



APPROVED MINUTES OF THE MEETING

Mike McGinn
Mayor

Diane Sugimura
Director, DPD

Marshall Foster
Planning Director, DPD

Julie Bassuk
Chair

Seth Geiser

Laurel Kunkler

Shannon Loew

Tom Nelson

Julie Parrett

Osama Quotah

Ellen Sollod

Debbie Harris

Valerie Kinast
Coordinator

Tom Iurino
Senior Staff

February 7, 2013

Convened 8:30am
Adjourned 4:30pm

Projects Reviewed

North Transfer Station Street Vacation
Westin Building Skybridge

Commissioners Present

Julie Bassuk, Chair
Julie Parrett (excused 8:30am-10:00am)
Seth Geiser
Debbie Harris (excused 8:30am-8:45am)
Lolly Kunkler
Tom Nelson
Osama Quotah (excused 1:30pm-4:30pm)
Ellen Sollod

Unconfirmed Commissioners Present

Martin Regge

Commissioners Excused

Shannon Loew



**Department of Planning
and Development**
700 5th Avenue, Suite 2000
PO Box 34019
Seattle, WA 98124-4019

TEL 206-615-1349
FAX 206-233-7883

Staff Present

Valerie Kinast
Tom Iurino



February 27, 2013

Project: **Westin Building Skybridge**

Phase: Briefing

Last Reviewed: N/A

Presenters: Jack McCullough, McCullough Hill, PS
Lance Forgey, Westin Building
Brad Smith, Sclater Partners

Attendees: Angela Steele, SDOT
Amy Gray, SDOT
Roxanne Glick, Community Member

Time: 1:30pm-3:00pm

Summary of Project Presentation

The owners of the Westin Building, a unique building mostly used as a data network distribution center, seek a new skybridge permit for an existing skybridge originally permitted 30 years ago. The skybridge runs across an alley bounded by 5th Ave., 6th Ave., Virginia St. and Lenora St.; it connects the Westin Building and its parking garage. When the skybridge was originally permitted, no public benefit was required. In 2000, the Westin Building added utility infrastructure to the top of the skybridge.

The skybridge is the primary access point for people to enter the Westin Building from the parking garage. In 2011, there was an average of 330-350 daily crossings into the Westin Building across the bridge. If the skybridge was not available, patrons who park in the garage would exit through the vehicle entry/exit point of the garage and traverse approximately 425 feet on a mostly uncovered sidewalk with a slight incline, along Fifth Avenue and Virginia Street, to the building entrance on the corner of Sixth Avenue and Virginia Street. The skybridge is the accessible route into the building from the parking garage.

The Westin Building proposed as public benefit: four electric car charging stations in the garage and digital signage on 5th Ave. at the entrance to the parking garage directing drivers to the charging stations; an awning six feet deep that wraps the corner at 5th Ave. and Virginia St. and transitions seamlessly into the existing awning on 5th Ave.; wayfinding signage at 5th Ave. and Virginia St.; and a stainless steel trellis covered by Boston ivy and evergreen pyracantha planting on Virginia St.

The commissioners' discussion centered on: the amount of the public benefit offered, the restrictions of the site, and the potential to explore public benefit off site; the quality of the trellis and associated planting and the streetscape at 5th and Virginia; and the extent to which the car charging stations were public benefit.

AGENCY & PUBLIC COMMENT

Angela Steel, SDOT, provided comment representing the Seattle's interdepartmental Skybridge Review Committee. The SRC had reviewed and recommended approval of the new permit for the existing skybridge with a public benefit mitigation package.

SUMMARY (by Harris)

The Seattle Design Commission, by a vote of 0-7, did not recommend the SDOT Director approve the Skybridge Permit for the existing Westin Building skybridge located at the south end of the alley that runs parallel between 5th Ave and 6th Ave, north of Virginia St and south of Lenora St. and connects the Westin Building and the parking garage to the west. The commission had the following recommendations:

- Revise the public benefit package. Remove the electric car charging stations from the package as they are not a public benefit. Due to the physical constraints of the site, consider proposing other public benefits that are off site yet nearby.
- Further refine the design of the corner of 5th Ave. and Virginia. While the building awning is a welcome addition, the streetscape still feels cold and dead. Consider other improvements to enhance this corner.
- Refine the design of the planting wall on Virginia St. and make it respond more to the building's architecture.

Commissioners Bassuk, Parrett, Nelson, Kunkler, Harris, Geiser, and Sollod voted no because the public benefit package was not adequate.

Commissioner Regge did not vote because he was not yet confirmed.