



The City of Seattle

## International Special Review District

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ISR D 07/26

### MINUTES FOR THE MEETING OF TUESDAY, January 13, 2026

Time: 4:30 p.m.

Place: Hirabayashi Place, 442 S. Main St., Donne Chin Community Room (in-person)  
Hybrid Meeting

#### **Board Members Present**

Heather Hargesheimer (HHarg), Chair  
Hyan Ho (HH)  
Kyle Jacobson (KJ)  
Adrian Lam (AL)  
Samantha Wong (SW), Vice Chair  
Jade Yan (JY)  
Zhiyun Zhu (ZZ)

#### **Staff Present**

Rebecca Frestedt (RF)  
Nelson Pesigan (NP)  
Lilian Young (LY)

#### **Interpreters:**

Arden Cai  
Howard Chou

#### **Absent**

None

#### **Key**

BM Board member  
AP Applicant  
SM Staff member

Vice Chair Samantha Wong called the meeting to order at 4:42 p.m.

#### **011326.1 ROLL CALL**

SM Rebecca Frestedt introduced two new board members Hyan Ho and Zhiyun Zhu.

BM Hyan Ho introduced himself as the owner of International Lobster Rolls in Chinatown, which has been operating since May 2025.

BM Ho previously worked in property management and affordable housing and spent ten years as a social worker. He noted that he has long been active in the community and local organizations and expressed enthusiasm about joining the board to contribute positively to the neighborhood.

SM Frestedt noted that the two new members were elected in the 2025 election. Zhiyun Zhu is a Cantonese speaker and is receiving real-time interpretation through a Community Liaison in Cantonese.

**011326.2 APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES**

October 14, 2025

MM/SC/JY/KJ

5:0:2

The motion passed. Board members Hyan Ho and Zhiyun Zhu abstained

October 23, 2025 *deferred*

BM Kyle Jacobson requested an addition or revision to the minutes, and the Board decided to defer approval until the next meeting.

October 28, 2025

MM/SC/HH/KJ

4:0:3

The motion passed. Board members Samantha Wong, Hyan Ho and Zhiyun Zhu abstained.

**011326.3 PUBLIC COMMENTS**

There were no public comments

**011326.4 CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL**

712 S. King St., - Dynasty Room at Uncle Bob's Place

Applicant: Yuko Kunugi, Suyama Peterson Deguchi

Record number: DONH-COA-09162

SM Frestedt introduced Chris Hadad, Suyama Peterson Deguchi Architecture firm, and Evan Chan, Edge Development to present the proposed tenant space on the ground floor of the existing 8-story mixed-used building, Uncle Bob's Place. This space has been vacant since the completion of the shell and core construction in 2023. The owner proposes to use this space as an event space.

The presentation focused primarily on the change of use from restaurant to event space.

AP Chan provided additional context on the proposed use of the space, noting that although a previous tenant had progressed through permitting, they ultimately withdrew, allowing the owners to return to their original vision. The intent is to create a flexible, community-driven venue accessible to residents, local artists, nonprofits, and small businesses.

AP Chan emphasized that the space would support a wide range of activities, including cultural workshops, community meetings, youth programs, pop-up markets, art exhibits, performances, fitness and wellness classes, and small private events. AP Chan also highlighted opportunities for food-focused programming, drawing on his family's long history in the neighborhood's restaurant industry.

The goal is to generate positive foot traffic, activate the corner, complement the soon-to-open Bush Garden restaurant, and provide an affordable, welcoming platform for creative, cultural, and community uses.

Board members raised several considerations regarding the proposed permanent change of use to an event space.

Vice Chair Wong emphasized the need to think carefully about long-term implications, including whether future ownership changes should trigger a reversion to the original use, and highlighted concerns about maintaining diverse programming rather than allowing recurring rentals to dominate.

Chair Hargesheimer expressed strong support for the concept and encouraged exploring potential partnerships with the Wing Luke Museum to further activate the space.

BM Yan underscored the importance of equitable access, noting that some neighborhood groups may not be able to afford standard rental rates and urging attention to affordability.

BM Jacobson reflected on precedent-setting challenges, noting that each approval contributes to cumulative change in the district and that commitments to community use are difficult to enforce, while also acknowledging that active ground-floor uses align with ISRD goals.

