

# Smith Cove Park

**Edward B. Murray**  
Mayor

**Diane Sugimura**  
Director, DPD

**Shannon Loew**, Chair

**Ellen Sollod**, Vice Chair

**Brodie Bain**

**Lee Copeland**

**Thaddeus Egging**

**Rachel Gleeson**

**Theo Lim**

**Martin Regge**

**John Savo**

**Ross Tilghman**

**Michael Jenkins**  
Director

**Valerie Kinast**  
Coordinator

**Aaron Hursey**  
Planner

**Joan Nieman**  
Administrative Staff

**Department of Planning  
and Development**  
700 5th Avenue, Suite 2000  
PO Box 34019  
Seattle, WA 98124-4019

**TEL** 206-615-1349  
**FAX** 206-233-7883  
seattle.gov/dpd

## Commissioners Present

Shannon Loew, Chair  
Ellen Sollod, Vice Chair  
Brodie Bain  
Lee Copeland  
Thaddeus Egging

Rachel Gleeson  
Theo Lim  
Martin Regge (excused at 12:30)  
John Savo  
Ross Tilghman

## Commissioners Excused

## Project Description

Seattle Parks and Recreation (SPR) is proposing to fully develop Smith Cove Park, located along Elliott Bay between Magnolia Hill and 23rd Ave. W, near the rise for Magnolia Bridge. The site, acquired by SPR through the Pro Parks Levy, had been initially developed with an open play field. In 2013, SPR expanded the site from 4.9 to 10 acres by acquiring the land between 23rd Ave. West and pier 91, which provides beachfront access on its southern and eastern boundaries. The current proposal will include space for active and passive recreation. A King County combined sewer overflow (CSO) facility is located within the site and will be fenced from future park areas. The fenced site includes an underground tank, equipment building, service roads, and planting beds.

In 2014, Friends of Smith Cove Park (FSCP) community group received a matching fund grant from the Department of Neighborhoods (DON) to develop conceptual plans for the park site. FSCP retained Berger Partnership to conduct community outreach and develop conceptual design plans for the park. SPR is using work generated from by Berger to create a framework for the park programming and design. SPR will move forward with selecting a design team in early 2016.

## Meeting Summary

This was the Seattle Design Commission's (SDC) first review of the project. The purpose of this meeting is to review the pre-design for Smith Cove Park and provide feedback to SPR and the design team. At this meeting, the SDC voted 10-0 to approve the Smith Cove Park pre-design with recommendations.

## Recusals and Disclosures

There were no recusals or disclosures.

October 1, 2015

1:30 - 3:00 pm

**Type**

CIP

**Phase**

Pre Design

**Previous Reviews**

None

**Presenter**

Jason Henry

Berger Partnership

David Graves

Seattle Parks and Recreation

**Attendees**

Bruce Carter

Friends of Smith Cove

Peter Hummel

Anchor QEA

Brice Maryman

SVR Design

Michael Shiosaki

Seattle Parks and Recreation



Figure 1. Context map - existing parks located near the project site.

**Summary of Presentation**

Jason Henry of Berger Partnership presented the project. Mr. Henry reminded the commission the design team was hired by FSCP to develop a vision for the future park. The design team included the following steps for generating an overall vision for the park design:

- Public Outreach
- Site Analysis
- Design Schemes

**Public Outreach**

The project team, along with SPR, organized three public outreach meetings and a site visit. All outreach meetings focused on creating a list of possible visions and programs for the park, which included highlighting surrounding infrastructure, connections, site history, local ecology, and the shoreline while planning for both active and passive recreation opportunities. The design team also hosted a site visit, which occurred on a Saturday morning during low tide in order to not only maximize community turnout but to also allow participants the opportunity to experience the site from the shoreline (see figures 1 & 2).

**Site Analysis**

Mr. Henry explained that the site has been manipulated extensively since the area was developed. Once serving as a salt marsh along a series of bluffs, the site was infilled and served as an area for small businesses as well as an informal settlement during the great depression. The site is located within a liquefaction zone, has shoreline setback requirements, includes a CSO facility onsite and is bisected by 23rd Ave. W, all of which are critical areas to be addressed in the design plan. After the initial analysis, Mr. Henry stated that the project team desired to address onsite critical areas and connections to the surrounding area. David Graves, the project manager at SPR stated that the county CSO functions as a storage tank only. Mr. Graves said that SPR has had conversations with the county about reducing the footprint of the

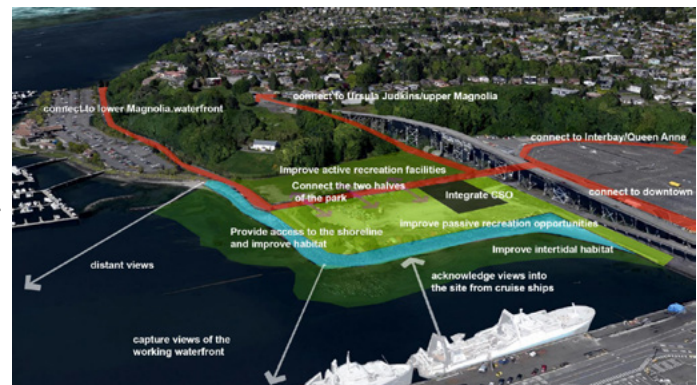


Figure 2. Proposed physical and visual connections to Smith Cove Park

fencing for the facility and will continue to work with them in the future.

