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APPROVED MINUTES OF THE MEETING

August 6, 2009

Convened 8:30 am
Adjourned 4:30 am

Projects Reviewed

Westlake Transportation Hub Strategy
Lake Union Park Master Plan
Center for Wooden Boats
DPD Director's Update
Linden Ave N Improvements
Urban Design Framework for Central Portland

Commissioners Present

Brendan Connolly, Chair
Andrew Barash
Julie Parrett
Nathan Polanski
Dennis Ryan
Norie Sato

Commissioners Excused

Graham Black
John Hoffman
Mary Johnston
Julie Bassuk

Staff Present

Guillermo Romano
Valerie Kinast
Tom Iurino
Jeff Arango

Celebrating 40 Years 1968-2008



August 6, 2009

Project: Westlake Transportation Hub Strategy

Phase: Design Development

Last Reviewed: N/A

Presenters: Casey Hildreth, SDOT
Robert Scully, DPD

Attendees: Darby Watson, SDOT
Marc Stiles, Daily Journal of Commerce

Time: 1 Hour

(121/RS02032)

ACTION

The Design Commission thanks Casey Hildreth of SDOT for the presentation on the Westlake Transportation Hub Strategy presentation. The Commission appreciates that the work has been coordinated with the Department of Parks and Recreation. As the plans for the streetcar and the bored tunnel to replace the viaduct solidify, so too will the data underlying the planning for this area of the city. Commissioners especially appreciate the challenges and potentials presented because this area is where the grids of the downtown streets collide. One important aspect of the plan will be to knit together this area to a more usable space and draw more people through the space toward the north. The Commission is pleased to see the multi-modal approach include consideration of taxis and cargo trucks, which are prevalent in the area. The following concerns and/or recommendations were voiced:

- Show more clearly the formal parameters and strategies that underlie the work, and distill these into design principles. Anchor the principles of the design such that with time it retains its power to influence future improvements in the area.
- Consider how the Westlake axis, which is bisected by Westlake Center, can be reconnected. This is an important corridor that is no longer readable as one entity. Providing continuity in the space reaching from Westlake Plaza north along 5th Ave., through McGraw Square and up Westlake Ave. should be a central goal of the Westlake Hub Transportation Strategy. Transforming the “back door” nature of the northeastern corner of Westlake Center will be an important part of this. While shifting the monorail stop south may be a long term solution in this regard, there may be less complicated interventions that would help. An artist may be able to transform the nature of the columns of the Monorail stop structure and/or create an iconic feature and help make a connection from here to Westlake Plaza.
- Think about finding a common perceivable design datum for the hub area. This could be a consistent, connecting physical design element that expresses a common vocabulary.
- Create clearer graphics for the presentation of the proposal.

Presentation

The coming of the streetcar and light rail provided a new opportunity to plan for Westlake Center as a transportation hub. The area has long served as a transportation hub since the early 1900's. The project area is bounded by Westlake, Olive and Stewart. The Westin Hotel is located in this area along with the Bank of America and two small Parks Department properties, McGraw Square and Westlake Square.

The work on this area goes back roughly 8 years, from 2002 or 2003. Streetscape improvements were the original intention of the work, but it has been expanded to include planning for Westlake as a transportation hub. A central open space in the Denny triangle was a principal focus of past planning work for the area along with increased density. A roundabout has been studied for this area as well as improving the streetcar terminus.

Center City Transportation Framework

The Westlake hub strategy incorporates several other larger studies including the streetcar network plan, the bicycle master plan and the center city-parking program. The planning efforts have been based on the assumption that the surface option would be implemented for the Alaskan Way Viaduct Project because it was the most constrained. The fact that the tunnel is now being implemented still gives resonance to the assumptions used in the early planning, but the tunnel allows for more emphasis on the public space elements.

Project Goals

Create a shared public/private vision for the Westlake hub

Identify short and long term recommendations to capture a range of opportunities

Leverage current planning and anticipated projects for hub development.

