



APPROVED

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING
May 15, 2008**

**Seattle
Design
Commission**

Convened: 8:30am
Adjourned: 3:30pm

Greg Nickels
Mayor

Karen Kiest
Chair

Tasha Atchison

Brendan Connolly

John Hoffman

Mary Johnston

Juanita LaFond

Dennis Ryan

Norie Sato

Darrell Vange

Darby Watson

Guillermo Romano
Executive Director

Valerie Kinast
Coordinator

Projects Reviewed

Freeway Park
Seattle Center Skate Park
Block 101 Alley Vacation
Capitol Hill Park
John and Summit Park

Design Commissioners Present

Darrell Vange, Acting Chair
Tasha Atchison
Brendan Connolly
John Hoffman
Juanita LaFond
Dennis Ryan
Darby Watson

Staff Present

Guillermo Romano
Valerie Kinast
Tom Iurino
Ian Macek



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15 May 2008

Project: Freeway Park

Phase: Design Update

Last Reviews: 9-20-2007

Presenters: Ted Holden, Department of Parks and Recreation
Iain Robertson, Consultant

Attendees: Alina Godfrey, University of Washington
Hirv Hi Inumarn, University of Washington
Sarah Sodt, Department of Neighborhoods

Time: 1.0 hours

(SR169 /RS0605)

ACTION

The Commission thanks the team for the presentation of the Freeway Park planting update plan and unanimously approves design of this phase of the plan. The Commission's principal comments were as follows:

- **Appreciate the renovation objectives to return to Halprin's original design.**
- **Support objective to bring people back to the park.**
- **Support the renovation objectives to balance the park's two primary characteristics; the spatial quality of concrete forms and paving surfaces, and the rich qualities of the landscape/plant materials.**
- **Support the phasing plan, and underscore the need to communicate the phasing and the plan's objectives to the broader public.**
- **Support development of an ongoing landscape management plan.**
- **Encourage the team to integrate educational and ecological conservation opportunities into this restoration effort.**
- **Appreciate the attention given to CPTED principles in the renovation plan and urge continuing attention to sustainable practices including water conservation, native plant materials, and material maintenance.**

The Commission would be happy to review subsequent phases of the design.

Project Presentation

Project Background

Project for Public Spaces did a study and made recommendations on how to revitalize Freeway Park, paying particular attention to use and safety issues. In 2007 the Mayor and Council approved \$2.5 million to make improvements.

The project today is just one of several projects at Freeway Park. Other projects currently going on include: Pigott Corridor fountain, new pedestrian scale lighting to Pigott Corridor, restoration of main fountains, pedestrian lighting in the park, area south of Seneca. The overall goal is to take care of safety issues and overgrown portions to make the park more maintainable and police-able.

This portion of the project has a \$500,000 construction budget and will take place over three years. Much of the vegetation taken out will also affect the irrigation systems. Therefore the construction will be spread out into three phases due to the impacts

throughout the park. The proposal will take Lawrence Halprin's design for the park during restoration to tie in with original vision.

Halprin wanted the park to be relatively simple. Mostly trees and groundcover were used, not shrubs. Plants were small when the park opened creating a spaciousness that has been lost due to overgrowth. Now the park is dark due to the density and growth of the vegetation. It is not suggested that it is bad that the trees have grown, but it has created a dark space that doesn't allow for undergrowth. The intent is to create the oasis that has been lost.

There are a number of trees that the proposal would like to replace over the three phases. Deciduous trees will be replaced due to space, both above and below ground.

The team has informed neighborhood organizations on the intent to remove trees, and many would like to take out more. The situation is different between Occidental and Freeway parks. The removal at Freeway Park allows for a continual balance with varying ages of vegetation. At Occidental Park the trees were on a regular grid and removal substantially changed the feeling. This is not the case at Freeway Park.

At East Plaza it is proposed to remove the Calloway Pears, which tend to break apart as they age, and replant a smaller grove of trees. As growth has occurred, some trees are now out of proportion with the scale of the space. Cedars will be replaced with hemlocks. Many of the tree replacements were discussed with Halprin to ensure that the renovation still retains his original vision. Tree plantings will be in groves, an idea that Halprin implemented throughout the park.

