

29th Ave SW and SW City View Vacation

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Director, OPCD

Shannon Loew, Chair

Ross Tilghman, Vice Chair

Brodie Bain

Lee Copeland

Ben de Rubertis

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Commissioners Present

Shannon Loew, Chair
Ross Tilghman, Vice Chair
Brodie Bain
Lee Copeland
Ben de Rubertis
Thaddeus Egging
Laura Haddad
Jescelle Major
John Savo

Commissioners Excused

Rachel Gleeson

Project Description

West Coast Self Storage (WCSS) is proposing to construct a self storage facility on two parcels located along Harbor Ave SW in West Seattle. In order to build the facility, the project team is proposing to vacate a segment of the 29th Ave SW and SW City View rights-of-way. Both streets are not improved to City rights-of-way (ROW) standards. This segment of 29th Ave SW is a remnant due to previous vacations to accommodate private rail lines within the ROW. The segment of SW City View in this vacation currently provides access to an existing building located on the project site. If the vacation is approved, the east lot line of the project site will be adjusted to align with an existing retaining wall and fence line. The vacation will allow the construction of a single four story self storage facility with 50 enclosed parking spaces.

Meeting Summary

This was the Seattle Design Commission's (SDC) first review of the 29th Ave & City View Vacation project. The purpose of this meeting was to review the urban design merit for the vacation proposal. After the presentation and discussion, the SDC voted 9 to 0 to approve the urban design merit for the project with several conditions and recommendations.

Recusals and Disclosures

There were no recusals or disclosures

December 1, 2016**9:00 - 10:30 am****Type**

Vacation

Phase

Urban Design Merit

Previous Reviews

None

Project Team Present**John Kay**

Magellan Architects

Karen Kiest

Karen Kiest Landscape Architects

Steve Tangney

West Coast Self Storage

Attendees

None



Figure 1: Site context map

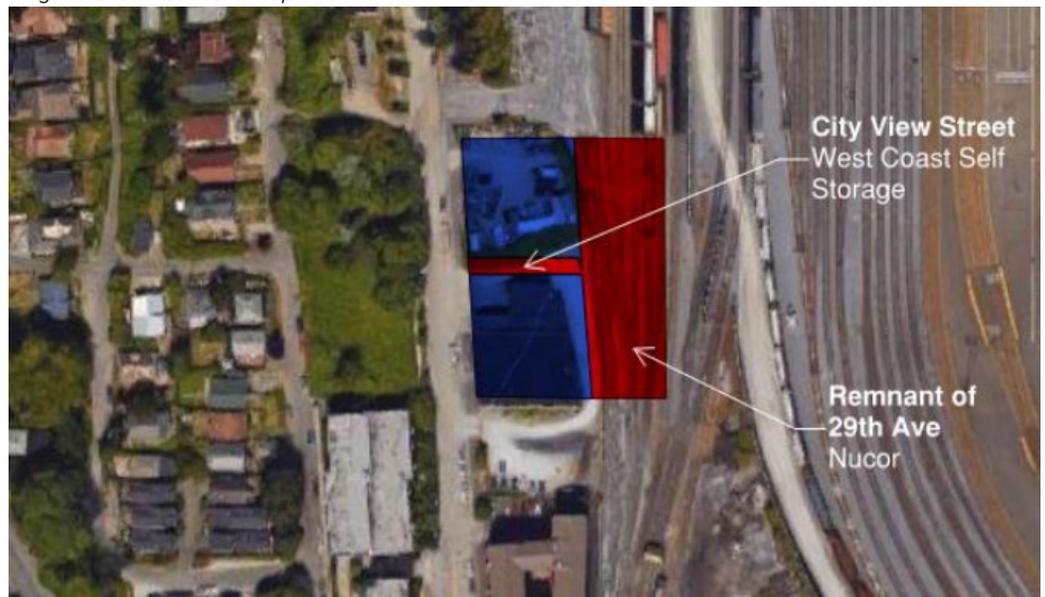


Figure 2: Vacation petitions highlighted in red

Summary of Presentation

Steve Tangney, of WCSS, and Karen Kiest, of KKLA, presented the urban design merit phase of the project. Steve Tangney provided background and description of the project location. The petitioner is proposing the street vacations of 29th Ave SW and SW City View, both of which are not improved to city ROW standards, in order to build a self storage facility along Harbor Ave (see figures 1 & 2). The vacations would allow the construction of a four story building with enclosed parking, office, and enclosed ground outside storage at the street level. The facility will include two driveways, a stairwell entrance, and office/store front along Harbor Ave (see figure 4). The preferred alternative serve as a buffer between industrial uses to the east and residential uses to the west of the site. The no vacation alternative would result in the construction of two 3 story buildings with a single 24-foot curb cut along Harbor Ave, three parking stalls, and 4 stalls for loading. see figure 3 for more detail.

