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April 2021

Protecting neighbourhood character while allowing growth?

Pike/Pine Conservation Overlay District, Seattle, Washington

ABSTRACT

The City of Seattle created the Pike /Pine Conservation Overlay District in 2009 to preserve the character of the Pike/Pine Corridor (neighbourhood) while simultaneously accommodating substantial growth in the number of residents and the size of buildings. Pike/Pine is known for its adaptively reused collection of early twentieth century 'Auto Row' buildings and for the diversity of its population. Since the year 2000, proximity to downtown has made this area attractive for development, and the city has designated Pike/Pine as a growth centre in its comprehensive plan. The city's implementation of the Pike/Pine Conservation Overlay District (one of the first uses of a conservation district in a commercial/mixed-use neighbourhood in the United States) seeks to address the conflict inherent in accommodating growth while simultaneously trying to protect older architecture, small-scale local businesses, and a diverse mix of housing. This article analyses the elements and impacts of this unusual district, considering its application of façade retention for townscape conservation as well as analysing its broad approach within the framework of integrated conservation. This article argues that the Pike/Pine Conservation Overlay District offers a useful case study for other cities looking to support growth while also retaining elements of the past.

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Protecting neighbourhood character while allowing growth? Pike/Pine Conservation Overlay District, Seattle, Washington

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Introduction

This article presents the case of the City of Seattle's Pike/Pine Conservation Overlay District, enacted in 2009, in an effort to conserve the 'character' of the Pike/Pine neighbourhood while simultaneously supporting significant growth in the number of residential units by allowing larger buildings. The district is an attempt to retain the neighbourhood's architectural and social 'character' while simultaneously addressing the regional mandate to accommodate a growing population in places that are already urbanized. The problem of balancing growth and conservation (called 'historic preservation' in the U.S.) is a challenge faced by many cities worldwide. The case of Pike/Pine is particularly instructive due to Seattle's explosive growth, reflected in the increase of the metropolitan population from 2.6 million to nearly 4 million since 1990 and the corresponding 77 percent increase in the downtown population in the same period.

(Fig. 1 near here) [districts map]

Located within walking distance of Seattle's downtown, the Pike/Pine Corridor is one of Seattle's designated growth centres under its comprehensive plan. At the same time, the City recognizes the Pike/Pine neighbourhood as unique in Seattle, both for its

collection of early twentieth century light industrial buildings (reminders of when the area was Seattle's 'Auto Row') and for the diversity of its population and late twentieth century history as a Gay neighbourhood and of the city's counter-cultural music and arts scene.¹ In fact, it is the area's character, described as 'industrial, gritty, urban, artistic, and youthful',² as well as its proximity to Seattle's urban core, that has made Pike/Pine attractive to the city's burgeoning population of younger professionals and tech workers. Therefore, the Pike/Pine Conservation Overlay District seeks to accommodate growth and simultaneously to retain qualities that residents and visitors treasure.

(Figure 2 near here) [Davis & Hoffman]

The unusual approach taken by the City in the Pike/Pine Conservation Overlay District Ordinance is easily perceived in photos of the area. Within the District, new construction often overshadows retained historical elements. The surviving historical fragments in many cases appear as façades attached to much larger structures. However, the regulations imposed by the Conservation District address more than façades address ground level uses and transparency, residential and commercial development, and support for the arts, all with the goal of protecting neighbourhood character.³ Still, protection of character has proved quite challenging because character is a broad term based on perceptions of both physical attributes such as the historical fabric, which can be protected, and non-physical qualities such as a diverse mix of residents, businesses and activities, which are much more difficult to address through regulation. Adding complexity are the extraordinarily strong protections of private property rights (called 'vested rights') in Washington State, limiting the actions that can be taken by the public

¹ Chalana, "Balancing History and Development," 182.

² Lund Consulting, "Pike/Pine Neighborhood Conservation Study," 14.

³ City of Seattle, "Pike Pine Conservation Overlay District."

sector. In this legal context, the Pike/Pine Conservation District regulations offer the incentive of additional height if the street-facing façades of pre-1940 character structures are retained in new development.

Attempting to protect a historical neighbourhood while also accepting growth is an idea that is particularly conflicted. Some commentators, notably economist Edward Glaeser, have critiqued the protection of neighbourhoods as historic districts arguing that the protections in these districts limit growth and negatively impact real estate markets.⁴ Such commentaries present a binary opposition between historic districts that allow little change and areas without historical regulations that can accept substantial growth. Seattle's Pike/Pine District presents an alternative, one that seeks to protect neighbourhood character and historical features, yet also allow growth.

A challenge for our analysis of the Pike/Pine Conservation District is that conservation districts in the United States, as distinct from historic districts, have emerged only in the past few decades and have rarely been theorized or subjected to critical analysis. Conservation districts arose in the United States as a pragmatic solution to the problem of how to protect the scale and character of older neighbourhoods that did not require regulation or review to the same degree as areas with a collection of historically significant resources.⁵

In our examination of Seattle's Pike/Pine Conservation Overlay District, we draw upon the analytical frameworks offered by two distinct but interrelated discussions of heritage conservation and economic development. Broadly, we consider the District in the context of 'integrated conservation,' an idea that emerged in city and town planning

⁴ Glaeser, *Triumph of the City*, 150-151, 260-264.

⁵ Kelly and Goodman, "Conservation Districts," 6-14.

and conservation/preservation in the 1970s. More narrowly, we consider the specific Pike/Pine approach of retention of street-facing façades of pre-1940 'character structures' within the debate about façadism relative to townscape and urban conservation.

Background and Literature

Preservation in the United States has always been decentralized as land use regulation is a power reserved to the states and allocated to cities. Thus, when historic districts were first conceived nearly a century ago, it was cities that took the lead. Charleston, South Carolina, created the first American historic district in 1931. Charleston's identification of a specific area with a collection of historically significant buildings, plus a set of guidelines, and a requirement that changes be approved by a Board of Review, became a model followed thereafter in almost all other cities that have created historic districts.⁶ Today, historic district ordinances typically regulate the design of alterations and improvements to the exteriors of the historic buildings as well as the design of any new in-fill construction; many regulate the design of streets, sidewalks and other public spaces as well. Some even limit interior alterations or restrict uses to those that are compatible with the character of the district.

Charleston's historic district was largely a pragmatic response to the problem of incompatible development reducing the perceived value of a historical neighbourhood. Critical questions such as what determines historical significance, what kinds of new development are considered acceptable, whether the underlying motivation for such districts might be based on exclusion, and whether such districts inevitably foster

⁶ Rose, "Preservation and Community," 504-512.

gentrification have generated an immense body of literature and some of these topics remain the subject of continuing debate.

Such debates might be extended to encompass conservation districts since these districts also seek to control change; however, because conservation districts are relatively new in the United States, most discussions to date have been primarily descriptive rather than analytical. In the United States ‘conservation districts’ or ‘neighbourhood conservation districts’, like historic districts, are typically enacted through a zoning overlay.⁷ Although similar to historic districts, conservation districts usually focus less on historical significance and more on consistency of physical form.⁸ In the residential areas where most American conservation districts are found, ordinances usually regulate a 'building's height, bulk, lot coverage, orientation, and general shape.'⁹ While there is no apparent reason why conservation overlays cannot be applied in urban commercial areas, there are few examples in the U.S. The conservation districts in residential neighbourhoods of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and in northeast Portland, Oregon, do include a few streets with commercial structures; there are several conservation districts in downtown San Francisco; however, these conservation districts are similar to historic districts, but with somewhat less stringent protections for some buildings.¹⁰

A few scholars have discussed urban conservation districts as an alternative to historic districts, but most studies have focused on these districts in residential areas. According to Kelly and Goodman, American cities began designating and regulating

⁷ Kelly and Goodman, “Conservation Districts,” 6-14; Miller, *Protecting Older Neighborhoods*.

⁸ Lovelady, “Broadened Notions of Historic Preservation,” 147-183.

⁹ Max, “Neighborhood Conservation Districts,” 14.