Study area is bounded by Pine, Virginia, 4th Ave. and 7th Ave.

Westlake Hub Characteristics

Westlake is a hub district

High quality urban design and integrated public spaces are key to the district's success

Place-making strategies need to provide localized variety within a larger spatial framework

Three distinct spaces include Times Square, Fifth Ave. Connector, Westlake Station. The goal is to keep the unique identity of each, but knit them together.

Times Square, the historic name of the area near the Westin and Bank of America, will serve as the "north hub" through a series of pedestrian and public space improvements. One option is to close Westlake Ave. to traffic between Olive and Stewart and to integrate McGraw Square into a new streetcar plaza. Over time the grid will be knitted back together and Westlake will be de-emphasized as a vehicular corridor through a series of public realm improvements.

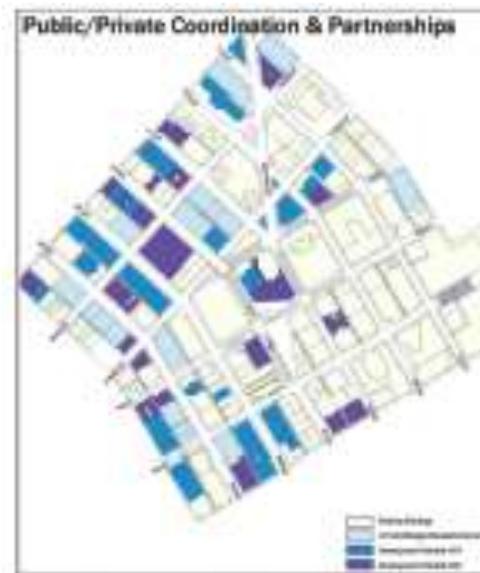
5th Ave. Connector – A boulevard framework is being explored as is creating shared spaces. One proposal is to utilize monorail columns as a visual landmark and "canvas" for improved way-finding.

Westlake Station – The approach here is to increase street-level visibility and access to station entrances, provide more direct connections to streetcar and Monorail, and consider a variety of measures to address pedestrian capacity on Pine Street. The team proposes removing the Pine Street bus-island and widening the sidewalk in front of the Century Square station entrance.

An even shorter-term proposal is being considered to address immediate problems with behavior in the public space including demolishing some of the existing structures of Westlake Square, the brick, 60s era plaza east of



Transit Integration



Public/Private Partnerships

the Sheraton at 6th, Stewart, and Olive. Olive Way sidewalk widening is to be completed in 2010 along with 7th Ave. bicycle improvements.

Commissioners' Comments & Questions

It seems like a very rich and complicated project you are dealing with. You mentioned the way-finding along 5th Ave., is there a formal list that you have in order of importance?

We have not filled out a list for a 10-year strategy, which will be done. Early on we focused on private development and trying to leverage that, which is not feasible now with the collapse of the economy.

Regarding bicycles, the bicycle infrastructure seems a little underrepresented, how much involvement with the bicycle community has there been?

We're getting ready to do that now, but we have worked closely with our bicycle planning staff at SDOT. We've focused on bicycle facilities up to this point including covered bicycle parking.

In terms of routing for bicycles and the conflicts with the streetcar, it seems like there are some challenges.

We are trying to address and minimize these conflicts. Transit and bicycle priority is addressed in several areas of the study area. The emphasis is on the trail network as the backbone of the bicycle network.

Will this plan become an adopted plan within the City?

No, it won't be formally adopted. It will be a living document. We'll provide a lot of the information online along with one page write-ups on specific projects that can be used to secure grant money.

Somehow these principals and basis for the study should be nailed down a little more to prevent a shift in direction that could result when there are changes in political offices.

A set of guidelines will be developed that may help with your concern.

For me the strongest part of the transportation was when you showed the slides from the 1950's movements in the area for cars and people in contrast to the plan approach.

When I look at it the 5th Ave. connector seems like such a key part of the plan. There is no connection existing today that is clear and strong.

