



The City of Seattle

Landmarks Preservation Board

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LPB 300/21

MINUTES

Landmarks Preservation Board Meeting

City Hall

Remote Meeting

Wednesday June 16, 2021 - 3:30 p.m.

Board Members Present

Roi Chang

Russell Coney

Matt Inpanbutr

Jordon Kiel

Kristen Johnson

John Rodezno

Harriet Wasserman

Staff

Sarah Sodt

Erin Doherty

Melinda Bloom

Absent

Dean Barnes

Chair Jordan Kiel called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.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 Event link or the telephone call-in line provided on agenda.

ROLL CALL

061621.1 PUBLIC COMMENT

Colleen McAleer, Laurelhurst Community Club said she appreciated the board’s great work. Regarding Battelle’s requested extension, she said we have heard this before from the owner. She said they have worked different programs. She said if there is not a short leash on extensions it becomes a continuum, and the extensions lead to this longer fencing which is another issue that will come up before the board. She said it also came from the Hearing Examiner and some of the objections we had was it not conforming to the standards. She said the owner has not paid \$40,000 in City fees to SDCI which could possibly have effect on the quickness of their getting permits or Controls and Incentives. She noted the deterioration of the landmarked landscape. She said at the last ARC meeting one of the members asked the owner once again for a landscape maintenance plan because that is an integral part of why it was landmarked. She said she sent an email to Ms. Doherty that the owner may request tree removal because a tree fell down. She said they are supportive of development of the site but that it is important that board give a shorter leash on extensions to know what is going on with these long extensions that have really wreaked havoc on the site. She said the owner should know there are consequences, and they should pay their bills.

061621.2 MEETING MINUTES

May 19, 2021 Deferred.

Agenda was reordered. Controls and Incentives moved to the end.

061621.4 DESIGNATIONS

061621.41 The Fairfax
1508 10th Avenue E

Jeff Murdock, Historic Seattle said the building was constructed in 1923 and designed by architect James Eustace Blackwell who was also the first owner. He said the three-story building is a load bearing brick masonry over concrete basement foundation walls. On the north side, square vertical masonry piers run from the ground to the parapet, stiffening the wall and tying into the interior timber structural system, which is supported by 8” x 8” timber columns. He said there are 14 apartments and three separate narrow primary elevations. He said the window groupings are each framed by a pair of diagonal pilasters that run from the ground to the top of the parapet. Each of the piers is capped by a Gothic style finial. He noted Gothic Revival

decorative elements repeated in an ensemble of details such as pointed arch cast panels installed on the parapet, a pointed arched opening under the entry stair, cast iron balustrade with point arch details, and window details on the doors.

He provided context of the neighborhood and site and noted the unusual-shaped lot. He said the building responds to the site dimensions. He said the apartments are accessed on each side of the double-loaded corridor with two apartments on each side. He said there is a rear door to the fire escape and exit stair. He said interior stair connects basement up to rooftop.

Mr. Murdock said the original front door remains on the 10th Avenue East elevation. He said the north side is much simpler with building set back. He said fire stairs are non-original. He noted the party wall condition on the south elevation. He said there are some original windows in the light court. He said the roof was recently replaced and parapet braced and noted the original finials and crockets. He said the roof deck and sauna are non-original.

Responding to board member question about alterations at nomination meeting, he said two windows were replaced and met Secretary of Interior Standards (SOI) with no impact to integrity. He said balustrade above entry porch was originally wood and was replaced with steel / wrought iron. He said on a non-public elevation, fire stair was installed, and upper windows have been changed. On the south elevation a window was added and on the front elevation a window was added. He said the building has high integrity.

Mr. Murdock said the building was painted, likely in the 1980s. He noted the Gothic Revival features of this building include verticality, instead of a horizontal cornice the pier buttresses extend to the top of the building and are terminated by finials with crockets; pier buttresses, simple diagonal piers organize the façade and extend from the ground to the top of the building, reinforcing the building's verticality; pointed arches throughout building including exterior railings, parapet friezes, door glazing details, and interior stair and exterior railings; trefoil decorative elements on interior stair balustrade and on front porch roof.

He said the building meets Criterion D. He said the style was commonly applied to church designs. He said there are numerous examples of the English Gothic and Tudor Revival are found throughout the city. A unique subset of the style, the Collegiate Gothic, is exemplified by the collection of academic building called for and designed by the office of Bebb & Gould in their Regents plan for the University of Washington. He noted integration of the Gothic Revival style for tall buildings in the Woolworth Building (New York), Chicago Tribune Tower, and in Seattle's Terminal Sales Annex. He said

Blackwell used simplified Gothic design elements on both the Fairfax and Shafer buildings including towers, buttresses, finials, and emphasis on vertical expression.

