



Seattle Design Commission

Approved

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

June 15 2006

Gregory J. Nickels,
Mayor

David Spiker
Chair

Convened: 8:30am
Adjourned: 5:00pm

Pam Beyette

Adam Christiansen

John Hoffman

Karen Kiest

Anindita Mitra

Sheri Olson

Nic Rossouw

Dennis Ryan

Darrell Vange

Guillermo Romano
Executive Director

Layne Cubell,
Senior Staff

Projects Reviewed

New Rainier Vista – 31st Avenue South – Street/Alley Vacations
Jefferson Park Expansion – Phase 1 Development
Arboretum Pacific Connections
Planning Division Update
Alaskan Way Viaduct and Seawall
Olympic Sculpture Park site tour

Commissioners Present

David Spiker, Chair
Pam Beyette
Adam Christiansen
John Hoffman
Karen Kiest
Anindita Mitra
Sheri Olson
Nic Rossouw
Dennis Ryan
Darrell Vange

Staff Present

Layne Cubell
Tom Iurino
Valerie Felts



Department of Planning and
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The project is guided by New Urbanism design principles with features such as pedestrian parks and paths to promote a walkable community. It is anchored by the central Martin Luther King corridor with an urban walkway and will be served by the Columbia city/Edmunds Light Rail Station.

The Boys and Girls Club element of the public benefit package includes a ground floor Teen Center visible. It would consist of a games room offering foosball, pool, and ping pong. Upstairs would be a quieter computer training and art center. Visible at street-level, the center would be an attractor for teens, providing a structured environment. The athletic playfield will be available to club members during club hours, and available for general use by the public during non-club hours. Changes to the project since the 2003 redevelopment plan are:

- addition of a Boys and Girls Club
- reduction of 79 units in Southeast quadrant
- increase of 85 units in B43 quadrant
- possible small increase in commercial space
- increase of 75-80,000 sq. ft. of parks/open space



Commissioner Comments and Questions

- Who is the parking behind the retail for?
 - Retail and housing above
- What is the parking count for the program?
 - 90 spaces, we're trying to not build more than needed. Planners took into consideration greater access to light rail.
- Is there structured parking in the mixed use component on the other side of the street?

- No, it is all surface parking
- Is the ballfield lot fenced from the midrise housing, the parking lot, is that part fenced in?
 - Yes, it will keep balls from breaking windows
- Is there a public accessway?
 - MLK sidewalk is the main access for the community
- Lighting at the ballfields?
 - Would like to have some level of lighting on ballfields so they can be used in the winter when it gets dark early. We would be happy to limit the hours of the lighting in the summer to 8:00 or 9:00 pm.
- The hierarchy of block forms makes sense with more density at the south end. Everything does not have to be the same size.
- Is there an eye for security at the large parking lot behind the Boys and Girls Club?
 - The building will have lots of windows, it is very transparent so administrators can see what is going on
- Recommend another driveway for access to retail on MLK Way
- Did the team do an exercise to see if the proposed platting will work?
 - Yes, we looked at hundreds of alternatives
- The team may want to explore siting the Club in the middle of the block.
- Regarding public benefit, the Boys and Girls Club is in itself a benefit
- The open space of the playfield cannot be seen from the street. Maybe when mixed use buildings are designed the team could make some view corridors
- What is the public benefit of replatting? The public did not benefit from 2003 replatting, so they are not losing anything now if street vacation is approved.
 - (SDOT): need to see drawings showing the design of the whole site to see benefit for the public that was realized in 2003
- What about a pedestrian circulation network?
 - Relies on MLK frontage and perimeter route
 - Boys and Girls Club sidewalks to the parking lot
- Has a more urbanist site plan been explored?
 - The site plan needs some fixes to show all constraints of topography
- Site plan needs work. Think of retail component and break it up more along MLK
- Keep internal program clear to allow views through
- There is a real opportunity for community connection for park at southeast
- Who is the landscape architect?
 - SVR, who are also civil engineers. But we have not started landscape design.
- Underscore permeability of site
- Work with Seattle School District to acquire school at southeast
- Stay focused on urban design and public benefits

- Public benefits are additional housing and additional park
- Need to convince Commission that design goals of several years ago will still be saved
- Quantity of parking is a concern, taking up a lot of the site. If this is a peat bog with a lot of drainage maybe low impact development to soften the parking surface would be appropriate. Tree it up and obscure it.
- Look at preserving alleys in some way, permeability for pedestrians if no car access

