



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

January 17, 2013

Convened 8:30am
Adjourned 4:30pm

Projects Reviewed

Mapes Creek Restoration and 52nd Ave CSO
Arena Street Vacation
Elliott Bay Seawall

Commissioners Present

Julie Parrett, Chair
Seth Geiser
Lolly Kunkler (excused from 9:00am-11:00am)
Shannon Loew
Tom Nelson
Osama Quotah
Ellen Sollod

Commissioners Awaiting Confirmation Present

Martin Regge

Commissioners Excused

Debbie Harris
Julie Bassuk

Staff Present

Valerie Kinast
Tom Iurino



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January 17, 2013

Project: **Arena**
Phase: Briefing
Last Reviewed: Dec 6, 2012
Presenters: Jack McCullough, McCullough Hill, PS
 Anton Foss, 360 Architecture
 Barbara Swift, Swift Company

Attendees: Beverly Barnett, SDOT
 Tom Bathalamew
 Amy Lindemuth, Swift Company
 Barb Wilson, Seattle Planning Commission
 Beverly Barnett, SDOT
 Brett Earnest, Clark Construction
 Brook Jackson, Magnusson Klemencic
 Bryan Stevens, DPD
 Garry Papers, DPD
 Geoff Wentlandt, DPD
 John Shaw, DPD
 Melody McCutcheon, Hillis, Clark, Martin and Peterson, P.S.
 MyTam Nguyen, DPD
 Rebecca Herzfeld, Council staff
 Susan McLaughlin, SDOT
 Tom Backer, Ballpark PFD
 Tom Bartholomew, Bartholomew Planning

Time: 11:00am-1:00pm

Summary of Project Presentation

The applicant is requesting the vacation of 23,531 sq ft of Occidental Ave. S. between S. Holgate and S. Massachusetts Streets in order to permit the future construction of an approximately 725,000 sq ft, 18,000 – 20,000 seat private spectator sports facility, the Seattle Arena, on land bounded by S. Holgate St., S. Massachusetts St., 1st Ave. S., and the Burlington Northern Railroad tracks.

The applicant has not yet filed a petition to vacate Occidental Way S. but expects to in February upon completion of early design guidance review by the Design Review Board. At that time, the applicant will formally present to the commission the urban design merit of the proposed street vacation and offer a proposed public benefit package.

Arena design requires entrances at the concourse level which enables patrons to walk either down to lower level seats or up to higher level seats and necessary stadium functions to be located at the lower level underneath the seating bowl. Because of the high water table in SODO, the Seattle arena isn't sunk into the ground. As a result, the Seattle arena is designed to allow for patrons to walk or ride up on escalators or elevators to the concourse level from the street.

The Seattle arena's design is based upon a contextual, perforated wrapper. The design may include Occidental S. to the north of the arena as a festival street. The northern entry of the arena and the associated plaza may be covered with a glazed canopy. The street along 1st Ave features retail and club restaurants whose location and number will be determined by the arena's dimensions. The design also includes a practice facility in the site's northeastern corner. There are no plans at present to build structured parking; the existing parking structures and lots nearby will absorb most of the need for parking. The full extent of the need and location for parking will be evaluated in the EIS. On game days, 13,000 patrons expect to arrive from the north, 2,400 from the south, and 2,400 from the east across the railroad tracks. These estimates are based upon existing use of light rail, not projections based upon light rail's expansion.

The design of the Seattle arena's public realm includes: 16-30' sidewalks along Holgate Ave S.; 16-24' sidewalks along 1st Ave; a 120' x 170' at-grade plaza with an entry to the arena in the northwest part of the site; a 140' x 180' area for stairs which lead from S. Massachusetts Street and Occidental Ave S. to the arena's main entry; and a 140' x 190' elevated terrace located to the east of the entrance stairs. The landscaping and furnishings include: large 40' street trees, rain gardens, streetscape planting, seating stoops, lean rails, and bicycle racks as well as entrances to retail along 1st Ave; small 20' tree plantings, porous paving, and water features in the at-grade and elevated plazas; and columnar 40' street trees and a green wall with upper level terraces on S. Holgate St.

