



**Seattle
Design
Commission**

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

May 17, 2007

Greg Nickels
Mayor

Karen Kiest
Chair

Tasha Atchison

Pam Beyette

Evan Bourquard

Brendan Connolly

John Hoffman

Mary Johnston

Dennis Ryan

Darrell Vange

Guillermo Romano
Executive Director

Layne Cubell
Senior Staff

Projects Reviewed

- Seattle Center Garage
- Seattle Center Long Term Investment Program
- Commission Business
- DPD Planning Division Update
- Commission Outreach

Convened: 8:30am
Adjourned: 2:00pm

Commissioners Present

- Karen Kiest, Chair
- Pam Beyette
- Evan Bourquard
- Darrell Vange
- Tasha Atchison
- Dennis Ryan
- Mary Johnston

Staff Present

- Guillermo Romano
- Layne Cubell
- Kadie Bell



**Department of Planning
and Development**
700 5th Avenue, Suite 2000
PO Box 34019
Seattle, WA 98124-2000

T: 206-615-1349
F: 206-233-7883

printed on recycled paper

17 May 2007 Project: **Seattle Center Garage**
Phase: *Construction Documents*
Previous Reviews: 21 July 2005, 16 Feb 2005, 3 Mar 2006, 20 July 2006
Presenters: Jill Crary, Seattle Center
Craig Norsen, Seneca Group
Jeanne Iannucci, NBBJ
Bob Sheh, NBBJ
Eric LeVine, NBBJ
Gareth Loveridge, GGN
Molly Hurley, Department of Planning and Development
Attendees: Amy Cragg, GGN
Rob Murray, NBBJ
Amy Williams, Department of Finance

Time: 1.0 hours

(SDC Ref. #169/RS0611)

Action

The Design Commission appreciates the opportunity to review the latest plans for the Seattle Center garage and thanks the design team for their thorough presentation. The Design Commission unanimously recommends final approval of the construction documents subject to the following recommendations and comments:

- **We accept the relocation of the Gates Foundation Visitor's Center to the Fifth Avenue frontage, but we caution it to be an active contributor to the streetscape and to offer extended hours on evenings and on the weekends.**
- **The 60,000 square foot green roof is a tremendous commitment to environmental design in the city and we commend you for this.**
- **We continue to encourage you to explore some kind of public connection to the green roof and reinforce the educational aspects with the visitor's center, perhaps including interpretive elements there.**
- **The latest design direction of the Harrison plaza elements is very positive and we urge you to continue to consider the practical challenges of real use (i.e. skateboarders and loiterers).**
- **We find the Fifth Avenue materials and the height, massing and volume of the facade, particularly at the Visitors Center, to be acceptable.**
- **We appreciate the shared desire to place the operations and maintenance responsibilities of both green roofs with the Gates Foundation. We strongly encourage Seattle Center to require a maintenance and operations agreement for the green roof, circulation core, artwork and visitor's center operations.**
- **The Harrison Street pedestrian safety issues have been adequately addressed. We support the use of contrasting color and textured pavers at the Harrison Street parking entrance and urge SDOT to support this, as well.**
- **The exterior materials palette, as presented today is satisfactory and includes high grade finishes.**
- **The signage program as presented today is also satisfactory.**

Proponent's Presentation

Public Access to the Roof

The Commission's request to look at creative and ingenious ways to allow public access to the roof has been explored. It is not possible to allow public access. The underlying ownership of the building lies with Seattle Center. The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation will be responsible for the maintenance of the green roof and the one on their campus, as well. The slope of the roof allows views from the street and there will also be public observation opportunities from the Space Needle.

Visitor Learning Center

This area was moved to be above grade on Fifth Avenue for heightened visibility. This is an opportunity to share the mission of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation with the public. The "First Person Voice Zone" gives an opportunity to share stories regarding the foundation. The façade is very open and the green roof was expanded to cover the Visitor Learning Center. The Learning Center is generally one level, with a small mezzanine space on the north end.

Building and Roof Materials

Natural copper will frame the roofing and siding and will continue to evolve and change over time. The green roof now totals 65k sf, up from 54k sf. The plant palette and soil type have been decided with emphasis on drought tolerant plants with irrigation, too. Limestone may be used for corner entry to visitor center. A blended pattern CMU of matching color will be used for the remainder of the garage. A painted aluminum mullion system with a warm tone will frame the windows.

