



Seattle Design Commission

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MEETING MINUTES

November 21, 2024

Convened 8:30 am

Adjourned 3:00 pm

Projects Reviewed

Commission business

West Seattle Link Extension (Longfellow Creek,
Guideway Segments, Delridge Station)

Commissioner's Present

Phoebe Bogert

Jill Crary

Kate Clark

Brian Markham

Kevin O'Neill

Zubin Rao

Molly Spetalnick

Caitlin Truong

Commissioners Excused

AP Amrhein

Ben Gist

Zubin Rao

Staff Present

Michael Jenkins (attended virtually)

Valerie Kinast

Windy Bandekar



Commission Business (8:30 – 9:00 am)

Commissioners received briefings by SDC staff on the day's sessions.

West Seattle Link – Context briefing, Longfellow Creek, and Guideway segments (9:00 – 11:30 am)

Presenters and team members available for questions:

- Jason Hampton, Sound Transit
- Phoebe Wu, Sound Transit (attended virtually)
- Jennifer Frey, Sound Transit
- Daren Crabil, Sound Transit
- Julie Montgomery, Sound Transit
- Becki Kniveton, Sound Transit
- Barbara Luecke, Sound Transit
- Mark Epstein, Sound Transit
- Kurt Kiefer, Sound Transit
- Ken Hutchinson, Sound Transit (attended virtually)
- Marcus Moore, Sound Transit

The following people attended:

- Katey Bean, SDOT (attended virtually)
- Shanti Colwell, SPU
- Alvin Edwards, DON (attended virtually)
- Saranya Gujuluva Rajan, SDOT
- Lindsay King, SDCI
- Ryan Packer, The Urbanist

Briefing on project timelines and project overview

From 9:00 – 9:45 am, the Commission received a briefing on the project timelines and general project overview. The presentation included in-depth information on:

- Tribal engagement with federally recognized tribes on cultural resources and fisheries, and both federally recognized and un-recognized tribal communities on station features, landscape design, art, and interpretation.
- Public engagement and how it has shaped station design priorities, transit-oriented development opportunities, and public realm upgrades.
- How equity and equitable outcomes affect access to transit.
- Sustainability goals and programs that include
 - Establishing LEED goals
 - Watershed improvements to Longfellow Creek

- Tree Salvaging
- Coordination with City utilities and the Port of Seattle
- Use of building materials with high recycling content
- Use of green regional power
- Evaluation of embodied carbon in building materials
- Waste reduction strategies in both demolition and construction activities

Briefing on Longfellow Creek crossing, and nearby guideway segments

From 9:45 – 10:25 am the Commission received a briefing on the proposed Longfellow Creek Crossing and related guideways.

From 10:25-10:35 am the Commission received a briefing on the proposed guideways at or near the Delridge Station, including their impact on Pigeon Point in West Seattle, areas to the west over S Yancy Street, and its connection to the Avalon Station. This portion of the presentation also included information on the proposed TPSS facility and its impact on existing residences near 32nd Ave SW.

Shanti Colwell and Katherine Lynch from Seattle Public Utilities also provided context about how the station and guideway designs may affect City goals for Longfellow Creek. Lindsay King of Seattle Department of Construction and Inspections provided context about how the City's regulatory oversight, and coordination with Sound Transit, will impact solutions for Longfellow Creek.

The Commission focused their discussion on Longfellow Creek and guideway segments on:

- Program form and character
- Access and circulation
- Sustainability
- Engagement
- Equity
- Information needed for 30% design presentations.

The Commission applauded the joint work between Sound Transit and the City. Commissioners were glad to have various Sound Transit experts available for the discussion. They appreciated seeing many City departments represented at the meeting and engaged in the station design process.

Commissioners approved the **design direction of the preliminary engineering** for the **Longfellow Creek and Guideway segments** unanimously 7 to 0.

Commissioners provided these recommendations:

General Program, Form, Character

1. Encourage creative collaboration between City departments and Sound Transit related to environmental stewardship, and on climate adaptation. Consider the long-term vision for the greater watershed and all associated projects as the Sound Transit site is designed.

2. Place the creek as the highest value and focal point in the design. It is the most important feature in this area for the Longfellow Creek and Delridge station design.
3. Design the architectural character of the guideways so that they are in relationship with the creek.

Access and Circulation

1. Be intentional in balancing restoration and human interaction with the creek. Leverage the project to provide access to nature for the community.

Sustainability and Equity

1. Provide as much flexibility as possible for future meandering of the creek when placing the columns and deciding on the rhythm of the spans.
2. Encourage collaboration with the Duwamish tribe as a vested stakeholder for station features, art, landscape design, and signage, in addition to engagement with federally recognized tribes.
3. Continue to engage with Office of Economic Development on business relocation support.
4. Set sustainability targets for construction materials and contractors.

The SDC requests the following information be presented at 30% design. This list supplements what is requested in City submittal requirements:

1. The design of the TPSS site.
2. The vision for community access to the Longfellow Creek restoration site.
3. Insights into remediation of the capped area on the site.

The SDC also asked that the Staff Review Panel coordinate communication to the SDC on the City's vision for Longfellow Creek in relationship to the light rail project.

Commission business – 11:30 – 12:30 pm

The Commission was briefed by SDC staff on other projects to be reviewed that day.

West Seattle Link Extension – Delridge Station (12:30 – 3:00 pm)

The Commission received a presentation of the preliminary engineering designs for the preferred alternative for the Delridge Station.

The Delridge Station would be an elevated station on the west side of Delridge Way Southwest, north of Southwest Andover Street. The elevated guideway would cross over Southwest Avalon Way, cross Longfellow Creek, and then turn south in the vicinity of 32nd Avenue Southwest to travel south along the east side of the West Seattle Bridge connection to Fauntleroy Way Southwest, transitioning from elevated into a retained cut. The alignment would turn west in the vicinity of Southwest Genesee Street in a retained cut, passing below Southwest Genesee Street.