15 June 2006 Project: Jefferson Park Expansion – Phase 1

Previous Reviews: December 2005

Phase: Design Development

Presenters: Randy Robinson, Department of Parks and Recreation
Michael Shiosaki, Department of Parks and Recreation
Carolyn Law, Department of Parks and Recreation
Greg Brower, Berger Partnership
Andy Mitten, Berger Partnership
Jess Harris, Department of Planning and Development

Attendees: Elizabeth Conner, Artist

Mira Latoszek, Jefferson Park Alliance

Time: 1 hour (SDC Ref. #170)

Action

The Commission thanks the Parks Department and design team for their presentation. It recommends approval and offers the following comments:

- **recognize this is Phase 1 of a multiphase development that will benefit the city. Development of this facility serves both the community in new and unique ways and will serve the whole city in years to come. It will work to balance a whole city scale and community scale in its efforts.**
- **appreciate any work that can be done to clarify, emphasize, to think through what was embedded in the schematic master plan in terms of the long term vision for this park, realizing that in design development you are focused on a \$7.5 million budget and how to best spend it. Urge team not to lose the clarity of the vision of schematic master plan.**
- **in recognition that funds are limited for trees, and that they will only mature over time, a greater number of trees smaller in scale should be explored.**
- **the Commission in general is positive about attention that's been given to clarifying the overall plan, bringing a sharpness to it, attention to access by preserving views. Emphasizing as this design work continues to clarify the uniqueness of the play area to the community to not let it get lost behind the tennis courts.**
- **Reconsider use of synthetic turf on the lids, especially the north meadow area.**
- **Appreciate the direction of the art as it evolves.**
- **Suggest team provide a vision of the preferred optimal tree coverage concept and a strategy of incremental planting phases through community programs as part of a guide for the future. Team should refer to the overall master plan that was previously approved by the Commission.**

Proponents Presentation

The Jefferson Park Expansion project is nearing completion of the Design Development Phase after several months of public involvement process, reviews, and approvals. The plan envisions a park with large open spaces for passive and active recreation, pathways that offer views of downtown Seattle, water features, opportunities for art, and dedicated areas for families and children. The project's art program was outlined by artist Elizabeth Conner who described water and land as themes of her artwork.

In response to Design Commission recommendations of an earlier review, the team outlined access points, views, and concerns surrounding funding.

Commissioner Questions and Comments

- How long is the walk around the perimeter?
 - Between ¼ to ½ mile
- What are the grades?
 - The highest is the community center, at 360 ft.; the road is 300 ft.
- Avoid at all costs a synthetic, organic shaped lawn or playfield.
 - At this point, the north meadow is not planned to be synthetic, but will be natural grass. The long-term plan for the sportsfields on the lidded south reservoir, however, is synthetic turf which has been universally supported over the water reservoir because no fertilizers, pesticides or irrigation is needed.
- Need an optimum overall vision of what preferred tree coverage is: 20 years – 25 years, so the community can have a vision to work toward.
- In regard to budgetary constraints on tree landscaping, have you considered a community tree planting program?
- What percentage of the project is the play area? Can it be increased?
 - At this time it is 6,000 sq. ft. The team seeks to double it in the next plan. At 12,000 sq. ft. it would be one of the large play areas in the system.
- Suggest improvement for drawings. To present them in phases so team is designing for the future, so community can see what can or cannot be in the future, within budgetary constraints.
- Are you working with the community to raise funds?
 - Not currently, but there are proposals with city such as a neighborhood matching fund for the play area.

Public Comments

Mira Latoszek, of the Jefferson Park Alliance, spoke of the need for a park-like feel, not only that of a sportsfield. She noted that the children's play area and water features should be better located, that at this time they appear to be shoved off to the edge. She suggested they be the focus of the park. She commented that her group would be better able to raise funds if it had access to drawings such as presented by the team today.

Mark Holland, a community member, sent comments by email, which were circulated among the Commissioners. He feels the expansion plan is vaguely structured, undefined, and does not meet the goals set forth in the Beacon Hill Neighborhood Plan. He specifically notes the north reservoir area, or "Great Lawn" as problematic in its use of irrigation, sporadic use of trees and poor bird and insect habitat. He also recommends less chemical maintenance of the lawn to prevent pollution of the park.