The idea of an iconic symbol that connects these areas is really important and goes beyond the power of signs and maps. It could be a color or type of paving.

The retail sales are significantly less along 5th Ave. as a result of the columns of the monorail providing a visual barrier.

5th Ave. is a really powerful concept.

If you are to redevelop these two parks projects, in thinking about the materials that might be used and the Westlake plaza design might influence these to tie them together. Stepping back and having some key goals and a diagram that shows all the areas together would be helpful since this is such a complicated plan. The colors are fighting against each other so more variety might help and the font size could be reduced in some cases. Images of the area would also be helpful to orient people to the area.

Have there been studies to find out about the history of the two parks slated for redevelopment?

McGraw square is a landmark and it will have to go through the landmarks board. Westlake Square was developed in the 60's, which includes a nice fountain that we will try to keep, but will reduce the hiding

places in these parks. We're also looking at ways to activate the space including adding tables and chairs as well as mobile vending.

August 6, 2009	Project:	Lake Union Park
	Phase:	Design Update
	Last Reviewed:	September 2, 2004, June 19, 2003, March 6, 2003, and December 19, 2002
	Presenters:	Toby Ressler, Department of Parks and Recreation
	Attendees:	Heron Scott, Center for Wooden Boats Andy Rovelstad, Center for Wooden Boats Matt Robins, Leavengood Architects David Leavengood, Leavengood Architects Tim Gallagher, Department of Parks and Recreation Alex Bennett, Center for Wooden Boats John Nesholm, Seattle Parks Foundation
Time: 1 hour		(169)

ACTION

The Design Commission thanks Toby Ressler of the Department of Parks and Recreation for his update on the Lake Union Park Master Plan. Commissioners are excited to hear that construction is half way complete and that the park is on track to open next summer. They are glad that the Parks Department is coordinating with other departments and agencies on such things as the interface with the Mercer project, parking, access, signage, way finding, lighting, and grading. The paths in the grove area offer strong structure, and the chosen surfacing of the paths downplays the structure in a positive way. There are good seating opportunities. Commissioners like that the grove area is more of a plaza and not a grass area. A street vacation will be required for the part of Terry Avenue that runs into the park. The Design Commission will review this once an application has been made. The Parks Department's internal ProView team and the Parks Foundation Board have reviewed and will continue to review how well the elements of the park, such as the Center for Wooden Boats and the Chesiahud Trail, fit into the Master Plan. The Design Commission will be watching over this when they review individual projects in the park also. One recommendation the Commission would like to make to the Parks Department is that the wayfinding system of the park be well coordinated among all players. The way-finding system must be strong and clear, given the variety and scale of the elements of the park.

Presentation

The Mercer and Valley project team collaborated on the design of Lake Union Park, which includes the Center for Wooden Boats and the Museum of History and Industry. The southern edge of the park in the grove area will have either crushed shells or granite. The park is halfway through construction.

Commissioners' Comments & Questions

Could you talk about where cars have access to the park?

Access will be via two parking lots, one south of the Armory and one along Valley. There is a service road that provides access to the park and the Armory building. There will be a keycard gate next to the Valley parking lot to limit access to the parking adjacent to the Armory. Emergency vehicles will be able to use the service road. Parking at the Valley parking lot will be metered with a two and four hour limits. Right in only off of Valley, on way out vehicles travel through the parking lot and there will be a traffic light to provide egress via Terry.

Does the Parks Dept. have a maintenance facility on-site?

No, everything is brought in via trucks.

Why are there rectangular patterns where there are diagonal paths?

The rectangle for CWB was meant as a placeholder.

How much has the path system been coordinated with the overall design of the facility?

The paths were there first and CWB new facilities have coordinated with those pathways.

Do you foresee that in the crushed granite areas there will be seating and lighting?

It is currently included in the plans.

Will wooden decking be used to connect the main building for the Center for Wooden Boats to their other buildings to the east?

Currently it is not but may be worth exploring.

How does the process work for design changes?

