

## Swedish First Hill Alley Vacation

**Edward B. Murray**

Mayor

**Diane Sugimura**

Interim Director, OPCD

**Shannon Loew**, Chair

**Ross Tilghman**, Vice Chair

**Brodie Bain**

**Lee Copeland**

**Ben de Rubertis**

**Thaddeus Egging**

**Rachel Gleeson**

**Laura Haddad**

**Theo Lim**

**John Savo**

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**Commissioners Present**

Shannon Loew, Chair  
Ross Tilghman, Vice Chair  
Lee Copeland  
Ben de Rubertis  
Thaddeus Egging  
Rachel Gleeson  
Laura Haddad  
Theo Lim  
John Savo

**Commissioners Excused**

Brodie Bain

**Project Description**

Swedish Hospital (Swedish) is proposing to vacate an alley in the block bounded by Boren, Minor, Columbia and Cherry. The vacation would allow the development of a new medical office tower and central support facility for Swedish First Hill Campus. The proposed development would include below grade parking, truck loading and kitchens to serve the entire campus, along with medical offices, laboratories and related building functions. Specifics of the proposed development include:

- A 240 ft (15 story) building on the east half of the block, stepping down to 90 ft (5 story) on the west half of the block;
- Street level café, lobby, and open space on Minor Ave;
- Patient drop off and pick up within the building;
- Approximately 700-800 stalls of below grade parking;
- Below grade loading docks with a service tunnel connection across Minor;
- Skybridge from the second level across Minor .

Swedish's Major Institution Master Plan (MIMP) identifies this block for a medical office, building, central support services, and parking. Approved by City Council in 2005, the MIMP states that a Standing Advisory Committee (SAC) will advise on the proposal. While projects developed under a MIMP are not subject to the City's Design Review process, City staff review the projects for MIMP compliance.

DPD and SDOT recently completed the First Hill Public Realm Action Plan. Their work built on the 1998 Neighborhood Plan and an in-depth park planning analysis completed in 2005.

**Meeting Summary**

This was the Seattle Design Commission's (SDC) third review of Swedish's proposed public benefit package. On November 19th, 2015, the SDC did not vote on the public benefit package, directing the development team to address several issues before the SDC could make a final recommendation on the public benefit package. At this meeting, the SDC voted to approve the public benefit package for the Swedish First Hill vacation with several conditions and recommendations.

**Recusals and Disclosures**

Brodie Bain recused herself, as she is an employee of Perkins+Will, the architecture firm designing this project.

**March 17, 2016**

**9:00 - 12:00 pm**

### Type

Vacation

### Phase

Public Benefit

### Previous Reviews

[11/19/15](#), [10/01/15](#), [9/03/15](#),  
[7/16/15](#)

### Project Team Present

**Mark Brands**

Siteworkshop

**Brad Hinthorne**

Perkins + Will

### Attendees

**Beverly Barnett**

SDOT

**Marjorie Brown**

Perkins + Will

**Dan Dixon**

Swedish First Hill

**Tammy Frederick**

SDOT

**Amy Gray**

SDOT

**Alex Hudson**

FHIA

**Chip Nevins**

SPR

**Eric Oliner**

Providence Health & Services

**Nancy Rogers**

Cairncross & Hempelmann

**Michele Sarlitto**

EA Engineering

**Maureen Sheehan**

DON

**Daria Supp**

Perkins + Will

**Aubrey Weeks**

SiteWorkshop

**Ruri Yampolsky**

Office of Arts & Culture

### Summary of Presentation

Mark Brands and Brad Hinthorne presented the public benefit package. Mark began by providing a summary of the vacation proposal as it relates to the overall vision for the Swedish First Hill Campus. Mark also highlighted their coordination with other city departments and agencies in order to ensure that the proposed benefit package can be implemented. The project team first addressed the following conditions provided at the Nov. 19th SDC meeting:

- First Hill Mile – Coordinating with SDOT and providing clarity on specific elements along the Mile
- Public Art – Providing more detail on how and where art will be integrated into the Frist Hill Mile
- First Hill Park – Providing detail about how the proposed \$500,000 will be used
- Boren Ave. Façade – Addressing how the façade treatment will activate and enhance the streetscape

The team then addressed the following remaining elements of the public benefit package:

