

Seattle Design Commission

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

October 18, 2007

Greg Nickels
Mayor

Karen Kiest
Chair

Tasha Atchison

Pam Beyette

Evan Bourquard

Brendan Connolly

John Hoffman

Mary Johnston

Dennis Ryan

Darrell Vange

Guillermo Romano
Executive Director

Layne Cubell
Senior Staff

Projects Reviewed

DPD Planning Division Update
Terry/Boren Project/Block 103
Terminal 30- Alaskan Way South
Fire Station 37- West Seattle/ High Point
Spokane Street Viaduct- Phase 4
Seattle Planning Commission

Convened: 8:30am
Adjourned: 4:00pm

Commissioners Present

Karen Kiest, Chair
Tasha Atchison
Norie Sato
Brendan Connolly
Mary Johnston
Dennis Ryan
Darrell Vange
Juanita La Fond
Darby Watson

Staff Present

Layne Cubell
Vivian Chang
Tom Iurino



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18 October 2007 **Project: DPD Planning Division Update**

Phase: *Bi-Monthly Update*

Last Reviews: 16 August 2007; several previous

Presenters: John Rahaim, Department of Planning and Development

Attendees: none

Time: 1.0 hours

(SDC Ref. 220)

Action:

The Commission thanks the Director of the Planning Division for a thorough and thoughtful set of updates with the following comments:

- **The Commission appreciates the insight into the activities and direction the division is taking on future projects. It was a fascinating recap on DPD and DC milestones of the last eight years.**
- **Recognizes that CityDesign and DPD's joint roles in mega CIP and transportation projects have resulted in a more informed and educated citizenry on CIP projects. The importance of public education and involvement in mega projects has been evident.**
- **Recognizes actions the Department takes to balance sometimes short-term political pull for projects with long-range and strategic planning processes.**
- **Looks forward to involvement with neighborhood plan updates.**
- **Supports raising the threshold for design review to ensure that considerations of neighborhood character are included in the design review process. This may ensure design review for developments that could impact neighborhood character but that would not require Commission involvement.**

Proponent's Presentation

Planning Division Update

In retrospect, the past eight years that John Rahaim has been at the City, first as Director of City Design and more recently as the Planning Director, there have been many shifting sands. The Commission should continue to work with and advocate for CityDesign but better define their roles and work with the Planning Division, too. Milestones at CityDesign include the creation of the Blue Ring Strategy, Center-City Open Space strategy, street design work Waterfront planning, and the Monorail. As for the Commission, it has helped review projects citywide, including libraries, the Civic Center, mega transportation projects, and parks. The new planning direction at DPD gives a clear role for the Commission in 2008 and beyond which includes more interdepartmental collaboration among all departments to set a bigger picture for the City and to continue to tend the comprehensive plan and neighborhood planning. Secondly, multifamily code changes are in the plans. Topics of discussion include lowering parking regulations to one per unit and Green Factor (0.75). Townhouses need new choices or new standards, especially height and rooflines, perhaps DRB review for smaller, six unit projects, clustered parking, and greener. The review of the Design Review program continues with in-house consulting and a scope for next phase that might include DC members on advisory groups or even former members. Improvements also include an increased role for administering design review regulations to include more design skilled staff. DPD may

outsource to design firms for next two years to raise the threshold. The hierarchy of design review includes Planning Commission, which formulates plans, Design Commission to review bigger and public projects, and the Design Review Board for smaller and private projects. There are some big projects that do not get reviewed, such as the Swedish and Harborview Medical Centers, the football stadium, and small institutions.

Neighborhood Plans

Key principles for the next wave of neighborhood planning include engaging citizenry, including small business owners and immigrant populations, sustainability and neighborhood growth.

DPD will use a sector approach and conduct research on one neighborhood every year. There is a fair amount of pre-planning that the Department of Neighborhoods and DPD will conduct in the first half of 2008. The process will have clarity up front on the roles and products and will keep a high level of professionalism. Neighborhood plans were completed between 1995 and 2000 to manage growth in the neighborhoods, especially in light of Seattle's Comprehensive Plan and growth management strategy, adopted in 1994.

Since neighborhood plans were completed, growth throughout Seattle has been generally consistent with expectations but this has varied by neighborhood. Some neighborhoods have seen a level of growth that was anticipated, while in other neighborhoods the growth has been far more or less than anticipated. In addition, some neighborhoods are uncomfortable with the current pace of growth, regardless of estimates, while others believe that more investment is needed.

The Mayor initially announced the proposed Neighborhood Plan Update proposal in July 2007. Since then, the Department of Neighborhoods (DON) and the Department of Planning and Development (DPD) have been reviewing this proposal with community, business, and civic groups to receive their feedback on the proposal. This proposal, Draft Two, is intended to incorporate the feedback heard during these past three months and to present a revised proposal for further comment. Some of the details of the original draft remain, while others have been refined or revised.

