



The City of Seattle

## Pike Place Market Historical Commission

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

MHC 1/24

January 9, 2024

David Graves  
Seattle Parks and Recreation  
300 Elliott Ave W Suite 100  
Seattle, WA Seattle 98119

Dear David Graves,

At its meeting of December 14, 2023, the Pike Place Market Historical Commission considered your application (DONH-COA-01146) to modify Certificate of Approval MHC 93/19 which pertains to the physical renovation of the Victor Steinbrueck Park located at 2001 Western Ave. The current application proposed to: (1) permanently, rather than temporarily, remove the two totem poles from the park; (2) re-open the park upon completion of renovations; and (3) install features designed by the Suquamish and Muckleshoot Tribes where the totem poles had previously been located. In its judgment the element of the proposal to permanently remove the totem poles does not conform to the intent of Seattle Municipal Code 25.24 and the commission's guidelines. By resolution, the commission hereby denies that portion of the application. The remaining elements of the application have been tabled, also by resolution.

The following information was considered in order to render this decision:

Commission staff presented a verbal and written summary of the proposal. These included a written statement by the applicant outlining reasons for the request, details about the timeline and approach to implementing the proposal, the status on preserving and restoring the two totem poles, Certificate of Approval MHC 93/19 and its corresponding approved plans, photos of the park, and a rendering showing the proposed location of the new artwork, which has not

yet been designed. Commission staff summarized the Design Review Committee's report from its meeting on December 6, 2023.

There were 26 written public comments provided to the commission in advance of the meeting. Twenty-five expressed opposition to the proposal. One expressed support for the proposal. There were 19 public comments made during the meeting, and all but one expressed opposition to the proposal. You were given an opportunity to make additional comments about the application.

Commission members next discussed the application. The discussion focused on the poles being an integral and character-defining feature of Victor Steinbrueck Park, and on the poles serving as an iconic element of the Pike Place Market Historical District as whole. There was also commission discussion of Native American artistic representation in the public realm and the importance of ensuring the poles were being properly preserved.

The nine commissioners unanimously voted to table the component of the proposal requesting re-opening of the park upon completion of renovations, citing that they did not have sufficient information to reach a decision. The nine commissioners also unanimously voted to table the component of the proposal requesting installation of features designed by the Suquamish and Muckleshoot Tribes, citing that they did not have sufficient information to reach a decision. Seattle Parks and Recreation will provide further information regarding the two tabled components of the application. Regarding the element of the proposal requesting to permanently, rather than temporarily, remove the two totem poles from the park, six commissioners were opposed to the proposal and three abstained from the vote. Therefore, that portion of the current application was denied.

The following guidelines were applied in order to render this decision:

#### 2.12 "Victor Steinbrueck Park"

Section 2.12.6 states "The Park's character-defining features should be retained and should not be altered, disguised or concealed." The guideline specifically identifies the totem poles as being among the park's character-defining features. The commission determined that removal of the poles would be inconsistent with this guideline.

#### 3.6 "Signs"

Section 3.6.4 states "Significant historic signs, symbols or icons of the Market must be preserved...If a significant historic sign, symbol, or icon of the Market is moved from its

site, it should be displayed in a public place within the District.” The commission determined the totem poles to be an iconic element of the Market and that the proposal to remove them, and not replace them within the park or another location in the District, would be inconsistent with this guideline.

Sincerely,

Grace Leong, Commission Chairperson

By:



Minh Chau Le, Commission Coordinator  
Pike Place Market Historical Commission

**IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR ISSUANCE OF YOUR LETTER OF DENIAL:**

**APPEAL PROCEDURE:** Any interested person of record may appeal to the City Hearing Examiner the decision of the Commission per SMC 25.24.080. A written notice of the appeal, a copy of this decision, and a \$85.00 filing fee must be filed with the Office of the Hearing Examiner (mailing address: P.O. Box 94729, Seattle, WA 98124-4729; physical address: Suite 4000, 700 Fifth Avenue, Seattle, WA 98104) within fourteen (14) days after the date the Commission’s decision is issued.

The appealable decision on your Certificate of Approval application has now been published. At the conclusion of the appeal period (see above), your Denial will be issued, and you will be notified at that time. Questions regarding the issuance and expiration of your Denial may be addressed to Commission Coordinator Minh Chau Le (206-684-0229, [minhchau.le@seattle.gov](mailto:minhchau.le@seattle.gov)).