- Boren & Minor Ave setbacks
- ROW improvements
- Pedestrian crossings

### First Hill Mile

The First Hill Mile is a proposed enhanced pedestrian loop located within the right-of-way (ROW) along Minor Ave, University St, Boylston Ave, Broadway, and James St. The proposal includes pedestrian safety measures, wayfinding, street furnishing, and landscaping throughout the Mile (See figures 2 & 3). Pedestrian safety measures will include curb bulbs, curb ramps, and traffic circles at specific street intersections along the active loop. Additional seating elements as well as a bicycle fix-it station will be located at the intersection of Boylston Ave and Seneca St. The proposal also includes replacing the sidewalk along Minor Ave between Madison and Marion St. as well as landscape improvements along Broadway between Columbia and Cherry St.

Wayfinding signs will be located outside of the ROW throughout the Mile loop, as recommended by SDOT. Wayfinding signs will consist of vertical steel elements, 6 feet in height, wrapped on three sides with an aluminum panel. The panel will orient pedestrians along the mile while also providing a description of the active loop as well as facts about the First Hill Community.



Figure 2: Proposed elements for the First Hill Mile

PUBLIC BENEFIT	DESCRIPTION	QUANTITY	CODE	MIMP
<b>1 - First Hill Mile</b>	<i>Sidewalk &amp; pedestrian crossing improvements</i>		None	None
	<i>Marion to Madison sidewalk &amp; plantings</i>	4,800 SF		
	<i>Minor &amp; Seneca curb bulbs, sidewalk, furnishings and plantings</i>	2,650 SF		
	<i>University &amp; Summit traffic circle</i>	925 SF		
	<i>Boylston &amp; Seneca curb bulbs, sidewalk, furnishings and plantings</i>	3,870 SF		
	<i>Boylston &amp; Spring traffic circle</i>	1,130 SF		
	<i>Boylston &amp; Marion curb bulbs and sidewalk</i>	2,715 SF		
	<i>Broadway Ave plantings</i>	3,960 SF		
	<i>Wayfinding signs</i>	11		
	<i>Street tree replacement</i>	39		
<b>2 - First Hill Park Contribution</b>	<i>Contribution toward improvements to First Hill Park</i>	Budget \$500,000	None	None
<b>3 - Public Art</b>	<i>Work with selected artists at identified locations in the ROW along the First Hill Mile</i>	Budget \$300,000	None	None
<b>4 - Minor Ave Voluntary Setback</b>	<i>Setback along the Minor Ave</i>	1,700 SF	None	None
<b>5 - Boren Ave Voluntary Setback</b>	<i>Setback along Boren Ave</i>	1,200 SF	None	None
<b>6 - Columbia St ROW Improvements</b>	<i>Expanded and enhanced pedestrian streetscape</i>	980 SF	None	None
<b>7 - Cherry St ROW Improvements</b>	<i>Expanded and enhanced pedestrian streetscape</i>	560 SF	None	None
<b>8 - Pedestrian Controlled Signal</b>	<i>Pedestrian controlled signal at Boren &amp; Cherry</i>	1	None	None
<b>9 - Pedestrian Controlled Signal</b>	<i>Pedestrian controlled signal at Minor &amp; James</i>	1	None	None

