



**Seattle  
Design  
Commission**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING  
21 November 2002**

Gregory J. Nickels,  
*Mayor*

Donald Royse  
*Chair*

Laura Ballock

Ralph Cipriani

Jack Mackie

Cary Moon

Iain M. Robertson

Nic Rossouw

David Spiker

Sharon E. Sutton

Tory Laughlin Taylor

John Rahaim,  
*Executive Director*

Layne Cubell,  
*Commission Coordinator*

Projects Reviewed

Montlake Library  
High Point Master Plan  
Belltown Cottages/P-Patch  
DCLU Planning Update  
Draft Cheasty Boulevard Improvements Plan  
Jefferson Community Center Expansion  
Dexter Court

Convened: 8:30am

Adjourned: 5:15pm

Commissioners Present

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

Staff Present

John Rahaim  
Layne Cubell  
Brad Gassman  
Anna O'Connell



Department of Design,  
Construction & Land Use

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**21 Nov 2002 Project: Montlake Library— REVISED**

Phase: Pre-Design

Previous Reviews: None

Presenters: Richard Yancey, Weinstein Copeland Architects  
Ed Weinstein, Weinstein Copeland ArchitectsAttendees: Lyle Bicknell, CityDesign  
Alex Harris, Seattle Public Library  
Justine Kim, Seattle Public Library  
Jess Harris, DCLU  
Tim Morrison, Department of Finance  
Christiane Pein, Weinstein Copeland Architects

Time: 1 hour (SDC Ref. # 221 | DC00110)

**Action: The Commission appreciates the introduction to this project, recognizes its importance in the Montlake community, and would like to make the following comments and recommendations.**

- **The Design Commission appreciates the thorough site analysis including the exploration of the figure-ground, neighborhood character, and site conditions;**
- **encourages the proponents approach the subsequent architecture and site ecology with the same focus and rigor;**
- **would like the team to study placing the parking entrance to the north if they move forward with scheme C;**
- **supports scheme C and recognizes the challenge of the topography along 24th and the narrow entrance to the north;**
- **encourages proponents to produce a concept statement and create design principles;**
- **supports proponents in petitioning SDOT for on-street parking spaces; and**
- **recommends approval of the pre-design.**

**Note: Commissioner Cipriani recused himself from this discussion.**

Montlake is unique in Seattle as a geographically defined neighborhood made distinct by natural features; it does not merge with other neighborhoods. 24<sup>th</sup> St. is the main arterial, which runs north to SR 520 and University Village and brings traffic through Montlake from Capitol Hill. It is a fairly sheltered neighborhood within Olmsted's Interlaken Blvd.

Some of the significant features of the area are its fine-grained character; it consists primarily of single-family homes. On 24<sup>th</sup>, between Lynn and McGraw, where the existing Montlake branch library stands is zoned commercial and residential. The neighborhood has two significant public institutions—the community center and the Montlake Elementary School. From a pedestrian perspective, there is a linkage between the Montlake Playfield and the elementary school through the arboretum. From the south looking north, there is a significant site line into the location of the new library. While the site is at the center of the neighborhood's pedestrian circulation, it is generally exposed to fast-moving cars. Currently, on the site is a one-story, single-family home with a tall fence. The need for such a fence indicates that it is a relatively hostile site for a home in that it is loud and a lot of traffic passes by.

The zoning of the new library site is single family 5000, so the library must abide by lot coverage and setback standards and there is a height limit of 30 ft. This does present some challenges, such as there being no on-street parking. The proponents are considering petitioning SDOT for the reintroduction of on-street parking and feels that this would also serve as a traffic-calming device. The parking requirement is an additional 11 stalls. There is also the challenge of scaling down the building from the west and the north to transition from commercial/residential into the adjacent single-family areas.

Some of the goals for the new library are to fit the library program into the 5000 ft<sup>2</sup> and keep it on one level, accommodate 11 parking stalls, and deal with the steep topography along 24<sup>th</sup>. The neighboring houses must also be addressed. The site is made up of four lots, however the 5000 ft<sup>2</sup> scenario can fit onto three lots. There is significant grade change of about 12 ft. heading up 24<sup>th</sup> St. and the McGraw hill is almost 15 percent. The setback requirements are 20 ft. in the front yard and 10 ft. to the side. The neighborhood will perceive the building from many different sides and angles given the topography and its location on a corner.

Proponents devised three different schemes based on analyses of where to put parking in relation to the building and in an attempt to keep the library all on one level. In scheme A, the lot to the north does not play into the requirements for the site, so it can be divested. Surface parking would be located to the west and patrons enter the parking lot from McGraw. Proponents acknowledge that it is not ideal to have people turning into the parking lot on a pedestrian-oriented street. Also, scheme A puts the parking adjacent to neighboring residences, which is a concern. The parking lot itself is awkward and the plan requires a retaining wall and significant amounts of fill.

In scheme B, the parking is off of 24<sup>th</sup> and the team is working with SDOT to address the issues of speed and volume of traffic on this street. The one-level parking structure allows for a landscaped buffer and pushes the library toward the community. The footprint within the given setbacks is only 3500 ft<sup>2</sup> so some of the library program would have to be accommodated on a second level. The parking to the north is right next to an existing house that will remain there. This scheme also requires a retaining wall to the west, which reduces solar access from that direction.

Scheme C consists of structured parking with the library above. Patrons would turn right off of 24<sup>th</sup> to enter and exiting it would be a right-turn only back onto 24<sup>th</sup>. The library will be up one level, so as people approach the building from the south there would be a gracious, two-story lobby to welcome people into the building. Some of the benefits of having the library up one level are that it brings it above the noise and traffic on 24<sup>th</sup>, affords views of the arboretum to the east, allows for a landscape buffer to the west and north, and provides solar access from both sides. It also creates the possibility for a secure exterior plaza at 24<sup>th</sup> and McGraw, which addresses the neighborhood's desire for more open space.

The team has gravitated toward scheme C and found that the added costs for structural parking are relatively minor. It does present the challenge creating a gracious at-grade entry and dealing with the liability of lifting the building up off the street while maintaining a civic presence. However, proponents feel that this is not a real liability and believe there is an opportunity for landscape to make the building appear to float and touch down very deliberately at 24<sup>th</sup> and McGraw. No matter where the building sits, it will have daylight and the perimeter will be landscaped as opposed to paved as in schemes A and B. The reading room will be glazed and will appear as a lantern in the community.

### **Key Commissioner Comments and Concerns**

- Sees that two of the schemes keep one of the houses and would like to know if this is a requirement.
  - Proponents stated that it is the library's best interest to extinguish the easement and sell

off the other lot. It would mean they would not have to carry the acquisition costs, which are significant. At present the library owns all of those parcels, but would like to get rid of one if possible.

