



**Seattle
Design
Commission**

**APPROVED
MINUTES OF THE MEETING
20 June 2002**

Gregory J. Nickels,
Mayor

Donald Royse
Chair

Tom Bykonen

Ralph Cipriani

Jack Mackie

Cary Moon

Iain M. Robertson

David Spiker

Sharon E. Sutton

Tory Laughlin Taylor

John Rahaim,
Executive Director

Layne Cubell,
Commission Coordinator

Projects Reviewed

ZymoGenetics
Olympic Sculpture Park
Automated Public Toilet
Cheasty Boulevard
Westcrest Park

Convened: 8:30am

Commissioners Present

Donald Royse, Chair
Jack Mackie, Vice Chair
Ralph Cipriani
Cary Moon
Iain M. Robertson
David Spiker
Tory Laughlin Taylor

Adjourned: 4:30pm

Staff Present

John Rahaim
Layne Cubell
Brad Gassman
Sally MacGregor
Anna O'Connell



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Construction & Land Use

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20 Jun 2002 Project: **ZymoGenetics**

Phase: Street Vacation Post Petition

Previous Reviews: 6 June 2002 (Post-petition), 20 September 2001 (Pre-petition)

Presenters: Marty Goodman, The Justen Company
William Justen, The Justen Company

Attendees: Beverly Barnett, Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT)
Chris Leman, Eastlake resident

Time: .75 hour (SDC Ref. # 170 | DC00247)

Action: **The Design Commission appreciates the presentation and would like to make the following comments and recommendations.**

- **The Commission appreciates the expeditious follow-up to the Commission’s previous presentation;**
- **believes that the vacation is justified, based on the urban design conditions in the area;**
- **supports contributions of additional improvements to two Eastlake neighborhood parks, Lynn Street Park and Rogers Playfield, as identified by the letter from the Department of Parks and Recreation;**
- **believes that extending basic streetscape improvements north along the adjacent WSDOT property and contributions to two small neighborhood parks is an appropriate public benefit for this vacation;**
- **recommends that the site plan, indicating the small triangle of land that will be deeded back to WSDOT, is clarified before presenting the proposed vacation to City Council;**
- **urges the proponents to further discuss the suitability of the proposed public benefits with the Eastlake community and appropriate community organizations to better assess the community’s position on the proposed public benefits;**
- **recognizes the community’s interest in this project, but does not believe that this project will preclude access to a future proposed pedestrian and bicycle trail beneath I-5, in the WSDOT right of way; and**
- **recommends approval of the proposed street vacation.**

The proponents for the ZymoGenetics expansion and street vacation project returned to the Commission to present their public benefit proposal. The Commission previously supported streetscape improvements north along the adjacent WSDOT property as a public benefit, but urged the proponents to propose an off-site public benefit for the surrounding Eastlake community. The proponents worked with the Department of Parks and Recreation (Parks Department), to identify an appropriate project. The Parks Department sent a letter to the proponents explaining two park renovation and improvement projects underway within the Eastlake community that could benefit greatly from additional funding.

“Lynn Street Park is a waterfront street end park at Fairview Avenue that is very popular with area residents. Parks Department has a project under construction to replace the failing retaining wall and seating area in the lower part of the park. Community members obtained a Neighborhood Matching Fund grant for an art tile project to further enhance the park. However, there is no funding for irrigation, landscaping or a new drinking fountain, elements requested by the community that would complete the renovation of this park. A contribution of \$24,700 will fund these elements.

Rogers Playfield is a heavily used park located at Eastlake Avenue East and East Roanoke Street. This park contains a small ball field, tennis courts, children's play area and restroom. The Parks Department is nearing the complete renovation of this park in partnership with the community. Parks Department funded the renovation of the ball field, tennis courts, and the restroom. Community members raised the funds and obtained a large Neighborhood Matching Fund grant to design and install a new play area that was dedicated last month. However, there are a few outstanding needs that Parks Department could not fund. Additional handrails and vinyl coated fencing at the northeast entrance to the play area will provide added safety for children, and additional plantings will allow the Parks Department to complete the landscape plan for the park. Additional funding of \$24,800 will provide these amenities.”

Key Commissioner Comments and Concerns

- Feels that these two park projects represent improvements that can be made now. Supports these two benefits, in addition to the streetscape improvements north along the WSDOT property that were presented at the previous meeting.
- Would like to know if the proponents have received any community input on these park improvement benefit proposals.
 - Proponents stated that they contacted Jim Reckers, of the Eastlake Community Council Land Use Committee, and they support these benefits. Proponents further stated that they do not know how many people in the entire Eastlake community Mr. Reckers was able to contact in the short time frame.
- Would like to know the time frame of this project, and would like to know the phasing of the public benefits.
 - Proponents stated that they have meet with the Parks Department, and the need for funds for the two park improvement projects is immediate. Typically, the vacation process is complete after City Council approval, which may take several months. Further stated that they could contribute these funds to the Parks Department, with these two specific projects earmarked. The streetscape improvements along the WSDOT property would be completed along with the construction of the Earl Davie building expansion.
- Commends the team for this public benefit proposal. Believes that these benefits would be important to tie loose ends within the community. Feels that it is important to finish these two projects properly and completely.
- Would like to know how the vacation would preclude access to the WSDOT property, which could become a neighborhood amenity.
 - Proponents presented the site plan, and explained that undeveloped WSDOT right of way along Eastlake Avenue, north of the ZymoGenetics expansion, would continue to provide access to the right of way beneath I-5.
- Recognizes that the Parks Department contacted WSDOT to determine the feasibility of the bicycle trail and pedestrian amenities beneath I-5, and WSDOT is not interested.
 - An Eastlake resident stated that the Eastlake Neighborhood Plan places a priority on making better use of the I-5 right-of way, which WSDOT owns. Further stated that 1.8 million dollars of the Pro Parks levy was designated for a park in the I-5 area. The Parks Department asked WSDOT for conceptual lease approval for the area, rather than

