Plane is the preferred street tree in Pioneer Square, and the required street planting in Occidental Mall, its future extension, and all north/south Avenues. Throughout the rest of the District's street right of ways, if physical site constraints preclude use of London Planes, a tree similar in habit and form may be substituted, subject to City Arborist approval. For individual small parks and spaces, a different, complementary tree may be proposed as a signature tree for that area. (7/99)

Median strips and permanent plant beds shall contain plants approved for urban conditions, combining evergreen shrubs with ground cover and, where appropriate, flowers. Hanging baskets with seasonal flowers are recommended. Given the maintenance required to keep plant material lush and full, temporary ground-level planters are not recommended. (7/99)

XVII. SIDEWALK TREATMENT

A. Standards

Sidewalk paving and improvements shall be completed with one pound lamp-black per cubic yard of concrete, scored at two-foot intervals. This material shall be used for all projects of 1/4 block or greater size. On small projects, if it is feasible, sidewalk material may be selected as for all projects of 1/4 block or greater size. On small projects, if it is feasible, sidewalk material may be selected to match adjacent sidewalks in color, pattern and texture.

B. Sidewalk Prism Lights

The glass sidewalk prism lights are one of the unique elements in the District, and their retention is required. The Board maintains the right to require applicants for sidewalk repair to repair sidewalk prism light panels and individual prism lights that have deteriorated into a state of disrepair. (7/99)

XVIII. AREAWAYS

Areaways are usable areas constructed under the sidewalk between the building foundation and street wall. Areaways were created after the Great Seattle Fire of 1889 when the District was rebuilt and the street elevations were raised. Building standards adopted shortly after the fire required fireproof sidewalk construction to replace the pre-fire wooden sidewalks. Areaways are part of the City's right-of-way area, however, the space is often available for use by the adjacent building owner. (7/03)

The most significant qualities of an areaway are its volume of space, which provides a record of its history, and the architectural features that render its form, character, and spatial quality. These features include use of unit materials (brick or stone), bays articulated by arches and/or columns, ceiling vaults, and other special features including tilework or skylights (sidewalk prism lenses). The historic characteristics of areaways shall be preserved. (7/03)

In 2001, the Seattle Department of Transportation completed a survey of approximately 100 areaways in the District. Each areaway was rated in terms of its structural condition and presence of original historic characteristics. A range of structural repairs options were proposed based on the structural and historical ratings. The 2001 Seattle Department of Transportation Areaway Survey shall serve as a guide for the Board's decision making on future alterations or repairs to areaways in the District. (7/03)

## XIX. ALLEYS

- A. Alley Paving. Alleys are to be paved with unit paving materials. Three types are acceptable in the District: remolded paving bricks, cobbles, and interlocking brick-tone pavers. Alleys should be repaired or re-paved in the original unit material when these materials remain available. All other alleys should be paved with remolded brick. The center drainage swale, peculiar to alleys, should be preserved as part of alley re-paving. Unit paved alleys should not be patched with any material other than approved unit paving.

### Secretary of Interior's Standards

1. A property will be used as it was historically or be given a new use that requires minimal change to its distinctive materials, features, spaces and spatial relationships.
2. The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.
3. Each property will be recognized as a physical record of its time, place and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or elements from other historic properties, will not be undertaken.
4. Changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right will be retained and preserved.

5. Distinctive materials, features, finishes and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.
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.
7. Chemical or physical treatments, if appropriate, will be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials will not be used.
8. 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.
9. New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be undertaken 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.

[Preservation Brief 3: Improving Energy Efficiency in Historic Buildings](#)

[Preservation Brief 14: New Exterior Additions to Historic Buildings Concerns](#)

[Preservation Brief 9: Repair of wooden windows](#)

[Interpreting the Standards 21: Adding new openings on secondary elevations](#)

Ms. Hoyt asked about plans to reduce roof coverage to 50%.

Mr. Clark directed board members to page 15 and said the envelope will be pulled in towards columns about 6". On the east side is a recessed window wall, and the penthouse will be notched in at the City Loan Building.

Ms. Hoyt asked about 11' setback of penthouse on north façade of the Buttnick building.

Ms. Pheasant-Reis said they can look into the setback options. She explained there are existing columns they are lining up to that would allow them to not add more columns to the building. She said she will provide more information to demonstrate this.

Mr. Clark said the Buttnick setback from the north is in alignment with the first structural bay; it is a heavy timber structure which will be retained in both structures. He said the parapet of the building is 4'6" and is above the finished elevation of the penthouse which makes the penthouse less visible.

He said there are 7000 square feet in the Buttnick Building with wood floors and ceilings and windows on three sides.

Ms. Pheasant-Reis said it is similar to how it was historically used.

Mr. Clark said at 300 feet away you can't distinguish the building.

Ms. Hoyt noted confusion about the 300' visibility renderings.

Ms. Price noted public comment about restoration/reconstruction of original cornice and if that had been considered.

Ms. Pheasant-Reis said it was discussed early on. She said there are no original documents so it would be speculation as to exact configuration. She said the features have been gone so long – since 1949 and are part of the history of the building. The parapet heights now are similar, they just lack detail.

Ms. Hoyt noted the challenge of visualizing without historical record of parapet.

Ms. Pheasant-Reis said she didn't think the roof changed so the parapet is the same on 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue but dropped as it moved around the building.

Ms. Hoyt said that given the date the parapet came down she was fine with not recreating/reconstructing it but wanted to hear other board members' thoughts.

Mr. Clark directed board members to page 9 which shows elevation of parapet before and after it came down.

Ms. Hoyt noted it looked like loss of ornamentation. She said she was comfortable with existing proposal to not to reconstruct.

Ms. Price said she agreed with Staff Report on the fire escape. She said this is the only fire escape remaining on the building and it is important to retain it. She noted others in the district that have been decommissioned with modified removal of treads and other elements to prevent access. She asked for more information on that.

Ms. Pheasant-Reis said the flooring and ladders have already been removed.

Ms. Hoyt said the fire escape should be retained. It is historical material, historical character. She said the proposed project is attractive and provides

differentiation between old and new. She said the contrast of new and original material is unique.

Mr. Clark said they are happy to keep the fire escape and will take a better look at it. He said they will keep historic fabric and will look at the parapet.

Ms. Pheasant-Reis said they can include fire escape in design plans going forward. Responding to questions she said they will add ventilation to areaway to reduce mold.

Ms. Price asked the presenters to keep the board apprised of areaway changes, provide photos of each area to be worked on.

Ms. Nashem said to include architectural elements that won't be impacted.

Ms. Salcedo said she echoed Mmes. Hoyt and Price's comments especially about the fire escape.

**080520.4 BOARD BUSINESS**

**080520.5 REPORT OF THE CHAIR:** Alex Rolluda, Chair

**080520.6 STAFF REPORT:** Genna Nashem

Genna Nashem  
Pioneer Square Preservation Board Coordinator  
206.684.0227