- Would like to know what the situation is with the existing residential zoning.
  - Proponents stated that they have allowable conditional use.
- Feels that it would be a civic gesture and a good neighbor policy to bury the parking. Would like to know if it's possible to move the hole in the building to the north face.
  - Proponents stated that they will look at that.
- Gets the sense that there is interest from the neighbors in helping figure out what the building looks like. Would like to know what the architectural strategy is to deal with that.
  - Proponents stated that the easiest thing to say is that it is a bungalow neighborhood and they could just make the library look like a bungalow. However, it is a public institution and needs to be set apart from the homes. The design of the building needs to be responsive to the scale, rhythm, and craft, and not made to just look like a big bungalow. Proponents further stated that they are use detail and scale to create an entry that is a transition from commercial to residential.
- Encourages proponents to define their vision in words, diagrams, and pictures to get the neighbors on board early.
  - Proponents stated that they will get agreement on principles of design incrementally and show these to people as they go. They are going to make presentations focusing on rules first so that start with the objective and move to the subjective. Proponents feel that the biggest liability is to reverse that when they first engage the community. The team will build a case for the site diagram and share the analysis of 24<sup>th</sup> and McGraw and then follow up with more architectural notions.
- Would like to know what the finished floor elevation of the building will be and how this relates to the plaza.
  - Proponents stated that they will have the same finished floor elevation.
- Would like to know if there is any way the service area can be incorporated with the parking.
  - Proponents stated that it is possible, however there is the operational advantage of having it at the same elevation as library. They are gravitating toward treating the service area as temporary and giving it the feel of a hardscape court rather than a parking area. This area also serves as parking for a handicap accessible van.
- Would like to know who the landscape architect is.
  - Proponents stated that it is Barbara Swift.
- Would like to know if there is handicap parking underneath in addition to the parking for the ADA van in the service area.
  - Proponents stated that there is handicap parking adjacent to the elevator. The van requires 9 ½-foot clearance, so they put it outside rather than raise the height of the parking structure.
- Would like to know if there are community concerns regarding the safety of accessing the garage at night; would like to know if there is daylight access in the parking structure.
  - Proponents stated that it is a naturally ventilated garage, so there is some daylight in it. There is also visual supervision into by way of significant openings from the lobby into

the parking structure.

- Feels that all are drawn to scheme C because the parking is out of sight, but that creates problems like a façade at ground level of parking. There is also a problem with servicing the library because the service entrance wants to be where the library service is but it is down a level. Believes that proponents have created challenges that do not exist in other schemes.
  - Proponents stated that there are trade-offs, but if they changed the parking to be above the library, they would still have to add an elevator to get down. It also does not address the problem of the volume of traffic and noise at that corner on street level. There is also the challenge of bringing people from the corner up, but 24<sup>th</sup> is not a highly pedestrian street. It may be appropriate to have the south flank being a pedestrian storefront-type space.
- Feels that, from the photos, the aspect on 24<sup>th</sup> seems large-scale and urban.
- Supports scheme C and proponents going to SDOT petitioning for on-street parking. However, believes proponents will only be able to get two or three on-street parking spaces.
- Agrees that proponents should try to get several on-street parking spaces. Feels that the building could be wider and would like to know the width of the building. Is also concerned about how to get out of some of the parking spaces in the garage, especially the handicap stall.
  - Proponents stated that the building is 45 ft. wide.
- Looks forward to seeing an analysis of the design concept and a set of design guidelines.
- Feels that service is still problematic, but likes the idea of making it look like part of the plaza.

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**21 Nov 2002 Project: High Point Master Plan**

Phase: Street Vacation

Previous Review: 18 April 2002 (Update), 15 November 2001 (Initial Briefing)

Presenters: Miranda Maupin, Seattle Public Utilities (SPU)

Michael Jenkins, DCLU

Tom Phillips, Seattle Housing Authority (SHA)

Brian Sullivan, Mithun Architects and Planners

Attendees: Miles Mayhew, DCLU

Beverly Barnett, SDOT

Kristin Kildall, University of Washington

Peg Staeheli, SvR

Time: 1.5 hours

(SDC Ref. # 170 | DC00253)

**Action:** The Commission strongly supports and applauds the participatory interactive process that is informing this complex project ensuring its unique character, and would like to make the following comments and recommendations.

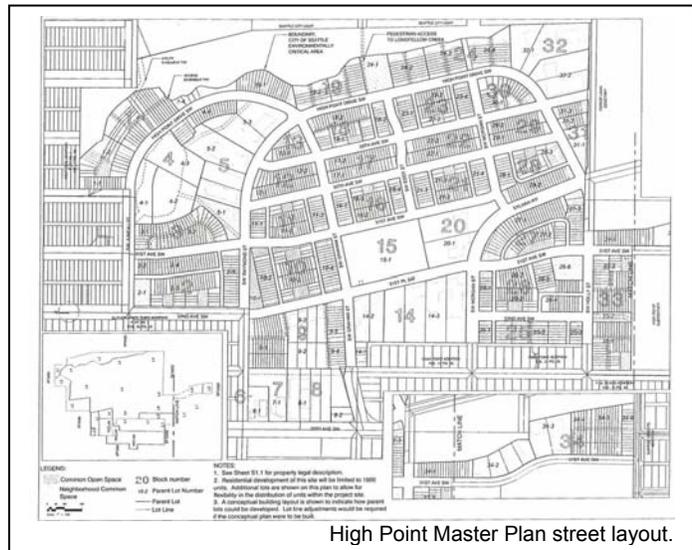
- The Design Commission strongly supports the urban design approach taken and the vision and realization of this plan based on the reintroduction of the historic street pattern and respect for the topography;
- commends the active participation of SPU and the incredible opportunity that SHA has presented;
- appreciates and recognize all of the pieces that had to come together in the contract rezone to manage density;
- commends the design going forward and seeding the site for future design;
- supports easement or dedication of new right-of-way at N. 34<sup>th</sup> St. and through the park at SW Eddy St.;
- thanks Seattle Housing Authority for going far in integrating different types of units throughout the plan;
- will support, in any way they can, the street design idiosyncrasies that will make the project work such as bulbing sidewalks to preserve trees and working with SDOT to create a pedestrian feel on Sylvan Way;
- would like a follow-up session to be scheduled for an appropriate time to see open space designs in more detail;
- supports putting bus stops where people live and where the community wants them;
- fully supports the street vacation and the establishment of a new street pattern as is shown on the master plan;
- recommends approval of the street vacations, with eight in favor and one abstention.

### Seattle Public Utilities

Last time SPU presented to the Commission, several right-of-way issues were addressed: using narrow streets with historic dimensions of 25-foot wide and parking on either side; having a natural drainage system throughout the site; and using porous pavement in sidewalks and one to three of the streets, depending on underlying soils (the technicalities of this are still being studied).

For the natural drainage systems, there are three menu options:

1. Shallow swales—designed to look like traditional planting strips, but they are slightly wider (about 11 ft.). They will be located in the interior of the site layout.
2. Vegetated swales—these are deeper than the shallow swales and a perennial planting palette will be used. These will be integrated into interior parks.
3. Conveyance swales—to be used in steeper areas as a means of surface conveyance.



Hydrology models have been used to assess the drainage and they estimate that each facility will treat about one block plus the associated right-of-way. The Department of Ecology is excited about including this kind of drainage into a dense urban area. Eco-revelatory art will be integrated into infrastructure such as manhole covers and slotted curbs, but they need to go back and look at funding and artist availability. Now the team is entering the regulatory gauntlet and planning ahead. SHA is developing only half the site and the rest is being developed as market-rate, so tools such as Director's Rules will be used.

### Department of Design, Construction, and Land Use

The project is now in the MUP part of the process. There are three factors that play into this:

1. Contract rezone—going from LR 1 to LR 2 and LR 4
2. Subdivision—making up to 1411 lots that will be created in series of larger parent lots
3. Environmental review—SHA has completed the final EIS and the city needs to adopt this as part of the review

The challenge with the contract rezone is that most are done on site-specific projects and this is a large, 105-acre project comprised of many sites. The difficulty is how to analyze the impacts of such a project. The best way they have figured out is to have a joint Design Review and Design Commission panel. The guidelines or criteria for evaluating the impacts of the additional density and character of the streetscape are for the new system to mimic and add to the larger streetscape system. The contract rezone was taken to the hearing examiner who recommended approval of the preliminary plat and as a result the team can go ahead with infrastructure implementation.

