

APPROVED
MINUTES OF THE MEETING

Ed Murray
Mayor

Diane Sugimura
Director, DPD

Marshall Foster
Planning Director, DPD

Osama Quotah, Chair

Shannon Loew, Vice Chair

Bernie Alonzo

Brodie Bain

Lee Copeland

Thaddeus Egging

Megan Groth

Martin Regge

Ellen Sollod

Ross Tilghman

Michael Jenkins
Director

Valerie Kinast
Coordinator

Nicolas Welch
Planner

Joan Nieman
Administrative Staff

May 15, 2014

Convened 8:30 am

Adjourned 3:00 pm

Projects Reviewed

Waterfront – Overall Program

North Precinct

Commissioners Present

Osama Quotah, Chair

Shannon Loew, Vice Chair

Bernie Alonzo

Brodie Bain

Lee Copeland

Thaddeus Egging

Megan Groth

Ellen Sollod

Commissioners Excused

Martin Regge

Ross Tilghman

Staff Present

Michael Jenkins

Nicolas Welch

Joan Nieman

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May 15, 2014
1:00 – 3:00pm

Project: North Precinct
Phase: Pre-design
Previous reviews: none

Presenters:	David Kunselman	FAS
	Andy Ishizaki	FAS
	Duncan Thieme	SRG Partnership
	Lt. Lesley Cordner	SPD
	Dennis Haskell	SRG Partnership
	Keasa Jones	SRG Partnership
Attendees:	Dove Alberg	FAS
	Jennifer Devore	CBO
	Michael Fernandes	FAS
	Hillary Hamilton	FAS
	Jason Huff	Office of Arts & Culture
	Joy Jacobson	FAS-ADA
	Candice Livingston	CBO
	Sandra Mallory	OSE
	Julie Moore	FAS
	Scott Murase	Murase Associates
	Brad Neudorfer	Lydig Construction
	Terri Simmons	FAS-ADA
	Nancy Stachey	FAS
Mark Tilbe	Murase Associates	

Recusals and Disclosures

There were no recusals or disclosures.

Purpose of Review

The purpose of this meeting was to review the pre-design of the North Precinct Police Station. This is the first time the Design Commission has reviewed this project.

Summary of Proposal

The Department of Finance and Administrative Services (FAS) is proposing to build a new North Precinct Police Station at N 130th St and Aurora Ave N. The existing North Precinct, designed in 1984 to accommodate 154 staff and now home to 254, is located on College Way N just south of N Northgate Way. The station is severely overcrowded and cannot expand on its current site.

The proposed design includes a three-story, 106,082 sf building and 241,019 sf of parking in a three-story structure on a 176,300 sf site bounded by Aurora Ave N, N 130th St, Stone Ave N, and N 128th St. The project site is comprised of three parcels, zoned commercial C1-65, and located in the Bitter Lake Urban Village. The station is set to open in 2018.

Summary of Presentation

David Kunselman introduced the project, noted its long history, and gave the presentation dated May 15, 2014, available on the [Design Commission website](#). Andy Ishizaki showed a map of Seattle's five precincts, sectors, and beats. The original North Precinct was designed in 1984 does not meet current facility standards. In 1995, SPD conducted a long-range planning study that assessed each precinct's site needs. In 2002, a study considered expanding on the current site and, due to space constraints, determined that was unfeasible. A subsequent site selection process led to the acquisition at N 130th St and Aurora Ave N.

Mr. Ishizaki outlined a few of the criteria that informed that site selection process, including good access to I-5 and both north-south and east-west arterials. The three-parcel site occupies an entire block. Mr. Kunselman noted that property acquisition is not yet complete. FAS hopes to begin construction in 2017 and open the station in 2018. The project team conducted an initial public meeting at Bitter Lake Community Center following the site announcement in 2013. Mr. Kunselman also referred to a market analysis FAS competed at Council's behest to assess opportunities for housing or other uses collocated at the site. Results of that analysis will be presented at the concept design review. The current proposal includes only SPD uses.

Lt. Lesley Cordner of the Seattle Police Department explained current operations at the existing North Precinct and described a day in the life of a police officer, including how officers arrive, vehicle usage, and shift changeover. Given how much gear officers are required to carry daily, storage is a significant issue at the current precinct. The former community room at the existing North Precinct had to be converted to locker room space several years ago. Unlike fire stations, officers do not wait to be dispatched; they are out on their beat on patrol. Lt. Cordner also explained the requirements for other officer responsibilities, including writing reports, cataloguing evidence, and securing detainees. There has been and will continue to be an increase in training requirements as a result of the Department's ongoing Department of Justice settlement, particularly around the use of force. The staffing and diversity of the police force has increased in the last several decades.

Keasa Jones showed images from other precincts in Seattle and the U.S. and shared lessons from each. The feeling of security was a recurring theme in the team's conversations with officers. The Salt Lake City public safety facility has a prominent glass façade and public space, though other façades are very opaque. The new Austin precinct had to expand soon after opening, highlighting the rising capacity needs of many cities. Several precincts in Los Angeles highlighted design opportunities for civic buildings. Visibility, secured spaces, artwork, and community space emerged from the precedent study as important considerations.

Duncan Thieme stated the concepts driving the team's design: safe, comfortable, proud/honor, sustainable, maintainable, scalable, and quality art and architecture. Of particular note, given current and projected population growth in the North Precinct, the station needs to accommodate a twenty-year timeline to 2038 without feeling empty in the present. Sustainability is a priority not only for environmental reasons but as a strategy for resilience and self-reliance as well. The team is targeting LEED Platinum, aims to be net zero by 2020, and is investigating the Living Building Challenge.