Susan Beardsley, resident/owner said James Eustace Blackwell began as a civil engineer and became one of the most prolific architects in the Northwest. She said he designed everything from drydocks and warehouses, to apartments and residences. He was a founding member of the Washington Chapter of the American Institute of Architects and served as its President in 1905. She said he was active in municipal affairs and served on Committee on Parks, Buildings and Grounds and on the Streets and Roads Committee. He was a member of the first Zoning Commission in 1923.

She said Blackwell moved to Tacoma in 1890 where he partnered with architect Robert L. Robertson and designed the Louderback Building, the Voorhees Grain Elevator, and the Puyallup Opera House. He moved to Seattle in 1900. She said he was the sole designer for the Luna Park hotel, pavilion and bath house in West Seattle. He was hired put an addition on the Mutual Life Building and he maintained an office there from 1904 – 1910. He designed and built his own home, the Galbraith-Bacon warehouse and pier, M. F. Backus warehouse, and E. O Graves warehouse, and Gray's Harbor Electric Company plant among others.

Ms. Beardsley said Blackwell formed a partnership with Frank Lidstone Baker in 1908 which lasted until about 1917. Included in their work was the W.W. Chapin residence, James Kerr residence, Grand Trunk Pacific Dock, and the Bellingham Armory, among others. She said the firm added two floors to the Washington Shoe Building, showing respect for the original design. They built three Carnegie libraries: Wenatchee, Burlington, and Olympia.

She said after the partnership with Baker dissolved, Blackwell's activities involved Seattle's municipal affairs. He served as Superintendent of Buildings from 1920-1922. When his term was over, he returned to his architectural practice and designed the Fairfax Apartments in 1923 and the Shafer Building in 1924 which bear several similar design features. She said he was a tireless worker and died at age 83 while showing plans to a client.

Ms. Beardsley said the building meets criteria D, E, and F. She said F is relevant because of the odd-shaped lot which was created when the Leary family wanted traffic directed away from their homes. She said Blackwell used every square inch of the parcel to build this building. She said the building adds to the beauty and quality of this part of Capitol Hill.

Mr. Inpanbutr asked when the building was painted.

Ms. Beardsley said it was likely painted in the early 1980s.

Mr. Inpanbutr supported designation based on criteria D and E and said he was less convinced with F, but the curve is unusual, and the building was sited around that.

Mr. Coney supported designation based on D, E, and F. He said the building has always been noticeable and prominent in the neighborhood. He said the building contributes and stands alone on the residential side of the street. He said the building is significant in both style and period.

Ms. Chang said she appreciated the presentation and the new elevation showing alterations was helpful. She said it is apparent most of the significant alterations happened out of view except for the balcony over entry. She supported designation based on criteria D and E and said she was not convinced about F.

Ms. Johnson supported designation based on criteria D and E but that she didn't feel strongly one way or the other about Criterion F. She said it is a very nice building and that it was nice to see an example of similar styles. She said it was a nice time period. She said it is a handsome building and the style was adapted to the site in a unique way.

Mr. Rodezno supported designation based on criteria D and E; he noted the Collegiate style, arches, and finials. He noted Blackwell's contribution to early Seattle's built environment and that he was a founding member of Washington Chapter of AIA. He didn't support Criterion F.

Ms. Wasserman supported designation based on criteria D, E, and F. She said it was a lovely presentation.

Mr. Kiel supported designation based on criteria D and F, but not F.

Action: I move that the Board approve the designation of The Fairfax at 1508 10th Avenue E as a Seattle Landmark; noting the legal description above; that the designation is based upon satisfaction of Designation Standards D, and E; that the features and characteristics of the property identified for preservation include: the site, the exterior of the building, and the main interior stairway.

MM/SC/KJ/MI 7:0:0 Motion carried.

061621.42 Aki Kurose Middle School
3928 S Graham Street

Messrs. Kiel and Inpanbutr recused themselves.

Full nomination report in DON file.

David Peterson, Historic Resource Consulting provided context of the site and neighborhood which he said is primarily residential. He said the school was designed by architect William Mallis and constructed in 1952. He said the school is laid out in three large volumes, the auditorium, the cafeteria and the gym with the rest of the campus wrapped around. Mallis used his 'kit of parts' in creating the design.

