Seattle Light Rail Review Panel
APPROVED MEETING MINUTES
November 20, 2014

Roosevelt Station Art

David Cutler
Planning Commission, Co-Chair

Osama Quotah
Design Commission, Chair

Bernie Alonzo
Design Commission

Brodie Bain
Design Commission

Lee Copeland
Design Commission

Jay Deguchi
Public Art Advisory Committee

Thaddeus Egging
Design Commission

Jerry Garcia
Arts Commission

Grant Hromas
Design Commission

Brad Khouri
Planning Commission

Shannon Loew
Design Commission

Marj Press
Planning Commission

Martin Regge
Design Commission

Ellen Sollod
Design Commission

Ross Tilghman
Design Commission

Michael Jenkins
Design Commission Director

Valerie Kinast
Coordinator

Nicolas Welch
Planner

Joan Nieman
Administrative Staff

Panel Members Present

David Cutler, Chair
Bernie Alonzo
Lee Copeland
Thaddeus Egging
Jerry Garcia
Grant Hromas
Shannon Loew
Ellen Sollod
Ross Tilghman

Panel Members Excused

Brodie Bain
Jay Deguchi
Brad Khouri
Marj Press
Osama Quotah
Martin Regge

Project Description

As part of the Northgate Link Extension, Sound Transit is constructing a below-grade light rail station in the Roosevelt Urban Village along the west side of 12th Ave NE with entrances at NE 65th St and NE 67th St. The station will include plazas, seating, bicycle parking, and public art. The station design also includes improvements and a vehicle drop-off zone along NE 66th St, a designated Green Street included in the Roosevelt Neighborhood Streetscape Concept Plan approved through Joint Director's Rule DPD8-2013 and SDOT03-2013.

The proposed public art at the station includes interior and exterior pieces by Luca Buvoli and R & R Studios, respectively. Luca Buvoli proposes a sequence of animation-influenced installations depicting runners and cyclists at both the south and north entries and along the east and west walls at the platform level. Roberto Behar and Rosario Marquardt of R & R Studios propose a roughly 48-foot-high "Building Blocks" sculpture in the plaza at the southwest corner of 12th Ave NE and NE 66th St.

Meeting Summary

As part of its 60% design approval in April 2012, the Light Rail Review Panel (LRRP) requested that Sound Transit return for another review of the artwork before the design development phase. The LRRP took two separate actions on the interior and exterior artwork.

The LRRP unanimously approved the 60% design of Luca Buvoli's proposed artwork. Panel members encouraged more three-dimensionality in the artwork at the platform level.

With a vote of 6 to 3, the LRRP approved the 60% design of R & R Studios' proposed sculpture; the dissenting panel members focused primarily on the "living room quality" of the artists' previous work, which they found lacking in the "Building Blocks" piece.

Recusals and Disclosures

Osama Quotah was recused. David Cutler disclosed that his employer, GGLO, has been involved in station design.

November 20, 2014

10:00 am – 12:00 pm

Phase

60% Design — art only

Previous Reviews

May 19, 2011

April 5, 2012

Project Team Present

Debora Ashland
Sound Transit

Roberto Behar
R & R Studios

Luca Buvoli
artist

Kristin Hoffman
Sound Transit

Barbara Luecke
Sound Transit

Rosario Marquardt
R & R Studios

Tom Marsden
Sound Transit

Christine Scharrer
Sound Transit

Barbara Swift
Swift Company

Attendees

Lyle Bicknell
DPD

Ruri Yampolski
Office of Arts and Culture

Summary of Presentation

Debora Ashland introduced the outline for today's presentation, which is available on the Commission website. When the LRRP approved the 60% design for the station, they requested that the team return for a review of the artwork prior to the design development phase. Ms. Ashland said the artists' work has been evolving over the last year.

Kristin Hoffman showed an overview of Northgate Link, the Roosevelt Station location, and a summary of the Roosevelt rezone that occurred in 2012.

Site plan for Roosevelt Station with the location of R & R Studios' "Building Blocks" piece identified in red.

Christine Scharrer described the station design and identified updates since the LRRP's April 2012 review. Two slides showed the south and north entries in detail. She noted that the design team has updated the plazas at NE 66th St in coordination with the artists. Elevations and sections showed the façades of the two entries and circulation throughout the station.

Barbara Luecke introduced the artists, Luca Buvoli and R & R Studios, and gave an update on their work. Ms. Luecke noted that at the previous review Mr. Buvoli showed four pieces, but due to construction and budget constraints only two are currently proposed.

