



APPROVED MINUTES OF THE MEETING

Mike McGinn
Mayor

Diane Sugimura
Director, DPD

Marshall Foster
Planning Director, DPD

Julie Bassuk
Chair

Seth Geiser

Laurel Kunkler

Shannon Loew

Tom Nelson

Julie Parrett

Osama Quotah

Ellen Sollod

Debbie Harris

Valerie Kinast
Coordinator

Tom Iurino
Senior Staff

November 15, 2012

Convened 8:30am
Adjourned 4:30pm

Projects Reviewed

North Transfer Station
Zoo West Parking
SR 520 I5 to Medina West Approach Bridge

Commissioners Present

Julie Bassuk, Chair
Julie Parrett (excused from 1:00-4:30pm)
Seth Geiser
Debbie Harris (excused from 8:30am-1:30pm)
Laurel Kunkler
Shannon Loew
Osama Quotah (excused from 8:30-9:00am)
Ellen Sollod

Commissioners Excused

Tom Nelson

Staff Present

Valerie Kinast
Tom Iurino



**Department of Planning
and Development**
700 5th Avenue, Suite 2000
PO Box 34019
Seattle, WA 98124-4019

TEL 206-615-1349
FAX 206-233-7883



November 15, 2012 **Project:** **North Transfer Station**
Phase: Urban Design Merit and Public Benefit, Street Vacation
Last Reviewed: Jun 16, 2011; Dec 2, 2010
Presenters: Hui Yang, Seattle Public Utilities
 Dean Koonts, HBB
 Tim Croll, Seattle Public Utilities

Attendees: Beverly Barnett, SDOT
 Jane Johnson, SPU
 Jeff Neuner, SPU
 Josh Campbell, SPU
 Pierce McVay, Mahlum
 Sandra Mallory, Office of Sustainability and Environment
 Vince Lyons, Wallingford Community Council

Time: 9:00am-11:00am

Disclosure

Commissioner Quotah's office is working on the living building project next door to the North Transfer Station project.

Summary of Project Presentation

The design team presented its plans for a street vacation of Carr Place N. between N. 34th and N. 35th as part of developing the North Transfer Station project. The proposed area to be vacated is 11,259 sq ft. Seattle Public Utilities plans to completely rebuild the current North Transfer Station at 1350 N. 34th St. This renovation is necessary because the existing station is outdated and a new one would be more efficient and would enable SPU to meet its goals for recycling.

The new station features a host of improvements, including recycling and reuse drop-off areas separated from disposal areas, allowing easier access for recycling. Along the north edge and east edges of the site, the station is set back from the property line, providing room for open space and plantings and preserving the view corridor from Ashland. The team summarized the community and legislative history of the project, and the council's approval of the agreement Seattle Public Utilities reached with the Wallingford and Fremont Community Councils. The agreement detailed some of the project's design, such as the setbacks and elements of the open space design.

The street to be vacated is little used and there are no significant adverse impacts on traffic. The portion of Carr Place N that is proposed to be vacated is restricted to one-way travel heading north into the Wallingford neighborhood. It provides little or no neighborhood connectivity and is bordered on both sides by the project site. Carr Place North's traffic volume did not exceed 13 vehicles in one hour and it

contains no drainage or wastewater infrastructure. There is still a view shed through the vacated street, as that is the site's entry and exit. The team will relocate Seattle City Light utilities and a water distribution main.

The proposed public benefits are: integrated natural play area, multi-sport court play and lawn, Olmstedian walk, a gathering area (Woodlawn and N 34), art along N 34, fitness stations along N 35, a viewing room inside the facility, and curb bulbs.

The concept for the design of open spaces is called Twine with a Twist. The design includes: natural play elements and passive lawn at the Carr Place North park; a multi-sport court and a green roof on the garage of the building; a play lawn, Olmstedian walk and a gathering area along the west side of Woodlawn Ave.; art along N. 34th St.; fitness stations along N. 35th St.; a preservation of view corridors, keeping street trees throughout the site as possible, developing a site with crime prevention in mind, and adding pedestrian safety elements such as curb bulbs at Woodlawn and 34th and 35th and N Carr. There will also be a viewing room inside the facility.

Department Comments

Beverly Barnett of SDOT identifies no significant issues. It is a feasible proposal. She is examining site access points, circulation, and the risk of cuing in the streets.

Public Comment

Vince Lyons, Wallingford Community Council Art Selection Panel, reported that 18 artists submitted proposals and the city will make a selection in early December. He is looking forward to getting feedback on the art from the PAAC.

Alison Hogue, Wallingford Community Council, commended Seattle Public Utilities for convening community groups and honoring the Wallingford Neighborhood Plan. She hopes Seattle could be a leader in air quality controls.

ACTION (by Kunkler)

The commission thanked the team for their presentation. It appreciated how the open spaces were broke down by zones.

With a vote of 6 to 1 the Seattle Design Commission approved the Urban Design Merit of the proposal to vacate Carr Place N. between N. 34th and N. 35th as part of the North Transfer Station project subject to items one through three below.

This is the first of two approvals needed before the Design Commission will recommend approval of the vacations to the SDOT Director. At a future meeting the Design Commission must further review and vote on the public benefit package. Items 4 through 6 are recommendations on the public benefit package.

- **Show the full context of the vacation request: the different options studied, why the vacation is required, etc. Review the functional benefits the alley will provide: less noise, view corridors, etc. Provide design drawings of the elevations, footprint, massing and capacity.**
- **Provide context for bicycling, including how the site is accessed and bicycle routes to, from and alongside it.**
- **Provide more information on sustainability measures and strategies.**
- **Reevaluate and further detail the public benefit. It seems to be driven too much by community input from immediate neighbors and not from the view of the larger neighborhood or city. For example, consider what design elements to place in the setback, as setbacks themselves are required and therefore not a public benefit.**
- **Show restraint in the design of the open spaces and number of elements in them.**
- **Consider as public benefits undergrounding the utilities and improvements to the bike network. Show that any proposed public benefit is not in conflict with the potential utility relocation. The benefit needs to be sustainable.**

- **Provide additional detail on the pedestrian crossing design at N. 34th and N. 35th and make sure these are the most beneficial connections that could be provided in the area. Consider how the connections to the south across N. 34th join the community, where there are amenities like the Burke Gilman Trail.**
- **Encourage an artist to be involved early in the design, and not just relegated to a single place.**

Commissioner Loew voted no because, given the importance of street vacations, the commission needs to see the full range of options considered in order to sufficiently evaluate the urban design merit.