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**Brendan Connolly**

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**Dennis Ryan**

**Norie Sato**

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## **APPROVED MINUTES OF THE MEETING**

**November 6, 2008**

Convened 9:00 am  
Adjourned 2:30 pm

### **Projects Reviewed**

Epiphany School Alley Vacation Part 2 – Public Benefit  
SPU Director Chuck Clarke Briefing  
Madison Valley Storm Water Improvements

### **Commissioners Present**

Tasha Atchison  
Brendan Connolly  
John Hoffman  
Mary Johnston  
Karen Kiest  
Dennis Ryan  
Norie Sato  
Darby Watson  
Darrell Vange

### **Unconfirmed Commissioners Present**

Julie Parrett  
Nathan Polanski

### **Staff Present**

Guillermo Romano  
Tom Iurino  
Shannon Glass

**Celebrating 40 Years 1968-2008**



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**November 6, 2008**      **Project:**      **Epiphany School Alley Vacation Part 2 – Public Benefit**

**Phase:**      Alley Vacation

**Last Reviewed:**      August 21, 2008; October 2, 2008

**Presenters:**      Juan Alonso, Artist  
 Maggi Johnson, Johnson Southerland  
 Jack McCullough  
 Sian Roberts, Miller Hull  
 Kim Scheil, Miller Hull

**Attendees:**      Holly Goddard, DPD  
 Loring McAlaster, Epiphany School Neighbor  
 Matt Neely, Epiphany School  
 Lee Stanton, Epiphany School  
 Dana Warren, Project Manager

**Time:** 1 hour

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## **ACTION**

The Commission thanks the design team for their third presentation, and unanimously approves the public benefits package, with the following comments and recommendations:

- Pleased to see the fence transparency around the pre-K play area, but some of the edges seem sharp. Encourages that some of the artistic details could be integrated into the fence and columns.
- Encourage reexamination of a more generous gate width.
- Understands the artist's desire to maintain integrity of art, and supports the desire to avoid it taking over the site; however, we encourage making small overall design moves in various site elements to strengthen its presence and to integrate the artwork more comfortably into the site and along the fence. The design should respond more to the artwork itself and support its presence on the site.
- There are some questions about the lighting; encourages consideration of safety and off-hours use in the pre-K play area as a public benefit.
- Realizes that some of the elements are not fully designed; in the final bench design, please keep in mind ergonomics, safety, maintenance, and accessibility from both sides.
- Art complements the overall building and window facing, which creates an interesting separation of the building and the pocket park, but could also benefit from much more resolution.
- There are some questions about various elements, such as additional paving in response to the art, how the landscape works with the art and its placement; in general, more design collaboration with the artist is necessary and advised.

## **Project Presentation**

### **Project Presentation**

The refined public benefit package includes:

- An increased setback
- A pocket park with public art
- Public access to the pre-K play area

The design team has addressed:

- Better access and visibility to the pre-K play area
- Integrating the park and pre-K are through design and art
- More detail in the pedestrian environment, particularly along East Denny Way

The school occupies the east end of the Epiphany Church campus. The main entry to the school is located at the campus midpoint, which leads to guest parking and the administrative offices front door. The staff parks in a parking garage. The internal campus circulation occurs within the open space between the campus buildings.

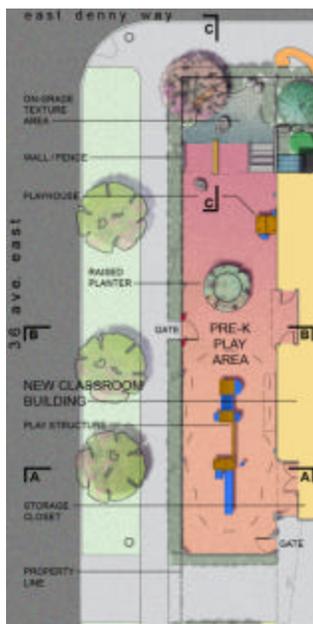
On the master plan, there were questions of pedestrian connectivity along East Denny Way. There is consistency of scale, materials, lush planting beds, and ample building setback along East Denny Way. Flowering dogwoods, planted in front of the Church building, are repeated along the street.