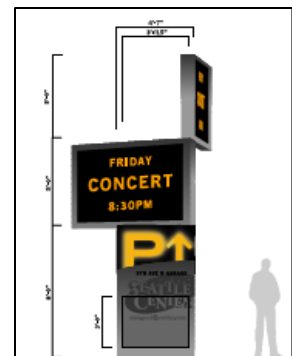


Plaza Form

The plaza arrangement of seating is playful and allows flexibility. A larger scale and more open scheme was chosen to allow diversity and vibrancy. For bench materials, a quartzite stone was chosen in a mosaic pattern with a glowing interior glass center. Peter Davis, a local artist, has developed a sample that is warm with orange and red. A patterned trench grate was also selected that reflects the 60s character of Seattle Center. The plaza will have a gray precast concrete paver to provide warmth and texture. For the sidewalk benches which are long and wide, Jara wood was selected over Ipe, as it has a longer life. The safety concerns along Harrison have been addressed through materials by using yellow warning pavers to alert drivers of pedestrians. SDOT will need to approve this.

Wayfinding

The goal of wayfinding was to minimize the number of objects needed to direct traffic. Therefore there are three types: iconic elements which are posts that stand 11' to 14' high, electronic display media to allow messaging for events occurring on campus and nominal building signage. The family of signage elements ties into that of the rest of Seattle Center. There are four external sites for directional and informational signage located at main access points to the garage. An integral display reader board, like that at McCaw Hall, will be used that can be changed remotely and in real time. It features 3 fixed planes on one column and will be located at the corner. There is also a branded element for Seattle Center on the base of the signs. Inside the garage, a color gradient on the circulation core will be used to



differentiate levels in the garage with street level being neutral to highlight the artwork.

Public Comments

The Gates Foundation campus was subject to neighborhood design review. A MUP has been issued for the Garage, but the Design Commission must sign off on final design changes before Cof O.

Commissioner Questions and Comments

- Will the Visitor Center be open in the evening?
 - This is yet to be determined.
- How will the copper drain off the green roof? Is there filtering? Will the stain go into the storm water system?
 - There are drains in the green roofs at all the low points. There should not be any staining or dripping due to the integral gutter system. The city would not allow the runoff to go into the storm system, but required use of combined sewer/storm pipes.
- Will the benches glow at night?
 - Yes, they will be illuminated subtly and low to the ground for comfort.
- Are these internally lit?
 - Yes, those at Seattle Center will be not as bright.
- Vinyl lettering will be used for pedestrian signs on glass?
 - Yes, it is one of many media that could be used and it sounds not ideal but works quite well.
- Can you discuss the green roof more?
 - Soil types and a plant list have been developed, but not finalized. Tests have eliminated some native species given the frost and dry spring.
- Will there be an irrigation system?
 - Yes, the rotors are set about 30 feet apart and this relieves the worries about excessive droughts, if there is a need.
- Is the elevator shaft glass?
 - It is glass with a film core inside that will be translucent.
- How do people know that to access the Gates Foundation they should use a specific door?
 - There is internal pedestrian oriented signage in the garage directing people to various locations, including the Foundation, the Center House, the Theater District, etc.
- The Plaza on the corner of Fifth and Harrison, is there a way to turn light beacons towards Seattle Center? There should be more attraction from across the street.
 - There is a clear view from EMP. The trunks of the trees and space will allow views to the benches and also the light poles. The glowing beacon in the art will also pull people from across the street. This rotation of the plaza has been explored to attract Seattle Center patrons.
- Can you talk more about the art? Where will it go?
 - A local artist who specializes in colored glass has been selected. Art will be privately owned. Very primary colors will be used. Piece will hang just behind Harrison plaza glazed entry.



- How will you present the green roof to the public?
 - The slope will allow presentation of the green roof. Also, next to the espresso stand there is an opportunity to present information to the public.
- Is there a reason public parking is not on the signage? It should be clear that Seattle Center patrons are to use this.
 - This will be branded as the Seattle Center garage, the iconic ‘P’ is extended to all other parking lots at Seattle Center.
- The Seattle Center logo needs to come up more.
- The gradual evolution of the 5th Avenue design is impressive. Is this the last evolution?
 - The family of materials is clear; however the store fronts are not quite set.
 - 3 proposals still, but the basic mass and volume will not change
- Push animation of street more and encourage later hours for the Visitor Center.
- The plaza is fantastic. There is a lot of stuff in there; is that too much? Will skateboarders trash these items? The combination of stone and wood is nice.
- Are there going to maintenance standards for the green roof for the Gates Foundation? This must be included in a legal document.
 - We are just beginning to draft that.
- The directional signs and reader board are located at fragile intersections and 3 planes for the reader board is awkward.
 - The renderings lack details. This configuration makes the mass of the pole element less. There was a need to address views from two different ways. Compared to what Seattle Center has had, these are slim.
- The Harrison Street safety issues have been addressed well.
- The Design Commission has not examined the east side of the building. It is good to see that there is activity in this area.
 - A service lane will run due east of the building, but the SE corner will be partially exposed and the same CMU cladding will be used here as on other facades, but there will also be a strong vegetative buffer at the corner.
- The glass façade will look like junk if it is not maintained properly.
- The SW corner where the plaza meets the visitor’s center is interesting and is at a slightly different level than the sidewalk. This transition point needs to be done well with all the materials meeting here.
- We support the use of the contrasting pavement to delineate the Harrison parking entrance.