Some of the plantings are competing for light and root space and may cause safety issues in the future. Therefore some plantings will be removed to improve the situation. The root volume of many of the containers will not facilitate additional plantings, therefore



Figure 1: Freeway Park Landscape Plan

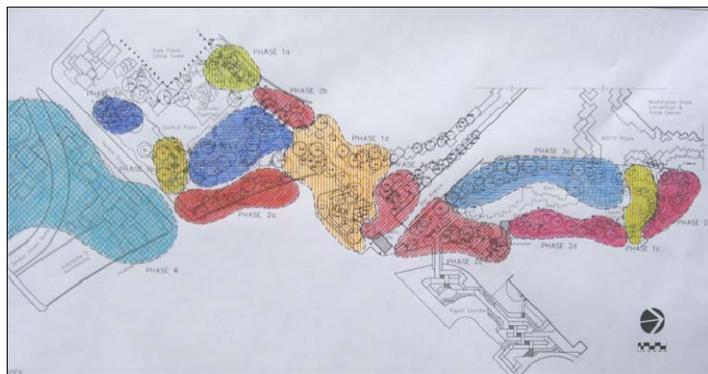


Figure 2: Freeway Park Phasing Plan

trees will need to be removed and replaced. Thinning is needed to ensure the survival of trees.

While making substantial changes, the team maintains Halprin's design at the heart. The park was conceived as a people park and the plants were merely a backdrop. The plan is working to restore this idea.

Commissioners' Comments

- Appreciate emphasis on creating a place for people and allowing the layers of time to be visible with plantings.
- What has been learned in 30 years concerning biodiversity and ecology, and what can be applied to this effort with Halprin's original wishes aside?
- Is there any potential with the reuse of trees?
 - They have grown so quickly that the quality is not suited for woodworking. The potential isn't there like it may be in other parks. However, some trees that were removed from the Pigott Corridor were used in wetland restoration in Magnuson Park.
- There is a huge amount one can learn about how plants respond to urban ecology. The extent to which the adjacent buildings have grown, and how the conditions have changed to be shadier. Pretty harsh growing conditions both environmentally and because of people.
 - New superintendent is fond of using native plants and the palette selected reflects this, creating the biodiversity that was absent before.
- Through replacement of plumbing and irrigation, will the system be forward thinking, or just a restoration of the current system?
- It will be restored to its past condition; a new system will not be implemented.
- Is water conservation an important aspect to restoration?
 - The park is essentially a window box and is completely artificial. Always plan with conservation in mind, but that isn't necessarily the focus of this park. The resources demanded are different than other parks due to the location and construction.
- The strategy of bringing people back is important.
- Is there something inherent in the concrete forms that promotes crime?
 - Project for Public Spaces looked at both vegetation and concrete forms. Parks has worked with a structural engineer and determined that the design of the concrete forms does not give much room for change. There is a street family that has taken residence in the park. Starting 5/14/08 rangers have been patrolling the park which will help with these incidences.
- The concrete forms create the pathways which form the space. To what extent is the restoration bringing the concrete forms back to being part of the landscape?
 - It is a balancing act. The plants now are so large proportionally to the concrete forms. The forms also limit the growth potential of the park, and many of the trees have met their growth limits.
- Concrete forms are essential to the parks design and choreographing of the space. The idea of creating an oasis where you are concealed from the city will not

- happen with the overgrowth, the concrete gives a feeling of being in the urban environment.
- Appreciate returning the original integrity to the park. See where the community would be excited and want to do it all at once, but support Parks Department decision for phasing. A communication plan that is interactive and dynamic and refreshed would be appropriate.
 - The community group is doing things, as well as working with the media on outreach.
 - Will the park only be assessed every 32 years?
 - Need to manage the landscape so in 30 years there will be plant diversity. A management plan is needed because the landscape is so dynamic.
 - The plans seem in final design. Is there any reason for the team to return? Can the DC help in any further manner?
 - For the planting plan in Freeway Park, perhaps not. However, the area South of Seneca we will be returning and want your input.
 - Therefore it would be Final Design approval for this phase.
 - It would be nice to coordinate to meet on the site for the next meeting.

15 May 2008 **Project:** Seattle Center Skate Park
 Phase: Concept Design
Last Reviews: 11-01-2007
Presenters: Jill Crary, Seattle Center
 Kathleen McLaughlin, Seattle Center
 Mark van der Zalm, VDZ & Assoc, Inc.
Attendees: Sandra Choy, Weinstein AU
 Patricia Hopper, Arts & Cultural Affairs

Time: 1.0 hours

(SR169 /RS0611)

ACTION

The Design Commission thanks the team for their presentation, and unanimously approves the proposed schematic design direction with the following recommendations:

- **Appreciate the emphasis on creating an active entry node and consideration of the surrounding edges, the activity and context, including the design opportunities beyond the scope boundary and integration with Fischer Pavilion.**
- **Recognize the stakeholder desire to blend the design concept elements, but encourage you to maintain clarity of concept as you move forward with design.**
- **Strong encouragement to maintain the bold approach to push the design envelope, while not forgetting who their primary clients (skate boarders) are.**
- **Support incorporation of the existing canopy to provide weather protected viewing space to the park to promote intergenerational comfort and activity.**
- **Continue to consider clarity and wayfinding of comfort resources for users.**
- **First and foremost the project should work as an urban skatepark – other considerations, although important should be considered as secondary if skatability of the park is compromised.**
- **Support integration of art into the park design.**
- **Appreciate the incorporation of appropriate and energy efficient lighting for the plaza to create a safe space, even if not skatable.**