Parks Foundation Board and the Parks Department must agree to any design changes.

What is the review process for the structures that are being planned in the park, like the Center for Wooden Boats, the Northwest Native Canoe Center, and the changes to the Armory by the MOHAI?

The Parks project manager reviews how the proposal fits into the overall Master Plan for the park, and the Parks Department's internal ProView committee reviews the plans with this in mind. In addition the Park Foundation reviews any design proposals.

The park has a lot of different elements and uses. I'm wondering about the wayfinding concept and how someone will understand what is there and how to access it?

There is a plan to do way-finding in the park. We are in the process of creating the style guide for the Park. We expect that this design will have its own character and be slightly different from standard parks department signage.

Where are there restroom opportunities in the park?

There are six restrooms open to the public at existing and future facilities.

In terms of wayfinding, I would encourage you to take that on sooner rather than later.

August 6, 2009	Project:	Center for Wooden Boats
	Phase:	Schematic Design
	Last Reviewed:	September 18, 2008
	Presenters:	Alex Bennett, CWB Andy Rovelstad, Leavengood Architects David Leavengood, Leavengood Architects Heron Scott, CWB
	Attendees:	Heron Scott, Center for Wooden Boats Andy Rovelstad, Center for Wooden Boats Matt Robins, Leavengood Architects David Leavengood, Leavengood Architects Tim Gallagher, Department of Parks and Recreation Alex Bennett, Center for Wooden Boats John Nesholm, Seattle Parks Foundation

Time: 1 Hour

(122)

ACTION

The Design Commission thanks the project team of the Center for Wooden Boats for their presentation of the design development stage of the future Center for Wooden Boats building. The Commission applauds the ongoing interrelationships among all the partners on the site. The commission expressed serious concern that the project is not at a resolved design development state as presented, but after consideration, the Commission grants conditional approval of the design development phase with a unanimous vote. Approval is granted pending subsequent review by the chair, other Commissioners as appropriate, and Design Commission staff, of 1) the explanation and refinement in the designs of the primary building systems (structural, mechanical, and sustainability strategies including daylighting), and 2) consideration of the following comments:

- Work with the other partners in the park to give significant attention to resolving the waste management issues associated with the various functions.
- Clarify site circulation and connectivity needs among the Center for Wooden Boats' various structures and work to achieve them with the partners in the park. A primary concern is bridging the service road and its many demands.
- Identify and develop the sustainability opportunities and strategies, including natural cooling, solar access, and other active and passive strategies for energy and water conservation and efficient building performance.
- Ensure that the necessary programmatic relationships among the Center for Wooden Boats' various facilities is achieved.
- Devote attention to achieving greater clarity in the structural and mechanical systems within these three closely associated volumes. This building is inherently of and for the building of wooden boats, and as such should express the logic and craft of the components that comprise a wooden boat. Emphasize simplicity and consistency in all systems, especially in the treatment of exterior and interior materials and structural expression.

- **The Commission applauds the porosity and transparency of the building, but recommends the team consider security issues that could arise with a new facility with multiple blind entries in a much more public area. With regards to transparency, the commission also urges the team to work with the daylighting lab to study the implications of unprotected solar gain on building performance goals.**
- **Commissioners appreciate the objective to achieve campus unity with the wooden decking, but encourage the designers to pursue opportunities to activate the deck areas around the facility through fixed and unfixed furnishings, displays and program opportunities.**

Presentation

The purpose of the Center for Wooden Boats (CWB) is to:

- Put kids in boats
- Keep Northwest history alive
- Support lifelong learning
- Serve as a community service

The CWB provides an urban oasis. CWB has grown and has 16 full time equivalent staff and visitors in excess of 80,000 visitors a year.

Major design issues:

The program needs that were developed by staff dictated that they need a building that was three times the size of the building that could be built on the lot they obtained. Therefore, the program elements had to be spread over the site. The main building is approximately 10 thousand square feet. The CWB structures must tie into the park. The program demands a building that is very porous and doesn't have a front and back. Imagery is another question that needed to be answered, taken from existing structures and history to be interpreted into the design of the new facilities.

