

Northwest Native Canoe Center - Carving House

Jenny A. Durkan
Mayor

Rico Quirindongo
Director, OPCD

Justin Clark, Chair

Vinita Sidhu, Vice Chair

Adam Amrhein

Elizabeth Conner

Jill Crary

Mark Johnson

Amalia Leighton-Cody

Elaine Wine

Michael Jenkins
Executive Director

Valerie Kinast
Coordinator

Juliet Acevedo
Administrative Staff

**Office of Planning and
Community Development**
Seattle City Hall
600 4th Avenue, Floor 5
PO Box 94788
Seattle, WA 98124-4019

TEL 206-615-1349
FAX 306-233-7883
seattle.gov/opcd

Commissioners Present

Justin Clark, Chair
Vinita Sidhu, Vice Chair
Adam Amrhein
Elizabeth Conner
Mark Johnson
Amalia Leighton-Cody
Elaine Wine

Commissioners Excused

Jill Crary

Staff Present

Michael Jenkins
Valerie Kinast
Juliet Acevedo

Recusals and Disclosures

None

Project Description

United Indians of All Tribes Foundation and Seattle Parks and Recreation are proposing to build an approximately 2,860 square foot canoe carving building (Carving House) in Lake Union Park (*see Figure 1*). The Carving House is the first of two buildings, which will be located on this site in the northwestern corner of the park. The second building, a Welcome House, is not being developed at this time.

The building will be a contemporary Coast Salish, one-story, timber post-and-beam structure with cedar cladding. It will have some operable and some inoperable large glass doors and windows, and a living roof. The building will be placed near the water so that canoes can be moved in and out easily. The roof will extend over the beach (*see Figure 2*). The building and site will be used for carving and other cultural and educational activities. 120 square feet of multi-purpose back-of-house space is planned. The building includes restrooms for the general public.

Meeting Summary

This was the Seattle Design Commission's (SDC) second review of the Northwest Native Canoe Center Carving House project. The purpose of this meeting was to review the design development phase (60% design) for the project. At this meeting, the SDC voted, 7-0, to approve the concept design for the Northwest Native Canoe Center Carving House project with several recommendations. The SDC will review the Carving House one more time before it reaches design development phase (90% design). They will review the Welcome House when it is developed.

Summary of Presentation

Bruce Arnold and Johnpaul Jones of Jones and Jones Architects presented the project. They provided background information. They explained that a maintenance agreement was being developed that has the site maintained by Seattle Parks and Recreation, SPR, and the building maintained by United Indians of All Tribes Foundation (UIATF). It was not yet decided who would maintain the living room but it would likely be both groups. The dune grass and camas on the roof require cutting and fertilization annually (*see Figure 3*).

