



APPROVED MINUTES OF THE MEETING

Seattle Light Rail Review Panel

David Cutler
Planning Commission, LRRP Chair

Catherine Benotto
Planning Commission

Shannon Loew
Design Commission

Seth Geiser
Design Commission

Brad Khouri
Planning Commission

Laurel Kunkler
Design Commission

Perri Howard
Public Art Advisory Committee

Kevin McDonald
Planning Commission

Tom Nelson
Design Commission, acting Chair

Julie Parrett
Design Commission/
Public Art Advisory Committee

Osama Quotah
Design Commission

Ellen Sollod
Design Commission/
Public Art Advisory Committee

Debbie Harris
Design Commission

Valerie Kinast
Coordinator

May 16, 2013

Convened 8:30 am
Adjourned 12:00 pm

Project Reviewed

Northgate Light Rail Station 60%

Panel Members Present

David Cutler, Co-Chair
Julie Bassuk, Co-Chair
Catherine Benotto
Seth Geiser
Debbie Harris
Perri Howard
Brad Khouri
Laurel Kunkler
Shannon Loew
Kevin McDonald
Tom Nelson
Julie Parrett
Ellen Sollod

Incoming Panel Members

Bernie Alonzo

Excused Panel Members

Osama Quotah
Kevin McDonald

Staff Present

Valerie Kinast
Joan Nieman

May 16, 2013	Project:	Northgate Light Rail Station
	Phase:	60% Design
	Last Reviewed:	Nov 2011, 30% passed; Nov 2012, 60% denied; Dec 2012 60% Guideway passed
	Presenters:	Ron Endlich, Sound Transit David Hewitt, Hewitt Architects Barb Swift, Swift and Company Barbara Luecke, Sound Transit Gordon Clowers, DPD Michael James, SDOT Gary Prince, KC Metro TOD Sally Turner, KC Metro Transit
	Attendees:	Debora Ashland, Sound Transit Ryan Bianchi, Sound Transit Cris Bruch, Artist Leah Ephrem, Hewitt Architects Bob Nichols, Sound Transit Mary Ann Peters, Artist Rachel Smith, Govt. Relations, Sound Transit Melinda Sneed, Public Art Coordinator, Sound Transit Thomas Whittemore, Dept. of Neighborhoods Fred Wilhelm, Sound Transit

Time: 8:30 am – 12:00 pm

Recusals and Disclosures

Panel member Quotah was recused
Panel member Benotto works on unrelated project/s for King Co
Panel member Cutler works on unrelated TOD for King Co
Panel member Khouri works on unrelated projects for King Co
Panel member Nelson works on unrelated TOD for King Co
Panel member Alonzo working on UW contract related to University Light Rail Station

Purpose of Review

The Light Rail Review Panel met to receive a briefing by staff from Sound Transit, DPD, SDOT, and King Co. Metro on the Northgate Transit Oriented Development plans and to review the 60% design of the Northgate Light Rail Station. At a previous meeting the LRRP had denied approval of an earlier 60% design with the request that the project team further develop and return for review of the guideway, station, parking garage and plaza, and art. Revised guideway 60% plans were reviewed and received approval of the LRRP on December 20, 2012. This review was of the station, but not of the parking garage or art.

(Note: the north plaza is part of the station and was covered in the presentation and review. Condition 3 speaks to north plaza design feedback).

Summary of Proposal

Sound Transit's elevated Northgate Light Rail Station is the last stop on a 4.3 mile extension of light rail, and will be the northern interim terminus until light rail is extended further north. The Northgate Station will open in 2021; Link light rail service will be extended to Lynnwood by 2023. Managers from Sound Transit, King County Metro and the City of Seattle intend to fully integrate the inter-modal transit facilities, develop TOD, and achieve ridership goals during and after station construction. Sound Transit is negotiating to build a shared-use parking garage on the southwest corner of the Northgate Mall site, west of the existing shared-use garage, before station construction begins. Also, Sound Transit is studying and prioritizing opportunities to improve pedestrian and bicycle access in the immediate station area. Sound Transit has adjusted the design of the guideway and station to accommodate SDOT's proposed cycle track on 1st Ave NE and is contributing \$10 million, to be matched by the City, toward the construction of a pedestrian bridge over I-5 and other pedestrian and bike improvements in the station area. How the bridge connects to the station is yet to be determined and, in part, depends upon the bridge placement. At this point the station is being designed under the assumption the pedestrian bridge will connect at the mezzanine level at the south end of the station. The City (SDOT) is the lead on designing the I-5 bridge and finding the remaining funding to complete the construction of the bridge.

Summary of Presentation

Sound Transit, DPD, and King Co. Metro staff described the station context and integration. They explained the general plans for a parking garage on the south west corner of the Northgate mall property. The Urban Design Framework that is being completed for the station area was described.

The station designer, David Hewitt described the station design. Barbara Swift of Swift Co presented the open space design. Barbara Luecke of Sound Transit, and the two project artists Cris Bruch and Mary Ann Peters presented conceptual ideas for the art.

The presentations can be found on the Design Commission website where the minutes are located:

Summary of Discussion

The general tenor of the discussion was positive about the changes and progress that had made with the design. There were a few areas where information was not provided that will need to be brought to the LRRP for review, as noted in the action below. The discussion produced a number of recommendations for further development of the plans.

The conversation around the ground plane connectivity, form, and function covered integration of the various elements. Coordinating with the TOD plans and Urban Design Framework were seen as important. There was discussion about how pedestrian flow, transit movements, and facility functions can be accommodated within a lively public open space. The station was talked about as a gateway to the neighborhood because of its high visibility from the freeway.

Discussion of the station planning and form of the building started with praise for the refinements that had been made to the design. Panel members noted the logic and clear articulation of the buildings. The neutral color was viewed as a positive, and the addition of bright colors in places was felt to bring vitality to the buildings. Panel members agreed there was a need for further resolution in bringing the building parts together, being more deliberate with emphasis, and balancing the visual affect the whole. The panel discussed the art at the station, thinking about how it would work in conjunction with the architecture and elements of the plaza.

Agency Comments

None

Public Comments

None

Action

The Seattle Light Rail Review Panel thanked the project team and staff of multiple agencies for the presentations. They applauded the early, collaborative work to find synergies between the station and future development around the station. Moving the road on the east of the station to create a transit island met with much enthusiasm. Panel members were positive about the changes that had been made to the station design since the last review, noting simplification of the structures, and the logical progression up to the platform.

With a vote of 11 to 0 the Seattle Light Rail Review Panel unanimously approved the 60% design of the Northgate Light Rail Station with the following conditions and recommendations.

Conditions

1. The art of the station and in the public realm must be brought to the LRRP for review before 90% design. The review should also address the interior of the station as it relates to the art. The presentation should explain how art fits within a system of the various elements in the public realm, such as the bus shelters, ancillary spaces, echo resin wall etc.. The panel would like to see information on color and materials of the art and context. A site plan illustrating art locations should be provided to aid in understanding the overall art strategy.
2. The panel should be provided with information on how TOD planning is progressing and how the progress of station design integrates within the plans. If significant changes are made to the TOD that affect the station or public realm, the panel should be alerted and presented information on changes to station design in response.
3. Resolve design of the south wall of the north entry building to more elegantly transition the grade change between the upper plaza and 103rd. Pay mind to column and stairway placement.

Recommendations for the City of Seattle and WSDOT

1. Have the I-5 pedestrian and bike bridge reviewed by the LRRP. Hire an artist early and elicit input on the overall design decisions, not only specifically on art.
2. Provide the opportunity for the LRRP to comment on the cycle track plans.