



DESIGN DEVELOPMENT NARRATIVE

7 February 2012

CONTEXT

Jimi Hendrix Park is located at 2400 S. Massachusetts Street adjacent to the Northwest African American Museum (NAAM) and Urban League housing to the west, and is on the site of the former Colman School playground and parking lot. The property is owned by the Washington State Department of Transportation, and has a long term lease arrangement with Seattle Parks and Recreation. Seattle Parks is responsible for the maintenance of the site.

The park borders seamlessly to Sam Smith Park to the north, site of a popular soccer field, and the I-90 trail. Sam Smith Park is over the I-90 lid, and is also owned by WSDOT. East of the park along the dead-end 25th Avenue South is a residential area with predominantly single family homes. There are a number of parks, playgrounds, and community gardens within a one mile radius.

SITE

The park is a 2.5 acre grassy site which slopes gradually from the northwest with views towards downtown, to a flat area to the southeast, with views to Mt. Rainier. The park has had a few improvements since being converted from a school ground. There is an existing parking lot at the south (single loaded) and to the west (double loaded), with some young trees. The existing retaining wall along the east and south hold the corner and is approximately 10' height at the south east corner. There is an existing 10' tall chain link fence in poor condition at the top of the wall. There is an asphalt path running from the southwest, near the vehicular entry to the park, the parking lot, and the park lot to NAAM, and on to the northeast corner, to connect to Sam Smith Park and the I-90 trail. In low places, the path often has pooling water.

In the center and the southeast of the site, the lawn is flat and poorly drained. The soils are fill material from a second growth forest site in King County, installed during the winter of 2003, with some compaction. The geotechnical investigation has found permeable soil below the topsoil

There are no shrubs on the site, and the area between the parking lot and the retaining wall is bark mulch. The site is irrigated, and the irrigation controller and the electrical service are just north of the property line, just west of the 25th Ave. cul de sac.

IMPROVEMENTS

Since being named for Jimi Hendrix, the park has had little reflection of the character of Jimi, and who he was. As arguably the world's greatest electric guitar player, Jimi Hendrix is among Seattle's most famous sons. Although he rose to fame far away from the Pacific Northwest, his character, talent, and his ongoing legacy is a product of the community he was raised in, and this park has the opportunity to be a reflection of his dynamism, and an inspiration to future generations of performers.

Working with the Friends of Jimi Hendrix Park (FOJHP), NAAM, Seattle Parks Department and the community, through a series of meetings and public houses, Murase Associates developed a plan that could provide a daily experience of the park that would reflect the legacy of Jimi Hendrix.

Funding currently is limited to \$500,000, and initial construction is projected to commence in winter or spring of 2013. FOJHP is raising money for Phase One, as well as additional structures that will be part of a full build out of the park.

THE OVERALL CONCEPT:

In plan view, the concept takes in the form of a guitar, with the fret of the guitar leading down to the southeasterly (Mt. Rainier direction) of the site. A staircase at the SE corner will provide better



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connections to the community, featuring plantings that have seasonal interest. The stem of the guitar will incorporate a time line of Jimi Hendrix's life.

Taking advantage of the existing topography, we propose sculpting the land a bit more to provide higher vantage points, particularly at the north end. Integrated into the north hill, there will be radial benches which can incorporate interpretive elements, such as imagery of Jimi Hendrix, his artwork, impressions of his notable clothing patterns, or handwritten lyrics. The creation of a slight bowl to the center will focus on a central space that can be used for classroom gatherings, picnics, or performances. NAAM regularly takes children out to the park for lunch, and this could contribute to the fun and education during their lunch gatherings.

Additional gathering spaces will be provided throughout the site, connected by concrete paths radiate from the center, in a spiral fashion. Gathering spaces will be unique from each other, eventually with canopies designed around themes from Jimi's work, and become iconic artistic elements in their own right. At the south end, the gathering area is connected to the beginning of a rain garden, which wraps around the south mound to the north side of the parking area, and also to the south of the parking lot.

