

**APPROVED
MINUTES OF THE MEETING**

Greg Nickels
Mayor

Diane Sugimura
Director, DPD

Raymond Gastil
Planning Director, DPD

Mary Johnston
Chair

Andrew Barash
Julie Bassuk
Graham Black
Brendan Connolly
John Hoffman
Julie Parrett
Nathan Polanski
Dennis Ryan
Norie Sato

Guillermo Romano
Executive Director

Valerie Kinast
Coordinator

Tom Iurino
Senior Staff

May 7, 2009

Convened 8:30 am
Adjourned 4:00 pm

Projects Reviewed

Seattle Trade Center Skybridge over Elliott

Commissioners Present

Mary Johnston, Chair
Andrew Barash
Graham Black
Brendan Connolly
John Hoffman
Julie Parrett
Dennis Ryan
Norie Sato

Unconfirmed Commissioners Present
Julie Bassuk

Staff Present

Guillermo Romano
Valerie Kinast
Tom Iurino
Jeff Arango



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Celebrating 40 Years 1968-2008



May 7, 2009

Project: Seattle Trade Center Skybridge over Elliott Avenue
Phase: Skybridge Mitigation
Last Reviewed: February 19, 2009

Presenters: Blythe Von Reckers, Pacific Lighting Systems
 Roger Pierce, Foster Pepper

Attendees: Jeff Spaulding, Real Networks
 Pat Clark, Wright Runstad and Co.
 Estelle Shives, Wright Runstad and Co.
 Diane Undi-Haga, Wright Runstad and Co.
 Angela Steele, SDOT
 Beverly Barnett, SDOT

Time: 1 hour

(170)

ACTION

The Design Commission thanks the team for their presentation of the Seattle Trade and Technology Center Skybridge over Elliott project. The Commission especially appreciates the team working with the Art Institute, which will provide art to display in the proposed display cases on the parking garage. Commissioners also appreciate the team considering the P-Patch in the design work. They see lighting of the stair tower building as an exciting gesture, and the uplighting of the Seattle Trade and Technology Center building as a great way to enhance the visual experience in the corridor. Referencing the Olympic Sculpture Park in some elements of the design is also applauded. The Design Commission unanimously recommends approval of the mitigation package as presented with the following conditions:

- Work with SDOT on perhaps installing curb bulbs and increasing the safety and comfort of crossing Elliott at Cedar.
- Carefully explore the location of the proposed bike racks. Consider the weather protection the skybridge might provide, and look at how the location might encourage bicyclists to view the art on display along the garage.
- Go with a more muted approach to the underlighting of the skybridge, perhaps providing only the metal mesh without the lighting.
- Pursue the idea of expanding the bike repair workshops and offering them at or near Vine St.

Project Presentation

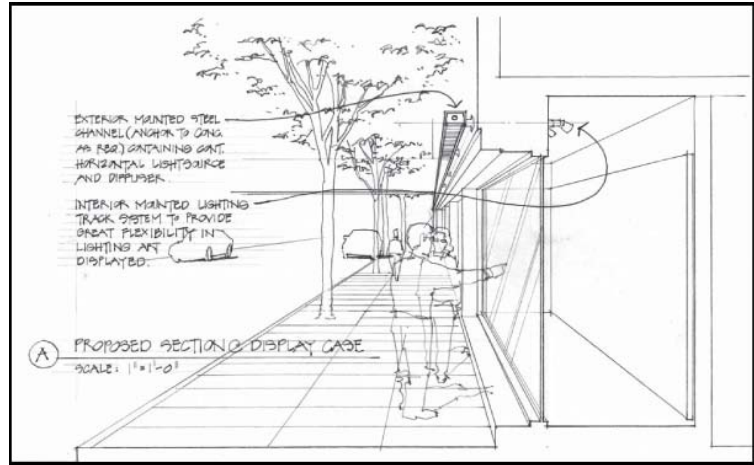
The project area is between the Sculpture Park, P-Patch and the Art Institute. The goal of the project is to improve the block and make it an asset. One of the project's elements is to clean up and improve the existing lighting fixtures on the building. Blacked out windows along the façade will be lighted and enlivened. New lights will be added to the building façade to highlight the verticality of the building features and will be energy efficient.

Display space for art on the parking garage will be added to enhance the pedestrian experience. Art for the display cases is to be provided by the Art Institute. Above the art space will be a band of light within a new exterior mounted steel channel that connects back to the bridge.

The applicants have met with the Art Institute and they are very supportive of the concept and are interested in participating in the project.

