



Seattle Design Commission

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

February 07, 2008

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

Woodland Park Zoo West Entry
Fire Station 37 High Point
DPD Deputy Briefing
Pedestrian Master Plan
West Thomas Street Pedestrian Bridge
Aurora Avenue North Improvements

Commissioners Present

Karen Kiest, Chair
Tasha Atchison
Brendan Connolly
Mary Johnston
Juanita LaFond
Dennis Ryan
Norie Sato
Darby Watson

Convened: 8:30am

Adjourned: 4:30pm

Staff Present

Guillermo Romano
Valerie Kinast
Tom Iurino
Ian Macek



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07 February 2008 **Project:** **Woodland Park Zoo West Entry**
 Phase: Schematic Design
Last Reviews: 12-06-2007, 9-16-2007
 Presenters: Monica Lake, Woodland Park Zoo
 Robert Shrosbree, Site Workshop
 Ed Weinstein, Weinstein AU
 Attendees: Paul Andrews, Phinney Ridge Community Council
 Ester Bartfeld, Resident
 Bill Bernstein, Site Workshop
 Diane Duthweiler, Save our Zoo
 Rob Kiker, Weinstein AU
 Leslie Lane, UW Student
 Scott Ringgold, DPD
 Irene Wall, Phinney Ridge Community Council

Time: 1.3 hours

(SDC Ref 169 RS 0612)

Action

The Commission thanks the team for their presentation and for addressing the Commission's concerns from the December 2007 presentation. The Commission unanimously approves schematic design of the project with the following comments:

- **Appreciate the improved integration and relationships between the architecture and landscape plan.**
- **Encourage further attention to the functionality and visibility of the west hub element.**
- **Also encourage continued attention to the design of the hinge point and kiosk where southbound and eastbound pedestrian flows intersect.**
- **Applaud the classic simplicity of the architecture and encourage vigorous pursuit of these principles in design development.**
- **Note the adaptive potentials for employing the architectural idiom in future zoo buildings, here and elsewhere.**
- **Acknowledge the sustainability measures (stormwater, daylighting, sustainable materials) and encourage further vigorous development including points in the LEED ratings.**
- **Appreciate the need to acknowledge the functional, collecting demands of an arriving public, often in groups. However, urge you to minimize the hardscape to support the expected circulation demands and maximize the vegetated character of the park and zoo with vertical and horizontal landscape materials..**
- **Give attention to making the circulation environment equally comfortable to serve low attendance as well as high attendance times.**
- **Encourage further attention to the interpretive potentials of the new north path in terms of visual, aural and other sensory qualities.**

Public Comments

Comment: The commission needs to step back to see if the west entry should be proceeding. The long range plan envisioned a south entrance, and the current planning has been done hastily. There is no parking infrastructure to accommodate this entrance. Most visitors come from the south, something stated in the zoo plan.

Some of the aspects of this proposal have legal questions:

- can only build what is authorized in neighborhood plan and what the City Council allows
- coffee bar and cafe is shown in a flyer, but not in the plan (only a cart) or long range plan
- land use zoning matter (garage not allowed in parks)

There are also general issues with access to the zoo store. Is it legal to only have public retail access since retail is not allowed in the single family zone?

Commission: These are SEPA and zoning questions.

Comment: Should retail access be allowed outside zoo? Step back and see if this is the vision, and how far it has departed.

Commission: Acknowledged receipt of public comments from past meeting.

Comment: It was stated earlier by the Zoo's Project Manager that the zoo is supposed to be a dialog with nature and other species. How does adding a second zoo store and vast paving support this?

- How are five ticket counters much different than the current configuration with two at both the north and west entrances? The zoo should consider what else they could do to handle occasional visitor surges.
- The proposal does not improve the pedestrian experience. West entrance is currently at both the bus stop and crosswalk; the new proposal needs fancy signage to let people know how to enter.
- The project has massive amounts of paving.
- If most of the surges in people are related to concerts, these will be unavoidable.
- The design does not fit WPZ and is a Disney approach.

Comment:

- This project is just paving over the parks; it is arrogant to think we have this right, there is too much paving.
- Most visitors come to the zoo from I-5 or SR-99, so the north/south entrances are the most logical. Consolidation at the west doesn't make sense.
- Object to a second zoo store at the west entry.

Commissioners' Comments

- The design is further along than asked, appreciates the response to previous questions.
- Is there a safety fence between animals and people?
 - There is a two tiered safety fence system, along path to north and entry gate 8ft barrier
 - There is a second perimeter fence which is partially underground where it is not adjacent to hard surface.
- What is the nature of the fence?
 - It is a hidden fence behind shrubbery, it has no barbed wire.

