

# Seattle **design** Commission

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**Raymond Gastil**  
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**Nathan Polanski**

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## **APPROVED** **MINUTES OF THE MEETING**

**April 2, 2009**

Convened 8:30 am

Adjourned 5:15 pm

### **Projects Reviewed**

Maynard Avenue Kiosk

Yesler Terrace Redevelopment

100 Republican Alley Vacation

SR519 Phase II Grade Separation

Seattle Theater Commons

Fire Station 21 - Greenwood

Seattle Childrens Hospital

### **Commissioners Present**

Mary Johnston, Chair

Andrew Barash

Graham Black

John Hoffman

Julie Parrett

Nathan Polanski

Dennis Ryan

Norie Sato

### **Staff Present**

Guillermo Romano

Valerie Kinast

Tom Iurino

Jeff Arango

**Celebrating 40 Years 1968-2008**



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|----------------------|-----------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>April 2, 2009</b> | <b>Project:</b>       | <b>Maynard Avenue Kiosk</b>                                                                                            |
|                      | <b>Phase:</b>         | Design Development                                                                                                     |
|                      | <b>Last Reviewed:</b> | N/A                                                                                                                    |
|                      | <b>Presenters:</b>    | Tom Im, Interim Community Development Association                                                                      |
|                      | <b>Attendees:</b>     | Steven Badanes, UW/Interim CDA<br>Rie Shintani, UW/Interim CDA<br>Patricia Hopper, Office of Arts and Cultural Affairs |

Time: 1 hour

(170)

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## ACTION

The Design Commission thanks Tom Im and Steve Badanes for presenting the Maynard Ave. S. kiosks and approves the design of the kiosks as presented with a five to two vote\* with the following recommendations:

One dissenting vote was because the Commissioner believes the kiosks detract from the urban design concept of the green street. The other dissenting vote was because the kiosks do not fit in well within the design, especially since the green strip between sidewalk and curb was narrowed from 7 ft. to 5 ft, and add to the confusion of objects in the right of way.

- The placement of the kiosks on cisterns is of concern. Placing them so that they are stand alone structures would help the kiosks be more legible and provide clarity to the cisterns as well as the kiosk.
- Commissioners are unsure why there is the same information on two kiosks, and whether the information may be redundant. Perhaps different information will make people move more from one to the other.
- The Commission asks that the designers consider eliminating one kiosk in the scheme, which would reduce the clutter in what is only a 5 f. narrow planting area. Perhaps more energy and money could be then focused on a single object.
- The designers are encouraged to place the information sign on the sidewalk side of the kiosk and not on the street side, to avoid pedestrians coming in conflict with cars and plants as they walk around the kiosk to read the information.
- Commissioners generally consider the choice of black and red for the structure attractive.
- The use of “Tnemec “ (2 part epoxy) paint instead of powder coating would provide more durability and be easier to maintain.
- Commissioners like the height variations of the piece and encourage the designer to consider more expressive variation and more height.
- The Commission notes with great dismay SDOT’s action of constructing only a 5 ft. strip when 7 ft. were agreed upon and planned. For a green street, the potential green area has become extremely skimpy.

\*Nathan Polanski recused himself

## Project Presentation

The project is along Maynard Ave near the junction with South Jackson Street. Maynard Ave. was designated a green street in 1992. The city is doing a land use plan for the area and will likely designate other streets as green streets near the project site.

The neighborhood does not have much open space and has one of the lowest open space ratios in the city. However, this is not surprising since it is in the downtown area. To the north of the project site is a community garden.

Reasons for the project:

1. Create a connection between the community garden and parking to the south
2. Have some artwork that provides some historical references to the Japanese American history in the area
3. Sustainable development elements, capturing rainwater off roof, into the cisterns and landscaping of the area.

Shown pictures of the street before any improvements were completed, which includes standard 10' sidewalks. The 1998 neighborhood plan looked at the streets within the community. They wanted to envision a different streetscape and developed very conceptual drawings that morphed into an urban design and streetscape plan in 2003. After the urban design plan, they decided to work on implementation. They worked with students from UW and a landscape architecture studio. The studio looked at three alternatives and had extensive public input on the alternatives. Initial ideas were to have planters and plant rice along the street with permeable pavement. SvR design was then hired to develop the civil engineering design, but architects and artists were also involved in the design. Weinstein Architects assisted in the design.

The artists had the idea of having a serpentine art element on the sidewalk with landscaping in between. Ceramic tiles that reference Japanese American history are incorporated. Solar LED lights are along the edge of the project. The kiosk is another major design element.

The Japanese hand pump will be located at the top cistern. It will be locked most of the time, only the maintenance crew will work it, but it will feed the top tiers of the landscape areas. The sidewalk area was expanded 5' to add space for plantings and other improvements. The International District Review Board has reviewed the project since it's in a historic district. The project originally had water conveyed over the sidewalk and down into the cistern. The project was redesigned to eliminate this element and a new kiosk was designed by Steve Badane. The kiosk will be 8.5' tall and there will be two kiosks with four signs on each kiosk. The kiosk is cylindrical and 2.5' in diameter. The kiosk is steel. They wanted copper, but were worried about theft. Instead, steel will be used and it will be powder coated.



**Project Area**



**Proposed Street Improvements**

## **Commissioners' Comments and Questions**

*What is the kiosk made out of?*

Steel.

*I want to step back and get an idea of what was the overall design concept?*

They needed a sign, so it's a sign element. They felt it needed a vertical element. The design concept is that it is a background element, not a monumental element like the Space Needle and is simple and economical. It is not really part of the art, but rather just signage.

*Do you envision the signs being temporary and placed in holders or permanent?*

We haven't gotten to that level and we don't know what information is needed. There is no space for community posting on the kiosk. It will have donor information as well.

*The little concrete cisterns, they are holding water, or have water in them when it rains?*

They do have water. They irrigate the landscape elements. They are covered and not accessible.

*Can you sit on the cisterns?*

Yes, on the downhill side they could be used for sitting. Benches are also incorporated.

*Why is the kiosk placed on the top of one of the concrete cistern structures?*

It needs to be on a flat surface. Also, the cisterns collect water from the adjacent roofs.