17 May 2007 Project: **Seattle Center Long Term Investment Program**
Phase: *Design Concepts*
Previous Reviews: 21 Dec 2006, 18 Jan 2007, 5 Apr 2007
Presenters: Robert Nellams, Seattle Center
Jill Crary, Seattle Center
Dennis Forsyth, SRG Partnership
Attendees: Janet Pelz, Pelz Associates
Peter Dobrovolny, DPD
Jeanne Iannucci, NBBJ
Bob Shay, NBBJ

Time: 1.5 hours

(SDC Ref. #169/RS0611)

Summary

The Design Commission appreciates the update on the Seattle Center Long Term Investment Program and offers the following summary of comments:

- We would like to remind the team that one of our jobs is to advise City Council and the Mayor on the wise allocation of city funds, so please keep us apprised of the financial implications.
- We appreciate the other places and sites example images that you have developed.
- We continue to encourage concentrating on creative programming of the myriad venues at Seattle Center, particularly the Center House.
- We encourage emphasis on successful, high quality uses and spaces at-grade as opposed to an emphasis on sub-grade facilities.
- We support continued cooperation between the Pacific Science Center and the Seattle Center, particularly in looking at bringing more openness to the corners, namely Second Avenue and Denny Way.
- We like the idea of the dispersion of attractions at the Center and the inclusion of an iconic element or attraction reminiscent of the Fun Forest, not necessarily a Ferris wheel.
- We would like to see the development of a graphic that illustrates the intentions and programmatic goals included in the final plan.
- We encourage you to strengthen the depiction and explanation of circulation within the Center and recognize the importance of circulation as a framework that can bind all of these pieces together.
- We encourage the organization of the plans into frames of reference such as the mission of Seattle Center so that the alternative plans can be evaluated or measured against the larger ideas.
- The incorporation of sustainability goals is encouraged.

Proponent's Presentation

The last round of public meetings has been completed. The Citizens 21 Committee is preparing its final report for delivery to the Mayor and City Council.

How Plans Have Changed

A board was developed for the public that expresses the location of portals and pedestrian paths. The loading and parking is also shown along with monorail connections, major streets, bus routes

and major passages to the Center House. Development of a streetcar along Mercer is also referenced in the final report but is not shown as Seattle Center would not be the lead agency for this and deserves larger discussion. Another diagram shows the context of Seattle Center with the surrounding area, from the Sound and South Lake Union as well as its relation to the Olympic Sculpture Park. All four concepts have been refined since April and these will be studied in a full EIS process which is the next step. These include:

Plan 1: No Action

Plan 2: Center of the Center

For the stadium zone, this shows potential shared use between the School District and Seattle Center with the upper grandstands removed. There is also potential development shown in the School District parking lot to east side. In the Center of the Center zone, the amphitheatre is expanded to the east and open space with a new water feature were also added (included in plans 2, 3 and 4).

Plan 3: Green Window

This plan opens up a cohesive green window to the south east, all the way to the Center House. There is still a fountain area and kids play area. The Center House remains. A new amphitheatre is placed over parking in the memorial stadium site with wide entries to the east side. There is an underground exhibition hall to replace the currently Exhibition Hall. The NW corner was also opened up using a small pavilion with a bookstore, information, coffee or another function. Private Development on the Mercer Garage site is possible with the move of parking capacity under the new amphitheatre, removing the sky bridge over Mercer St.

Plan 4: East-West Axis

The east-west axis throughout the campus has been opened up from Key Arena to Memorial Stadium. The maximum height limits of 85 feet are tested in this scenario. The Mercer Arena, shown as an Opera site in plans 2 & 3, is shown as potential private development in this plan. The underground exhibition hall is twice the size as shown in plan 3. The northwest corner of 2nd and Thomas St. has been identified as an outdoor activity area and the site of a potential skateboard park.