DCLU has five major guidelines for the project:

1. Physical environment—because it is such a large site, response to the physical environment is

- challenging;
2. Pedestrian environment—creation of this is important because it will be radically changed with the new street layout;
  3. Street system character—the goal is to retain street connectivity and create a sense of place by building on the character of the neighborhood;
  4. Context—creating a relationship to the surrounding neighborhood;
  5. Open space network—open space character is part of the review of the subdivision
    - opportunities for place-making
    - determination of the character of the retention/detention pond
    - determination for what would, could, and should be provided for residents, especially children

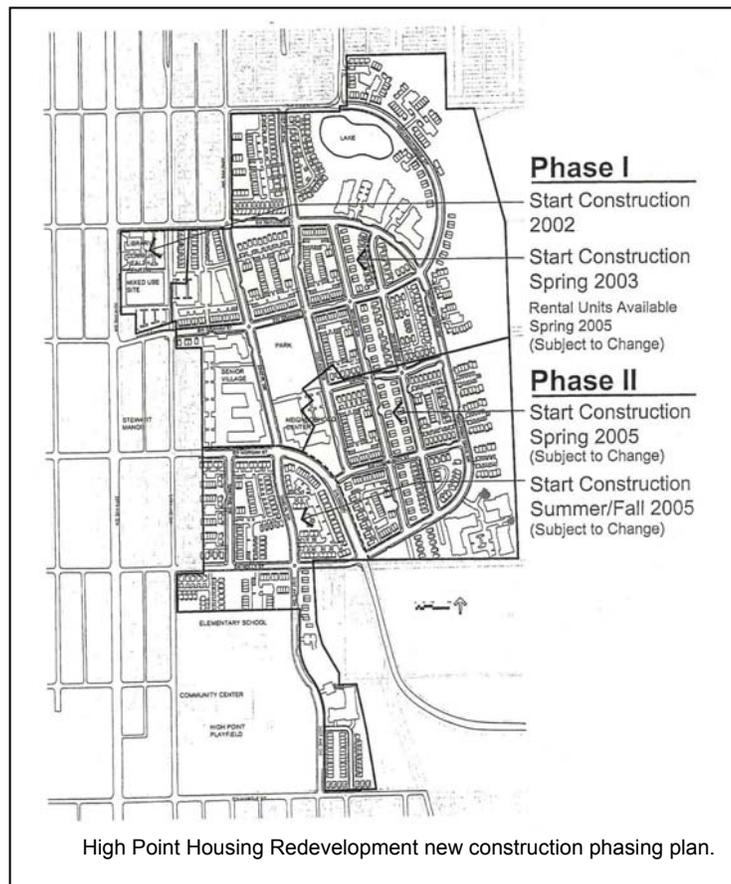
In the process of writing the decision for this project, what DCLU needs from the Commission are recommendations on the subdivision and the contract rezone.

### *Seattle Housing Authority*

What has emerged in this project is a plan that takes advantage of special features, in part in terms of water, but also in dealing with some other issues. With regard to the housing and relocation of current tenants, they are relocating people and developing in two phases. The tenants voted on which people would move first and who could stay during the first phase. All of the families who want to stay can be accommodated. There was not enough room to have all of those in the single units stay, but it is relatively easy to find places for them to live in West Seattle.

Sustainability is a primary goal of the project and proponents are aggressively participating in the Build Green program. They are currently soliciting for a general contractor and the contractor's willingness and ability to work in this program is a significant criterion.

SHA has brought in Pomegranate Center who have experience involving communities in terms of building projects. It is a priority to have a real community and they are holding spaces in parks where residents can participate in building an element of the park. There will be a more specific plan to implement this in about 2 ½ months. They have been meeting with residents on an ongoing basis to discuss different issues and the next meeting will address what they will do with pocket parks. This past summer they met with the community and had them vote on what they are looking for in the housing units.



With regard to the mixed-use area along 35<sup>th</sup> and the right-of-way itself, they are negotiating with some users of the site to find ways to break down the barrier that 35<sup>th</sup> currently presents. They are hoping to supply the users with what they need because SHA knows that the joint review panel and others want this to be a public right-of-way.

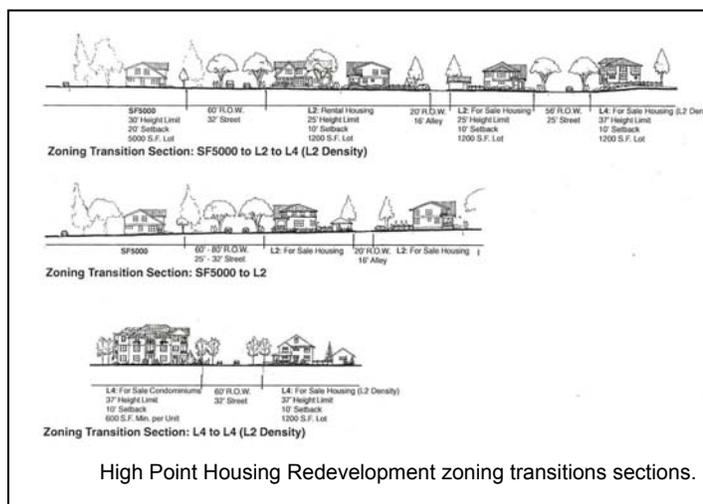
SHA will create a community facility that will provide space for nonprofit organizations and social services. They have found one partner at this point, Head Start, to be located here, and they are talking with YMCA about it, as well.

Design guidelines, which will be site specific by block, will direct private builders. SHA has a contract with Mithun and Nakano Associates to create the guidelines for all sites that will be privately developed and they will have focus groups with prospective buyers to aid in creating the guidelines.

The team is currently negotiating with SDOT, but is almost through this process. They will be ready to start demolition of a nearby building and have been deconstructing it for a couple of weeks. In terms of relocating residents, the Evans School at the University of Washington will track residents to see what happens to them.

### Mithun

The zoning conflicts on the site are that the remaining L4 area is condominiums and retirement homes. L2 lots will be placed around these to feather the high-density places into the surrounding lower density sites. The minimum and maximum numbers of units will be determined for each block. The maximum number of units is 1600, which is less than L1. In the subdivision plan there are dedicated alleys and easements, and the team is looking for an easement on 34<sup>th</sup>. Overall, there are more lots than units, but developers can build out an area to less than L2 density. This gives developers a chance to come in and readjust the blocks in a suitable arrangement.



The phasing is such that the north part of the site will be developed first and the south part of the site will be occupied during construction of phase 1. The site has been planned to have maximum integration of different kinds of buildings. In showing residents images of different building options, they found that people preferred a mix of market-rate and rental housing; carriage houses with alley entrances and narrow views into the alleys; public housing that looks like the market-rate housing; and two-story buildings. There is also a desire to save the major trees and the site is being planned with that in mind.

### Key Commissioner Comments and Concerns

- Would like to know how they determine what kind of swale goes where; would like to know if it decided only by the kind of water that is being treated, or does use factor in as well.
  - Proponents stated that use is a major criterion. Whether there will be on-street parking

and the types of soils and topography are also factors.