Figure 1: Proposed public benefit package

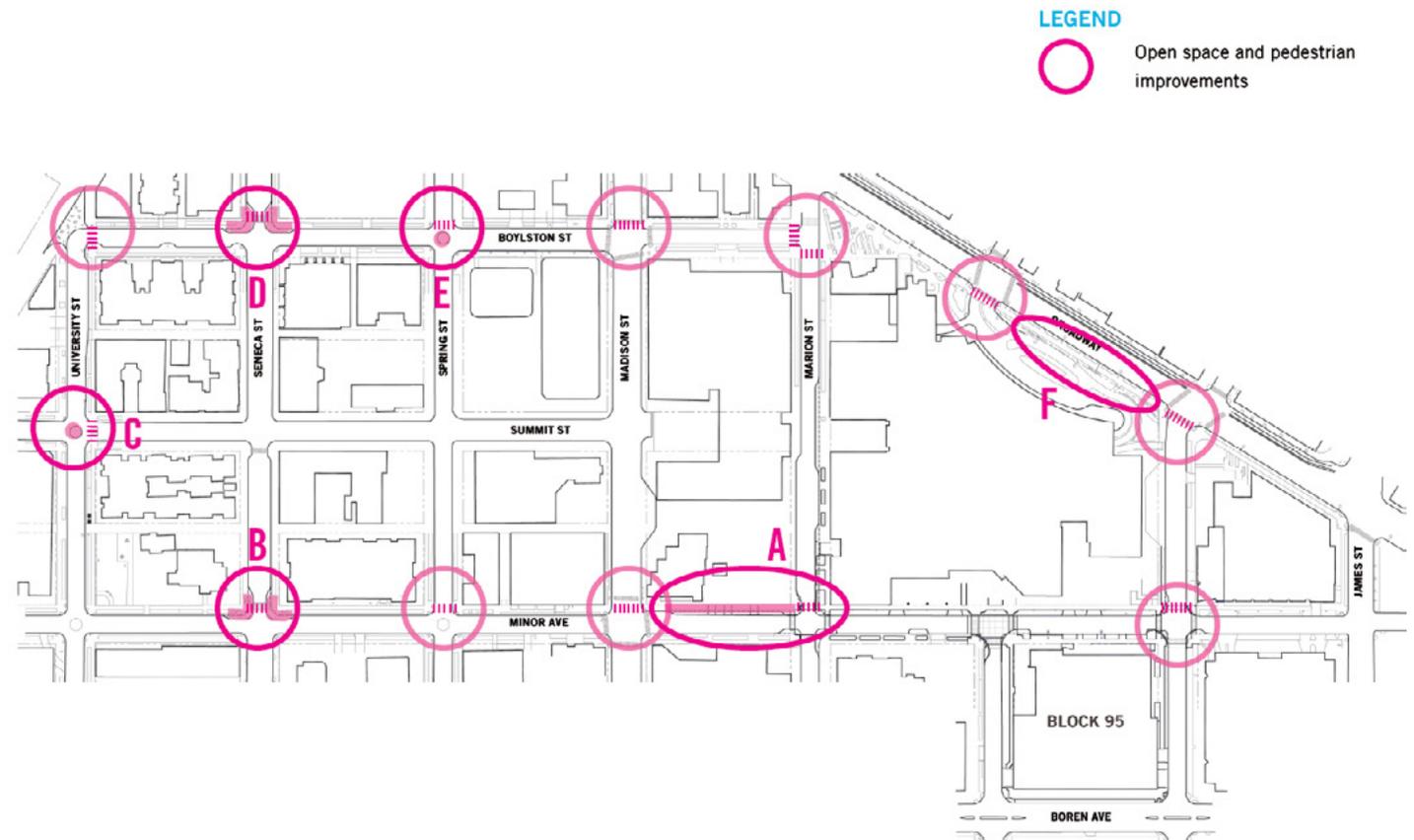


Figure 3: Proposed improvement locations along First Hill Mile

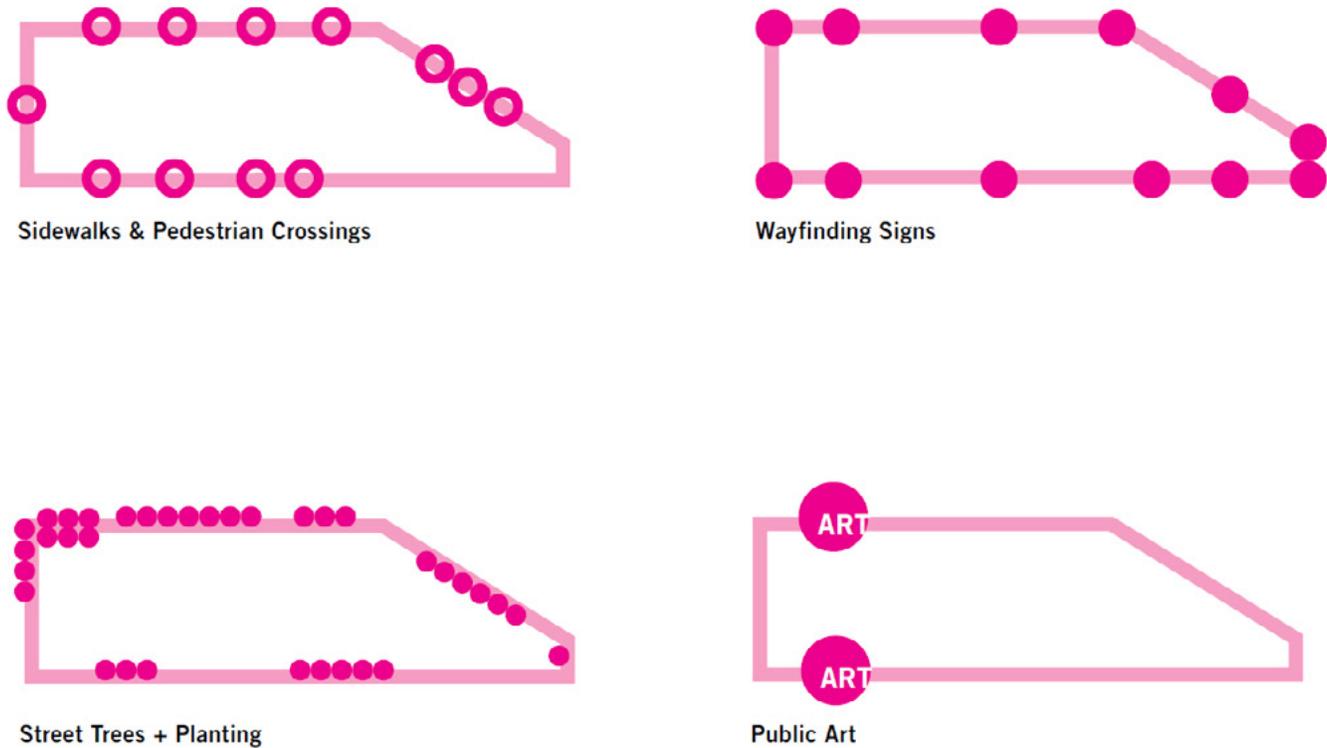


Figure 4: Proposed element locations along First Hill Mile

The proposal also includes the addition of 39 street trees and new planting strips through the First Hill Mile.

#### Public art

The project team has worked with 4Culture to develop the public art selection process. The project team has designated two locations for public art along Seneca St at Minor and Boylston Ave (See figure 4) and has allocated \$300,000, with \$150,000 per installation, for the program. Two artist teams were selected - Annie Han and Daniel Mihalyo of Lead Pencil Studio, and John Grade, for these commissions. Neither Lead Pencil Studio nor John Grade have provided an artwork proposal. Because a specific artwork proposal was not provided during today's meeting, the project team has requested the Swedish Public Art Advisory Committee (SPAAC), which will include representatives from Swedish, First Hill Neighborhood, design team, and 4Culture, review and approve the artwork program.

#### First Hill Park

First Hill Park, located at 1201 University St, was designed and constructed in the 1970's. Both SPR and the First Hill community believe the current design no longer meets community needs. The First Hill Improvement Association (FHIA) was awarded a small and simple grant from the Department of Neighborhoods (DON), which has allowed them to initiate community outreach and concept designs for the park. To implement the concept designs, Swedish has proposed a \$500,000 capital contribution to upgrade the park. SPR will be involved in all aspects of the proposed upgrades.

#### Boren Ave. façade

The design of the Boren Ave façade has been updated to address concerns raised by the Commission during its urban design merit review. Originally conceived of to include a prominent art feature, the redesign includes extensive use of vegetation. The first two floors of the building now include greenwalls, metal screens, cast glass, and seating areas. Cast glass will be illuminated from within to provide a unique experience throughout the day and nighttime. Cast-in-place concrete seating will be integrated into the façade. The upper floors will include vision glass, precast concrete, perforated metal, and a series of architectural louvers for building ventilation. The ground plane includes a 12 foot landscaped buffer between Boren Ave and the sidewalk that will include a series of street trees and low lying shrubs. Another 5 foot landscaped buffer will be located between the façade and sidewalk. See figure 5 for more detail.