completing a study of potential opportunities. Without the study, WSDOT is unwilling to grant conceptual lease approval; and without the conceptual lease approval, Parks Department is refusing to initiate the planning process. Does not believe that Parks Department should ask for a lease first, but believes that a study of opportunities should be first. Is concerned that the Parks Department has taken no for an answer. Is concerned that WSDOT would fence in their property. Believes that the undeveloped right of way in question, Bellevue Avenue, could be the only way to gain access to the area beneath and beside I-5.

- Proponents stated that ZymoGenetics supports the I-5 improvement project, but recognizes the significant challenge created by WSDOT's position. The I-5 right of way also extends down to Eastlake Avenue, adjacent to Bellevue Avenue. Further stated that this corridor would narrow past the ZymoGenetics site with or without the vacation.
- Recognizes that the sidewalk improvements along Eastlake Avenue would not compromise any future proposals.
- Does not believe that the vacation would preclude access to the WSDOT property in question.
- Supports retaining the submerged parcels beneath Lake Union, as well as the area beneath I-5, but feels that the proponents have proposed very practical and feasible public benefits. Supports the proposed public benefits.
- Is concerned that Parks Department committed to make improvements to Lynn Street Park and Rogers Playfield, and would like to know why this will not be able to be completed with Parks Department funds. Would like to know if the funds for these improvements are above and beyond of what the Parks Department previously committed to complete.
- Does not believe that it would be appropriate to force the Parks Department to give a detailed description of the funding for these projects. Trusts the descriptions within the letter.
- Believes that the relationship between the Eastlake neighborhood groups and the Parks Department should be clarified, as well as the community's support for these two park projects. Believes that the Eastlake Neighborhood plan Stewardship Committee and the Parks Department should meet to discuss these funds.
 - An Eastlake resident provided a list of twelve stakeholders who should be involved. Believes that it would be appropriate to ensure these stakeholders are aware of the public benefits, recognizing that none of the stakeholders have seen the letter from the Parks Department to the proponents.
- Believes that the actions should reflect the discrepancy in the plans, recognizing the shape of the building footprint, and the area of land that will be deeded back to WSDOT. Recommends that City Council should require an official response from Eastlake Community Council Land Use Committee.

Key Visitor Comments and Concerns

- Chris Leman, an Eastlake resident expressed some concerns about this project. He feels that it is unfortunate that the CityDesign issue paper on street and alley vacations and the Commission's street vacation process do not give much priority to undeveloped right of way, which has some value as undeveloped land. He presented a document that gave suggested work elements for conceptual planning in the area, specifically, thirty-five acres of land under and beside I-5 between Denny Way and East Newton Street. Feels that the Design Commission could provide critical help to the Parks

Department to implement these efforts to construct pedestrian and bicycle trails in this area.

- Leman stated that many community members were not informed of the June 6, 2002 Commission meeting and many community members value the submerged parcel in Lake Union. Feels that the Commission should research this opportunity more carefully. Further stated that the original letter regarding off-site improvements, from Jim Reckers from the Eastlake Community Council Land Use Committee (ECCLUC), explains “We are not at this time making specific recommendations but the following are community improvements that are worth examining.” Stresses that these recommendations were suggestions to begin a process to identify a benefit, not final recommendations.
- Leman believes that the Parks Department is committed to identify their own funds for the Lynn Street Park and Rogers Playfield. Hopes that the Commission will encourage study of the actual land near ZymoGenetics, especially the WSDOT land, and the value of the undeveloped right of way. Believes that this would be an irreversible loss of open space in trail resources. Is not necessarily opposed to this vacation, but is opposed to rushing through the process without adequate consideration of the public amenity value that plays in the context of the great amount of public land adjacent to ZymoGenetics.
- A representative from SDOT stated that Leman has raised some key questions for the review of the street vacation process, specifically, “is there any foreseeable public purpose on the vacated right of way.” WSDOT is a co-petitioner and supports the vacation. The Parks Department has stated that they do not believe that the street right of way has any imaginable park purpose. The players that might make use of this property have stated that they are not interested in the use of this right of way. Believes that there is room for access and public use of the WSDOT property. Does not believe that the vacation would preclude access to the WSDOT property. Previously, was worried that this vacation would preclude City use of City right of way, but it convinced that this is not a concern. Feels that the public benefits as proposed, is sensible. Believes that the benefits are modest in scale, given the scale of the project and the amount of right of way in question, but the benefits are appropriate. Is pleased that the benefits are feasible and will benefit the community in which the project is located.