Recusals: Commissioner LaFond and Commissioner Watson

Project Presentation

Project Background

The 5th Ave parking lot was the old skatepark location. Last summer City Council chose the Seattle Center Pavilion site at Thomas and 2nd, which was identified in the preliminary draft of Seattle Center Century 21 Master Plan as a possible future site. Neither the Council nor SPAC (Seattle Park and Recreation Skateboard Park Advisory Committee) wanted the suggested temporary site.

Perri Lynch has been chosen as the artist for the project and will be part of the design team weaving her ideas into the park. The existing cross-axis through access at 2nd and Thomas make this an important intersection. The site is also at an interesting highpoint in elevation.

Due to the controversial aspects of the project a stakeholder group was convened. Its Stakeholder team includes Seattle Center staff, SPAC (Seattle Parks and Recreation Skatepark Advisory Committee), Skate Like a Girl, the nearby Sacred Heart Church, the Seattle Children’s Theater, Seattle Center workgroups, the project architect and representatives from the four major Seattle Center festivals. The final design will be completed in July. The project will be a tricky demolition, with the completion of the park scheduled for the end of June 2009.

There has been a move from old school style of transition/bowl skateboarding, which is space intensive, to street/skate plaza skating. Street style creates the need to create authentic urban terrain in an urban plaza, hence reducing the impact of inappropriate skating in other areas. These plazas can be a place for public art, multipurpose events, and can use a diversity of materials.

The site chosen is a high profile location with landmarks that give a great context. The skatepark will be looked at nationally because it is the first downtown plaza in the US. The prominent location also acts as an entry to Seattle Center. The project will open up the corner and make it an asset to the entire campus. It will be treated as a welcoming entry, making it safe and not intimidating for both skaters and non-skaters. Integrated materials, and incorporated functional artwork are priorities, as well as screening so the park is respectful of adjacent neighbors.

There are still various ways that the park design can go. Commonalities exist between the three concepts: grade changes, London Plane trees along borders, entry at the corner where there would be no elevation change, and respecting the back of the house operations of Key Arena. The design will integrate entry elements, admissions booth, necessary mechanical vents and ATM, to coordinate with the skatepark.

Three design directions were shown to the public for feedback.

1. Urban plaza vocabulary with stairs, ramps, and other urban elements.

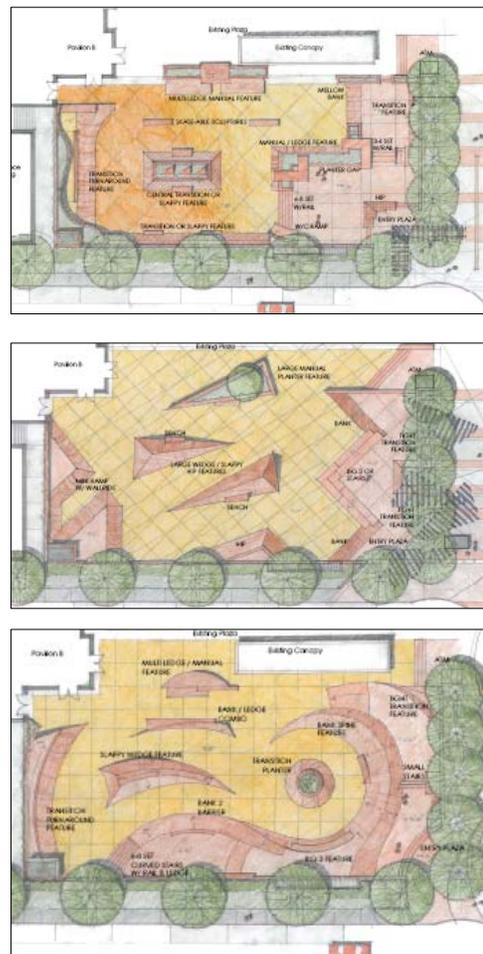


Figure 3: Skatepark Concepts

2. Dynamic angular pieces and sharp elements. Canopies tie in with Fisher Pavilion.
3. Throwback to transition style skateboarding with an updated twist and urban feel.

After public comment the team decided that a blending of concepts one and three would be appropriate. The design will stay away from grey concrete and will use a number of materials that add color and are skateable. The team is also looking at how to infuse the design with art that is indicative of Seattle.

