

7th Ave S Street Vacation

Edward B. Murray
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Thaddeus Egging

Rachel Gleeson

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Commissioners Present

Shannon Loew, Chair*
Ross Tilghman, Vice Chair
Brodie Bain*
Lee Copeland
Laura Haddad
Jescelle Major
John Savo

**Term ended March 1, 2017*

Commissioners Excused

Ben de Rubertis
Thaddeus Egging
Rachel Gleeson

Non-voting Commissioners

Rick Krochalis

Project Description

Seattle Public Utilities (SPU) and a private property owner are petitioning to vacate a segment of 7th Ave. S in the South Park neighborhood. The 7th Avenue segment under consideration intersects with two additional rights of way - S. Riverside Dr. and S Holden St. The 7th Avenue S segment is partially located within a shoreline management zone. The 7th Avenue S segment is not a shoreline street end, as it is not platted to extend into the Duwamish. Following the vacation, the resulting property would be used to develop a flood control pump station to mitigate the negative impacts caused by reoccurring flooding events.

The street vacation area is 6,893 square feet (sf). 5,293 sf will be dedicated for the future flood control pump station, while the remaining 1,600 sf will be established as an easement to provide access to a neighboring property as well as public access to the shoreline. The flood control pump station and ancillary facilities will be fenced and lighted for security. The pump station will be run remotely, having staff periodically present for maintenance.

Meeting Summary

This was the Seattle Design Commission's (SDC) second review of the 7th Ave Pump Station project. The purpose of the meeting was to review the urban design merit for the vacation proposal. The Commission did not vote on the urban design merit and will review the project again at a future date.

Recusals and Disclosures

There were no recusals or disclosures.

February 16, 2017

1:00 - 3:00 pm

Type

Street vacation

Phase

Urban design merit

Previous Reviews

10/06/16

Presenters

Meredith Hall

KKLA

Karen Kiest

KKLA

Jeff Massie

SPU

Rachel Ramey

SPU

Attendees

John Barber

Friends of Street Ends (FOSE)

Beverly Barnett

SDOT

David Goldberg

OPCD

Sheila Harrison

SPU

Brian Henry

SDOT

Hal Hurlen

Co-petitioner

Katie McVicker

SPU

Marty Oppenheimer

FOSE



Figure 1: Site context (above) and proposed site design (below)

Summary of Presentation

Jeff Massie and Rachel Ramey, of SPU, and Karen Kiest and Meredith Hall, of KKLA, presented the urban design merit phase for the 7th Ave Street Vacation. Jeff Massie provided a project description and purpose for the vacation request. Project goals include reducing flooding for the 7th Ave drainage basin through the construction of a flood control pump station and water quality treatment facility. The project team has engaged with local businesses, community members, and Friends of Street Ends (FOSE) throughout the planning and design process.

The project site is located along the western edge of the Duwamish River and is adjacent to a community proposed Riverwalk along S Riverside Dr. Currently, the 7th Ave street end serves as a parking area for adjacent businesses. An access gate to private property is located on the southeast edge of the street end. See figure 1 for more detail



Figure 2: Renderings of proposed public space

The presentation included an updated design that show both the proposed development and one that would occur without a vacation (vacation/no vacation scenario designs). The updated design for the pump station under the vacation scenario includes a larger amount of public space, increasing from 1,535 square feet (SF) to 4,035 sf, sidewalk, street tree, landscaping, hardscape materials, and security fencing. Instead of surrounding almost the entire site, security fencing has been relocated to abut the proposed pump station and head box, allowing for a significant increase in publicly accessible space. The proposed public space will also include an easement to support truck access for the adjacent property located to the south of the street end. See figure 1 & 2 for more detail .

The no vacation scenario includes placing the pump station on the SPU owned parcel located north of the 7th Ave Street end. This scenario would provide 10-foot-wide publicly access easement to along the northern edge. The public access includes a 5-foot-wide sidewalk, fencing, minimal landscaping and hardscape materials. The no vacation scenario would eliminate the water quality treatment facility.

After the presentation on urban design merit, the project team provided a preview of the proposed public benefit.

Agency Comments

Beverly Barnett, SDOT, stated that while the project team has always done a good job addressing the reasons for the proposal, they have not always been about the reasoning for the specific layout and site design. Ms. Barnett

mentioned that today's presentation provided a more informative proposal and site plan. Ms. Barnett then stated she is concerned with how the increase in truck access on the adjacent property will affect the project proposal.

Public Comments

Harald Hurlen, Co-petitioner and adjacent property owner, appreciated that the project team is addressing flooding issues within the South Park neighborhood. Mr. Hurlen mentioned that the tenant operating on that adjacent property just received a contract to rebuild Colman Dock of the Washington State Ferry System. He then mentioned that all new materials for the project, as well as all demolition debris, will travel through the adjacent property. Mr. Hurlen stated that there will be an average of 100 trucks accessing the site daily for the next 5 years, which could conflict with pedestrian access and circulation. (This was new information to the project team and City agencies). He suggested the project team move the proposed public space to the north end of the project site to reduce conflicts.

John Barber, FOSE, Stated that FOSE has developed a good relationship with SPU and project team. Mr. Barber mentioned that while FOSE advocates for a commensurate amount of public space be provided as a result of street end vacations, the organization is more concerned with the quality of the space design. He is concerned with the potential conflicts between pedestrians and trucks accessing the adjacent property. Mr. Barber is also concerned with the proposed security fencing.

Marty Oppenheimer, FOSE, stated that he is a business owner in south park who supports the proposed flooding mitigation. Mr. Oppenheimer then said that it is important people be able to appreciate industrial areas within the city. Mr. Oppenheimer then stated that while he hopes the project will include public access to the water, he is concerned with the proposed security fencing along the eastern edge of property, which will eliminate access. Mr. Oppenheimer also had questions regarding the location of the northern boundary of the drainage area for the proposed pump station.

Summary of Discussion

Based on the public comment concerning the need to provide access to the adjacent property for potentially large numbers of trucks, the SDC recommended the project team re-evaluate the site design and placement of public space. Commissioners commended the design team for responding to concerns raised during the October 6, 2016 meeting. The Commission recommended the design team consolidate the parking spaces and crane access, located along S Riverside Dr, with the truck access area located behind the proposed facility. Commissioners also recommended the team provide architectural images of the proposed facility for subsequent presentations to the SDC.

Action

The SDC did not take an action during today's meeting. The SDC will review the urban design merit phase again at a later date.