18 October 2007 **Project: Terry/Boren Project/Block 103**

Phase: *Partial Alley Vacation*

Last Reviews: none

Presenters: Sharon Coleman, Vulcan
Wendy Pautz, LMN
Tim Clemens, Walker Macy
Beverly Barnett, Seattle Department of Transportation

Attendees: Rachel Ben-Shmuel, Vulcan
Angela Brady, SDOT
Dean Clark, LMN Architects
Lori Mason Curran, Vulcan
Marta Falkowska, LMN Architects
Phil Fuji, Vulcan
Kurt Gahnberg, Transpo
Moirra Gray, SDOT
Ken Johnson, SOJ
Jon O'Hare, Allen & Associates
Jodi Patterson, Allen & Associates
Mike Scott, Callison
Lish Whitson, DPD
Lloyd Douglas, Community Member

Time: 1.0 hours

(SDC Ref. 170)

***Recusal: Darby Watson's firm has been involved in this project so she recused herself for this presentation**

Action:

The Commission thanks the design team for a thorough and thoughtful presentation. The Commission believes that the alley vacation is justified, and unanimously approves of the first phase of the two-part process for the proposed partial alley vacation with the following comments:

- **The urban design argument makes sense and the Commission recognizes and appreciates that the project is coordinating with the Mercer Corridor project team.**
- **We appreciate that the proposed project builds on Terry Avenue design guidelines.**
- **The Commission has some concern about the future planning of the remaining southeast parcels of the site, but appreciate that the team is in communication with this group and has their endorsement. We would like to see letters of support from neighboring groups in the next round of materials.**
- **We also have some concerns with how the alley functions in its new configuration. The alley is currently a void in the design proposal, and deserves attention to make this an effective shared space between vehicles and pedestrians. We look forward to how the design of the plaza space and materials extend to the alley itself.**

- **Give more attention to streetscape design of Boren Avenue, particularly vehicular and pedestrian interactions and consider how the benefits to Mercer and Terry Avenue are potentially a detriment to Boren Avenue, especially in terms of service access. Safety should be the paramount consideration, independent of city design standards.**
- **We question how the loading docks will effectively service a multiple tenant configuration in both buildings A and B.**
- **We urge the team to study the pedestrian relationship to the block on the south end.**
- **The Commission urges the team to consider the pedestrian and urban characteristics of the plaza space.**
- **We appreciate the sustainability approaches supported by the proposal, especially the increased southern solar exposure for building A, and encourage further sustainable design integration.**
- **The Commission compliments the team on the design process and presentation, including the resulting design principles and considerations of experience and connectivity.**
- **The Commission appreciates the refinement of scale of massing and street frontage.**
- **The Commission would like to see the public benefits package again in follow up.**

Proponent's Presentation

Project Context

There are five phases and six sites targeted for development for a large corporate tenant, all scheduled to come on line between 2010 and 2011. This project is consistent with the goals and vision of the neighborhood, such as the Uptown and SLU Visioning charrette. There are three different architectural firms working on this project in five phases. The five phases are as follows. Phase I will be ready to break ground soon and NBBJ is the designer. Phase II to III involves LMN and includes the vacation under discussion today to reconfigure the alley for better urban form. Phase IV to V involves Callison and the south sites. The team will try to save the brick building, reorient the alley and building; and negotiate with the City to increase heights by twelve stories (from 65 feet to 85 feet) to consolidate tenant needs. Otherwise, additional housing will be added on the other side of the street.

Partial Alley Vacation

In the nine-block urban design analysis, the partial alley vacation will occur in Phase II and III. The alley does not cross over to Mercer on the north side. There is large open space and the team is looking for diversity in architecture and in open spaces that are available to the community. Mercer Corridor has a scale that buildings need to respond to and needs much more pedestrian friendly places along both edges. Terry Avenue is on the west and the site plan shows the streets as 212 feet in length and 80 feet in width. It is zoned as industrial, and the team is considering a five-story building. The alternative that does not consider an alley vacation will preserve existing street wall and grid. However, with an alley vacation on the north side, the building massing will need to be reconfigured to provide open space and support pedestrian needs. The team would take a large area of the building and put it along east-west side using a large scale façade, which will allow both facades to orient themselves to the sun. Ground level retail is not required and pedestrians will be pulled into the plaza

to animate and activate the space. However, a little more area may need to be added to the building. The public courtyard addresses its back to Terry Avenue with components addressing Boren Avenue.

Alley Vacation Details

There are details on car parking and a reconfiguration of the alley. Elevations will give a sense of scale of the buildings. Also, at the landscape site, traffic will be encouraged to go onto Boren and the sidewalk will be increased to 31 feet on Terry Avenue. There is a six-foot grade change from Boren to Terry, and the team will try to work with smaller area. There will be storm water planters and the character of the street will have a woonerf design. Public space elements include a dog walk area, seating, and lawn area. The elevated landscapes, building orientation, and building massing show that the sun will provide natural lighting and heat. The zoning will be for FAR-3, IC-65. The public process includes SLUFAN and Chamber of Commerce. In addition, the Cascade Neighborhood has also approved the proposed design of Terry Avenue and Boren Avenue.



