



The City of Seattle

Pioneer Square Preservation Board

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PSB 69/26

Staff Report

Board meeting April 1, 2026

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.

040126. 1 Prefontaine Headhouse

425 3rd Ave

Sound Transit

Proposed alterations to the headhouse structure

Staff report: The Board was briefed on the project on Feb 4. The board made recommendations about w options presented and the Board did not think that screen over the plinth was a feature to highlight with lighting. The final proposal reflects those preferences of the Board. The headhouse was built in the early 1990's and the people figure art work was part of the original design.

There are no guidelines specific to headhouses so the review would consider the guidelines for building to the extent that they apply to structure such as a headhouse. Assuming that the some of the features were designed to be compatible with the District, for example the metal construction and barrel-vaulted ceiling similar to the Pioneer Park Pergola, etc. the Board should consider if compatibility with the District is maintained or even improved. The applicant has presented challenges of original design elements that make the structure more susceptible to vandalism and more difficult to repair, leaving it in a state that distracts from the district. The desire for improvements has been brought up in numerous meetings and studies.

Draft Motion:

I move to recommend granting a Certificate of Approval for alterations to the headhouse structure. All per the applicant's submittal.

The Board directs staff to prepare a written recommendation of approval based on considering the application submittal and Board discussion at the April 1, 2025 public meeting and forward this written recommendation to the Department of Neighborhoods Director.

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.

23.66.180 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.

Rules for the Pioneer Square Preservation District

III. GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR REHABILITATION AND NEW CONSTRUCTION

New construction must be visually compatible with the predominant architectural styles, building materials and inherent historic character of the District. (7/99) Although new projects need not attempt to duplicate original facades, the design process ought to involve serious consideration of the typical historic building character and detail within the District.

- 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)

Issued: March 25, 2026

Genna Nashem

Pioneer Square Preservation Board Coordinator