- Is the location of the bicycle parking structure at the west edge near the parking lot? Along the path to the east?
 - Yes.
- How does the pedestrian flow work at the entrance? It seems that there would be conflicts with circulation coming from the north with those trying to enter the zoo after obtaining their tickets. Perhaps conflicts could be reduced with a counterclockwise movement.
 - Only 30% of the volume is from the north, if membership card enter through that entry. It is an issue of magnitude, as the paths will cross.
- Since the kiosk is a hinge point, it could be non-permanent. This would allow assessment of the pedestrian flow once the entrance opens.
- The simplicity of architecture is appreciated, but questions it being clouded in zoo store. It is encouraged to embrace the simplicity, as it can be adapted to other future zoo buildings easily.
- The overall architecture may be daunting when the entrance is not full of people; it should be made to feel more comfortable.
 - The entrance plaza will have art elements designed to accommodate surges gracefully.
- The relationship between the landscape and design has improved. Appreciate the soft edges, but watch the height of the landscape.
- The new path from the north lot can be an interpretive opportunity and a great way to build anticipation with sound and smells.
- More landscape could be incorporated in the plaza without cutting down on hardscape; other incorporation of green area is appreciated.
- What is the ground material on the north path?
 - It has not been decided.
- What are the sustainability goals of project?
 - Storm-water will be infiltrated on the site in connection with the penguin pool which uses materials to allow for filtration. Daylight strategies are used in all buildings, and sustainable materials will be utilized throughout the construction process.
- Will any of the buildings have a green roof?
 - This option made sense when a parking structure was still considered. The stormwater infiltration system has the same benefits as the green roof.
- The zoo is a park, but also has many other functions. It is a major institution in a large city, and it will continue to evolve over time. The amount of paving is moderate considering the anticipated use.
- The interior main loop from east needs further attention with both the kiosk location and making the 90 degree turns softer. Appreciate the transition between the entrance and the penguin exhibit. It will be a draw for this entry.
- Appreciate public comments, see road as collector.
- How can the south edge of the zoo retail be activated?

17 January 2008 **Project:** Fire Station 37 High Point
 Phase: Design Development
Last Reviews: 10-18-2007, 6-21-2007
Presenters: Dodi Fredericks, Fredericks Landscape Architects
 Teresa Rodriquez, FFD
Attendees: Dov Alberg, FFD
 Jason Antonoff, DPD
 Molly Douce, SFD
 Morgan Elliott, Miller Hayashi Architects
 Jess Harris, DPD
 Jason Huff, Arts & Cultural Affairs
 David Kunselman, FFD
 Chris Leman, Citizen
 Ray Villanueva, Miller Hayashi Architects

Time: 1.0 hours

(SDC Ref. 169 RS 0609)

Action

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

- **The commission feels the building is creating a great civic presence in the area.**
- **Approves the colors and materials as they are developing, as well as the apparatus bay doors.**
- **Supports viewing the right of way as part of the project. It should be seen as an opportunity to replace grass with ground cover and perhaps add small street trees along SW Holden Street.**
- **Supports the landscape plan that eliminates a street tree on the NW corner of the site along 35th Ave SW.**
- **The commission likes the idea of the green terrace evolving over time.**
- **Urges the team to continue to look at the balance of glass, solid material and green screen material on the west façade. Perhaps the green screen could be pulled back from the corner to expose more of the apparatus bay.**
- **Supports the art piece at this early point and will follow its development through the PAAC.**
- **Concerns with the signage. The idea of the floating panel needs to be expressed more clearly.**

Proponent's Presentation

Project Background

Fire station 37 is located in the High Point neighborhood on the corner of 35th Ave SW and SW Holden Street. The new \$3.6 million facility will total 9,000 sqft, creating a civic presence in the neighborhood. Current zoning requires exceptions to both the set back and transparency requirements, which the team is working on. The finished project will

achieve a silver LEED rating with such measures as high efficiency heat pump system, green roof and rain garden. The building also incorporated windows that incorporate a venting portion that can remain open at all times, as well as a larger pane for natural day-lighting. The fire station lobby is also clearly identified due to signage and transparent glass.

The project will also include a freestanding kinetic steel art piece thanks to the 1% for art. The piece will be interactive and has been located in relation to street trees, utility poles, and the flagpole

The landscape plan includes the addition of street trees along 35th Ave SW, green roof, green walls on the west façade and adjacent to apparatus bay, and a grove of trees in the NE corner of the site. The small terrace on the north side of the building has been removed from the design since the team last presented. The corner street tree on 35th Ave SW has also been removed due to the location of the art piece.

Commissioners' Comments

- Is there a tree at the corner on 35th Ave SW? Is it going away?
 - The tree may go away, not sure yet. May be the site for the art piece.
- Where there be planting behind the green wall?
 - The green wall is only a screen and will not have plantings behind it.
- Why are there no street trees on Holden?
 - There are some constraints with utilities, and the fire department requested their absence due to entering/exiting although outside view corridor
- Why is grass on frontages/ how to maintain?
 - The sidewalks and planting strip will not be replaced. Only adding street trees on 35th Ave SW.
- Is there a retaining wall near the parking?
 - Yes, adjacent to the lot, private parking to south side of site
- Does the team have additional information on the art piece?
 - It is in preliminary design, but the piece will represent the role of the fire department in the community. It will symbolize a phoenix rising to rescue the community in times of need. The team wants to make sure the art has a presence in its location and that the imagery comes across because it is kinetic art piece.
- Can only fire fighters use the art piece?