Commissioners' Comments

- Can you speak more about the existing canopy?
 - It is a relic from 1962 and is a cast concrete form that is a freestanding element. The canopy provides weather protection and viewing and helps to define the space. The design will have edges that are less skateable to promote people to get close.
- SC is a place for innovation. Be new, bold, and adventurous. Is blending the concepts taking away the boldness of the design?
 - Softening some of the big statements and combining with the rectilinear elements of the other concept will keep the design fresh and bold. An exciting flow can be created by integrating the curvilinear form with the rectilinear elements.
- First and foremost it must work as a skatepark. The design needs to push the skateboarder's envelope as well as plan for future recreation needs.
 - A skateable art piece will definitely be incorporated into the park.
- Support keeping existing canopy. Are restrooms/water/facilities nearby?
 - Located adjacent to the park, and a drinking fountain will be added.
- Are there safety Issues?
 - By moving the park onto campus there will be more 'eyes on the park.'
- Are there less accidents or do patrons just not sue?
 - Skating has a lower accident rate than soccer or football. Many injuries are minor or go unreported. The passion of the skateboard community is great that they appreciate the park and the consequences that come with skating.
- Does the plaza have to be at grade, or can varying grades be added?
 - Existing grades will be used to add element changes to avoid tall walls. There will be a grade change in all three options between the zero grade plaza and the ends.
- Appreciate the objectives of bringing in the vertical design elements of Fisher Pavilion into the space.
- Encourage looking at the maintenance implications of the material choices for the project.
- Appreciate having artist Perri Lynch involved in the project.
- How will the space be lit?
 - The plaza is not intended to be skatable at night, and would require a large amount of lighting if it were. The plan is to light the space for safety, but not to promote skating. Part of the art program can look at lighting. Using solar and LED lights wherever possible, because can't use integrated stormwater due to slab construction.

15 May 2008 **Project:** **Block 101 Alley Vacation**
Phase: Alley Vacation: Public Benefits
Last Reviews: 4-3-2008
Presenters: Tim Clemen, Walker Macy
Sharon Covoman, Vulcan, Inc.
Peter Krech, Callison
Attendees: Beverly Barnett, SDOT
Jennifer Dalley, Callison
Phil Fujii, Vulcan, Inc.
Lori Jay, Callison
Scott Kemp, DPD
Michael Medina, Callison
Sean McKeever, Callison
John Schoettler, Amazon

Time: 1.0 hours

(SR170 /RS0606)

ACTION

The public benefit package is deemed adequate, and is approved by a vote of 5-2. The Commissioner recommends that the following comments be considered in the next design stage, which will be reviewed by staff:

- **Raises concerns over the inversion of the public benefit diagram, as most benefits are interior to the block rather than on the perimeter.**
- **Concern that lobby entrances are sited on the interior plazas and not directly on the street, which may decrease the activation of the public sidewalks.**
- **Appreciate the preservation of the Terry Avenue Building, which adds depth of time. A positive feature is providing eyes on the adjacent spaces. Support moving the rooftop mechanical equipment to new development.**
- **Appreciation for the level of details of the streetscapes**
- **Recognize that Harrison is the logical path for pedestrians and that the team has extended the curb and provided features to support this.**
- **Appreciate the sidewalk improvements per the Terry Ave guidelines, which are not mandatory. Extended streetscape on Terry is consistent with other developments.**
- **Appreciate that the project matches the widened sidewalk on the adjacent block on Harrison.**
- **Support the use of display windows to enhance the perimeter sidewalks where transparency is not possible.**
- **Appreciate the mid-block bulb on Boren.**
- **The landscape consistency enhances the seamlessness of the transitions.**
- **Appreciate eroding of the corners of the buildings at the mid-block entrance and the angled building walls at the Boren-side plaza.**
- **Appreciate extension of sidewalk improvements at the Bio-Rad loading docks.**
- **Appreciate including the sun/shade studies in the presentation.**

- **Suggest exploration of public art in the project.**
- **Concerns over the garden rooms and that they will not feel public.**
- **Encourage the team to promote uses in the Terry Avenue Building that activate the Big Tree plaza, with services that are inviting to the general public, and to provide public amenities and seating in the plaza in addition to those associated with the Terry Building commercial tenants.**

The two dissenting votes were based on the opinion that the public benefit package as proposed provides open space that is focused on private retail use at the interior of the block, rather than allowing the public benefit to be sufficiently public.

Project Presentation

Project Background

A partial alley vacation is requested in order to reconfigure the private parcels into a more viable set of building footprints, while saving the two storey Terry Avenue building, which has been nominated for landmark status by the proponent. Preservation of the Terry Avenue building is proposed as the main public benefit. It has character that is indicative of the past history of the neighborhood.