The existing site issues had to be incorporated into the site design such as the access road on the east side and the fountain. In terms of integration with the park, the building was pushed up to the edge of the fountain. It was a subtle change, but it created a lot of changes to the building. The amphitheater concept was eliminated as a result, but the front lobby area became an extension of the park. The building energizes the surrounding area of the park by being porous and allowing multiple entrances and exits. The building height is consistent with the lower two stories of the armory.

Services need to be dealt with such that they are handled at off times.

The building materials include a standing seam metal roof, wood windows, wood clapboard siding and a lot of wood exposed on the inside. Wood decking will be used around the building at the floor elevation.

Commissioners' Questions and Comments

In terms of the use of the decking, how does it relate to the other elements in the park and how does it identify the Center for Wooden Boats.

We want to tie this to the wharf detailing and decking, which is cedar.

There is a ramp in the building, how does that correspond with the decking?

The decking is at grade, there is a 12" grade change.

What is the slope on the exterior of the building along the decking?

About 1%.

In terms of crossing the access road, do you have ideas how this will be done effectively and safely?

It has to be developed as part of a broader discussion with the users of the area.

How are you dealing with runoff on such a tight site?

Below the deck will be used for a storm-water tank.

What other sustainability strategies are being used?

Keep the materials in light colors to reduce the heat island effect. Energy use reduction will be a challenge, but day lighting and natural ventilation is being explored.

The idea of using the decking to tie the main building into the other buildings to the east was brought up previously, can you address that issue? Perhaps just the paths connecting the buildings could be used to create a visual connection.

It's difficult to see from the site plan, but the buildings are visually tied together in terms of materials and scale.

About the deck around the building in terms of the inside and outside components. Are you providing exterior seating and opportunities for activity on the outside?

We're not looking at adding new furniture on the outside because we'd like to allow flexibility in the uses of the outdoor space.

The second story overhang with the library, I think is a great design element. It helps nail down the end of the fountain. A slight concern is how much storage space you need for waste.

The trash issue, currently everything is self-contained within a dumpster. We're going to work with the other users on the site to come up with a collective way of addressing the issue.

Can you describe the mechanical systems and materials of the building?

The northeast corner has a steel frame, the rest of the building has a wood frame.

There seems to be a lack of correspondence and characteristics of the mechanical systems and the relationships between the three portions of the main building. The structural bones aren't readying as clear as they could be.

I want to commend you guys on the partnership you have with Parks and Recreation and the other organizations using the park and surrounding area.

I'd really like to see some thought put into the linkage between the main building and the other structures on the site as well as crossings along the access road.

Have there been conversations about safety and security measures in the new building?

It will be kept fairly basic, no high tech security systems. The existing facility has never had any issues in this regard in the 30 years it's been in operation.

In terms of daylighting and natural ventilation, I would encourage you to model and address those issues.

August 6, 2009 **Project:** **DPD Director's Update**

Phase: N/A
Last Reviewed: July 3, 2008
Presenters: Diane Sugimura

Attendees: Jayson Antonoff, DPD

Time: 1 Hour

(220)

ACTION

The Design Commission thanks Diane Sugimura for her update of the activities of the Department of Planning and Development. The Commission is interested in the challenges posed by the state of the economy and was glad to hear that the department has initiated a system of offering permit extensions for projects that are on hold because of this. The updates on the multi-family code updates, the backyard cottages regulations, and South Downtown planning were informative. The Commission asks that DPD continue to consider all of the efforts holistically. Commissioners encourage the City to acknowledge the value of retail uses in public parks and open spaces, and rethink any codes that may limit such possibilities. In their experience of reviewing public projects, they see how retail can serve to activate public spaces, if done sensitively.