Figure 3: Fire Station 27 elevations

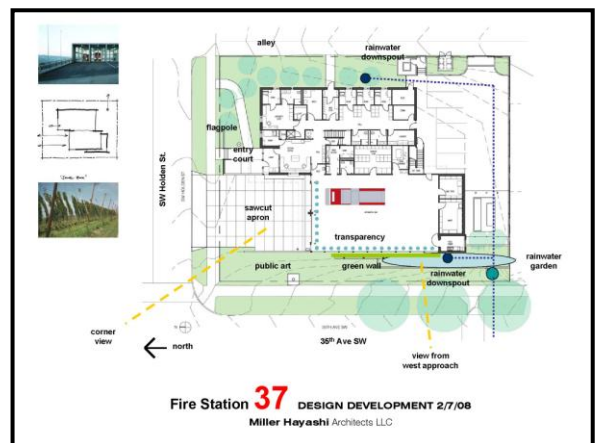


Figure 4: Fire Station 37 site plan

- The piece will be open to public use; however, it must not draw the public too close to the station. It will be a simple mechanism to use so people won't linger.
- What are the angles above the apparatus bay doors in the north elevation?
 - They are part of the structural tension system.
- Are there trusses in the apparatus bay?
 - Bar joint trusses are used in this location.
- Last time this project was presented did the entire structure have a green roof?
 - The roof angle is the same as shown in the last DC meeting. The roof will also have the terrace.
- Is the entry green wall with vertical cables also hops? It seems thin.
 - Not hops, but honeysuckle or other clinging vine.
- What is the journey that stormwater takes?
 - The roof slopes to the gutters, then travels to tight line or downspout. When it hits the ground the water has the opportunity to sink into terraces filled with a deep layer of porous soil. Moisture tolerant plantings will also be used to accommodate the water.
- What is the roof protrusion in East elevation?
 - It is a skylight on the roof.
- The building will have a dramatic civic presence, and should embrace the corner despite the size of the structure.
- The choice in color, materials, and doors are all appreciated. Due to beauty of materials, the team shouldn't cover up too much of the wall with hops.
- The balance of the screen behind the hops is unsettling, front corner could open up to allow more transparency.
- The hops green screen could also angle back at south end to provide view into apparatus bay. Low glazing could be used on the bottom window.
- The green roof is evolving in a good way; the area will evolve over time and may become a garden at some point.
- In keeping with sustainability, encourage that the ROW is included in the project. The planting strip will need to be replaced during construction, and the area along Holden could accommodate street trees.
- Support not having a street tree at corner, but Holden is exposed; lawn is not the statement should be putting out.
- Appreciates the subtle design of the windows.
- If the signage is a floating plane it should look more like that.
- Supports the art piece as it evolves, commission agrees with its location.

07 February 2008 **Project:** **DPD Deputy Briefing**
 Phase: Update
 Last Reviews:
 Presenters: Alan Justad, DPD Deputy Director
 Attendees:

Time: 0.6 hours

Action

The Commission thanks the DPD Deputy Director for the presentation and update on the numerous projects, with the following comments:

- **Appreciate involvement with the awards and any involvement with the upcoming 40th Anniversary**
- **Share concern about open space and how to increase it in the City of Seattle**
- **Support DADU/Backyard Cottages and Cottage Housing units to increase density in the city**

Proponent's Presentation

Project Background

The Deputy Director position has been created to assist the Director with various tasks. They will be in charge of customer service and complaints against projects, as well as continue handling media and community outreach. This will allow the Director to focus on design and planning. An update of department was given in the following areas:

- The city issued permits worth \$3 Billion, and took in \$3 Billion this past year. Only \$2 Billion was issued the year before. The increase is due to ramp up in staff. There has been some tapering in applications, but hard to tell.
- Industrial legislation came through this time last year that limits commercial uses in industrial centers. The city is now looking at outer edges and lighter industrial centers and if those should have more diversity or not, which may be contentious.
- The South Lake Union urban form study has started, and the city conducted a two day charrette. Development continues, so it is important to keep the project moving forward.
- Increased upzoning around the edges of South Downtown. Historic issues with Pioneer Square and International District, and urban design planning is taking place in this area. Focus is on connecting the area, especially Little Saigon and Yesler Terrace.
- Controversy around stadiums concerning heights.
- North lot development moving forward.
- More public interaction with the Shoreline Master Plan update is starting this year. Visioning meetings in the spring will address a wide range of interests from industry to recreation.
- Stormwater revisions area also taking place.
- Working with a consultant to set up a reasonable implementation program for rental housing inspections.

- Looking to make it easier to develop multi-family lots, most in mid-high rise zones (First Hill, Downtown).
- Looking at facade treatments for townhouses and the front design. May include administrative design review may just be administrative.

Commissioners' Comments

- City is grappling with how we grow in the future. The need for open space is always there, city is behind. Is the city pursuing the balance?
 - Land is expensive downtown. Open space effort going on at various levels. The City Center Strategy is trying to address this issue. The city is looking at what it already owns to create open space, green streets, and pocket parks. With 22,000 additional planned units in city center, working on how to provide for them.
- Open space is not a tradeoff for providing density. The city only has one chance to create a neighborhood. Bellevue spent \$15 million for waterfront properties to turn into park.
 - Housing piece tough and open space is critical. How to leverage space city owns: sidewalks, street. Also still looking for pure open space.
 - Downtown 75% affordable housing
- DC at city design level, not specific projects. Neighborhood plans draw attention to local geographies. How to balance needs of locals with needs of region?
- Citizens doing workshops on detached accessory dwelling units (DADUs), how is that going?
 - Calling them backyard cottages. Mayor wants to expand to rest of city. Required to allow DADUs under growth management act.
- A consultant is currently working on design guidelines for DADUs.
- Character of neighborhoods change by adding backyard cottages.
- Is cottage housing coming back?
 - Yes, but the same NIMBY attitudes will come with it. Need to mitigate impacts.
- Appreciate involvement with Design Commission awards, and would like to see the commission make awards beyond city investments.

