

## **Seawall and Waterfront Review Panel April 14, 2011 MEETING NOTES**

### **April 14, 2011 Panel Business**

- Review Process: Role and Background
- Update: Waterfront Seattle
- Presentation: Elliot Bay Seawall alternatives

Convened 3:00 pm / Adjourned 5:10 pm

### **Panel Members Present**

Julie Bassuk, Seattle Design Commission, Co-chair  
Josh Brower, Seattle Planning Commission, Co-chair  
Graham Black, Seattle Design Commission  
Catherine Benotto, Seattle Planning Commission  
Dan Corson, Arts Commission  
David Cutler, Seattle Planning Commission  
Martin Henry Kaplan, Seattle Planning Commission  
Bradley Khouri, Seattle Planning Commission  
Kay Knapton, Seattle Planning Commission  
Laurel Kunkler, Seattle Design Commission  
Kevin McDonald, Seattle Planning Commission  
Leslie Miller, Seattle Planning Commission  
Radhika Nair, Seattle Planning Commission  
Tom Nelson, Seattle Design Commission  
Osama Quotah, Seattle Design Commission  
Julie Parrett, Seattle Design Commission  
Christopher Persons, Seattle Planning Commission  
Matt Roewe, Seattle Planning Commission  
Norie Sato, Seattle Design Commission  
Debbie Wick-Harris, Seattle Design Commission (awaiting confirmation)

### **Panel Members Absent**

Kadie Bell, Seattle Planning Commission, Colie Hough-Beck, Seattle Planning Commission, Mark Johnson, Seattle Planning Commission, Malika Kirkling, Seattle Design Commission, Jeanne Krikawa, Seattle Planning Commission, Amalia Leighton, Seattle Planning Commission, Donald Vehige, Seattle Planning Commission

### **Staff**

Barbara Wilson, Katie Sheehy, Robin Magonegil; Seattle Planning Commission  
Valerie Kinast, Tom Iurino, Tera Hatfield, Jenny Hampton; Seattle Design Commission

**Guests:** None present (see notes for presenters)

## **Review Process: Role and Background**

**Presenters: Julie Bassuk and Josh Brower, Panel Co-Chairs Marshall Foster, DPD**

The panel members from the Seattle Design and Planning Commission introduced themselves noting their backgrounds and their involvement with their respective Commissions. Co-Chairs Bassuk and Brower gave brief introductions of the Design and Planning Commissions, respectively. Co-Chair Brower explained that the joint review panel will meet quarterly to provide input about the conceptual design of the waterfront redevelopment. He reminded the commissioners that meeting minutes will summarize the panel's discussion and be approved electronically. Mr. Foster reiterated that the panel has been brought together to review the conceptual design phase of Waterfront Seattle and that the Planning and Design Commissions will provide further guidance during subsequent phases.

## **Update Briefing Waterfront Seattle**

**Presenters: Steve Pearce and Hannah McIntosh, SDOT**

Steve Pearce reminded the panel that the second public design presentation would take place at 6:30pm on May 19 at Bell Street Pier. He explained that the project team has been coordinating closely with the Elliott Bay Seawall Project team and other stakeholders including the Port of Seattle, Pike Place Market, Aquarium and Washington State Ferries. He noted that there will be ample opportunity for public involvement. Hannah McIntosh provided summary of the survey results, which can be downloaded as a pdf [here](#).

### **Question & Answers/ Comments:**

**Q:** Does this work build on previous planning efforts?

**A:** The project team has reviewed the previous planning efforts and the guiding principles and are built on them. There were also lots of parallels between the responses to the public survey and previous studies.

**Q:** How is the project team responding to calls to keep at least a portion of the existing viaduct?

**A:** They are exploring a variety of opportunities, including a non-literal response. In the public survey, support for keeping at some portion of the viaduct peaked around the publication of an editorial that supported that idea in the Seattle Times.

