



APPROVED MINUTES OF THE MEETING

Mike McGinn
Mayor

Diane Sugimura
Director, DPD

Marshall Foster
Planning Director, DPD

Julie Bassuk
Chair

Seth Geiser

Debbie Harris

Laurel Kunkler

Shannon Loew

Tom Nelson

Julie Parrett

Osama Quotah

Ellen Sollod

Valerie Kinast
Coordinator

Tom Iurino
Senior Staff

December 6, 2012

Convened 12:30pm
Adjourned 3:30pm

Projects Reviewed

Arena

Commissioners Present

Julie Bassuk, Chair
Seth Geiser
Debbie Harris
Laurel Kunkler (excused 12:30-1:45pm)
Shannon Loew
Tom Nelson
Osama Quotah (excused from 12:30-1:30pm)
Ellen Sollod

Commissioners Excused

Julie Parrett

Staff Present

Valerie Kinast
Tom Iurino



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December 6, 2012

Project: **Arena**
Phase: Briefing
Last Reviewed: NA
Presenters: Jack McCullough, McCullough Hill, PS
Barb Swift, Swift Company
Anton Foss, 360 Architecture

Attendees: Bob Chandler, SDOT
John Shaw, DPD
Angela Steel, SDOT
Beverly Barnett, SDOT
Brook Jackson, Magnusson Klemencic
Garry Papers, DPD
Jack McCullough, McCullough Hill, PS
Kristin Dean, WSDOT
Michele Scoleri, Mayor Office
Nathan Torgelson, Finance and Administrative Services
Rollin Fatland, Mayor press contact
Tom Backer, Ballpark PFD

Time: 2:00pm-3:30pm

Summary of Project Presentation

The applicant is requesting the vacation of 23,531 sq ft of Occidental Ave. S. between S. Holgate and S. Massachusetts Streets in order to permit the future construction of an approximately 725,000 sf, 18,000 – 20,000 seat private spectator sports facility, the Seattle Arena, on land bounded by S. Holgate St., S. Massachusetts St., 1st Ave. S., and the Burlington Northern Railroad tracks.

The applicant has not yet filed a petition to vacate Occidental Way S. The team will return in January with another briefing, and then in February they will submit the petition to vacate. Then the proponents will formally present to the commission the urban design merit of the proposed street vacation and offer a proposed public benefit package.

The design team presented the context, urban analysis, standard arena programming, and three design options for the Seattle Arena. The team is looking at the project from all scales. At the city-wide scale, the team analyzed the north-south form of the city, the weaker E-W connections, the other stadiums and landmarks, and the 5-15 minute walk-sheds. At the neighborhood scale, the team studied the nearby surface and structured parking, the smaller building types along 1st Ave. S., the numerous utilities, the gateways to downtown, and the heavily travelled streets that border the site, 1st Ave S and S. Holgate St. The team identified two major design ideas they culled from the urban analysis that they integrated into

the site planning and design concepts: the nodes of activity at the southern edge and the northwest corner of the site; and the strong presence the site has on 1st Avenue.

The team discussed the arena's programming and the three early design concepts. Arena programming requires that patrons enter at the concourse level of the arena. This enables patrons to walk either down to lower level seats or up to higher level seats, and frees up space at the lower levels for necessary stadium operating functions. Because of the high water table, the arena can't be sunk into the ground to allow the arena entries and the street level to align with the arena's concourse level. As a result, the arena must be designed to allow for patrons to walk or ride up on escalators or elevators to the concourse level from the street. Also, another constraint is that the arena's site is a little tight in width (E-W), so that will affect the design.

The team presented the three early design concepts: 1. a program driven design; 2. a design that spreads the program to Holgate and 1st Ave.; and 3. a preferred design, which contains a contextual, perforated wrapper that hides and also allows views of the interior. The design may include Occidental S. to the north of the arena as a festival street. The northern entry of the arena and the associated plaza may be covered with a glazed canopy. At the street level, the aim is to activate the street as much as possible, featuring retail and club restaurants whose location and number will be determined by the arena's dimensions. The design also includes a practice facility in the site's northeastern corner. The team hopes to build as little structured parking as possible, drawing upon already existing parking structures and lots.