¹⁰ Gunn, “Protecting Seattle's Auto Row,” 30-35, 40-42.

conservation districts in the 1980s.¹¹ Lubens and Miller analyzed the frameworks shaping multiple conservation districts and found two primary types: the first similar to historic districts with legal provisions enforced through a design review board or commission; the second with conservation regulations for the neighbourhood added to the zoning ordinance with review by the zoning board.¹² Several student theses have also offered analyses of the impacts of such districts.¹³ There are also several consultant and agency reports, offering ideas for communities considering adopting conservation district ordinances including typical guidelines and procedures for such districts.

Seattle's Pike/Pine Conservation District differs from previous examples because it allows significant increases in building scale. Indeed, given that the Pike/Pine ordinance does not limit the scale of new construction to match the existing fabric, one may question whether the Pike/Pine District is properly called a 'conservation district' as the term has usually been applied. Although the Pike/Pine District seeks to manage new construction, where new development has taken place in Pike/Pine it is typically visually dominant relative to what remains of the older fabric. Because the protection is extended only to the street-facing portions of pre-1940 buildings (identified as 'character structures'), the ordinance focuses façade retention and allows removal of all other parts of historic buildings. In addition, the Pike/Pine ordinance seeks to protect neighbourhood-based small-scale businesses and to support cultural and arts uses.

Because Seattle has called the Pike/Pine District a 'conservation district,' we use that term in this article, but we recognize that some may question whether Pike/Pine properly fits

¹¹ Kelly and Goodman, "Conservation Districts."

¹² Lubens and Miller, "Protecting Older Neighborhoods." Also see: Miller, *Protecting Older Neighborhoods*.

¹³ Yeston, "Neighborhood Conservation Districts"; Allen, "Philadelphia Neighborhood Conservation."

within the commonly understood definition of a conservation district in the U.S.

Scholarly research on the Pike/Pine Corridor has been limited to a few published articles and student theses. Manish Chalana has presented a brief summary of the ordinance and the changes that have taken place since its passage, noting that the ordinance has encouraged 'facadism' and that small and local retail establishments, many of which catered to the city's LGBTQ community, are gradually being replaced; thus, the conservation district has not resolved the problem of gentrification.¹⁴ Writing in a local design tabloid, Eugenia Woo pointed to 'facadism' in the Pike/Pine Corridor and elsewhere in Seattle, calling it a flawed approach to preservation, but she did not provide any analysis of the origins, history or substantive provisions of the Pike/Pine ordinance nor did she draw on any of the literature addressing façadism.¹⁵ Several student theses offer more detail. Amber Piona's 2015 study argued that the conservation district has been most successful in protecting the architectural elements of the neighbourhood (at least the historical facades), but has been less successful in providing affordable housing and protecting the LGBTQ heritage of the area.¹⁶ Elizabeth Johnson's 2016 thesis concluded that the Pike/Pine ordinance, as applied, has not been very effective in meeting its goal of protecting the small, local, diverse ground-floor retail businesses that had given the neighbourhood much of its character.¹⁷ Jingchen Liu's 2016 thesis used GIS tools to explore relationships between some aspects of urban form and social vitality¹⁸; the thesis adopted the analytic approach used by the Preservation Green Lab, localizing it for Pike/Pine, attempting to determine if the conservation overlay had fostered diverse

¹⁴ Chalana, "Balancing History and Development," 182-184.

¹⁵ Woo, "What Price Facadism?"

¹⁶ Piona, "Protecting Neighborhood Character," 62.

¹⁷ Johnson, "Case Study," 36-73.

¹⁸ Liu, "Promote Neighborhood Character."

business types and diverse residential options.¹⁹ More generally, there have been few publications broadly addressing historic preservation in Seattle. The most comprehensive account addressing Seattle and King County, by Lawrence Kreisman, is descriptive rather than analytical, and is too old to have addressed the Pike/Pine District.²⁰

(Figure 3 - near here) [District Map]

Research Objectives, Materials and Methods

The contribution of our paper is a detailed discussion and analysis of the approach taken by the City of Seattle in the Pike/Pine District. First, we consider how the city has used façade retention as an approach to townscape preservation and urban conservation. Second, we discuss the idea of integrated conservation that emerged during the 1970s and consider how it has been transformed within the market-based framework of the Pike/Pine District.

Our primary source materials, in addition to the ordinance itself, are the records of city departments addressing Pike/Pine, primarily consultant studies, staff reports, and the like. The city's 'Pike/Pine Development Activity' list, including more than 20 mixed-use projects initiated or completed since 2011, provided an initial basis for our review of completed projects.²¹ From the list we focused primarily on projects that face primary pedestrian streets and incorporate facades of character structures. Because all these projects were all subject to the city's design review process, we were also able to review the publicly available 'design review packages' that were submitted for each project.

¹⁹ Preservation Green Lab, "Older, Smaller, Better."

²⁰ Kreisman, *Made to Last*.

²¹ City of Seattle, "Pike/Pine Development Activity," 1-20. Most projects in this document responded to the Pike/Pine Conservation District requirements, although a few originated before the implementation of the district so were exempt.

Our final selection of five buildings is based on our exploration of the district on foot in 2016 and 2019 as well as our review of documents from the city. Our selection includes some of the larger examples of new construction because these show the impacts and problems of the ordinance most clearly. Four of these buildings were illustrated in the Revised Design Guidelines adopted by the city in 2017.²² Table 1 summarizes general information about the five projects and their locations are indicated on the map in Figure 3. Because our focus is on the effectiveness of specific provisions of the Conservation District ordinance, we do not provide complete case studies of each project. Rather, we focus on how these projects responded to the regulations.

(Table 1 near here) [five projects]

Early Change in the Pike/Pine Corridor

Located in the far northwestern United States, Seattle is a young city that developed rapidly beginning in the late nineteenth century. Founded in 1851, the city grew slowly until the 1880s when rail connections to the south and east triggered the city's first 'boom.' The population that was only 3500 in 1880 reached 237,000 by 1910 and 324,000 in 1920. Outward expansion from the early city centre, fostered by the network of cablecar and streetcar lines, took the pattern of walkable single-family residential areas surrounding higher density neighbourhood commercial centres with small commercial and multi-family residential buildings. In the 1920s, as automobile ownership proliferated, the city expanded in the form of automobile-oriented suburbs, a

²² "Pike/Pine Neighborhood Design Guidelines"; of the five case study buildings in this paper, only the AVA Capitol Hill is not illustrated as an example.

pattern that continued for the next 80 years. Since the 1990s, as Seattle has continued to grow, the inner ring of neighbourhoods has become increasingly attractive because of their convenience to downtown. The city's 1994 Comprehensive Plan designated many of the historic neighbourhood commercial centres, including Pike/Pine, as 'urban villages'-- locations where growth could occur because they are highly walkable, served by transit (now in the form of buses rather than streetcars), and already zoned for increased height. In many neighbourhood commercial centres the existing fabric was only two to three stories in height, but the zoning allowed buildings 45 or 65 feet (14 or 20 meters) or four or six stories tall.

The Pike/Pine Corridor (or Pike/Pine Neighbourhood), located just northeast of downtown is one of the oldest of these neighbourhood commercial centres. Soon after the turn of the twentieth century, Pike and Pine streets (running east-west) and Broadway (running north-south), began to attract commercial uses including automobile sales and service businesses. After 1910, the area became known as 'Auto Row', the centre of Seattle's automobile industry.²³ All types of auto-related businesses prospered, including new car showrooms, service and repair shops, parts dealers, body shops and used car dealers. Several truck sales and service businesses also moved into the area.²⁴

(Figure 4 near here) [historical photo - Nute & Keena]

Many buildings still found in the Pike/Pine Corridor recall the requirements of the early auto and truck industry: two- to four-story rectangular buildings with structural

²³ Abraham, "Evolution of Seattle's Automobile Showrooms," 111-123.

²⁴ Lund Consulting, "Pike/Pine Neighborhood Conservation Study," 1, 3.

frames of heavy timber or concrete, with brick and/or terra cotta or stucco cladding and large windows. Showrooms, sales offices, and service areas were typically located on the ground floor, with vehicle storage (and occasionally service areas) on the upper floors.²⁵

As the popularity of automobiles soared in the 1920s, auto sales and service spread to all parts of the city and after 1945, most auto dealerships relocated to suburban sites that offered space for large parking areas. Auto-oriented commercial strips developed in suburban locations, leaving the commercial structures of Auto Row behind. The Auto Row buildings along Pike and Pine proved highly adaptable; many were converted to office or residential uses on the upper floors and retail at the street level. Although vestiges of the automobile industry survived in Pike/Pine, the area was generally perceived as a declining neighbourhood from 1950 to 1975, even as inexpensive rents attracted a variety of new ventures.

