

Meeting Minutes #17

(Adopted 7/30/2025)

Seattle University (SU) Implementation Advisory Committee (IAC)

Wednesday, June 18, 2025

6:00 to 8:00pm

(Transcriber's Note: The notes shown below are summaries of statements provided. They are not transcriptions and have been shortened and edited to include the major points raised. Full comments are retained in the files in video recording and available upon request.)

In-person Location:

Seattle University
Advancement and Alumni Building — Stuart T. Rolfe Community Room
824 12th Ave
Seattle, WA 98122

Virtual Option: via Webex

IAC Members Present:

John Feit, Chair
James Kirkpatrick
Maureen O'Leary (virtual)
Wolf Saar
Mark Stoner
Wes Wheless
Bill Zosel

IAC Members Absent:

Manette Stamm

SU Staff:

Lara Branigan
Nathan Gregory
Ranleigh Starling

City of Seattle Staff:

Dipti Garg, Department of Neighborhoods (DON)
Donna Hartmann-Miller, Department of Neighborhoods (DON)
Carly Guillory, Department of Constructions & Inspections (SDCI) (virtual)

Opening & Introductions

- Dipti Garg opened the meeting at 6:04pm.
- Agenda reviewed; housekeeping items; IAC Roles & Responsibilities; Public Comments procedure; brief introductions
- Meeting handed over to Chair John Feit

Agenda item review

- Review of last meeting; more in-depth, detailed plan to be presented this evening

Minutes adoption

- April 22, 2025
- Call for corrections or clarifications: None. Chair moves to adopt; second by Wes Wheless.

John Feit calls for a vote for adoption of minutes; second by Wes Wheless.

Minutes adopted (8:49)

Discussion regarding length of time given to Public Comments; Chair would like to play by ear before making decision on this.

Seattle University Presentation:

Seattle University Museum of Art (SUMA) project - IAC Meeting 2

Presented by Lara Branigan

- MIMP Requirements Review
 - Major Institutional Master Plan is a long-term (~20 year) big picture planning document, creating goals and guidelines to base decisions involving growth or development of projects by a major institution.
 - Amendments to a MIMP are defined as major changes or minor changes: SU considers this to be a minor amendment; Reasoning for this includes:
 - Square footage calculations – SUMA target = 40,000 SF: Lee Center (21,441) + Site 309, aka Executive Education/Conference & Events (25,000) = 46,441 sq ft
 - 12th Avenue Activated
 - Building Design includes: express entrances, gather transition, terra cotta siding (not wood), plaza and building flow together
 - Relationship to Surroundings includes: not a back yard feel; gateway feel; protection of spaces (protect neighbors from open spaces and the open spaces from unpleasant noises, air impurities); clearly identified entrances & public pedestrian circulation
 - Exterior Spaces includes: circulation between places on campus (safe, convenient, direct, visually attractive); bike storage provided with design goals; plaza intent is to integrate art and thinking

- Parking Requirements:
Existing spaces 136 = 116 Regular + 20 ADA
Proposed spaces 170 = 150 Regular + 20 ADA
- Site Selection overview
 - Responses to questions asked at April 22 meeting
 - How site selected?
 - 2013 Feasibility Study by Walt Crimm & Associates
 - Criteria categories included: Program Opportunities, Campus Master Plan Goals, Campus Master Plan – Key Site Issues, Arrival & Identity, and Site Use
 - Top Sites Studied: Marion lot, Broadway & Madison, 1103 Building + Storage lot, 726 Broadway, Library Parking Lot
 - 2024 Feasibility Study by Emerald Initiative
 - Five priorities listed
 - Top Sites Studied: Marion lot, Broadway & Madison, 726 Broadway, Library Parking Lot, 1300 E Columbia
 - Shade & Shadow – why is light important to the chapel?
 - Chapel was designed with light in mind; there is a responsibility to protect that architectural masterpiece
 - Massing studies were done to make sure light reached there, particularly in morning hours
- Lee Center Building History
 - Built in 1930; lightly renovated 2006
 - Finance numbers included lifespan, renovation construction cost, replacement cost; deferred maintenance
 - Integration of Cornish campus is moving forward

Presentation continued by Lauren Sinn and Steven Rainville

- Street Activating Uses
 - 75% Schematic Design Plan shown
 - Still working with SU on the program and how the space will function
 - Basement: Services supported, art prep and handling, water table issues mentioned, catering support, office space
 - First Floor: distribution of programs and services, main lobby, loading, café, student art gallery spaces, art studio, hours mentioned
 - Mezzanine: art storage, object study room
 - Top level: mobile partitions for gallery and exhibit space, light and audio sensitive spaces, art storage