To the northeast, custom sculptural seating shelters, inspired by artwork that Jimi did while at Garfield High School, will provide intimate seating opportunities, and an icon to the park. Celebrating sound waves, we're proposing a curved colored steel wall with cut outs of notable figures of Jimi Hendrix performing. As the sun passes over the wall, people can walk past his long shadows.

At the north end of the site, we are proposing clusters of purple flowering Pawlonia trees to provide a "purple haze" in the spring. For the most part, the planting would remain turf grass, flexible and easy to maintain. There will be additional shade trees of different varieties to provide seasonal change, and a rain garden at the south, low parts of the site. The central part of the site will slope gradually to the south, to connect to the rain gardens for a slower release. A new, lower fence will replace the existing one, and portions of the base of the wall will be planted in Boston ivy to cover the existing retaining wall in green.

Construction Elements

Demolition:

The "V" site wall to the east of NAAM will be removed, as well as a portion of the SE wall. A portion of the SE wall will be completely removed, and two parts of the wall will be cut down in elevation to become part of planters that will step down, opening up the corner.

The fence at the top of the wall will be completely removed where the retaining wall is less than 30" high. Elsewhere, all but the posts will remain, post caps to be saved, and the posts cut down to 42" high. Between the 25th Avenue sidewalk and the base of the wall, an 18" wide band of paving will be removed to allow for the planting of vines.

The asphalt path will be removed to the property line. The parking lot will remain.

A street tree at the NW corner of the intersection of 25th and Massachusetts will be removed to improve lighting and visibility at the stairs, as well as some trees at the SW where grading impacts the site.

Most of the site will be re-graded. The irrigation mainline and wires will be capped at the property line.

Temporary Erosion Control, Grading and Drainage:

Construction access will primarily be from the parking lot side. The former driveway located just to the east of the NAAM driveway may be utilized to reduce construction impacts to NAAM and Urban League



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housing. Standard erosion control techniques, such as check dams, wheel wash, sedimentation traps/barriers, and silt fences will be employed.

Most of the site will be graded to drain into the rain garden/bio-retention facility north of the west parking lot. These facilities are sized to handle the impact of our site improvements and most of the existing parking impact.

The eastern 10% of the site will remain mostly unchanged, and drain behind the existing retaining wall and through weep holes in the wall. Paving at the base of the wall will be replaced with planting soil and vines to absorb this water. Water draining from the south parking lot will be directed to a planted swale with a perforated pipe leading to the smaller, south rain garden, located to the west of the "head of the guitar".

Three foot berms are designed to form the edge of the "body of the guitar", and form the edge of the space. However, there will be multiple openings in the berms to allow for additional visibility and paths. The high point of the site will be at the NW corner, where seating for performances is envisioned.

Pedestrian and Vehicular Circulation and Paving:

The existing parking lots will remain, but the area between the lots will be raised 6" to allow for a stronger pedestrian connection along the "head of the guitar". An extruded curb will be added at the north end of the south parking lot.

The main path, from the staircase to the central space, will be comprised of a 10' "timeline" path. Charcoal/black integral Lithocrete concrete paving will contrast with flush-set stainless steel bars, 4" wide, running like frets along the guitar. These bands will be engraved with text highlighting key parts of Jimi Hendrix's life in Seattle and career. Decorative circles of white paving will further contrast and add to the sense of a guitar fret.

The head of the guitar will also be comprised of more colorful integral Lithocrete, with mica added for sparkle. The guitar head will have wavy bands of bright colors (purple, yellow, green, orange, red) with zinc bands to separate the distinct colors. 24" high, 18" diameter cylinders of concrete will form the "tensioning knobs" and provide informal seating.

Elsewhere on site are simple 5' wide concrete paths, with medium broom finish perpendicular to the path, with 5' tooled scoring, with 2% cross slope to drain.

At the center of the site, a 48' diameter circle of Lithocrete concrete paving will radiate the heart of the space. The color of this circle is to be a deeply saturated orange at the center, and gradually cool to yellow at the perimeter.