Terry/Boren Project Public Benefits

Public Comments

- Just to clarify, this “public plaza” in actuality is a private space intended for public use?
 - Yes, it is a private open space with a private owner.
- If an alley vacation is pursued, since this project has community facilities, the team should first consider open space to compensate loss of open space.
 - The existing conditions are delineated in the Appendix.
- Are there public benefits out on the streets?
 - Yes, there is.
- How do you account for future traffic flow?
 - By eliminating as many access points on Mercer.
- This is a brand new review, but in general, SDOT and the City disfavors vacations, except in the case of topographical breaks, changes in zoning and land use. One example is the West Seattle alley vacation onto a major arterial.
- There are design challenges; look at Republican, etc.
- The bigger issues are maintaining the South Lake Union neighborhood plan, its character, directions, and larger policy implications. How are the design, building scale, and traffic flow, etc. considered as public benefits?
- Vacations require input from all city departments. The larger impacts and community context of neighborhood plans and policy direction need to be considered.
- The Design Review Board will need to review this project and will coordinate with the Design Commission.
- Need to make sure interior is satisfactory. The original look was feasible.

- Terry Avenue design guidelines must be consistent with those on the eastern side with a more informal streetscape, such as landscape activation of street edge spillover. There is current opposition for this project to continue in paving the full block on Terry Avenue with a traditional curb on street patch.
- The general guidelines are to provide a very strong pedestrian focus with all vehicles working together.
 - There will be a traditional street edge on the west side, with more informal curvilinear tradition seamlessly spilling traffic into the streets, bringing pavers to sidewalk.

Key Commissioner Comments and Questions

- Hope that there is community support, including local businesses.
- Would like to see more design energy on alley design, not just the plaza.
- What is the intent and character of Boren Avenue? What is it supposed to look like?
 - Boren Avenue is non-arterial and a good solid street.
- How does the Boren Avenue function in conjunction with Mercer Corridor?
 - There will be a signal pedestrian crossing at Mercer so the SDOT team is reviewing the auto bulbs that have been proposed, which are not as narrow.
- Access to the site needs to work off the new alley configuration to benefit from Mercer, but to the detriment of pedestrian character on Boren and Republican.
 - The team is very conscious of this issue.
- Is there back-in loading?
 - Yes, off the non-arterial pulled back from the corner and for small trucks only. These are some of the many trade-offs faced.
- Getting the alley away from Mercer makes sense.
- Is the north bound one-way along the alley?
- SDOT supports curb elimination on Mercer from a traffic management perspective, to extend possibilities.
- Have you done any planning for the residual building on the edge? Have you considered shadows on building?
 - Yes, property owners have written letters of support.
- What are the functions from widening the alley by two additional feet?
 - There will be shared public space between pedestrians, bikes, and cars.
- Permeability is very important and therefore the team should consider more urban design strategies for the alley in future.
- Are there strategies for sustainable design?
- There is support from an urban design perspective for the current proposal, but more work needs to be done with the design.

18 October 2007 **Project:** Terminal 30- Alaskan Way South

Phase: Street End Vacation

Last Reviews: None

Presenters: George Blomberg, Port of Seattle
Peter Hummell, Anchor Environmental
Beverly Barnett, Seattle Department of Transportation

Attendees: David Thompson, Port of Seattle
Steve Gray, Moffatt and Nichol
Moirra Gray, SDOT

Time: 1.0 hours

(SDC Ref. 170)

Action:

The DC believes the proposed vacation is justified based on urban design conditions in the public realm and more specifically because the Port is vacating a right-of-way between two cargo-oriented parcels with the assumption that there will be a SPU storm water corridor and swale, and that this proposal corresponds with the 1985 Shoreline Access Plan. The Commission recommends approval of the vacation by a vote of 7:2, but suggests the public benefits include modifications to the proposal with the following comments:

- The public benefits package needs work. The Commission does not want to see a net loss in public shoreline access and wants to see substantial and visible improvements to the existing shoreline access on site
- Give attention to the juncture at Alaskan Way and the roadway into the viewpoint since it is an important entry to the site, pedestrian refuge and also needs to meet cyclists' needs. There should be a way for cyclists to easily access and use the road, as well as pedestrians and cars.
- Security and safety are of concern.
- The Port needs to enhance the dock and pier and the over the water experience by having more activity there.
- Explore artist involvement with a natural system focus.
- Reduce the dead-end experience.
- Consider urban design merits in regards to the water abutting street end.
- Explore how there can be more immediate shoreline high view experiences by the improvements.
- Look at options to extend the promenade further south or north.
- In terms of additional compensation, explore how the costs of replacing the boat ramp elsewhere could be used for improvements to this or other public access sites.
- The viewing structure needs to be explored more for shading impacts, and more importantly, carefully consider security around the site.
- Look at ways to improve water quality of waterway (i.e. clean fill material, bioremediation).
- Look for ways to increase the beach and direct public access to the water.