Comments From Previous Meetings

Previously comments were made regarding the use of glass on the Center House and if it could be reduced. There are three general options being explored showing a range of glass use. Another suggestion was to include additional picture boards for the public to show the look and feel of buildings not yet designed. These were added using exemplary projects. The financial analysis brought up at the last meeting was discussed including capital costs, and operating/revenue impacts. The committee reviewed initial capital costs for this potential 20 year plan that are consistent with the \$700 million dollars of combined public and private investment in Seattle Center over the past 17 years. On the operating side, initial assessment indicates that as long as there is a balance of programming and commercial space going forward, the open space that is envisioned in the concept plans can be afforded within the current range of General Fund support.

Sustainability has also been addressed more fully with a charrette hosted by the AIA Cote/Cascadia Green Building Council in April. The Living Building Challenge and the One Planet Living Principles were used as a platform for discussions. One general proposal was created which outlines goals, strategies and action steps. One big idea was to use Seattle Center as the first Carbon Neutral World's Fair site. Other ideas focus on on-site water and energy reclamation and food harvesting for local restaurants on a network of green spaces and roofs.

We expect to reach a preferred alternative by January 2008. There are public meeting requirements associated with the Draft EIS as we work towards the preferred alternative and it seems like the next milestone for fertile discussion with the Commission would be around this public process. Seattle Center and SDC staff will meet in the near future to determine that schedule.

Commissioner Questions and Comments

- Will you do an economic study? This is helpful to the Commission.
 - An ongoing funding analysis is underway and will continue. The Committee decided not to include any detail in their report as it was premature but it is understood that it will be needed further on in the process.
- From the public point of view, is Plan 4 what we should focus on?
 - The public liked 3 and 4. There has not been much negative feedback for any plans. We have been pushed to go further, into some elements such as housing or play fields but those are not our mission. Plan 4 received the most comments. Elements from plan 2 may also be included in the final preferred concept. The preferred alternative will probably include elements for all 3 plans.
- What were the objections from concert and large festival organizers?
 - The reduction of seats with the removal of Memorial Stadium and/or the upper stands would be detrimental, but we believe this will be mitigated with the new amphitheater.
- Using Millennium Park as an example is appreciated; that's a great model.
- Is phasing part of the plan at this point?
 - Once we have the preferred alternative we will work on how to phase and sequence implementation to avoid disruption for the resident organizations. Some of that analysis has begun.
- What is the length of this plan?
 - 20 years.
- The programmatic energizing of Center House needs to be addressed.
 - This was addressed in depth at the previous meeting.
 - The idea is to open it up on the sides with views to the middle. People want a variety of restaurants. A terrace is included on the roof that would accommodate a high-end restaurant. The public stage area is greatly enhanced. A teen center is currently included in plans. The public is brought from the garage into Center House for increased foot traffic. There are underground connections to other buildings also. A lounge (where the orb is) could be used for meetings, etc. Spaces programmed should be flexible.
- The exhibition hall below the new green is not described anywhere. Plans should be more "real." I would encourage the team to worry less about activating the floor below and focus on the ground plane. There seem to be disconnects and inconsistencies in the plan details.
 - PNB has an option to take over the current Exhibition Hall (under the Phelps Center). Plan 3 replaces that space so Seattle Center can retain the current activity. Plan 4 doubles this space based on recommendation for the minimum floor space needed to attract a wider range of events. Both will be studied in the EIS.
- Can you talk more about the Memorial Stadium acquisition?