*The cistern seems too high to have the kiosk on it and perhaps too low for seating. Perhaps the base of the kiosk should be lower. It seems like the cistern and the kiosk are not well incorporated.*

*It also seems like the base of the kiosk, since it is a cistern, that it might be difficult to attach the kiosk*

There is a 4" slab base that can accommodate the kiosk.

*Is it possible that someone could fall backwards if they are standing on the base of the cistern?*

*Regarding the path, why is it so restricted to the listed strip next to the parking? It seems cramped and squeezed between the cistern and the parking.*

SDOT built the area at 5' even though the original plan was for 7'.

*Will there be more street trees?*

6 on the west side, 4 on the east side.

*I think there is a lot going on for such a small project. There will be more vertical elements and I would suggest that you consider only one kiosk instead of two. The base maybe doesn't want to associate with the cistern, but perhaps on a smaller base.*

*In looking at the plan, it seems there are two spots between the southernmost trees where there isn't a cistern or runnel, maybe in that area a single kiosk could be added.*

*The serpentine, the vertical features have lost their design concept. I would like to see them gone. However, Seattle has a lot of wayfinding devices, some are unique and some are basic. Perhaps, the existing Seattle system could be incorporated and put on the light poles. If you really want a wayfinding device, put it in the gardens and make it big enough to be attractive.*

*I think a vertical element could be fine there, but perhaps it needs to be taller. Instead of powder coating, you might think about tnemec paint? It's easier to repair than powder coating.*

*I like the idea of adding the kiosk element elements to the horizontal elements.*

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|----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>April 2, 2009</b> | <b>Project:</b>       | <b>Yesler Terrace Redevelopment</b>                            |
|                      | <b>Phase:</b>         | Briefing                                                       |
|                      | <b>Last Reviewed:</b> | N/A                                                            |
|                      | <b>Presenters:</b>    | Judith Gilgore, Seattle Housing Authority<br>Gary Johnson, DPD |

Time: 1 hour

(122)

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## ACTION

The Design Commission thanks Judith Kilgore and Gary Johnson for presenting the current state of planning for the redevelopment of Yesler Terrace and has the following comments:

- The Commissioners urge SHA to use the Commission as a resource in the undertaking.
- Commissioners appreciate that the educational opportunities that the project presents are being taken, and that an increased need for education in the field by underrepresented youth is being considered.
- The Commission praised and is intrigued by the public outreach methods being employed to bring a diverse population into the planning process.
- "If it's just a cool place to live in, then in the end, we've failed," is a great motto.

## Project Presentation

There are no detailed redevelopment plans. Yesler Terrace is one of the oldest public housing projects in the country, began in 1939, opened in 1941. It is unique because they had a visionary director of the Seattle Housing Authority (SHA) at the time. It was modeled after Swedish hill towns, and it stayed true to the terrace of Yesler Terrace. It's also unique because it has always been completely integrated; 23 different languages are spoken by residents of the housing development. Even though Yesler Terrace is the oldest project, it is built to last and was not meant to be temporary. It is an extraordinary place, close to downtown, close to the interstate. This special place deserves the time and focus it is receiving. However, in the waiting period significant infrastructure problems have surfaced, mold problems, some sewers are still brick. All units have one bathroom, even if they have four bedrooms. When Yesler was developed people did not have as many cars, they have 1/3 of the parking they need creating conflicts between the residences that need the on-street parking.

In 2006, the SHA engaged in discussions about how to redevelop Yesler Terrace. The process started with community conversations and listening to what the community had to say. A citizen review committee was established and chaired by Norm Rice. They developed a set of core values (4): Social equity; economic opportunity; environmental stewardship; and one-to-one housing replacement. The community made it clear that this is a very special place, residents want to come back after it is redeveloped. One thing they have discovered is that there are 19 in home daycares, mostly Muslim. They serve a vital market for people who want their children cared for in a culturally sensitive environment. Outside residents use the daycares in Yesler Terrace.

After a year, two documents were developed, which are on the SHA website. The first is the planning concepts, broad ideas from the community dialogue. The second is the definition and guiding principles, which takes the four core values and provide guiding principals for each. The board of commissioners adopted both documents.

Last year they began the planning phase for the project. Hired the design team of CollinsWoermann. Their model for the plan is based on sustainable in the core, is it viable, financially feasible, socially viable, affordable. They want it to be a 21<sup>st</sup> century community and serve as a model for healthy communities.

A rude awakening came last fall. They figured that given the size and location of Yesler Terrace, 561 existing units, they would double and even increase beyond that the number of units on site. Heartland was also hired as real estate consultants. The planning program included 3-5,000 housing units, 5-8 acres of open space, 1million sf of

office and 50,00 sf of retail. If they are serious about it being a model community for health and sustainability, they had to determine if this was realistic. Unlike the other garden communities that were redeveloped, they do not have Hope VI money. They need to make it financially feasible.

The residents generally supported the density increase because they saw what it meant to them, they still had open space and gardens. One part of the very aggressive planning program is financial. They are going to replace all the 561 low-income housing units, with a price tag of 141 million dollars with 91 million dollars for infrastructure improvements. The parks and other amenities are also costly: 10-12 million dollars just for the planning phase of the project. They will have to sell the land for a premium (office, retail). Another 1,300 units of low-income housing will be incorporated. Over 1,800 total low-income units.

In January they supplied the citizen review community with an element overview. One of the big questions: are there other neighborhood in Seattle that have this kind of density (200 acres/unit)? Downtown and First Hill has this level of density. Last month they brought in some models to show examples of what the massing, height and open space could look like on the site.

They will hold a retreat on May 2<sup>nd</sup>. Hopefully by June they can generate their evaluation document. They will not be recommending a concept, they will be evaluating the elements.

The 30-31 acre site calls for denser development than there is now. It represents a large scale opportunity to push the envelope on sustainability, energy generation, urban agricultural, green jobs, and deconstruction. The City sees the Yesler Terrace redevelopment as a partnership. Even though they do not suggest moving Yesler or Warren, they are flexible on the street network design and are supportive of the open space goals. A rezone of the property will be required. The city may participate in infrastructure development and the city is interested in replacing the infrastructure with a sustainable approach. New transportation infrastructure is on the way – a street car from the International District to Yesler Terrace as a result of Prop 1. Harborview Hospital – at the end of their system – they have a lot of condensation, they must use colder water (potable) to cool down the steam.