- Would like to know what happened to the north-south connection on 34<sup>th</sup>.
  - Proponents stated that it is not at present a dedicated right-of-way. It is an unresolved issue and will be the topic of a hearing.
- Would like to know the relationship between the Director's Rules and where these rules reside.
  - Proponents stated that a Director's Rule could be used to adopt site requirements outlined in an SPU-approved drainage basin plan that relates specifically to drainage in this subbasin. The rule is one of several tools the City can use to implement the drainage goals for this site over time.
  - Proponents stated that a Director's Rule will provide developers and City plan review staff with guidance in applying the drainage requirements within this subdivision. The Rule could be issued as a joint DCLU/SPU, and potentially SDOT, rule and be used by each department in reviewing future street improvement and building permit drainage plans.
- Is concerned with the open spaces on the edges of the development and how they relate to the eastern edge of the corridor; would like to know how they will be defined so they are not co-opted by neighbors as side- or backyards. Feels that the edge needs to be given different kinds of consideration.
  - Proponents stated that is one of the purposes of the larger greenbelt. It is clearly a natural break with limited access. The project needs to be designed to discourage inappropriate use through the housing.
- Stated that along the Burke-Gilman Trail, adjacent residents throw yard waste onto the trail and feels that could happen at this edge, too.
- Would like to know if the City estimates escrow accounts for street improvements and drainage infrastructure and have developers pay fees so the relevant agency is actually implementing the infrastructure improvements.
  - Proponents stated that it is a public investment and that the roads and natural drainage system will be developed in their entirety. Later, some of the costs will be passed on for things like mechanics, but SHA is responsible for creating the system to begin with.
- Feels that in terms of overall Commission concerns, assuming the overall project evolves with the concept that has been agreed on, they perhaps should focus more on issues like massing, etc.
  - Proponents stated that guidelines have been developed to help answer some of these kinds of questions. The project goals need to be implemented over time.
- Believes that there is concern from the joint panel about the ability of individual developers to change zoning. For example, will early developers have more opportunities to manipulate the overall density and have the site not end up as uniform as the drawings imply.
  - Proponents stated that there are issues with making sure the grain of the streetscape is implemented as they intend so a Property Use and Development Agreement (PUDA) will be used. The character of two-thirds of the development is that, while the proposed zoning is L4, the density is limited to L2 (1 lot/1200 ft<sup>2</sup>). That dictates the platting and development pattern and creates a clear sense of what the streetscape would or could be and the height limit will be consistently applied.
- Would like to know what the overall loss of public housing will be.

- Proponents stated that the number is going from 716 public housing units to 350, but they are committed to replacing housing with houses for people with less than 30 percent median income. The result will be the creation of more housing opportunities for low-income people.
- Would like to clarify whether SHA is responsible for building 100 percent of the infrastructure.
  - Proponents stated that they are building the total infrastructure and all of the parks. The cost of this has been incorporated into the price of the lots they sell.
- Would like to know if SHA will build some of the housing.
  - Proponents stated that SHA will build 600 units of rental housing. The other 116 units will be built by other nonprofits. Another 80 affordable for-sale homes will also be built and the remainder of the units will be market-rate.
- Believes that it is good to include alleys, rights-of-way, and open spaces as part of the plan to solidify commitment to their location.
  - Proponents stated that they are trying to coordinate these and they anticipate that the vacations will go to council in February. The first piece is the preliminary subdivision and MUP and this goes to the hearing examiner. After this, the contract rezone is taken to council. This kind of vacation is different—we are not measuring the loss of right-of-way because right-of-way is being put back in. Thus, the key issues for the Design Commission to address are land use impacts such as adequacy of infrastructure, space for street parking, places for loading, and bus stops. There is also the question of how to fit all of these onto small streets. The possible impacts themselves include layout, density, balance between public and market-rate housing.
- Would like to clarify whether the Commission’s vacation action should focus on the urban design and community qualities of the new plan.
  - Proponents stated that what they would like the Commission to think about are character, mix of building types, orientation, and layout.
  - Proponents stated that there are a lot of design guidelines that speak specifically to 34<sup>th</sup> Ave. SW. The two projects that flank it are subject to design review and they would like this to continue to inform the easement.
- Supports the vacation and asks that the proponents come back when there are further development plans for the public spaces. Would like to add 34<sup>th</sup> Ave. to the list of things the Commission gives feedback for today.
  - Proponents stated that they will have to come back to at least the Design Review panel to discuss the mixed-use block because it is a separate MUP.
  - Proponents stated that one thing they neglected to mention needing support on are the tree preservation bulbs because some people do not like these. The trees here have been more thoroughly analyzed than those at New Holly phase 1. They worked to expand their information such as the critical root zone for specific trees and feel the tree preservation bulbs will work. Some trees will require mid-block curb bulbs, which technically are not allowed, but City Light and the Fire Department is willing to work with proponents on this. However, they do need some help getting SDOT to support this idea.
  - Proponents stated that the details on Sylvan Way are not finalized and they need help getting permission to put the bus stops where residents want them.
- Would like to know if there are any private development lots for sale.

- Proponents stated that there probably are not any for sale.
- Believes that SHA does not have the ability to provide a percent funding model and suggests that SHA and developers look at appropriate opportunities to bring in artists. Recommends that the team find creative ways to get artists to work with spaces such as pocket parks.
  - Proponents stated that they can work this into the design guidelines.
- Commends the team in trying to have bureaucracy design something that does not look like it's designed by bureaucracy. Feels that the subtleties such as saving trees, mix of uses, and sustainable infrastructure are all progressive moves. Encourages proponents not to write a detailed and dense proposal that does not allow flexibility and not be heavy handed.
- Compliments the team on the continuous structuring of the project so that they are ending up with something very close to their original vision. Believes that the development will require management and maintenance. Would like proponents to go back to the previous action as well and keep the following recommendations from that in mind: "34<sup>th</sup> Ave. SW be mapped as a public right-of-way through the project, between SW Raymond St. and Graham St." and "the new Park St. SW be continued and mapped as a public right-of-way through the proposed park between 31<sup>st</sup> Ave. and 32<sup>nd</sup> Pl. SW."

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**21 Nov 2002 Project: Belltown Cottages Site Plan/P-Patch**

Phase: Briefing

Previous Reviews: 15 November 2001 (NMF Briefing), 9 September 1999 (Scope Briefing)

Presenters: Andy Sheffer, Seattle Parks and Recreation

Peggy Gaynor, Landscape Architect

Carolyn Geise, *Growing Vine Street*

Attendees: Donna Kalka, Friends of Belltown P-Patch Board

Rich MacDonald, P-Patch Program, Department of Neighborhoods

Time: 0.5 hours

(SDC Ref. # 169 | DC00084)

**Action: The Commission thanks the team for coming and providing an update on this design, and would like to make the following comments and recommendations.**

- **The Design Commission commends the proponents' strong community process and efforts at site integration;**
- **believes that this innovative project breaks the mold for community-oriented design;**
- **supports the decision to fence the perimeter of the site as described and feels that it is appropriate for the existing conditions;**
- **appreciates the simplification of the cottage site landscape design;**
- **encourages CityDesign to study this project for application to the Blue Ring Strategy;**
- **urges SDOT to assume responsibility for repair of the alley;**
- **urges the Police Department to recognize the changing character of the neighborhood and address needs associated with this change to create new behavioral patterns; and**
- **recommends approval of the final concept design.**

The main objective of this design is to connect and unify three major projects: the renovation of the cottages, the cistern steps in the right-of-way, and the security and fencing work proposed for the p-patch. Fencing in the p-patch has the potential to call attention to the entrance from the alley, as it is currently difficult to discern.

Last time the Commission saw the design, proponents were working on how to keep the rectilinear footprints of cottages while maintaining the more organic and curvilinear aspects of the garden as well. A solution was needed to knit the cottages and p-patch together. The concept is that the form of the cottages erodes away through the garden. Wide spots in the pathways allude to the concept of the eroding of rooms.

The bean shape has been retained from the last presentation and a "tendrill," which is a walkway with a grade of less than 5 percent, runs through the p-patch. The old central walkway is also being kept. Currently, the site slopes so that water drains into an area underneath one of the cottages; they are trying to fix this while creating an ADA accessible site. An orchard and ecological lawn transition from the p-patch to the back of the cottages.

The Cistern Steps project is in the adjacent right-of-way and a bioswale catches water from the two farm pumps. Proponents would like to put in a 4-foot high perimeter fence around the park that would tie into the existing black iron gate, unifying the p-patch and the cottages. The main entrance for the site is off the alley, where existing topography is steep, and historically people would walk up eight or nine steps to get

to the site. The design retains this historic view spot, with the addition railings.