Planting and Irrigation:

An irrigation system with new, low water use spray heads (MP Rotator), new valves and piping will connect to the existing point of connection, which already provides a 2" line, meter, isolation valve, and backflow preventer. We will reuse the existing controller. All lawns will be irrigated.

Most of the site will be lawn, but we have two rain gardens will be planted with low shrubs and perennials to withstand inundation and drought. At the southeast corner, we proposed some unusual but tough plants to make a statement: smokebush, beautyberry, along with other tough, shorter, evergreen plantings.

The existing site wall will be planted at the base with Boston Ivy.



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Along the upland berms, we propose Pawlonia for its bold winter form, curious large seedpods, and spring clouds of purple blossoms. In the lower wetter parts of the site Jackmontii Birch, for its elegant form and striking white winter bark. Elsewhere, we provide Autumn Radiance Maples for fall color.

Lighting and Electrical:

With all the improvements being made to the park, there needs to be light for safety (per CPTED review). At a minimum, we propose a single light in the lawn, and five pole lights in the parking lot. To light the central space, we propose a mast light to the west of the central space, with 3-5 luminaries that can be adjusted. At a maximum, we propose 9 additional pole lights to provide better lighting long the paths.

The current electrical service needs to be evaluated, but will most likely be upgraded to allow for lighting and power. At the central space, a 60 amp company switch could be installed to provide power for small events. We recommend including conduit and pull boxes to 9 potential pole light locations, central stage area, and the three other main gathering spaces.

FUTURE PHASES

RADIAL HILLSIDE BENCHES

Integrated into the north hill, there will be concrete radial benches which can incorporate interpretive elements, such as imagery of Jimi Hendrix, his artwork, impressions of his notable clothing patterns, or handwritten lyrics.

WALL OF SOUND

One feature of the heart of the park is a "wall of sound", a colorful curved wall, imitating the curves of the side of a guitar, curving around to form a backdrop to the center gathering space. This wall can incorporate openings of colored glass, images, and sound, with the use of speakers. Any sound elements would be moderated with a maximum volume and would be connected to a controller so that they would be off during park close hours. Electrical service would also be provided for the occasional larger event.

CENTRAL CANOPY

We propose a shelter over the central space, with a form to take on the feel of a "Little Wing". The armature of the shelter is considered an open sculptural form of tubular steel, bend and tapered to form the support for the shelter as well as tendrils curving and reaching over 40' to the sky, as a beacon to the central space. The shelter, with a tapered oval leaf/wing form, will be 28' long and 16' wide. Attached to an underlying steel armature integrated with the tubular steel will be panels of glass, laminated with a photographic layer to provide pattern and color, to enhance the plaza beneath.

RAINWATER AND PICNIC CANOPIES

Two additional, smaller shelter spaces will be provided throughout the site, with similar forms to the central canopy, but simpler. At the south end of the site, we are proposing a canopy with an opening for the rain to be funneled into a source piece for the beginning of a rain garden. At the east end, we propose a small picnic area with a different theme.

SEATING PODS

To the northeast, custom sculptural seating shelters, inspired by artwork that Jimi did while at Garfield High School, will provide intimate seating opportunities, and an icon to the park. These will need to have openings for safety and comfort.

WAVE WALL

Celebrating sound waves, we're proposing a curved colored steel wall with cut outs of notable figures of Jimi Hendrix performing. As the sun passes over the wall, people can walk past his long shadows.



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This wall will be comprised of several rolled $\frac{3}{4}$ " steel plates, attached to a concrete footing, and will receive a powdercoat finish. The height of the wall will vary from 4' to 10' high, and openings will be sited to allow for great views along the path, which connects Jimi Hendrix Park to Sam Smith Park, our gateway. The wall will be oriented for maximum visibility from the street. In addition to the large cut-outs, there will be perforations in the steel to allow for screened images and patterns to form when looked at from varying distances.

Additional elements

A drinking fountain near one of the smaller shelters may be installed. At the north end of the site, we can add additional open bench seating along the north path to view the soccer field. Community message boards may be considered if the need arises.