Open spaces are incorporated into all of the varying blocks of the Amazon campus. The varying character of the spaces adds to a sum that is greater than the individual blocks. There is a lot of interaction with pedestrian routes and the space of Block 101. The open space is situated on an axis that provides view corridors to the Space Needle due to the 20ft grade change of the site. The topography of the site will be an integral part of the design, bringing abstract lines into the plazas and acting as a unifying element. The plan also erodes the base of the buildings to expand the ground plane, creating a space that is larger than the actual space between the buildings. The lobby entrances are off the Boren Ave courtyard. The alley will be a dead-end and have a hammerhead turn-around.

The team spoke on the three areas that make up the public benefits package: perimeter street attention, the Terry Avenue Building and its integration, and the through-block connection and series of outdoor rooms created. The proposed through-block connection is different from the proposals for the other blocks in the Amazon campus due to the elevation change across the property.

Perimeter Streets

Terry Avenue is subject to the Terry Ave guidelines, but compliance is not mandatory. The proposal includes sidewalks that are 31ft wide, change of materials, larger tree canopies, bicycle parking and benches in the ROW. All of these things are non-standard elements. The same brick pattern will be used to provide continuity along the blocks all the way to Mercer. Bollards are required due to the 2in curbs. The Terry Ave Building sits five ft beyond the typical property line; therefore it sticks out further into the public ROW than the new construction. The Terry Ave building will be restored with new doors and windows. The curbs on Harrison will be extended to provide more plating space. The parking entrance on Harrison will be aligned with the building across the street. In addition, the sidewalk will be widened to match the adjacent blocks. Planters will be

adjacent to the buildings as well as along the street. Display windows will be behind the planters to hide the aboveground parking. A 15ft setback is required above 45' along Thomas Street to preserve the view corridor, so roof terraces were created. On Boren the tree planting area is increased to expand the plaza into the ROW. The buildings will have overhead canopies above the sidewalk. There is a north/south slope change of 20ft along Boren as well. The improvements on Thomas include curb extensions, drought tolerant street trees, and plantings at the corners. The project will also be improving the right-of-way just across the alley, which is in front of the Bio-Rad service entry.

Terry Avenue Building

The Terry Ave Building will be retained and act as a retail hub for the entire neighborhood, as it is well suited for a wide variety of retail uses. The proponents will seismically upgrade the building as well as add other mechanical services. The building provides eyes on the courtyard. Skylights and windows provide daylight to the interior of the building. The ground floor of the new building is shorter than the existing structure, so the interiors of the buildings do not align. However, the exterior space has been aligned with the Terry Ave Building floor levels to improve pedestrian flow. No structural upgrades will be needed for the proposed eco-roof, which can be used to capture rainwater. Mechanical structures will be moved to the adjacent building and not be located on the roof. The roof will have irrigation to provide varied vegetation.

Through-Block Connection

The through-block connection is comprised of two main spaces, the Boren Plaza and the Terry Avenue Plaza. A series of small spaces will be created, rather than one unified space. The project proposes to use a diversity of tree types to provide visual interest. A rain garden and green wall will be used to add color, texture and interest.

A large plaza will be located adjacent to the Terry Ave Building which includes a large specimen tree to give an immediate impact. The large tree immediately scales the site, and allows better sightlines to the stairs due to the higher canopy. It will provide shade, but not too much. A rain stairway will be integrated into the elevation change. There is an opportunity for the accessible route to tell the narrative of the site, and provide storage to house fixtures used to animate the lower plaza.

The upper Boren Ave courtyard now has a softer stadium stair approach. Movement is under the actual building overhang, which again promotes the eroding of the architecture to allow pedestrian movement. A collection of smaller scaled garden rooms will be created within the larger space to provide a more intimate feeling. Plantings along the east side of Boren act as a push into the courtyard. The area will be active due to the retail space and lobby entrances.

The overall tree selection will provide continuity with adjacent blocks. As a whole, access to water is a larger site problem than access to sunlight. Irrigation will ensure the success of the plantings.

Public Comments

Beverly Barnett, SDOT:

- The design has advanced. Appreciate the attention to detail on all sides of the development. The Terry Ave improvements cover everything with the guidelines, preservation of the building, and plaza.
- Has preserving an existing building been used before?
 - The building is an icon, whether or not it is designated. Preserving landmark buildings is listed specifically as a public benefit in the Street Vacation policies. The project to the north preserved part of the building, but it did not make use of it as beautifully as here.

Scott Kemp, DPD

- The DRB has been very supportive and likes the general site plan. They are still interested in the façade treatment, garage façade treatment, and tunnel bridge connection. Best design yet seen in SLU.