By the 1970s and 1980s, Pike and Pine Streets, particularly within a few blocks of Broadway, emerged as the centre of Seattle's Gay culture. The LGBTQ community did not change the neighbourhood substantially in its outward appearance; rather, this community reused spaces inside the older buildings as inexpensive residential apartments, clubs, galleries and performance spaces. The neighbourhood in this period has been described as 'bohemian'.²⁶ In the 1990s, the Pike/Pine Corridor and nearby areas became a centre for Seattle's grunge music scene, with bars, clubs, record stores, and music shops opening to cater to the youth culture.²⁷

In this period, the neighbourhood came to be called the Pike/Pine Corridor due to its linear form, two to three blocks wide, centred on Pike and Pine, the two parallel east-

²⁵ Sheridan, "Historic Property Survey Report," 23-24.

²⁶ Lund Consulting, "Pike/Pine Neighborhood Conservation Study," 3.

²⁷ Chalana, "Balancing History and Development," 182-184.

west streets. Although there had been some aggregation of land to create larger parcels (usually for the few surviving high-end auto dealers), the neighbourhood still displayed the pattern small-scale of development shaped by the initial division into urban lots, often 50 or 60 feet (15.2 or 18.2 meters) wide by 100 or 120 feet (30.5 or 36.6 meters) deep, and the older one- to four-storey buildings.

Concern about the potential impact of downtown growth with overflow into the Pike/Pine Corridor led to a series of planning studies beginning in 1991, followed by the city's establishment in 1995 of an initial Pike/Pine Overlay District with the goal of enhancing the mixed-use character of the neighbourhood.²⁸ The overlay left in place the existing Neighbourhood Commercial (NC) zoning that supports mixed-use buildings and neighbourhood-scale commercial development. The overlay limited new commercial development to the ground floors of buildings to foster multi-family residential construction on the upper floors. Designation of Pike, Pike and Broadway as 'pedestrian streets' mandated that new construction adjoin the sidewalk and support pedestrian activity through transparent glazing and activities such as retail spaces and restaurants; the city subsequently extended the pedestrian overlay to adjacent streets.²⁹ In 1998, a plan amendment reaffirmed the neighbourhood's focus on mixed-use development; this amendment also proposed a conservation district.

In the 1990s and early 2000s, Pike/Pine changed slowly. Nonetheless, as Seattle continued to grow, Pike/Pine's walkable mixed-use character, inexpensive rents, varied restaurants and bars, and close-in location of Pike/Pine began to attract a new residential population of young professionals and tech industry workers. With continuing growth,

²⁸ Pike/Pine Urban Neighborhood Coalition, "Final Neighborhood Plan," 5-6.

²⁹ City of Seattle, "Proposed Amendments," 12-14.

and the demolition of several older buildings, residents became increasingly concerned about the loss of historic fabric and neighbourhood character and began to seek stronger protection, especially as the existing 65-foot (20-meter) zoning incentivized replacement of the existing fabric usually no more than two, three and four stories in height.³⁰

Regulating Change: Legal Framework for the Pike/Pine District

For the last thirty years, land use regulation in Seattle has been shaped by the State of Washington Growth Management Act (GMA), approved in 1990, that seeks to protect agricultural lands and natural environments by focusing development in existing urban areas using urban growth boundaries.³¹ (Initially intended to protect the natural environment from sprawl, the GMA has more recently been understood as requiring the denser development necessary to address climate change and global warming.) In 1994, Seattle responded to the GMA by adopting a new Comprehensive Plan (CP) that incorporates the city's 'urban village strategy,' directing most new growth to existing commercial centres and adjacent high density residential areas, that the plan designated as urban villages.³²

Regulation of private property in Seattle has also been significantly shaped by legal decisions made in the 1980s by Washington State courts that strongly protect owners' vested rights. These decisions make it very difficult to downzone any property without either the owner's agreement or payment of compensation to the owner. The courts essentially ruled that what is not explicitly prohibited is allowed, which severely

³⁰ Ibid, 2-5.

³¹ Laschever, "Washington's Growth Management Act."

³² City of Seattle, "Comprehensive Plan," 10.

limits the discretion of public officials to intervene when projects are submitted for permits.³³

In the 1990s, the City of Seattle supported a neighbourhood-based planning program to create plans for 37 Seattle neighbourhoods.³⁴ A significant concern in most of the neighbourhood plans was protecting neighbourhood character. Actions proposed in the 1998 Pike/Pine neighbourhood plan included the creation of a ‘community heritage district that would provide preservation incentives and design review for the rehabilitation and remodelling of existing structures.’³⁵ Because city staff found no applicable precedents for conservation districts in commercial/mixed-use areas that were targeted for growth, Seattle developed its own approach for the Pike/Pine District.

Seattle had established its first historic districts in Pioneer Square and Pike Place Market in the early 1970s.³⁶ By the early 1980s, the city had designated four additional historic districts.³⁷ Since that time, however, in part because of the 1980s state court decisions strengthening private property rights, the city has designated only two additional historic districts, both on former military bases that are now city-owned property. (See Fig. 1) As a result, it would have been very difficult to establish a historic district in the Pike/Pine Corridor. Protecting Pike/Pine as a historic district would likely have required downzoning or other regulations that were neither legally nor politically feasible. Instead, the city sought an approach that protected some elements of neighbourhood character using a combination of controls and incentives.

³³ Overstreet and Kirchheim. "Quest for the Best Test to Vest."

³⁴ Siriani, "Neighborhood Planning."

³⁵ City of Seattle, "Pike/Pine Matrix," 13-14.

³⁶ Kreisman, *Made to Last*, 84-95; Shorett and Morgan, *Pike Place Market*, 136-148; Lee, "Conflicting elites and changing values."

³⁷ Kreisman, *Made to Last*, 100-112.

In the Pike/Pine Conservation Overlay District, Seattle offers incentives to support retention of character structures while simultaneously supporting new development, an approach that was feasible within Washington's vested rights doctrine.³⁸ The decision to focus on 'character structures' suggests the city was influenced by conservation districts in other U.S. cities and by the use of the term 'character' in American historic preservation. In preservation, character-defining features are defined as the visual and physical features of a historic building or site that give it its identity.³⁹ American preservation ordinances typically protect character-defining features as these features are considered essential to showing the significance of a property or site. In Pike/Pine, the city identified the character-defining features primarily as the visible physical portions of the older buildings identified as character structures (those structures whose visual and physical features contributed to the historical character of the neighbourhood). Structures not thought to contribute to neighbourhood character did not receive this designation and were not protected. The city did not implement protection of complete buildings as would typically take place in a historic district, but instead protected only the street-facing façades as the primary visible elements of the character structures. This façade protection has been called façadism, as developers receive benefits (added height and space) even if they demolish all of an historic building but retain the street-facing façades.⁴⁰

(Figure 5 near here) [AVA retaining Nute/Keena facades]

³⁸ City of Seattle, "Proposed Amendments," 1.

³⁹ Nelson, "Architectural Character."

⁴⁰ Woo, "What Price Facadism?"

When this approach was proposed in 2008, it was generally accepted by the neighbourhood, but attendees at a public forum expressed concern about the bulk and scale of the upper portions of new development.⁴¹ Although the city revised the ordinance to limit the size of the upper floors of new buildings somewhat, the zoning already provided for taller buildings, and greater limits on the added floor would have reduced the attractiveness of the incentive to retain façades. It was hoped that limiting the size of the added upper floors would provide some protection for neighbourhood scale, which, with the retention of the character structure façades, would maintain the uniqueness of the neighbourhood, while still encouraging new development.

The city adopted the Pike/Pine Conservation District ordinance in late July 2009. The boundaries of the area designated by the ordinance are shown in Figure 3). The District includes 49 complete or partial blocks (equivalent to about 35 full blocks) with 271 distinct parcels. Sixteen blocks have larger parcels resulting from the aggregation of lots over time.

