MINUTES OF THE MEETING

25 January 2001

02/26/2001[1]

Projects Reviewed

Tower Records
City Hall Park
Seattle Center Festival Pavilion
Parks NMF/CRF

Convened: 10:00am

Adjourned: 3:00pm

Commissioners Present

Donald Royse
Tory Laughlin Taylor
Jack Mackie
Cary Moon
Donald Royse
Sharon E. Sutton
David Spiker, Commissioner Elect

Staff Present

John Rahaim
Layne Cubell
Brad Gassman
Marianne Pulfer

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25 JAN 2001 Project:	**Tower Records**
Phase:	Pre-Petition Alley Vacation Briefing
Previous Reviews:	None.
Presenter:	David Hewitt, Hewitt Architects Joan Rosenstock, ESD Margo Polley, Seattle Center Alan Winningham, Armada Retail Eric Pravitz, Office of Housing
Attendees:	Joan Sundborg, Uptown Alliance Lyle Bicknell, CityDesign John Coney, Queen Anne Community Council-Landuse Com. Kirk Nyland, Armada Retail
Time:	1 hour (SDC Ref. # 169 | DC00210)

Action: **The Commission appreciates the extensive presentation and makes the following comments and recommendations:**

- **would like to have more information on the Potlatch Trail in order to better understand how this project relates to it. Supports the team's efforts to accommodate the Potlatch Trail, but is concerned about possible traffic conflicts**
- **encourages the team to continue working with representatives of the Theater District design team so that this project will complement their efforts**
- **expresses a desire for greater visual reference to the existing alley and visibility through the open space that bisects the block**
- **is primarily concerned that sufficient and truly public benefits are provided to warrant the removal of the alley**
- **if the alley vacation is pursued, encourages the team to create a design that maintains the visual definition and scale provided by the two smaller blocks**
- **encourages the inclusion of <u>permanently</u> affordable housing**

The Council has been briefed as to what the ESD would like to see on the site. Tower Records and its developer are negotiating a purchase agreement with the City (ESD and the Office of Housing). One condition for the agreement is that the deal will close within this year. Tower will now be allowed to apply for a Master Use Permit and petition for an alley vacation. The City is still discussing the issue of the number and mix of affordable housing units that the project will offer. Whether the affordable units will be incorporated within the project, and how ownership by moderate-income households will be assured over the long term. Currently the Office of Housing is negotiating with the developer the amount of the project's capital contribution to affordable housing; then it will be determined how these funds are used to subsidize affordability, on site or off.

The team will petition for an alley vacation if it is resolved that the Potlatch Trail will travel along Roy,

which borders the project's block to the north. The Trail that starts at South Lake Union and continues around Seattle Center would include a lane for pedestrians, a mixed-use lane and a lane for fast bicycle traffic. An underpass of Aurora at Roy would impact the use of the north/south alley so the team is considering a trade-off of a ten-foot setback on two sides of the site against the vacation of the alley. The design team will have to work with SeaTran and the Seattle Center in developing the first leg of the trail when the route of the Trail has been decided on.

As the project developer for Tower Records, Armada was hired to develop a project that will be both a "super-store" for Tower, provide market rate condominiums, "affordable" condominiums and other retail space. Armada plans on purchasing that part of the block owned by the City and plans on leasing the property from Tower on a long-term basis. Tower will expand their floor space from 12,000 square feet to 20 to 25,000 square feet. The team is trying to fast-track this project and would like to see a completion date of 2003 or 2004.

The team outlined the public benefits if the alley were to be removed that included the following:

- cross traffic conflicts would be eliminated if the Potlatch Trail borders the site
- better visibility would be created at Mercer and 5th Avenue for pedestrians
- a "flex-car" system will be available to residents and the community
- below grade public parking capability would be expanded for commercial and residential parking thus reducing surface parking
- curb cuts would be reduced from 3 to 2
- additional open space for trail users would be provided and the amount of over-all public space would be increased by 1,000 square feet.

A community representative stated that residents are concerned that the project reflect the lively activity of Seattle Center but are concerned about the massiveness of the building.

Key Commissioner Comments and Concerns

- Requested clarification as to what percentage of the housing would be affordable and what is the definition of affordability.
    - Proponents explained that the project would have 110 units. They indicated that they are using the City's standards for affordability, which is affordable to a "moderate-income" household with an income at 80% of King County median income spending no more than 30% of their income on housing ($922 for a studio unit, $987 for a one-bedroom, $1,184 for a two-bedroom unit). The City will have to decide if they are going to contribute to affordability by asking for studio-sized units or if they will be placed on this site at all. The team will not designate two qualities of condominiums; if affordable units are incorporated on site they will be of the same quality. The City would take a "soft second" on the purchase of the units. This will ensure that they will continue to be affordable.
- Asks if this soft second would be at the City home ownership loan amount of $25,000 maximum.
    - Proponents stated that there isn't a limit at present. The Office of Housing will determine this.
- Inquired as to whether the retail space would be for sale or for lease.