Public Comments

John Shaw, EIS reviewer, is studying both the SODO site and the Key Arena site at the Seattle Center for the EIS. He will finish the scope of the key elements for the EIS next week. The draft EIS is due in April, the final EIS in the late summer or fall.

Gary Papers, DPD design review planner, notes the Downtown Design Review Board will review the project again at a second EDG meeting on Tuesday, December 11. He anticipates a third EDG meeting in January, and at least one Recommendation meeting in mid to late late spring. He highlights several of the recommendations the board made at the last meeting at the end of November: the building should contribute to the city's life 365 days a year; the building should be uniquely Seattle; the plazas should be strong, active places; the public spaces above the street should be designed for views; the ground level treatment along 1st Ave. S. should be scaled to the pedestrian and designed for the gathering and flow of crowds; the movement of large crowds should be choreographed, designed for the pedestrian experience, and not overwhelm the city's infrastructure.

Beverly Barnett, SDOT, confirms there is no vacation application yet. SDOT anticipates it will be submitted in February, after the Downtown Design Review Board has reviewed the project through the EDG phase.

Sandra Mallory, OSE, advises that because the City may have the potential to purchase the arena under the MOU, it should follow the City's lead and design to the standards the City uses for its own capital projects.

SUMMARY (by Quotah)

The Seattle Design Commission thanks the Arena design team for its briefing on the Arena in advance of its petition for a street vacation of Occidental Ave. S. between S. Holgate and S. Massachusetts Streets. The commission will consider the project's Urban Design Merit and Public Benefit at future reviews before it can make a recommendation to the SDOT Director about the proposed street vacation. The commission appreciates the presentation and has the following recommendations:

- **As you prepare to submit for the vacation, prepare to show how the arena meets the criteria for urban design merit in this specific location with this proposed design. Show both vacation and no vacation options. Consider the qualities of the street that is proposed to be vacated; show what the street provides the city (air, light, connections, a place for utilities, transportation, services, etc.) and evaluate what the city is losing and gaining by vacating the street.**
- **Study the pedestrian level experience, public realm, and access (pedestrian and service) to the building and include this study as part of the analysis and development of the design. Develop a**

design which activates the streets on all sides of the building, and include overhead weather protection as one element. Develop a design which activates the streets on all sides of the building. Don't neglect to consider the design of the back (or east) side of the building and also at the southern edge, which is proposed as a new southern gateway to downtown. Specifically, study the pedestrian experience on 1st Ave; it is, at present, not a welcoming street for pedestrians. Also, study and show ground level views of the proposed pedestrian procession south on Occidental toward the north entry of the arena and also from Railroad Ave. and 1st Ave. S. Evaluate the impacts to the public realm caused by raising the ground plane to accommodate the building's primary entry at the northern end of the building; show ground level views of the arena's public plazas and open spaces. Study the impact on the public realm when the arena is closed.

- Consider how the arena can contribute to the neighborhood context. Be aware of the vision for the neighborhood might be. Study the Stadium District Concept Plan, consult with the DPD Planning Division, and show how the area design responds to the plan for the area.
- Further study transit and pedestrian connections to the arena; identify the expected mode splits for arena patrons and the locations for parking. Study access from the light rail stations and along S. Holgate St., which is an east-west connector that crosses the frequently used railroad track; the design shows it as a southern gateway to the city and a building entry. Evaluate the impact of the arena on the transit, transportation and pedestrian networks and on the public realm during concurrent and staggered events hosted by the nearby stadiums.
- Show the design precedents of other arenas in urban contexts that illustrate the team's intent for the design of this arena.
- Develop a public benefit package for the larger public not just those who will attend events at the arena. Consider a benefit package that is proportional to the large scale of the project and vacation and includes elements located in proximity to the arena, such as the festival street on Occidental to the north.
- Incorporate in the design the city's standards for sustainability and green building for capital projects, as outlined in the Sustainable Buildings and Sites Policy, for both the building itself and also in the public realm.
- Develop and show light and solar access studies.