Figure 5: Proposed Boren facade

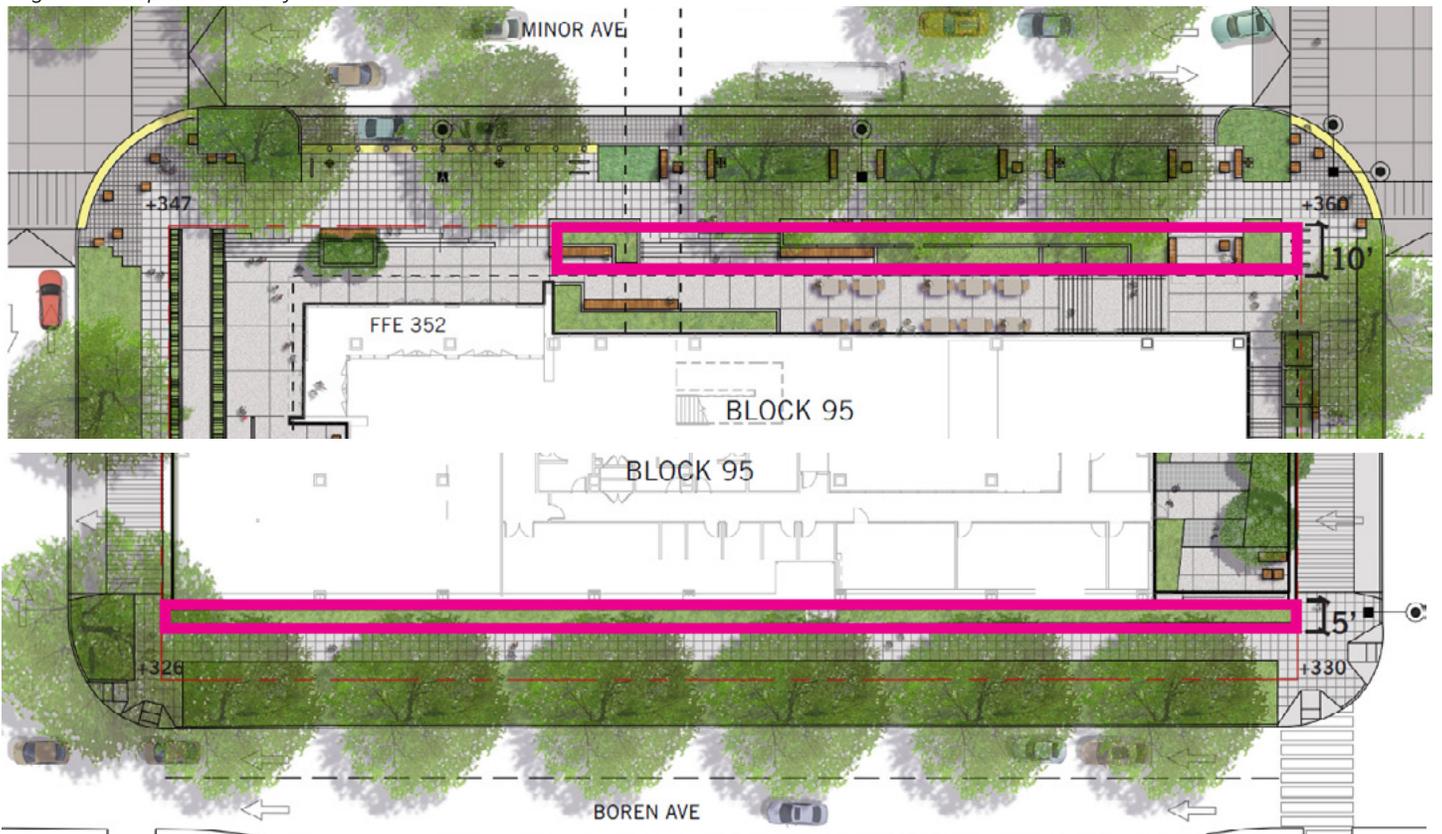


Figure 6: Proposed Boren Ave (Top) and Minor Ave (bottom) setbacks.

**Boren & Minor Ave setbacks**

The proposed setbacks will provide 1700 square feet (sf) of additional open space along Minor Ave. and 1200 sf of additional open space along Boren Ave. between Columbia and Cherry St. See figure 6 for more detail.

### *Columbia and Cherry St ROW improvements*

The right-of-way improvements will include 980 sf of planting areas along Columbia St and 560 sf of planting along Cherry St. See figure 7 for more detail.

### *Pedestrian crossings*

The proposal includes pedestrian controlled signalized crossings at the Boren Ave and Cherry St intersection and Minor Ave and James St intersection.

### **Agency Comments**

**Beverly Barnett**, with SDOT, mentioned that, although the SRC does not favor approving additional skybridges within the City, skybridges within medical campuses are exceptions due to the nature of work occurring within hospital facilities. Ms. Barnett stated that, although SDOT supports the concept of the skybridge proposal, they still need to understand that the proposal is not just the result of poor planning. Ms. Barnett mentioned if the skybridge is needed, then it should be designed to minimize the negative impact on the Minor Ave streetscape. She said the SRC will further analyze the public benefit proposal prior to making a recommendation to the SDC. Ms. Barnett then stated that the SRC needs to review elements specific to the skybridge proposal while still having an understanding of the overall vision for the Swedish campus.