Rather than create a new project review process, the Pike/Pine ordinance provided for review through the city's existing Design Review Program.⁴² Since 1993, in Seattle's commercial districts and multi-family residential districts a Design Review Board (DRB) evaluates each project's appropriateness and makes suggestions for improvements before a permit is issued.⁴³ (While the intent of design review is to encourage design improvements and make projects more responsive to the neighbourhood context, under the State's vested rights doctrine, the design review process cannot change the basic zoning and other regulations that apply to sites where projects are proposed.) Since 2009,

⁴¹ City of Seattle, "Pike/Pine Urban Conservation Strategy," 1.

⁴² Punter, *Design Guidelines in American Cities*, 31-65.

⁴³ City of Seattle, "Design Review Program," 2-4.

the DRB for this part of the city has commented on new projects including compliance with the ordinance requirements, such as retaining the historical façades to receive added height and area.

Once the ordinance took effect, developers immediately sought to obtain the additional height that was awarded as an incentive for retention of façades of character structures. Unfortunately, the city had not anticipated scale of new development. An unexpected number of larger parcels proved attractive for development in part because the ordinance was interpreted as providing added height if the street-facing façades of a single character structure were retained, even if there were multiple character structures on one site (as often occurred with larger aggregated parcels).

(Figure 6 near here) [aggregated parcels]

Amendments

Approval of the Pike/Pine Conservation District in 2009 led to a period of rapid development. In response, the city amended the ordinance several times (as shown in Table 2). Of most importance, the 2011 amendments provided stronger protections for the 62 most important character structures.⁴⁴ The 2013 amendments, anticipating the passage of time, also established 1940 as the threshold year for determining which structures contribute to the area's historical character and, therefore, receive protection.

(Table 2 near here) [amendments]

⁴⁴ City of Seattle, “Director’s Rule 3-2012,” 4-6.

The 2011 amendments also established a ‘conservation core’, an area in the centre of the district with the largest number of character structures. In the conservation core, the original pattern of lots 60 feet (18.2 meters) wide is readily apparent because fewer lots have been combined into larger parcels. (See Figure 3) In the core, the ordinance now limits the width and depth of new construction to control the size of the new upper floors on sites with character structures. Although these protections are not at the level of a traditional historic district, the combination of smaller parcels, multiple character structures and stricter requirements may serve to protect much of the core as if it had been designated as a more conventional conservation district or even a historic district. Because little new development has occurred in the conservation core, visitors currently see little new development from the corner of Pike Street and 10th or 11th Avenues; here the Pike/Pine Corridor looks almost as it did half a century ago.⁴⁵ Most recently, in 2017, the city adopted revised 'Design Guidelines' for the Pike/Pine neighbourhood. As in other neighbourhood commercial districts, the Design Guidelines suggest how new construction might be designed to be compatible with the existing context.⁴⁶ However, these guidelines are not incorporated into the Municipal Code and, therefore, are not legally enforceable. Instead they provide a framework for the Design Review Board to make suggestions for project improvements.

⁴⁵ The 2011 amendments also provide additional protection using Transfer of Development Potential (TDP; in other cities this is sometimes called 'Transfer of Development Rights'), but this has had very limited effect to date. TDP is only allowed inside the Pike/Pine District (that is, both sending and the receiving sites must be within the district), and if TDP is used, the benefit to the receiving site is no greater than the benefit for retaining the façades of the character structures. However, with the greater protections provided in the 'conservation core', TDP may become more attractive in the future, especially if the city allows receiving sites to be outside the district.

⁴⁶ "Pike/Pine Neighborhood Design Guidelines."

Façade Retention as a Conservation Approach

Although façadism (meaning façade retention) has become a common practice in many parts of the world since the 1970s, it has received limited critical analysis.

Façadism is typically seen as a necessary but undesirable compromise when property development occurs, an option between complete retention with adaptive reuse of an historic building, and demolition for construction of an entirely new structure.⁴⁷

Façadism saves the most visible part of the existing building, but allows up-to-date replacement of the interior. Conservationists (preservationists in the U.S.) generally oppose façadism except as a 'last resort', and typically advocate for retention and adaptive reuse. Many architects, influenced by the ideology of Modernism, reject façadism because the exterior is not a reflection of the interior, that is the form (of the exterior) does not follow the function (of the interior).

A few published discussions have gone beyond this superficial debate. David Highfield's 1991 monograph provides a brief introduction to the topic including a discussion of technical issues, but is primarily a collection of case studies.⁴⁸ The most developed account, by Jonathan Richards, is a bit muddled because Richards addressed more than façade retention; he proposed that façadism also includes the reconstruction of a lost façade on a new building, or even the construction of a new building with of façades in abstracted version of a historical style.⁴⁹ Nonetheless, some of the perspectives through which Richards considered façadism -- architecture, townscape,

⁴⁷ Highfield, *Construction*, 1.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Richards, *Facadism*, 7-22; Alcock, "Book Review."

urban conservation and economic -- offer a useful framework for discussion of the Pike/Pine projects.⁵⁰

By choosing not to protect the Pike/Pine Corridor as a historic district, the city opted to rely on discretionary retention of façades of character structures. What drives developers to retain the street-facing façades of character structures is the incentive of added height and area. Whereas Richards discussed the economic costs of façade retention, in the Pike/Pine District façade retention offers an economic windfall for developers. By retaining street-facing façades they gain the benefit of an additional floor that translates into more residential units; although there is an additional cost to retain the historical façades, this is more than offset by the longterm economic return.⁵¹ In addition, the extra residential units address the city's goal of increased close-in housing in a walkable, transit-friendly, and convenient neighbourhood. At the same time, city officials can point to the retained façades as addressing the neighbourhood's wish for retention of character. When critics point out that the surviving façades are only fragments of the past, city officials can argue that historical façades that would have been lost (since the area was already zoned for an increase in height) have been retained.

The Pike/Pine regulations try to avoid the appearance of façades that appear 'pasted on' to new buildings. When a façade of a character structure is retained, the ordinance requires that the new construction, which will be much taller, be set back 15 feet (4.6 meters) from the street-facing façades. The city considered this setback

⁵⁰ Richards, 23-119.

⁵¹ In Seattle, most new mixed-use structures take advantage of a building code provision that allows up to five floors of wood frame construction (for residential use) over a one- or two-story 'podium' of concrete (for retail and commercial use); parking is typically located in the basement. The incentives in the Pike/Pine District ordinance typically permit an additional wood frame residential floor without requiring more complex construction.

sufficient to provide a clear distinction between the historical facade and the larger new project and to maintain pedestrians' perception of the original streetscape. The ordinance also requires that the original floor-to-ceiling height be maintained for the footprint of the character structure, which is also intended to maintain some sense of the whole structure, not just a pasted on façade. The ordinance does not dictate a specific design approach and accepts different design solutions that may provide an acceptable relationship (evaluated by the DRB) between the old and new structure.⁵²

Multiple factors influence the effectiveness of retaining historical façades as a means of urban conservation. First, although the Pike/Pine ordinance treats all 'character structures' the same, they vary widely in size and appearance. For example, at 600 E. Pike and 714 E. Pike (numbers 1 and 2 in Table 1; Figures 7 and 9) the character structure façades are one storey in height and have simple details; at 1530 11th Avenue, 501 E. Pike and 1414 10th Avenue (numbers 3, 4 and 5 in Table 1; Figs. 2, 8 and 10) the taller character structure façades have a stronger visual presence. The height of new construction is independent of the height of the retained façades, so one-story facades visually disappear relative to new construction, whereas taller façades retain their visual presence.

(Figure 7 near here) [AVA apartment w/ blue tile]

Second, the designs of new construction also vary widely, even after design

⁵² These standards are classified as 'departable' because an applicant can argue for a departure through the design review process; for example, an applicant might request a setback of less than 15 feet (4.6 meters) along one portion of the facade in exchange for a setback greater than 15 feet (4.6 meters) along another.

review. The AVA Capitol Hill apartment project at 600 E. Pine Street (No. 1 in Table 1; Fig. 7) is a large building that extends a full block along Pike Street. During the design review process, the DRB expressed concern about its scale, but eventually permitted a five-story volume clad in blue steel tiles (a material used nowhere else in the district) above the one-storey character structures along Pike. Although this volume is set back, its dark colour makes it visually dominant, particularly relative to the small scale façades below.⁵³

(Figure 8 near here) [Sunset Electric]

In contrast, the red brick and terra cotta façade of the former one-story Sunset Electric Company at 1530 11th Avenue (Number 3 in Table 1; Fig. 8) is quite tall (about 25 feet, or 7.6 meters). The new five-story dark grey residential block above is set back from the historical facades on both street sides, although a departure permitted setbacks less than 15 feet. Nonetheless, the combination of the setback, the colour difference and the simple detailing of the new portion allow the character structure facade to retain its visual primacy.

