



## APPROVED MINUTES OF THE MEETING

**Mike McGinn**  
Mayor

**Diane Sugimura**  
Director, DPD

**Marshall Foster**  
Planning Director, DPD

**Julie Bassuk**  
Chair

**Seth Geiser**

**Laurel Kunkler**

**Shannon Loew**

**Tom Nelson**

**Julie Parrett**

**Osama Quotah**

**Ellen Sollod**

**Debbie Harris**

**Valerie Kinast**  
Coordinator

**Tom Iurino**  
Senior Staff

**February 7, 2013**

Convened 8:30am  
Adjourned 4:30pm

### Projects Reviewed

North Transfer Station Street Vacation  
Westin Building Skybridge

### Commissioners Present

Julie Bassuk, Chair  
Julie Parrett (excused 8:30am-10:00am)  
Seth Geiser  
Debbie Harris (excused 8:30am-8:45am)  
Lolly Kunkler  
Tom Nelson  
Osama Quotah (excused 1:30pm-4:30pm)  
Ellen Sollod

### Unconfirmed Commissioners Present

**Martin Regge**

### Commissioners Excused

Shannon Loew

### Staff Present

Valerie Kinast  
Tom Iurino



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<b>February 27, 2013</b>	<b>Project:</b>	<b>Westin Building Skybridge</b>
	<b>Phase:</b>	Briefing
	<b>Last Reviewed:</b>	N/A
	<b>Presenters:</b>	Jack McCullough, McCullough Hill, PS Lance Forgey, Westin Building Brad Smith, Sclater Partners
	<b>Attendees:</b>	Angela Steele, SDOT Amy Gray, SDOT Roxanne Glick, Community Member

**Time:** 1:30pm-3:00pm

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### Summary of Project Presentation

The owners of the Westin Building, a unique building mostly used as a data network distribution center, seek a new skybridge permit for an existing skybridge originally permitted 30 years ago. The skybridge runs across an alley bounded by 5<sup>th</sup> Ave., 6<sup>th</sup> Ave., Virginia St. and Lenora St.; it connects the Westin Building and its parking garage. When the skybridge was originally permitted, no public benefit was required. In 2000, the Westin Building added utility infrastructure to the top of the skybridge.

The skybridge is the primary access point for people to enter the Westin Building from the parking garage. In 2011, there was an average of 330-350 daily crossings into the Westin Building across the bridge. If the skybridge was not available, patrons who park in the garage would exit through the vehicle entry/exit point of the garage and traverse approximately 425 feet on a mostly uncovered sidewalk with a slight incline, along Fifth Avenue and Virginia Street, to the building entrance on the corner of Sixth Avenue and Virginia Street. The skybridge is the accessible route into the building from the parking garage.

The Westin Building proposed as public benefit: four electric car charging stations in the garage and digital signage on 5<sup>th</sup> Ave. at the entrance to the parking garage directing drivers to the charging stations; an awning six feet deep that wraps the corner at 5<sup>th</sup> Ave. and Virginia St. and transitions seamlessly into the existing awning on 5<sup>th</sup> Ave.; wayfinding signage at 5<sup>th</sup> Ave. and Virginia St.; and a stainless steel trellis covered by Boston ivy and evergreen pyracantha planting on Virginia St.

The commissioners' discussion centered on: the amount of the public benefit offered, the restrictions of the site, and the potential to explore public benefit off site; the quality of the trellis and associated planting and the streetscape at 5<sup>th</sup> and Virginia; and the extent to which the car charging stations were public benefit.

### AGENCY & PUBLIC COMMENT

Angela Steel, SDOT, provided comment representing the Seattle's interdepartmental Skybridge Review Committee. The SRC had reviewed and recommended approval of the new permit for the existing skybridge with a public benefit mitigation package.

## **SUMMARY (by Harris)**

The Seattle Design Commission, by a vote of 0-7, did not recommend the SDOT Director approve the Skybridge Permit for the existing Westin Building skybridge located at the south end of the alley that runs parallel between 5<sup>th</sup> Ave and 6<sup>th</sup> Ave, north of Virginia St and south of Lenora St. and connects the Westin Building and the parking garage to the west. The commission had the following recommendations:

- **Revise the public benefit package. Remove the electric car charging stations from the package as they are not a public benefit. Due to the physical constraints of the site, consider proposing other public benefits that are off site yet nearby.**
- **Further refine the design of the corner of 5<sup>th</sup> Ave. and Virginia. While the building awning is a welcome addition, the streetscape still feels cold and dead. Consider other improvements to enhance this corner.**
- **Refine the design of the planting wall on Virginia St. and make it respond more to the building's architecture.**

**Commissioners Bassuk, Parrett, Nelson, Kunkler, Harris, Geiser, and Sollod voted no because the public benefit package was not adequate.**

**Commissioner Regge did not vote because he was not yet confirmed.**