



The City of Seattle

International Special Review District

Mailing Address: PO Box 94649, Seattle WA 98124-4649
Street Address: 600 4th Avenue, 4th Floor

ISRD 133/24

MINUTES FOR THE MEETING OF TUESDAY, July 23, 2024

Time: 4:30pm

Place: Hybrid Meeting

Board Members Present

Heather Hargesheimer
Nella Kwan
Kyle Jacobson
Gary Lee
Samantha Wong

Staff

Rebecca Frestedt
Melinda Bloom

Absent

Adrian Lam

Vice Chair Heather Hargesheimer called the meeting to order at 4:30 pm.

ROLL CALL

072324.1 MEETING MINUTES

April 23, 2024
Deferred.

May 28, 2024
MM/SC/GL/KJ
4:0:0
Minutes approved.

072324.2 PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

072324.3 CERTIFICATES OF APPROVAL

072324.31 **700 6TH Ave S. – Nikkei Manor**

Record number: DONH-COA-01348

Applicant: Thomas Papastavrou, applicant

Proposed artwork (mural) to be painted on a portion of the north façade.

Ms. Frestedt introduced the application and noted this site is located outside of the Asian Design Character District. She said, when reviewing artwork, the Board considers placement, materials, colors, scale and method of attachment.

Thomas Papastavrou provided context of the building in the district and noted the proposed mural location. He said the mural will honor Nikkei Manor's culture by incorporating traditional Japanese patterns that resonate, in tandem with the symbolism of the crane. The crane's iconic red crown is meant to be the only splash of this color on the mural adding reverence to the mural's subject. The tranquil color palette was selected from traditional Japanese textile and paintings and then blended together in a contemporary sense that honors the past while evoking the beauty of dusk and dawn simultaneously. He said the Japanese crane is frequently depicted on Japanese fabrics and papers, either realistically or as origami. This graceful bird symbolizes longevity and good fortune. Cranes are very much appreciated in Japan. A legend says that if you build a thousand cranes in origami, then all your wishes may come true.

Mr. Papastravrou said bamboo is a strong, flexible and fast-growing plant that symbolizes strength, flexibility and prosperity. When only its leaves are depicted on the fabric, then it is associated with calm and tranquility. The Kikko pattern is inspired by the hexagonal shape of tortoise shells, an auspicious animal symbolizing longevity. In the past the samurai's armor could be composed of many Hexagonal facets sewn together, similar to geometric pattern in the mural design. He said the arabesques of the Karakusa pattern represents a plant endlessly growing and spreading in many different directions.

He said the 20' x 20' mural will be painted on to the stucco and will have a graffiti coat applied. Building signage will be included above the mural, as proposed.

Mr. Jacobson appreciated the addition of placemaking and beauty to the neighborhood. He liked that it would have a graffiti coating.

Ms. Wong said she was impressed with the magnitude. She said the proposed mural is consistent with other murals around the neighborhood.

Action: I move that the International Special Review District Board recommend approval of a Certificate of Approval for exterior alterations for the application of a painted mural to the north facade, per the submitted application materials.

The Board directs staff to prepare a written recommendation of approval, based on considering the application submittal and Board discussion at the July 23, 2024 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 and relevant Standards:**
Seattle Municipal Code (SMC)

- SMC 23.66.336 - Exterior building finishes
- A. General Requirement
- B. Exterior design outside the Asian Design Character District

SMC 23.66.338 - Signs

Secretary of the Interior Standard #9

MM/SC/KJ/SW

4:0:0

Motion carried.

Ms. Kwan joined the meeting at 5:06 p.m.

072324.32 303 12th Ave S. – “2Sipps”
Applicant: Robert Okunamlak, business owner representative
Proposed change of use to “indoor sports and recreation” for a hookah lounge

Ms. Frestedt introduced the application and reported this site is located in Little Saigon, east of I-5. She explained “Office” is not a preferred use within SMC 23.66.308 – International District preferred uses east of I-5. Therefore, the code does not support administrative review.

Robel Okunamlak explained he has been in business for 11 months. He learned he needs a change of use and apologized for the misstep and said he is learning along the way. He said the business is open from 2:00 pm – 2:00 am. He provided a site plan to show how he uses the space. He said the business is a private lounge which requires membership. He said they do hookah and serve non-alcoholic beverages only. He said they have done karaoke, spoken word, DJs and other events. He said members stay a while and then eat at local businesses. He said no signs are proposed at this time. He said that the business is named after a friend, to honor him.

In response to a question, Ms. Frestedt said this use if not preferred , as identified the code, but it is permitted. She said it is not prohibited. As an example, she explained that SDCI defined it in the Land Use Code as a category that falls under Indoor Sports and Recreation. She noted the Pinball Museum falls under this category. She said it is not a restaurant or community center, etc.

Mr. Jacobson said this use is not significantly different from other allowed uses such as bars, or the ground floor architectural firm community space. He said there is no reason to deny.