The current status of the Cistern Steps project is that the permit will be issued very soon and they hope to put a bid out for it in December or January. Proponents still need to close the gap on funding of the Department of Neighborhoods grant; they are about \$18,000–\$20,000 short. The project has received tremendous support and is helping knit together the community, transitioning it from a neighborhood of a few artists to a vibrant community with residences.

There is some resistance from the Parks and Recreation Department to putting in a fence. Most p-patches have fences for perimeter definition, but this one traditionally has not. Since the cottages were abandoned, there has been a lot of trouble such as vandalism and, as a result, gardeners voted to erect a fence. At this point, temporary one has been put up. The involved parties are working together to find a solution and would like to put in a new fence that matches the one that is already there. They feel this would go a long way in mitigating the problems and would like the Commission's support in this endeavor.

### **Key Commissioner Comments and Concerns**

- Would like to know if the new proposed fence is an exact duplicate of what is already there.
  - Proponents stated that it is not. The new fence is a 4-foot high wrought iron design like the existing one to give a consistent look, but the new one is a picket design.
- Would like to know if proponents know what will happen on the southwest corner of Vine St. and Western Ave.
  - Proponents stated that it is owned by Skip Collins' family and they have leased the skyway.
- Would like to know if the City has been responsive to dealing with the alley that is in poor condition.
  - Proponents stated that one of their goals is to improve that alley and they have spoken with SDOT about it, but have not gotten anywhere yet. City Light has been responsive and has offered to bury the electrical infrastructure there.
  - Proponents stated that if there is anything the Commission can do to get SDOT to respond to the request for reparations of the alley and drainage issues, that would be helpful.
- Commends the people involved and feels that it represents great cooperation that has turned derelict land into a jewel. Would like to see ways to expand the program so this is not just one little jewel in the crown and feels that these kinds of projects could be reinventing the city if there were a program. Hopes that as the Blue Ring Strategy evolves, CityDesign will involve relevant departments such as Parks and Recreation because they have worked on the real thing and there will be more support if people can see built projects like this.
- Feels that it is fine to have a policy regarding keeping open space open, but some sites need to be treated differently and supports the fence.
- Appreciates the integration of the two sides—the cottages and the p-patch. Would like to know what the cottages will house.
  - Proponents stated that two of the cottages are for artists-in-residence. They are subleasing these to Richard Hugo house and that process is moving along.
- Would like to know how proponents are dealing with privacy issues since two of the cottages will be

serving as homes.

- Proponents stated that there will be screening fences or lattice in back and no public access will be allowed on the sides of the cottages. Essentially, the cottages will have secured perimeters with just the fronts open.
- Would like to know where the water that goes into the pumps and swale will come from and where it will drain through.
  - Proponents stated that the pumps are just for Belltown P-Patch. Roof runoff goes to the Cistern Steps and overflow water goes through the trough.
- Would like to know about the fourth cottage.
  - Proponents stated there is no actual fourth cottage. It is a paving pattern in the form of the cottage footprint represented in plan. Some of the pattern is also a seating wall.

**21 November 2002 Commission Business**

**ACTION ITEMS**

- A. TIMESHEETS
- B. MINUTES FROM 7 NOVEMBER 2002—APPROVED

**DISCUSSION ITEMS**

- C. PUBLIC OUTREACH UPDATE—CUBELL
- D. CIVIC CENTER UPDATE—CUBELL
- E. TRANSPORTATION DISCUSSION—STAFF
- F. DECEMBER 19, EVENT PLANNING—CUBELL

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**21 Nov 2002 Project: DCLU Planning Team Update**

Phase: Briefing

Presenters: Diane Sugimura, DCLU  
John Skelton, DCLU  
John Rahaim, DCLU

Time: 1.25 hours

(SDC Ref. # 170 | DC00291)

DCLU Planning Team staff provided updates for the Commission on the search for a DCLU director and the department's reorganization. The search for a director has been narrowed down to two possibilities and the final decision is still to come.

With the reorganization that took place in June, the goal is to have CityDesign; Comprehensive and Regional Planning; Code, Policies, and Administration; and the Seattle Planning Commission work as one planning group. A shared work plan has been developed and a mission statement for the group has been drafted. With the reorganization and split of the Seattle Planning Office, each of the four groups gained several new FTEs. Some of the added functions in CityDesign as a result of the reorganization include area and subarea planning, South Lake Union planning, and expanded urban design work.

In terms of the budget process, DCLU has taken a 13 percent cut departmentally. The result is increased fees and decreased revenue because DCLU will still see a lot of projects. These projects, however, will be smaller, which take more staff time, but bring in less money.

With regard to the Monorail, one of the first items that needs to be addressed is establishment of a strategy for bridging DCLU's planning role with and SDOT's parallel transportation role.

**Key Commissioner Comments and Concerns**

- Would like to know what the effect of the view corridor codes and comprehensive plan that are in place will be on the Monorail.
  - A DCLU representative stated that they are operating under the assumption that there will be land use planning involved. This is also important because people are afraid that high-capacity transit will raise density in the neighborhoods it goes through.
- Would like to know DCLU's role with regard to issuing the RFQ for design and suggests that they should advocate for Design Commission presence on the design panel.
  - A DCLU representative stated that they have not gotten there yet.
  - Another DCLU representative stated that they need to know where the Monorail planning stops and what surrounding vicinity will be affected.
  - Believes that individual entities with specific missions will build the different stations and that lessons can be learned from the light rail process.
- Feels that corridor integration is important because big things will happen.
  - A DCLU representative stated that they do not know yet, but there is talk of pulling together a team together so aspects of the corridor are coordinated.
- Would like to know the effects of the cutbacks in positions and the new director on the total

workload.

- A DCLU representative stated that new projects keep coming. They recently briefed the Mayor on height and density issues with regard to the waterfront and got waterfront planning as a new task. The Mayor is looking at job growth and economic opportunities in South Lake Union and DCLU has been asked to look at that, as well. With regard to industrial policy, the Port is talking about Pier 90/91 and what kind of land use will happen there. Similarly, there is talk of zoning and land use possibilities at North Lake Union. DCLU is constantly reprioritizing issues and projects.
  - Another DCLU representative stated that making projects real like the Blue Ring Strategy is another challenging task they're taking on.
- Would like to know how the mandate of the Planning Commission has changed with the integration/reorganization.
  - A DCLU representative stated that the mandate has not really changed. The Planning Commission staff is now part of the planning team.
- Would like to know what the role is between the Planning Commission and Comprehensive Planning Group.
  - A DCLU representative stated the Planning Commission has an oversight role and they review and provide comment.
- Would like to know the role or authority of the Planning Commission.
  - A DCLU representative stated that it is not totally clear. It is fairly broad and they deal with reviews of plans and policies.
  - A DCLU representative stated that the mission statement for the Planning Team has not yet been finalized, but the Commission has been given a draft to look over and comment on.
- Would like to know if there will be more structural changes with the new director.
  - A DCLU representative stated that there will be some. A planning director in charge of the whole group will be hired and there will be some reconfiguration.
- Would like to know where the Design Commission fits in and whether there is any in particular they should do.
  - A DCLU representative stated that both possible new directors have a design bent and advises the Commission to get a meeting with the new director when he is announced. The representative further stated that there will be changes in other departments affecting DCLU, too, but they do not know what those will be at this point.

