



## APPROVED MINUTES OF THE MEETING

**Mike McGinn**  
Mayor

**Diane Sugimura**  
Director, DPD

**Marshall Foster**  
Planning Director, DPD

**Mary Johnston**  
Chair

**Andrew Barash**

**Julie Bassuk**

**Graham Black**

**Brendan Connolly**

**Lauren Hauck**

**Laurel Kunkler**

**Julie Parrett**

**Norie Sato**

**Donald Vehige**

**Guillermo Romano**  
Executive Director

**Valerie Kinast**  
Coordinator

**Tom Iurino**  
Senior Staff

**April 15, 2010**

Convened 10:00 am  
Adjourned 5:30 pm

### Projects Reviewed

West Seattle Reservoir Park  
Councilmember Tom Ramussen  
Childrens Hospital Design Guidelines  
Childrens Hospital Laurelon  
Westlake Transportation Hub Strategy

### Commissioners Present

Mary Johnston, Chair  
Andrew Barash  
Brendan Connolly  
Julie Bassuk  
Graham Black  
Lauren Hauck  
Laurel Kunkler  
Julie Parrett  
Norie Sato  
Donald Vehige

### Staff Present

Guillermo Romano  
Valerie Kinast  
Tom Iurino  
Jenny Hampton



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**April 15, 2010**      **Project:**      **Councilmember Tom Rasmussen**

**Phase:**      Discussion

**Last Reviewed:**      June 4, 2009; April 17, 2008

**Presenters:**      Councilmember Tom Rasmussen

**Attendees:**

**Time:** 1:00pm – 2:05pm

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## **SUMMARY**

The conversation with Tom Rasmussen was a briefing on the projects and committees he is working on this year. The Design Commission is engaged in the changes and appreciates the update that Tom Rasmussen provided.

### **Project Presentation**

Councilmember Tom Rasmussen reviewed his role with the Design Commission. In his presentation, Rasmussen discussed his background, committee's projects, and updates for the Design Commission.

Tom Rasmussen reviewed some his work in the following committee topics: city-wide and regional transportation policies and planning, neighborhood transportation planning, pedestrian and bicycle programs, and the task of coordinating transportation issues across city, state and regional organizations.

### **Commissioners' Comments and Questions**

*It seems like one of your biggest projects is transportation and we as a commission see a lot of transit projects come through our door. We have been impressed with the process that they have been going through. In terms of the portal and the vent projects, we are impressed with the vision and what is happening in the larger picture, but we are a bit concerned that it might not go through as designed. We have just gotten word that we have to change a lot of what has happened because of budget and we want to make sure that the elements that are for public benefit are not lost.*

*You were briefed recently by the design team for the tunnel?*

Yes, it is very timely that I am meeting with you right now as I am going to be on a committee which includes the governor and the mayor that will review these transit projects. I can bring this up with the committee to go over the importance of this project and design.

*One of our major concerns is the south portal. One of the main issues is the reconnection of the streets and how they will interact with the neighborhood.*

Would you email your concerns to me? That way I can look them over and synthesize them as talking points.

*We know that the council received a letter that was signed by many organizations about the concern about how the tunnel and portal will be developed. We asked for a design oversight committee and we think that includes us.*

What we have done since we have received that letter is look at the overall committees in the city. The Design Commission has the qualifications and expertise covered for review. I would say that everyone is committed to doing this right and we want this to be an elegant and successful project from a transit and urban experience.

*I would hate for anyone in that list to be operating in a vacuum in that group. There needs to be an overarching committee that makes sure that our concerns and ideas are spread and heard across committees.*

The first meeting in May we are going to talk about design and I would like a representative from the Design Commission to be there and provide input.

*Benchmarks or goals are also an important issue to consider. Right now the city and state are working together well, but when the budget gets tight there needs to be an internal checklist so that each player gets what is wanted.*

*Within the contract, there needs to be a balance in describing the responsibilities of the design/build contractor and where cost and payments will come into play. The more risks there are, the higher a design builder might charge.*

*I know that you also oversee parks. In general, what is your perspective right now on the parks levy and what direction it is going?*

What I hear from the community is that the parks levy is meeting or exceeding expectations. What I would like to see is more park boulevards. My thought is that any time we dig up a part of the street, we should look at the opportunities for landscaping and change. I was really involved with the parks levy and our real challenge is paying for maintenance. The overall advocacy needs to develop in order to create new great parks and continue to maintain them. We need to keep in mind the cost of maintenance and the practicality of how this maintenance is done. Some of the design items that are suggested for the parks are very expensive to maintain. People get excited about the design, but it becomes sometimes wildly difficult to maintain. The challenge is to create parks that are creative and innovative, but are also easy to maintain.

*I think our role is to look at design and also value for the city. However, it is a complex issue and the key might be to get departments talking to each other about where new technologies are going and what the city can do to strategize how to balance them. Our small part as a commission would be to connect projects and new technology. If we can become part of those connectors we would be happy to keep this going across projects*

*That ties into the city's whole emphasis on sustainability. From your point of view, do you see that as a strong imperative for the city?*

With the new mayor, I see sustainability, especially with the goal of trying to be a carbon neutral city is still on the agenda. It has been useful for us to look at transit connections in the framework of sustainability.

*What is going to happen with 520?*

It will be light rail convertible, but might not have the capacity when it first opens. The government has also been really clear that there is a plan in place. Improvements on the west side have taken shape.

*I am concerned about the activity and connections in the Rainier Vista triangle. The University has taken a stronger role in how this is taken shape.*

There is going to be a workgroup that will help to design the Rainier Vista triangle and it would be helpful to have the design commission involved.

*We have been writing a letter about this issue. It seems to me that we could have an entrance on both sides of the street and a tunnel connection.*

The University had some concern of the tunnel in terms of utilities, safety and parking with the hospital. I like talking about these issues about quality of life and how the city is growing. These items need to be an overarching goal for the city and its development.

*It would help to have items such as the ROW manual to create a tiered approach for incorporating pedestrian environments into the city.*

I am a fan of form based codes because they are ways in which pedestrian uses are at the top of the list. We are doing this for the Fauntleroy Triangle in West Seattle. We have DPD and other people coming up with design guidelines.