Dennis Haskell described the site conditions, the predominantly auto-oriented development surrounding the site on Aurora Ave N, and the residential zones in Bitter Lake and Haller Lake beyond that. In images of the existing conditions, Mr. Haskell noted the lack of sidewalks on much of the

perimeter and the RapidRide bus stop on Aurora Ave N. Rick Zieve showed the proposed massing for the project. Keasa Jones described how officers' shifts would circulate through the building.

Summary of Discussion

The Commission's discussion focused on massing, program, art and architecture, and sustainability. Given the early stage of the project, there was interest in seeing and discussing alternative massing schemes. While they recognized the substantial parking required for the project, the Commissioners were nevertheless keen to see other options for distributing it to support a civic presence on Aurora Ave N. Commissioners encouraged the design team to think broadly and creatively about how parking could support a civic gesture and to reduce as much as possible the amount of visitor parking provided in order to prioritize the southern portion of the site as a public and civic space. There was consensus that, parking aside, the team must strive to "erode" the fortress feeling of the building by incorporating more permeability and transparency and perhaps moving the proposed courtyard towards N 130th St to "dissolve" the box. There was discussion with the design team about strategies to modulate the expansive 600-foot façade on N 130th St given the security imperative not to create hiding places.

The Commission commended the design team's decision to relocate the training to the west side of the third floor, thereby creating the aforementioned courtyard and providing views for staff and officers. They encouraged the team to pursue additional such moves that create more permeability in the massing and taller architecture along the major frontages. Given the lessons learned from other precincts about capacity challenges and the size of North Precinct, the Commission hopes the courtyard remains in the design even as the precinct grows. There was interest in seeing more programmatic detail for the south side of the site and concern among some that, given the location of plazas on N 130th and Aurora Ave N and parking at Stone Ave N and N 128th St, the east side of the site could feel ignored.

Art integration, though challenging, is a priority for the Commission. The expectation is that artwork not be added as screening or inserted into a plaza but thoroughly integrated into the design in an authentic way. The Commissioners appreciated learning that the design team is looking to engage with an artist early.

Likewise the Commissioners were encouraged by the proposed sustainability strategy, particularly the ambitious rooftop PV array. However, the Commission has a keen interest in seeing specific and attainable measures that maximize the building's performance and sustainability, especially if features other than solar PV can provide more value for the City. The Commission was also encouraged by the team's discussion of celebrating stormwater through reuse, runnels, and other features. Given the extent of impervious surface and vertical drop at this site, the Commissioners expect the design team will continue pushing the envelope here.

Agency Comments

none

Public Comments

None

Action

The Design Commission thanked the project team for a clear presentation of the pre-design of the new North Precinct Police Station at N 130th St and Aurora Ave N. The Commission appreciated seeing the project at pre-design and having an opportunity to provide ideas and recommendations at an early stage in the design process. The Commission also valued being involved in the consultant selection process.

With a vote of 8 to 0, the Design Commission approved the pre-design of North Precinct with the following recommendations:

Urban Design and Siting

1. Develop strategies for creating a **civic experience at all edges of the building**.
 - a. Continue to erode the feeling of a fortress, recognizing the security features required for the project.
 - b. Ensure that the scale and space of the proposed plaza along Aurora Ave N feels very civic, and consider ways to address the edge at N 128th St as a smaller public gesture.
 - c. Avoid including surface parking as part of the civic experience of the project. Reduce as much as possible the amount of surface parking required.
 - d. The Commission appreciates the courtyard gesture. Consider other options for its location within the site, perhaps moving it to the northern edge as a way to further erode the fortress feeling without limiting the security requirements the team must uphold.
 - e. Consider how landscape and setbacks can be a critical strategy for strengthening the civic experience along N 130th St.
2. Create an authentic civic gesture at the corner of N 130th St and Aurora Ave N. At the next meeting, present **alternative schemes for massing and program** and explore how they might achieve this goal.
3. Discuss clearly the **benefits and costs of two precincts in one facility** in the future as opposed to two sites given the concern that this strategy could limit opportunities SPD's opportunities for neighborhood engagement.
4. Explore more opportunities for **linkages into the community** and for leveraging the existing neighborhood plan.
5. Identify the optimal location for the **public and community spaces** relative to the noise on Aurora Ave N.

Program

6. Ensure that the program adequately considers the **south side of the building** along N 128th St, especially if that ends up becoming the functional public entrance for the precinct. At the next review, explain the programmatic elements here in more detail with an eye to continuing and stepping down the larger civic gestures along N 130th St and Aurora Ave N.
7. Continue to **push the sectional shifts** you have begun by redistributing program and creating a courtyard space with the goal of creating views and opportunities for staff and officers to connect to their community.

8. Ensure that artwork is not inserted or dropped into the plaza but instead **thoroughly integrated** into the design.

Sustainability and Building Performance

9. Recognize how intensive the **stormwater strategy** must be given the scale of this site. Provide more detail on how stormwater will be handled and explore opportunities to make this visible, public, celebrated, and educational.
10. Make a **clear and actionable commitment to sustainability**. While the Commission applauds the trajectory presented relative to sustainability, focus on what is possible and achievable for this project and commit to those actions. Continue drawing from the petals of the Living Building Challenge.

The Commission anticipates reviewing the project next at the concept design phase.