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**21 Nov 2002** Project: **Draft Cheasty Boulevard Improvement Plan**

Phase: Concept Design Update

Previous Reviews: 20 June 2002 (Conceptual Design)

Presenters: Tanja Wilcox, J. A. Brennan Associates  
David Goldberg, Seattle Parks and Recreation

Attendees: Michael Shiosaki, Seattle Parks and Recreation

Time: 1 hour (SDC Ref. # 169 | DC00276)

**Action:** **The Commission appreciates the presentation and detailed information on the concept development, and would like to make the following comments and recommendations.**

- **The Commission appreciates the team’s response to and incorporation of their earlier recommendations;**
- **approves of the direction and thrust of the design, especially the balance of the manmade boulevard elements with the natural systems;**
- **encourages continued conversations with the people involved in the McClellan Light Rail station design so they fit together;**
- **appreciates proponents sensitivity to the Olmsted principles without being slavish in following them;**
- **appreciates the choice of elements slated for Phase I development, focusing on the pedestrian trail as an important safety and social connection;**
- **recommends that the final drawings show the larger context and that different pieces of the proposal be shown on different layers for clarity;**
- **appreciates the sensitivity to legal classification of this *boulevard* as both park and road, and urges the team to focus on maximizing pedestrian safety; and**
- **supports the location of the north gateway at Winthrop rather than Martin Luther King, Jr. Way;**
- **recommends approval of the concept design.**

“Cheasty Boulevard is 1.3 mi long, and 120 ft wide. The boulevard runs from Beacon Ave. S. to S. Winthrop St. near the intersection of Rainier Ave. S. and Martin Luther King, Jr. Way S. Cheasty Blvd. was included in the Olmsted Brothers’ plans for the Seattle Parks system in the early 1900s. They proposed that Cheasty, along with other boulevards, be created to provide attractive connections between city parks. The Olmsteds did not provide specific plans for the development of the boulevard. The current character of the boulevard is an informal combination of medium-aged forest and houses.” –presentation handout

The team developed a phasing plan, working with the University of Washington and SoundTransit on the north portion. They are looking for review and endorsement of certain elements like the path and drainage elements. Some people object to having a path along the boulevard. The drainage must fit with the aesthetics and complement the natural drainage. In addition, there are a number of encroachments along the boulevard that will have to be dealt with. The project has a \$600,000 budget, so not all the improvements will happen now.

The team has responded to the Commission’s actions of their last meeting in the following ways:

“ . . .simplify the design with a single unifying element”—Design Commission Minutes, 20 June 2002

- the addition of street trees to east side where appropriate; there are places where the character is different or the slope does not lend itself to trees
- as a unifying element the trail goes along the full length of Cheasty Blvd. and only crosses twice, at Andover and north of 24<sup>th</sup> Pl.
- in order to build the trail, retaining walls will need to be built in some places; these will be simple concrete wall with stone characteristics. Where the walls need to be taller than 3 ft, the team is looking at terracing so they can do plantings to minimize the visual impact.

“ . . .hopes that design improvements are relatively invisible, in order to maintain the natural character”—Design Commission Minutes, 20 June 2002

- the landscape character is an important part of the project and there are formal and informal areas along the boulevard; the goal is to fit with what is there now, concentrating on informal native plantings, but transition to more ornamental, formal planting near residences
- City Light will replace the lighting with essentially what is there now—cobra head lights on wood poles; the team looked at smaller poles, but heeded the caution of the Commission not to go faux historic
- the community agreed with this suggestion for subtlety in the design

“ . . .some type of marker would be appropriate at Cheasty Blvd.’s gateways and intersections to signify the street as a special place; historic and rustic character marker at gateways and one at center (Della) recommended”—Design Commission Minutes, 20 June 2002

- gateway markers with be placed at either end in reference to the boulevards Olmsted association

“ . . .strategically develop the design to delineate possibilities and opportunities for incremental development. . . .” —Design Commission Minutes, 20 June 2002

- because of the limited budget, incremental installment is being planned for; the first/primary elements to be built are the trail and the necessary associated infrastructure

A geotech consultant has looked at the drainage along the boulevard and has recommended several springhead drains and interceptor catch drains. The team has also incorporated two ponds for stormwater detention and they feel these have potential to also serve as educational features. The ponds these will be located in areas that are already typically wet.

Phase 1 includes

- the full trail and necessary drainage improvements
  - the drainage improvements are a ditch system. To minimize impacts and in recognition of the limited maintenance budget they are standard 2 to 1 slope ditches, some lined with gravel. A pipe underneath carries the surface runoff away.
- all of the walls because they are necessary to implement the trail
- gateway marker at Winthrop
- some street trees to infill and augment existing street trees
- some infill plantings to restore where the slope has been impacted with wall development
- traffic-calming measures: raised crosswalk and traffic choker at 24<sup>th</sup> Pl.; they are also working with SDOT to get the stop sign on Della installed
- lighting, which will be done by City Light
- a limited number of bollards and park boundary markers

The restoration of the public landscape character is part of an ongoing effort to eliminate non-park use of park property. The plan provides some additional guidance to the existing Boulevard Policies endorsed by City Council. Restoration may be a small part of phase 1.

### **Key Commissioner Comments and Concerns**

- Would like to know if there will be signals at the crossings.
  - Proponents stated that they using raised crosswalks that may be accentuated with pavers and pinching the boulevard slightly by planting closer in as pedestrian safety elements. Specifically, they are proposing a stop sign at Della, a traffic choker with the crosswalk between Della and Andover, and a crosswalk and choker at Hanford.
- Supports the trail as the creation of a safer pedestrian situation, which is key. Would like to the design guidelines generated for this project extend to Franklin High School or at least to Winthrop in order to realize the full vision.
- Believes that proponents are getting a lot done for less than 25 percent of the money. Would like to know what the expenses are in the remaining phases?
  - Proponents stated that the remaining expenses are primarily plant material, bollards, and more raised crosswalks.
- Would like to know how much planting they are doing in the first phase.
  - Proponents stated that they are doing some, but it is restricted to 53 street trees and limited shrubs and herbaceous vegetation. Phase 1 consists of a very small amount of the total proposed plantings.
- The map shows the trail on the west at the south and then it crosses, and crosses back again. Would like to know why it is not being kept on the west the whole length.
  - Proponents stated that there is steep topography in one area that is prohibitive because it would require walls for it to work. There are also a lot of driveways in the section where it crosses over, so pedestrian safety is an issue.
- Congratulates the team on their good work and feels that they are going in the right direction. Suggests that they think strategically about preparing a document so the plan is kept alive. Feels that the plan, in all its layers, is awkward as is. Also suggests that the team write how the rest might be funded.
- Would like to clarify that the green lines on either side are the edge of the boulevard. Suggests that showing these edges does not accurately reflect what is there—there is a much larger area of green.
  - Proponents stated that the historic precedent of a boulevard is a 120-foot width and that the policies that come into play are important distinctions. Showing the edges provides the visual language that tells people it is a boulevard, a strip. However, proponents do acknowledge that it is a bigger thing.
- Would like to know if the resistance to the path is privacy.
  - Proponents stated that it is and that many people have been using this part of the right-of-way as part of their yards. In addition, many residents on Cheasty Blvd. want drainage improvements implemented before a pathway is installed, so recommended drainage and

path improvements will be done at the same time.