    - Proponents stated that these spaces are expected to be held and operated for lease by the developer.

- Asked for clarification regarding the flow of traffic from Aurora and possible traffic conflicts and how the changes might impact the neighborhood. Asks if Roy Street is single flow west bound; how many vehicles that approach lower Queen Anne and Seattle Center use Roy and Valley Streets to turn off of Aurora instead of going past Mercer and coming in diagonally. Asks what the impact will be with 45 to 50 mph traffic slowing down on Aurora to make the turn onto Roy.
    - SeaTran clarified that there would not be access to Roy from Aurora. Drivers will come up from the underpass between 6th and Taylor.
- Asked where the garden would be in relation to the alley.
    - Proponents explained that the alley would be eliminated and retail would occupy that space at street level and the garden/terrace space would be on top of the retail. It would always be necessary to move up (by stairs or escalator) to get to it.
- Asks what the Office of Housing thinks of this project.
    - OH stated that they fully support this project and the alley vacation.
- Stated that the City would be loath to use the alley vacation in the block to the north as a precedent for other vacations to the south of Roy Street.
    - Proponents understand that the alley helps the scale of the block. The proposed belvedere is intended to preserve the transparency that the alley creates. The special event within the massing of the building relates to the half block.
- Asks for clarification at next presentation about the other private property owners that will need to make changes to accommodate the Potlatch Trail.
- Is concerned that the open space reads as an entry to retail space as opposed to an inviting public space. Does not want this space to be just for the building users.
- Asks for clarification at the next presentation on the specifics of the affordable housing component.
- Is concerned that visual access be maintained through the building in the area of the existing alley, if the vacation is pursued. This would have the effect of breaking down the building mass into a more manageable human scale.

25 JAN 2001 Project: City Hall Park

Phase: Briefing
Previous Reviews: 18 January 1990 (Schematic Briefing), 15 March 1990 (Design Development)
Presenters: Jerry Ernst, NBBJ
Eric Schmidt, Cascade Design Collaborative
David Layton, KC Courthouse Seismic Project
Wendy Anderson, Weisman Design Group
Jerry Stickney, Stickney Murphy Romine Architects
Beverly Barnett, SeaTran
Cath Brunner, KC Public Art Program
Attendees: Marilyn Senour, City of Seattle
Jennifer Meisner, DON

Time: 1 hour (SDC Ref. # 169| DC00150)

Actions: The Commission appreciates the reestablishment of the historic entrance to the County Courthouse with the proposed seismic retrofit, commends the presentation and makes the following comments and recommendations:

- **commends the team for looking at the broader circulation and use patterns in the neighborhood; urges the team to now specifically look at the pedestrian traffic through the site**
- **asks the design team to consider how the street change will affect traffic flow with regard to the adjacent transit station and how these changes will affect the people who now dwell in the park and the changing neighborhood as well**
- **supports the scheme that would close Dilling Way in order to incorporate that right-of-way into the Park**
- **highlights the need for a management plan for the Park and noted that the recent Civic Center Focus Group discussions conducted by City Design recommended that this park be managed as part of the Civic Center open spaces**
- **urges the team to make the park universally accessible and maintain it as a neighborhood park**
- **recommends the team coordinate their efforts with SeaTran, DOPAR and the City**
- **urges the team to create a single plan concept that recognizes the compound geometries of the surrounding city texture and addresses the requirements of an changing urban population in need of defined green space.**

The team reiterated the goals of the City Park project as one component of a greater project to install a seismic retrofit to the King County Courthouse and shift the main entrance to the original entrance on the south side of the building. The primary goals of the redesign of the park are to create a ceremonial and civic plaza in front of the Courthouse and to preserve the characteristic of a neighborhood park.

The primary design moves for the park respect the historic design of the park, namely the radial

walkways, the use of grass, the north/south axis and the architectural character of the building. The plan is to consolidate as much service functions as possible. There has to be accommodation for loading and unloading, recycling and access to the tunnel. The team wants to make space that is inviting to the public by having pedestrian eddies, improved ADA accessibility and more benches. At this time people avoid going though the park so more hardscape walkways will be included from 3rd and 4th Avenues to allow for direct access to the entry.

In analyzing the larger urban context the team concluded that it made sense to expand the park by closing Dilling Way to vehicular traffic and make it a pedestrian way. The service traffic would be rerouted, the sidewalks would be wider and the flow of traffic would move naturally out to the corner of Yesler Bridge where the crosswalk is located. Nineteen parking meters would be removed.