The relation between old and new is also shaped by whether the design allows some pockets of open space to extend from the adjacent sidewalk. At 1414 10th Avenue (Number 5 in Table 1; Fig. 2) the new portion is set back both above and adjacent to the retained two-story Davis & Hoffman Building facades, leaving the old portion to read as a distinct volume against the background of the much larger new construction. The new

⁵³ Kandel, *The Age of Insight*, 264-268. As Kandel explains, a dark colour is a monocular cue that makes an object appear closer and larger than it actually is.

construction is white in colour and so recedes visually. 714 E. Pike (Number 2 in Table 1; Fig. 9), the former Pike Motorworks Building, has a curved one-storey façade enclosing a semi-circular open space fronting the sidewalk retained in the new design; although the new construction is five stories above the facade, this open space and unusual curved element provides visual relief and a distinct identity for the Pike Street side of this building.

(Figure 9 near here) [Pike Motorworks restaurant]

Richards noted that that façade retention can be seen as 'a clear indicator of the process of social and economic change in an area', and added that it also conveys that the change is 'deeper seated and permanent.'⁵⁴ Although the scale of new construction in Pike/Pine suggests that visitors will always be able to read the different ages, to perceive layers of change and to have some sense of what the district was like before the present cycle of growth, the degree to which change is perceived depends directly on the relation between old and new. The differences of the new and old portions, as at 1530 11th Avenue and 1414 10th Avenue (Numbers 3 and 5 in Table 1; Figs. 2, 8), the Sunset Electric and Davis & Hoffman buildings, clearly reveal the changes that have taken place. At 600 E. Pike (Number 1 in Table 1; Fig. 7) reading the layers of history is much more difficult. Reading these layers is also more challenging at the Dunn Motors Building at 501 E. Pike (Number 4 in Table 1; Fig. 10) because the designer chose to mimic the colours and textures of the historical two-story façades fronting the streets in the new setback construction above. In conservation (historic preservation) practice today, some

⁵⁴ Richards, 26.

differentiation between new and old is generally encouraged; instead, the design at 501 E. Pike confuses old and new.⁵⁵

(Figure 10 near here) [501 E. Pike]

When Richards considered façade retention as a way to conserve the townscape he assumed that the new construction would be concealed behind the historical façades, so that one's experience of the sequence of urban space would remain essentially what it had been even as the construction behind the façades was replaced and the functions changed.⁵⁶

Although Seattle officials hoped to limit the visual impact of the higher density mixed-use development allowed under the District ordinance, they had little power to do so. The already existing 65-foot (20 meter) zoning envelope was vested, so structures up to six floors were already allowed (in contrast to the existing Pike/Pine fabric that was mostly one to three stories in height). In the new District the incentive for retaining character structure façades, a height increase of ten feet (three meters), allows for an additional floor. In most of the District, retaining character structure façades also triggers a 25 percent increase in the 15,000 square foot (1395 square meters) limit on the upper floors.⁵⁷

⁵⁵ Tiller, "Obey the Imperatives," 6-13; Semes, "'Differentiated' and 'Compatible'," 14-20. The "Pike/Pine Neighborhood Design Guidelines" illustrates both Seattle Electric and Dunn Motors indicating that both completely "differentiated" and fully "compatible" approaches are acceptable under design review.

⁵⁶ Richards, 55-69.

⁵⁷ City of Seattle, "Staff Report – June 20, 2013," 6, 12. To limit the visual impact of the added bulk, amendments adopted in 2014 require that increased floor size must be placed in a single location.

Where construction has taken place in the District since 2009, it is clearly visible. However, when one walks along the sidewalk of a street where a character structure façade has been retained, the 15-foot setback of the adjacent new taller structure usually makes that new structure invisible. This experience is enhanced when sidewalk canopies (common in Seattle due to the rainy climate), have been added as these further limit the view of the new construction above. Street trees often have a similar effect. Thus, the combination of historical facade and new construction setback partially retains the historical small-scale pedestrian experience in the Pike/Pine Corridor, although change to the townscape is always apparent as soon as one looks across the street. The result is a mix: Part of the historic streetscape experience remains even as the scale of townscape has changed.

(Figure 11 near here) [pedestrian level view]

Integrated Conservation in Pike/Pine

Integrated conservation is an idea that was first advanced in the late 1960s and early 1970s as conservation (historic preservation) began to shift from a concern with individual monuments to a concern with the older sections of towns and cities. Unlike the approach of the Venice Charter (1964) that focused on the material fabric of individual monuments, integrated conservation was to encompass the social, economic, cultural, historical and architectural value of historical urban neighbourhoods. This idea was embodied in the 1975 *European Charter of the Architectural Heritage* that recognized the importance of 'groups of lesser buildings in our old towns and

characteristic villages.⁵⁸ As proposed in the Charter, integrated conservation not only considered the future of the historical fabric, but issues of economic viability, resident mix, housing and social justice. Governmental programs and investment were considered key elements of the programs that would be developed in support of integrated conservation.⁵⁹

Although the United States has largely ignored international developments in conservation (historic preservation) since the adoption of the National Historic Preservation Act in 1966, parallel changes took place in the U.S. as cities and towns began to implement historic districts. In Seattle, Pioneer Square and Pike Place Market are representative of the forward-thinking tendencies of the early 1970s, as both historic districts supported economic revitalization and provision of housing; Pike Place Market is exemplary as it was rehabilitated while protecting the existing tenants and providing significant increases in affordable housing.⁶⁰

After the 1980s, however, the rise of neoliberalism led to less reliance on public investments and more focus on use of market mechanisms to promote conservation (preservation). In the U.S. tax incentives for private development in support of building rehabilitation and adaptive reuse became much more important as a component of preservation. In Washington State, including Seattle, court decisions strengthened vested rights making it much more difficult for public officials to intervene in the private property market or limit private development beyond what already existed in the city's zoning ordinances.

The difficulty of achieving integrated conservation in the current neoliberal legal

⁵⁸ *European Charter of the Architectural Heritage*.

⁵⁹ Papageorgiu-Venetas, "New Orientations."

⁶⁰ Kreisman, *Made to Last*, 96-99; Shorett and Morgan, *Pike Place Market*, 145-153.

context is evident in the subtle shift that took place in the city's expressed goals for Pike/Pine from 2008 to 2013. The 2008 consultant report *The Pike/Pine Conservation Neighborhood Study* identified five character elements in Pike/Pine: (1) architecture, particularly the surviving Auto Row one- to three-story loft buildings; (2) uses, typically small-scale, local, independent, with some bars, restaurants and clubs, as well as remaining auto-oriented businesses--businesses described as 'gritty and authentic'; (3) culture, including diverse nightlife, art and performance spaces, businesses serving the LGBT community and younger patrons; (4) housing, primarily rental; and (5) 'a community of neighbors', with a diversity of ages, incomes, and sexual orientation.⁶¹ This report proposed three conservation goals: conserving the area's architectural character, preserving affordability to maintain a mix of residents and small local businesses, and balancing the diversity of people and uses to maintain a mix of activities supporting different groups, even as the area grew.⁶² The five character elements fit well within the 1975 framework of integrated conservation, but are much more difficult to address in an era with limited public funding and a dependence on market forces.

In the Pike/Pine ordinance as written, the city's focus on character structures diluted attention to several of the other elements of neighbourhood character. The use of incentives to support preservation of façades of character structures partially addresses the area's architectural character, but the incentive of an extra floor in new construction, exacerbates the problem of increased bulk and scale as it contributes to the neighbourhood's demographic transformation. Preserving affordability and balancing diversity proved difficult to achieve given the legal protections of vested rights. The city

⁶¹ Lund Consulting, "Pike/Pine Neighborhood Conservation Study," 23.