Ms. Frestedt asked the applicant to elaborate further on the private membership aspect of the business.

Mr. Okunamlak said it is an easy application which includes name, birthdate, identification check, and a \$5.00 fee.

Mr. Lee said he has heard about police complaints about noise, fights at 2:00 am. He expressed concern.

Mr. Jacobson said he was not uncomfortable evaluating this change of use. He said complaints are hearsay. He said there is a noise ordinance here that all businesses must adhere to.

Ms. Hargesheimer said if there are complaints it would be good to understand concern. She noted karaoke and DJs operating without sound proofing.

Mr. Jacobson said there are multiple karaoke businesses in the district.

Mr. Lee said people congregate outside in parking lots and on streets late at night. He said there are fights and sometimes shooting. He said they are customers or friends of customers.

Ms. Wong commented on how this change of use fits under the code. She said a lounge – café makes sense. She said historically hookah is not favored by the CID or residents; given the history in the last decade she said she understands why. She said this business is not the sole producer of noise, it is already in the neighborhood. She said the business contributes to the restaurant business in the area.

Ms. Kwan said she agreed.

Ms. Frestedt said she does not see a basis in the code to deny this application. She said the board could include a recommendation or comment to engage with CPTED officer to mitigate concerns. She said there is no evidence to suggest any additional factors to indicate problems other than word of mouth.

Mr. Lee suggested requesting information from the police.

Mr. Jacobson said it seems outside the board's jurisdiction. He said it is good to have a vacant space used. Hearsay and speculation are problematic.

Mr. Lee said he is a member of the CID Public Safety Council and issues have been reported at this location. He said it would be good for the board to hear.

Ms. Wong said the business qualifies for change of use under SMC 23.66.308. She said it doesn't technically fit but it does lend itself to some livelihood.

Ms. Frestedt said the board could consider linking the use to this particular business so when the business leaves, the use reverts back to the previously approved use.

Mr. Lee said he wanted his comments noted, for the record.

There was discussion about the Board's scope of review, in light of public safety concerns.

Mr. Jacobson made a motion to approve, which failed to get a second

Ms. Frestedt reminded board members they could approve, deny, or approve with conditions, such as linking approval to this business and revert to prior use when leave, as had been discussed. Any motion should be rooted in SMC 23.66.

Ms. Hargesheimer asked if she could make a motion as acting chair.

Ms. Frestedt said that while it is not prohibited, it is best if another board member does it.

Action: I move that the International Special Review District Board recommend approval of a Certificate of Approval for use, per the submitted application materials. This use is for the business 2Sipps in this location.

The Board directs staff to prepare a written recommendation of approval, based on considering the application submittal and Board discussion at the July 23, 2024 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 and relevant Standards:**
Seattle Municipal Code (SMC)

SMC 23.66.308 – International District preferred uses east of I-5

Preferred uses for that portion of the International District the lies east of Interstate 5 includes restaurants, retail shops, residential uses, and other small- and medium-scale commercial uses. Commercial businesses and uses with an Asian product service or trade emphasis are preferred. Preferred uses should contribute to the International District’s business core or to the function and purposes of the International District east of Interstate 5.

SMC 23.66.320 – Permitted uses

- A. All uses shall be permitted outright except those specifically prohibited by Section 23.66.322 and those subject to special review under Section 23.66.324.

MM/SC/HH/KJ

3:1:1

Motion carried. Mr. Lee opposed. Ms. Kwan abstained.

Ms. Frestedt asked Ms. Kwan to comment on her abstention.

Ms. Kwan said she could see both sides. She noted the location in a residential area and the purview issue.

Ms. Frestedt said the approval is tied to this business. She noted the robust discussion and that the discussion and concerns will be relayed to the recommendation to the DON director. She encouraged Mr. Okunamlak to take the discussion to heart. There is a desire for the neighborhood to be safe and the business to be successful.

Mr. Okunamlak said safety is important to him and he does security checks. He said he has a metal detector to ensure all are safe and unarmed and there are no issues inside. He said he had done his best with the parking lots and that he reached out to the police. He has made requests for police presence. He said he takes it seriously. There is lots of stuff happening at 12th and Jackson and safety is important.

Ms. Frestedt said if signage is planned a Certificate of Approval will be needed. If it is under four square feet and painted or vinyl decal to window no review is required. Anything else would need a Certificate of Approval and SDCI permit.

072324.41 STAFF SUMMARY AND BOARD BUSINESS

Administrative approvals issued or pending since date of last meeting

Ms. Frestedt shared information on a Parliamentary Procedures training which she said was valuable. It shared guidance and best practices and that a board member should not speak again until each board member has spoken. She said she would share the recording.

She said the mayoral appointment for the vacant seat (Position #1) should be confirmed on August 2, 2024.

She said the South Downtown Community Hub community provided their website information and is planning to come present to the board. She said the workshops are worthy. She noted the integrated transportation future for Pioneer Square and the Chinatown International District.