



## APPROVED MINUTES OF THE MEETING

**Mike McGinn**  
Mayor

**Diane Sugimura**  
Director, DPD

**Marshall Foster**  
Planning Director, DPD

**Julie Bassuk**  
Chair

**Seth Geiser**

**Laurel Kunkler**

**Shannon Loew**

**Tom Nelson**

**Julie Parrett**

**Osama Quotah**

**Ellen Sollod**

**Debbie Harris**

**Valerie Kinast**  
Coordinator

**Tom Iurino**  
Senior Staff

**December 20, 2012**

Convened 8:30am  
Adjourned 4:30pm

### Projects Reviewed

Jimi Hendrix Park  
Spruce Project (formerly Hancock Fabrics)  
DPD Planning Division Update and Arena Briefing

### Commissioners Present

Julie Bassuk, Chair  
Julie Parrett, Vice Chair (excused from 8:30-8:45am)  
Debbie Harris (excused from 8:30am-10:00am)  
Shannon Loew  
Tom Nelson  
Osama Quotah  
Ellen Sollod

### Commissioners Excused

Lolly Kunkler  
Seth Geiser

### Staff Present

Valerie Kinast  
Tom Iurino



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**December 20, 2012**      **Project:**      **Spruce Project (formerly Hancock Fabrics)**  
**Address:**      3922 SW Alaska St  
**Phase:**      Public Benefit follow up review  
**Last Reviewed:**      Dec 21, 2006; Oct 19, 2006; Sep 7, 2006  
**Presenters:**      Roger Pearce, Foster Pepper  
                                  Andy Rasmussen, Weisman Design Group  
                                  Joe Workman, Collins Woerman  
                                  Lezlie Jane, Artist

**Attendees:**      Beverly Barnett, SDOT  
                                  Brian Hawksford, Office of Tom Rasmussen  
                                  Tracy Record, West Seattle Blog

**Time:** 1:30pm-3:00pm

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## Disclosures

Commissioner Harris's firm is working on the project's structural engineering.  
 Commissioner Loew worked with Roger Pearce on a separate project.

## Summary of Project Presentation

The Spruce Project sought a partial alley vacation to allow 6-7 story mixed use building at 3922 SW Alaska Street. The project includes approximately 65,160 SF of retail, 186 residences and parking for 484 vehicles below grade. The platted north-south alley connects SW Oregon to SW Alaska. The southern portion of the alley would be vacated and additional right-of-way dedicated to provide an L-shaped alley connecting SW Oregon to 40th SW. The Design Commission reviewed the project in 2006 and made a recommendation to City Council, who approved the alley vacation and public benefit package in June 2007 (C.F. 308171). That approval was extended in November 2012. The Council approval required Design Commission review of the final public benefit design. The public benefits include: a public open space in right-of-way at the SE project corner; \$25,000 payment to Seattle Parks; 8' sidewalks and 8' landscaping along SW Alaska; 8' sidewalks and 4' planting strip along 39<sup>th</sup> Ave SW; three more street trees than required; flex car spaces in the project garage; weather protection along the SW Alaska and 39th SW facades; a decorative bike rack; and a public art element. The building is substantially identical to the building originally shown to City Council. The exterior materials have been upgraded and the project's retail use was changed from a grocery store to a fitness center.

The commissioners' discussion centered on: the extent to which the plaza design was urban, permeable, and open enough; the number and design of the plaza's paving materials and elements such as benches; the coverage of the overhead weather protection; the pinch point and blank wall at the southeast corner and their effect on the public realm; and the plant material in the right-of-way.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Beverly Barnett, SDOT, said that city council often asks an applicant to come back to the Design Commission to check in on the project implementation. The design and public benefit was consistent with the prior applicant's intent.

### **ACTION (by Harris)**

The Seattle Design Commission thanked the Spruce project design team for its presentation of the design of the plaza and public realm, which was a condition of the city council's approval of the project's partial alley vacation of the southern portion of the alley on the block bounded by SW Oregon, SW Alaska, 40<sup>th</sup> Ave SW and 39<sup>th</sup> Ave SW. By a vote of 6-1, the commission approved the design refinements of the public benefit package with the following recommendations:

- Further study and refine the overlap of canopies and make sure water doesn't fall between them; do not rely on perfect execution of construction to keep water from falling through the gaps. Consider developing the design so water from the overhang drains into the planters.
- Revise the design to increase the width of the sidewalk at the building's pinch point at the southwest corner. Also, provide more transparency at the southwest corner of the building; do not develop a blank wall.
- Develop the plaza as an urban space. Make the plaza permeable and more open, reconsider the number of benches, and if the walls remain, develop another use for them such as a seating bench.
- Refine the placement of the ADA ramps and planting so they better align and integrate into the design of the outside walk and colored sidewalk.
- Make stronger reference in art to local natives.
- Tone down the center of the medallion. It distracts from the art piece. Also, ensure that the small pieces that make up the artwork do not break.
- Simplify the paving patterns. There are too many of them.

Commissioner Bassuk voted no because the design could use much more refinement