07 February 2008 Project: Commission Business

Time: 0.5 hours

Action Items

- A. Timesheets
- B. Minutes
12-20-2007
 - Commissioner Johnston move to approve, unanimous approval1-17-2008
 - Commissioner Hoffman abstained due to partial attendance at meeting
 - Commissioner Sato move to approve, unanimous approval

Discussion Items

- C. Outside Commitments Calendar
- D. DC Retreat – Romano
 - 2-21-2008, Cal Anderson Park
- E. SLU Charrette Recap – Kiest
 - Next Meeting 2-12-2008 at 5:30pm at the Armory
- F. SR-520 Mediation Update – Atchison

07 February 2008 **Project:** **Pedestrian Master Plan**
 Phase: Phase I: Setting the Foundation
 Last Reviews: 6-7-2007
 Presenters: Barbara Gray, SDOT
 Rebecca Deehr, FeetFirst
 Attendees: Bob Corwin, AICP
 Peter Lagerway, SDOT

Time: 0.75 hours

(SDC Ref 169 RS 0606)

Action

The Commission thanks the team for the extensive overview and unanimously approves the scope as presented with the following comments:

- **Appreciate the input from the various agencies that have been solicited.**
- **Look forward to you concluding a consultant contract selection process.**
- **Appreciate public outreach to achieve the race and social justice goals of involving groups that have been previously underrepresented.**
- **Impressed with the diversity of advisory group.**
- **Look forward to seeing the results of both surveys.**
- **Support the goals of creating a pedestrian network that contributes to the health of citizens.**
- **Appreciate the inclusion of stairways as they are an integral part of the overall pedestrian network**
- **Support the goals to complete the overall system as a baseline or alternatively to focus on areas strategically such as urban villages and transit hubs, school zones and local business districts.**
- **Support the creation of sub-area plans such as Belltown green street and the Denny Triangle pedestrian strategies**
- **Attaching the handout to the minutes.**

As a Design Commission we:

- **Support your efforts in this planning effort and offer our support, interest and advice to facilitate this plan.**
- **Look forward to future involvement and advising on the redesign of new alternative sidewalk designs that might include low impact development, using non-traditional materials such as porous pavement, intersection designs to minimize pedestrian/car conflicts, integration of green factor, application of the SDOT art plan, and how to integrate old parking patterns with the completion of network patterns.**
- **Support working with you in an advisory function in a design capacity that best suits your needs.**

Proponent's Presentation

Project Background

In February of 2007 the City Council passed a resolution for safety goals for pedestrians. An advisory group has been established that will include 25 diverse stakeholders. The meetings are the forth Friday of the month, and there is an opportunity for public comment at the beginning. The steering committee meets twice a month (1st and 3rd Mondays) and sets the agenda for the advisory group.

Public engagement will play a large role in executing this plan. Many outreach efforts are being implemented such as:

- Steering committee
- Monthly group meeting
- Roundtable discussions
- City-wide events
- Two surveys
- Walking preference survey
- Knowledge/attitudes/behaviors survey
- Media strategy
- Website, resources and meeting information

The scope of the Pedestrian Master Plan is comprised of four parts: Setting the Foundation; Existing Conditions and Toolbox Development; Pedestrian System: Identify and Evaluate Solutions; and, Develop and Approve Pedestrian Master Plan. Right now the focus is on the advisory group and public engagement strategy. There will be a big push in 2008, and the project will wrap up by early 2009.

Commissioners' Comments

- Does the Commission still have the ability to comment on the scope?
 - Yes, it is not set yet. Further information is available online.
- Is this effort tied into that done with neighborhood planning?
 - Absolutely. Last time there were no plans that outlined bicycle or pedestrian needs. Coordination is essential to minimize the number of meetings for people to attend.
- The Design Commission is interested in design of trails and sidewalks. Will the plan be redesigning anything or will standards be put in place? These are issues the Commission wants to be involved in.
 - Engage Commission 3-6 months down the road with design recommendations.
- Seattle is behind the curve in intersection design. The City should not be paving everything over when creating sidewalks.
 - Discussions about porous pavement and issues related to climate are being discussed even outside Pedestrian Master Plan process.
- Focus on downtown or Coleman Docks or problem areas?
 - There tend to be more pedestrian collisions downtown, although speed is not usually the issue. Looking at signal timing as well as other issues.
- The issue of equity will continue to be on voters minds. People above 85th still want sidewalks. Other areas are looking for safety. How does the plan address recommendations?
 - The plan will look for input from advisory group and consulting team. 75% of the city has sidewalks with curb and gutter. Is the baseline to

complete the system? How much will that cost? Or is it to complete in urban villages and adjacent to schools/transit stops based on land use then go from there?