- The groundwork for plans to proceed is being worked right now. There is a team that is currently exploring the options. Working staff to staff is the chosen approach and we are optimistic about the outcome.
- Is there any progress on the Science Center?
 - The Science Center is beginning their own master planning process. They are exploring partnerships also with other organizations. We have remained aligned through this C21 planning process and that's been helpful.
- What are the wheels shown on the plans?
 - They are symbols for attractions. The Fun Forest will not be replaced. One option would be for just a few signature rides such as Ferris wheel as shown in plan 4.
- The dispersal of these attractions throughout the campus is appreciated.
- More temporary festivals are encouraged.
 - There is a tremendous amount of pressure on Seattle Center to have temporary festivals. There need to be permanent structures, too.
- There is a need to juggle the desires of the immediate community and the broad community. It is important to get the design and program intentions in front of the Commission and clear with the public and elected officials, as well. Expression and education are pivotal themes for the Center and should be actualized.
- Zones or areas could be shown diagrammatically to illustrate challenges and uses.
- Plan 4 is the preferred option and offers the most. The team should describe how this plan can take place. There is room for the full design potential of the site to be realized in plan 4 more than other plans.
- The Commission encourages you to look beyond your current audience.
 - The current Master Plan went so far as to envision specific use for private property along 5th Ave and Mercer St. Those are included in these plans as the current Master Plan is the basis for these plans. .
- The circulation and walkways are not as obvious as in the earlier diagrams and lack a coherent theme.
 - We are constantly balancing the attraction of a single overarching “theme” with our desire to be a gathering place for some many divergent activities. The EIS is quantifiable, but the master planning process is more conceptual and can communicate the extent beyond the four options within the EIS.
- The sustainability workshop was great. Focus on site resources and reuse.
- Need a theme to describe the overall landscape and site integration envisioned in the LTIP, distinct from the current hodgepodge.
 - Flexibility, Vibrancy, Legibility and Sustainability are the primary goals. The overarching vision is A Gathering Place, bringing people in.
- The team should take the words and put them into the diagrams and make them pictorial and visual.

17 May 2007 Project: Commission Business

Time: 0.5 hours

ACTION ITEMS

- A. Timesheets
- B. Minutes from 04/19/07 and 5/3/07/Bell
Unanimous approval of 04/19/07 minutes from the Commission with the incorporated changes from Bruce Rips.
The minutes from 05/03/07 have been tabled to the next meeting.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

- C. DC Issue Paper/Ryan
- D. Actions vs. Summaries/Kiest
- E. Outside Commitments/All

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- F. Green Factor Workshop, 5/30, 12-1:30pm, back at City Hall
- G. PC/DPD Industrial Lands Forum #4, 5/31, 4:30-6:30pm, City Hall

17 May 2007	Project:	DPD Planning Division Update
	Phase:	<i>Bi-Monthly Update</i>
	Presenters:	John Rahaim, Department of Planning and Development
	Attendees:	none

Time: 1.0 hours

(SDC Ref. #220)

Summary

The Commission appreciates the project updates and the chance to discuss issues of design significance.

Briefing

Waterfront

Council has reestablished the proviso that prevents us from using the money allocated for the waterfront. For DPD, the primary concern is allocating a portion of the \$8 million recently approved by Council for the Urban Mobility Study to urban design and not put all of this funding for transportation.

Colman Dock and King Street Station

The City still does not have ownership of the King Street site. The question remains what the scope of work should be, if it is just building renovation or extends beyond. King Street Station will be more active when the bus tunnel reopens in the fall. The State Legislature is withholding most funding for Colman Dock for two years. Washington State Ferries has requested a third boat at Colman Dock and the City has serious concerns remain about increased traffic. This is generally not advisable as a priority; another Bremerton boat is encouraged to avoid sprawl in Kitsap County.

Green Factor

There has been a great turnout of participants at the workshop series this spring. The simplicity of the format has been great and they have been well organized and well received. One challenge to Green Factor implementation seems to be very large sites due to lot area.

Multi-Family Recode

This section of the land use code is being redone. The design of townhouses is an important part in this effort. The number of townhouses being built is staggering; they are growing rapidly. The multi-family code will change the requirements, for instance setbacks. The design issues need to be improved. The other question is density; some of these properties are being underdeveloped, which results in lower density and unmet growth targets city-wide. A workshop is being held next week to get input from the design and development community. Design Commission members would be welcome. It was decided that two members will attend.

University District Planning

DPD has put this effort and the idea of community workshops on hold until next year. This area may be appropriate for high-rise development given the addition of the Light Rail station and Safeco property purchase. Several of the surface parking lots are owned by the same entity and

they are reluctant to redevelop. Another challenge is the lack of ownership among retail stores on University Way.

Civic Square

There is still not a purchase and sale agreement, although there is a signed letter of intent. The Design Commission conducted an early look at the project design last month and joint reviews with the DRB are planned in the coming months.

17 May 2007 Project: Commission Outreach

Time: 1.0 hours

Design Commission Web Updates

Tom Iurino briefly reviewed his recent work updating the Design Commission web page. This is expected to go live mid to late-June.

Annual Site Tours and the 2007 Bi-Annual Awards Program

The 40th Anniversary is approaching for the Design Commission Bi-Annual Awards. These awards look at exemplary projects the Design Commission has reviewed in the previous two years. This will be held in late 2007. It has been proposed that the annual site tours in September should include the short-list of potential recipient projects for the Bi-Annual Awards.