The presentation addressed the project elements:

- Station location and context

- Public realm context
- Station designs
- Public realm enhancements
- Landscape elements
- Art integration
- TOD site in context with station
- Relationship with transit and other transportation modes

The following people were presenters, or were present to answer questions:

- Julie Montgomery, Sound Transit
- Daren Crabil, Sound Transit
- Barbara Luecke, Sound Transit
- Jason Hampton, Sound Transit
- Jennifer Frey, Sound Transit (attended virtually)
- Kurt Kiefer, Sound Transit
- Mark Epstein, Sound Transit
- Marcus Moore, Sound Transit
- Ken Hutchinson, Sound Transit (attended virtually)

The following people attended:

- Saranya Gujuluva Rajan, SDOT
- Katy Haima, OPCD (attended virtually)
- Jennifer Meulenberg, SDOT
- Ryan Packer, The Urbanist

The Commission focused their discussion on the following topics:

- Program form and character
- Access and Circulation
- Sustainability
- Engagement
- Equity
- Additional information for 30% design presentations

Following the presentation and discussion, the SDC thanked the project team for the presentation. The SDC expressed appreciation for the level of coordination between Sound Transit and the City of Seattle on design of WSLE. Commissioners benefit from the unique materials that each agency provides ahead of and during the review meetings.

The SDC endorsed the location of the Delridge station, but noted that the success of the station and its integration into the neighborhood hinges on development of the TOD sites fronting Delridge Way. Visual cues to the station and activation of open spaces will be challenging in the time the TOD sites are undeveloped.

The Seattle Design Commission unanimously approved the **Preliminary Engineering** phase for the **Delridge Station (8 to 0)**, with the following recommendations:

General, Program, Form, Character

1. Provide clarity on design and delivery of elements, such as the building in the plaza, that are not within the scope of the station project. Please include information on timing and ownership.
2. Design the concourse level plaza to be successful under a scenario where the TOD A2 building is not built concurrent with the station. Anchor the plaza with community amenities such as art, temporary activation, and weather shelter, so that it functions well regardless of the timing and extent of retail abutting or near the station. Explore including performance in the art plan.
3. Consider how the community's expressed need for a grocery store can be met either with a conventional grocery store or other means.
4. Orient the design of the station toward the south. The center of the Delridge community is located further south, so establish a center of gravity for this new civic facility along the southern end of the site.
5. Explore how the wall along the south end of the site at the drop of area can be pulled back, reduced, or reconfigured to allow for a better connection into the site. The wall is a physical and visual barrier between the street and the station.
6. Carefully consider the user experience of accessing the site from the south with all modes.
7. Develop a unifying concept for the station and Longfellow Creek site, drawing from the creek, watershed, and Pigeon Point for cues. Consider how to draw the landscape of the Sound Transit creek site into the station site. Explore how the location of the piped part of the creek might be made visible in the public realm.
8. The station will not front on Delridge Way, so its success as a transit facility and civic element of the new neighborhood center relies heavily on development of the TOD sites and plaza design. Actions include:
 - Plan the TOD sites comprehensively and early.
 - Engage with the development community. The zoning at this site creates a TOD opportunity that is unlike any other that Sound Transit and many developers have developed.
 - Develop contingency plans for the station and TOD sites in case the TOD is delayed.
9. Consider how existing small businesses might be incorporated into the TOD.
10. Explore involving the Seattle Office of Economic Development (OED) in the TOD planning.
11. Coordinate with Seattle arts agencies.
12. Engage with community in the planning for TOD.

Access and Circulation

1. Continue to explore how the station connects and serves the bike trails in this part of Seattle, in particular northward.
2. Consider the experience of reaching the station by bike from the north. Provide for a legible, comfortable route to the bike parking from the north, whether along Delridge or along the pedestrian alley between the station and TOD site.
3. Considering wayfinding to the station from trails that pass by the station.
4. Provide more inviting and direct access between the pick-up and drop-off area (PUDO) and the station, plazas, and passenger amenities. The PUDO is a node of activity where people waiting could provide eyes on the public open spaces and station entrances for activation and safety.

Sustainability, Engagement, Equity

1. Continue to engage with the Duwamish Tribe and federally recognized Tribes on the landscape, architecture, and art.

2. Consider providing restrooms at this station in response to the Race and Equity Toolkit identified outcome of providing amenities for communities from the south. People access the Sound Transit system via bus from High Point and White Center will travel longer than 20 minutes to reach restrooms at SODO station.
3. In response to BIPOC community requests for good car access to the station, further develop the ease and attractiveness of the car pick up and drop off area. Consider how people arriving, leaving, and waiting at the pickup and drop-off can have better visual and physical connection to the entrances and lingering spaces and amenities outside the stations.

We request the following information to be presented at 30% design. This list supplements what is requested in the submittal requirements:

1. Provide an update on TOD site development planning, including a schedule and strategy for retail.
2. Report on the coordination with possible partners such as OED, arts organizations, and the development community.
3. Information on the bike connections, especially toward the north.

We request the following from the City of Seattle:

1. Time the city planning and code update work to be supportive of the WSLE design process.
2. Provide the SDC with updates on the City's Equitable TOD work.
3. Present City work on connecting the existing Delridge center with what will be an emerging new center.
4. Prior to 30% station design reviews, provide the SDC with an update on the City's Comprehensive Plan, rezones, TOD, urban design, and creek planning work, and any other work that commissioners will benefit from hearing about before SDC reviews.
5. Present the City development standards for the TOD sites to the SDC as they are developed.