The landscaping elements for the project include areas of respite. One of the proposed strategies is on the south elevation of the parking garage and consists of a vine wall. A bike rack will also be installed at the corner adjacent to the P-patch to the south.

The underside of the bridge lends itself to be lit, wire mesh material that can backlight and “sparkle” even during the daylight will be installed. The panels will have color and be playful. At the top of the parking garage is a stair tower that is proposed to be up-lit with color to tie in with the bridge.



Proposed Display Cases

In terms of the skybridge’s affect on ADA access to the garage the applicant doesn’t believe the skybridge hurts accessibility, but they looked at its options for improving ADA access at the ground level. The only way to improve ADA access is to blowout the structure and it’s prohibitively expensive.

Public Comments

Beverly Barnett, SDOT

It does seem like this has moved forward quite a bit, but I would like to see a bigger recognition that the pedestrian environment is the fundamental concern with the continuation of the skybridge. When you look at lighting on a bridge over an arterial, may be a problem for drivers, colored lights near a traffic signal is a concern. I was looking to see the pedestrian experience enhanced, not the driving experience. It is a difficult task, but we have to look at what the neighborhood will be, and to recognize that this a transition. We’ve spent a lot of time walking the street and determining what is the best mitigation for the corridor and we kept going back to these touchstones of light. We do feel that this a great thing to do for the pedestrian environment and is a jumping off point for the next go around.

Casey Hildreth, SDOT

On Page 9, there are two exiting landscaping areas with cages. Have they been removed?

Yes, they took them out, nothing grows in them. With the bike rack, we have to work with the bike rack group to find the right location as well as the lighting under the skybridge.

Commissioners’ Questions and Comments

What kind of bike rack are you looking at?

They need to discuss this with SDOT, but they are flexible on the type and location.

On page 5, you show the wall panels, and that is where you are removing the blacked out wall panels?

No, that is where the art is proposed to be incorporated along the parking garage façade with wire mesh panels and lighting.

What type of fixtures will be you be using?

RGB LED’s will be used that can use a variety of color.

Will the beacon be lit in the same way as the underside of the bridge?

They could be tied together or related, they have a lot of flexibility with the RGB LED's to change the colors. The color will be limited to the bridge and the stair tower.

I appreciate the thorough package you presented and the attention to detail this time. I think one of the primary accomplishments is the outreach you have done to the community along that corridor, particularly the Art Institute. Addressing the P-Patch is a great idea and the bike rack somewhere in that area.

On the bike rack issues, as far as the bike rack location, there were two points of emphasis last time, creating a bike rack near the display panels and enjoy the art, bike racks need to be coordinated with the art panels. The landscape buffer was also discussed. Perhaps we could have a row of bike racks along the street that will begin to create a street edge.

The sidewalk is approximately 6' wide, which severely limits the location of a bike rack. It is also very loud along the corridor that might limit the desirability to park their bike and linger.

Lighting the stair tower, I think it's kind of exciting. It leads to thinking about the Art Institute and whether they may have some participation in it.

We did talk to the at length about that, and we considered video, but are concerned about the moving sign limitations within the City.

I'm a little worried about the lighting under the bridge, not so much for drivers, but for the message it sends to pedestrians and whether they consider it a crossing location.

Could we work with SDOT to add curb bulbs at Cedar Street and use it to add bike racks?

I share the concern about the lighting of the skybridge and encouraging it as a crossing. Do we want to accent the skybridge or the areas around it? Instead of putting money into under-lighting the pedestrian bridge you could do a bike workshop at the p-patch once a year.

Wright Runstad does a similar type event for delivery bikers and it's a fairly modest amount of money.

If our concern is that lighting the bridge will give a mixed message to pedestrians, on the south side, if we wanted to work with SDOT for curb bulb and bike rack, it might exclude pedestrians from crossing at that point.

There are lots of different elements, which is great, and they aim to enhance the pedestrian experience. Of all these pieces, what is the most important?

We started with the skybridge, because it was the element that created the shadow, but we've evolved from that conversation. I love the idea of the art cases and wouldn't want to give that up. I think the skybridge isn't totally integral and it's where we added the color, we didn't want colored lighting on the building or art. Maybe we redirect the effort to the stair tower.

There are two places in the Sculpture Park that enliven the street and create a changing environment (movement): the eastern elevation of the building and the art piece do that.

We aim to do that with our design and create an animated environment.

I'm pretty happy with the package and I've heard some concern about the pedestrian enhancements, but I'm not too concerned, I think adding curb bulbs and space might mitigate the concerns. I recommend we go ahead with the package as presented and then allow people to vote against.

My only comment about the curb bulbs is you said only on the south side?

No, I would do them on both sides.