15 June 2006 Project: Arboretum – Pacific Connections

Phase: Design Development Update

Previous Reviews: November 2004, May 2006

Presenters:

Michael Shiosaki, Department of Parks and Recreation

Paul Stromdahl, Portico Group

Milenko Matanovic, Pomegranate Center

Attendees: Donald Harris, Parks & Recreation

Time: 1 hour

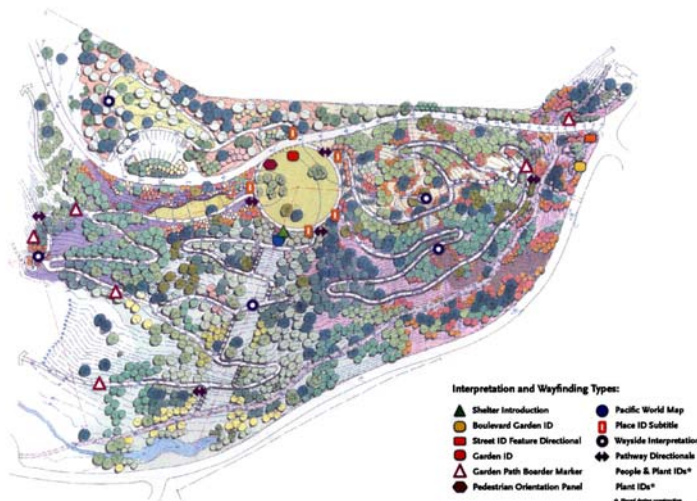
(SDC Ref. #169/RS0605)

Action

The Commission appreciates the update on the shelter pavilion and wayfinding elements, but still does not recommend approval with the following concerns:

- the designs show a lack of understanding of how the elements work together
- the use of inappropriate shapes and forms and overall aesthetic remain an issue

Parks staff suggested and the Commission agreed to follow up on these concerns with the design team in a small group meeting which will be scheduled soon.



Proponents Presentation

The team presented a scheme for the kiosk and its interpretive elements, which addressed items flagged as concerns in a May 2006 review by the Design Commission. The presentation included design details and a description of materials for the proposed kiosk with three interlocking interpretive panels and also the proposed hierarchy of wayside elements. Cedar, which may be salvaged from the site, would likely be used for the kiosk. They defined the intent of the

kiosk as a place where visitors would pause to get interpretive information rather than gather for events. It would be simplified and serve as a gateway to views, the stairs and the gardens below. Also described were future plans for a possible green roof on the shelter.

Commissioner Questions and Comments

- Please explain techniques for building a green roof
 - use of soil, plants, etc.
- The design needs work, look at the Japanese Garden
- The stairs look too formal for the other, very informal structure. The two elements pull away from each other
- Suggest making stairs into an overlook
- Need to see another level of drawings. The design is not appropriate to the place - no overall sense of appropriateness for the arboretum.
- There is an awkward aesthetic relationship in the site design, and the scale and materials, of the kiosk.
- Focus of the overlook design is on a formal circle, but not sure how it really works programmatically with the larger site
- Need to see sections and a more detailed site plan
- This shelter represents approx. \$60,000 out of a \$6.0 million project.

15 June 2006 Project: Planning Division Update

Bi-monthly Update

Presenters: John Rahaim, DPD

Summary

The Commission appreciated the focus of this update on the Waterfront Plan and continues to believe that the Public Realm Plan should go forward. They continue to be interested in reviewing the scope and sitting on the consultant selection panel for that next phase of urban design work.

John Rahaim provided updates on planning activities at DPD, focusing on the Waterfront Plan. His discussion centered on recent efforts to persuade Council to approve the Concept Plan and release funding for the next phase of public realm planning work for the waterfront. He is concerned about losing precious time and momentum, diminishing the ability of the Plan and public realm design to influence the Viaduct and other projects planned for the waterfront. For instance, he noted that relocation of the extensive network of existing utilities along the waterfront is a pressing issue and needs to be determined soon. Mr. Rahaim noted that the Council funding proviso for the Public Realm Plan was not yet lifted and was not likely to happen before a decision on the Viaduct. He announced that the Waterfront Plan summary brochure was being revised based on lots of input received to make it a more visual piece.

Commissioners discussed the need to debunk some myths out there about the Viaduct project and wondered if City staff might find points where the Waterfront Concept Plan could move ahead without much more work, say at the north or south end. They also wondered if a rebuild scenario should be factored into the Waterfront Plan to broaden its scope and relevance and suggested it might be wise to spend money on this.