**Discussion:** While most members of the panel felt that the engineering and cost associated with this idea make it an unattractive proposition and a low priority there were other members who expressed that retaining a portion of the viaduct, in some form, could be an asset to the project.

**Q:** Did the survey responses include comparisons to specific locations?

**A:** Most responses focused on a desired atmosphere rather than specific places. There were a few mentions of an Asian night market and providing floating hot tubs in Elliott Bay.

### **Discussion:**

While input from the public is essential, remember that people's ideas may be limited by what they already know, and the design team should not be constrained in offering unexpected solutions.

**Q:** What will be the next steps in the review process?

**A:** The next meeting of the panel is scheduled in early July and will be an opportunity for the panel to provide feedback on the initial design concepts. By the time the panel sees the concepts they will have had the benefit of input from the May 19 public meeting.

### **Elliott Bay Seawall Replacement: Presentation of Seawall Alternatives**

**Presenters: Stephanie Brown and Jennifer Wieland, SDOT; Drew Gangnes, MKA**

**Synopsis of presentation on Seawall Alternatives:** Presenters Stephanie Brown, Jennifer Wieland, and Drew Gangnes gave a [PowerPoint presentation](#) that overviewed the two bookend alternatives.

#### **Question & Answers/ Comments:**

**Q:** When was the original seawall built?

**A:** Oldest portions were built in 1903 with most of it built in 1930s and some rebuilt in the 1980s. It started failing in the 1950s.

**Q:** There were several questions raised regarding working with the Army Corps of Engineers specifically regarding costs and habitat restoration.

**A:** The advantage of working with the Corps is the expediting of federal permits but there are several unknowns. The Corps will perform a cost-benefit analysis and identify a preferred alternative based on that analysis, which is not likely to assign much benefit to habitat restoration. The federal government could contribute up to 65% of the cost of the Corps' preferred alternative for the seawall replacement. The City is able to move forward with a different alternative, but would have to pay for the difference between the two alternatives.

**Q:** How would the alternatives accommodate rising sea levels?

**A:** The alternatives use a model developed by the Office of Sustainability and the Environment that predicts rising sea levels. The City's continues to develop an adaptation strategy.

**Q:** Many questions were asked about coordination with the Waterfront Seattle design team and how the seawall alternatives would impact design opportunities.

**A:** The two alternatives provide for maximum flexibility and the two teams are coordinating closely around one vision for the redevelopment of the waterfront. The preferred alternative for the seawall replacement will be coordinated with the waterfront design. Different replacement alternatives can be built within the different zones. The actual placement of the seawall will not necessarily dictate the location of the nearshore or uplands. The two teams are exploring opportunities for 'early wins.'

**Q:** How will SEPA and NEPA be addressed?

**A:** The team anticipates that the NEPA can be adopted for SEPA as well.

**Q:** What sustainable development opportunities, such as district energy, ground source heat transfer, water treatment, be incorporated into the seawall replacement?

**A:** An initial sustainability workshop was conducted where initial opportunities were identified. The team continues to work with the utilities to explore options and expects to host another workshop, where panel members will be asked to participate. One opportunity might be to create a test case study for harnessing wave and/or wind energy.

**Q:** Will the final Right of Way (ROW) location be determined by the seawall? Will it impact design opportunities for the waterfront? What will be the width of the interim ROW?

**A:** The ROW that will be in place after completion of the seawall replacement will be a temporary condition with the final ROW determined by the waterfront design concept. The interim ROW will be constrained by the Viaduct, which will be demolished after the seawall replacement. The interim ROW will be 60' – four 11' travel lanes, one 12' multi-use trail, and a 4' buffer. The extent of the interim pedestrian corresponds to current conditions.

**Q:** If the location of the seawall does not necessarily determine the uplands, how will habitat be impacted?

**A:** Any overwater coverage will include light penetrating surfaces. The habitat impacts continue to be evaluated. The project team can provide more information about habitat impacts as a subsequent meeting.