BM Lam voiced concern about the unpredictability of activity in an event-space model, cautioning that limited daytime use could result in the appearance of an empty storefront despite the intended community benefits.

Action:

I move that the International Special Review District Board recommend approval of a Certificate of Approval for change of use, 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 January 13, 2026 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 23.66.030**

Certificates of Approval – application, review and appeals

SMC 23.66.320 – Permitted uses

SMC 23.66.326 – Street-level uses

SMC 23.66.336 – Exterior building finishes

B. Asian Design Character District

4. Transparency Requirement

MM/SC/KJ/AL

7:0:0

The motion passed and approved unanimously.

**011326.5 STAFF SUMMARY AND BOARD BUSINESS**

SM Frestedt noted that, since the board did not meet in December, a significant number of applications have been reviewed in the interim and encouraged anyone interested in the full list to visit the board’s website, where all applications are posted for closer review.

Vice Chair Wong adjourned the board meeting at 6:02 pm and transitioned into the Architectural Review Committee meeting.

**011326.6 ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW COMMITTEE**

**011326.61 1001 S. Jackson St. – Little Saigon Landmark**

Applicant: Doug Leigh, Mithun

Record number: DONH-COA-01875

Briefing on proposed Final Design elements associated with the Little Saigon Landmark Project. Briefing will review construction documents and refinements made since June 10, 2025 briefing.

SM Frestedt explained that the update pertains to the proposed new construction at 1001 South Jackson Street, part of the Little Saigon Landmark Project and noted that the project has been reviewed by the ISRD Board multiple times since November 2023, with the most recent briefing in June 2024.

The board previously issued a Certificate of Approval in May 2024 for demolition of the existing structure and for the preliminary design of the new building.

The current review focuses specifically on final materials, colors, landscaping, and architectural detailing.

AP Doug Leigh, project manager at Mithun, reported that the project has reached a significant milestone with the Office of Housing awarding the full requested funding. The developer, Seattle Chinatown International District PDA, is awaiting final decisions from two remaining public funders and is optimistic about receiving awards by the end of the month, which will complete the project’s financing.

AP Leigh stated that they anticipate closing on financing and breaking ground in June of this year and added that the building permit is nearly ready to issue, with only ISRD approval and a few remaining owner-executed legal documents outstanding.

Presenter Casey Huang summarized the key design updates made since the previous briefing. Based on community feedback received after the 2024 presentation, the team implemented three major changes: first, the upper six floors facing Jackson Street and 10th Avenue were revised from fiber-cement panels to thin brick. Second, the window frame color was changed from white to an adobe tone to better complement the new brick material. Third, window sizes were adjusted—some slightly enlarged—to align with the dimensional requirements of the thin brick system.

Presenter Tammy Lee, Landscape Architect, Mithun, outlined the street improvement plan, noting that the project will include standard concrete sidewalks and 5.5-foot planters with street trees.

Presenter Huang explained the two zoning departures requested for the project. The first concerns the required common recreation area: the code requires 3,758 square feet, but the project can provide only 2,875 square feet due to program needs for affordable housing, resulting in a 23.5% reduction.

The second departure relates to maximum façade width above 75 feet. To meet the community's request for a 10,000-square-foot Vietnamese Cultural Center, the design incorporates a mezzanine and increased floor height, pushing the building above the 75-foot threshold and extending the façade length to 155 feet 4 inches—about 12% over the code limit.

Chair Hargesheimer expressed strong support for the design updates, noting that the shift to thin brick—though more challenging and costly—will significantly enhance the overall quality of the project and encouraged careful attention to detailing at corners, window surrounds, and other transitions, as these areas can visually weaken if not executed well.

Chair Hargesheimer also hoped the murals would incorporate opportunities for color, reflecting the vibrancy seen elsewhere in the International District.

Vice Chair Wong had no new concerns and expressed appreciation for the upgraded façade materials, noting that the renderings highlight the improvements well.

BM Lam continues to support the two departures requested, emphasizing that they help preserve the quality and efficiency of the affordable-housing units. BM Lam stated that the design team has maximized what is feasible within the constraints, and for that reason considers the departures justified and appropriate.

Vice Chair Wong adjourned the meeting at 6:37 p.m.