

# **CB 120456: *Administrative Review Protocols for Historic Preservation***

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**Neighborhoods, Education, Civil Rights and Culture Committee**  
*Seattle City Council*  
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# Administrative Review and the Historic Preservation Program

- In 2020, the City Council passed Ordinances 126072 and 126188, which temporarily allowed Certificate of Approval (CoA) applications for minor alterations to be handled administratively by staff instead of requiring board or commission review at a public meeting. These temporary provisions will expire on December 30, 2022.
- The SMC has long provided administrative review authority for certain, minor application types that would otherwise be referred to the Landmarks Preservation Board, both for individually designated landmarks and for properties within the Fort Lawton Landmark District and the Sand Point Naval Air Station Landmark District.

# Temporary Provisions

*will expire December 30, 2022*

- Examples of minor alterations currently eligible for administrative review by staff include signage, awnings, storefront renovations and building systems upgrades.
- New construction, demolition and major redevelopment proposals are not eligible for administrative review.
- Regardless of whether a CoA is handled administratively or reviewed by a board or commission, all SMC requirements and adopted guidelines are adhered to.
- CoA submittal requirements and review timelines are the same regardless of whether an application is subject to administrative or board/commission review.

# Historic Preservation and Administrative Review in other Municipalities

- **City of Los Angeles:** Board review of major alterations and staff review of minor alterations.
- **City of San Antonio:** Board review of major alterations, additions and demolitions; most other types of alterations reviewed by staff.
- **City of San Francisco:** Staff review of smaller project types including storefront alterations, signage, security equipment, mechanical equipment, landscaping and art.
- **City of Denver:** Staff review of small projects that clearly meet regulatory guidelines.
- **New York City:** Staff review of smaller project types including signage, additions to non-primary elevations and mechanical systems.

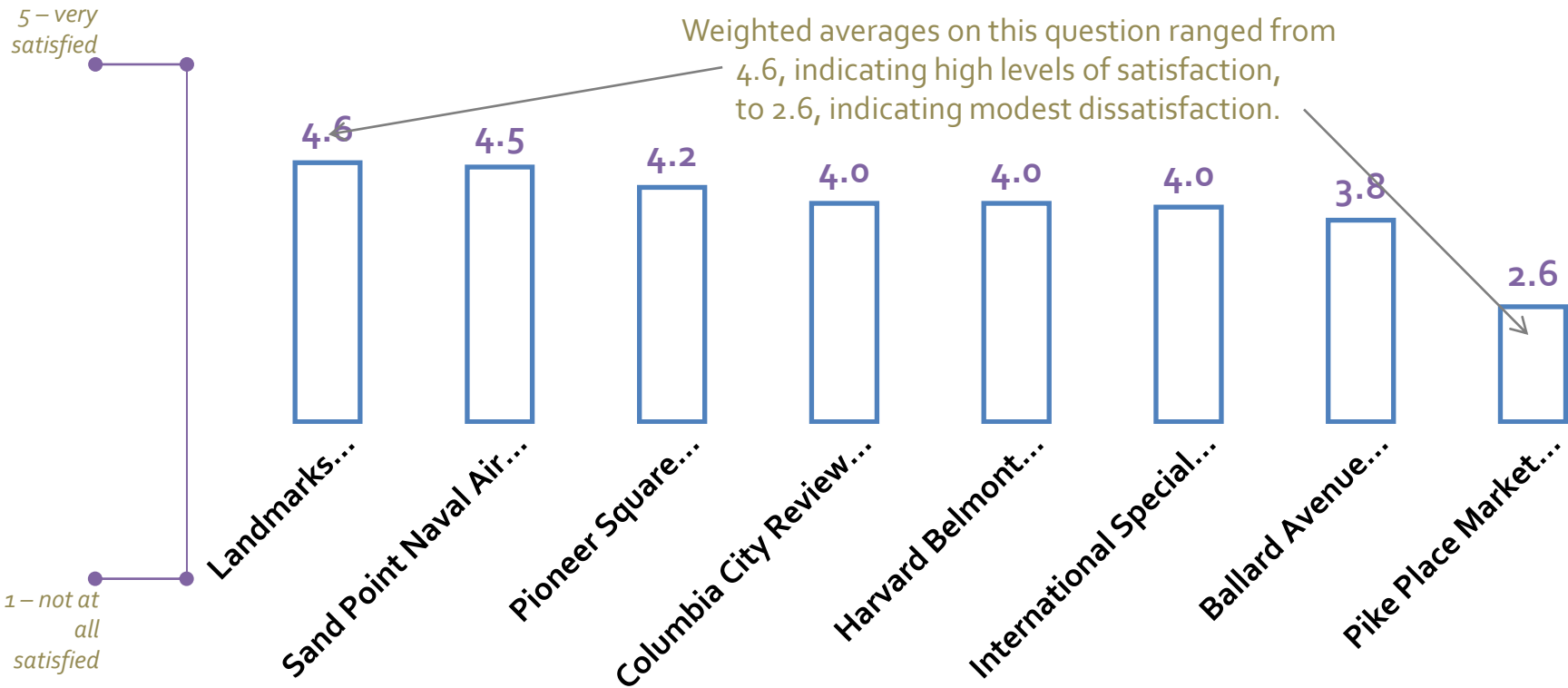
# Benefits of Administrative Review

- Minor CoA decisions are often made more quickly without the need to schedule public board/commission meetings.
- Simplified and less expensive regulatory process for applicants.
- Board/commission meetings and volunteer resources can focus on more complex applications.