October 21, 2021

10:30 am - noon

Project Type

CIP

Phase

concept design

Previous Reviews

2/18/2021

Presenters**Bruce Arnold**

Jones and Jones Architects

David Graves

Seattle Parks and Recreation

Johnpaul Jones

Jones and Jones Architects

Attendees**Page Crutcher**

Community Member

Emma Hinchliffe

DIC

Joy Jacobson

FAS

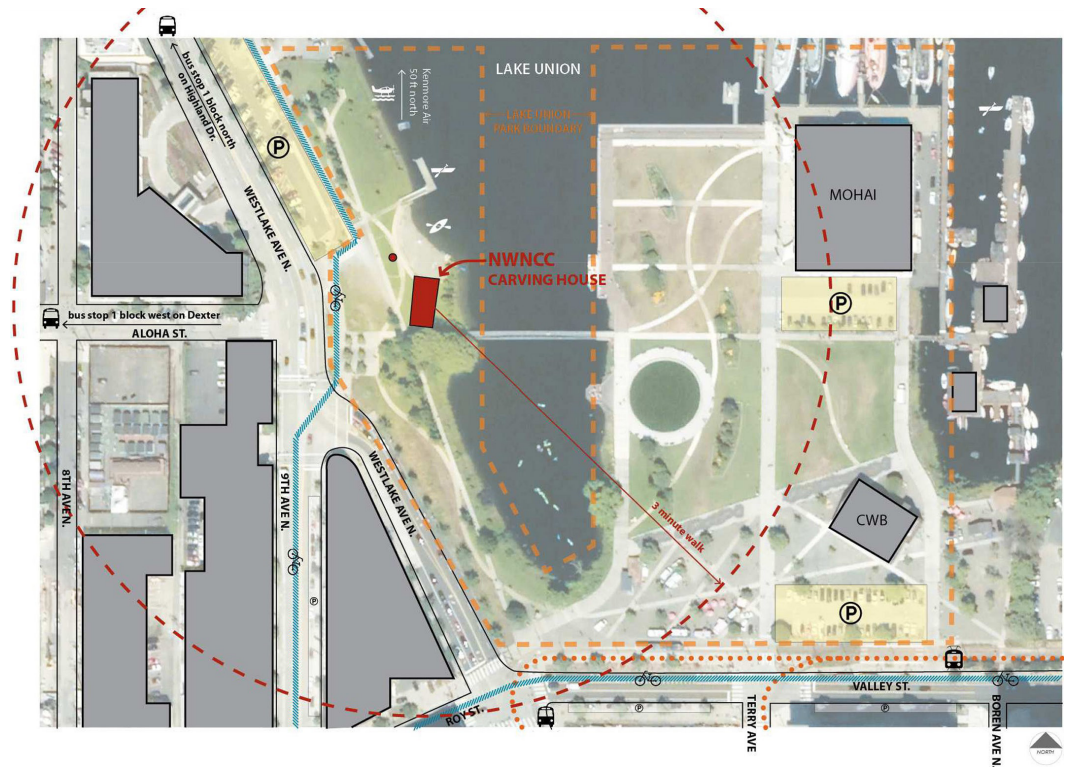


Figure 1: Project location



Figure 2: Project rendering

The team explained access to the site. From land and sea the UIATF desired the facility to have a Coast Salish appearance. Welcome Figures were commissioned, which would provide orientation and cultural identity. Directional blade signs were planned to augment the SPR standard signage systems in the park.

Since the last review thinking has evolved on the desired interactions at the facility, given the pandemic, UIATF's business plan for the Northwest Native Canoe Center was updated. Hands-on learning, teaching, classes, and opportunities to drop on and participate in learning about canoes and making them was still at the center of the plan. The team explained that Native communities have a history of adapting to sweeping change. For the Carving House business model the program, was being expanded to include distance learning potential. Technology and infrastructure were being added to achieve this. This was a difficult choice that had to be weighed during the pandemic in a time of increased demands to deliver public services for youth, elders, and community

members who are homeless.

The design team explained that UIATF and SPR were working with neighboring institutions to develop programming that could leverage the site to meet various related missions and enhance the public experience.

The SDC had recommended that the team consider providing more edible plants. The team explained that Lady fern, huckleberry and camas were planned. There was concern from SPR that it might not be healthy to eat plants at the ground level because of the activities going on around the site. The designers reported too that strengthening and promoting the canoe culture was integral to the UIATF mission that educating and communicating on Indigenous landscapes was something their leadership had intentionally decided to leave to others.

Finally, the project team discussed geotechnical challenges. The greatest risk was identified as slippage during an earthquake that might result from shaking in a liquefaction zone. The estimate for additional cost of foundations were \$800,000. This amount would need to be raised in addition to the \$1.2 million needed for the building. The designers reported that Pangeo has been honored to look carefully for more affordable solutions (see Figure 4). Borings were being done to augment the two that had been completed during master planning of the park, which provided conflicting information despite being in proximity to each other.

The team concluded by explaining that a Coast Salish presence would be reestablished in this location without delay despite the geotechnical challenges. This might be achieved by programming before construction, but the team was confident that additional funding could be found in order to keep the project on schedule.