- Thinks that the crosswalks are problematic because they will lull people into thinking that they are safe and they will be careless. Believes that bulbs or some kind of edge might help.
- Would like to know how many lanes of traffic there are and whether it would be possible to put bulbs there.
  - Proponents stated that there are two lanes of traffic and bulbs could take up shoulder space, which is 1 ft on either side.
- Believes that pedestrians assume motorists will follow the law and stop.
- Feels that textured paving is effective, but it must be located before the stopping point as a warning.
- Believes that the steep slopes and the width of the area is a critical issue. Suggests proponents look at ways to put a large interceptor drain under the path; combine the two drains under the path for a simpler profile.
  - Proponents stated that they can explore that, but as it is designed now, it can also have a small swale function.
- Would like to know what the width of the paving is now and whether they are going to widen it.
  - Proponents stated that it is 20 to 22 ft. wide and it will not be widened.
- Would like to clarify that there is then 100 ft left that is most vegetated.
  - Proponents stated that there is, except where residents have encroached in a portion of the Boulevard that is along a golf course and at the Park's bulk storage yard.
- Would like to know whether the drainage and ponds are capable of handling all surface runoff.
  - Proponents stated that they are improving the existing ditch system only where they have to because of the addition of the trail. They will focus improvements on the problem areas. The ponds are primarily catching additional surface runoff created by the trail.
- Would like to know if the ponds will have water year-round.
  - Proponents stated that the one by Della will be at least wet all year long.
- Would like to know if the team plans to build out and take the 120 ft.
  - Proponents stated that they do not plan to relandscape the full boulevard because it has steep topography on both sides and the desired character is to retain and enhance the existing natural quality. The entire width is Parks land and is built out in an informal, heavily vegetated way. The only exception is at the south end where there might be opportunities in the future for a picnic area.
- Would like to know if they have run the lighting by the Landmarks Board.
  - Proponents stated that they have not and are not sure where they will stand. They do have the Olmsted folks on board.
- Would like to know what the plan is if there is an objection from the Landmarks Board.
  - Proponents stated that they do not know because with this project, they could not afford to add lighting.

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**21 Nov 2002 Project: Jefferson Community Center Expansion**

Phase: Design Development

Previous Review: 15 August 2002 (Pre-Design)

Presenters: Rex Bond, ARC Architects

Don Bullard, Seattle Parks and Recreation

Karen Kiest, Karen Kiest Landscape Architecture

Attendees: Karin Richards, ARC Architects

Michael Shiosaki, Seattle Parks and Recreation

Time: 0.75 hours

(SDC Ref. # 169 | DC00282)

**Action: The Commission thanks the team for coming and would like to make the following comments and recommendations.**

- **The Commission feels that the project meets the proponent's three basic goals of creating an appropriate civic scale, keeping on budget, and respecting the existing community center while looking to its future expansion;**
- **supports the design concept of the "floating roof" above the gym and looks forward to seeing the configuration that results from the lighting studies mentioned;**
- **encourages alternative programming for the parking lot so as to discourage cars;**
- **urges the team to explore possibilities for variation in roof color;**
- **is concerned with the limited design of the plaza or breakout space to the north, especially its social use and encourages its reconsideration in Phase I work; and**
- **recommends approval of design development.**

This project is part of the community center levy program and is funded at \$2.5 million. It is a simple, straight-forward program consisting of a regulation-sized gym and associated spaces including a storage facility, mechanics room, and toilets. The three primary goals for the project are to create a building with an appropriate civic scale, stay on budget, and respect the existing community center. However, it is also important for the proponents to look to the future when the existing community center will be replaced with a new one.

The new gym will be located next on the west side of the existing community center. The proposed community center will be to the north of the existing one, but is not part of this project. Anticipated on-site changes are the move of the existing fence lines by Park's land and the driving range, which will give this project more room. In the predevelopment meeting with DCLU, proponents tried to get the parking requirements changed. However, they are still required to have no right-of-way parking and 18 spaces in the parking lot, two of which will be handicap stalls.

At the last meeting, the Commission supported having a more generous space around the building by way of an arcing walk. For landscape features there are large deciduous trees that wrap around the building and a modest bioswale from the parking lot. The north terrace off the main gym provides a break out space and addresses the future park that will be located off the community center in this direction.

For the building itself, the team explored a number of forms of old park structures, which were presented at the last meeting, to provide a link to the past. In addition, the building is designed to be a companion to

the existing community center and be background rather than a foreground element. The park form chosen is that of an old fire pit that is open on one side. The west, south, and east sides of the community center expansion will be solid walls and the north side will be the open end that comes out onto the plaza.

The building façade will have a ten-foot high concrete masonry unit (CMU) datum line. Proponents are playing with proportions of siding material to create the appropriate rhythm and scale. The end result will be an articulation and break down in scale of the building's exterior. Along the top of the west and east sides are rows of clerestory windows. Lighting tests will be performed to determine whether they can specify transparent glazing. From the outside, the north elevation is wrapped in stained material to be determined, but possible cedar. The pitched roof has two trusses that completely span the building and several half trusses.

On the interior, the plumbing core will be shared by the existing gym and community center. The interior walls of the gym are stained medium density fiber board (MDF). These break down into a pattern that articulates the space with a play of horizontal and vertical elements. Two large sheets of glazing on the open end that look out onto to the plaza. Barn door-type technology will be used as a retractable cover for the glazed wall.

### **Key Commissioner Comments and Concerns**

- Believes that when you look through the clerestory, you will just see the edge of the roof, but likes the concept of the floating roof.
  - Proponents stated that the Lighting Design Lab will help determine whether that is the case.
- Would like to know why the clerestory is so narrow.
  - Proponents stated that it is narrow because if the glazing extended further down, there would be more direct light into the gym.
- Is concerned that, if people are looking at the underside of the roof rather than sky, they will just see spider webs, dirt, etc.
- Would like to know if there is any way around the parking situation and encourages proponents to find other ways to imply a means of appropriation of the space, i.e., basketball.
- Would like to clarify if the base is concrete block because the drawings look more mottled and stone-like.
  - Proponents stated that they are going to the cost estimator with standard block, but would like split face block if they can afford it. They are thinking of a 70/30 mix of two darker blocks.
- Suggests that proponents go into the estimator with stone. Feels that the material will not look like the way it has been rendered and wishes more could be done like using brick or concrete with texture. Recognizes it is a matter of opinion, but prefers the split face.
  - Proponents stated that stone is too expensive, as is brick. The exterior facing material they are looking at now is textured concrete.
- Would like to know if the concrete would need still need to be finished if they get it already stained.
  - Proponents stated that it will be sealed at the factory.

- Would like to know how proponents are going to deal with the door at the southwest. Would like to know if it meets grade as it comes out or if they will pull the grade down and eliminate the wall. Encourages proponents to look at this closely.
- Would like to know why the walkway comes out at a right angle rather than curving to meet the sidewalk.
  - Proponents stated that by going out a little further, there is opportunity to pick up grade. It is hard to know how it will wrap around the curve at this point.
- Recommends that the team make grading and plants do more work in terms of scaling down building.
- Would like to know what happens to the entrance in existing building when the existing community center is demolished.
  - Proponents stated that the reason the elevation here goes down four feet is because they struck the middle ground between the lowest and highest elevation points. The primary entrance will be north of the existing community center.
- Would like to know, as you turn the corner from the east and west to the north, if the building will be stained a different color.
  - Proponents stated that a segment of CMU and a piece of the other stain will be brought around to the north.
- Recommends that if proponents use 70/30 mix for façade treatment, they also look into using a mix of roof materials.
  - Proponents agreed that was a good idea.
- Does not see the plaza on the elevations.
  - Proponents stated that they are not on the elevations, just the site plan.
- Would like to know if the plaza will be further articulated because it does not yet seem like a social space. Recommends that if proponents are going to put it in now, they should make it a useful space.
  - Proponents stated that it is hard to know how the future community center will be used.
  - Proponents further stated that some park improvements will be done and it could be expanded within the parks scenario. The primary value of the plaza is that it is at-grade with the gym.
- Would like to know why the plaza is on the north rather than the south.
  - Proponents stated that it started with dealing with grade and then they thought how it might be incorporated in the future. The parks master plan shows a plaza in that area and its intended use is mostly as a way to get out onto the lawn.
- Would like to know if proponents have considered a different roof.
  - Proponents stated that they did look at the possibility of a flat roof or two sheds, but they are going more toward what is there now and a typical parks building.
- Believes that the roof massing is bigger than the existing building.
  - Proponents stated that the roof pitch is very shallow and looks almost flat from the ground level corner.
- Would like to know if the rendered colors of the stain are accurate.