The reasons for not approving the vacation are as follows:

- The extent of vacation surpasses level of proposed public benefits
- Removing right-of-way would preclude future public waterfront access on the parcel.

Proponent's Presentation

Project Background

The 1985 Shoreline Public Access Plan covers all anticipated street vacations including this site and South Forest Street, which was previously reviewed by the Commission. The public access plan is a very useful tool to develop facilities and provides vacation guidance. Terminal 30 has been vacant for the last several years and houses the interim cruise ship terminal. The vacation is needed because the port now wants to restore the container cargo behind Terminal 25 to create 70 contiguous acres, which necessitates a vacation of Alaskan Way South street end. Public benefits include jobs, a tax base increase, and physical improvements on- and off-site. This vacation meets the objective of the 1985 Shoreline Access Plan for the following reasons. On-site improvements include expansions of existing shoreline, wider, more permeable entry with a swale along 800 feet of access road. In lieu of the boat launch and temporary moving, \$800,000 will be set aside for other shoreline improvements. There will be a similar swale at Terminal 17, which will be 90 feet long and 17 feet wide. SPU is eager for storm water runoff swale versus underground pipe. From the 16 foot access road to the 11 foot at the shore, there is only a one percent grade.

Terminal 30 Public Shoreline Access Site

In terms of landscaping and other aesthetic improvements, a re-design of the existing landscape is in progress, including an installation of an additional 19,000 square feet of additional irrigated native landscape vegetation. Site plans also include re-grading the upland area landward of MHHW to create approximately 7,200 square feet of beach landscape features and placement of a surface water drainage swale and native riparian vegetation. There are also plans for the installation of a shoreline boardwalk/promenade around 180 feet long, 12 by 20 feet wide, with over-water platform and railings. There will also be a re-design of landscaping and pathway connections to existing paved and striped vehicle parking area. Also, there will be four additional site-built benches and four tables for seating and other uses. There will also be the placement of two color interpretive panels describing marine cargo operations in south Elliott Bay and the East Waterway. In terms of the environmental conditions in the area, there will be particular actions regarding the cleanup of environmental contamination, including fish and wildlife habitat restoration. In regards to parking, the 860 feet of the existing pavement will be retained, with a new two-lane access road with concrete curbs, a six foot wide pedestrian/bike access pathway, striped parking for eight vehicles and an entrance sign (four by eight feet). In terms of view location and shoreline improvements, an elevated viewing area will be installed at 18 feet above the existing grade elevation, and will be constructed as a filled mound structure in an expanded upland portion of the existing public shoreline use area, with 280 linear feet of paved ramp and walkway leading to a multi-level shoreline and East Waterway viewing areas, including railings, seating, and integrated native landscaping. There will also be 270 feet of paved site pathways. There will be continued access for "heavy lift" cargo industrial for industrial cargo transfer via the existing paved access roadway. However, the trailer boat launch with a double ramp, the fishing pier as a conversion of the existing dock, and the temporary moorage will no longer be feasible due to waterway security and marine vessel operational restrictions and conditions. Improvement values will offset the losses with further investment at the public access site or as a compensation or payment.

Project Context

The Alaskan Way South bike route and pedestrian trail provides views, access, and pavements. Views are great close up opposite of the ships. There is public appeal for access, but improved access is needed to include a platform and ADA accessibility, as well as taking down the barbed wire. The entry, road with swale and vegetative screen, turnaround and parking, shoreline promenade, and elevated viewing areas in spirit of ships prow are all parts to consider.



Public Comments

- According to local policy, there must be areas to make up for the view for lost opportunities to access the water.
- Shoreline public access site, different sizes and parcels along the Duwamish.
- Isn't required for approval by DC, but have authority to see public good. The port has offered compensation. Prioritize best use.

Key Commissioner Comments and Questions

- The City can deviate from the Shoreline Access Plan with justification. It seems like some funds should go off site, such as the 250 feet of shoreline access.
- It makes sense from an urban design perspective to vacate. The Port has been using informally and between two other parcels owned by the Port. The size of land vacated seems disproportional with new land and former improvements.
- The storm water swale could be accomplished in the existing right-of-way, but it is challenging to try to put on this site.

- Public benefits should focus on placing the motorboat launch somewhere for viewing, water access with views, bike and pedestrian paths along Alaskan Way, the promenade, viewing opportunities, landscape buffer on the south end, signage and wayfinding, security, active use, and the dead end.
- Be careful of costs. Instead of incremental cost to install elements in this location, the Port can replace costs at another site.
- Is the existing street ROW is necessary? SPU needs to be involved before transaction to be completed, so that some storm water corridor is configured in the final solution.
- To what the degree is the storm water is an impediment to public access?
- Perhaps a pipe will do since there is not a significant slope.
 - No, because there is an abundant amount of contaminated soil.
- Could tracks along AK way that was paved over be uncovered to reconnect rail?
- Just to clarify: is the access road 160 feet long in its existing state?
 - Yes.
- Is the proposed revision to the existing public access enough public benefit to justify the nearly 4-acre vacation? Is there any way to expand the possibility of public access at this site, either along the street access (by widening it) to the viewpoint area or along the water further south or north?