⁶² Ibid., 26-28.

has tried to slow rent increases by permitting an extraordinary number of new units in new apartment complexes, but the demand for new housing by the influx of well-paid tech workers has exceeded the supply and rents have continued to rise. The Pike/Pine ordinance does include a limit on the (average) size of street-level retail businesses (restaurants, shops and the like) of only 2000 square feet (186 square meters), but there is no way legally to prevent non-local business ownership, although the size limit does prevent larger chain stores and restaurant franchises from locating in Pike/Pine.

A list of the purposes of the district in a 2013 city report reveals the subtle shift and selective emphasis on only a few elements of neighbourhood character:

- Promote mixed-use development;
- Keep new development compatible and in scale with the neighbourhood;
- Encourage small, diverse local businesses by limiting the area for each retail business;
- Preserve pre-1940 buildings ('character structures') that contribute to the character of the neighbourhood; and
- Retain and attract arts and cultural uses.⁶³

As adopted, the provisions of the Pike/Pine ordinance reveal the limits on the city's ability to foster integrated conservation.

Mixed uses

The zoning in place prior to the Conservation District already addressed mixed-use development. The city was concerned that the closeness of Pike/Pine to downtown

⁶³ City of Seattle, "Staff Report – June 20, 2013," 1.

could generate an increase in commercial office space rather than multi-family residential. To protect the mix of uses in the area, the Pike/Pike Conservation Overlay includes rules that address floor area ratio (FAR) for non-residential uses. Provisions limiting FAR typically use an FAR of two, except on smaller parcels. However, if an entire ‘character structure’ is retained (not just street facades), the floor area of the character structure is excluded from the FAR calculation. The FAR for non-residential uses may also be increased to 4.25 which the city claimed would achieve a better balance between residential and commercial activities within the area, provided all character structures on the site are retained. This provision responded to the community's wish to enhance commercial opportunities as a way to increase the daytime working population to help support the district's small businesses. (This provision likely has had minimal impact as most developers chose to focus on multi-family residential development above the ground floor.) The FAR of residential uses is not regulated.

Retail size limits

Since the 1970s, other than a few larger-scale auto sales and service businesses, the Pike/Pine Corridor has been an area of smaller-scale locally-owned retail shops and galleries, small restaurants, bars, clubs and similar establishments. Residents and business owners in the area had become concerned in the early 2000s when a large chain grocery store and large chain drug store moved into the neighbourhood, displacing local businesses. To protect all types of smaller, street-level retail businesses, the Pike/Pike ordinance includes provisions addressing the size of street level uses.⁶⁴

⁶⁴ City of Seattle, “Proposed Amendments,” 16, 22-23.

The previous zoning in the Pike/Pine Corridor provided that the ground floors of buildings must adjoin the sidewalks, have a high level of transparency, and provide sidewalk-related retail uses such as shops, restaurants, galleries and the like. The Conservation District supports small street-level retail businesses by requiring projects with more than 5000 square feet (465 square meters) of street-level commercial space to provide space for businesses averaging 2000 square feet (186 square meters) or less; the greater the amount of ground floor commercial space, the greater the number of small business spaces required.⁶⁵ There is also a limit of 50 feet (15.3 meters) on the street frontage for each retail business on Pike and Pine, which fosters activity (due to multiple businesses requiring multiple entrances adjoining the sidewalks). The amendments to the ordinance provide some exceptions for character structures; for example, if a character structure originally had a large space on the ground level such as an auto showroom, the space does not need to be included in the amount of floor area to be partitioned into smaller spaces. Further, existing businesses within character structures facing Pike or Pine are exempt from the 50-foot frontage limit. The city typically does not allow automobile-oriented use in pedestrian zones. However, because the area was historically Auto Row, the 2014 amendments include a provision to allow automotive retail sales and services on the street level in new development that includes a character structure.⁶⁶ These provisions explicitly address the goal of the 2008 Pike/Pine Study relative to small businesses, but it did not prove legally feasible to require local ownership (that is ownership by Pike/Pine area residents), and the diversity of businesses is dependent on the decisions of owners and developers regarding individual leases of ground level

⁶⁵ City of Seattle, “Pike Pine Conservation Overlay District,” 19.

⁶⁶ City of Seattle, “Staff Report – June 20, 2013,” 3, 11.

space.⁶⁷ Developers and buildings owners can also request exceptions. The brewpub located on the ground floor of the Seattle Electric Building exceeds the limit, but was allowed as a compatible use for the neighbourhood that is locally owned. More recently a grocery store leased a substantial portion of the ground floor of the AVA Capitol Hill apartment building facing Pike Street; this use was considered beneficial for the neighbourhood and occupied a space that had remained vacant for more than a year.

The Pike/Pine District seeks to promote pedestrian life on the designated principal pedestrian streets, particularly Pike and Pine. The ordinance also tries to support small and varied businesses at street level as an element of neighbourhood character. Transparency along the street fronts is a fundamental requirement – the minimum amount of transparency is 60 percent of the width of each building fronting a pedestrian street, and the Conservation District rules increase the required transparency for projects with additional height at the ground floor.

(Figure 12 near here) [E Pike Street transparency]

The district rules foster smaller (hopefully local and varied) businesses by requiring smaller retail spaces at the street level in most projects and by limiting the length of retail frontage of any single business along Pike and Pine streets. To date, the Pike/Pine Conservation District has been somewhat successful in fostering smaller, locally-oriented, commercial spaces. However, a 2015 study questioned whether diverse

⁶⁷ In addition, the requirement for small businesses is a 'deportable standard'--that is the DRB may allow a larger street-level business if it judges this will improve the mix of retail activities in the district.

businesses are truly being supported.⁶⁸ That study found that roughly 2/3 of the businesses occupying space in new developments are eating and drinking establishments; personal service businesses (dry-cleaning, hair care, fitness, and similar businesses) are the next most common; and only a small number of street-level ventures are retail shops. The same study also noted a trend toward more expensive eating establishments. Overall, the new street-level businesses are more generic (less 'gritty' and 'quirky'), and are oriented primarily to the new influx of young professionals and tech workers rather than long-time area residents.⁶⁹ Long-time residents report that the neighbourhood is changing; in particular its character as a centre of Gay culture is being diluted.⁷⁰ While the city can write an ordinance to protect architectural features and control the size of businesses, it has not found a way to support diversity or limit change to neighbourhood demographics.

The city also cannot dictate how owners and developers lease their spaces. The rents charged in new construction are often significantly greater than the rents in older buildings. That higher rents limit the range of businesses that can afford space in new construction is a problem that has long been recognized.⁷¹ The city can set the rules to mandate space for retail uses at the street level, but the success or failure of retail space is dependent on decisions made by building owners and managers relative to rental rates, business mix, and the like. Limiting the size of retail spaces does appear to be a successful way of excluding national chains, but it also means that these spaces take longer to attract tenants.

⁶⁸ Johnson, "Case Study," 36-73.

⁶⁹ Ibid., 70.

⁷⁰ Piona, "Protecting Neighborhood Character," 62.

⁷¹ Powe et. al., "Jane Jacobs," 167-180.

The contrast between 600 E. Pike and 714 E. Pike is quite suggestive (Numbers 1 and 2 in Table 1). At 600 E. Pike, the street-facing spaces adjacent to the sidewalk have not been leased. The blank walls provide no interest for pedestrians and the lack of activity means there is no reason for pedestrians to spend time in this location. One block east, at 714 E. Pike, former Pike Motorworks Building, the sidewalks are activated by the adjacent businesses. This building had the advantage of the semi-circular open space facing the sidewalk and the owners fostered activity by leasing space to a café that uses the outdoor space for seating; the result is one of the most active block fronts in the entire district. (See Fig. 9)

Supporting the Arts

To support the arts, the Pike/Pine District ordinance offers a 15 percent increase to the 15,000 square foot (1395 square meters) floor area limit on new construction for providing a cultural or performing arts facility. However, this incentive is less than the 25 percent increase allowed for retention of character structure façades, and the increased percentages are not additive (25 percent is the maximum total), so the incentives for arts facilities have had minimal impact. In addition, when the city began identifying 'Arts and Cultural Districts' in 2014, the Capitol Hill Arts District, including the Pike/Pine Corridor, was recognized as 'the densest arts neighborhood in the State of Washington' with over 40 arts and cultural organizations.⁷² The high concentration of arts organization already found in Pike/Pine is a further disincentive to the addition of new ones.