Presentation

The Commission was briefed by Diane Sugimura, DPD Director on its workload and current funding situation. The department is extremely busy but its major load of work is not related to new development. Still 85% of DPD's budget depends on development fees, so that is creating a challenge. Pre submittal and design guidance projects are higher than a month ago but still down 80% from a year ago. New development has not picked up a significant way, and the Department has seen more activity in tenant improvements, addition, remodels and alterations, while the volume is down 40% in terms of numbers, these types of project require a lot of staff time. The same has been for enforcement, work generally picks up during a down economy.

Some of the things that DPD is planning on doing in this down economy include:

- Permit extensions for MUP permits is being proposed to the City Council. The current proposal is to extend the permits for 6 years. The whole permit would be good for 6 years without renewal for projects that have come in since June of 2006.
- The revision process for permits is also being explored and how to make it a smoother process.
- A "hold" policy has been implemented. A two-year hold has been proposed to the applicants with the understanding that all fees must be paid.
- A new billing system revision is being considered that will provide more predictability

Other current planning initiatives:

- *Backyard cottages* – The proposal is currently before the City Council. Some citizens are concerned about "duplexing the city". A lot of support is coming based on the affordability benefits. In evaluating the projects that have been built in SE Seattle, many people who lived nearby a backyard cottage didn't even know they existed.
- *Multi-Family Code* – Going through the City Council now and has been in development for the last 3 years. The proposal addresses low, mid and high-rise multi-family development. Administrative design review will be required for any project with 3 or more units.

- *South Downtown Plan* - includes Pioneer Square, the International District, Little Saigon and the Stadium District
 - Pioneer Square – major issue is preserving the historic core, but having more development opportunities in the surrounding area.
 - International District – Similar concept as to Pioneer Square, but significant height changes are being considered east of the Fire Station #10 creating additional development capacity. Transfer of development rights are also being considered to sell additional development potential from the historic buildings to provide incentives for rehab and restoration.
 - Little Saigon – Trying to maintain Jackson and the core, looking at developing design guidelines for the community. One of the things we learned is that we had been working the business community and stakeholders, yet there is another part of the Vietnamese community that are consumers and provide social services and have strong opinions on the future of the neighborhood.
 - Stadium Area – Looking at the area south of Dearborn to allow both industrial and commercial uses.
- *South Lake Union* – The city doesn't have money for the EIS, but an urban design framework is being developed. The UD framework will provide an opportunity to address major UD issues like where is the heart of the neighborhood.
- *Green building Task Force* – An eighth month process has been ongoing to encourage more energy efficient buildings in the City. Options such as changing energy codes and other measures to improve efficiency are being considered. The goal of the Mayor is improve the efficiency of the existing building stock by 20%. Energy disclosure is also being considered at the local level for all buildings. Green-que is a priority permitting process for green building residential projects. A new sustainability policy for the City is also being developed to first address city buildings and perhaps later it will address private development.
- *Building Deconstruction* – The permitting process for deconstruction/demolition and new construction are now separated enough that a building can be deconstructed and recycled before the new permit issued. Prior to the permitting separation it was discouraging deconstruction in favor of total demolition.

Commissioners' Questions and Comments

Is there a menu of options for adjustments to the multi-family administrative design review?

No, it's not a menu. However, I've asked to further develop a list of examples and options that can assist in designing the project.

When we look at the fire levy and the green building goals, there was consideration to buy the geothermal equipment in bulk to be used in all facilities and it never was done. Thinking and acting as a city on these issues would be helpful.

The city could certainly benefit, and it's not just fire stations, from more efficiently addressing these issues in a cost effective way.

I think that the city could benefit from having small commercial uses (café, etc..) in city parks.

Many parks are in single family zones, which allow only uses that are customarily incidental the primary use and cannot be a destination restaurant in and of itself.

August 6, 2009	Project:	Linden Ave. N. Complete Street
	Phase:	Concept Design
	Last Reviewed:	September 18, 2008
	Presenters:	David Vijarro, SDOT
	Attendees:	N/A

Time: 1 Hour

(169/RS0606)

ACTION

The Design Commission would like to thank David Vijarro of SDOT for stepping in for Ken Lee, the project manager, and presenting the Linden Avenue North Improvements project.