- Is it tied into neighborhood planning?
 - Priorities for infrastructure. So little adequate data so land use is best proxy we have to prioritize projects.
 - Communities likely to walk out of necessity, improving those communities before others.
- This has a lot to do with intersections. Will the plan analyze intersections with wide turning radii?
 - Yes, that will be an important part of the discussion. Key issues will be anything relating to speed, intersection design, trees/utilities/sidewalks (making attractive walking environments).
- Are there models out there we are looking at?
 - FeetFirst is in the process of doing a nation wide survey on cities that have completed similar master plans. Barriers, successful implementation, support by city officials and lessons learned. Working to find the core issues surrounding pedestrian plans.
 - Spreadsheet of 40-50 plans to see what the main components are. Looking to other cities. Take the best and most innovative and cater to Seattle.
 - Not copy any plans directly, ahead of the curve by most standards.
- Coordination with parks and city staircases and the networks.
 - Have ability to look at city system. Emphasis on the policy side to the value of public stairways.
- What about areas where sidewalks are needed but not desired? The continued thinking about trees and pervious pavement will be important.
 - Many people will be concerned with preserving the rural character of some streets.
- Enormity of the project is a concern. Worried that the plan will not be implemented due to other priorities.
 - Bridging the Gap is an early funding source for pedestrian improvements. Money continues for nine years. Bike plan similar where money is available to implement recommendations. Also funding from council to implement cost effective projects.
- Seattle has been a city of self generated pedestrian projects. How do you respond to groups that have already generated projects?
 - Safe Routes to School projects are ongoing and chip away at list. But land use has been changing, so projects that may not have been reflected in past community comments will be addressed. A list will need to be formed to create a priority.
 - Series of street types to get at a series of design elements. Complete streets ordinance clarifies pedestrian and bike modes into street design.
- Sea Streets?
 - Lyle is good at working through private development. The barrier to implementing them in downtown is that each developer must do it themselves, very piecemeal.

- Linking the goals directly to health and reducing carbon are good. Neighborhoods and communities might be on board if improved pedestrian connections relate to higher property values.
- Is police dept involved?
 - Yes, on committee and support with reports and information.
- What phase is this? More than a briefing.
 - Still in Part One which is 'setting the foundation'

Pedestrian Master Plan

Scope of the Plan, Revised Draft 11/16/07

Purpose: The purpose of this document is to identify the key tasks and deliverables envisioned for the Pedestrian Master Plan Project. The term “scope” in this document refers to the set of activities (tasks and deliverables) that will be accomplished in order to develop a Pedestrian Master Plan that meets the project goals.

Draft Project Goals: SDOT has been using the following to describe the high level project goals:

- Get more people walking
- Reduce the number and severity of crashes involving pedestrians
- Engage the people of Seattle in the solutions

These draft goals are likely to be modified as the plan develops and more people get engaged in the planning effort.

When revising goal statements, keep in mind that they should be prefaced by a visionary statement Define the goals keeping in mind the planning horizon (through 2020)

Goals need to address public health, enforcement, environment, making walking inviting, and streamlining public access to information from the city.

Organization of the Scope of the Plan: Consistent with the Pedestrian Master Plan Approach Timeline, the scope of the plan has four parts:

Part 1: Setting the Foundation. The tasks and deliverables under Part 1 will develop the foundation pieces for the plan including goals and problem definition, a public engagement strategy and implementation steps, scope development and consultant selection and tasks associated with SDOTs management of the project.

Part 2: Existing Conditions and Toolbox Development. The tasks and deliverables in Part 2 focus on data collection and analysis, and creation of a toolbox of best practices and strategies for creating a more walkable Seattle. Data collection and analysis tasks will focus on both qualitative and quantitative information in order to understand the existing conditions for pedestrians and the nature and location of the “gaps.” The toolbox will define a set of strategies and solutions to develop and implement the Plan.

Part 3: Pedestrian System: Identify and Evaluate Solutions. Part 3 focuses on defining a network or system of pedestrian facilities throughout the city envisioned for the year 2020. Tasks will include identifying and mapping the system, applying the “toolbox of strategies and solutions” to the system as a basis for a list of policies, projects and programs to be implemented. Another task in Part 3 will be to develop and apply criteria to evaluate the system. The foundation for the pedestrian system plan will be information gathered in Parts 1 & 2 of the Plan.

Part 4: Develop and Approve Pedestrian Master Plan. Part 4 focuses on finalizing the set of near-, mid- and long-term plan actions as well as compiling the actual plan document. Part 4 also includes the final review and adoption process.