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

*There is so much opportunity for the city, it's very exciting. I wish we had more visual aids to allow us to comment on the proposals. However, we want to be a resource for the project and hope we can provide some expertise.*

*The Heartland report was made under different economic circumstances. When you look at the office proposals and to some degree the retail, it calls into question the assumptions. Also, construction costs, in terms of materials, have gone down 20-40% recently, although it may not hold up.*

We will reevaluate the assumptions throughout the process. There may also be additional federal programs that can be tapped.

*The current residents, do they use the nearby school? It seems that the redevelopment has learning value for the kids, reshaping the neighborhood, sustainability, etc..*

Yes. They have already been involving the kids in the process. The kids were doing parking surveys and learning about infrastructure. They view the project as a laboratory and definitely want to use it as a learning opportunity. For the first few weeks of July, the kids will be learning about design and putting together models with UW students in architecture and planning. The highlight of the course will be a charette for young people, run by the youth in the program.

*Would the existing schools be able to accommodate the increase in the number of kids in the development?*

They've started conversations with the school district and recognize the need to work with the schools on this project.

*Given the diversity of residents, what techniques are being used for community involvement?*

The biggest thing is to respect the cultures. In Western culture we make quick decisions, which is not the case in others. They spend a lot of time on interpreters and documentation of the minutes (which are translated into 9 different languages). We have pre-meetings that are translated. None of these measures are cheap.

*What's out there today that is totally radical that you are looking at? What are some of the extreme ideas you are hearing?*

Personally I love the water idea. There is such an opportunity for this to be self-sufficient and self-sustaining. The other big thing they are working on is economic opportunity, to promote self sufficiency. It breaks down to three broad categories. First is entrepreneurship. They are going to incorporate large meeting rooms and micro-spaces. The second is construction, where developers have to employ a certain percentage of their residents. The third is education and training – they are looking at how to incorporate green jobs to low-income populations. They are applying for a grant through EPA to do a labor analysis and focus on Yesler Terrace and perhaps other communities. They are looking at other city projects and what are the training and pre-training needs that low income people have so they can be part of the development of these projects. Another important thing to note is that they should celebrate the rich history of Yesler Terrace development – Gary Locke and Jimi Hendrix both lived here at one time.

*Is there a model out there that you are looking at?*

They have looked at other developments around the country and in Sweden. They want it to be unique and represent Seattle. They want a new model.

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|----------------------|-----------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>April 2, 2009</b> | <b>Project:</b>       | <b>100 Republican Alley Vacation</b>                                                                                                                       |
|                      | <b>Phase:</b>         | Design Development                                                                                                                                         |
|                      | <b>Last Reviewed:</b> | N/A                                                                                                                                                        |
|                      | <b>Presenters:</b>    | Brian Runberg, Runberg Architecture Group PLLC<br>Jason Henry, Berger Partnership                                                                          |
|                      | <b>Attendees:</b>     | Robert Burkheimer, Burkeheimer Management<br>Courtney Kaylor, McCullough Hill<br>John Schwartz, Keller CMS/PM<br>Beverly Barnett, SDOT<br>Marti Stave, DPD |

Time: 1.5 hours

(170)

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## ACTION

The Design Commission thanks the project team for an exceptionally clear and concise presentation of the 100 Republican Alley Vacation project, and unanimously approves the urban design merit phase with the following comments:

- The Commission applauds the design team for thinking of the project in the context of the entrance to August Wilson Way in the Seattle Center.
- It thanks the team for the effort at reaching beyond the bounds of the project site to tie into the Century 21 Theater Commons plans nearby.
- Commissioners applaud the team for coordinating with neighboring businesses on the reconfiguration of the alley.
- The project supports pedestrian vitality, strengthens the neighborhood character and causes no internal circulation problems in the area of the alley.

For the upcoming presentation on the public benefit package the Commission recommends:

- Explore traffic calming on Republican Avenue in response to the additional traffic resulting from the consolidating of driveways that access the site.
  - Consider building on public space potential on the southeast corner of the site to provide a prominent ending or beginning to August Wilson Way, by, for example, extending the public plaza more toward the east or possibly by carving the building mass back at this location to create a stronger connection with August Wilson Way.
  - Explore moving the residential curb cut on Warren Avenue to the south, possibly locating this between the proposed commercial and residential uses. This will consolidate all the townhouses in a group, separate driveways and differentiate areas for pedestrian circulation and vehicle entrances.
  - Lend more attention to the art component of the project, including consideration for how an artist will be selected.
  - Extend the thoughtful and dynamic landscaping along Warren Avenue to the plazas and other street frontages.
- Explore the idea of increasing the setback along First Ave. N, or shifting the project eastward to allow for more landscaping potential along First Ave. N.

## Presentation

The project site is adjacent to the Seattle Center at the former site of the QFC grocery store and parking lot. It is located at the northwest end of the Seattle Center. The design team is seeking to integrate the project with the Century 21 Master Plan for Seattle Center. The alley bisects the site and does not continue to Mercer Street. It is bounded by First Ave on the west, Republican to the south and Warren Ave. to the east. The streets all have different characters and the project will tie in with each. Warren Ave. has some great mature street trees. Tight space and small shops exist along 1<sup>st</sup> Ave. The proposed project will support this environment.

In analyzing if the alley could be extended all the way through the block, cut through traffic is a concern. Study option two looks at adding a hammerhead at the terminus of the alley. It requires the hammerhead to overlap two properties and does not serve all the properties. Study option three is to have a hammerhead to the south, it doesn't adequately serve all properties and requires interruption along Republican. Study option four, the preferred scheme, creates a dedicated hammerhead from Warren Ave. N. and serves all properties adequately without disruptions to adjacent streetscapes. The size of the existing and proposed alley are equal.

Existing curb cuts - 23' curb cut along republican, 23' along Warren and 32' to the north along Warren. Proposed plan is to have two curb cuts along the Warren Street side. The number of street trees along Warren would go from 14 trees to 19 trees.

The site design will enhance the pedestrian experience and add a pedestrian plaza along Republican. The goal is to orient it to the Northwest entry from Seattle Center. 97% of the site has pedestrian frontage with parking and trash consolidated to the rear of buildings and below grade. The alley vacation allows them to add more parking on the interior of the site with access from Warren Ave. N.

