



APPROVED

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING
June 5, 2008**

**Seattle
Design
Commission**

Convened: 8:30am
Adjourned: 3:00pm

Greg Nickels
Mayor

Karen Kiest
Chair

Tasha Atchison

Brendan Connolly

John Hoffman

Mary Johnston

Juanita LaFond

Dennis Ryan

Norie Sato

Darrell Vange

Darby Watson

Guillermo Romano
Executive Director

Valerie Kinast
Coordinator

Projects Reviewed

Streetcar Network
DPD Green Building Team
Northgate Urban Center Park
Councilmember Bruce Harrell

Design Commissioners Present

Karen Kiest, Chair
Tasha Atchison
Brendan Connolly
John Hoffman
Mary Johnston
Dennis Ryan
Norie Sato
Darrell Vange
Darby Watson

Staff Present

Guillermo Romano
Valerie Kinast
Tom Iurino
Ian Macek



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5 June 2008

Project: Streetcar Network

Phase: Design Update

Last Reviews:

Presenters: Ethan Melone, SDOT

Attendees: Henry Markus, TOD Advocate

Time: 1.0 hours

(SR169 /RS0606)

ACTION

The Commission unanimously supports the Streetcar Most Promising Routes planning effort, with the following comments:

- **Encourage exploring routes that provide service to South Downtown and West Seattle.**
- **Support establishing a systems approach to planning.**
- **Encourage implementing Tax Increment Financing, but recognize this would be a state issue.**
- **Recommend that planning efforts should fit into neighborhood plans, including thinking about integrating streetcar routes and HOV lanes.**
- **Appreciate planning for bicycle/streetcar interface and ask that bicycle issues continue to be addressed as planning moves forward.**
- **Encourage incorporating bicycle storage at platforms into later designs.**
- **Encourage using the Alaska Way Viaduct Replacement as an incentive to implement the plan.**

Disclosure: Commissioner Watson’s firm LMN has done work indirectly related to the streetcar project.

Project Presentation

Project Background

There are four lines that are currently under development through SDOT: Central Line, Fremont/Ballard Line, First Hill/Capitol Hill Line, and the University Line. Each of the routes will share the streetscape with bicycles and vehicles. One option is to serve the new lines from the South Lake Union (SLU) maintenance facility. Expansion of the current maintenance facility is possible to aid in line extensions. Multi-modal connections can be incorporated at King Street Station, the ferry terminals, First Hill/Capitol Hill, and with the new RapidRide lines from West Seattle and Ballard.

The Central Line will go from Seattle Center through the International District to the



Figure 1: Streetcar Network

Central District at 23rd and Jackson. The line runs along 1st Ave, and is seen as a replacement to the Waterfront Line because there is not the demand for two lines a couple blocks apart. Having service run every six minutes along 1st and the ability to connect to Seattle Center makes 1st Ave a better alternative than along the waterfront. Service along Jackson would run every 12 minutes. This will be a high ridership route that will operate 18hrs per day.

The Fremont/Ballard Line would extend from the SLU Line and terminate at the Ballard Commons. This route is able to connect the Ballard and Fremont neighborhoods with South Lake Union. This route is able to utilize the Fremont Bridge and improvements made there. This route is more cost effective than an Interbay route and takes the same amount of time.

The First Hill/Capitol Hill route will run between the two neighborhoods and will connect to the Central Line.

The University Line extends the SLU Line and runs along the current Metro Route 70. The streetcar will touch south campus and go up University Ave. This route will connect the University life sciences campuses. It was determined that replacing Route 70 rather than continuing the streetcar down south campus to Montlake and the proposed light rail station made the most sense. The streetcar line would run within two blocks of the proposed light rail station at Brooklyn though.