Figure 5: SDOT Scope of Work for Pedestrian Master Plan

07 February 2008 **Project:** West Thomas Street Pedestrian Overpass
 Phase: Schematic Design
Last Reviews: 01-17-2008, 12-07-2006, 7-06-2006, 12-16-2004
Presenters: David Hewitt, Hewitt Architects
 Barbara Hinkle, SDOT
 Brian Sperry, ABKJ
Attendees: John Coney, Uptown Alliance
 Rob Fazio, Fazio Assoc
 Fay Garneau, AAMA
 Pong Jongjitirat, ABKJ
 James Klauser, AAMA
 Peter Lagerway, SDOT
 Barbara Lee, ABKJ
 Jeen Sundborg, Uptown Alliance
 Jessica Vets, Queen Anne CC
 Ruri Yampolsky, Arts and Cultural Affairs

Time: 1.25 hours

(SDC Ref 169 RS 0606)

Action

The Commission thanks the team for their presentation and approves revisions to schematic design with a vote of 8:1 with the following comments:

- **Appreciate the quick and thoughtful response to comments from last session**
- **Emphasize priority in this funding go to include the stairs at Elliott Ave. Would like to see these stairs shown in future drawings**
- **Excited about west belvedere into park as an opportunity to create a dramatic space and allow for clear movement and passage around this corner.**
- **Appreciate presenting the design realistically with clear sense of where the money is going**
- **Concerns over railing. Appreciate that it is a work in process. Support having the railing for functional reasons, but must be looked at relative to youth, skateboarders and other concerns**
- **Support minimal lighting plan**
- **Appreciate simplicity of structure, but also recognize it can be brutal.**
- **Recognize the opportunity to humanize structure through art or other means**
- **Expressed concerns about skateboarders and how they will use this structure**
- **Support minimizing the impact of downspouts, and their incorporation into a clear drainage strategy**
- **Recognize there are several neighbors to this project. Structure must meet surrounding conditions as elegantly as possible.**
- **Disapprove of potential for signage to be hung from bridge**
- **Recognize and support importance of bike movement, but continue to have concerns regarding bicyclists or skateboarders traveling fast down the ramp to W. Thomas.**

- Look forward to the art component that can be incorporated into the project
- Support landscaping in keeping with structure of bridge, not overly ambitious.

Note: Dissenting vote based on the project being overambitious under funded, with the Elliott Avenue extension not primary to the project.

Proponent's Presentation

Project Background

There is no respite regarding budget and timeframe for this project. The team wants a project that the Commission is behind. Since the project is at 30%, the design engineering elements not worked out, and some items are not completely in the budget, but may be add-ons for project if sufficient funding is found.

The bridge will start at 3rd Ave W and elevate to a juncture. It will then cross both Elliott Ave W and the BNSF tracks to another juncture. The junctures will be poured in place giving them the ability to be slightly more free form. This will facilitate the turn for bicyclists. The current plan also provides stairs into the park as well as the ramp. In addition the mound will be 2ft rather than 5ft due to the structural system.

The current proposal is to have a voided slab that is a 4'x2' precast concrete element (reduction from 5' to 3' in thickness). The bridge will be comprised of three of them. The top slab will take care of drainage due to its sloping ability. A tilted railing will create a more open quality to the space and will be made of steel mesh, as will the handrail. There is a requirement for a throw fence, and it will be similar to the one at the sculpture park. The ramp onto the west side of Elliott has been eliminated.

Tapered and chamfered support braces will be used, similar the ones in the light rail system. Lighting will be every 15' located in the support and will project onto the ground. Changing railings at belvederes is possible to give juncture points more prominence, and

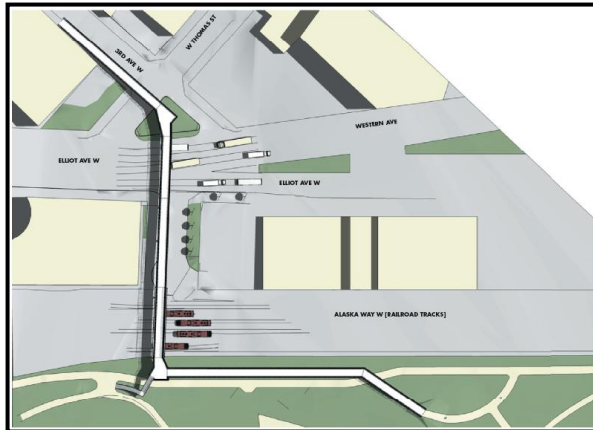


Figure 6: Aerial view of project



Figure 7: West and South Elevations

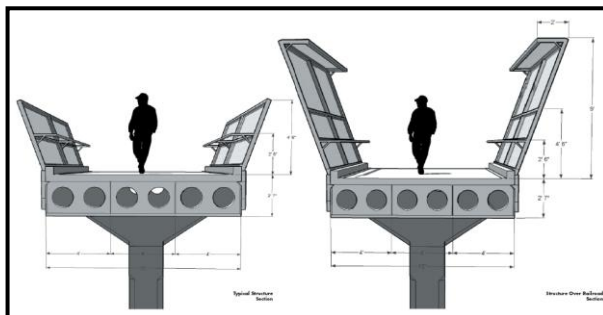


Figure 8: Section Views

the throw fence, belvedere and railings will be more integrated than images suggest. The downspouts and electrical conduit provide problems, although able to integrate into the design.