SeaTran declared that these changes would not require a street vacation since there is already existing street right-of-way in the park.

Key Commissioner Comments and Concerns

- Ask what would happen if Dilling Way was taken out altogether and became park space. Would like to know if the right-of-way would be maintained.
    - Proponents stated that in this case the Parks Department would have to petition for an Alley or Street Vacation.
- Asks SeaTran if 4th Avenue will always be one-way north bound. Dilling Way was clearly designed when 4th Avenue was a two-way street. Asks how the changes brought about by the construction of the tunnel will affect the direction of 4th Avenue. Asks if the team has had any contact with SeaTran in regard to street operations.
    - Proponents stated that they have not.
- Asks if there is a Public Art component to the project.
    - Proponents stated that the Arts Commission elected to put art in the interior public entry zone.
- Asks if the team has done any studies of the health and life of the trees on the site and if it is necessary to start thinking about replanting now.
    - Proponents answered that they are working with an arborist and he has made recommendations for improved drainage. It is planned that five or six trees will be removed and some of the trees are past peak but with proper care might last another ten or twenty years. From a horticultural standpoint it would help the remaining trees to thin them out.
- Thinks that the team needs to think about what the neighborhood will look like in 5 years with regard to all of the proposed projects and out of a concern for the people who now dwell in the park and neighborhood.

25 JAN 2001 Project:	**Seattle Center Festival Pavilion**
Phase:	Design Development
Previous Reviews:	7 November 1996 (Scope Briefing), 5 December 1996 (Scope Briefing), 4 September 1997 (Schematics), December 21 2000 (Design Development) 20 January 2000 (Schematics II), 21 December 2000 (Design Development)
Presenters:	Robert Hull, Miller Hull Partnership Bob Shrosbree, Site Workshop Shelly Yapp, Seattle Center Bonnie Pendergast, Seattle Center
Attendees:	Sara Levin, CBO Paul Janos, DCLU Ron Rochon, Miller/Hull Partnership Mark Brands, Site Workshop
	Time: 1 hour (SDC Ref. # 169| DC00152)

Action: The Commission approves Design Development and appreciates the atttentiveness with which the team has addressed issues previously identified by the Commission and makes the following comments and recommendations:

- **supports the switch from the asymmetrical arrangement of the new lower plaza to a more symmetrical and direct geometrical relationship to the International Fountain to the north and suggests that the way the two relate to the central axis of the sites be marked in some way as a point of general interest**
- **notes that the design of the restroom structure will require further review and asks for follow up with Commission staff.**

Proponents stated that they had reexamined the basic geometries of the Festival Pavilion plaza in relation to the International Fountain and have come up with a scheme that is more simplified yet responds to the curvilinear nature of other geometries at the Center. Proponents explained the tension achieved with the recession of the fountain and the pushing-up of the mounded area of the plaza. A north/south axis has been identified that cuts bi-symmetrically through the two sites. The team addressed the request to design wayfinding with methods with other than signage with the already existing signage sentinels and with the use of “blade-walls” that can be used as reader boards.

The restrooms have been further developed; they contain men’s women’s and family use restrooms. The building has windows directly under the roof line and is clad in red brick. At the entry, trees, planters, and spaces are provided for waiting. The team proposes the inclusion of bricks that show standard male and female restroom symbols by way of signage. The building is intended to function as a beacon when it is lit at night.

<u>Key Commissioner Comments and Concerns</u>

- Asks the landscapers not to include prairie grasses in the landscape design.
    - Proponents asserted that although they are used at other locations at the Center that are

not planned for this site.

- Suggests that the architects could do something less conservative with the restrooms.
- Asks for clarification on the role of the artist at this time.
    - Proponents stated that the artist Deborah Mersky is just starting to get involved with the project. She will not be working with any of the surfaces that are walked on but will probably do something with the vertical pylons.
- Suggests the team somehow mark the relationship of the geometric shapes of the plaza and fountain to the Center's central axis lines that communicates the Center's design evolution.

25 JAN 2001 Project:	**Parks NMF/CRF**
Phase:	Briefing
Previous Review:	05 August 1999 (Update), 03 February 2000 (Update), 17 August 2000 (Update)
Presenters:	Karen Galt, Department of Parks and Recreation (DOPAR) Pamela Kliment, Department of Parks and Recreation (DOPAR)
Attendees:	Roger Dane, DOPAR Marlynne Gardner, CBO
Time:	1 hour (SDC Ref. # 220 | DC00042)

Action: The Commission appreciates the status report on Neighborhood Matching Fund Projects in Parks for North, Central and South Divisions and makes the following comments:

- **would like to hear about the Department of Parks and Recreation (DOPAR) approach to historical structures such as the Greenwood greenhouses and how this informs Neighborhood Matching Funds (NMF) projects**
- **would like DOPAR to encourage communities to pursue more creative solutions to playground designs and not be limited to copying what is already built.**

Representatives from the Department of Parks and Recreation (DOPAR), Pam Kliment and Karen Galt, presented a status briefing of Neighborhood Matching Funds Projects in Parks. Working in collaboration with many different departments, there are a variety of types of projects in various stages.