Townhouses are proposed along Warren Ave.

Landscaping – Good opportunity on Warren Ave. side for rain gardens. Seat walls and proximity to Seattle Center are a good opportunity to tie into the surrounding activity. The plaza provides great solar orientation and is a nice place to hang out. Seating is near food service, art, seat-walls and other amenities that have great public benefit. Improving the street trees along Warren and Republican is a project goal.

Substandard planting strips exist, they will increase the root zone and prevent sidewalk damage. Structural soil will be explored. Art will be incorporated in the project, either as part of the infrastructure or a monumental piece. Lighting will be upgraded in the area and new lighting will tie in with existing lighting in the area.



**View of Seattle Center's Northwest Entry from Plaza**

3' building setback along 1<sup>st</sup> Ave. to increase the sidewalk width. Existing sidewalk is less than 5'.

10' setback proposed along Warren Ave. 26'9" from curb to building face. It opens up the visual width of the right-of-way. A rain garden is proposed along Warren. The 10' setback will allow for significant planting areas. Smaller scale private porches will meet the landscaping and street improvements.

## Public benefits summary

- 2,000 sf public plaza located to relate to Seattle Center and August Wilson Way
- Southeast corner setback opens up to Seattle Center and Theater Commons

- Art to be incorporated into the design of the streetscape/plaza
- Voluntary minimum 3' building setback along 1<sup>st</sup> Ave. N and Republic Street
- Voluntary 10' setback at town houses along Warren Ave. N
- Integration of sustainable stormwater concepts

Beverly Barnett, SDOT – As presented, they do not want the alley to open up onto Mercer. It is problematic. The turnaround and entrance seem feasible, but the concept is supported by SDOT traffic operations although there may be some fine-tuning needed. The rest is early in the review so there is not a lot of feedback at this point.

## **Commissioners' Questions**

*Will the new alley be public?*

Yes

*Will people be able to cut through the parking lot to get to Mercer via car?*

There are bollards now, but it's not clear how the property owners will want to do it.

*By taking the curb cut away on Republican, but now all the traffic is channeled through Republican and Warren. It will increase traffic across the front of the plaza area and Seattle Center.*

*A curb bulb on both sides of Republican could slow down the traffic and increase pedestrian space.*

Traffic studies show there will be less traffic than at the current development.

*Is there a light at Mercer and Warren?*

No, a stop sign.

*Have you discussed these options with adjacent property owners?*

Two have signed the agreement, one has not. They have attended the presentations. One property owner is not in favor of the proposal.

*Will retail customers use the new alley?*

Retail parking will be from a separate curb cut along Warren, to the south of the alley curb cut.

*I'm trying to get a feel about how much traffic will be going up and down Warren?*

They may move the retail curb cut to the south, to eliminate the break in townhouses.

*Is there a way to decrease the driveway for retail to 10' and exit the traffic out the alley entrance? A 23' curb cut is rather big.*

It's problematic with grades due to the underground parking.

*What is your height limit?*

40', but the contract rezone is to 65'.

*Is there any part of the voluntary setback associated with the height increase?*

No.

*Is there a northbound bus stop on 1<sup>st</sup>?*

Yes, one block north on Mercer.

*The stormwater feature is that to mitigate the private development or does it treat runoff from public areas?*

Private

*Where will crosswalks be located?*

Awaiting development of the Seattle Center pedestrian plan so nothing definitive has been determined.

## Commissioners' Comments

*The uptown buildings are characterized by the solid mass of buildings and this proposal significantly strengthens the character. I don't see any internal traffic conflicts. However, external conflicts were raised by Andrew, but it seems that traffic will be dispersed. The project enhances the pedestrian experience, activates first floor uses, and reduces curb cuts. The alley function is being replaced.*

*Functionally it makes a lot of sense. Jumping ahead to the public benefits, I think one of the things that is an opportunity is the portal at the entrance to the Seattle Center. I think it would be a bigger bang if that retail and plaza were swapped.*

*For artwork, I would strongly urge you to take care in how you select the artist. It's very important and visible, it needs to measure up.*

*I would like to see the retail curb cut narrowed, but it may not be possible. I like the plaza where it is, to provide enclosure. Perhaps the retail near Seattle Center could be cut away to provide more direct visual access to the Seattle Center.*

*I think it's important to hold the corner, but I think it needs to be more porous and allow the plaza to capture more of the area. The thought and energy you have for the landscape along Warren is fantastic. I would encourage that energy to be brought to the plaza and along Republican.*

*I think we need to see more of the Republican side and the plaza with the same degree of detail that was shown along Warren.*

*Perhaps the 10' setback should be incorporated along 1<sup>st</sup> Ave. side to give more space for the pedestrian space on 1<sup>st</sup>.*

*The project site and adjacent blocks are basically a super block. By eliminating the southern curb cut it generates more traffic along Warren. Opportunity to reduce traffic around the elbow at Republican and Warren.*

April 2, 2009

**Project:** SR519 Phase II Grade Separation

**Phase:** Design Development

**Last Reviewed:** February 19, 2009; November 20, 2008; January 17, 2008

**Presenters:** Michael Johnson, SDOT  
Juliette Vong, HBB

**Attendees:** Ann Hegstrom, Kiewit Pacific  
Gavin Wong, Aecom  
Ryan Lambert, HBB  
Katherine Claeys, SDOT

Time: .5 hours

(169)

## ACTION

The Design Commission thanks the project team for their concise presentation and approves the design refinement unanimously\* with the following comments:

- The Commission applauds the clarity of the design and quality of movement provided.
- The removal of unnecessary walls and railings cleans the design, readability and way-finding. These simplifications are appreciated.
- The consolidation of landscaping is an improvement over the previous plan.
- Commissioners encourage the team to explore providing street trees along Third Ave. S.
- Recommend providing different paving for the spiral area than for the outer sidewalks.
- The Commission advises that the design team keep in mind that the seatwalls and railings, as vertical elements, will be the most powerful element for defining the spaces and provide visual continuity

\* Andrew Barash recused himself.