- Campus Gateway Design
 - Creating two portals into the campus
 - Plaza: elevated, accessible, views of campus and the chapel, nighttime
- Plaza Concept Design
 - Open, weather protection, adjacent to café and gallery space (very transparent)
- Project Permitting Timeline
 - From January 2025 to end of 2026
 - Earliest construction start August 2026
 - Current goal to open in the fall of 2027
 - Current Schedule shown, includes: Design and Construction documentation, MIMP process, permitting, FIFA, demolition, construction start
- Next Steps
 - Feedback, return and talk through what is needed for the minor amendment

Committee Q&A

- More vision, more detail at the ground level for the plaza
- Elevation
- Café (location moved a bit, opening discussed)
- Gateway opportunity questions (more of a proper entry look being developed (removing guard booth, stamped concrete, banners, crosswalk work)
- Actual entrance to gallery is hard to identify
- Different uses of space described (partitions, lecture, film, performance, event)
- Parking lot relationship with plaza (want access to work, some greenery along edges)
- View of chapel also through transparent art studio (may not be welcome by the people using it; could also be a children programming, senior arts projects, graphic arts space)
- Question regarding the relationship to the surroundings (intent, context, need more detail)
- Concern with the programming (needs more detail)
- Don't see what makes this a Gateway (not convincing, neutral; what about the underside space; ambitious cantilever building; feels off-the-shelf; uninspiring; want more ambition)
- Would like more of an understanding of the site; relationship to the pedestrian street; trees; space; glass clarity

- Shadow study confusing (time of day, time of year)
 - The 6 to 7 story building to go there? (not everything will be built to fullest extent)
- Thought there was to be a meeting (by DON) to review the MIMP every 5 years or so

Public Comment

Ellen Sollod; Theresa Earenfight; Dominic Cody Kramers; Rich Brown

Committee Deliberation

- Mechanics of how to have a conversation and give feedback when only getting the presentation the afternoon of the meeting
 - Time to visit the site with the presentation materials would be helpful to give good feedback.
 - SU acknowledges they understand the IAC needs the materials the week before the meeting
 - How to communicate concerns to SU?
 - Dipti suggests the IAC members send their comments to her, she will consolidate them and circulate them among the members; then it can be summarized by one or two members of the IAC, then it can be sent out again for discussion at a meeting. This can be repeated as necessary.
 - There cannot be a quorum for any conversation or discussion.
 - This process can take at least two to three weeks.
- What would the IAC like to understand better
 - More development of the plaza and gateway, understanding how it works for the university as a whole and how it really does a job of highlighting the chapel; how is it more than a cut and an opening; what is the relationship between this space and the campus, chapel, and community
 - Is this being done because the money is available or because it is inspiring and it really offers something more than what will be demolished
 - Function and programming of the building and the plaza space needs to be clearer
 - Not feeling convinced that this is a gateway or why a gateway is needed? What was missing, what is driving this need to create a gateway?
 - What are the impacts on the art community?

- What are the impacts on the neighborhood?
- Security concerns
- How will stairs and ramps affect the use of the plaza space
- Minor Amendment aspect – who makes that determination? How to judge significant impact or not detrimental to the public?
 - Past projects haven't had pushback like this one which brings IAC responsibilities into focus; there is a struggle here.
 - "Detrimental to public" is source of concern; is the project itself causing questions to be raised that didn't exist before
 - Dipti Garg – believes SCDI reviews the committee comments before making a determination; Carly Guillory – the Major Institution Chapter Code allows the IAC to provide comments to SCDI; then a policy and technical advisory team reviews the IAC comments; then the department issues a decision. The IAC comments help inform the analysis and helps SCDI to interpret and reach a determination. If the determination differs to what the IAC recommends, it can be appealed.
 - There is some question as to how to judge what is major and what is minor
 - Dipti Garg can send the code to the IAC members.
 - Looking at the Master Plan as well as projects outside the Master Plan and how they may or may not achieve stated goals
 - Sustainability issue brought up
 - Need to understand the sustainability goals in the Master Plan
 - Throwing away a good building doesn't feel sustainable; the maintenance cost compared to building something new isn't persuasive

Adjournment

There was a motion to adjourn the meeting, it was seconded.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:47 pm.