There are three changes to the pre-K play area:

- A picket fence, to enhance transparency
- A public gate
- Two concrete gate posts topped with sculpture

The public entry gate is located on 36<sup>th</sup> Avenue, rather than on the north end adjacent to the public benefit area, due to grading and accessibility. Also, there is a valuable play area at the north end that would be sacrificed for circulation. The school is also concerned about controlling access for safety reasons.

The south end of the play area is below grade the of the 36<sup>th</sup> Avenue sidewalk. There are wide planting strips and street trees. The metal picket fence has a transparent quality. There will be a visual connection to the sculpture as well.



Along East Denny Way, the new sculpture integrates with the landscape and nestles into the vegetation. It has been confirmed that there is a twenty-two foot required minimum width for the driveway. There is no curb cut, and the sidewalk is continuous. From East Denny Way to Spock Hall, there is a courtyard below grade, a vehicle entry sign, a four-foot-wide planting strip, and a six-foot-wide sidewalk. The planting includes the thematic dogwood trees.

At the public benefit and art paving area, the sidewalk zone extends to the curb and bus stop area. There is a two-foot-tall retaining wall, constructed of recycled granite blocks.

The East Denny Way entrance is flanked by existing trees, and feature a recycled sign. The driveway into the parking garage does not have a curb cut.

At the northeast corner of the campus, the fence is undergoing design refinements. It is essentially a metal fence with concrete posts. All of the artwork is visible from this vantage point.

*Artwork*

The art is a collaborative effort to integrate the art visually and functionally. The design team concluded that a subtle approach, with works that relate artistically in concept and style, outweigh the urge to forcibly direct a view. The artist intends for the viewer to discover and recognize the relationship among the art pieces.

Considering the Commission's suggestions, the paving is redesigned to limit planting beyond the sidewalk, so it is all hard surfaces. The single bench is replaced with two backless benches, providing flexible seating and accessibility. An ADA path provides access and adequate space for turnaround and seating on either side of the benches.



The Knowledge Sculpture is four feet high, three feet wide, and three inches deep. It is composed of powder coated steel and placed on a concrete slab. It is incorporated into the landscape and neighborhood, and visible to the public. The sculpture's concept suggests a child with arms outstretched to welcome a world of knowledge. There are two stainless steel silhouette sculptures, as a playful reference to musical cliffs, flanking the gate posts. They are intended to signal the entrance to the play area.

## Public Comments

### Holly Goddard, DPD

It would be interesting to see some studies on more artistic concrete posts, and incorporated in a playful way. The grade change also offers opportunity for the art. It is very separate now. The art is beautiful, colorful, and enchanting. It is in a bus stop area, instead of the play area. It is confusing why the art is not being shown or explored.

### Loring McAlaster, Epiphany School Neighbor

The School is believed to have addressed the public benefit at the last meeting; this review is only an improvement. Regarding the DPD's comment regarding the need for the art to flow into the design more: it is not known how that can be done without infringing on the goals of integrating the new building and campus together. It currently reflects a good effort.

Regarding a comment about the artwork location in the bus stop area; the street gets a lot of pedestrian and bicycle traffic on both sides.

## Commissioner's Comments and Questions

*The major questions regarding the transparency of the fence have been addressed. The location of the gate is a good idea. Is the pocket park bigger?*

It is the same size, but has been set back to comply with ADA. The design has been simplified so the paved areas are wider.

*Asking the art to do more here risks visual noise.*

There were discussions of other options with the art. The artist desires to maintain integrity of work, and does not intend for it to be conspicuous or invade the neighborhood.

*There is greater transparency with the fence, but it still seems like a sharp edge. Can the framework of the fencing respond to the voluptuous art and landscape, especially on the awkward corner post?*

*Is there lighting on the building, or freestanding lighting?*

The lighting is still being discussed. The intent is to have late afternoon lighting for the children, probably incorporated into the fence.

