



The City of Seattle

Pioneer Square Preservation Board

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PSB 283/24

Staff Report

Board meeting Oct 23, 2024

Board Members Please Note: The citations from the District Ordinance, Rules for the Pioneer Square Preservation District, and Secretary of the Interior's Standards listed below are for your consideration in addition to any other citations you find relevant in considering each application.

**102324.4 King Street Station
303 S Jackson St**

ARTS Administrative offices

Briefing regarding proposed art display

Staff report: The application proposed is for art installation. There have been temporary installations of projected videos on buildings for less than three days and a projection for a video show on trees for a short period of time. This proposal for an art video presentation in the windows is different in that it would be for an extended length of time, but the proposal includes limitations on operational hours of the projection so that the building can be seen in its lighted iconic state some of the time. I have discussed with the ARTS staff that moving image signs are prohibited so the images must not include signage or branding. The Board has denied use of colored lighting to decorate a building or to wash the building with color at night including on the Hawk Tower next door. The Board thought that colored lighting as a modern trend, was not compatible with and detracted from the historic character of the District and changed the appearance of the historic building by changing the colors of the materials or obscuring the materials. The Board noted the colored lights on the stadium were outside the district boundary and among the preservation district code purposes is to protect from adverse impacts of the stadium rather than adopt its aesthetic. This presentation does show a window lit up in blue and the doorway in pink which is similar to the type of colored lighting that had previously been denied. The Board had previously allowed a limited duration of colored lighting as art installations to be installed on the non-historic benches around the planters in the plaza of King Street Station and hanging from the new construction pavilion in Occidental Park. If supporting the proposal, The Board should differentiate this as artwork different than the prohibited moving image or video

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signage. If the Board considering approving the use of the colored lighting as shown in the presentation, they would need to discuss how this is compatible with the historic character of the District or what limitations would prevent the colored lights from distracting from the historic District generally, and especially the iconic nature of the historic building with the clock tower at night, as this consideration would apply to all of Pioneer Square. While the existing guidelines do not address color of lighting the draft guidelines prohibit colored lighting on buildings.

Code Citations:

Seattle Municipal Code

23.66.030 Certificates of Approval required

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.

23.66.100 Creation of district, legislative findings and purpose

A. During the City of Seattle's relatively brief history, it has had little time in which to develop areas of consistent historical or architectural character. It is recognized that the Pioneer Square area of Seattle contains many of these rare attributes and consequently is an area of great historical and cultural significance. Further, the regional sports stadiums, constructed in and near the Pioneer Square area, and the traffic and activities that they generate have resulted in adverse impacts upon the social, cultural, historic and ethnic values of the Pioneer Square area. To preserve, protect, and enhance the historic character of the Pioneer Square area and the buildings therein; to return unproductive structures to useful purposes; to attract visitors to the City; to avoid a proliferation of vehicular parking and vehicular-oriented uses; to provide regulations for existing on-street and off-street parking; to stabilize existing housing, and encourage a variety of new and rehabilitated housing types for all income groups; to encourage the use of transportation modes other than the private automobile; to protect existing commercial vehicle access; to improve visual and urban relationships between existing and future buildings and structures, parking spaces and public improvements within the area; and to encourage pedestrian uses, there is established as a special review district, the Pioneer Square Preservation District.

23.66.160 Signs

A. Signs.

2. The following signs are prohibited throughout the Pioneer Square Preservation District:

Permanently affixed, freestanding signs (except those used to identify areas such as parks and those authorized for surface parking lots under subsection 23.66.160.C.7);

- Roof signs;

- Off-premises signs;

- Electric signs and signs using video display methods, excluding neon signs;

- Signs with messages that appear to be in motion;

- Changing image signs;

- Signs with flashing, running or chaser lights.

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Genna Nashem

Pioneer Square Preservation Board Coordinator