- Proponents stated that they are very close—the existing community center is dark and the want the new treatment to be of the same ilk.
- Would like to know why the interior bands do not match the exterior ones.
  - Proponents stated that the wanted to break the north elevation with glazing above ten feet rather than at the datum line of up to ten feet to accentuate it as special and different.

**21 Nov 2002 Project: Dexter Court**

Phase: Street Vacation Follow-Up

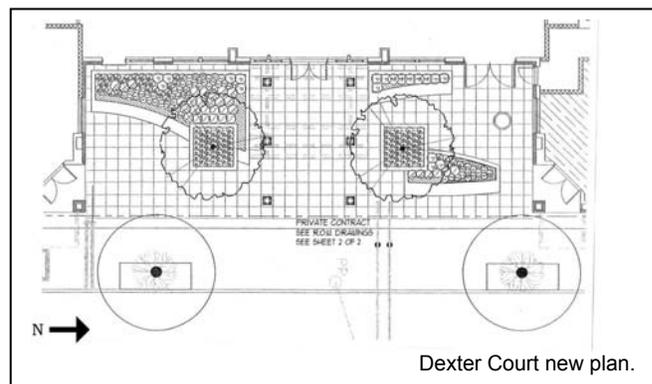
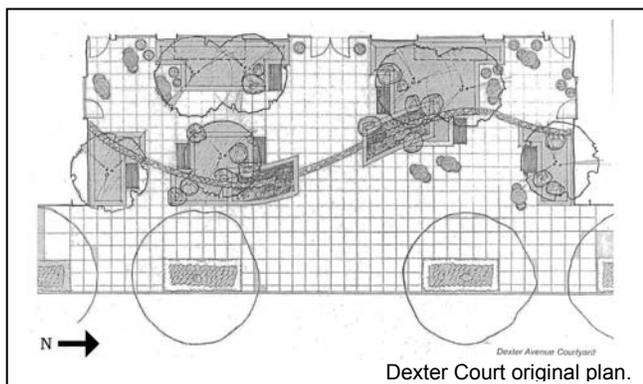
Previous Reviews: 2 May 2002 (Design Development), 4 April 2002 (Design Development), 6 May 1999 (Schematic Design), 3 April 1999 (Conceptual Design)

Presenters: Julie Berger, Artist  
Scott Burns, Thomas Rengstorf Associates  
Matt Driscoll, Driscoll Architects  
Tom Warren, Holland PartnersAttendees: Beverly Barnett, SDOT  
Lisa Rutzick, DCLU

Time: 0.75 hours (SDC Ref. # 170 | DC00004)

**Action:** The Commission appreciates the proponent's efforts to come back with their proposed revisions to the plaza design and would like to make the following comments and recommendations.

- The Commission will require another review of this project;
- would like to see, upon the team's return, a design of a comfortable public and social open space that does not just serve users of the building;
- urges the team to address the following issues: sun exposure, social activity in the area, visibility, and circulation within the plaza;
- asks that the team resolve and present by the next review, the final design of the canopy, analysis of the light conditions, and specification of materials;
- urges proponents to consider an alternative for the canopy or explore the possibility of no canopy altogether, and pursue other ways to announce the building entry;
- is not confident that the team will develop the plaza for public use as agreed previously and shown on their original plaza design; and
- does not recommend approval.



The plaza at Dexter Court has been modified because they revised the interior spaces and changed the corner entrances. The main revision is that there is amenity space in the interior and the changed outdoor space is meant to better tie into that. To do this the original curve has been flipped and the water feature has been eliminated. In the old scheme, the plaza was 480 ft<sup>2</sup> with seven trees; the new scheme is 528 ft<sup>2</sup> with eight trees. The benches remain the same. The primary element to change was the common space—

proponents wanted to create a bigger outdoor space to the north, but the gathering spaces remain basically the same. A covered roof structure has been added and the water feature is pulled back to create a bigger entry. Several street trees have been moved to allow for underground utilities, but the larger landscaped areas are the same as previously presented. Street tree type has been determined, but proponents are unsure of what was decided. The trees in the courtyard itself will be small, multistem trees. Other plant materials include grass, small shrubs, perennials, and flowering groundcovers. The paving in the property line will be 2'x2' stone pavers and outside the property line will be 2'x2' concrete pavers. The paving under the awning is angled to pick up on the diagonal of the flooring in the entry.

The artist was recently brought on board and is in the conceptual phase of the project. Her focus is metal and how it works and her work generally uses abstracted motifs. She is looking at incorporating metal into the wall and will emphasize lighting rather than water; pieces of the wall will be lit to tie into the sculpture. The primary mediums will be metal and glass, along with lighting. With regard to form, artistic elements will be integrated into the curved line.

### **Key Commissioner Comments and Concerns**

- Would like to know if the original water feature is now plantings.
  - Proponents stated that it is.
- Would like to know what material the awning is.
  - Proponents stated that it is a metal awning.
- Feels that proponents are not being clear enough in what they plan to do.
- Would like to know what exactly the canopy is/includes.
  - Proponents stated that it is a steel canopy with a steel roof in the form of a reverse curve with a chandelier underneath.
- Feels that the canopy gives the impression of private space and imposes on what was a fairly singular open space. The side spaces then become peripheral rather than having one unified space. Believes that it looks like the building is intruding back out into public space. Urges proponents to make the space more inviting for users.
  - Proponents stated that in conjunction with right-of-way improvements on the sides, the public portions are similar. The spaces that were truly public are similar and visually the space is the same. Believes that qualitatively the space feels more public and that its move to the south side is a benefit because more people approach from that direction.
- Believes that it is impossible to avoid the significant difference that the canopy makes. It announces the entry into the building and changes the public/private space indication.
  - Proponents stated that it is the entry to the building.
- Believes that the point is that the canopy is a major intrusion of a solid overhead plane into the public courtyard. The canopy pushes the building into the courtyard.
  - Proponents stated that the steel makes more sense than glass because you cannot see water spots, dirt, and pollen. Would like to know if pulling the canopy back might help.
- Suggests that the intrusion of the canopy is width and size scale. It could be six-feet wide rather than a great arcing structure. Feels it could be made more narrow than shallow. Believes that the

Commission had approved something that was not then submitted and now proponents are coming back with something else. Would like to know what the Commission is to believe and approve.

- Believes that not all parts of the courtyard are the same with regard to sun and shadow. The public space is now tucked into the north part of the courtyard. This simple shift retains the forms, but would like to know if proponents have created a comfortable space.
- Feels that the canopy could be narrow and close to the building so it does not impose; the alcove looks private. In the first scheme, the doors are projecting and there are tables and chairs; it's not cozy, but feels that it was more active and therefore more public.
- Is happy to see an artist brought on. Would like to know if the water is totally gone from the scheme; would like to know if water was traded for an artist.
  - Proponents stated that the water is gone and feel that art can be more compelling than water.
- Feels that they do need to see what the artist develops and how it fits in because there will be a fundamental character change. Believes that the artist needs to be given time to develop her work and no be compromised by being brought into the project so excessively late.
- Would like to know where the project is, whether it is under construction.
  - Proponents stated that it is all formed out and there is building all around it.
- Feels that the canopy is a large part of the problem and art could help integrate it.

#### **Key Visitor Comments and Concerns**

- A representative from DCLU stated that the process is 1) Commission approval of plan in May 2002; 2) revised plan filed this fall; and now 3) current version of plan presented.