There are dilemmas in pursuing LEED certification, which restricts exterior lighting.

*Does the landscape have an ecological function?*

LEED points for reduced irrigation are being pursued; however, this site doesn't make sense for rain gardens. There is a learning vegetable garden and a roof cistern to provide irrigation.

*Understand the LEED considerations for lighting, however, don't lose track of lighting as a public benefit.*

*The synergy of the design elements needs to be worked on.*

*When is the play area open to the public?*

It will be open after school hours, which are 8:30 am to 3:25 pm. It is also open on the weekends.

There are also two other open play areas. The pre-K area is age specific.

*How wide is the gate?*

It is four feet wide.

*Excited about the seating area as a resting spot for pedestrians.*

*A wider gate would be more inviting to the public.*

*Concerned about the ergonomics of the bench design.*

The bench will be redesigned; it was recently decided to make two smaller benches, without backs, so that they can be used from both sides.

*The placement of the additional sculpture is fun and whimsical. Is there a reason for its location?*

The artist wanted to expand the art within the public benefit area, rather than concentrating it in one spot.

There will be views of it from within the new building.

*The area near the bus stop has a paving pattern that children might be interested in exploring; can the paving be added to the gate area?*

That was considered, but decided against to avoid making it too busy or competing with the art.

*Complement the design team on the framed window portals turning away from the public benefit area, which minimizes the sense of the building "looking down" onto it.*

*Support more design intention to the concrete columns.*

*Encourage the designers to respond to the art, instead of asking the art to more. It may tie everything together, without burdening the artist to be heavy-handed. Encourage more collaboration as the design is refined.*

*What phase is the project at?*

Construction documents are 50 percent complete. An application for a building permit will be submitted on December 1, 2008.

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**November 6, 2008**      **Project:**      **Seattle Public Utilities (SPU) Director**  
**Phase:**              Briefing  
**Presenter:**         Chuck Clarke

**Time:** 1 hour

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## **SUMMARY**

The Commission thanks the SPU Director for his briefing on SPU's endeavors, and increasing the Commission's understanding of how it can help SPU's activities:

- Impressed by the level of research and development, and encourages being more public and celebrating the results of that research.
- Appreciates borrowing information from other cities, and raising the bar on Low Impact Development (LID) and other strategies.
- Supports SPU's focus and concern on regional storm water strategies that leverage future infrastructure and reduce the high pollutant loads in storm water.
- Encourages public expression and education components in SPU projects, and in projects such as street ends and the Viaduct alternatives. It is very important that SPU is on the front end of those projects, and a proactive approach is encouraged.
- Appreciate solving problems from the inside-out and, and hopes the Commission can assist in the public realm endeavors.

## **Project Presentation**

### **Project Background and Context**

SPU's primary public activities are garbage, wastewater, storm water drainage, and water services. SPU generates \$5-6 million per year revenue; a lot of that money is generated for general fund. Fifteen-and-a-half percent of rates are allocated to the general fund as utility taxes.

The challenges of climate change and utilities adaptations:

- Water supply
  - There is little concern about this region's water supply; according to international studies, an equal or greater amount of rain is projected for this area
  - SPU has created a "Frankenstein" scenario, which studies extreme weather events together, in order to understand what kind of weather patterns would inhibit the water supply
- Rain
  - Debates with climate change about what the nature of precipitation will be
  - Infrastructure designed to handled water underground
  - Predictions for higher intensity and shorter duration rain events, which infrastructure is not designed for; recent short and intense rain events created significant city flooding problems that the city infrastructure is not designed to deal with
  - The challenge for the future is to change the way drainage is dealt with; underground cannot be status quo; will have to look at LID, directing where rainfall will flow on the surface
  - There are 80,000 inlets and 40,000 CB's in the city
  - New York, London, the Netherlands have had significant urban flooding events in recent years; there is an exchange of ideas between cities to deal with issue

SPU is considering how to burying reservoirs appropriately and protect them from contamination. SPU's authority has been narrowed, and very limited work can be done on top of buried reservoirs; utilizing the tops of reservoirs for open space development is under the purview of the Parks and Recreation Department. There are weight limits on reservoir lids, as well as herbicide and pesticide application limits. West Seattle and Mapleleaf reservoirs now have planning money – both are on schedule and budget.