Luca Buvoli showed images of his previous work and early sketches of his concept for the Roosevelt Station south entry. Mr. Buvoli expressed that he wants to integrate his work with the architecture of the station. He showed elevations, perspectives, and an animation of the following installations:

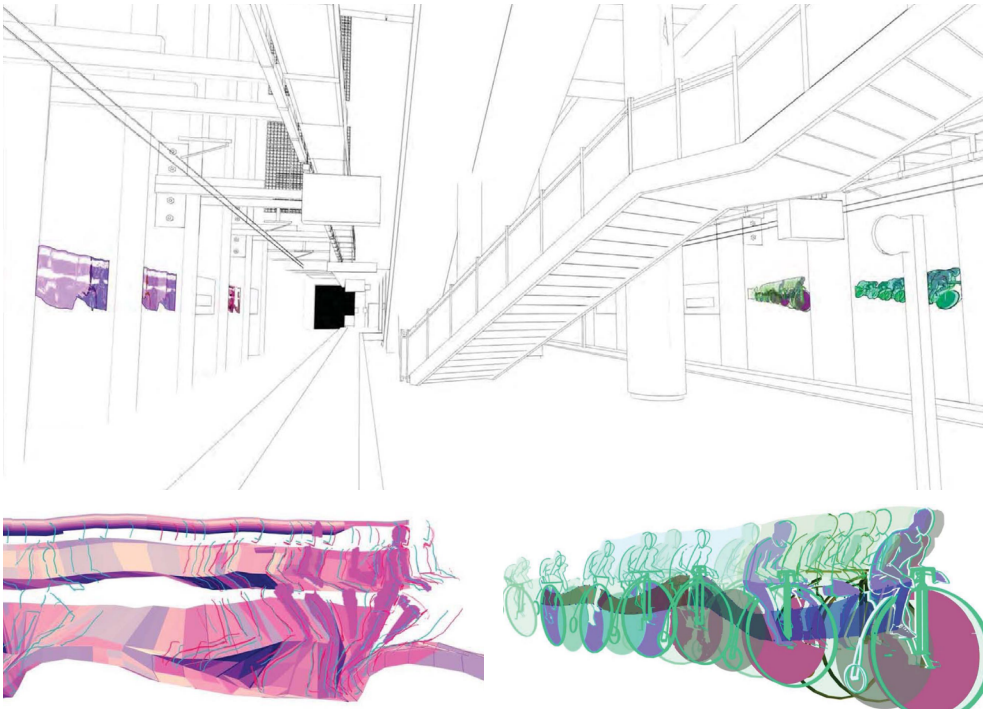
- "Bikers" at the south entry
- "Runners" at the north entry
- "Bikers" and "Runners" at the west and east walls at the platform level, respectively

Roberto Behar and Rosario Marquardt then showed images of their previous work and the evolution of their proposed "Building Blocks" sculpture for the corner of NE 66th St and 12th Ave NE.

Agency Comments
none

Public Comments
none

Summary of Discussion
The LRRP responded positively to Luca Buvoli's work. The discussion centered on how Mr. Buvoli could take his concept even further, particularly at the platform level. The panel members found Mr. Buvoli's artwork most successful where it breaks away from the plane of the architecture and, accordingly, encouraged him to increase that quality along the platform. The LRRP suggested exploiting the rhythm of the pilasters, gathering all pieces in a large vertical piece in one central bay of the platform wall, or creating more three-dimensionality so that the artwork is glimpsed from the mezzanine and descending the escalator. Given the cavernous space of the platform level, the LRRP believed this artwork should be a significant piece that demands attention.



Details of Luca Buvoli's proposed artwork for the east and west walls of the station platform.

The LRRP also responded very positively to the images Roberto Behar and Rosario Marquardt showed of their previous work. However, there was consensus that the strongest elements of that work — a sense of ownership, a "living room" quality, a playful narrative that invites action and activity — are less evident in "Building Blocks." While panel members appreciated the colorful materials and found the space well articulated, they recommended revising the seating location and reconsidering the siting of certain walls and planting in order to create a more welcoming plaza. With NE 66th St designated a pedestrian-oriented Green Street, the LRRP saw the plaza as a potential gateway entrance to that street. That said, some panel members doubted that people would be drawn here given the northeast exposure and the distance from the plaza to the station entrances.

Action
The LRRP thanked Sound Transit for returning with a presentation of the artwork and a general station overview in advance of the design development review of Roosevelt Station. The LRRP took two separate actions on the artwork.

Interior Artwork
With a vote of 9 to 0, the Light Rail Review Panel approved the schematic design of Luca Buvoli's proposed interior artwork for Roosevelt Station with the following comments and recommendations:

1. Ensure that the exuberant quality and playful appropriation of architectural material does not diminish as the artwork moves further into budgeting.
2. The most successful moments are where artwork jumps off the building itself and becomes three-dimensional. Incorporate that quality into the artwork at the platform level.
3. Consider how lighting, shade, and shadow can inform the articulation of and animate the artwork.

