Seattle design Commission

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MINUTES OF THE MEETING

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Shannon Loew

Tom Nelson

Julie Parrett

Osama Quotah

Norie Sato

Debbie Harris

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November 1, 2012

Convened 12:30pm
Adjourned 3:45pm

Projects Reviewed

Arboretum North Entry and Multi-use Trail

Commissioners Present

Julie Bassuk, Chair
Julie Parrett, Vice Chair
Debbie Harris
Shannon Loew
Tom Nelson
Osama Quotah (excused from 3:30-3:45)
Norie Sato

Incoming Commissioners Present

Seth Geiser
Ellen Sollod

Staff Present

Valerie Kinast
Tom Iurino

DRAFT

November 1, 2012	**Project:**	**Arboretum North Entry and Multi-use Trail**
	Phase:	Schematic Design
	Last Reviewed:	May 3, 2012
	Presenters:	Andy Sheffer, Seattle Parks and Recreation Andy Mitton, The Berger Partnership Jason Henry, The Berger Partnership Kerry Pihlstrom, WSDOT
	Attendees:	Candace Goodrich, Enviroissues Elizabeth Umbanhowar, Parametrix

Time: 2:15pm-3:45pm

Disclosure

Commissioner Parrett works for the University of Washington.

Summary of Project Presentation

The design team presented its plans for the schematic design of the Arboretum North Entry and Multi-use Trail. The team is breaking the project into two parts, the North Entry and the Multi-use Trail, because the trail is ready to move forward, while the design and construction of the North Entry is tied into the SR520 project. The multi-use trail will be built in phases; the first phase, which does not include the roundabout and Arboretum Creek day lighting, will be built over the next two years. The team will continue collaboration on the north entry integration with the WSDOT design.

As part of its mitigation for rebuilding SR520, WSDOT has helped Seattle Parks and Recreation with the planning of the North Entry. The team briefly presented the major elements of the North Entry, such as the overlook mound and naturalistic plantings in the area where SR-520 on and off ramps will be removed. The aim of the design is to: create a gateway equally as powerful as the south entrance; return to the original Boulevard concept; include multi modal connections to adjacent neighborhoods, UW, and SR520; offer a seamless transition to the SR520 project; preserve open character of the WSDOT peninsula and create new vistas; enhance and improve ecological function and integrate the WSDOT mitigation site; connect and expand the native forest; extend the park's perceived boundaries to encompass the Montlake lid; strengthen connections to the Union Bay Natural Area; draw from the historic character of the Arboretum, but provide a unique identity.

The focus of the presentation was on the details of the multi-use trail project, which connects the arboretum's north and south entries and crosses Azalea Way, creating a possibility for a trail loop. The team covered plans for: daylighting Arboretum Creek; Arboretum Creek enhancements; a roundabout at the intersection of E. Lake Washington Boulevard and Foster Island Drive; a vehicular bridge; a restriping of E. Lake Washington Boulevard with sharrows; restoration of pond and feature walls with runnel; termination of Azalea Way; wetland mitigation; an amenity zone, multi-use trail bridge and a reconfigured parking lot; trail bridge at drainage; retaining wall behind stone cottage; and reconfiguration of 31st Ave to include curb bulbs. The trail will also provide better ADA access, allowing more people to see more parts of the arboretum. The concept for the planting along the trail is a native matrix, which includes 80%

native plants. The team presented conceptual ideas for the eight bridges and structures along the multi-use trail. The trail's eight bridges and structures are being studied in a matrix to evaluate materials, environmental impacts, spans, and maintenance. The bridges' designs or materials could reflect the plant selections that they cross. The trail will also include standard historic benches, bollards, bike racks, and trash cans.

ACTION (by Loew)

The Seattle Design Commission thanked the design team for its presentation of the schematic design of the Arboretum North Entry and Multi-use Trail project. They applaud the cooperation with WSDOT in thinking about the trail in a regional context and how the North Entry project connects with the SR520 design.

By a vote of 7-0, the commission approves the schematic design of the trail with the expectation that the following elements will return for review at design development: materials for the pathways and walls; the awkward dimensions and geometries of pathways, intersections and adjacent amenity spaces; and the bridges. The commission will continue its review the North Entry as part of the WSDOT's Montlake Lid for the SR520 I-5 to Medina project. The Commission asks the proponents to bring handouts with images to the next review.

The commission has the following recommendations:

- **Better define the form and materials of the trail, bridges, and railings. Further develop the concept of using different bridges and materials along the trail and develop a greater resolution of the palette of materials. Consider using more contemporary design and materials; don't let the design be laden by historicism. Work further on the idea that the bridge designs will respond to adjacent collections, perhaps by making the connection more apparent to trail users.**
- **Refine the trail geometries at the amenity spaces and better integrate the amenity space at Azalea Drive. Conduct user studies of the trail visitors – runners, elderly, birders, botanists, etc. – to better develop the design of the amenity spaces.**
- **Study and better define the trail's connection at Madison near the South Entry.**
- **Consider increasing the width of trail to facilitate two-way traffic from both pedestrians and bicyclists. We understand the limitations of the topography, the desire to save the collections, and the strategy of encouraging commuter bicyclist traffic on the street.**
- **Ensure that the roundabout, as designed, will accommodate truck traffic.**

Also, please share the design intent for the North Entry with the SR520 designers so that it will better integrate with the Montlake lid.