

# Green Lake Community Boathouse

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**Ben de Rubertis** Acting Chair

**Justin Clark**

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## Commissioners Present

Ben de Rubertis, Acting Chair  
Justin Clark  
Rikerrious Geter  
Laura Haddad  
Brianna Holan  
Rick Krochalis

## Commissioners Excused

Mark Johnson

## Project Description

Seattle Parks and Recreation (SPR) is proposing to redevelop the existing Green Lake Small Craft Center, located on the southwestern edge of Green Lake. The center offers rowing, canoeing, and kayaking programs for youth and adults. Currently the site includes the existing center, shell house and public restrooms, the remnants of the Aqua Theater, and several piers. The project would include the redevelopment of the small craft center only. The proposed redevelopment project will increase the amount of programmable space from 10,000 SF to 17,000 SF and will provide additional space for boat storage, workout equipment, meeting/office space, and bathroom/changing facilities.

## Meeting Summary

This was the Seattle Design Commission's (SDC) second review of the Green Lake Community Boathouse project. The purpose of today's meeting was to review the schematic design (60% design) phase for the project. The SDC voted, 6-0, to approve the schematic design for the Green Lake Community Boathouse with several recommendations.

## Recusals and Disclosures

**None**

**April 18, 2019**

1:00 - 2:30 pm

**Type**

CIP

**Phase**

Schematic Design (60% phase)

**Previous Reviews**[10/4/18](#)**Presenters**Brian Bishop  
SiteWorkshopEvan Bourquard  
Schacht Aslani ArchitectsWalter Schacht  
Schacht Aslani Architects**Attendees**David Graves  
SPRMike Stanley  
Green Lake RACEmily Van Geldren  
SiteWorkshopColin Vasquez  
SDCI**Summary of Presentation**

Walter Schacht and Evan Bourquard, of Schacht Aslani Architects, and Brian Bishop, of SiteWorkshop, presented the schematic design for the Green Lake Community Boathouse. The presentation began by describing how the project team worked with community members and partners in the planning process on goals, programming, accessibility, and community outreach. The project team then highlighted changes to the design concept due to budget and site constraints. While the updated design includes reducing the overall size of the proposed facility, the updated design does not reduce site programming and will continue to serve as a low-impact development. The updated design will fit more comfortably on the site, allow more open space, improve access, and open views. *See figure 1 for more detail.*

The updated design for the boathouse includes a more efficient use of programmable space and boat storage as well as relocating the customer service area adjacent to the building entrance on the first level (*See figure 2*). The proposed site plan opens up green space on the south side of the project site, which will be used as a bioretention area, and provides for more space to maneuver large boats from the parking lot. Bioretention cells will be stepped into the landscape, alongside the existing historic park typology. The updated site plan also better aligns with the adjacent Aqua Theater. *See figure 4 for more detail.*

Part of the team's sustainability goal is to meet LEED v.4 Gold certification, as well as pursuing energy efficiency credits. A focused heat pump system will accommodate each space's needs, while they hope to achieve 4x higher efficiency than what the Seattle Energy Code requires. Site design includes a native and drought-tolerant plant system.



Figure 1: Updated site plan

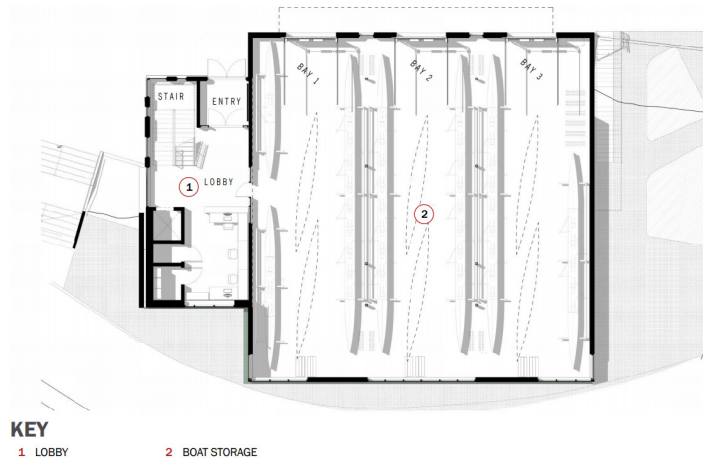


Figure 2: Updated building layout level 1 (left) and level 2 (right)

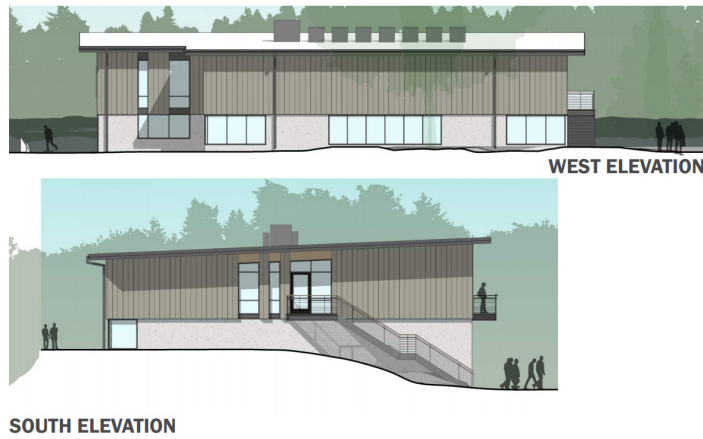


Figure 3: Elevations of the proposed boathouse



Figure 4: Proposed landscape design



### Agency Comments

**Colin Vasquez**, SDCL, is a land use planner involved with the environmental review on Green Lake Community Boathouse project. Mr. Vasquez mentioned that he would appreciate the SDC comments on the exterior materials. Mr. Vasquez then said that it will be important to have a conversation about the materials and how they are being used as well as the visual expression they provide.