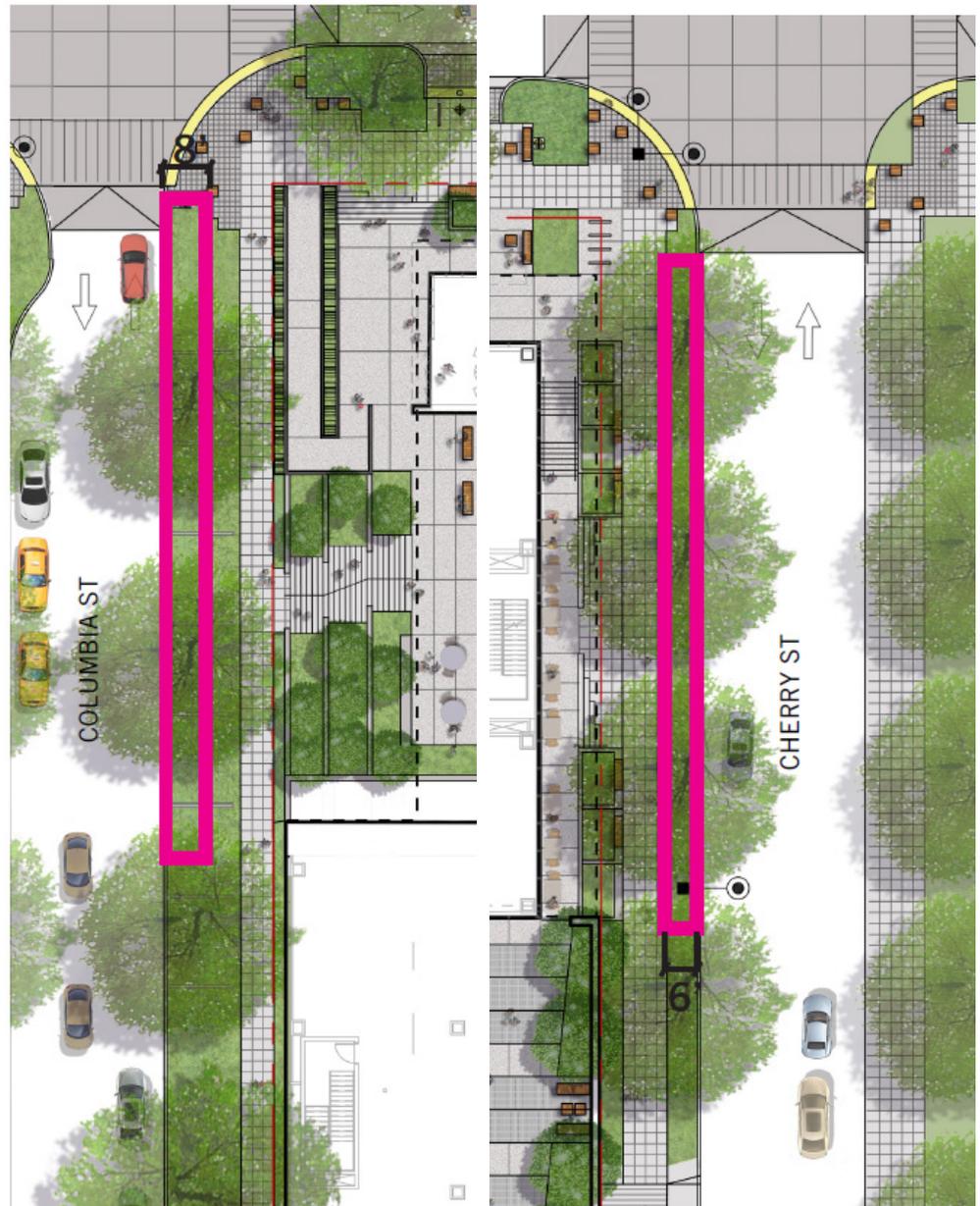


Figure 7: Proposed Columbia St (left) and Cherry St (Right) improvements

**Shane DeWald**, SDOT, stated that SDOT is on board with the First Hill Mile. She said there are several trees along the corridor that are managed by SDOT. Ms. DeWald also mentioned there are trees along the corridor that SDOT does not manage, but is willing to collaborate in managing in the future. She then said that there are possibilities to do soil reconditioning around trees.