The commissioners' discussion centered on: the uses, design and programming of the plaza spaces, including the elevated terrace, especially given Seattle's dark, winter weather when the arena would most often be open; the needs of the local community and how the arena affects and shapes planning for the neighborhood; the character and uses along 1st Ave; the shelf life of the building, the sustainability of its materials and design, and the opportunity to create the largest sustainable impact as possible; and access to and from the arena for all modes—car, transit and pedestrian—and how that affects the public realm not only on the arena site but also in the neighborhood.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Gary Papers, DPD noted the upcoming 3rd EDG meeting and the Design Review Boards recommendations about the quality of the public realm, the importance of the building's public character, the need to create a space for the whole year, the character and uses along 1st Ave on the building's west faced, the design and amount of pedestrian realm, and that the entrances allow for proper queuing.

Beverly Barnett, SDOT, anticipated the vacation petition in early or mid February after the EDG process. The vacation for the applicant's other site may be simultaneous, if they know how the site is going to be used.

Barb Wilson, Planning Commission, asked about the plan's for access to the Safeco Field garage.

Melody McCutcheon, representing the Seattle Mariners, noted Occidental Ave. and Massachusetts St. are vital for Safeco Field's operations, including its garage and emergency access and large vehicle staging. Safeco Field needs to insure its access and operational needs will be met.

Geoff Wentlendt, DPD, noted the city is studying developing a stadium district and strengthening land use protection of industry in SODO.

SUMMARY (by Quotah)

The Seattle Design Commission thanked the design team for its briefing on the Arena in advance of its application for a street vacation of Occidental Ave. S. between S. Holgate and S. Massachusetts Streets. The commission will consider the project's Urban Design Merit and Public Benefit at future reviews before it can make a recommendation to the SDOT Director about the proposed street vacation. The commission appreciated the presentation and the redesign of the stairs at the main entry to create more of an opening and buffer along 1st Ave. The commission had the following recommendations:

Context

- For the urban design merit, study the function of the street to be vacated and show how it affects Safeco Field and surrounding properties. Also, show the effect on the project if there was no vacation, and what type of a building would be there.
- Show an understanding of neighborhood dynamics and character, how they will change, and how this project facilitates that change.
- Show the program on the site, and options to use offsite properties for the program and how these options affect the neighborhood's urban design.
- Study the feasibility of a service entry on Holgate. Develop drawings that show and analyze the access road, loading zones, short-term parking, service entry, and public entries.
- Show due diligence for freight, rail, and other users of the right-of-way.

Plaza

- Show how the plaza's design is an "essence of place" and is compatible with Seattle's climate of rain and darkness and the SODO neighborhood.
- Better define the plaza programming and who is responsible for it. Show how the programming influences the design of the plaza, entry stairs, and elevated terrace.
- Show concepts for public art in plaza, public realm and throughout the project and how they fit into the neighborhood context, especially if they are seen as part of the public benefit.
- Show more details of the plaza, including the water features, signage, pageantry graphics, paving, runnels, seating and other furnishings especially if they are part of the public benefit.
- Continue to explore removing the wall of stairs on 1st Ave. and create an opening and buffer to the street.
- Develop a design concept for Occidental Ave. S. and S. Massachusetts St. and ensure the design and use of the elevated terrace and plaza relate to these streets.

Streetscape

- Study and consider relocating the loading and service entry on S. Holgate St. to provide a better pedestrian experience.
- Study the proportion of the bottom of the building façade and consider raising its height so it is more than 15 feet.
- Better define the retail experience strategy and the expected tenants, and how both relate to neighborhood. Study the experience on game and non-game days.

Building form

- Provide details about the building wrapper, how the screen meets the ground and the pieces meet the exterior. Show precedents of building wrappers.
- Better integrate the building design and the site and landscape design.

Sustainability

- Further develop sustainability goals. Develop a design that considers the life of building and the life of the building form. Consider the role and image of the project's sustainability could have on the city. Take advantage of the unique opportunity for sustainability afforded by the project's large scale. Integrate sustainability in other ways besides stormwater; for example, consider options for daylighting, cooling, solar, etc. Study harnessing the scale of systems.
 - Develop a plan to show the educational benefits of sustainability to arena patrons and the public.
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