The Design Commission votes three to three not to approve the concept design (30%) of the project. While the Commissioners understand the constraints of the project, the challenges of the project area, and difficulties of the utilities aspect of the project, they have strong recommendations that they ask the designers to address.

- Draw in the expertise of the urban design professionals in SDOT to address the issues of the Design Commission.
- Simplify the plans horizontally and vertically.
- Examine the potential for more midblock crossings, and their best locations and configurations.
- Reexamine the bike lane configuration and placement of the multi-use trail functions across the site.
- Reexamine the configuration and amount of parking that will be provided.
- Consider the potential for increased natural storm water drainage.
- Emphasize the highest and best urban design over maintaining the parking that is currently located in this stretch of right-of-way. Reevaluate the allocation of space, allowing prospective use of the corridor to lead over the idea of retaining what is there at the moment.
- Please provide a full plan of the corridor, in one continuous piece, at the next meeting, to aid in orientation and understanding of the site.

Presentation

145th Street to 128th Street is the project area. Project is at 30% design.

Project History

- April 2000 – SDOT received a small grant to develop concept drawings for improvements to Linden Ave from N. 130th to N145th Street.
- SDOT completed the interurban trail south of N 128th. City of Shoreline completed the Interurban trail north of N 145th Street.
- 2008 – SDOT participated in numerous interdepartmental meetings involving Seattle Public Utilities (SPU), Seattle City Light (SCL), Department of Finance (DOF) and the Department of Planning and Development (DPD).

- 2008 budget process, Council added funds to the CIP to begin design of the Linden Corridor.

Project Description

- 17 block long neighborhood collector street
- Vision includes constructing concrete sidewalks, roadway widening, bike lanes, landscaping, art, street lighting and natural drainage.
- Project also includes SPU and SCL components.

2009 Work-plan

- SDOT 30% Vision
 - Assess needs for right-of-way, construction staging, and property rights
 - Establish vertical profile and curb elevations
- Work with SPU and SCL to ensure their infrastructure needs do not conflict with proposed roadway,
- Preliminary work on SEPA
- SPU Wastewater: review sewer capacity lines to identify sewer line upgrades within the Linden Avenue Corridor
- SPU Water: reviewing future water capacity needs
- SCL: studying future transmission additions and existing distribution poles



Existing Conditions

Project Design

The project design includes two vehicular travel lanes, parallel parking on both sides, bike lanes, planting strip and sidewalks on both sides of the street. A large drainage swale will be incorporated on both sides of the ride. Some portions of the street have a middle turning lane and back-in perpendicular parking.

Schedule

- Public open house on 6/1/09
- 30% Design Achieved on 6/30/09
- Begin environmental phase on 6/30/09
- Report to Council on 9/1/09
- 60% Design 2nd Quarter 2010
- 90% Design 3rd Quarter 2010
- 100% Design 4th Quarter 2010

Citizen Feedback

- Maximize Parking and enforce parking time limits
- Provide continuous sidewalk system on both sides of Linden Ave. N, with safer crossings
- Find funds for construction of project
- Overall support for the project and would like to get something built

Commissioners' Questions and Comments

Can you put in a median and still maintain clearances?

I think so, but I'd have to look into it more.

What's the overall grade of the street?

Overall, it's fairly flat, but it does go down in elevation towards the south.

Were concerns about traffic speed raised at the public meetings?

It was identified as a concern, some residents want to keep a four way stop to reduce vehicular speed.

Have you worked with anyone in urban design within SDOT? It seems like part of this project is to spur private development and perhaps they could provide some insights?

I believe they were part of the interdepartmental teams early on in the project, but we haven't had that since.

Is there lighting?

Yes, roadway lighting will be included and we are exploring adding pedestrian lighting.

The back angle parking adjacent to the bike lane appears problematic.

Yes, but the back angle parking gives the driver better sight distance when pulling out.