**Tammy Frederick**, SDOT, stated that after having several meetings with Swedish regarding the First Hill Mile, SDOT endorses the design of the First Hill Mile. SDOT approved the proposed curb bulbs and signalized pedestrian crossings. Ms. Frederick mentioned that the proposed crosswalks are still being reviewed by SDOT.

**Chip Nevins**, SPR, mentioned that SPR has worked closely with the First Hill Community and Swedish on the redevelopment of First Hill Park. Mr. Nevins said that, initially, SPR reached out to Swedish about providing assistance with redeveloping the park, which currently does not function adequately for the surrounding neighborhood. Although SPR does not have a true cost estimate for the redevelopment of First Hill Park, Mr. Nevins mentioned that, after

researching parks of similar size constructed within the past 5 years, SPR is comfortable that the \$500,000 in funding proposed by Swedish will fund the park's reconstruction.

**Ruri Yampolsky**, Office of arts and culture, commended the project team for their artwork process. She encouraged the design team to continue to be cognizant of the scale of the proposed artwork, ensuring that it will fit relative to the street and curb bulbs.

## Public Comments

**Alex Hudson**, FHIA, concurs with Chip Nevins. Ms. Hudson said FHIA is excited with the momentum created from the First Hill Park redevelopment project. She mentioned that the community is excited for all of the improvements, especially the proposed artwork, pedestrian crosswalks, and First Hill Mile. Ms. Hudson said that the project is allowing the community to leverage private development in order to enhance the public realm. She then said that FHIA encouraged the design team to create a well thought out design for the Boren facade.

## Summary of Discussion

The Commission organized its discussion around the following issues:

- Pedestrian realm
- Integration of public art
- Boren facade
- First Hill Park Improvements

### *Pedestrian realm*

The Commission commended the project team for elements proposed within the public ROW, especially for the proposal of signalized pedestrian crossings at the Boren Ave and Cherry St and Minor Ave and James St intersections. Commissioners encouraged the project team to continue incorporating wayfinding along the First Hill Mile through a combination of artwork, crosswalks, and signage. Commissioners also encouraged the team to work with SDOT in designing curb bulbs with continuous ramps along the street edge.

### *Integration of public art*

The SDC commended the project team for locating public artwork off-site from the Swedish First Hill Campus. The commission agreed with Swedish's request to delegate continued review of the Art elements to the SPAAC, as long as a SDC representative was included. While the SDC has adopted specific policies that require greater detail about public art than was presented at this meeting, the SDC was satisfied that the role of 4 Culture and the SPAAC met the intent of their policy concerning the inclusion of public art in a public benefit package. Commissioners recommended the design team continue to understand how to incorporate artwork in a manner that engages pedestrians while not competing with other elements along the First Hill Mile. The commission recommended that the project team develop a long-term maintenance and conservation plan for this art.

### *Boren façade*

The Commission agreed the design team has made great progress in the design development of the Boren Ave. façade. Commissioners encouraged the team to continue thinking about how to create social, dynamic spaces along Boren Ave through the reorientation of benches as well as the strategic use of paving patterns, interpretive graphics, and varying sizes of green screens along the façade. Commissioners also encouraged the team to continue designing the corridor in way that relates to the Frye Museum of Art, located across Boren Ave. The Commission recommended the design team carefully select plants that will further enhance the streetscape in front of the façade.

### *First Hill Park improvements*

The Commission appreciated the design team's community outreach. Commissioners understand this to be a highly important part of the process, which will assist in providing programming that will benefit current and future residents of the First Hill Community.

## Action

The SDC thanked the project team for presenting the public benefit package for the Swedish First Hill alley vacation. The Commission appreciated the broad scope of the public benefit package as well as the continued coordination with community members and city agencies.

The SDC voted to approve, 9 to 0, the public benefit package for the Swedish First Hill alley vacation with the following condition:

1. The Swedish Public Art Advisory Committee (SPAAC) will be responsible for reviewing and approving details of the design and implementation of the art plan. The SDC will be a voting member of the SPAAC.

The SDC included the following recommendation:

1. Include the selected artist(s) in the First Hill Mile project design team.