# Outreach and Engagement

- In late 2021, DON engaged Broadview Planning to collect feedback on the Historic Preservation Program's temporary administrative review procedures. Broadview Planning utilized stakeholder interviews, case study analyses and a community survey in their engagement efforts.
- Two takeaways from Broadview Planning's work:
  - 1) Support for making the temporary administrative review procedures permanent is generally strong across the City's historic districts and boards, with Pike Place Market representing a more mixed response.
  - 2) More clarity and transparency are needed in the business practices for administrative review.

# Respondents' satisfaction with the administrative review process varied based on their board or district affiliation



Source: Broadview Planning

# CB 120456: Content Overview

- Would more permanently codify many – though not all – of the temporary administrative review provisions in place for the Historic Preservation Program.
- Takes a tailored approach to administrative review across the City’s historic districts to better reflect their unique architectural, cultural, and community features.
- See Central Staff matrix for a detailed breakdown of how CB 120456 would apply administrative review across the City’s historic districts and boards.



# CB 120456 and Administrative Review in the Pike Place Market Historical District

## *Proposed language:*

### **SMC 25.24.070.C**

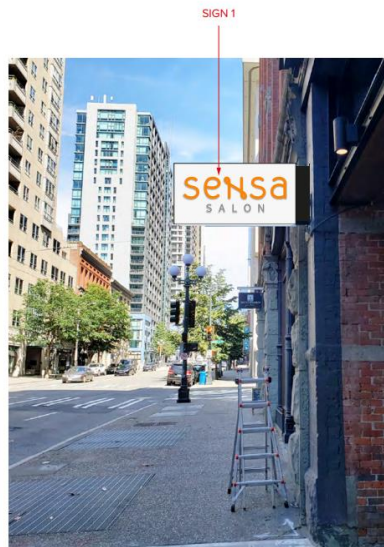
1. The installation, removal, or alteration of: fire escapes, ducts, conduits, HVAC vents, grilles, pipes, panels (including photovoltaic panels), weatherheads, wiring, meters, utility connections, downspouts and gutters, or other similar mechanical, electrical or telecommunication elements necessary for the normal operation of the site, building, or structure.
2. Installation of improvements for accessibility compliance.
3. Installation, removal, or alteration of fire and life safety equipment.
4. Alterations or changes to accommodate seismic improvements.

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**Note:** *All other application types – including, but not limited to, signage and awning installations, interior alterations, use review, new construction and major redevelopment projects – would **not** be eligible for administrative review. These types of applications would all still be reviewed by the Pike Place Market Historical Commission.*

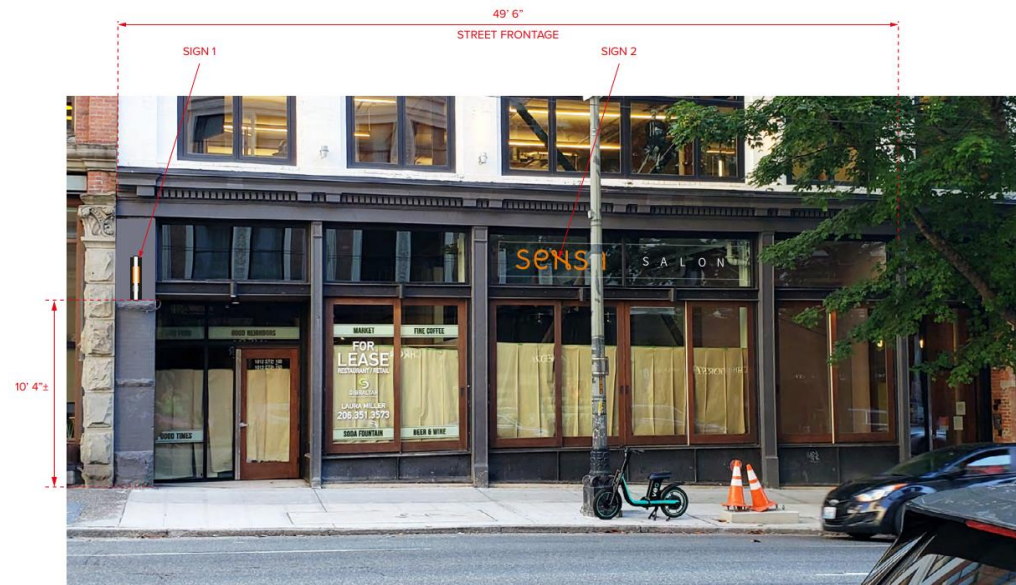
# Case Study #1: *The Standard Building* Administrative Review by DON Staff

## The Standard Building, 1012 First Avenue *New business signage*



SOUTH ELEVATION

SIDEWALK WIDTH IS 15FT AT SIGN LOCATION



WEST ELEVATION

# Case Study #2: *Pacific Telephone & Telegraph Garfield Exchange*

Board/Commission Review by Landmarks Preservation Board

Pacific Telephone & Telegraph Garfield Exchange, 1529 4th Avenue West  
*Penthouse addition, entry alterations and window replacement*



# Proposed Business Practice Improvements for CoAs Eligible for Administrative Review

- Publish notices of decision via email and on DON's website.
- Publish updated instruction materials for CoA applicants, including details about review timelines.
- Update DON's website to provide further clarity around when a CoA application can be reviewed administratively by staff and when board/commission review is required.
- Include a standing item on all historic preservation board/commission agendas for regular staff reports on administratively issued CoAs.

# Questions and Discussion

Thank you!