Commissioners' Comments

- Are the stairs on the west side of Elliott still considered an add-on?
 - Looking at how stairs can be integrated into the piece on the west end of Elliott. Formerly showed a costly ramp in this location.
 - There are two sets of stairs in the project, one on the west side of Elliott, and ones connected to bike/ped trail in the park. Keeping both in the project as cost allows.
- Is there room in the ROW for this?
 - Yes. Also see stairs as steel, not concrete.
- Appreciate simplicity of stairs.
- From bridge function point of view, take away the one near the window and leave the one at West Elliott. Belvedere doesn't need stairs to be special.
 - Rational is that when coming from north on the trail, don't need to walk around.
- This is a pedestrian environment; people will not mind walking further.
- Priority stair is at Elliott. Must disclose that works nearby, but development is increasing in area.
- Will there be art?
 - The art component will come later
- May be able to strengthen belvedere with potential seating area, lowering the railing might then be possible.
- Avoid freeway signage on bridge
- The handrails are woven wire mesh, is that tube steel?
 - Yes, probably a dark color. Mesh may be galvanized or painted. May be connection to sculpture park, but want to differentiate.
- The railings are 4'6" for bikes, even though people are walking them?
 - Bicyclists will be riding across.
- Keep handlebar placement in mind, may cause conflicts.
- Concerned with addition of handrail, youth using that to get on horizontal portion.
 - Appreciate the comment. Provided handrails to be accommodating to people, especially increasing elderly residents located in adjacent neighborhoods. Agree that railing is a benefit?
- Appreciate helping people across. Perhaps have less of an angle
- Appreciate the simplicity of the railing, also find it somewhat brutal. Phoenix is an example of different treatments that can be done. Skaters love railings and ramps, could cause conflicts, so keep in mind. Belvederes are important juncture points and should be celebrated.
- Lighting only coming from one way?
 - Only see silhouettes, on one side, 10' apart.
- What does the landscape plan include?

- Triangle area suitable for low/no irrigation low plantings due to traffic site view
- Opportunities to take advantage of topography, planting in park will be coordinating with parks department
- existing bike path will be relocated west of new ramp
- replant rose garden if needed
- The belvedere with or without stairs is a connection between bike and pedestrian paths, opportunity to revisit this area, create passive plaza
- There is a simplistic landscape plan in the park, want to respect it.
- Future thoughts on plaza in that area may detract from the Heizer sculpture; if budget allows for only one stair in the project, it should be placed on the West side of Elliot and not at the belvedere.
- This is a simple structure that has to look spectacular. Some trees on the east side could make a difference. The landscape in Myrtle Edwards is in need of some help, and bringing Parks & Recreation into the process and improvements should be supported in coordination with the project.
- Color may be able to be used to bring softness to this area.
- Not everyday that you are able to be in an elevated position. Being in a tree canopy can be exciting, and an added feature.
- Appreciate when the project is finished and built.
- Pay attention to how each element touches down on both ends; consider CPTED in minimizing opportunities for hiding places. Use appropriate lighting at touch downs.
- Applaud you for work and keeping in budget. Have trouble with rationale for project. Question the necessity of having bridge extend over Elliott to 3rd. This design is trying to be simple, reminder of pedestrian bridges built in the 70s. Rather have seen a project that is 1/3 shorter with higher quality materials and design.
- Community council met. Concerns have been met with this proposal. The project will be having its tenth birthday, want to move forward.
- Appreciate the Mayor's mandate, but difficult in trying to assess urban design merit.

07 February 2008 **Project:** Aurora Avenue North Improvements
 Phase: Concept Design
 Last Reviews: 12-05-2005, 3-17-2005
 Presenters: Ken Lee, SDOT
 John McKenzie, CH2M Hill
 Attendees: Bob Corwin, AICP
 Faye Garneau, Aurora Ave Merchants Association
 James Klauser, Rowley Klauser LLP, AAMA
Time: 1.0 hours (SDC 169 DC 00353)

Action

The Commission thanks the team for their presentation and approves concept design with a vote of 7-2, with the following comments:

- **Recognize the challenge of working with a WSDOT state route**
- **Encourage transit as a high priority, specifically**
 - **Bus access lane widening is critical for function**
 - **Encourage pedestrian crossings are a priority, and**
 - **Support crossing at 140th, and appreciate the team pushing for it**
- **Recognize must balance access with safety concerns**
- **Concerns with U-turns and non-signalized intersections**
- **Removal may disrupt access, but improve safety**
- **Realize the degraded pedestrian environment with minimum width, would like to see innovative designs**
- **The Commission would like to see the larger context with impacts and relationships to Linden Avenue improvement project, recent housing development in the area, and what the City's vision for this area is.**
- **Encourage creativity and flexibility along the corridor, especially in the cross section**
- **Support a lower speed limit**
- **Appreciate the sustainability checklist**
- **Encourage appropriate lighting levels**
- **Encourage more partnership with other agencies**
- **Recognize that this project is more than a roadway improvement, but an entry to Seattle and a gateway to the north end.**

Notes: Dissenting votes because the concept design neglects to show how the project fits in with the larger context and whether the project would realistically support needed improvements to a large enough portion of Aurora.

Proponent's Presentation

Project Background

The overall project is from 145th Street to 110th Street. Phase I encompasses 145th Street to 137th Street. The existing road has a center turn lane and the ROW varies from 90' to 100'. Parking takes place in the public ROW which causes maneuverability problems.

There are high accident locations throughout the corridor. The goals of the project are to improve safety and efficiently movement of people and goods. The team is working with METRO to update bus stops and shelters.