The Street Edge Alternatives (SEA) Streets are a wave of the future for SPU; but they only apply to about one third of the City, depending on soil type. SPU is also working with Vulcan, Inc. on the development of a water quality channel in Capitol Hill.

City Council is currently working on SPU's budget, which should be determined by November 12, 2008. The budget is estimated to range from \$150 to 250 million split among utility, wastewater, and solid waste services.

The solid waste capital budget peaks every forty to fifty years, when transfer stations typically need to be rebuilt. It is preferable to design the north and south transfer stations for greater flexibility.

There is currently discussion on zero waste strategies for the City of Seattle. While there is no such thing as zero waste, there are interesting public policy debates on defining zero waste and lifestyle changes. There will be a twenty-four to twenty-five percent rate increase, driven by zero waste provisions of new contracts. As more trucks and routes will be added to accommodate organic collection of meat and dairy, consumer costs will increase. There is discussion about changing from weekly to bi-weekly garbage collection as well. There will be co-mingled recycling, which the contractors will sort.

Other curbside solid waste pickup changes include waste oil and electronics.

Wastewater and drainage will be dealing with large projects, such as:

- Madison Valley, which is a \$30-40 million project
- A pump station at South Park

Drainage and wastewaters challenges will be... Monitoring and potential to comply with combined sewer overflows (CSO)... for marginal environmental impact. While there are ninety-two CSO's in the area, storm water runoff is a much greater impact. Storm water pollutant overloading is 100 times greater than CSO's. It includes copper from brake linings; zinc from radial tires; petrochemicals; and herbicides, pesticides, and fertilizers during the summer months. Addressing those issues will be a cultural change.

## **Commissioners' Comments & Questions**

*What reservoirs are being considered?*

Beacon Hill, Myrtle, Roosevelt and Volunteer Park are being evaluated to determine whether or not they will have continued use

*Impressed with the research and development dimension of the agency.*

SPU revenue is more stable than most city agencies, which facilitates planning ahead for research, development and demonstration projects. It is also proactive in "stealing" ideas and benchmarking itself against other public utilities. SPU competes worldwide in benchmarks on pump stations. It's the only way to make improvements. There have been awards for SEA Streets.

*Is there any strategy to retrofit existing infrastructure for rainwater surges?*

Yes, SPU is considering regional detention to deal with surges. Dealing site-by-site doesn't work well.

*The Commission reviews a lot of right-of-way projects; what kind of coordination does SPU have with SDOT to reduce impervious street surfaces?*

It's a challenge, but there are conversations with SDOT to try new things. SDOT is very concerned about trying things that are uncertain to succeed. There are limited resources, huge transportation issues, and the questions of "unproven" technologies. Progress is being made, in projects such as High Point. Progress must be made to use streets in different ways.

*There is a tremendous public education opportunity with the downtown waterfront and Viaduct replacement, in terms of the way the street and open space are designed to address storm water issues. Is SPU working with other agencies?*

The Viaduct is like the “bathtub drain” for the city; it is critical for long term success to think holistically, which does create problems with WSDOT. Part of it depends on the chosen design, which may or may not allow LID techniques. If there is a tunnel, it’s dependent on where the tunnel and utility conduits are located. SPU has informed them of its fundamental needs, and it is hoped that “non-traditional” methods may be implemented.

*What role does SPU play in determining how the selected Viaduct alternative will be designed? In terms of its public space and benefit would be, how can the Commission help with?*

SPU will be on the front end, with Seattle City Light. There will be decisions about wastewater, drainage, and water issues there.