**Q:** What is the timing of the waterfront redevelopment relative to the seawall replacement?

**A:** The actual timeframe has yet to be determined and will be contingent on funding. Demolition of the Viaduct could begin within a year after the seawall replacement has been completed and waterfront construction will last for several years.

**Q:** Will design materials, construction finishes, etc., be comparable between the seawall replacement and the waterfront redevelopment?

**A:** Materials have not been selected for either project yet and the teams will coordinate about the selection of these materials, which will take place further along in the design process.

**Q:** How do the different alternatives impact potential opportunities to touch the water?

**A:** Both alternatives provide comparable opportunities at each of the zones. Zone 4 has the greatest opportunity while Zone 2, because of the ferry terminal, has the least.

**Q:** Are opportunities to preserve some of the existing seawall as a design element being explored?

**A:** The design team can explore this option, but there will be significant contamination issues that would need to be resolved.

**Panel Comments:**

- There was general consensus among the panel that the “bookend” approach is reasonable, provides sufficient flexibility and allows look for opportunities.
- The Panel was very satisfied that the current range of alternatives captured maximum flexibility to allow for a wide range of opportunities for the James Corner Field Operations design process on the Waterfront Seattle project.
- The Panel noted that they were pleased that the options outlined the Seawall Project will move the workhorse components of the seawall but would result in no net loss to the public realm.
- The panel acknowledges alternatives retain the range of historic piers while also looking for opportunities that will be available within the bookend approach qualitatively will not be equal in terms of habitat, access to water, public space, etc.
- It was noted that the schedules of the Seawall and Waterfront projects do not preclude integrating the Waterfront design team’s ideas as the Seawall planning advances.

- The panel commends the work of the seawall replacement team and supports their exploration of opportunities for ‘early wins.’ At future presentations, the commissions would like to learn more about the sustainability components of the project.

### **Waterfront Seattle Review Panel Disclosures & Recusals**

#### **SPC Commissioners**

Catherine Benotto - a member of Commissioner Benotto’s firm, Weber Thompson, sits on the Central Waterfront Committee, Design Oversight Subcommittee, and the Stakeholder committee, all as a representative for Allied Arts.

David Cutler - works at GGLO, an integrated design and planning firm that advises clients and designs projects that may be impacted by work associated with the Seawall Replacement and Seattle Central Waterfront projects.

Colie Hough Beck - the firm she works for HBB has contracts with Community Groups, Seattle Parks, SDOT and SPU. HBB also works on multifamily and commercial projects in the city.

Mark Johnson - my firm, ESA, is currently assisting WSDOT Ferries with environmental planning for upgrades to Colman Dock, and Seattle Public Utilities with environmental planning for their combined sewer overflow plan, which includes facilities in the central waterfront. ESA also provide on-call environmental services to the Port of Seattle, although are not engaged in any work in the waterfront area for them at this time.

Bradley Khouri - b9 architects offices are located in Pioneer Square, a neighborhood directly affected by the work on the Seattle Waterfront. Commissioner Khouri is a co-Chair of AIA Seattle's Waterfront Committee.

Matt Roewe – Commissioner Roewe’s wife’s firm, EnviroIssues, is a consultant to the Seawall Project and the Alaskan Way Viaduct Replacement Project.

#### **SDC Commissioners**

Laurel Kunkler - the firm at which Commissioner Kunkler is employed is providing technical support to the city for projects unrelated to central waterfront visioning or design.

Julie Parrett – Commissioner Parret formerly worked for James Corner Field Operations (1999-2002) however, not on the project under review by the Seattle Design Commission. She is a co-founder of the People’s Waterfront Coalition and continues to work with this organization.

Norie Sato – Commissioner Sato’s studio is right on Alaskan Way, but right up against the viaduct on the east side. It is a possible demolition candidate during the tunnel building process. The Viaduct has been her very close neighbor for the 30 years she has been in her studio.