



## APPROVED MINUTES OF THE MEETING

**Greg Nickels**  
Mayor

**Diane Sugimura**  
Director, DPD

**Mary Johnston**  
Chair

**Andrew Barash**

**Julie Bassuk**

**Graham Black**

**Brendan Connolly**

**John Hoffman**

**Laurel Kunkler**

**Julie Parrett**

**Dennis Ryan**

**Norie Sato**

**Guillermo Romano**  
Executive Director

**Valerie Kinast**  
Coordinator

**Tom Iurino**  
Senior Staff

**November 19, 2009**

Convened 9:15am  
Adjourned 3:00pm

### Projects Reviewed

Rainier Beach Community Center  
Ballard Roadside Rain Gardens  
Denny Way Access Program

### Commissioners Present

Mary Johnston, Chair  
Andrew Barash  
Julie Bassuk  
Graham Black  
Brendan Connolly  
John Hoffman  
Laurel Kunkler  
Julie Parrett  
Dennis Ryan  
Norie Sato

### Staff Present

Guillermo Romano  
Valerie Kinast  
Tom Iurino  
Tim Trujillo



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**November 19, 2009**      **Project:**      **Ballard Roadside Rain Gardens**  
**Phase:**      Briefing  
**Last Reviewed:**      N/A  
**Presenters:**      Shanti Colwell, SPU  
                                 Tracy Tackett, SPU

**Time:** 12:59 pm – 2:00 pm

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## **SUMMARY**

The Commission would like to thank the design team for their presentation of Ballard Roadside Rain Gardens, and unanimously approves the design direction. The Commission applauds the team for working with existing conditions and encouraging synergy between traffic calming and raingardens.

The Commission has the following recommendations:

- Consider monitoring and maintenance.
- Explore opportunities for planting more street trees to enhance the city's tree canopy but also to enhance continuity on the blocks where more extensive features are planned.
- Carefully weigh and consider designs for possible access across the swales.
- Strive for visual continuity of the blocks. A strategy for consistently using the proposed features may be helpful.
- Take a systematic approach to the artwork and think beyond just the placement of single art objects.
- Involve the Public Art Advisory Committee in phase 2 of the planning.

## **Project Presentation**

The Seattle area has both separated sewers and combined sewers. King County receives some of the runoff while the city receives the rest. There is a desire to use green infrastructure to reduce the demand on grey water infrastructure for moving stormwater in an attempt to aid our built environment to work in harmony with the natural environment.

Roadside rain gardens and green alleyways are seen as potential solutions to stormwater retention.

Residential Rainwise is a single-family residential property owner financial incentive program for the City of Seattle. The website, [rainwise.seattle.gov](http://rainwise.seattle.gov) is now live for citizens to learn where infiltration is most desired by the City and what might be useful to homeowners.

The Ballard, North Union Bay, and Interbay basins are targeted areas for this initial green infrastructure.

The schedule for the Ballard Roadside Rain Gardens is as follows:

- Phase1 design:      2009
- Construction:      2010
- Monitoring:      2011

Ballard Green Alleys and Roadside Rain Gardens:

- Design and construction: 2010-2014

Residential Rainwise in Ballard:

- Ongoing design and construction: 2010-2014

Monitoring for all infrastructure is targeted for 2015.

Ballard was identified because this plan overlaps with community traffic calming goals and the basin has several assets that work well with the goals including:

- Flow monitoring stations
- A complementary, existing right of way width
- Street slopes
- A lack of driveways or major planting at the lower end of the block
- Alternate parking options exist for the residents of this neighborhood



Figure 2: A typical rain garden

These roadside gardens are “shallow depressions filled with a designed soil mix and plants that capture and infiltrate street runoff.”

Other project facts and features:

- Curb extensions are presented as possibilities for these facilities.
- 29<sup>th</sup> Ave and 77<sup>th</sup> St are currently shown as prototypes.
- The curb extensions and bulb-outs create opportunities for the raingardens but create a loss of on-street parking.  
proposed
- There was a \$1.5 million loan from the federal stimulus to push the project along.
- Phase 2 objective is to expand system to an area-wide scale.
- The design team is exploring incorporation of art elements into the project.



Figure 3: Proposed 29th Ave rain gardens

## Commissioners’ Comments & Questions

*Are you overlaying traffic calming measures into the plan?*

Loss of parking was a larger issue than the traffic calming.

*Is there any kind of monitoring to assure that nothing is modified?*

It will be maintained by SPU.

*Are you thinking of commissioned art? Little art pieces might be difficult to get done. Perhaps there is a variety of art opportunities. How well does pervious pavement work in an alley?*

Soils would be evaluated before anything is implemented.

*Have you considered looking at existing road calming devices for use in designs?*

*Do you have a set number of trees that might be installed? There is a wonderful opportunity to enhance the neighborhood with street trees.*

Looking to work with OSC to try and obtain trees and other plantings.

*I have some concern for the visual discontinuity when one block is enhanced while the next block is not.*

*Consistency across the block would be helpful.*

*Is it the community that feels there is a need for parking or is it SDOT?*

The community is asking for the parking.

*Do you have any accommodations for people to get across the rain gardens without negatively affecting the functionality?*

*Think about the function and materials of these when considering artwork.*

*Consider the synergy between traffic calming devices and rain gardens.*

*Consider maintenance.*

*Increase the number of street trees.*

*Geography provides opportunities and challenges in design. Strive for consistency in strategies.*

*Emphasize using a systematic approach to applying artwork.*