I would like to see an image of the entire corridor.

Was there a discussion of designing a multi-modal trail along the corridor?

Yes, we looked at it, but it would require removing existing infrastructure.

How frequent will pedestrian crossings be along the corridor?

The crossings are more frequent on the southern end where there is more development and activity. Crossings for the most part are located every block.

August 6, 2009	Project:	Urban Design Framework for Central Portland
	Phase:	N/A
	Last Reviewed:	N/A
	Presenters:	Arun Jain, Urban Designer
	Attendees:	Marshall Foster, OPM Jie Ai Yang, UW Urban Design and Planning Phil Fujii, Vulcan

Time: 1 hour

(168)

Presentation

Mr. Jain worked as the urban design strategist for Portland from January 2003-March 2009 and has been an urban designer for over 25 years.

Do you take what you can get or do you take a more strategic approach to implementation. One of the biggest problems with the Portland Development Commission was that they were allowing inappropriate development on high value sites. The reaction from the PDC was whether or not the city wanted to risk having no development for 10-15 years.

How should we plan the future?

- Are we seeing things correctly?
- Fiscal crisis is a crisis of consumption
- Can we go back to business of usual?
- Is this a paradigm shift?
- Where are we going?
- What are we planning for?
- Is trend analysis a good basis?

Problems we face

- Fear of change
- Confused role of design
- Nostalgia and planning determinism
- Plurality and the citizen driven process

A new paradigm?

- Integrated thinking
- Adaptability
- Resilience
- Coherence
- Quality
- Diversity
- Sustainability
- Balance

The role of urban design

- Urban form
- Urban Quality

An urban design framework is needed to:

- Develop confidence about what we want
- Identify where great architecture and public spaces should be
- Provide direction to limited public resources
- Enhance, create and preserve

A robust urban design framework:

Builds upon qualitative characteristics rather than quantitative ones. Things are that are not measured like resilience, adaptability, design are fundamental to a robust urban design framework.

The urban design framework for Central Portland includes six areas of investigation including:

- History
- Precedents
 - Explored precedents in several other cities including Barcelona, Kyoto, Glasgow and Edinburgh
- Current Plan (88')
- Existing Conditions
- Plans already on the books
- Focus Issues

Urban design efforts can be diluted by trying to do too much in too many different places.

Portland had a 30 to 60 year supply of land in the downtown based on the analysis performed. The regulatory incentives should therefore encourage mid-rise development to fill out the downtown area.

Basis for Places

People congregate because they have:

- A need
- A want

The transit hubs and concentrations were then mapped into a bubble diagram.

- Districts and focal points were mapped.
- Network of preferred green corridors were also mapped. – They are designed for the elderly and children, and they connect significant open spaces within the city.
- Utilize all the existing conditions analysis as overlays to determine the areas that have the most potential for change, those that have the most features from each layer.

Commissioners' Questions and Comments

Where does this plan sit now in Portland?

The political leadership is more interested in short term results as opposed to long term vision. However, there is considerable interest in the plan. This work was the preface of getting more public involvement in the process. This was intended to be a template for public dialogue.

In terms of process, even without a public process you would likely look at the three sites you showed as examples, is the process justifying the outcome or vice versa?

These are not surprising sites, there had been ideas floated about some of the sites already, but the ideas were lukewarm. This process helped to elevate some of the sites based on the process.

Most of the great cities in the world are defined by water. The nodes are tied together by bridge crossings and it is fundamentally different from Seattle that has a linear waterfront. How much are the similarities and differences?

It's complicated, but there are cities that have very similar issues as Portland and it's relationship with the river such as Vienna.

It seems as though you are emphasizing links that aren't there today, but are invisible lines being brought to light. Is it because there were too many disasters that needed to be corrected that you were able to build upon past development and planning?

Portland has done things wrong as most cities and the issue is dilution and attempting to be too opportunistic.

One of the things that I find interesting about this plan is its ability to inspire developers and other people that might not have seen them the same way.