Center platforms are recommended for the Central Line. The streetcar will travel along the center of the street, or in the left travel lane. This was determined to be the best alternative due to bicyclists being accustomed to traveling in the right lane. Travel lanes shift toward the curbs taking away some parking spaces. This type maintains street parking (except at platforms) and bicycle lanes. Along 1st Ave portions of the center turn lane would be used for the streetcar, with bus operations moving onto another street. This will improve overall mass transit service along 1st Ave.

At an early stage there are well-defined funding sources to fund the project in full. Various sources and strategies were given during the presentation. A 2012 completion date was given.

Commissioners' Comments

- What is the status of the Pioneer Square Trolley Barn?
 - The Pioneer Square Trolley Barn development is currently stalled due to cost increases and market conditions for the private development partner. There is no current plan for replacement and SDOT envisions no action in the near term.
- How does bus routing interface with the streetcar routes?
- Where the streetcar is replacing bus routes that streetcar takes, are you working with Metro at termini?
 - Seattle Center and King Street Station are opportunities and in Fremont and Ballard. Too early to really tell, but it's being considered.

- The total cost for all four lines is high. What is the city's ability to fulfill the full scope of this project?
 - One line is a Sound Transit project. Possibility to do two of the other lines at once, but it would be a very aggressive approach. May move incrementally through the construction, but does not mean it is a 25 year overall period. Momentum grows with success of the lines.
- Because viaduct has to be replaced, the city is looking at a regional solution. Is the streetcar part of the solution?
 - Streetcars carry a lot of people in cities where there are complete lines, such as Portland, Toronto, and San Francisco. There are scenarios in the Urban Mobility Plan that include streetcar routes.
- Property along Leary is zoned industrial. Why invest in an area that is not particularly pedestrian oriented now?
 - SLU and the Central Line have local service. The Fremont/Ballard Line would be a combination of local and express service. Leary would become an express area with only a few stops.
- West Seattle has a tremendous history of streetcar lines. What is being done in this area?
 - A RapidRide route is being developed. A streetcar has been looked at for West Seattle, but it would be a light rail project due to the technical issues. Retrofitting the West Seattle bridge would be extremely costly. Looked into the streetcar as a feeder into the RapidRide, but it didn't resonate, and wasn't functional.
- The design and engineering have been done with SLU line. Is there any ability to build upon this? It seems there would be uniformity in the entire system, concerning platforms, etc. Is that included in the cost estimates?
- LID advantageous to property owners, but Tax Increment Financing (TIF) would enable entity to capture the value increment over time.
 - The team wants a value capture method; LID is what is available now.
- How does this fit into the neighborhood plans?
 - Fits with transportation plans and with neighborhood plans.
- Will there be a 'streetcar only' lane during peak hours?
 - There may be signal priority or other mechanisms. Haven't worked to that level of detail yet.
- 1st Ave makes more sense as the streetcar route.
- Appreciate accommodating bicycles, and encourage accommodating bicycle storage at platforms as the design moves forward.
- Use viaduct timing to promote Fremont/Ballard line as tools to get around city

5 June 2008

Project: DPD Green Building Team

Phase: Discussion

Last Reviews: 9-21-2006

Presenters: Lucia Athens, DPD Green Building Team

Attendees:

Time: 1.0 hours

(SR220 /RS)

ACTION

The Commission thanks Lucia for her final report on the Green Building Team and for the reassurance that the Green Building Team will continue its important work.

The Commission also made the following comments:

- **Support the Green Building Capital title initiative.**
- **Recognize the role that individuals have in energy use and conservation as well as the importance of individual choices concerning sustainability.**
- **Applaud the Priority Green project. Recognize that as with other city programs it depends on city staffing in order to succeed.**
- **Support a larger system-wide approach to reinforce the idea that the city needs to focus on infrastructure issues.**
- **Partnerships are good indicators of the next generation of green thinking. Support partnerships not only with other jurisdictions, institutions and agencies, but also with suppliers and manufacturers.**
- **Recognize the importance of addressing waste when talking about sustainability.**
- **Encourage an emphasis on using and developing locally produced materials.**
- **Look forward to updates on the new Green Building Team Taskforce as it develops.**
- **Recognize the incredible impact of the Green Factor, and that an audit of this program and all programs is beneficial.**