## Presentation

Indirectly, the project team wanted a better design. They started out addressing conflicts that were raised, but it has resulted in a significant change to the design concept for the East Plaza.

Juliet Vong presented before and after plans of the east plaza. Biggest change is the path that goes around the ramp structure. This allowed for a significant simplification of the design. By simplifying the circulation pattern, they can eliminate multiple routes and decisions. The new plan centralizes the green space in the east plaza and creates a stronger landscape concept. They wanted it to function for circulation, but also give a place for people to pause. The railing design is much simpler than the previous plan. The seat walls are retained in the new design.

## Commissioners' Questions and Comments

*Please describe the difference in ADA accessibility for the east plaza design?*

Original plan was a ramp that is no greater than a 5% grade. However, ADA has come out with new guidelines



Site Plan of Improvements

for public spaces. In this new guidance, designs may follow the existing street grade. For someone with a disability they have to travel an additional 600' to get access to a ramp which still required steep grades. We will be documenting the decisions we make with regards to ADA guidelines.

*What is the steepest grade?*

The steepest grade from a curb edge is 6% with the inside edge of the curve getting close to 9%. The cross slope is 1%.

*Can you show in plan view, which slopes are greater than 5%?*

*It's really nice that common sense has prevailed. I like this design much better, easier to understand and simplified along with increased vegetation. Getting rid of the wall along the 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave. is a positive.*

*Can you get street trees along 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave.?*

Possibly. We will explore that more fully.

*What is the paving pattern for the sidewalks?*

Continue the paving pattern on the ramp for the most part, but we might make some changes along 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave. S. by incorporating a new pattern or simple concrete sidewalks.

*I like the way the green areas have been consolidated.*

*As you make decisions about the location of the seat walls and railings, I believe the space will be defined by those elements. So, strong visual continuity would be preferable.*

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|----------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>April 2, 2009</b> | <b>Project:</b>       | <b>Seattle Theater Commons</b>                                                                                          |
|                      | <b>Phase:</b>         | Design Development                                                                                                      |
|                      | <b>Last Reviewed:</b> | December 4, 2008                                                                                                        |
|                      | <b>Presenters:</b>    | Jill Crary, Seattle Center<br>Shannon Nichol, Gustafson, Guthrie Nichol                                                 |
|                      | <b>Attendees:</b>     | Lesly Bain, Weinstein AU<br>Layne Cubell, Seattle Center<br>Tess Chiavone, GGN<br>Amy Craggs, Gustafson, Guthrie Nichol |

Time: 1 hour

(169)

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## ACTION

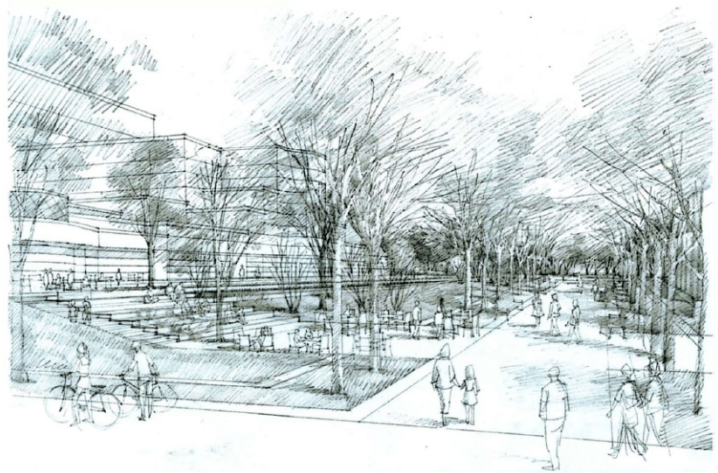
The Design Commission thanks the project team for the presentation of the Seattle Center Theater Commons design and unanimously approves the Design Development phase with the following comments:

- The Commission applauds the beautiful sophisticated design that is coupled with a sophisticated system of dealing with water and other sustainability issues on the site.
- As well, the interest and thought about how the space will look and work at various times (day, month, season) of day as related to the theaters is much appreciated.
- The Commission is encouraged to see the inclusion of movable furniture, which is not yet common in Seattle.
- The Commission applauds including the infrastructure for possible future art in the area not only for displaying art but also because flexible infrastructure should be an important component as Seattle Center redefines what a street can be.
- The Commission appreciates the variety of walkways and garden paths, with their differing functions, widths, materials and characteristics.
- The Commission considers the canopy that is proposed from the entrance of the Repertory Theatre to Mercer a simple and powerful gesture.
- The Commission appreciates the connections between the theaters which resulted from various workshops with the design teams and the theaters that are now evident in the design.
- The Commission applauds the thoughtfulness that went into the planting plan and the fact that it responds to the formality of the theaters that flank the space.
- The Commission recommends that careful thought be given to the size and shapes of the trees that are proposed in relation to the movement that is intended with the design.
- The Commission asks Seattle Center staff to recognize the opportunity of replacing the large iron gates leading to the Intiman Theatre as future planning and budgets allow.
- The Commission recommends allowing for the provision of paths connecting to a new center entrance of the Repertory Theater in case that happens in the future.

## Presentation

First time the Design Commission saw the project was in 2003 and again a few months ago. The project was shelved after McCaw Hall opened, but now they are revisiting the project and tying it in with the Century 21 Master Plan for Seattle Center. Many changes were made since the last presentation. At the end of February, the partnership group approved the design and the budget.

The site is a space, but also a passage way along the side of two of the theatres, the Repertory Theatre and the Intiman Theatre. Legibility and sustainability are two of the major goals of the project. The streets and trees are the best place to start; they provide the glue that ties the site together. The space needs to give a sense of arrival. The Intiman Theater has a lot of subtlety and has traditional American plays emphasizing dialogue. The bold Repertory Theatre is contemporary.



**Artist Rendering**

They want to take advantage of the large glass windows in the building; perhaps it could look out onto a garden and provide a connection between indoor and outdoor space. The number one needs are to tie in to a great neighborhood and to encourage neighborhood activity and pedestrian interaction.

The commission felt the previous submittal was fragmented: the consistent linear treatment on the east side of the space and fragmented on the west side.

