



APPROVED MINUTES OF THE MEETING

Mike McGinn
Mayor

Diane Sugimura
Director, DPD

Marshall Foster
Planning Director, DPD

Julie Bassuk
Chair

Seth Geiser

Laurel Kunkler

Shannon Loew

Tom Nelson

Julie Parrett

Martin Regge

Osama Quotah

Ellen Sollod

Debbie Harris

Valerie Kinast
Coordinator

Tom Iurino
Senior Staff

April 4, 2013

Convened 8:30 am

Adjourned 4:30 pm

Projects Reviewed

10th Avenue Hillclimb

Railroad Avenue

Arena

Commissioners Present

Osama Quotah

Debbie Harris

Laurel Kunkler (joined at 11:00am)

Shannon Loew

Tom Nelson

Martin Regge

Ellen Sollod

Commissioners Excused

Julie Bassuk

Julie Parrett

Seth Geiser

Staff Present

Valerie Kinast

Tom Iurino

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April 4, 2013 **Project:** **10th Avenue Hillclimb**
9:00 am – 11:00 am **Review Type:** **Street Vacation – Public Benefit Item Followup**
 Phase: **30% Design**
 Previous Reviews: 1/26/13 Pre-review

Presenters: Alan Grainger, GGLO
 Marieke Lacasse, GGLO
 Anne Fiske Zuniga, Seattle Housing Authority

Attendees:
Beverly Barnett, SDOT
Tom Eanes, SHA
Jeff Foster, GGLO
Kathlyn Paananen, SHA
Dave Rodgers, SvR Design

Recusals and Disclosures

Lolly Kunkler was recused. There were no other recusals or disclosures.

Purpose of Review

The purpose of this review is to assess the 30%/concept design of the 10th Ave Hillclimb. This project is a public benefit element of the Yesler Terrace Street Vacation. The vacation was approved by the Design Commission in May, 2011. The 10th Ave Hillclimb design was at a very conceptual level at the time. The Design Commission approved the public benefit package contingent on each public benefit element returning for review as they were further developed, at schematic and design development.

The Yesler Terrace Vacation approval by City Council included the following guidelines for the 10th Ave Hillclimb- Refer to last page (5) for Council document.

Space for group activities and gathering

- Wide steps, clear sightlines
- Wide landings
- Seating for views and social interaction
- Safe for users
- Adequate lighting
- A balance between hardscape and vegetation
- Consideration for specific populations
- Functional public art
- Culturally familiar planting”

Summary of Proposal

SHA is planning to build a hillclimb in the ROW of 10th Ave S between S Main and the alley halfway between Main and S Jackson St. The hillclimb would connect the Yesler Terrace development and First Hill to the International District. It is a public benefit element of the Yesler Terrace Street Vacations, which the Design Commission approved in 2011. The hillclimb was one of several public benefit elements, which was approved contingent on it coming back for review at schematic and design development. The site is at the south edge of the proposed Yesler

Terrace development. It will be built in Phase I of the overall Yesler Terrace project along with the large central park at the community center and buildings at the center and north of the center.

The hillclimb is planned in an approximately 38 ft wide swath of ROW, where an old stairway currently exists. Another approximately 60 ft of width was gained for the hillclimb by extending onto an SHA owned lot to the east. It consists of a stairway “spine” at the center, with a regimented series of ramps and landings that zig zag up the hill. It includes triangular planted areas, sitting walls and benches at the landings, and stormwater runnels running on either side of the stairway. At the top of the walkway is a small plaza with lookout, plantings, benches, and bike parking. To the east the hillclimb will connect to community gardens, which will be built in a later phase.

Summary of Presentation

The team reviewed the *powerpoint* presentation which is posted on the Design Commission website.

[http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/Planning/Design Commission/Project Review Meetings/Minutes/default.asp](http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/Planning/Design%20Commission/Project%20Review%20Meetings/Minutes/default.asp)

Summary of Discussion

The Commissioners’ were enthusiastic, and somewhat concerned about the design they were presented. The discussion centered around the flow of the space through and beyond the top and bottom terminuses, the environmental and aesthetic expression, practical aspects of construction and maintenance, and art integration. The team was asked to consider that while at the base of the hillclimb the cultural impetus is Asian, this changes moving up toward Yesler Terrace. They were encouraged to continue strengthening water as a unifying element in the design. Issues of graffiti, safety through visibility/sightlines, and maintenance of fruit bearing plantings were brought up. The recommendations in the action further document items that were discussed.

Department Comments

Beverly Barnett – Project has been approved and there are several pieces that will come back as the project develops. We ask you to review and confirm that they are providing what was agreed upon. This is first piece, important to Council and community as connection and early step in the development.

ACTION

The Design Commission thanked the project team for the presentation of the 10th Ave Hillclimb concept design. It applauded this contribution to great urbanism. Commissioners noted this will provide a valuable connection between neighborhoods. They expressed appreciation to the proponents for working to widen the ROW to improve the design, and adjusting phasing to provide more benefit of the intervention. Integration of water in the hillclimb was seen as a strong positive design move.

With a vote of 6 to 0 the Design Commission unanimously approved the 30% design of the 10th Ave Hillclimb.

This project is a public benefit item of the Yesler Terrace street vacation, which was approved by the Commission in May 2011 with the condition that each public benefit item return for further review at the concept, schematic, and design development phases. The project will be reviewed again at future meetings when it reaches 60% and 90% design.

The Design Commission had the following recommendations for the further development of the plans:

1. Focus on creating flow into and out of the hillclimb with the design of the top and bottom terminuses. At the bottom, develop a more gracious entry into the hillclimb. At the final landing before the bottom terminus, consider sight lines up 10th and the fact that the final landing is hidden behind a building. At the top, work on integrating the stairs as part of the gathering space, widening them and/or developing them as seating.
2. Further develop the gathering space, paying mind to the needs of various user groups, and how the wall at the south end that extends east serves.
3. Consider how future 85 ft high adjacent development could shade p-patches.

4. Think comprehensively about bike use and facilities, paying mind to young and old, and adding a place to park bikes.
5. Consider the lighting in conjunction with the art. Given its three dimensionality it might add drama to the space.
6. Integrate the art. Involve the artists in the overall hillclimb design. Use art as place making, and avoid a patchwork of disparate interventions.
7. Consider aging and maintenance of lithocrete, fruiting plants, and the many blank concrete walls. Be aware of the environmental impacts and lifecycle of colors/dyes that are chose. Consider graffiti and maintenance of fruit bearing plants.

Beyond Scope of Required Public Benefit

8. Work with SDOT/City to connect improvements down along 10th Ave, beyond the site, to Jackson, for ADA connectivity, security and to take advantage of benefits of doing the projects together. City should consider putting a Street Concept Plan in place to guide improvements that will be made as private property adjacent to 10th Ave S is developed.