Discussion

The Design Commission is a great venue to take about sustainability issues and incorporate them into project review. The Mayor announced at State of the City speech in February his Green Building Capital Initiative, as in capital of North America, rather than capital dollars. He wants to maintain and increase the leadership role that Seattle has. City Green Building has been compiling an inventory of leading Green Building actions in other cities, and will be presenting these for consideration by the Mayor's Office. The following is a short list:

- **Green Building Capital Initiative, as in capital of North America, rather than capital dollars. Want to increase the leadership role that Seattle has.**
- **Compile an inventory of Green Building initiatives that have been happening in other areas and which can be used in Seattle.**
- **Make LEED Gold a standard over LEED Silver for CIP Project.**
- **Policy requirement for space the city leases must be in a LEED building.**
- **Increase the energy efficiency of existing buildings. Require the city's existing buildings of a certain size to go through LEED for Existing Buildings or be**

- retrofitted to meet Energy Star requirements. The largest city-owned building is the Seattle Municipal Tower, which has been undergoing energy and water upgrades.
- Adopt a policy that City Project managers be LEED accredited professionals.
 - Regular reporting at capital cabinet on the status of projects falling under sustainability policies.
 - The National Trust for Historic Preservation wants to have a collaborative effort with Seattle that looks at the energy efficiency of historic buildings. Could be used to distinguish Seattle as a leader.
 - DPD Operations and City Green Building are getting ready to pilot a new program: Priority Green. One must meet a minimum number of points on a green feature checklist to get into the program. A team is then assigned to work with the design team from start to finish. This gives staff the chance to work with projects that are trying to integrate innovative measures and may need help.
 - Fleets and Facilities Department is currently creating a sustainability plan for existing building management and upgrades.

Commissioners' Comments

- There is a disconnect among agencies that could be improved. The DC wants to bring sustainability to the forefront in every project, but not always successful. The DC should be considered the public arm of what the Green Team does.
- Concern over Seattle Municipal Tower, is work being done to determine if it can be LEED?
 - Lucia believes that FFD is scoping that right now with help from their consultant.
- Is it possible to measure the performance of existing buildings?
 - Energy is the biggest focus. Have to figure out what is the right baseline. There are specific percentage targets that have been set in 2030 document.
- Is it possible to do LEED on a floor by floor basis or by systems?
 - LEED for commercial interiors standards were used as departments moved into the Seattle Municipal Tower. It is also important to look at overall occupant behavior.
- Are things being discussed or initiated by green building program for existing buildings?
 - Yes, for historic buildings mostly. OSE is leading initiative for existing buildings. For City-owned buildings, feel that FFD or department that owns the buildings should be championing that, along with the utilities.
- Is the Green Team momentum threatened?
 - Don't feel it is. A strategic planning process was done last year. The program was trying to be all things to all people. Since then the marketplace has matured. Pulled back from broad educational programming, and one-on-one technical assistance for homeowners. Focusing on multi-family and large impact development projects. Want to use time to its best advantage. Green thinking has been infused and is being integrated into all areas of the department. The overall program is

solid and looking at ways to integrate into all facets of the business the city conducts.