### Public Comments

**None**

### Summary of Discussion

The Commission organized its discussion around the following issues:

- Contextual integration
- Circulation and access
- Architectural massing and materials
- Landscape and sustainability
- Program and equity

#### *Contextual integration*

The SDC appreciated the project team's thorough explanation of the design changes made since the last review on October 4th, 2018. Specifically, commissioners appreciated the project team's explanation for reducing the overall transparency of the façade. The Commission expressed its concern with the possibility of the facility not being perceived as a public facility, specifically along the western façade. Commissioners then recommended that the project team increase the presence and visibility of building entrances, possibly through the use of signage. Commissioners also encouraged the project team to think about ways to visually communicate that this is a public facility. The SDC then commended the project team for the location and design of the overlook. Commissioners recognized the overlook as a great way to help invite people into the facility as well as to the water. Several commissioners then commented on the building orientation and its impact on the adjacent pathway. The commission is concerned that the updated design of the facility has resulted in the southwest corner of the building being too close to the pathway.

The SDC appreciated the alignment of the boat storage with the docks. Commissioners agreed this alignment will increase the visibility of interior elements within the storage area. The Commission then commented on the visibility of the water and commended the project team for providing views of the water near the northern edge of the site. The SDC recommended the project team consider opening views of the lake from the southwestern edge.

#### *Circulation and access*

The SDC commended the project team for increasing the distance between the boathouse and the dock/boat launch. Commissioners agreed this will allow for a greater amount of space for people to gather and move through the site. The Commission also appreciated the project team's consideration of boat maneuverability when designing the areas along the southern edge of the site. Commissioners also appreciated the provision of visual access to the water for pedestrians using the pathway along the northern edge of the project site. The Commission then continued to express their concern that the updated building design has resulted in the building being closer to the pathway and that the close proximity of the building's corners to the pathway will result in a pinch point as well as a blind spot for pedestrians using the pathway during large events. The Commission then agreed with the reorientation of the south stair, which is not publicly accessible, away from the pedestrian pathway.

#### *Architectural massing and materials*

The SDC appreciated the overall massing and materiality of the proposed facility. Specifically, commissioners appreciated the simplicity of the materials used, allowing the surrounding landscape to frame the building. Commissioners then supported the architect's notion that the simplicity and dark color of the building exterior will help in highlighting colorful and dynamic boats and other interior elements that are visible from the outside. The commission then encouraged the project team to consider long term maintenance issues when

specifying materials for the western façade<sup>1</sup>. The Commission then commended the project team for their simplification of interior spaces and programming elements.

### *Landscape and sustainability*

The SDC discussed the integration of landscape and architectural materials. Commissioners encouraged the project team to continue to think about how the proposed landscape materials and architectural form will complement one another. Several commissioners continued to express their concern with the interaction between the western building façade, proposed landscape, and existing pathway. Commissioners thought the proposed design would serve as a pinch point for pedestrians using the pathway during large events, resulting in the degradation of the adjacent landscape. The commission then recommended the project team continue to develop the landscape plan and materials on the western edge between the proposed facility and pathway. The SDC then commended the project team for their proposed sustainability measures.

### *Program and equity*

The SDC appreciated the project team's explanation of the existing programming and opportunities. Commissioners then commended the project team for providing greater access to the waterfront. The Commission then recommended the project team increase public awareness of the availability of programs offered at the facility as well as the availability of the community room within the facility. Commissioners then encouraged the project team to consider additional programming to attract a broader group of people to the area.

### **Action**

The SDC thanked the team for their presentation of the schematic design for the Green Lake Community Boathouse project. Overall the Commission appreciated the increased access to the water edge, proposed location and design of the overlook, relationship between boat storage and docks, width and location of pathways to the water, simplicity of building materials and how they frame both the interior and exterior environments, and equitable programming and continued outreach to attract a wide variety of users as well as the simplicity and clarity of the presentation. The SDC voted 6-0 to approve the schematic design for the Green Lake Community Boathouse with the following recommendations:

1. Increase presence and visibility of entries, possibly through the use of signage
2. Increase public awareness of the availability of programs offered at the facility.
3. Increase public awareness of the availability of the community room within the facility
4. Look at the location of building corners, specifically on the western edge of the facility, as it relates to the adjacent pathway to ensure there is enough room for pedestrian movement
5. Continue to develop the landscape on western edge for durability and visibility
6. Consider opening views of the lake from the southwest

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<sup>1</sup>Following the meeting, a few commissioners expressed concern to the SDC Director about the west façade and its use of materials. They indicated that the west façade could be enlivened by applying materials in a different manner (shingling, lapping in various widths, etc.) to offset the reduction in transparency from the redesign.