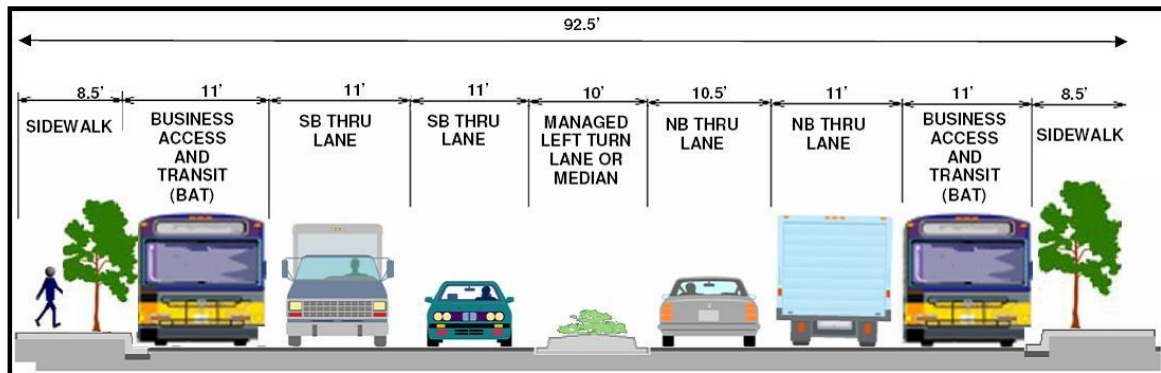


Figure 9: Project Cross Section

The current project will implement BAT lane, reduce lane widths, and create double left turn lanes at 145th Street. Left-turn u-turns will be allowed, need to have 50' allowance, will go into sidewalk amenity zone. WSDOT will review lane widths and channelization plans because Aurora is a state highway. The design details include undergrounding of overhead utilities; tree grates/light poles located in sidewalk; and opportunities to landscape median, in either formal or informal manner. The team notes there is a current funding gap with the overall project.

Public Comments

Comment: The proposed design isn't possible in this area. Sidewalks still remain at 12' and bus lanes at 13'. No amendment has been filed by Mayor. The current appeal is on that larger width, but no change to the DNS has been made. In addition, the project has ignored neighborhood concerns. There are currently 1120 multifamily units being built along Linden; no provision for those who travel to Aurora to access sidewalk or bus services.

- Disappointed SDOT did not address pedestrian issues.
 - There is no pedestrian crossing from 135th to 145th.
 - 140th not through street
- Flooding around Aurora is prevalent, didn't address drainage problems.
- Why 137th to 145th to start?
- Not taking business environment into consideration.
 - There are 155 businesses on 85 parcels that will lose land.
 - 110th to 145th 117 businesses with no backdoor access.
 - Access to properties blocked. Need complete EIS to know what the project is getting into.
- This design is changing the character of a historic highway.
- The problem is the 12' sidewalks that go into property, the ROW can handle the 12' bus lanes.
- Traffic speed reduction to 35mph along entire roadway from Greenlake to 145th would help.

Commissioners' Comments

- What happens to extra property in ROW in areas where it exceeds the required amount?
 - The width varies throughout the length, only some areas where the City needs to obtain more use, other ROW left over will continue to be used by adjacent property owners
- Adding any pedestrian crossings?
 - Not adding any, but want to implement crossing
 - There used to be one at 140th, but it was removed due to safety issues.
 - City and WSDOT did not want a crossing there.
 - Doing pedestrian warrant analysis for a signal at 140th. WSDOT says crossing doesn't meet warrants, don't see pedestrian need.
 - The design will put in infrastructure for future need.
- When they will make that decision?
 - Verbal feedback, but waiting for written comments.
- Absolutely necessary to have pedestrian crossing at 140th.
- The smaller sidewalk is at the detriment of the pedestrian.
 - Where people are waiting for buses the ROW should be kept to provide shelter.
- Linden will be constructed as a pedestrian street
 - SDOT will be looking at Linden and making recommendations for council.
 - Coordinating signalization at 145th with one at Linden
- What kind of U-turns are you providing south of here?
 - U-turn every 400' feet
- Concern over U-turns without traffic lights.
 - Once drivers get used to it, it works well.
- Less U-turns at fewer locations
- Access management and balancing with safety and efficiency of roadway is critical. Minimizing left turn pockets will add benefit to roadway and aesthetic, but will jeopardize access.
- Is WSDOT onboard with lane change?
 - They recognize the compromise.
- Safety over amenities, but bus lane needs to be wider. This is one area of Aurora that has many businesses.
- What is the lighting plan?
 - Street standard lights will be in place, and will provide enough luminance for sidewalk. More at bus stops.
- The Commission can't respond to all concerns. WSDOT's goal is to maintain capacity. From city, look at transit as high priority.
- Appreciate the complexity of project. Aurora is a spine that will continue to get denser, so this is a significant opportunity.
- Budget doesn't seem realistic. Likes under-grounding utilities.
- Any opportunity to look at this as an asymmetrical situation; one side with more amenities than other.

- Support idea of lower speed limit, narrower lanes.
- Need to look at the bigger picture to see what is appropriate, otherwise hard to make informed decision. Where are bus stops, where is dense housing located?
- Encourage team as partner with WSDOT
- Way to rebuild roadway as civic gateway. 145th is Seattle's north gateway, speak positively about city.