*Appreciates explorations outside of the City of Seattle; implementing aggressive strategies is encouraged.*

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**November 6, 2008**      **Project:**      **Commission Business**

**Phase:**      Briefing  
**Presenter:**      Chuck Clarke

**Time:** 1 hour

(121)

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### **ACTION ITEMS**

- Minutes of October 2 – Approved
  - Tasha and Darby recuse due to absence
- Time sheets

### **DISCUSSION ITEMS**

- Viaduct Alternatives letter

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- Outside commitments

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<b>November 6, 2008</b>	<b>Project:</b>	<b>Madison Valley Storm Water Improvements</b>
	<b>Phase:</b>	Schematic Design
	<b>Last Review:</b>	September 18, 2008
	<b>Presenters:</b>	Brent Middleswart, SPU Peter Nelson, Karen Kiest Landscape Architects
	<b>Attendees:</b>	Peter Triandafilou, Greater Madison Valley Community Council Celia Kennedy, SPU Grace Manzano, SPU Ruri Yampolsky, Office of Arts and Cultural Affairs

Time: 1 hour

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## ACTION

The Commission thanks the Madison Valley Storm Water Improvements team for their presentation, and unanimously approves thirty percent schematic design with the following recommendations and comments:

- Appreciates the challenge of designing a facility which has such serious technical requirements, while trying to meet the community's needs and desire for more recreational space; so far it is an exciting and sensitive solution.
- Encouraged that an artist will be selected for Phase I and Phase II, as art could be an important player in fulfilling the site's interpretive potential.
- Encouraged seeing the inclusion of more plant material in the lower portion of the site. The dry stream bed is very successful. There is some concern, however, that vegetation may be too dense in some parts of the site in terms of safety considerations.
- The fence along the east edge is an important unifying element, and is strongly encouraged.
- Encourage a larger play area, and exploring the possibility that non-traditional play structures could cascade down the slope.
- There is some concern about clarity and consistency of the drawings; there is a desire to see more of the site, and context.
- Encourages being more playful with the gabions. There are some concerns with a five foot height on security, accessibility, views, context, et cetera.
- The edges offer opportunities for activity nodes, viewing or overlook platforms, gathering spaces
- Encourage referencing the CPTED guidelines and creating clear lines of site.

**Recusals:** Commissioner Kiest recused herself from the presentation.

## Project Presentation

### Project Background and Context

The projects scope is to expand stormwater storage in the Madison Valley basin to greatly reduce stormwater flooding and sewer backups. The project includes the expansion of the 30<sup>th</sup> Avenue East and East John Street above-ground stormwater facility; a new stormwater pipeline in a section of the basin; and approximately 2.0 million gallons of stormwater storage in Washington Park. The focus of the presentation is Phase I, the expansion of the 30<sup>th</sup> Avenue and John Street facility.

Last time the design team shared two concepts, one formal and the other more naturalistic. This thirty percent design combines elements of those two concepts. The design team selected a naturalistic concept, which includes elements from the community input.

*Themes SPU Heard from the Community*

#### Safety and Security

- Maintain clear visual access into and across the site
- Address flood safety through clear routes and signage

#### Children and the Neighborhood

- Kids as key users in design of circulation and spaces
- Incorporate playful elements into design
- Develop area for kids near southwest entry

#### Recreation

- Provide more open lawn on west edge for recreation
- Add to recreational opportunities in the neighborhood

#### Community Uses

- Provide loop walk, seating spots, overlooks, perches
- Rolling lawn, plaza can serve as performance space
- Wrap the rolling lawn around sides to capture more sun

#### Landscape

- Reference natural history in "dry creek" and plantings
- Preserve existing trees or reference in new plantings
- Select plants with a variety of textures and seasonal color
- Simplify plantings, and broaden lawn for maintenance in the southeast portion of the site