Commissioner's Comments

- Will the accessible route be the primary access route throughout the year?
 - People are encouraged to go up the stairs; this will be a secondary route.
- Is Terry Ave one-way?
 - Yes, going north.
- Can you access the belvedere without taking the stairs?
 - There will be elevator access on all levels.
- How discretionary are the Terry Ave guidelines?
 - They are guidelines, not mandatory.
- There is an eco-roof on Terry Ave building. Typically used to accept rainwater and allow detention and evaporation, not to have runoff, but will have it on this building.
 - They can only hold 20% of normal rainwater. Also provide bird habitat and fixes nitrogen in the air. Because the soil media is so shallow the water goes through it quite fast, so it's incorporated into the runoff garden.
- Where will water come from for the rainwater stairway?
 - It is a sustainable feature, only from at minimum Terry Ave building roof.
- Will the project be storing rainwater?
 - Not at this point, but the team is exploring the possibility.
- What are the safety implications of this alley type?
 - Pedestrians are not invited to use the alley. In this case they would need to turn around to exit.
- Do any guidelines provide emergency exits in the alley?
 - None do because they are not intended for a pedestrian.
- Not many are dead ends with this type of topographic break, so this does pose a safety concern.
 - Pedestrians will be able to go into the building during business hours.
- Can the team speak about the alley improvements near Bio-Rad?
 - They are not required and are not part of public benefit.
- Green Factor being met primarily by green roofs..

- Is street crossing at Boren encouraged?
 - No.
- Is there any lighting proposed at the Boren plaza?
 - The three lighting strategies are up high having low intensity mood lighting, benches housing linear light fixtures, and decorative lighting higher in the space.
- Appreciate clear presentation.
- The bicycle racks are exposed at the perimeter. Encourage providing public bike storage, and steel channels up the stairways to promote bicycle movement.
- Resting spots for the public are in the shady spots and more private looking spaces. These are not comfortable spaces for the general public.
- Concerns over winds and what will happen.
 - Wind study currently being conducted.
- Terry Ave plaza is the best gathering space. It is the heart of the entire project, frustrated that it is claimed by the private retail spaces.
- Impressed with changes. Appreciate canopy removal on Boren, the sun studies, and adding the specimen tree adding to the open space. However, encourage rethinking type of tree.
- Appreciate attention to detail along the streetscape.
- Appreciate pedestrian connections, but wish the neighboring buildings were shown.
- Would like to have seen how pedestrians will use the space.
- Parking entrance on Harrison. Pedestrian must compete with those using the parking.
- The public benefit seems to mainly be at the middle of the site.
- Safety of the alley is a concern. Would like to see a 24hour access to the public space from the alley.
- Appreciate topographical erosion of the ground plane that the public can appreciate and read as public space.
- Need to find more ways to provide clearly public spaces for seating/respice.
- Encourage public art dimension.
- At Harrison the bulbs and the notch and the way the garage is treated seems like a good resolution.
- Encourage placing a bench around the tree.
- The team may want to investigate the elevated north end of the alley. People have the natural tendency to go to the edge and look below.
- Appreciate the sun and wind studies.
- Appreciate the clear line of sight that has been created across the site.
- Encourage providing seating opportunities that are both commercial and public.
- The streetscape is nice along the perimeter of the building, but the structure is not engaging. Interior through-ways have provided a means for lobby entrances
- Encourage taking tree out along Boren to open up space.
- Garden rooms are perpendicular to the flow and act as barriers. May not be perceived as public.
- Accessible pathway from Terry may create security issues.

- Did not see how the erosion translated into the design.
- The preservation of Terry Ave building does not seem like a public benefit.
- The public benefit around the perimeter responds well. Shares disappointment that there is not more activation along the streets.
- The Boren plaza is too heavily landscaped and may be a logical location for art. Does not see as an oasis, but as pass-through to the haven on Terry.
- The right balance does not exist there to make it a successful public space.

15 May 2008

Project: Commission Business

Time: 0.5 hours

Action Items

- A. Submit Timesheets
- B. Minutes of April 17, 2008
 - Approved

Discussion Items

- C. 40th Anniversary
- D. Recruitment
- E. Outside Commitments

15 May 2008

Project: Capitol Hill Park

Phase: Schematic Design

Last Reviews:

Presenters: Deb Guenther, Mithun

Craig Skipton, Mithun

Lynn Sullivan, Department of Parks and Recreation

Attendees: Kelly Davidson, Department of Parks and Recreation

Dotty Decoster, Capitol Hill Resident

Gary Gibbons, Department of Parks and Recreation

Joanne Ivanek, Capitol Hill Community

Donald S. Johnson, Capitol Hill Community

Joel Lavin, First Church LLC

Rich MacDonald, Department of Neighborhoods

Glenn MacGilvra, Capitol Hill Community

Craig Norberg, Norberry Tile

Sandy Pernitz, Department of Neighborhoods, P-Patch

Time: 1.0 hours

(SR169 /RS0605)

