

BELL STREET PARK SUMMARY OF PUBLIC MEETING #3

held on May 19, 2010 at PACCAR Pavilion, SAM Olympic Sculpture Park



Meeting notices were mailed throughout Belltown and beyond. The Belltown Community Council contacted residential and business members via e-mail. Posters were displayed at multifamily locations and a project sign was posted on Bell Street.

OVERVIEW

Seattle Parks and Recreation and the Belltown Community Council jointly hosted their third public meeting for the planned Bell Street Park on May 19, 2010. The design team of SvR+Hewitt presented a hybrid design from two distinctly different concepts—the “Sluiced Surface” and “Measured Movement”—that the public discussed and commented on at the second meeting held in January. Over 60 people attended the meeting to offer guidance to the design team as it begins design development to refine the final park design. Lively discussion was interspersed with questions of clarification, general observations and suggestions for programming and operations. The new park will be located between 1st and 5th Avenues and is funded with \$2.5 million from the 2008 Parks and Green Spaces Levy. Following a review by Seattle’s CPTED (crime prevention through environmental design) team and approval of the final schematic design by parks management, detailed design development will commence. Permitting will occur in late summer with construction scheduled to begin in late fall of this year.

PRESENTATION

Christopher Williams, Acting Superintendent of Seattle Parks and Recreation, opened the meeting by announcing that on May 24, the Seattle Board of Park Commissioners will consider a proposal to increase the project budget by \$1.0 million, bringing total funding to \$3.5 million. The designers next described the schematic design, which incorporated elements from the two concept designs that were discussed and evaluated at the prior public meeting in January. Major components, such as pedestrian and vehicle areas, storm water treatment, landscaping, lighting and gathering spaces—were described in detail using rendered plans, example photographs and two “fly-through” animations of a computer simulation. Finally, the selected project artist gave a brief presentation of her working methods, completed pieces in the public realm and initial thoughts about incorporating public art in the new park. The presentation is available on the project web page.

BCC BELLTOWN COMMUNITY COUNCIL
www.belltowncommunitycouncil.org

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“Creating community through people, parks, and programs.”

SEATTLE PARKS
AND RECREATION

Vibrant Safe Green

BE PART OF THE NEW PARK IN BELLTOWN



WHAT WE HEARD

The selection of comments on the final design are organized into the categories of vibrant, safe and green. For additional project information and detailed comments, visit www.seattle.gov/parks/projects/bell_street/boulevard_park.htm.

ELEMENTS OF THE FINAL DESIGN

VIBRANT

- Form** blend of dynamic gestures and meandering movement, a faceted surface with rhythmic gestures and measured movement
- Gathering Spaces** large gathering space between 2nd & 3rd with lots of seating, large water feature, provisions for outdoor kitchen, vending, farmers market, street fair • smaller, more intimate sitting areas with views, drinking fountains, bike racks, places to play

SAFE

- Lighting** significant increase over today: catenary lighting with small fixtures on tight grid at alleys, illuminated bollards on south side, shielded 12- to 14-foot pedestrian pole lights on regular interval on north side • infill lighting at trees, art, water features, steps
- Pedestrian Safety** wide sidewalks: 30 feet on north side, 12 on south • curbless, elevated surface • bollards, textured paving, trees near drive lane at alleys and parallel parking on south side to create perception of narrow drive lane—effectively slowing drivers

GREEN

- Vegetation** leaving 16 healthiest of 48 existing trees for replacement over time • tall, majestic species on south side: elm, chestnut, poplar, london plane • clusters of smaller trees on north side
- Stormwater** drains to north into rain gardens for treatment by plants • trees planted in silva cells will allow root expansion

SELECTED COMMENTS ON THE FINAL DESIGN

VIBRANT

Form — Ensure sufficient space for people with walkers or strollers to walk two abreast • Plan for dogs • Looks like the park is expandable • Extend linear park elements around the corners to capture the avenues • Don't clutter the space — keep it flexible • Incorporate art throughout—integrate art into functional elements • A park design filled with stuff like bollards, mounds, lights, etc., doesn't support outdoor dining

Gathering Spaces — Provide outlets for vendors and street fairs • Fixed benches are not what the public asked for at the previous meetings • Benches are good—it's nice to have a place to sit and rest • Is the space flexible for future business and uses? • Provide lighting for the stage area • Lovely design, though stage may be too small for weekly farmers market and sidewalk cafes

“Yea for Vibrant, Safe and Green! Keep the three in balance.”

SAFE

Lighting — Consider more catenary lighting • Increase brightness of nighttime lighting • Lighting and anti-sleeping devices on benches alone will not address safety issues

Pedestrian Safety — Vibrancy equals safety • Need more activity from adjacent businesses • Site elements alone cannot activate the park • Benches will bring activity • Friends of Bell Street Park needs stewardship volunteers • Consider a video surveillance system • Existing trees at 3rd and Bell provide hiding spot for drug dealers • Keep the dog park open all day and night to activate area

GREEN

Establish a dedicated fund to ensure tree replacement program extends over 15–20 years • Plant trees to avoid encroachment on buildings • Empty trash receptacles and wash down sidewalks frequently