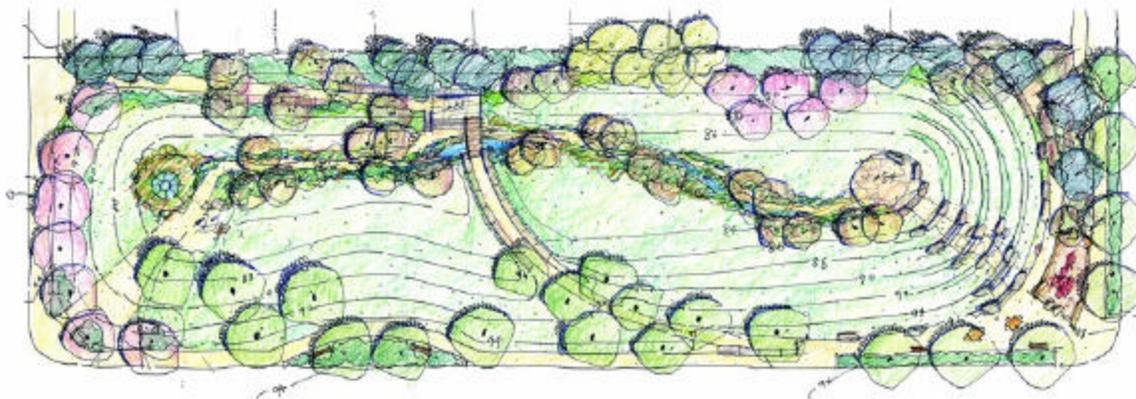
#### Art and Culture Understanding

- Tell the story of the community

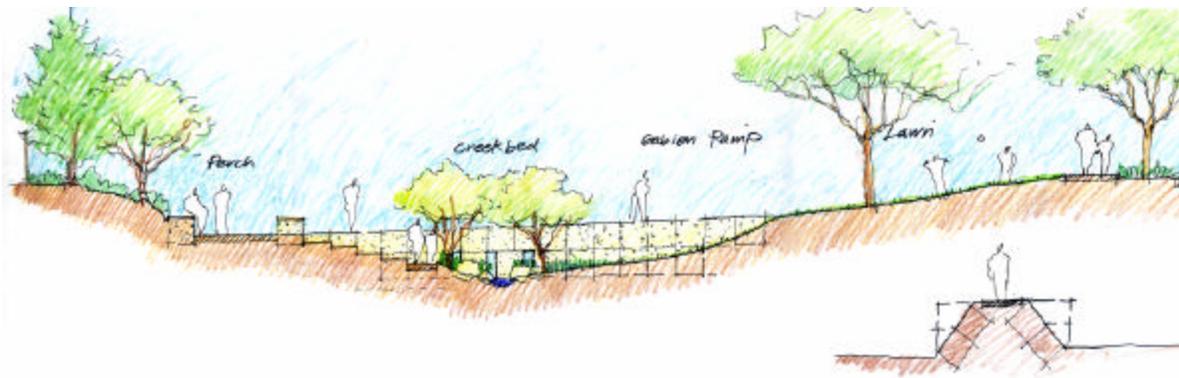
#### *Design Update*

The design team has focused on two elements:

- Creating clear access through the site, which is ADA accessible and experiential walk
- Making the south end the "activities" and kid-friendly zone



To unify the site, material simplification is being considered. Gabions create a trestle-like trail. A low vegetated hedge would soften the trail experience, while maintaining views across the site.



## Public Comments

### Ruri Yampolsky, Office of Arts and Cultural Affairs.

An artist will be selected to create something specific for this site, as well as the Washington Park site.

### Peter Triandafilou, President of Greater Madison Valley Community Council

Most community members view this site as a "pit." Has heard from the community that the proposed design may not meet the community's needs. It is a fast-growing community, which may want more play area, as the closest play spaces are one-half or one mile away. There is concern about how little of this space is devoted to play area and community gathering spots. Perhaps a portion of the site could be lidded to increase usable space. Encourage appreciation of how it is currently being used as a children's play area and dog park. Since the site could become contaminated with sewer backups, perhaps people should not be walking through it. Partial decking might increase usable space at street level. It may be feasible, though cost is an issue. Thinking outside of the box might enhance potential uses.