- From a city initiative point of view it would be great to see the boundaries stretched. Composting as an integral part of pick-up, cities do need to look at larger systems and tying green policies into them.
 - The city could use a dedicated team to investigate infrastructure or large systems issues. There are huge opportunities in these areas.
- Partnerships are good indicators of the next generation. Project teams used to be individual silos doing what they know. The DC learned through the fire stations that the city can form partnerships concerning purchasing. Does the city have any type of purchasing project?
 - The city did have a green purchasing project; King County has an amazing project. The City still has a green commodities team that would be a good connection. Contact Shirli Axelrod of SPU.
- Does carbon footprint of larger systems impact policy making by council or staff?
 - Think it should, part of the challenge is the quantification issue. Not sure how it will be played out. How do you quantify where development is happening? The State is also looking at this topic, and don't know if their decisions will supersede local policies. City is coordinating with King County on how to quantify and mitigate.
- Not sure if measuring greenhouse gases should be part of SEPA process. Understand the play in the development community and giving them guidelines on the value so they can understand it immediately. Some aren't sure what the value is or don't understand.
- There is a disconnect during project review. Frustrated with civic square project and focusing on LEED goals and worry about the slippage from platinum to gold.
- It is a city/private investment. The challenge is forcing it through the departments.
- The project is client driven. The design should be more amazing considering the team that is working on the project. The city needs to have the ability to address teams that aren't performing to city standards.
- Can you speak about the private sector?
 - The following are areas that involve the private sector:
 - Priority Green permit service
 - Green Lab/Historic Trust collaboration
 - New taskforce on green building established by the Mayor's Office. Stakeholder group with two subgroups, one for existing buildings (Office of Sustainability) and one for new buildings (DPD).
 - Existing Buildings Group will look at mandatory energy audits for existing buildings, could tie into green collar jobs.
 - Possible to create a requirement for homes over a certain square footage must provide a certain percentage of their energy onsite.
 - Must consider more performance based energy codes.
- It can be hard for projects to find local materials. Is there anything the city could do to facilitate green building as far as manufacturing and providing local materials?

- There is more awareness and dialog. Sustainable Connections provide a spreadsheet to determine what is available. The office of Economic Development is also tasked by the Mayor's Office to look at how to more businesses dealing with sustainability and the 'clean-tech' sector can be encouraged.
- Has any audit of the Green Factor taken place?
 - Yes, work is being done to audit it.
 - Revising the green factor worksheet.

5 June 2008

Project: Commission Business

Time: 1.5 hours

Interview Update and Succession

A discussion about the interview process and the succession of Commissioners took place. By unanimous decision the positions of Chair and vice Chair for the next year were assigned. Mary Johnston will be the Commission's recommendation to the Mayor and Council as the new Design Commission Chair, while Brendan Connolly will act as the Commission Vice-Chair. The positions will start this fall.

Action Items

- A. Submit Timesheets
- B. Minutes of May 1, 2008 and May 15, 2008
 - Approved

Discussion Items

- C. 40th Anniversary Update
- D. Announcements
- E. Outside Commitments
- F. Summary of visit to PLUNC

5 June 2008

Project: Northgate Urban Center Park

Phase: Concept Design

Last Reviews:

Presenters: T. Frick McNamara, Mithun

Kim Baldwin, Department of Parks & Recreation

Karen Janosky, Mithun

Lauren Atcheson, Mithun

Attendees: Gary Gibbons, Department of Parks & Recreation

Time: 1.0 hours

(SR169 /RS0605)

ACTION

The Commission unanimously approves conceptual design with the following comments and recommendations:

- **Appreciate the programming diagram, but encourage including the greater nine-block context.**
- **The Commission felt the three diagrams expressed similar levels of formality and encourage a bolder range of design when moving to proposed design concepts.**
- **Commend the additional outreach and attention to diverse populations.**
- **Appreciate adding artist to design team, and encourage close collaboration.**
- **Support phasing ideas and non-traditional presentation venues. Encourage expanding the cultural outreach to the presenting of diagrams.**
- **Make sure the balance is tipped towards providing a green space given the largely impermeable nature of the surrounding Northgate area.**
- **Recognize the budget concerns and encourage a phasing plan that creates a park that has useable and functional space as the phases are completed. However, recommends caution regarding not to letting the phasing of the project drive the design.**
- **The Commission looks forward to schematic design**

Recusal: Commissioner Connolly works for the consultant team firm, Mithun.

Project Presentation

Project Background

The current site is 3.7 acres of asphalt paving, providing a contrast between the natural and built environment. The surrounding area boasts diverse demographics due to the surrounding housing types and development.