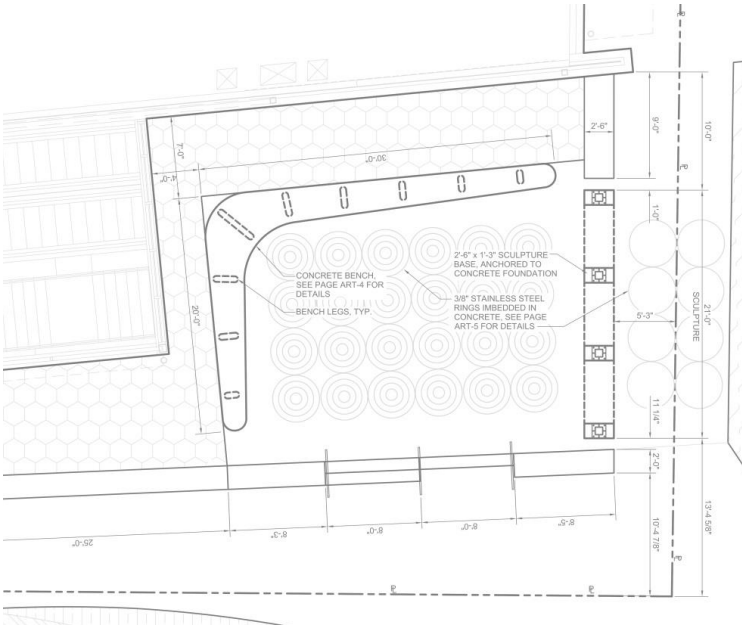
4. At the platform level, explore breaking the rhythm of the pilasters in order to accentuate the artwork. You could achieve this by expanding the artwork verticality or altering the the three-dimensional articulation and rotation of the planes of material. Explore ways to use the full depth of the pilaster.

Elevation of "Bikers" installation along the wall at the platform level.

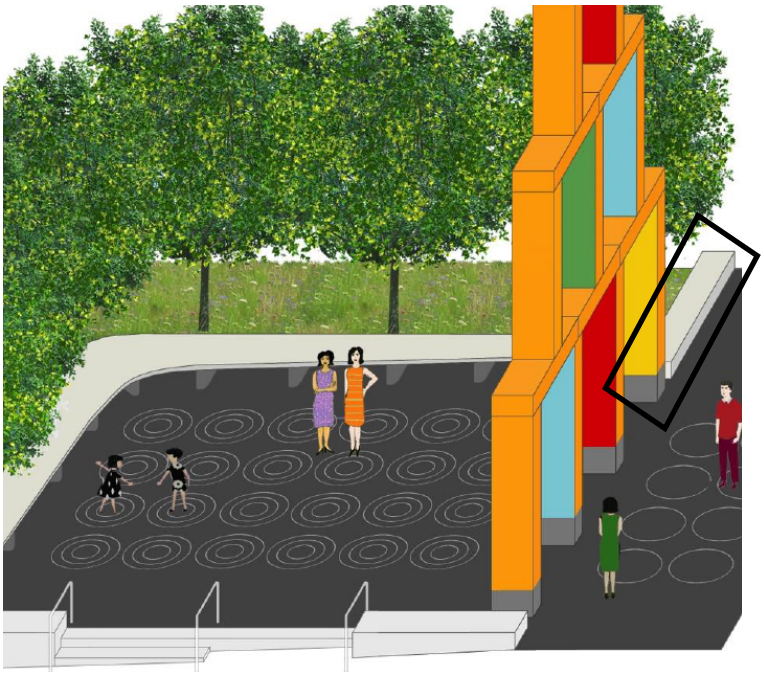
Exterior Artwork

With a vote of 6 to 3, the Light Rail Review panel approved the schematic design of R & R Studios' proposed exterior artwork for Roosevelt Station with the following comments and recommendations:

1. We appreciate the surprising play of colors, the playfulness of the concept, and the idea of a room on the corner.
2. Try to incorporate into this work the sense of ownership and the living room quality present in your previous work. Those aspects may be missing here because the artwork is a gateway piece, whereas in other work the public space is the foreground and the artwork its backdrop.
3. Consider extending the line of trees further around the perimeter of the building to define and provide a backdrop for the plaza and sculpture. Consider relocating the seating towards the center of the plaza and closer to the street so that it becomes more of an object that occupies the space and more formally addresses both the eastern plaza entry and the drop-off area. This could help address the LRRP's concern that the plaza feels incidental in scale relative to the rest of the station.
4. Continue to explore providing seating with an obvious bench as proposed or, alternatively, as an organic shape that accommodates seating.
5. Explore how geometry can create a more coherent space. Currently the relationship of rectilinear vertical elements and circles on the ground plane feels problematic.
6. Reexamine the design and/or scale of the feet of the sculpture, which appear too small given the scale of the sculpture resting on them.
7. Examine whether the concrete bench on NE 66th St at the northwest corner of the plaza is necessary and, if not, consider removing it or replacing it with planting to create a more welcoming edge.



The LRRP discussed the mix of rectilinear and circular geometry in the plaza.



The LRRP recommended reconsidering the need for the seat wall above.

The reasons for the votes against were as follows:

David Cutler: I love your previous work. This is almost there but not quite to that level. It would benefit from more exploration on the continuity or congruity of the pieces.

Shannon Loew: I have a similar rationale. I appreciate the narrative and social aspect of your other work, and this piece is not yet initiating either of those aspects.

Ellen Sollod: I agree with David and Shannon. I am looking forward to the next iteration and hope to see a better sense of place that is welcoming and inviting.