### Celia Kennedy, SPU

There are different interpretations of what is considered the right scope for the project, but there is considerable community support for the current design, based on the input at the public meetings. If the community wants a portion of the site lidded, which one community member has suggested, it's up to City Council to approve a significantly increased budget for the project. There are geotechnical issues with creating lidded area, such as liquefaction zone pilings, which would add substantially to the cost.

## Commissioners' Comments & Questions

*What is the nature of the children's play area?*

Boulders and a more naturalistic approach, in keeping with the material language.

*What is the cage height?*

About three or four feet tall.

*Since this has been a controversial site, ways to incorporate educational opportunities and public outreach would be a design bonus, such as a datum, marking, or stone feature.*

One of the questions last time was how to expose the engineering and function of the site. There is a struggle to balance that interest with the community's lack of interest in that.

*Is there water flowing through the stream bed on a regular basis?*

It is a "dry stream" bed, with water flow only after very large storms.

*Is there a fence, and what kind?*

The fences are private in some cases and jointed owned in others. The fences are mostly cedar and about six-feet-tall. Building one solid fence is being considered for continuity.

*Describe the design of the south end of the site.*

The southwest corner is the only flat area and there is not enough space for play structures, so boulders are being considered for natural play.

*How often are four feet storm events expected?*

Currently, overall capacity is a million gallons. The facility now has capacity to hold fifteen- to twenty-year storms. When Phase 1 is complete, it will hold 40- to 50-year storms. Once Phase 2 is complete, the system capacity, based on modeling results, will handle all the historic storms in a 157 year record.

With the current configuration, there is about six inches of water every four years. A lot of storms are already absorbed in that. Every eight years, there's about two-and-a-half feet of water.

*Is the basin lined, or meant to infiltrate as it filled?*

There is a liner with soil on top, drain material, and a French drain at the bottom to allow for infiltration.

*The lawn is maintained, or is it a meadow?*

It is a maintained lawn, to allow for recreational use.

*What material is being considered for the "dry creek" walk?*

A gravel path with wet-loving, native plants next to it.

*Is it intended to be accessible?*

It's intended to be ADA accessible.

*Is there a sense of how art might work within the design?*

The design is not at that level yet, however there is an interest in a reference to water.

*Are there street lights on 30<sup>th</sup> Avenue?*

Yes, there are existing street lights.

*Concern that obstructed lines of site may lead to areas of mischief. Make sure areas are open with site lines from the perimeter. Think about using trees to make backdrop in performance areas.*

*If play space is an issue, consider feasibility of non-conventional play structures, such as rocks on slopes; it may also help with activate the area.*

*The design can be pushed further to increase the amount of play area, given the community needs.*

*Mark sections on plans so there is a reference. For the presentation, expand the context boundaries so there is a better perspective of the surroundings.*

*Is the gabion bridge intended to address ADA slope issues? Does it divide the site in half?*

Yes, it is a response to ADA constraints. It is also an opportunity to create a bridge and dramatic topographic interest.

*Perhaps the unstructured play areas could happen in the gathering areas.*

*The gabions are an interesting idea; perhaps they could be more playful.*

*Are gabions safe for children to play on?*

They are stable.

*The five foot gabion height may be a concern; three-and-a-half to four feet may be preferable.*

*This project seems like a great opportunity to incorporate small demonstration projects, such as porous paving.*

*There are attractive and interesting pedestrian paths in the site. If a play area is possible on the southwest corner, it would be attractive. The hole is not deep, so it might be pleasant to walk into; and the opportunities for children to climb, roll down the hill, and so on appropriate.*

*The fence bordering the neighbors is an important element, featuring the nature of this park. The continuous datum will reinforce that public interest. Consideration of bike racks is encouraged.*