15 June 2006 Project: Commission Business

Action Items

A. Timesheets

B. Minutes from 05/18/06/Felts

Discussion Items

C. Street Vacation reviews/Barnett

D. Outside Commitments/All

E. Waterfront/Viaduct Outreach/All

Announcements

F. Prep for COW on SR-520, 6/23, 9-11 am - postponed

G. SLU Open House, June 12, 5:30-7:00pm, ConWorks

H. Tim Beatly – Green Urbanism, Central Library,
6/19, 5:30pm

15 June 2006 Project: Alaskan Way Viaduct and Seawall

Phase: Design Update
Previous Review: February 2006
Presenters: Ron Paananen, Washington State Department of Transportation
Steve Pearce, Seattle Department of Transportation
Bob Chandler, Seattle Department of Transportation
Rachelle Hein, Washington State Department of Transportation

Time: 2 hours

Action

The Commission appreciates this latest project update from the City/State Integrated Project Team and particularly:

- **Commends the team's efforts to freshen public relations materials which are definitely now more balanced and sophisticated**
- **Appreciates the clear description of the two main options, the Tunnel and the Elevated Structure, now being considered in the SEIS**
- **Appreciates and supports the project team's focus on:**
 - **Public concerns for funding**
 - **Expert Review Panel which was recently convened to advise the Governor on both the Viaduct and SR-520**
 - **Efforts to minimize construction delays**
 - **Making utility work a priority**
- **Recognition of Seattle's unique physical conditions which inherently has lots of constraints**

Proponents Presentation

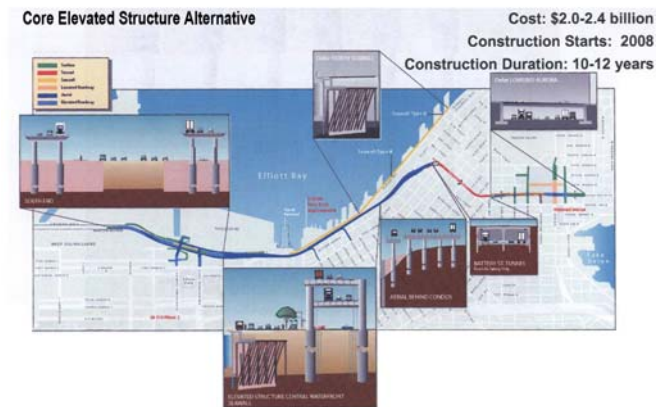
The team provided a briefing on design aspects of the complex project including a traffic study update and information on how the streetcar can best serve as transit. Also discussed were recent public relations efforts; the rebuild option; cost estimating; traffic/construction mitigation, relocation of utilities, and rebuilding the seawall.

The traffic study update outlined current Viaduct transportation demands of 110,000 vehicles per day and a 2030 forecast of 135,000 vehicles per day. Viaduct options discussed were: 4- and 6-lane surface; core tunnel, and core elevated structure. Projected costs, funding, construction timelines, risks, and transportation mitigation of each option were discussed. The team outlined

viaduct and seawall vulnerabilities, concluding that neither of the existing structures can withstand another earthquake. They also noted the seawall must be replaced regardless of which option is selected. In addition to earthquake vulnerability, marine bore damage caused by gribbles, flea-size crustaceans, and teredos, worm-like wood boring bivalves, exists as deep as 500 ft. into the structure.

An overview was provided of the project's public involvement process which consists of 4 Open House meetings and more than 50 community briefings held this year. Open House participants surveyed expressed a preference for a short, more intense construction plan. Suggestions for keeping people moving were: better timed lights, dedicated bus lines, broadening the free ride zone, and incentives to companies to offer flex hours.

An Expert Review Panel has been appointed to evaluate work to date and the financial feasibility of the project and will submit a report to the Governor by September 1, 2006. They are in town next week and will return next month, too. There is still a question hanging out there about whether Council will make a decision about its preferred option or put it out for a public advisory vote. Funding is coming together, \$800 m is part of the RTID funding package that will go to the voters in 2007. Utility work needs to start in 2008 for the project to stay on schedule. Any delays will cost money, roughly \$10million/month.



Commissioner Questions and Comments

- Appreciate how much work has been done on public relations these last few months
- Treatment of the tunnel and elevated structure seem very fair
- What about other options?
 - Retrofit is being studied, surface option – no real work
- Regarding the surface option – is there merit with it?
 - jamming 50,000 trips out to local roads seems unlikely, even after transit shift presumption
- Seattle has a uniquely constrained street grid

15 June 2006 Project: Tour of Olympic Sculpture Park

The Commission took in a construction site tour of the Olympic Sculpture Park, guided by Chris Rogers, Capital Projects Director of Seattle Art Museum.

Time: 1 1/2 hours