Golden Gardens Skateboard Park-As a response to local community interest in skateboard parks the Parks Department has committed funds for an asphalt overlay in the upper parking lot of Golden Gardens. A landscape architect and a skateboard module fabrication specialist are working on a proposal for movable units that can be placed on the asphalt surface. The units are too heavy for two people to move but they can be moved with a fork lift. This site is not considered ideal and DOPAR is considering building a permanent part near Green Lake or at a location in the South Division.

Carkeek Park Building Annex- The Advisory Council has received preliminary drawings from the architects but there remain many issues pertaining to the program that need to be resolved. The project will include renovation and repair of an existing building with additional landscaping around the perimeter. The goal is to make the building a model of sustainability.

Carkeek Park Trails- An assessment is being executed to determine which trails to allow to overgrow, which to move, or retain and improve . The two groups working on this project are The Indoor Classroom and The Outdoor Classroom.

Wallingford Playfield- The funds for the construction of the Playfield Park building will need to be spent by August 2001. The architect is waiting for the planning group to decide on program issues before they can develop a budget for the project.

Greenwood Park- A schematic plan has been developed for the buildings to be located on the site of the former greenhouses. The demolition of the greenhouses is almost complete. DOPAR is working closely with SeaTran and SPU on the issue of storm water drainage. The site is being considered as a pilot site for drainage studies.

Blakeley Property- Located near intersection of 25th Avenue NE and Blakeley Street, this two block long project on SeaTran and DOPAR property is intended to provide additional access

points at the east and west ends of that portion of the Burke-Gilman Trail that would be inaccessible due to the condominium development directly to the north.. There are questions yet to be resolved regarding ADA access.

North Seattle Disc-Golf Area- The completed design comprises an "art walk" vegetation improvements in the disc golf areas. Disc-golf is a form of Frisbee using 2-lb.g weighted discs. The site is two blocks east of the Northgate Mall and six blocks east of I-5. The bulk of the $721,700 will be used for the grading of the "Art Walk".

Boren Pike Pine Park Redevelopment- A consultant has prepared a conceptual scheme for the area of Four-Columns Park and the strip of land below it to the west that runs along I –5. The main idea is to improve visibility by opening up the corner and re-orienting the columns to the original street grid. The scheme provides for grade separations and a variety of meeting places distinguished by degrees of density.

4th and Ward- This site, on lower Queen Anne contains an old pumphouse that may be retained for the time being. The project will be brought back when it is further developed schematically.

Cormorant Cove- A landscape consultant has been hired for this community park in West Seattle and DOPAR is currently working out a contract with them. The project is intended to be finished in September 2001.

Key Commissioner Comments and Concerns

- Feels that the greenhouses in Greenwood Park contribute to the character of the park, are in fairly good shape, and should not be removed. Feels that DOPAR should be responsible for the stewardship of these structures. Does not believe that there is enough internal commitment within DOPAR to preserve the totality of the historic character of open spaces within the city. Believes that there are creative, adaptive re-use options for the greenhouses and other similar historical structures in parks.
- Asks if the buildings that are to replace the Greenwood Greenhouses references to the history of the site. The Design Commission is interested in the stewardship of historic structures.
  - Proponents agreed that DOPAR is not equipped to deal with historic structures but claimed that some play equipment will reference the Interurban that once ran through the site.
- Concerning the Greenwood Park, feels that DOPAR should think creatively about the playground equipment and create a file of non-standard equipment.
- Concerning Boren Pike Pine Redevelopment, asked for clarification on the strip of land the runs along I-5.
  - Proponents clarified that the whole site is DOT property and the strip is a sloped piece of land with a wall on one side and a trafficable fence on the other side.
- Asks what the limits are to the authority in changing or developing this area.
  - Proponents stated that DOT will allow DOPAR to develop further but DOT would have to be responsible for the maintenance.
- Clarified that the Convention Center has agreed to compensate the neighborhood but money has not yet been spent. The money may not be used for art projects along Pine, but may be used toward the Park.

- Would like to know if the plan was created as a working document by a number of groups for the Bore Pike Pine Park.
  - Proponents confirmed that it was created under PPUNC steering.