Susan Boyle, BOLA said the site is situated between main thoroughfares Rainier Avenue and former Empire Way boulevards the site was very rural and undeveloped in the 1930s. She said Holly Park was constructed in 1942 for war and Boeing workers and later became home to working-class families.

Mr. Peterson said the school service area was large and had a diverse demographic in the 1970s – 1980s.

Ms. Boyle said residents at this time were predominantly from European and Russian ancestry.

Mr. Peterson said Mallis did many school projects in the 1920s – 1930s. He dabbled in Art Deco and Moderne in the late 1930s. He said after WWII he got a commission from Seattle Public Schools (SPS) to design schools to accommodate the huge expansion of population and workers. He designed his first modern style building at View Ridge Elementary (Seattle), using prismatic glass which was popularized in the late 1940s as a way to provide light in double loaded corridors. At Lincoln Elementary School (Ellensburg), Mallis started using strip windows which were to become a design element in his kit of parts. Mallis worked out his 'kit of parts' during design of school buildings including David Denny Junior High (Seattle), Nathan Eckstein Junior High (Seattle). He said that Mallis honed the modern design and began to break up façades; this is a great example of Modern style by him. He said the biggest alteration is the windows.

Ms. Boyle said the glass block was a performance device. The use of glass block windows in schools began to be a popular solution for lighting classrooms in the late 1930s, as it provided an abundance of daylight with no glare. Glass block had only transitioned from a largely experimental product

to a readily available building material with advances in manufacturing in 1934. The introduction of light-directing blocks in the 1940s which had prisms on the interior face that would direct light upwards towards the ceiling and diffuse it through the room proved popular in schools. Most of the glass block installations for schools were used as large panels above a row of operable plate glass windows, as in the configuration used by Mallis. Mallis's first use of glass block was at Nathan Eckstein Middle School in 1948-50.

Mr. Peterson said there has been a significant loss of integrity with loss of much of the glass block and because of that, the school fails to meet the Criterion D. He said the building would have been significant if it had remained unchanged. He said the school occupies a full block and could potentially meet Criterion F.

Ms. Boyle said the school's importance lies with the institution and not the building. She said the school responded to conditions and was not seminal. Regarding Criterion F, she said the school is prominent in the neighborhood as shown in aerial photo.

Mr. Coney said window changes are reversible and glass blocks could be put back in.

Mr. Peterson said it is possible but said he is not sure SPS would want to do so. The windows were changed for energy efficiency.

Mr. Coney said he hears the excuse, 'energy efficiency' when the overall plant system could be made more efficient. He said glass block is thicker.

Mr. Rodezno asked why the glass was replaced and asked if SPS has a threshold for how it determines energy efficiency.

Mr. Peterson said the drawing set for replacement windows was just a few sheets. He said it was a relatively minor upgrade for the building in terms of design.

Ms. Boyle said energy efficiency was a big push in the 1970s.

Ms. Doherty said she does not know the reasoning here, but said that SPS noted a challenge at Nathan Eckstein Middle School with heat gain issues at the glass block and a desire to increase shading and ventilation. She also noted for the record that Mr. Kiel had left the meeting, and that while Mr. Inpanbutr had recused himself from this item, he was still in attendance in the audience.

Mr. Coney said he supported designation and noted letter from SPS that stated designation would have no negative impacts. He said it is unfortunate to take a negative approach and said he wished it were more positive. He said this part of Seattle has fewer landmarks and fewer schools landmarked. He said the school meets Criterion D. He said perhaps the glass block could be replaced to get the prismatic light on the ceiling. He noted the parallel to Nathan Eckstein School.

Ms. Chang said she was undecided. She said the windows were featured characteristics that best fit definition. She said the siting draws attention and the school is distinctive in a residential area between two smaller commercial corridors. She did not support Criterion C. She said she wished the replacement windows were more appealing.

Mr. Rodezno said it was nice to see the building nominated. He supported designation based on criteria C and D. He said Criterion D is the strongest but noted that criteria E and F could be supported. He said the style is a distinct modern style. He said Criterion E is met because Mallis's use of prismatic glass brought daylight into a public building and was used in multiple schools along with sawtooth and horizontal glass block. He said Mallis was prioritizing daylight and the users' well-being. He said he would like to see the glass block there and said the remaining glass block should remain in place.

Ms. Wasserman supported designation. She said the replacement glass should be more attractive. She said Criterion F is met because the school is such a huge feature in the area. She said the school meets Criterion D even with the changes. She said she wouldn't argue about any other criteria included.