The design team backed up after the last commission meeting and simplified the design scheme. The demonstration garden was incorporated into the site. They sought to incorporate the theatre gardens and fill the space wherever they can fit it. The project can serve as a pilot project and display how landscaping is done today. They want to engage all the senses, involve colors and make it romantic. We have a lot of places where water is going into gutters and pipes, so they sought to merge the feeling of the Mediterranean landscape with rain gardens. They considered how the space could transition at night, to become a moon garden. What they are proposing to accomplish with this objective are plants that serve these dual purposes. The lighting scheme is about moonlight, making it softer and magical.

In the current layout, they have a main garden space vs. several smaller gardens. Two bands of material are pulled across east/west to provide building access. They also wanted to reinforce the space as a pedestrian travel route. Lusher and richer plantings are used in rain garden areas to contrast the drier drought tolerate Mediterranean plantings. Curbs are eliminated on both sides of the street through the space to allow for sheet flow into the rain gardens.

They seek to have people enjoy a garden experience, to enjoy plantings on a narrow path, something that's not easy to do in Seattle today and not in Seattle Center.



**Site Plan**

Theater Commons  
Design Commission Review  
Guaranteed Seattle Revised L&E  
1" = 20' - 0"  
April 2, 2009

The material palette has been simplified. Concrete pavers will be used in the dark center strip through the project. Gravel mulch will be along the concrete pavers that are 10' wide. Exposed aggregate will be used in smaller areas.

They are attempting to connect the buildings with the landscape. The Repertory Theatre will have the second layer of the building pulled out to Mercer Street to give it a presence on Mercer, which it doesn't have now. It also provides protection from the weather.

The ADA/VIP entrance will have a simple and elegant marker to identify it and better define the entrance.

The intent is to emphasize moonlighting. It is offset with a warm glowing light at the entrance from Mercer.

Reader boards are going to be located along the edges of the space at Mercer Street associated with the new canopy on the east side.

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

*What's your initial design concept for the paths and gardens?*

Right now we have three key planting zones, drought tolerant, a middle planting zone, more a true green, lower planting near the street that is bio-retention zone. Each has different colors and texture. Paths will follow these zones with other paths to cut through.

*How wide will the paths be?*

Between 5' and 18".

*Are you removing the large utility boxes?*

No, they are being incorporated into the paving area.

*The gravel mulch, that's where the tents will be, will it be stabilized gravel?*

Yes, we are not wanting to move to a completely bound material. We don't want it to end up all over the place, so we'll be examining different specs. They may use a material under the tents on a temporary basis.

*Are those tables on the south terrace?*

We've suggested movable furnishings to allow people to make themselves comfortable.

*Why are the trees in the terrace area itself?*

To provide shape. The criteria are that the canopy will be well above pedestrian height. We're looking for something with a Mediterranean form, a horizontal branching pattern and the trunk may be a little crooked. The random placement of the trees is to make the space less formal even though the design on the ground is quite formal.

*Is there any change in the fencing by the Intiman?*

A vine-wall is proposed that somewhat repeats the vine-wall near McCaw Hall.

*Is the midpoint of the space, as you move from the wet zone to the drought tolerant zone, what is the height of the wall?*

2.5' for the walls.

*For the bio-retention area, is it surface storage or in the soil?*

In the soil, no surface storage.

*Please explain how the entrances to the commons and the street intersections are celebrated?*

There are two ways to make things visible. One way is to draw circle around it and create a separate space. The other way is to be as clear as possible that two streets are crossing. The language is then about gateways and the scale of the walkways that are converging there. We took the latter approach.

Much of which is taken from the broad and lack of definition and consistency along the north and south sides of the project. The garden is a gateway to the space.

*Infrastructure to transform the space, is it still part of the project, to incorporate public art?*

We were enamored with a simple overhead canopy that could be used. Everything we tried appeared as an insertion and was not compatible. Let's look at things that are more about the buildings and the ceiling will be provided by the trees. The public art budget is very small (\$30,000). In the spring of 2010 they will have a temporary art installation. They have utilities and infrastructure to support art installation at a future time. They may name the garden space after Peter Donnolly and it may refocus the art emphasis.

*Adding the infrastructure for future art is a good idea. It can reinforce the idea of his a demonstration street that is flexible.*

*Expressing the glass on the buildings, could you have some steps or opportunities to get down to the gardens?*

We developed a scheme that if the Rep theatre is added on it would include access to these areas with added entrances to the buildings.

*I wanted to appreciate the differing pathways in the space, maintaining that balance is a good idea. Can the walls be walked on?*

No, the top surface is not wide enough to walk on.

*The other idea I like is the connection of the theatre to Mercer.*

*The workshops you had with the theatre groups have really improved the design. The simplification of the design and very thoughtful approach to the plantings are improvements.*

*I really like the way the structures, the built environment, connect to the open space. The new highlighted entrance from Mercer needs to be carefully considered.*

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April 2, 2009

**Project: Fire Station 21 - Greenwood**

**Phase:** Design Development

**Last Reviewed:** September 4, 2008; April 17, 2008

**Presenters:** Kate Spitzer, Miller Hull Partnership  
Rich Hennings, Fleets and Facilities Department  
Scott Wolf, Miller Hull Partnership

**Attendees:** Rich Hennings, Fleets and Facilities Department  
Jack Johnson, Outdoor Studio  
David Jackson, Fleets and Facilities Department  
Jeremy Nichols, Fleets and Facilities Department  
Chief M. Douce, Fire Department  
David Kunselman, Fleets and Facilities Department  
Scott Kemp, DPD  
Jason Huff, Office of Arts and Cultural Affairs  
Perri Lynch, Artist

Time: .5 hours

(169/RS0609)

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## **ACTION**

The Design Commission thanks the project team for the quick and clear presentation of the changes made to the plans for Fire Station 21 since the last presentation and unanimously approves Design Development with the following comments:

- The Commission supports the request for conditional approval to rebuild the fire station in a pedestrian zone. It also supports departures in order to provide a 12 ft. floor to ceiling height instead of 13 ft., and to not provide transparency of the face along the sidewalk of N 73<sup>rd</sup> St.
- Commissioners would have liked to see more detail in the planting plans.
- The Commission generally regrets that the fire station projects are not provided the financing in measure with their importance as civic structures.