18 October 2007 **Project:** Fire Station 37- West Seattle/ High Point

Phase: Schematic Design

Last Reviews: 21 June 2007

Presenters: Teresa Rodriguez, Fleets and Facilities Department
David Kunselman, Fleets and Facilities Department
Brad Miller, Miller Hayashi
Dodi Fredericks, Fredericks Landscape Architecture
Jess Harris, Department of Planning and Development

Attendees: Eric Aman, Schacht Aslani Architects
Harry Anderson, Lawhead Architects
Peter Dobrovolny, DPD
Molly Douce, SFD
Patricia Hopper, Arts and Cultural Affairs
Jason Huff, Arts and Cultural Affairs
David Kunselman, FFD
Peter Law, Schaht Aslani Architects
Frank Lawhead, Lawhead Architects
Will Scales, Hoshide Williams Architects
Ray Villanueva, Miller Hayashi Architects

Time: 1.0 hours

(SDC Ref. 169/SR0609)

Action:

The Commission thanks the design team for a thorough and thoughtful presentation and approves unanimously with the following comments:

- **Questions the north-facing terrace and suggests the quality of space needs more study.**
- **Commend design refinements from last presentation.**
- **Encourages the new dramatic roof to be entirely green.**
- **Strengthen the northwest corner by taking the glass wrap even farther and remove the tree to improve the visibility.**
- **Encourage a more powerful storm water cycling showcasing of water with drain-off tower in the southwest corner and use of a stronger element for the drains.**
- **Applaud sustainable design (i.e. rain garden)**
- **Urge team to take another look at fenestration and materials.**
- **Thanks team for bringing landscape plans.**
- **Believe this is an elegant solution to the design problem at hand.**

Proponent's Presentation

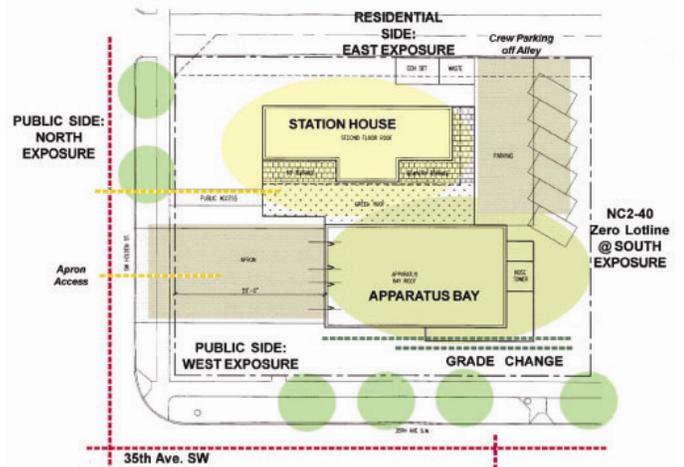
Goals of Project

The team is seeking to create continuity with the neighborhood with street tree plantings. Also, the team would like to reduce storm water discharge from the site and increase filtration, while limiting water use. There are plans for an infiltration terrace for roof and surface water runoff, a green roof, and low water use plantings. Also, the team is looking forward to enhancing the civic presence of the building by framing the public entry, creating an opening in the street tree plantings, and providing

color and year round interest. Lastly, the team is seeking to meet Seattle’s Green Factor by planting vine walls, trees, and a green roof.

Project Update

A public meeting was held on July 1, 2007, in which over a hundred people showed up. Their interests mainly lie in the landmark structure and the existing fire station. The artist for this station is Pete Beeman, who specializes in kinetic metal sculptures and will provide the exterior piece. The project will cost approximately \$3.3 million to \$3.7 million. The station is seeking LEED-Silver rating (35 points) by including a green roof and high performance mechanical system. The site is located on a corner parcel, with two arterials, 35th Avenue Southwest and Southwest Holden Avenue, run through the site. The architecture uses a “jewel box” approach to the apparatus bay. The stairwell will have daylighting and a green screen on the western wall will be planted. Massing studies will also be conducted. The landscaping will include street trees to match those on 35th Avenue Southwest. There will also be a roof garden that will contain a rain barrel and vegetable garden. The rain garden will be placed on terraces on 35th Avenue Southwest. A landscaped pedestrian entry will be located at the northeast corner. The main entry and flagpole in the northwest plaza will be landscaped as well. There will be vines on 35th Avenue Southwest elevation and façade.



