

APPROVED
MINUTES OF THE MEETING

Ed Murray
Mayor

Diane Sugimura
Director, DPD

Marshall Foster
Planning Director, DPD

Tom Nelson, Chair

Osama Quotah, Vice Chair

Bernie Alonzo

Brodie Bain

Megan Groth

Laurel Kunkler

Shannon Loew

Martin Regge

Ellen Sollod

Ross Tilghman

Michael Jenkins
Director

Valerie Kinast
Coordinator

Nicolas Welch
Planner

Joan Nieman
Administrative Staff

February 6, 2014

Convened 8:30 am

Adjourned 3:30 pm

Projects Reviewed

North Transfer Station

Colman Dock

Commissioners Present

Tom Nelson, Chair

Osama Quotah, Vice Chair

Bernie Alonzo (arrived 11:40 am)

Megan Groth

Laurel Kunkler

Shannon Loew (excused 9:30– 11:30 am)

Martin Regge

Ellen Sollod

Ross Tilghman

Commissioners Excused

Brodie Bain

Staff Present

Michael Jenkins

Valerie Kinast

Nicolas Welch

Joan Nieman

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February 6, 2014 9:00 – 10:30 am	Project:	North Transfer Station	
	Phase:	90% design	
	Previous reviews:	12/2/10; 6/16/11; 11/15/12 UDM approved; 2/7/13 PB approved; 10/3/13; 11/21/13; 1/6/14 admin review	
	Presenters:	Dean Koonts Pierce McVey	HBB Mahlum
	Attendees:	Josh Campbell Tim Croll Gregory Lindstadt Vince Lyons Kelly Pajek Ken Snipes Hui Yang	SPU SPU CDM Smith Wallingford CC Office of Arts & Culture SPU SPU

Recusals and Disclosures

Osama Quotah's employer, LMN Architects, is working on the adjacent Stone34 project.

Purpose of Review

The purpose of this meeting was to review the 90% design of the North Transfer Station redevelopment. At the November 2013 review, the Commission was interested in the walls around the project, further development of the entry plaza, the relationship between the hardscape and landscape materials, and further integration of the architecture and landscape architecture. The Commission approved the 60% design contingent on an administrative review of the window, wall, and entry plaza elements, which occurred on January 6, 2014.

Summary of Proposal

Seattle Public Utilities is proposing to replace the existing transfer station at 1350 N 34th St in Wallingford. SPU has also acquired additional property on the east side of Carr Place N, whose vacation has been approved in order to expand the facility to meet utility demand. The existing North Transfer Station (closed in January 2014) was over 50 years old and had become unreliable and unable to meet all recycling needs as it ages. The goal of the redevelopment is to improve programming, onsite access, and traffic flow.

The new transfer station will consist of a large tipping building, a small administration building attached to it, a reuse and recycle building, scale yard, parking, and park-like open space. At the north and east edges of the site, the station is set back from the property line to preserve the view corridor along Ashworth Ave N and provide open space and plantings. SPU has acquired a parcel north of N 35th St between Carr Pl N and Woodlawn Ave N intended for open space improvements as part of the public benefit package of the street vacation.

The City Council approved an agreement between SPU and the Wallingford and Fremont Community

Councils that details some of the project's design, such as the setbacks and elements of the open space design.

Summary of Presentation

Pierce McVey reviewed the presentation dated February 6, 2014, available on the [Design Commission website](#). Mr. McVey gave an overview of the site, its buildings, and its open space areas. He explained the circulation of haulers entering and exiting the site, the locations of staff and public parking, and the main entry plaza to the building at the SE corner of the site. The rooftop photovoltaic array has been scaled back and is intended to provide 150 kW of power. Since the previous meeting, there have been architectural refinements to the plaza (public access and art), the 34th St public way, and the north wall. Mr. McVey noted the bus dropoff location and described where those visitors would enter the building.

The artist for the plaza installation, Jean Shih, will take inspiration from the original site topography. A series of contour lines will be cut and epoxy filled on the ground, with repurposed rebar from the demolition for the vertical forms. Kelly Pajek, Office of Arts & Culture, noted that the PAAC reviewed this art piece last week. There was concern about the massing forms that will evolve.

Design of the 34th St public way includes benches, for which the community has expressed desire, and glazing to provide views into the tipping floor. The north wall will have a bored form upper zone above a concrete lower zone. This texture continues as the wall wraps along the east wall.

Dean Koonts summarized the landscape plan for the site and the neighborhood criteria that guided it. Sections illustrated the grade difference between 35th and 34th Streets. The open space plan includes a play area north of 35th, exercise stations at the NE corner of the site, and landscaping along the east edge of the site at Woodlawn Ave. Renderings are intended to illustrate landscaping after roughly 20 years of growth. The rooftop vegetation will be sedum for stormwater treatment. Smaller concrete retaining walls and benches will evoke the vertical patterning present in the concrete walls.

Summary of Discussion

Overall, the Commission applauded the evolution this project has undergone over the course of its reviews. Positive elements included in particular the concentration of art at the plaza and the move towards a more naturalistic landscape strategy. There was concern in the sizing of the art installation so that children visiting the site cannot become stuck but leaves and debris do not collect within it. Furthermore, while the Commission liked the use of safety yellow throughout the site, they cautioned against confusing that concept by including it in the art. The Commissioners also discussed how the team treated the long walls along 34th and 35th and generally praised as elegant and inviting the use of windows, niches, cants, and texture.

Agency Comments

none

Public Comments

Vince Lyons, Wallingford Community Council, wanted to review the artwork in the plaza. Mr. McVey described the topographical lines traced across the ground plane and the scale, materiality, and coloration of the three-dimensional forms.

Action

The Design Commission thanked SPU and their consultants for the presentation of the 90% design of the North Transfer Station. Overall, the Commission appreciated the opening up of the plaza and bringing it into a better relationship with the street. The Commissioners lauded the transparency of architecture, a quality they hoped would remain through construction. The Commission appreciated that the landscape was taken in a more naturalistic direction. They believed the design addressed N 34th St more effectively than when it was first brought before them. Concentrating the art at the plaza was a big component of this improvement.

With a **vote of 8-0**, the Design Commission approved the 90% design of the N Transfer Station with the recommendations listed below. This completes the Capital Improvement Project review by the Design Commission. It also fulfills the condition of vacation approval that the landscape design be approved at the 30%, 60%, and 90% phases. The Commission does not anticipate reviewing the project again unless there are significant changes to the design.

1. Consult with the artist as the lighting of the plaza and the lighting overall is developed.
2. Be mindful of the relationship of the color in the art piece to the safety yellow of the graphics in the architecture. Also, as the art is further developed, consider how the transparency or opacity will affect the openness that has been created in the plaza. Given its location where children will be passing by and gathering as they visit the facility, also consider issues of safety with the art.
3. Reduce the mullion size in the windows on the walls along N 34th St., if possible.
4. Investigate differentiating the niches in the walls on N 34th St to make them more visible, and consider how they can allow for playfulness. Consider carefully how these niches will be used and managed to create interesting "moments" along the facade.
5. Use subtleties of the angles of the walls along N 35th St to create more variety in the way light hits it.