## **Presentation**

Project is located at Greenwood Ave. and 73<sup>rd</sup> St. The three portions of the building are the support bar, station house and apparatus bay. The sides of the apparatus bay will be glazed and tie into the pedestrian zone in the city.

They've revised the landscaping. Emphasis is on 73<sup>rd</sup> to serve as space for staff.

The design intent is to make the support bar and station house tie together and contrast with the apparatus bay.

The station house has a bite out of it on 73<sup>rd</sup> to engage with the street.

The public art, at 73<sup>rd</sup> and Greenwood, consists of a series of stacked stone blocks, sandwiched between are cast glass pieces with LED lights. When the alarm goes off the colors go from blue/green to orange/red to signify a response mode.

The project is solidly in the range of silver LEED certification, but they may achieve gold.

Fire stations do not meet the pedestrian zone requirements; they have to get a Type V City Council Action. They also are departing from two zoning requirements: street level transparency requirements (due to grade) and the height of first floor non-residential uses requires 13', but 12' is proposed to meet the budget.



Rendering of Proposed Fire Station 21

Construction is slated to start on April 2010.

### Commissioners' Questions and Comments

*I'm concerned about this 73<sup>rd</sup> Street wall Transparency might not be possible, but are there other things you could do?*

We can't meet transparency requirements, but in terms of articulating more, we were trying to add art elements to that area, but budget limitations prevented us from doing this. Hopefully, the landscaping plan here will mitigate some impacts. Low level deciduous plantings and street trees will be installed on 73<sup>rd</sup>.

*Are you looking at any non-deciduous in the plan?*

Just some evergreen ground cover.

*As far as our support for the items needed to get concessions from City Council, I support the elimination of transparency requirement. The 13' height limit is arbitrary.*

*Is it only a budget limitation in meeting the 13'?*

For the most part, yes.

*These are important public buildings and the budgets are too tight.*

*I see the project meeting the intent of the city's transparency rules. The glimpses into the apparatus, significant green zones and all of these elements add to the purposes of having transparency requirements. The ceilings are an important part of the project. It seems like you are keeping the details reigned in, which you have to do.*

*Does the support bar have 12' ceilings?*

Yes

*I support the changes requested from the City Council. When I look at this elevation, I see the wood wrapping the building and brick of the apparatus bay and I think it should be consolidated in terms of two materials.*

We looked at this, but we felt that we needed a third material (wood) although we're looking to go away from the wood, but something in similar terms of colors.

*I recommend some evergreen plantings and perhaps also some vertical elements. I'd also like to see the planting list for future projects.*

*I appreciate that the artwork will be a strong element. It's not active, but it has personality or response that will be a nice asset for the neighborhood.*

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April 2, 2009

**Project:** **Seattle Children's Hospital Alley Vacation**

**Phase:** Public Benefit

**Last Reviewed:** March 19, 2009

**Presenters:** David W. Neal, AIA, Zimmer-Gunsel-Frasca Partnership  
John Keegan, Davis Wright Tremaine, LLP  
Todd Johnson, Seattle Childrens Hospital

**Attendees:** Scott Osterhage, Seneca Group  
Desiree Leigh, Seattle Children's Hospital  
Robert Shrosporee, Site Workshop  
Allyn Stellmacher, ZGF  
Lisa Reitzes, Seattle Childrens Hospital  
Peter Steinbrueck, Steinbrueck Urban Strategies

Time: 2 hours

(170)

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## **ACTION**

The Design Commission thanks the Seattle Children's street vacation project team for the presentation of the Children's Laurelon Street Vacation and denies approval of the public benefit package unanimously.

While the Commission applauds the sustainability measures and the extent to which the project team has looked far beyond the campus in providing amenities in the framework of the master plan, the Commission does not see the presented public benefit package as clear enough to approve.

The Commission is in agreement that a reduced number of public benefit items would be acceptable, but that more detailed information and documentation is necessary in order to approve the public benefit package. The Commission would like to see the following six items included in the public benefit package:

1. A pedestrian and bicycle connection across the Hartmann property to the Burke-Gilman Trail.
2. A plaza and street amenities on Sand Point Way NE, including wide sidewalks, landscaping, signage, lighting, furniture, weather protection, and street accessible bicycle, coffee, and gift shops.
3. Enhanced public transit/Children's shuttle center on Sand Point Way NE.
4. \$2 million for City of Seattle bike and pedestrian fund.
5. A plaza and street amenities on 40<sup>th</sup> Ave. NE, including wide sidewalks, street trees, landscaping, furniture, and signage.
6. Pocket garden at corner of 40<sup>th</sup> Ave NE and NE 45<sup>th</sup> St.

More information should be provided on items 1, 2, 5, and 6 at the next meeting. The Commission would like to see a brief graphic presentation and diagrammatic material that includes specificity on dimensions, materials, etc. Commissioners ask that the project team provide a breakdown of the public benefits into the four phases of the Master Plan.

## **Presentation**

Foundation for the need is that Children's Hospital is very strained to accommodate the needs of the sick children. Go through the items listed on the introduction page of the presentation.

Refer to the Public Benefit Matrix on the second slide of the presentation.

Comprehensive transportation plan objectives:

30% daytime SOV rate target by 2028; reduce 30-40% of net new pm peak hour trips  
 Reduce 5-10% of delay through Intelligence Transportation Systems (ITE)  
 Significantly increase bicycling and walking

Improvements:

Pedestrian-bicycle connection across Hartmann property to the Burke-Gilman Trail  
 Plaza and street amenities on Sand Point Way NE; wide sidewalks, landscaping, signage, lighting, furniture, weather protection, street accessible bicycle, coffee, and gift shops  
 Streetscape plan  
 Enhanced public transit/Children's shuttle center on Sand Point Way NE

Matrix on Mobility/Transportation Improvements shows the improvements for Sand Point Way/40<sup>th</sup> Ave. It shows whether the proposals neutral, positive or negative relative to public benefits.