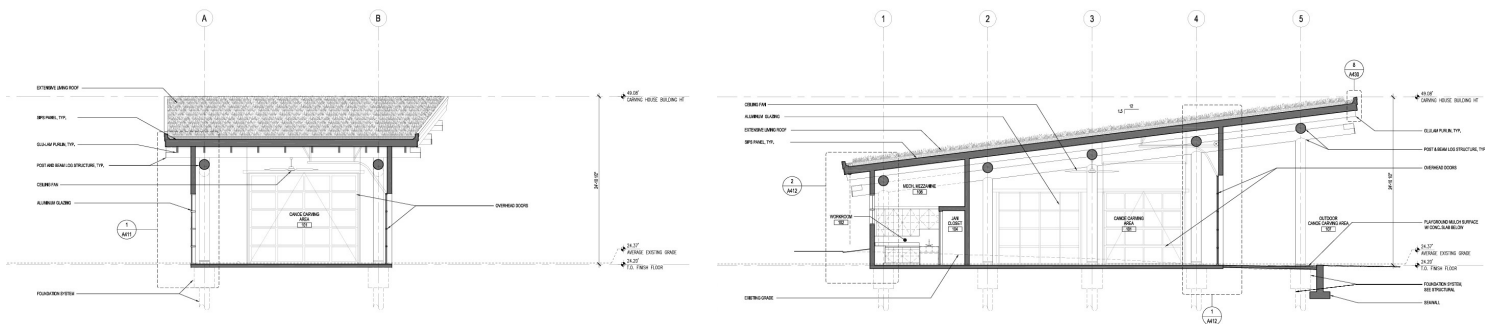


Figure 3: Building sections



Figure 4: Summary of foundation options

Agency Comments

None

Public Comments

None

Summary of Discussion

The Commission organized its discussion around the following seven topics:

1. Connection;
2. Cohesion;
3. Maintenance;
4. Expression and experience;
5. Site constraints;
6. Circulation;
7. Edible plants.

Connection, Cohesion

Commissioners strongly supported the current design. They found the design strong and were excited at the new level of use the project would bring to this part of the city. They agreed that the long-term viability of the project was assured by the early due diligence that had been undertaken to site the project within the park. They lauded the project team for building relationships with the neighbors and encouraged them to continue to seek areas of mutual benefit.

Maintenance

Commissioners provided reminders to consider making access to the roof easy for those who would need to provide culturally appropriate maintenance, perhaps volunteers from the community. They also reminded the team to consider the full sun condition at the site considering the shade plants in the pallet.

Expression and Experience

The SDC voiced strong support for a design that recognized Indigenous history and tradition. Commissioners noted that the project has been envisioned in the park master plan for a long time. They were glad to know that care has been taken to place the new canoe center in a location that worked well for the community and that provided rare water access.

The commission was glad to see the story of cultural resilience in this project. Adding technologies for remote participation in cultural activities was recognized as part of the legacy of adaptation to challenges.

Site Constraints

The SDC expressed the urgent need to address the geotechnical challenges head on by providing additional funding. The burden of finding funding should be shifted from the project proponents and SPR to the City as a whole. Equitable outcomes are a focus of the City and this should lead to action on funding this project. To address its commitment to the Northwest Native Canoe Center, the City should provide strong and substantial commitment to both the Carving House and Welcome House.

Action

The Commission thanked the project team for the presentation of the design development of the Northwest Native Canoe Center Carving House. This project exemplifies the equity and resilience that the City of Seattle is committed to. The Commission applauded the strong, contemporary Coast Salish design of the project. They appreciated the addition of technology for remote participation in programming as an extension of a legacy of adaptation and resilience. In addressing the geotechnical challenges, they were glad to hear the care that went into selecting this location in the master planning process. They firmly pressed the City to come up with additional funds needed to put the project on solid ground.

The SDC voted, 7-0, to approve the design development phase of the Northwest Native Canoe Center Carving House, and provided the following recommendations:

1. Be very thorough with the geotechnical investigations to reduce the uncertainty and help refine the foundation solution and design, which will help refine the actual cost. Perform additional borings at the Welcome House site at this time too. Assess the full and actual cost of building these buildings in this location.
2. As you continue to develop the operations and maintenance plan and resolve who will be responsible for the green roof, provide easy access to the roof for the community who may be involved in caring for and harvesting the plants. Consider providing permanent irrigation to support plants that need it in our even hotter and dryer summers.
3. Continue to build relationships with neighbors to provide exposure to Coast Salish culture.
4. We recommend that the City (beyond just SPR) provide additional funds to complete the unusually extensive geotechnical work necessary in this particular location in Lake Union Park. It is important to complete this missing, key element if the Master Plan, which includes the Welcome House as well. In keeping with the City's commitment race and social justice, this project to strengthen Indigenous culture in Seattle should not be saddled with the costs of having been allocated one of the most problematic pieces of land in the park.