### Design Schemes

The following three design schemes were proposed to represent an overall vision for the park:

- Remembrance – included several programmable elements such as volleyball courts, multi-use recreation fields, community garden, a dog park, ADA accessible access to the beach, and non-motorized boat launch. Active recreation is located west of 23rd Ave. W while passive recreation and access to the waterfront are located east of 23rd Ave. W. See figure 3 for more detail.
- Rebirth - Similar to the remembrance scheme, rebirth includes active recreation programming west of 23rd Ave. W and passive recreation programs east of 23rd Ave. W. The design scheme is focused on reconnecting visitors with the waterfront, and includes a series of terraces that will bring water into the site during high tide. In this scheme, parking is relocated to the southwest area of the project site. See figure 4 for more detail.
- Reflection – This design scheme includes several programmable elements found in the previous schemes. The reflection scheme includes rerouting 23rd Ave. W to the western edge of the site, which will connect directly with the Magnolia Bridge. See figure 5 for more detail.

Although different in design, each scheme focuses on connectivity, history, and character while providing access to the shoreline and waterfront, takes advantage of views to downtown, and includes programming for active and passive recreation. Mr. Henry reaffirmed that the design team did not want to choose one of the three schemes, but desired to create a “preferred plan” that would include elements from all three plans, as shown in figure 6. The preferred plan, which will serve as a vision for the park design, includes elements that were envisioned throughout the entire visioning process such as shifting 23rd Ave. W to create a larger passive recreation area, raised crosswalks, improved ecology and tidal zone, non-motorized boat launch, restrooms, and wetland ecology to mitigate storm water onsite.

### Agency Comments

None

### Public Comments

**Bruce Carter**, with Friends of Smith Cove Park Community Group, stated that the group is in conversation with the county about moving the CSO fence. Mr. Carter said it is still to be determined exactly how and when the move will occur.

### Summary of Discussion

The Commission appreciated the design team’s attention to detail while creating an overall vision for the park design, especially with the team’s decision to provide waterfront access. The Commission organized its discussion around the following issues:



Figure 3. Design scheme 1 - Remembrance



Figure 4. Design scheme 2 - Rebirth

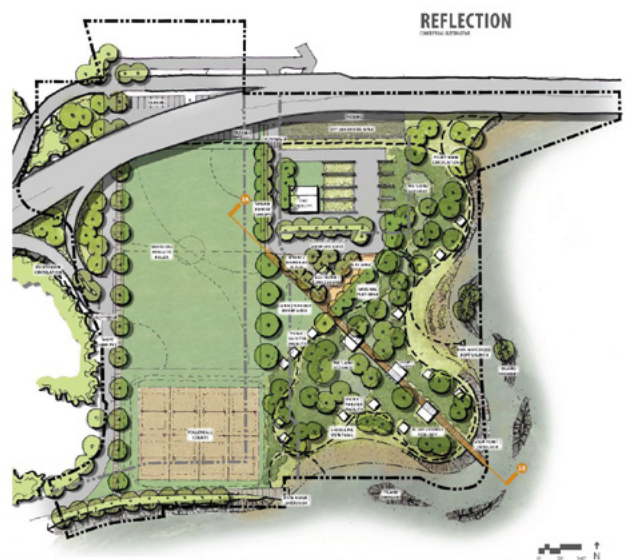


Figure 5. Design scheme 3 - Reflection



**Figure 6.** Preferred design scheme

- Park Programming
- Circulation & Access
- Shoreline Habitat
- CSO

#### *Park Programming*

While the Commission supported the design team's solutions concerning site programming, they suggested the team develop alternative program schemes designed to attract park users, due to challenges in accessing the park. The Commission also encouraged the team to achieve a balance in active and passive recreation throughout the site. Passive recreation opportunities with ample amounts of comfortable seating, views of downtown, and flexible spaces should be located closer to the waterfront, while active recreation programs should be located west of 23rd Ave. W. Although included in two of the three design schemes, the Commission thought it critical to include onsite restroom facilities to support the active recreation programs.

#### *Circulation & Access*

The commission discussed the location of 23rd Ave. W, vehicular and pedestrian site access, and access to the waterfront. Commissioners discussed the merits and drawbacks of moving the 23rd Ave W. road alignment to the west or retaining it in its current location. Although the road limits the areas where passive and active recreation will occur, it also provides clear circulation to all points within the park. The Commission encouraged the design team to explore this issue in detail and to locate the road where it will best serve the programmable elements.

Although the site is not easily accessible from the surrounding area, the Commission recognized the design team's effort to create visual and physical access to the park for pedestrians and cyclists and encouraged the team to further explore the issue. The Commission also encouraged the team to provide more ways to access and interact with the waterfront.

#### *Shoreline Habitat*

While the design team plans to restore the shoreline with native plantings, the Commission agrees that it is very important to continue using native plantings throughout the park. The use of native planting throughout not only emphasizes the importance of the shoreline restoration, but also provides a natural transition from the shoreline to other on site passive and active recreation areas.

#### *CSO*

The commission encouraged the design team to work with King County to minimize the fencing surrounding the county CSO facility. Commissioners also encouraged the team to explore environmental educational programs at or near the CSO area.

#### **Action**

The SDC thanked the project team for the Smith Cove Park pre design presentation. The commission appreciates the balance of programs between active and passive recreation as well as the opportunities to access the waterfront within each design scheme.

The SDC approved the pre design plan for Smith Cove Park, **9-0**, with the following recommendations:

- Retain bathroom facilities for active recreation programming
- Ensure that there is a balance between active programming and waterfront views
- Provide seating areas with views of the waterfront within the passive recreation area ; provide easy access from the seating areas to the shoreline
- Provide car access and parking circulation so that programming is visible and available to everyone
- Provide pedestrian and bicycle access to the site
- Provide adequate wayfinding to the site
- Ensure that SPR works with King County to reduce or eliminate the CSO fence on site
- Include native planting that is acclimated to seashore environments for park use
- Study in detail the best location of 23rd Ave. W as a response to the programmable elements