⁷² City of Seattle, "Arts and Cultural Districts." (This program is not regulatory and added no new provisions to Seattle's Land Use Code.)

Affordable Housing

The District ordinance initially offered a similar 15 percent increase to the floor area limit for new construction of affordable housing. Like the incentive for cultural and arts spaces, this incentive was less than the incentive offered for retention of character structure façades so it had little effect. However, in April 2019, the City adopted Mandatory Housing Affordability legislation that requires new commercial and residential development across Seattle to contribute to affordable housing. Residential developers may either provide affordable housing in their new developments or they may contribute to a citywide affordable housing fund. To compensate developers for this cost, the zoning envelope was increased another ten feet (three meters). This legislation includes the Pike/Pine District; although new construction will now be taller, the MHA legislation does not require that the affordable units be constructed in the Pike/Pine neighbourhood.

Conclusion

Of the projects shown in this paper, Seattle Electric, Davis & Hoffman and Pike Motorworks may be considered the most successful. Seattle Electric and Davis & Hoffman both incorporate taller facades that help balance new and old. At Pike Motorworks, the unusual configuration of the historical façade and the use of the outdoor half-circular space as restaurant seating has made this one of the most active locations along Pike Street. In contrast, the dominance of the large-scale new construction at AVA Capitol Hill relative to the single-story façade makes the façade retention here almost meaningless. Even suggesting that some projects are successful in integrating old and

new, it must be recognized that the new larger buildings on aggregated sites stand out from the fine-grained historic context simply because of their size.

The Pike/Pine District cannot be said to protect Pike/Pine townscape (one of the justifications for façade retention offered by Richards) because the taller new construction changes the experience of the sequences of sidewalks and street spaces. Developers have accepted the extra expense of retaining one- or two-story historical facades while new structures behind them producing a combination of old and new, with both visible, at least from a distance. These designs counter the critique of façade retention as concealing change and misleading observers. The changes taking place as Pike/Pine is redeveloped are not be hidden and the past will not be entirely replaced. The pattern of facadism seen in the Pike/Pine District, with one- or two-story facades retained in front of taller construction, has proliferated since Richards published his analysis in 1994, yet surprisingly little has been written on the phenomenon. Pike/Pine seems to be the first location that has overtly endorsed this kind of facadism as an overt urban conservation strategy.

The pattern of new development in the Pike/Pine District suggests that although the ordinance incentivizes new development on large parcels, it discourages redevelopment of small parcels and on parcels with taller character structures. When the Pike/Pine District ordinance was first adopted, developers rushed to build on large aggregated parcels that had one-story character structures; although there was a cost associated with retaining the one-story historical facades, the cost was more balanced by the return from an additional floor of residential units--the Pike Motorworks Building and the AVA apartments are good examples. New development has also taken place on sites

with taller facades (up to two stories), as at Seattle Electric and at David & Hoffman, if the site has been large enough so that the added cost is offset by the larger project. In contrast, single lot sites with character structures have not been redeveloped, possibly because the cost of retaining the historical facades cannot easily be recovered in the additional units such small sites. Similarly, no sites with character structures taller than two stories have been redeveloped to date; again, the added costs of retaining taller facades may make cost of redevelopment of these sites prohibitive. Therefore, the effect of the Pike/Pine District ordinance is surprisingly mixed--where the historical buildings are small scale and the historical lots can be aggregated to create larger sites, new development will occur. But, where the individual lots cannot be aggregated and the historical buildings are taller, the ordinance may actually be protecting the buildings in their historical form.

In Pike/Pine, the zoning prior to 2009 fostered a mix of uses, but the overlay district specifically aimed to support small, local and diverse businesses. The new limit on size has meant that most street-fronting businesses in new construction are small and there few are national chains. However, the cost of newly constructed space has squeezed out marginal and quirky local shops and there is now less diversity. The shift toward more up scale eating establishments and similar ventures is likely a result of the higher costs of new space and a response to the influx of well-paid tech workers in the new residential construction.

Unfortunately, the goals of integrated conservation can only be partially addressed in the neoliberal context of land use law in Seattle and Washington State. The Pike/Pine ordinance primarily relies on market-based incentives to protect historical

façades and to support affordable housing and arts and culture activities. Nothing in the ordinance addresses the problem of gentrification that results from the influx of new residents. Although Pike/Pine retains some distinctiveness as a centre of Seattle's Gay culture, there is a general consensus that this character has been diluted.⁷³ In response to concerns that new residents and visitors were unaware of the Gay heritage of Pike/Pine, in July 2015 the city painted eleven crosswalks in the centre of district with rainbow colours to indicate visually the presence of the Gay community, but this may serve more as a visual reminder of the area's history than an indicator of its future.

By zoning Pike/Pine for increased height before 2009, Seattle had already accepted that the neighbourhood would change. Where other American cities have adopted conservation districts in residential areas to protect the *status quo*, allowing new construction if the new projects fit in with what already exists, the Pike/Pine Conservation District was created to try to mitigate change that was already inevitable. Without the ordinance, the neighborhood would have seen more demolition and entirely new construction. With the Pike/Pine District, where new construction takes place fragments of the past remain, and in areas with larger buildings the regulations actively discourage replacing the historic structures.

Still, a regulatory framework, like that embodied in the Pike/Pine ordinance, can only set minimum standards. It is impossible to legislate creative design, although in a jurisdiction that does not protect vested rights as strongly as Washington State, officials would have more power to negotiate for improvements. Even where such negotiations are possible, there are few cities that can require developers and owners to rent spaces inexpensively enough to attract small, local, quirky, and often minimally profitable

⁷³ Chalana, "Balancing History and Development," 182.

businesses. And no legislation can prevent gradual change to the demographic or cultural mix of a neighbourhood especially one that is experiencing a significant influx of new residents.

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FIGURE CAPTIONS

Figure 1: Map of Seattle showing locations of the city's eight designated historic districts and the Pike-Pine Conservation Overlay District. (Drawing by Jansen Bennett, 2018.)

Figure 2: Brick David & Hoffman Building contrasts with new construction in gray and white stucco at 1414 E. 10th Avenue.

Figure 3: Pike/Pine Conservation Overlay District (outlined); gray area shows the conservation core. The five buildings researched in detail for this article are identified by number.

Figure 4 Nute & Keena store building, Pike Street at Belmont Avenue, ca. 1909. One of the earliest 'Auto Row' buildings, this was the location of auto sales and service businesses for more than one hundred years. The façade of this 'character structure' has been incorporated in the new AVA Capitol Hill building. (Paul Dorpat photograph collection.)

Figure 5: Retention of facades facing Pike Street (left) and Boylston Avenue (right) during construction of the new AVA Capitol Hill (building) at 600 E. Pike Street. (Courtesy Historic Seattle; photo by Eugenia Woo)

Figure 6: Building forms resulting from parcel aggregation; two adjacent blocks on the north side of E. Pike Street in 1950 and 2018.

Figure 7: New construction above retained facades at 600 E. Pike Street, AVA Capitol Hill apartment building.

Figure 8: New construction and retained facades (character structures) at 1530 11th Avenue, former Sunset Electric building.

Figure 9: Open space activated by brewpub occupying ground floor of new development with preserved façade (character structure) at 714 E. Pike Street, former Pike Motorworks building.

Figure 10: New construction above retained facade (character structure) at 501 E. Pike Street, former Dunn Motors building.

Figure 11: View, standing on sidewalk adjacent to 600 E. Pike, looking west on Pike Street from beneath projecting canopy; the tall buildings in the background are in Seattle's central business district.

Figure 12: Transparency at the street level along north side of E. Pike Street from Belmont Avenue to Harvard Avenue.