The scope for the park has been developed through a community outreach process. Community meetings were used to determine the neighborhood's vision. In addition, the team ran a cultural audit process that met with groups as well as individuals along the street to see where the community stood on different issues. One area was sustainability and how the park could be an example for the city and region. It was fitting for the neighborhood to incorporate sustainable measures into the park. The team also looked at connections in the neighborhood and how they integrate with the new park. Another issue

was history and interpreting the history of the site from pre-settlement, to the influence of Native Americans, the arrival of logging operations, and the influence of the mall development. It was discovered that there was a historic spring and a creek that moved through the site, which plays an important role in the conceptual design.

A passport exercise was used to assess images to determine what was important for the community. The information was put into a matrix to help shape the vision, along with the feedback from the cultural audit. It was determined that a park was desired that would be activated with community, evolve with time, provide more green space, be interactive, rejuvenating, and restful, and tell the heritage of the neighborhood.

The team displayed three concept alternatives to receive feedback from the community, as well as looked at five park precedents from the region, which integrate urban and natural environments. The three concepts are Blue Streak, Quiet Center, and Overlook.

Blue Streak

This scheme plays off the hydrological history of the site. Integrating the site's history into the design will help to ground the park within its physical and social context, imbuing the park with a 'heritage' quality while creating a setting for the stories of tomorrow. A water element celebrates the historic location of the spring, with a water runnel paralleling the central path and lawn edge; this mimics the movement of the creek through the site. The runnel will interplay with rain and pedestrian movement through the site. Skate elements are dispersed in a linear street style layout with areas allowing for various skill and age levels. A park pavilion, restrooms, basketball court and sculpted play area are also incorporated into the design.

Quiet Center

The 'quiet center' option creates a respite, within urban edges that respond to the diverse qualities of each street. Both 5th and 112th receive heavy vehicular traffic creating a noise level and sense of energy quite different than the serene nature of 3rd and the north edge. In addition, solar access is optimized along the center and northern edge of the site. Although the visibility of water is more subtle throughout the park, this scheme collects the historic spring water in a constructed wetland area at the southeast corner. This



Figure 2: Blue Streak Concept



Figure 3: Quiet Center Concept



Figure 4: Overlook Concept

wetland optimizes the ecological function of the site while creating visual relief to the busy, paved street. This design incorporates a boardwalk, active recreation areas, restroom and vendor facilities, and a performance pavilion.

Overlook

The existing site has some significant grade differentials between the street and site interior. This scheme recognizes the grades as an opportunity creating overlooks within the park. The structure and steps on the western edge provide space for seating and performing adjacent to the lawn. This scheme devotes the most space to uninterrupted lawn. The design also includes a boardwalk, water accent, skating, and bocce ball court.

Commissioners' Comments

- There are components common to each of the schemes, and appreciate looking to the community for these. It was nice to know the context and background of the community's vision. How can the DC support you today?
- Tell the team what they think is important, such as park form
- Would appreciate seeing the nine-block area and where people are coming from.
- The team has gone quickly to these three options. Is the park welcoming people from the region?
- Appreciate looking north into the park and having the water component. The concepts are compositionally similar, and not as distinct as they could have been.
 - The composition has to do to insulating from the noise and taking advantage of the sun.
- Appreciate the process. Did you mention that the cost of the elements would be discussed at the next community meeting?
 - The budget and if phasing should occur will be discussed.
- It would be nice to have the summary diagram at the beginning.
 - The summary diagram does not fit into each of the concepts, so shown at the end.
- The scale and opportunity to experience the park in such an urban area is unique. Might want to take advantage of the site dimensions when developing the park.
- This will be one of the only green spaces in the area. Tipping the balance to the green as much as possible is important. Part of the site to be loose, and let it be loose for a while and phase in more development as funding becomes available.
 - The project is a balancing act with materials and programming due to the diverse users.
- What will the base \$2.5 million develop? Agree with the phasing plan.
 - Determining how the form of the base schemes can still exist until funding is available to do Phase II. Develop the park in a way that is true to the overall master plan and is achievable.
- The two end seams are orthogonal. The only other geometric variation is the grand arch. Has an organic curvilinear form been explored?
 - The geometric form works well from phasing standpoint. The design looks rigid in diagram, but will not seem that way at the ground plane. A benefit of the skate component is that the consultant is the same as at the Seattle Center skatepark, so looking at the two together.

