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APPROVED MINUTES OF THE MEETING

November 3, 2011

Convened 10:30am
Adjourned 3:30pm

Projects Reviewed

Mercer West II
South Lake Union Mobility Plan
Alaskan Way Viaduct – North End and Portal

Commissioners Present

Julie Bassuk, Chair (excused from 1:00pm-1:30pm)
Julie Parrett (excused from 11:00am – 2:00pm)
Tom Nelson
Osama Quotah (excused from 10:30am-1:00pm)
Norie Sato (Chair from 1:00pm-1:30pm)
Donald Vehige

Excused Commissioners

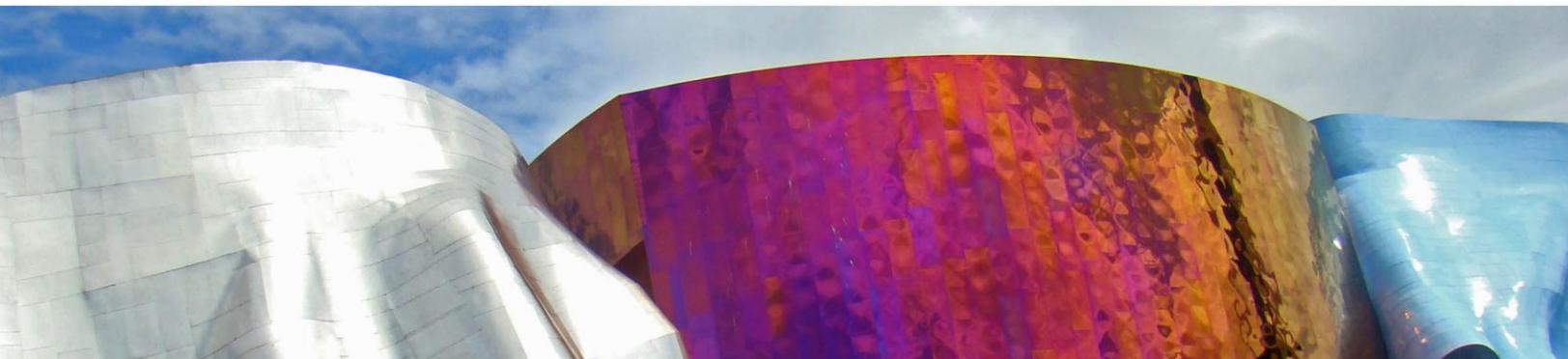
Malika Kirkling
Debbie Wick-Harris
Laurel Kunkler

Incoming Commissioners Present

Mary Fialko

Staff Present

Valerie Kinast
Tom Iurino



November 3, 2011 Project: Alaskan Way Viaduct - North End and Portal

Phase: Briefing
Last Reviewed: May 20, 2010; May 6, 2010
Presenters: Lesley Bain, Weinstein AU
Terry Bulfin, Seattle Tunnel Partners
Katey Bean, WSDOT

Attendees: Ali Almiri, WSDOT
Amy Turner, Alaskan Way Viaduct Communications
Anne Herrick, HNTB
Brian Elrod, Seattle Tunnel Partners
Craig Hanway, Queen Anne community member
Diane Hilmo, WSDOT
Donald King, DKA Architecture
Eric OBrien, SDOT
Eric Tweit, SDOT
John Coney, Uptown Alliance
Linda Mallin, DKA Architecture
Marni Heffron, Heffron Transportation
Mike Johnson, SDOT
Paul Diedrich, Grid Engineers
Susan Everett, WSDOT

Time: 1:30pm-3:30pm

Presentation

The design team presented its revised design for the Alaskan Way Viaduct North End and Portal project. The project included: new ramps between Harrison and Mercer streets; a new Aurora Ave. surface street with transit stops; and new connections across Aurora Avenue at John, Thomas and Harrison streets. The team hasn't made many changes to the overall design; the portal still features a curved headwall with terraces, significant planting and saving as many trees as possible as prescribed by the design guidelines. The team made several small changes to the landscape, such as a change in the alignment to the 6th Ave. sidewalk.

The team also presented the tunnel operations building and the changes they made to its design. The building shrank in size due to the constraints of the tunnel; the existing grade and placement of the superstructure underneath drove the location of the fan box, a major component of the building. The team lowered the fan room, locating it much closer to the street, and illuminated the fan box. The new, smaller building design created a plaza on the northwest corner of the site. Due to the superstructure underneath, it can't be planted with trees; the team proposed wooden-topped seating walls with lighting underneath, an interpretive element, and raised planters. The team also detailed how the new building design better animated the street: lowered, illuminated fan box and plaza on the north side; a secondary entrance on the south side along with rain gardens and other green infrastructure on Thomas, a green street; and more windows on the west side.

SUMMARY

The commission thanked WSDOT for its presentation of the Alaskan Way Viaduct North End and Portal Project. The commission believed the team and its design of the landscaping along the highway in the portal area was heading in the right overall direction. The commission made the following comments:

- **Develop further the concept for landscape design along Harrison; incorporate the best place(s) for views to the highway and other territorial views. Consider both the south and north sides of the street; the form, plants, materials, uses, and views could relate and provide continuity across the street, even though they are different spaces with different purposes. Explore the opportunity for each side to have a bus stop. Provide wayfinding on Harrison to the Seattle Center; the view from Harrison to the Seattle Center is obscured, unlike Thomas, which has a view of the Space Needle.**
- **Develop a clear purpose and concept for the building's plaza on the Harrison Street side; without one, the design of plaza will continue to be problematic. If siting an interpretive element is feasible and supports the plaza's purpose, consider using large scale elements appropriate for this project: "go big". For example, consider expressing the diameter of the tunnel, siting a large piece of equipment used in tunnel construction, etc.**
- **Push the building massing to be more pure and read more strongly. Ensure that the secondary moves don't take away from the parti and detract from the massing, especially on the building's west side.**
- **Accentuate the building's horizontal layering. For example, study expressing this in the hierarchy of the joints. Find the best solution even if it is not included in the guidelines.**
- **Further study the adjoining parking lot and how many spots WSDOT will require for the occupants of its portal building. Consider how the parking requirement might affect the design of the private development that will occur on this site, the surrounding public realm, and the use of Thomas St.**

At the next presentation, the commission would like to hear about the building's daylighting as part of the sustainability strategy.