The design for the preferred vacation alternative includes the realignment and widening of the Alki bicycle trail from 6 feet to 8-12 feet, separated sidewalk, additional street trees and landscaping. The project appears to have minimal effect on existing utilities and reduces the number of curb cuts from four to two along Harbor Ave.

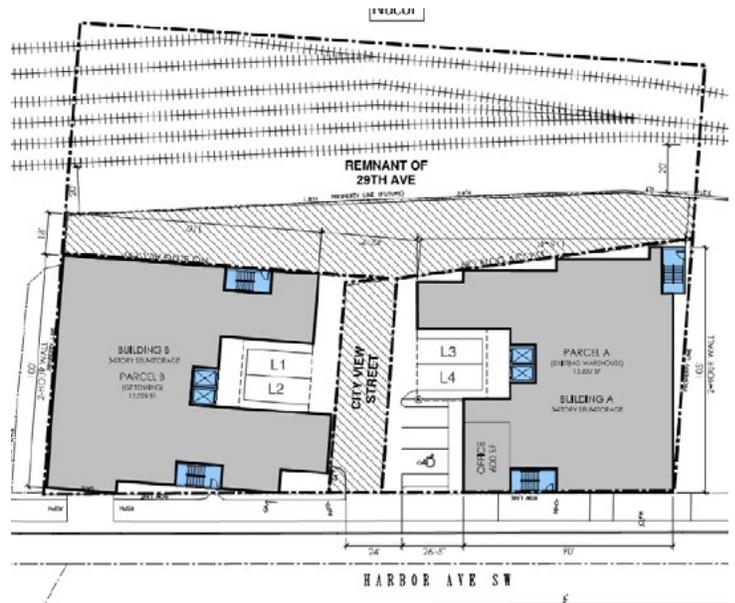
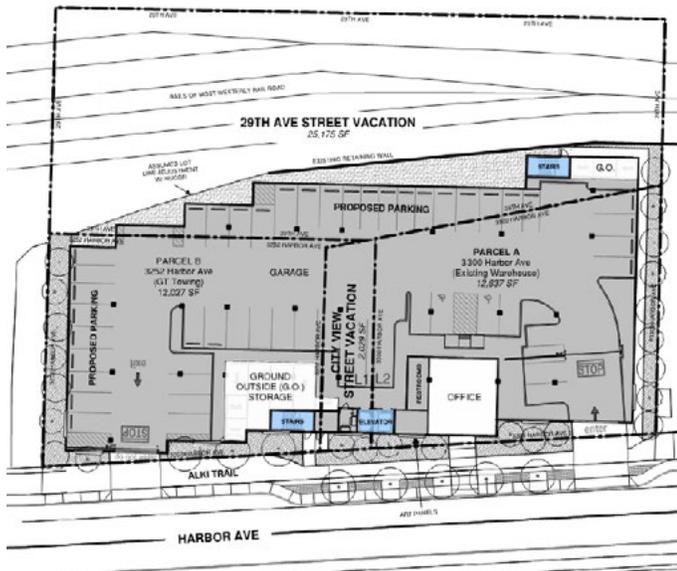


Figure 3: Proposed project plan under vacation (left) and no vacation (right) scenarios



Figure 4: Proposed project facility under the vacation scenario

After presenting urban design merit, the project team provided an overview of the proposed public benefit package. The package included elements that addressed additional landscaping, artwork along the street level façade, and further information about the realignment and widening of the Alki bicycle trail. see figure 5 for more detail.