5 June 2008

Project: Councilmember Bruce Harrell

Phase: Discussion

Last Reviews:

Presenters: Bruce Harrell, City Council

Attendees:

Time: 1.0 hours

(SR220 /RS)

ACTION

The Commission thanks Councilmember Harrell for coming to the Commission today. The dialog has been a good opportunity to review our mutual objectives and interests, which include projects like the possible city jail and its site selection, transportation and infrastructure improvements, and fire stations. The Commission encourages the Councilmember to reach out to them should their involvement be helpful.

Discussion

Councilmember Harrell is currently the Chair of the Energy and Technology Committee, Vice-Chair of Public Safety, Human Services, & Education, and also sits on the Housing & Economic Development Committee.

As requested by CM Harrell a clarification of roles and differences between the Planning Commission and the Design Commission was made. While the Planning Commission looks at citywide land use, zoning and long term planning issues the Design Commission spends only about a third of its time being briefed on long-term urban planning and design initiatives. It is mainly responsible for the review of CIP and specific projects, but in a citywide context. The DC serves as a design conscience on city projects, as well as providing guidance and recommendations to Mayor and the City Council on current issues that concern the City. Both Commissions can pick specific issues to consider. Another aspect of the DC work is street and alley vacations, unique objects in the ROW and skybridges. These are areas where the DC relates to the Design Review Board. Process, some examples and purview were discussed.

Councilmember Harrell stated that the new jail siting and design is a concern of the City Council. The Design Commission would not be involved in the site selection, but would be involved throughout the design. The City Council is currently determining whether a high-rise or low-rise facility should be built and is also dealing with the sensitive issue of its location, which will impact transportation costs, efficiencies of services provided, proximity to ancillary services and what other public safety facilities are in the pipe-line that could be incorporated into the same building or site.

Along the lines of maximizing sites, the Councilmember wondered if the Design Commission was looking at how facilities would be used in the future, using the fire stations as an example. Most first response calls are medical, and ten years from now firefighting may be very different with smaller vehicles. The DC recognized how time could determine the use of spaces on city facilities. The DC did propose the inclusion of a housing component into fire stations that shared similar conditions as the ones where it

had been proposed in other cities. The appropriateness of mixing public uses with fire station operations, while meeting objectives on the sites to maximize the investments, was not determined to be appropriate. However, the Commission did not look at what future needs may be or propose the definition of such programs, recognizing that while the alternative should be analyzed, the DC purview is limited to the design of the facilities and not the definition of their use, their programmatic needs nor their viability or funding.

The DC has been acting as a transportation committee for the city in review of projects such as the streetcar network, light rail, monorail, viaduct and other SDOT projects throughout the city. The Commission and Councilmember Harrell agree on the multi-modal opportunity that lies in King Street Station. The Councilmember did have concerns on the extent of the streetcar network and wondered why areas such as South Seattle and West Seattle weren't being served. However, this concern is out of the purview of the Design Commission. Another concern of the Councilmember was the North Aurora street improvement project, and the Aurora Merchants Association (AMA). He stated that the AMA is not happy with the design of the improvements. The DC recognizes their concerns and has heard public comments from the AMA at their meetings. The Commission is looking at the long-term viability of the street and how it will function into the future.

The Commission also informed the Councilmember of other projects they are involved in such as the Civic Square, South Lake Union, transportation projects, fire stations, parks, reservoir coverings, pedestrian/bicycle/vehicle interface, and the Viaduct.