Fire Station 37 Site Map



Key Commissioner Comments and Questions

- Is the green roof visible from the street?
 - No, it is more like a private yard for firefighters.
- What are the exterior materials?
 - CMU, slatecrete and glazing and sliding doors.
- Where can there be cross-ventilation?
 - Possibly in the apparatus bay.
- What about the north-facing terrace?
 - The wall will be pulled back.

- Will the green roof be sloped?
 - Greatest and most dramatic views will be from below, so more for storm water on site.
- Like the consolidation of forms and parts all under one roof.
- What energy systems are there?
 - New city multisystem is being explored that balances heat and air control needs of site.
- The team can make corner windows big enough to extend and wrap more especially for passerbys on 35th Avenue Southwest
- This plan has a very elegant scheme and seems to be headed in the right direction.
- Keep roof as lean and light as possible, if it is not green.
- Regarding the covered roof: make sure that it is not too dark under and that the upper roof garden has a through walkway.
- The northwest corner is not as strong as it could be; make it visible, break trees there, and make more open.
- Celebrate roof runoff more. Chain drains are too similar to cables. Make it stand out against the hose tower.
- The artist will likely target the northwest corner.
- Fenestration patterns are too much, so simplify.
- Really nice to see the landscape at this mid-stage.

18 October 2007 **Project:** **Spokane Street Viaduct- Phase 3**

Phase: 60% Design Phase

Last Reviews: 20 June 2006?

Presenters: Stuart Goldsmith, Seattle Department of Transportation
Barbara Moffat, Jacobs Engineering

Attendees: Einer Handerland, Parsons Brinckerhoff
Joe Tasky, SDOT

Time: 1.0 hours

(SDC Ref. 169/SR0609)

Action:

The Commission thanks the design team for a thorough and thoughtful set of presentations, and unanimously approves the 60% phase of the project, with the following comments:

- **Appreciate that the team is moving ahead, and to that end the Commission encourages the team to look internally at SDOT Art Plan for creative aspects to the project that might be easy to include.**
- **Safety is the most important for pedestrians, vehicles, and bikes, so find effective ways of mitigating this issue.**
- **Concern for the landing near Seattle City Light Parking lot.**
- **Take another pass at design treatments of outriggers.**
- **Appreciate landscaping and lighting which can help improve circumstances of site.**
- **If it is not possible to provide a design amenity on the outrigger columns, then provide an improved bus shelter on South Spokane.**
- **Partner with City Light regarding potential incorporation of art into this project since the ramp is adjacent to their building; suggestion of a lighting panel or solar panel on the outriggers, as well as potential partnering on art opportunities for the project.**
- **Understands the project is the first out of the gate among the big transportation projects, with expediency as the goal, but the Commission encourages the team to return once more.**

Proponent's Presentation

Project Background

The goals of the South Spokane Street 4th Avenue off-ramp project are many. First, it seeks increase an improve traffic flow by widening the road. RTD will provide full funding for the widening phases. Phase 3 is currently funded. It is a fast track project, and the team hopes to bid next May and begin construction by 2008. Part of the Alaskan Way Viaduct Mitigation Plan is to anticipate very large volumes of traffic diverted onto the Spokane Viaduct once the Alaskan Way Viaduct closes.

South Spokane Viaduct- Eastbound 4th Avenue Off-Ramp

Last year, the team presented the greater Spokane Viaduct Widening project to the Commission, with the focus on Phases 1 and 2, the widening phases. The presentation this year will focus on Phase 3, the eastbound 4th Avenue off-ramp, which is fast-tracked to start construction in 2008.

Goals of the Greater Spokane Viaduct Widening Project

The goals are to improve safety and traffic flow for all travel modes, reduce conflicts between modes and enhance freight mobility, reduce delays on Spokane lower roadway at railroad tracks, provide