Agency Comments
None

Public Comments
None

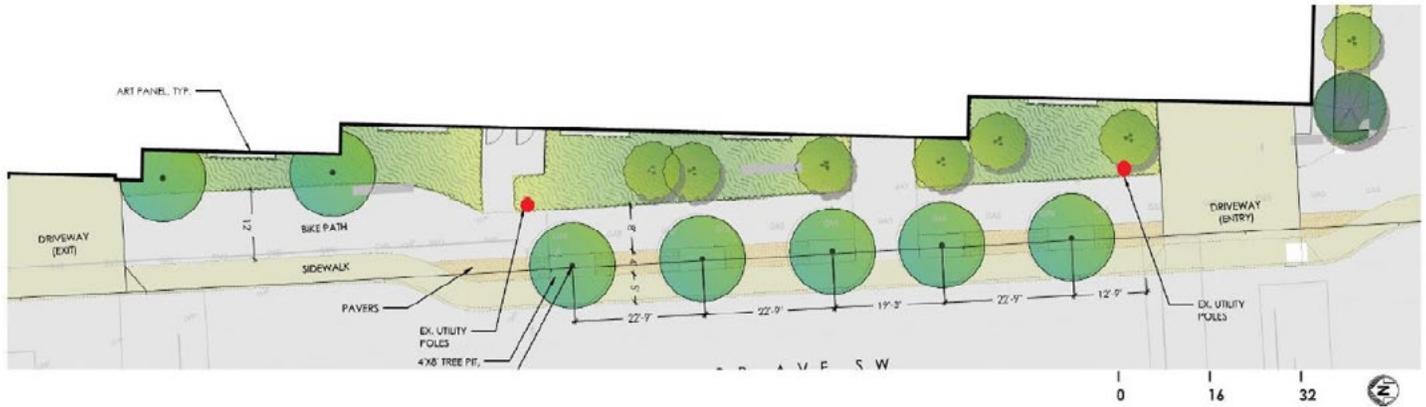


Figure 5: Proposed urban design elements

Summary of Discussion

The Commission organized its discussion around the following issues:

- Circulation
- Utilities
- Light, air and open space
- Urban form

Circulation

The SDC is concerned with the limited sight lines for pedestrians and cyclists traveling northbound as they approach the facility's northern driveway. Commissioners are also concerned with the alignment and materials used for the separated sidewalk as well as potential conflicts between pedestrians and cyclists at specific transition zones. The Commission recommends the project team coordinate with SDOT to provide adequate sight lines to the facility's northern driveway and to ensure the separated pathway transition is designed to avoid conflicts with pedestrians and cyclists. The SDC also recommended the project team explore a shared driveway with the driveway used by Nucor, located immediately north of the project site.

Utilities

The SDC did not have issues or concerns with the project's effect on surrounding utilities.

Light, air, and open space

The SDC agreed the proposed warehouse provides an adequate buffer between residential uses to the west and industrial uses to the east of the project site. The commission is supportive of the use of the site as a warehouse and the petitioner's agreement with the adjacent property owner to realign the parcel line along the east side of the project site. Commissioners also valued the addition of street trees along Harbor Ave.

Urban form

The SDC appreciated the amount of light and transparency provided in the proposed design of the facility. Because of the steep grade change to the west of the project site, the commission recommended the project team consider providing a designed roof treatment. Roof treatments will help address any view impacts of the facility on the residential properties to the west. The Commission supports reducing parking requirements to provide greater flexibility in the design and layout of the ground level portion of the building. Commissioners also encouraged the project team to create a cohesive design on the façade along Harbor Ave, specifically when addressing the facade design of the secured vehicular entrance and exit, artistic elements, and office. The Commission also recommended the project team reach out to community members to see if there is a need for providing more retail opportunities at the street level along Harbor Ave. If reduced parking can be achieved, some of that space can be reprogrammed for retail or other street activating uses.

Action

The SDC thanked the project team for presenting the urban design merit phase for the 29th Ave and City View vacation project. Specifically, the SDC appreciated the enhancement of the building design to create a heightened

sense of transparency. The SDC voted to approve, 9-0, urban design merit for the 29th Ave and City View vacation project with the following conditions:

1. Show adequate sight lines at the facility's exit driveway for cyclists and pedestrians
2. Ensure the transition to separated pathways is designed to avoid potential conflicts between cyclist and pedestrians.

The SDC also provided the following recommendations:

1. Provide consistency in trail alignment and materials used with adjacent portions of the trail to the north and south of the project site.
2. Consider roof treatments, such as a green roof, to enhance views from adjacent residential uses to the west
3. Explore interest from community members for further pedestrian activation at the street level
4. Explore combining the facility's exiting driveway with the adjacent driveway on north end of site, further reducing curb cuts along Harbor Ave.