Ms. Johnson said she was undecided and said just the scale was impressive along the block. She said the design makes a big statement especially with repeated window pattern. She said there is not a lot of decoration and when pieces were removed, it made a difference. She didn't support designation although she appreciated the arguments for, especially the one about fewer landmarks in this area.

Mr. Coney said the auditorium and gymnasium are significant aspects. It is important to have a landmark in this part of town. He said there have been other instances where windows were replaced and still the building was designated. He said window replacement is reversible, especially if modernized in a nice way. He said it could be better than what was used to

replace the windows. He asked for support, to go with the majority of board members for the benefit of the community.

Action: I move that the Board approve the designation of Aki Kurose Middle School at 3928 S Graham Street as a Seattle Landmark; noting the legal description above; that the designation is based upon satisfaction of Designation Standards D and F; that the features and characteristics of the property identified for preservation include: the site, and the exterior of the building.

MM/SC/HW/RUS 4:1:1 Motion failed. Ms. Johnson opposed. Mr. Inpanbutr recused himself.

Mr. Inpanbutr left the audience and returned to the Board panel.

061621.3 CONTROLS & INCENTIVES

061621.31 La Quinta Apartments
1710 E Denny Way
Request for extension

Ms. Doherty explained the owner's request for a three-month extension. She said she submitted a draft C&I agreement to the owner who needs additional time to review it. She said ownership is an estate so there is more than one person that needs to weigh in.

Jessica Clawson, McCullough Hill Leary said the estate is trying to think about what to do; the property will probably be sold.

Mr. Inpanbutr said the request is reasonable.

Action: I move to defer consideration of Controls and Incentives for La Quinta Apartments, 1710 E. Denny Way, for three months.

MM/SC/MI/HW 6:0:0 Motion carried.

061621.32 Battelle Memorial Institute / Talaris Conference Center
4000 NE 41st Street
Request for extension

Ms. Doherty explained the owner's request for a six-month or twelve-month extension.

Jessica Clawson, McCullough Hill Leary said there is an application in to redevelop the property and they were recently before the ARC to talk about proposed fence for security. She said the project is still going through EIS and there is not a lot of progress on the application which is why they asked for six-month extension.

Ms. Doherty noted the public comment provided and clarified that the fence Certificate of Approval application is not related to the Controls and Incentives agreement extension.

Ms. Johnson said she has seen a couple proposals at ARC and asked if any more briefings are planned or if they are waiting on SDCI.

Ms. Clawson said there is not much changed and there will be no real update until the EIS is underway.

Ms. Chang asked for clarification on the EIS / SDCI review and why it takes so long.

Ms. Clawson said it is basic land use and noted the owner applied to subdivide the property for 60 single family homes. She said some buildings would be preserved. She said SDCI will make the threshold determination. It is easier if there are not significant impacts on environment but here SDCI thought there could be significant adverse impacts to tree removal and destruction of historic resources. She said that requires and Environmental Impact Study, EIS be provided. Alternatives to proposed action are provided or a different course of action is stated. It is hard to agree to controls when the findings of the study have yet to come out.

Ms. Doherty asked if the property owner has started the EIS.

Ms. Clawson said they don't have the alternatives yet, so they are waiting on the city to set them.

Ms. Doherty said in the EIS scoping summary the alternatives are noted. She asked if the owner is questioning that.

Ms. Clawson said yes they are.

Ms. Doherty asked if they are continuing to discuss this with SDCI before proceeding.

Ms. Clawson said yes.

Ms. Johnson said SDCI takes a long time, up to 12 months. She said it makes sense with this property to have updates.

Mr. Coney said keep it to six-month extension. He said the board asked for a landscape maintenance plan and asked if the owner is doing anything.

Ms. Clawson said they do maintain the property to ensure it is not a hazard. She said as it gets dry, they will keep the brush down and keep things trimmed. She said they won't do elite landscaping, just keep it safe.

Ms. Wasserman said she hates to see the deterioration. She said to keep the deferment to six months so board will know the status.

Mr. Rodezno agreed with Mr. Coney and Ms. Wasserman on a six-month extension. He said the developer / owner has not been forthright with the board. He said a level of checks in place is critical as the owner won't do it on their own.

Action: I move to defer consideration of Controls and Incentives for Battelle Memorial Institute / Talaris Conference Center, 4000 NE 41st Street, for six months.

MM/SC/MI/HW 6:0:0 Motion carried.

061621.5 STAFF REPORT

Respectfully submitted,

Erin Doherty, Landmarks Preservation Board Coordinator

Sarah Sodt, Landmarks Preservation Board Coordinator