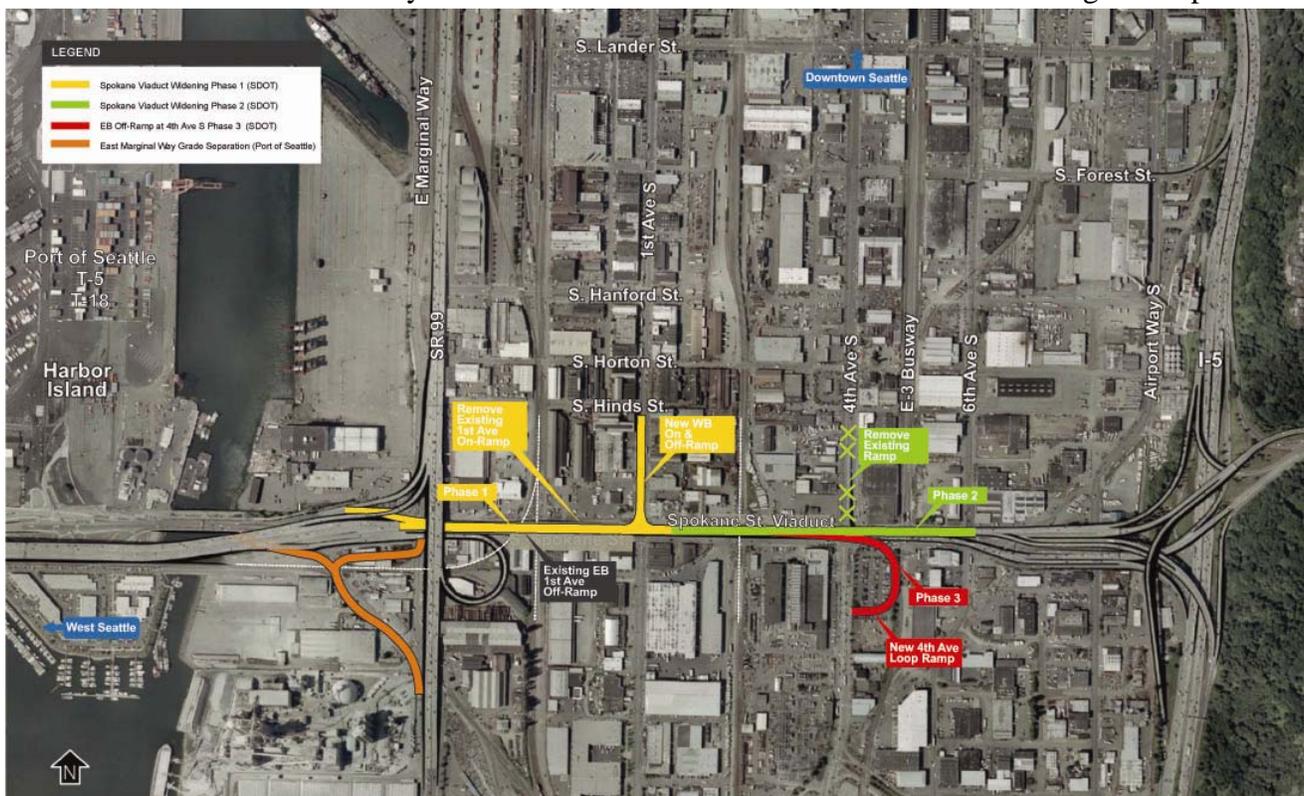
new access to surface streets from upper roadway, and to facilitate transit access between West Seattle and downtown.

Main Elements of Widening Phases

Main elements include widening the north side of the structure by 41 feet between 6th Avenue South and East Marginal Way to make space for a new westbound acceleration-deceleration lane, an eastbound transit lane, wider lanes and shoulders, and a permanent median, relocating the westbound on- and off-ramps from 4th Avenue to 1st Avenue South and build them to current design standards, complete the seismic strengthening of the existing viaduct structure, rebuilding the lower roadway in concrete, and add curb, 10-foot wide sidewalk along the north side of lower roadway, and constructing planted median on 4th Avenue South, north of Spokane.

4th Avenue Off-Ramp: Overview

Genesis of 4th Avenue Off-Ramp: Center city access will be made better use of surface arterials to downtown—4th Avenue South is underutilized. The Alaskan Way Viaduct is in need for additional north access to downtown during closure. Ramp objectives are to provide direct eastbound access from West Seattle Bridge to 4th Avenue South, which is currently lacking. This will be critical during the replacement of the Alaskan Way Viaduct when SR-99 northbound will be inaccessible from West Seattle. Access to downtown Seattle will be enhanced from West Seattle, taking advantage of available capacity on 4th Avenue. More direct transit access will be facilitated from West Seattle to downtown via the E-3 Busway and thus faster transit travel times to downtown. A grade-separated



South Spokane Street Viaduct Widening Project Plan

bypass will be created to the eastbound Spokane lower roadway crossing of the railroad tracks, facilitating more efficient freight access to the 4th Avenue South area. This off-ramp is expected to be heavily used; the model shows 50% of traffic that now exits at 1st will exit at 4th which means less traffic on lower roadway. Potentially reduce congestion on 1st Avenue South, which is now only

eastbound exist between SR-99 and I-5. Provide a relief valve to the surface streets when congestion on the I-5 ramps back up onto eastbound Spokane Viaduct.

Description of Ramp

The new ramp begins just east of the BNSF mainline railroad tracks along 2nd Ave South. Columns will match columns of existing viaduct. Need to span street because did not want to put columns in roadway: forecloses future use of space and creates an object that can be hit, especially bad idea in freight street. Fully separates from existing viaduct around 4th Avenue and loops around to touch down in the SCL parking lot. SDOT is currently working on an agreement with SCL for use of parking lot. Ramp will have two lanes, one most likely being a HOV/transit lane.