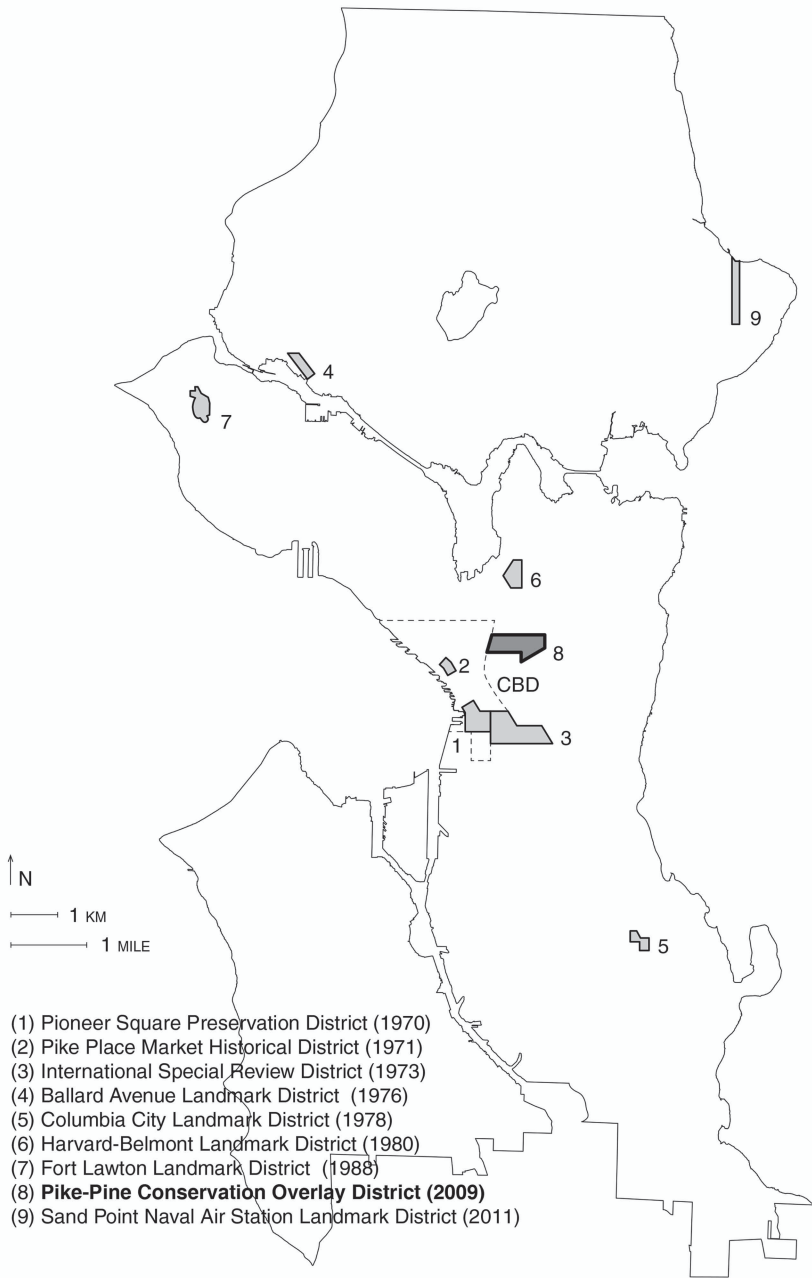
TABLE CAPTIONS

Table 1. General information for the five examples of Pike/Pine Corridor projects, designed, reviews and constructed following the Conservation District regulations that are discussed in this article.

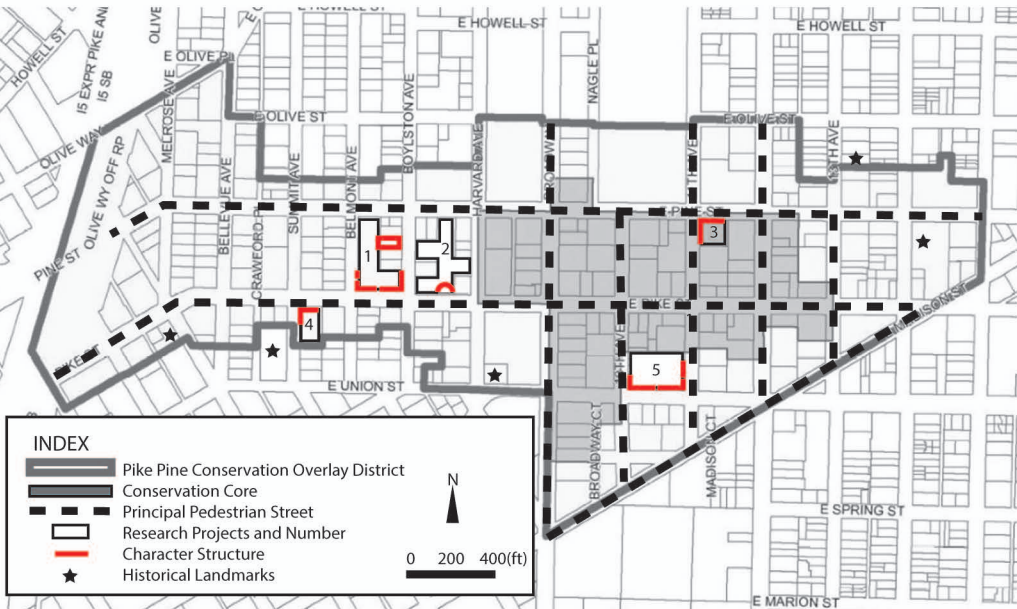
Table 2. Pike/Pine Conservation District amendments, 2009-2017.

1		address	600 E. Pike St.
		units	249
		retail (square feet)	15975
		lot size (square feet)	47990
		floors	7
		character structures	4 retained, 0 demolished
2		address	714 E. Pike St.
		units	270
		retail (square feet)	19090
		lot size (square feet)	54000
		floors	7
		character structures	1 retained, 0 demolished
3		address	1530 11th Ave.
		units	92
		retail (square feet)	6276
		lot size (square feet)	14404
		floors	7
		character structures	1 retained, 0 demolished
4		address	501 E. Pike St.
		units	89
		retail (square feet)	6600
		lot size (square feet)	18000
		floors	7
		character structures	1 retained, 0 demolished
5		address	1414 10th Ave.
		units	244
		retail (square feet)	14000
		lot size (square feet)	44029
		floors	7
		character structures	3 retained, 1 demolished

Phase	Date	Effect
1	Adopted 29 July 2009 (Ordinance #123020)	Expansion of the existing Pike/Pine Overlay District revisions to create the Pike Pine Conservation Overlay District. Character structures identified as any structure at least 75 years old.
2	Adopted 23 September 2010 (Ordinance #123649)	Revision of the Neighbourhood Design Guidelines to support the Pike/Pine Conservation Overlay District.
3	Adopted December 2011 (Ordinance #123776)	Transfer of Development Potential (TDP) provisions. Create Conservation Core.
4	Adopted June 2014 (Ordinance #124503)	Amendments to require retention of older buildings particularly on larger parcels. Other revisions to clarify language. Character structures identified as any structure built before 1940.
5	Adopted 2017 (Ordinance #125362)	Pike/Pine Neighbourhood Design Guidelines were updated.



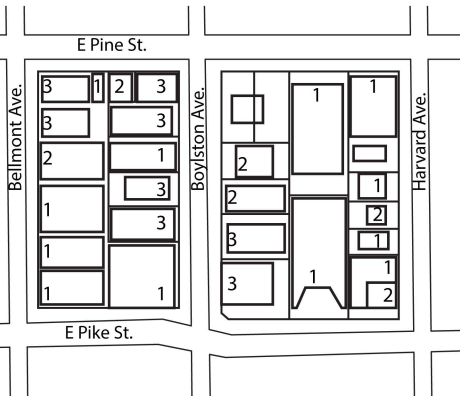




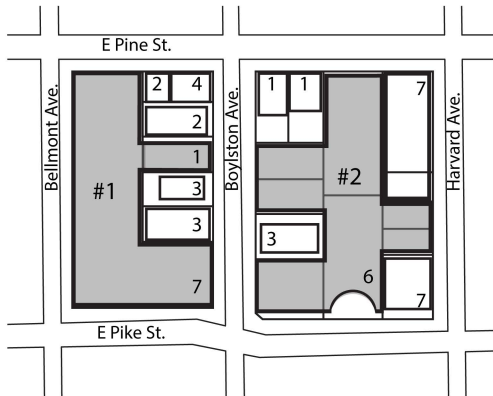




in 1950



in 2018



*Figure shows floor numbers.





PIKE
MOTORWORKS
BLDG.

BREWLAB









North elevation at street level on E. Pike Street between Belmont Ave. and Boylston Ave.



North elevation at street level on E. Pike Street between Boylston Ave. and Harvard Ave.