Above and beyond what's required, the public benefits are:

Partnered with Metro to reach 7000 households in NE Seattle  
 Maps  
 Free-ride tickets  
 Prizes and incentives

Open Space and Pedestrian Porosity Benefits:

Plaza and street amenities on 40<sup>th</sup> Ave. NE: wide sidewalks, street trees, landscaping, furniture and signage  
 Terrace garden on Laurelon Terrace with mature landscaping and art visible to Sand Point Way  
 Pocket garden at corner of 40<sup>th</sup> Ave. NE and NE 45<sup>th</sup> Street  
 Laurelon Terrace: 47% of lot area in open space  
     o 52,414 SF at grade  
     o 82,734 SF accessible rooftop

They showed photos of public art, many of which are part of an art walk that is publicly accessible. Children's is looking to expand the art offerings on site.

136 affordable units on the Laurelon Site. As a mitigation effort, they seek to replace those units beyond the 136 units by partnering with a housing entity.

This is not a typical vacation or a typical client. Served on the council for 10 years and reviewed street vacations, also works with Children's at the planning level. This is a master plan, not a design plan, so that is one of the main

reasons for the lack of specificity. Task is to determine the discreet public benefits that are tied to the impact of the street vacation. This project goes well beyond any contribution in total of a private development or even a typical institutional development. You don't have to consider every benefit listed in the presentation. However, Children's was listing the benefits to the public in the hope that the commission could assist in defining the benefits best tied to the street vacation. Clearly the Burke Gillman trail extension is a clear public and measurable at this time. In terms of urban morphology, you have to see the benefit to the street condition along Sand Point Way, which isn't pedestrian friendly and it will change the urban morphology of the area. Second, the 2 million for



**Artist Rendering of Streetscape**

bike and pedestrian improvements, we can't say what they are, but we want to see a public process to determine those improvements. Those two benefits in my estimation are more than significant enough to provide public benefit worthy of the street vacation.

## Public Comments

Beverly Barnett, SDOT

Discussion is good, similar to what we've discussed at the staff level. The City Council requires a specific benefit in exchange for a street vacation. In terms of specificity, trust is not really a part of my vocabulary. I think in terms of accountability. If there isn't a snapshot of the plans, we need more detail with a clear articulation of public benefits. We can go a step beyond where you're at in terms of specific details.

Scott Ringgold, DPD

Much of the MIMP describes now that you will only have the full open space only upon the final completion of the project. Most of the amenities are part and parcel with the master plan, it's mushy in a comprehensive and holistic way. Affordable housing, bicycle and pedestrian master plan, and open space improvements are all good efforts but need to be better defined.

## Commissioners' Questions and Comments

*Do you have a graphic that shows the open spaces, pedestrian connections and other amenities that are publicly accessible?*

*There is not a lot of detail in terms of the open space design or specific design elements to allow for meaningful comment.*

*What we need is a plan, wayfinding system and where the public and private spaces intersect. We need that kind of information to determine if the public will actually use the space.*

*I question whether people would access those rooftop spaces if you weren't already going to Children's for a specific purpose.*

It's at the conceptual phase, but we are exploring having inviting and grand staircase entrances to the rooftop open spaces.

*How would people connect from the opposite side of the hospital to the Sand Point Way NE?*

There is a pedestrian connection that allows for shorter pedestrian routes between these two areas.

*I think one of the reasons why Seattle put in place the Major Institution Master Plan (MIMP) process is to show integrated and whole systems. A pedestrian circulation plan is needed.*

*I think one of the most tangible assets of what you presented is the transportation master plan, which is tremendously progressive.*

It's as specific as possible at this point, but also there are areas that are well defined in terms of locations such as the buffers and the pocket parks.

*In terms of the artwork, as you develop more plans in the future for artwork, it needs to be more cohesive rather than just dropping in objects. I'm a little bit wondering whether you are rising to the level you should be.*

There are some examples of having great art collections, such as Swedish Hospital, and we have some of that, but not on that level. Having an artist on board could have benefit.

*The six points that you introduced, the livability and vitality points, I think they are excellent categories. You showed some great examples that you've pursued in these categories. I would imagine they will be categories in the master plan. However, the lack of graphics is limiting our ability to review it. Diagrammatic plans should be provided. Also, you're selling yourself short on the sustainability efforts, which are tremendous.*

*I am really struggling to understand how the roof garden along Sandpoint Way would be a clear public open space benefit for a couple of reasons. It's approximately 50' above ground. Perhaps the public benefit package shouldn't be tied to the rooftop open space.*

*As part of the master plan, they want to create new pathways and trails through the campus to be used by the community.*

*We want to see the public street (Sand Point Way) and the benefits that occur in the public realm. The lack of details, elevations and sections make it difficult.*

*Last time, did you have a diagram that shows the buffers?*

*Yes.*

*How will you get people from the street level up to the rooftop gardens.*

*Unclear at this point.*

*I feel completely unready to decide if the public benefits are being met. Is there a way to hone in on the public benefits that you can provide whole-heartedly to the public?*

*We have to keep in mind that there is proportionality relative to what they are taking away from the city. It's a loop road that provides no benefit to the public once the condominiums are removed.*

*It feels not too clear. It's not that I don't want to approve the street vacation, but I don't want to set a poor precedent.*

*The street vacation is about 40,000 square feet. You are paying fair market value for the property, plus about \$1.95 million for an acre.*

*I want to reiterate what Mary said, providing bikes and making progressive moves towards sustainable transportation is a significant public benefit, which is what I see as the strongest part of the public benefit.*

*In spirit, we believe in what we're doing, but when I look at the public benefit packages that we've reviewed, there is huge potential, but it lacks quantifiable measures. We need accountability and a way to track progress. The mapping system and signage needs more detail.*

*I want to know which improvements are truly public and which are quasi-public.*

*Diagrams are crucial in tying the improvements to the language of the presentation in terms of public benefits.*

*Two levels of the public benefit discussion, one in terms of where and another in terms of what details it involves. We need some guidance about those regulatory mechanisms to address that issue.*

*Details are important, such as the transit waiting areas, which are not clear at this time. It's difficult for us to determine the value of these details. A map or system diagram with dots and arrows, urban design symbols, is needed.*

*My inclination is that the information we need is already here, but we may have had to dig more than we needed to. The public benefits far outweigh the street vacation.*

*The City Council will take up the street vacation during the MIMP process, there will not be any design work done after that time.*

*The Burke Gillman connection, connection to the Hartman property, pocket garden, amenities along Sand Point Way and the enhanced public transit/children's shuttle center on Sand Point Way (something is missing here).*