ACTION

The Design Commission thanks the team for their presentation and approves schematic design with a vote of 5-1. The Commission offers the following comments:

- **The Commission would like to see the boundary between church and park resolved, as well as the boundary between the park and garden.**
- **Appreciate simplicity of plan and design.**
- **Would like to have a more detailed description of storage and compost areas.**
- **Appreciate level of public involvement and collaborative spirit.**
- **The Commission would like to see the next level of design and refinement, including cross sections.**
- **We look forward to seeing in design development.**

Dissenting vote based on the opinion that the project design is too conceptual and does not reflect the detail typically seen in schematic design.

Project Presentation

Project Background

The property was purchased last year from a church, which is currently being converted to condos. Mithun was hired in February and developed two concepts that were presented to the community in April. After the meeting the project was refined to one concept, which will be presented to the community later in May. The project has no money for arts. There is a great need for parks in this area, which is very densely populated. The team also recognizes the importance of place with nearby Cal Anderson Park and its location on top of the hill. The park is very small at only .39 acres. The project is using the “less is more” principle by keeping the park simple.

There are eight principles that are guiding this project, which include creating a space that is safe and secure; simple and elegant; adaptable; provides the greatest good; flexible use by groups and individuals; expressive of Seattle character; becomes a civic legacy; and is welcoming. The team analyzed circulation, topography, adjacent uses, and conducted shadow/sun studies. They also developed concepts that had a connection to food and played off the seven hills of Seattle, of which Capitol Hill is one. Three concepts were developed: Open Lawn; The Grove; and The Hills of Seattle (not a viable option as Parks Department was concerned about maintenance).

The community liked the lawn scheme due to its flexibility, as well as aspects of the grove scheme. Mithun developed a plan that blends both concepts. The community also wanted a balance between open space and gardens, gathering spaces, grills, integrated play, multiple seating, and areas to facilitate play. The preferred concept is The Lawn. It's permeable, uses the alley to make it feel larger, has ADA access, is flexible in use, and maximizes the space. It includes a gesture toward the seven hills of Seattle as a place for kids to climb. The team wants to use Ipe wood and induction lighting. The garden area would be designed, managed and installed by the community.



Figure 4: The Preferred Concept - The Lawn

Public Comments

- The community group is going to work with P-patch people.
- There is a need for P-patch space on Capitol Hill. This plan is the absolute minimum. We would like it increased.
- Currently restoring the church. Not happy with the placement of the compost pile as it is right near the entries into the condo units. Would rather have the P-Patch spread out and not against the church.
- Will you save the cherry trees?
 - It's on the table. Exploring that.

Commissioners' Comments

- Did you look at the alley and consider modifying it to create a woonerf?
 - The community talked about it, but it's outside the boundary of the project. If the community raises money for a woonerf, the team could look at it.
- Why a MOU and not a regular P-patch?
 - The community garden will be on Parks property and as such requires a Memorandum of Understanding between Parks and the community.
- Why is there no buffering between the church and the garden?
 - It was intentional; we think it was a nice contrast between the two.
- What is the grey form in the garden?

- It is a place to store mulch. There will be no storage shed as the tools will be stored in benches.
- Are four new trees included in the plan?
 - Yes.
- Can you explain the steps?
 - The lawn is in the middle with steps at two corners to accommodate grade change.
- Did you explore P patches on alley side?
 - Explored other places, but the church already serves as a barrier to the north and we didn't want to create an additional barrier to the west. In addition delivery along the alley and the relationship of the townhouses to the alley made the location we picked the preferred one. It is also the sunniest area of the site for gardening.
- Where will residents of the church condos park?
 - Underneath in a garage.
- Reduce the depth of the P-patch and make a screen wall.
- I don't know who has the responsibility to screen – the developer or the park?
- Someone needs to resolve the buffer and boundary. That's the issue.
- Is the 7 hills an art piece and is it unfunded?
 - Yes.
- Don't understand the Ipe under the trees.
 - It is meant to be threshold and is used at Counterbalance Park. It gives a greater sense of texture.
- Won't that diminish the size of the park?
 - It only diminishes the size of the lawn. People in community like it.
- Have you thought about using benches to shield mulch pile?
 - Have been thinking of ways of shielding it.
- Are we really at schematic design? It's too diagrammatic and crude.
- Appreciate the flexibility of the plan and simplicity of the plan.
- There is a separation between the park and garden created by the regular placement of the picnic tables. Placing them in other areas may break down the border.