Key Commissioner Comments and Questions

- This project uses the same design philosophy as the other South Downtown plan.
 - What is the extent of street improvements?
 - Street improvements include parking lot repairs, illumination. Also, the roadway in the eastbound corridor from East Marginal Way to 6th Avenue South will be rebuilt. The area under the outriggers will have tight sidewalks and street trees in front of only the City Light building on the south side.
 - What is the public art budget?
 - Not sure, will check on this later.
 - What will the underside treatment be?
 - Just illumination.
 - Spokane Street is a link for cyclists. There is an E3 bike trail on the north side, not south side. Will there be a bike trail?
 - Currently, there are no bike trails on the south side of Spokane.
 - What about the wall on the ramp?
 - The wall is will be partially visible from 4th Avenue with trees. However, it will be fenced off within the parking lot.
 - What is the design of outriggers? Perhaps the team could look into a more enhanced design for the outriggers and columns.
 - They will have a distinct look and feel from the main Viaduct structure. The team will not look at them as art, although it could provide a design opportunity. However, it needs more architectural treatment.
 - See concrete walls as canvas, so the team can use concrete as a statement itself. The team should explore ways that artwork can enhance or mediate the impacts of the progression of outriggers and what it does to both the auto/truck and pedestrians.
 - What is the total budget?
 - \$25 million.
 - Round columns and rectangular beams are the most seismically-efficient engineering solution possible.
 - Safety perspective in light of potential “jumpers” needs to be taken into consideration.
 - What are plans for illumination?
 - This is still being developed. There might be downlights under T-beams on the north side of outriggers against Spokane Street Viaduct, too.
 - Do something discreet and special in the pedestrian environment.
 - There needs to be a frontrunner of all South End projects to set the right tone.
 - Mine information on context sensitive design.
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18 October 2007 **Project:** **Seattle Planning Commission**

Phase: *Discussion*

Last Reviews: None

Presenters: Tony To, Chair, Seattle Planning Commission

Barbara Wilson, Executive Director, Seattle Planning Commission

Linda Amato, Planning Commission

Attendees: None

Time: 0.5 hours

Action:

The Commission thanks the Planning Commission for an overview of its work and activities, with the following comments:

- **Strongly endorse close collaboration on large civic projects and planning initiatives.**
- **Ad hoc Light Rail Review has been very good and the Commission looks forward to do more similar collaborations.**
- **Appreciate the Planning Commission work on emerging policy issues such as Industrial Lands.**

Proponent's Presentation

History

The first city planning commission was convened in 1910. Since that time, there have been many iterations of the Planning Commission (PC) in Seattle. The PC was officially adopted into the City Charter in 1946.

Planning Commission Today

Sixteen members belong to the PC and serve without compensation. Fifteen members serve three years, which are renewable. In addition, there is one Get Engaged member that serves a one-year term. The PC has urban planners, architects, transportation experts, housing developers, civil engineers, land use attorney's, and people with a history of neighborhood and civic engagement. The PC's role is to advise city officials on broad planning policies and goals, and on major planning projects and issues. The PC's role is to advise City officials on policies and plans that affect the physical development of Seattle. This includes giving advice and recommendations on land use and zoning issues, transportation and housing initiatives. The PC brings an independent expert perspective and also provides recommendations that are framed by the Comprehensive Plan of Seattle, as well as a commitment to promote planning decisions that support the health and vitality of the community.

Recent Planning Commission Activities

Industrial Lands: The PC recently concluded a multi-year effort that included extensive stakeholder outreach and the development of a report that includes PC recommendations for how to best protect and foster a thriving industrial sector.

Affordable Housing Action Agenda: PC will release a report in early 2008 that focuses on policies and implementation tool that addresses housing affordability with a focus on land use based strategies.

Updating Neighborhood Plans: PC is assisting in the early development of the Updating of the city's 38 Neighborhood Plans.

Advise and Assist on City Planning Initiatives: These include Development of a South Lake Union Urban Center Plan, the City's revisions to the neighborhood commercial code policies, new zoning for Downtown, and review of the city's policies regarding adult cabarets.

Transportation: Evaluating how mega transportation projects (i.e. Sound Transit 2, 520 Replacement Project, and the Alaskan Way Viaduct) impact Seattle residents. But in addition to mega projects, the PC also assists in looks at citywide transportation policies and sub area plans.

Promoted Housing Choices: PC has been advocating for legislation such as Detached Accessory Dwelling units in Southeast Seattle and is in the process of assisting DPD and OH in developing a User Guide.

Key Commissioner Comments and Questions

- Good areas of overlap and clear sense where to begin and end.
- Transportation, especially Sound Transit 2 and Viaduct
- South Lake Union
- Light Rail is really valuable and its current review is a modified version of LRRP.
- Neighborhood planning
- Missing out on coordination; seems to be splintered.
- CIP year end forum
- What can the Commission do?
 - Alliance of commissions might rekindle that group on quarterly basis.
- The 2000 Work Plan is good to partner on discrete items.
- Regarding South Downtown, the Commission is struggling with the context on big transportation projects.
- The Commission needs a briefing on industrial areas.
- The Planning Commission did not address, but flagged need for strategic investments especially for transportation.
 - The Planning Commission is screening criteria for engagement under addressed areas.