15 May 2008

Project: John and Summit Park

Phase: Schematic Design

Last Reviews:

Presenters: Deb Guenther, Mithun

Craig Skipton, Mithun

Lynn Sullivan, Department of Parks and Recreation

Attendees: Kelly Davidson, Department of Parks and Recreation

Dotty Decoster, Capitol Hill Resident

Gary Gibbons, Department of Parks and Recreation

Glenn MacGilvra, Capitol Hill Resident

Rich MacDonald, Department of Neighborhoods

Craig Norberg, Norberrytile

Time: 1.0 hours

(SR169 /RS0605)

ACTION:

The Commission thanks the team for their presentation and unanimously approves schematic design with following comments:

- **Appreciate the clear presentation and design, understanding that the project is evolving and responding to community's input.**
- **The community has passion in the project. The design team is encouraged to maintain the dialogue and to continue collaboration with all public involvement efforts.**
- **Street trees will add to the enclosure of the space, but choosing the right trees is essential. Encourage 15-20' height so as to not overpower/over-shade gardening use.**
- **Encourage combining or integrating lawn and planting areas due to budget constraints**
- **Encourages revising the E-W path's dimension and materials to incorporate the adjacent uses as open space while at the same time providing clear definition of a different use.**
- **Concern over the amount and balance of concrete in the design. Understand the desire for non-gardening activity or plaza space, but encourage more green elements. The "Green wedge" needs more attention and the Commission encourages its use as an enclosure piece on the west edge.**
- **Encourage simplifying the programming of the park as the plan seems to interject an unnecessary level of use conflict.**
- **Encourage exploration of closing John Street in the future for events if it agrees with local neighborhood transportation and circulation needs.**

Project Presentation

Project Background

There is a great need for parks in this area, which has little public open space. There is a five storey building on the east side and single-family homes on the north side. The park

is very small at only .22 acres with a 10% slope. The project is using the less is more principle by keeping the park simple.

Eight design principles are guiding this project, which include creating a space that is safe and secure; simple and elegant; adaptable; provides the greatest good; flexible use by groups and individuals; expressive of Seattle character; becomes a civic legacy; and is welcoming.

The response from the community has been that they like the lawns, and would like to see a balance between the P-patch plots and open space, diverse seating opportunities, gathering space, grills and a skate dot. Mithun came up with some other ideas which the community might fundraise for, like compost silos. From three concepts presented to the community on April 2, the Urban Meander was the preferred concept: three lawns areas are accessed off a center path. Gabion walls create flat areas for lawns and gardens. Individual plots are provided for gardening. All trees on this site are proposed, being careful not to shade the plots. A plaza on the west side provides unassigned open space.



Figure 5: The Preferred Concept - Urban Meander

Public Comments

There are 24 plots making this a small community garden. There need to be more plots to create a critical mass. Recommend covering 75% of the space with plots. Gardeners also need defensible space. The thoroughfare is not a good idea. The park should be created by the gardeners themselves. There are lots of talented people in the community who are willing to work on it. The tree is not a good idea. Need view from highpoint of property. The northwest corner of the garden area site should extend to the sidewalk, so as to avoid a dead corner up against the dividing line with lawyer's office.

Commissioners' Comments

- Is there a requirement for street trees along Summit?
 - Need to find out
- Has vacating John Street been explored?
 - Parks likes the idea but isn't pursuing it. Idea would require monies in excess of the project budget and could still fail.
- Do you know the zoning of Starbucks parcel?
 - 65' but likely developed at 85'. Shadows cast from both heights were looked at in the shadow studies.
- There seems to be a lot of concrete at the base of the gabions.
 - Area acts as pass-through space, and skate dot space.
- Trees vs. no trees. Support the trees as they will protect the park and make it feel like a neighborhood park.

- Segmented lawn vs. large lawn. The lower ones will be used. Maybe have a few too many. Should look at.
- Does the slope prevent large, flat lawn?
 - We would have to create higher walls to do that.
- Questions the amount of concrete at the bottom.
 - Don't forget the people who want an open space plaza. There was support for that at the community meetings.
- Encourage redesigning the concrete wedge.
- Think about the street closure. The street can't be too busy.
- Caution against trying to achieve too many objectives on this little spot. The concept of integrating the two – gardens and hardscape – may create conflict. And then adding the skateboarders the project may invite skate-mania.
- Look at Freeway Park concerning the idea of succession development. Over time it should be developed, especially given the level of community interest. Need accurate and timely info – keep feeding the public information.
- Would like to see a little more lawn and a little less concrete, or make the concrete more functional.
- Meandering path is too wide. Make it more like a path.
- Get rid of two of the lawn areas in north.