

WSCC Expansion

Tim Burgess
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John Savo, Vice Chair

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Ben de Rubertis

Thaddeus Egging

Rachel Gleeson

Laura Haddad

Brianna Holan

Rick Krochalis

Evan Fowler

Michael Jenkins
Director

Valerie Kinast
Coordinator

Aaron Hursey
Planner

Juliet Acevedo
Administrative Staff

Diana Settlemeyer
Intern

**Office of Planning and
Community Development**
Seattle City Hall
600 4th Avenue, 5th Floor
Seattle, WA 98124

TEL 206-684-0435
FAX 206-233-2784
seattle.gov/designcommission

Commissioners Present

Ross Tilghman, Chair
John Savo, Vice Chair
Lee Copeland
Ben de Rubertis
Rachel Gleeson
Laura Haddad
Rick Krochalis

Commissioners Excused

Thaddeus Egging
Evan Fowler
Brianna Holan

Project Description

The Washington State Convention Center (WSCC) is proposing to vacate three alleys and two streets below grade on three blocks bounded by Pine St, 9th Ave, Howell St, and Boren Ave. The petitioner is requesting the full vacation of the following three mid-block alleys:

- Block 33 (Site B) - bounded by 9th Ave, Howell St, Terry Ave, and Olive way
- Block 43 (Site C) - bounded by Terry Ave, Howell St, Boren Ave, and Olive Way
- Block 44 (Site A) - bounded by 9th Ave, Olive Way, Boren Ave, and Pine St

The petitioner has also modified their initial vacation petition to change the vacation of Terry between Olive and Howell to a subterranean-only vacation. The request for a subterranean vacation for Olive Way, between 9th Ave and Boren Ave, has not been modified.

The preferred scheme includes approximately 2.385 million square feet (sf) of development on three sites. The WSCC expansion would occur above grade on Site A only, and extend to a below grade loading dock on Sites B and C. These remaining two sites will include co-developments above grade. The preferred proposal includes 1,165,000 square feet dedicated to the convention center expansion, 385 residential units, 575,000 square feet of office space, 42,000 square feet dedicated to street-level uses, below-grade parking for 700-800 vehicles, and below-grade loading services.

Meeting Summary

The Seattle Design Commission (SDC) continued their review of the proposed public benefits package for the WSCC Expansion. The SDC did not take an action during today's meeting. The SDC provided the project team with several recommendations that should be addressed prior to the next review of the public benefits package.

Recusals and Disclosures

Thaddeus Egging recused himself as his employer, KPFF, is working on the project.

Brianna Holan recused herself as her employer, LMN Architects, is working on the project.

November 2, 2017**1:30 - 4:30 pm****Type**

Street and Alley Vacation

Phase

Public Benefit Briefing - Freeway Park

Previous Reviews

[10/5/17, 7/6/17, 5/18/17, 3/16/17, 2/16/17, 1/19/17, 9/15/16, 4/21/16, 2/4/16](#)

Presenters

Bernie Alonzo
GGN

Matt Griffin
Pine Street Group

Mark Reddington
LMN Architects

Lyle Bicknell
OPCD

Attendees

Margery Aronson | Art Advisor

Beverly Barnett | SDOT

Cath Brunner | 4Culture

Andy Cameron | Resident

McCaella Daffern | Capitol Hill Housing

Ryan Durkan | HCMP

Doug Holtom | FHIA

Alex Hudson | Community Package Coalition

Bryn Kepler | GGN

Abby Lawlor | Unit Here Local 8

Jane Lewis | Pine Street Group

Katherine Mackinnon | NYHUS

Brandon Macz | Capitol Hill Times

Cathy McClure | Artist

Bob Messina | Resident

Jessica Miller | LMN Architects

Chip Nevins | SPR

Chip Reed | Resident

Kylie Rolf | Housing Development Consortium

Michele Sarlitto | EA Engineering, Science, and Technology

Martin Sicotte | LMN Architects

November 2, 2017

Physical Public Benefits

- Public Open Spaces & R.O.W. Improvements
- Historic Building Lighting
- Additional Improvements Beyond Code

Public Benefit Art**Funding Neighborhood Improvements**

- Pike Pine Renaissance: Act 1 Funding
- Bicycle Master Plan Funding
- Lid I-5 Study Funding
- Freeway Park Association / Seattle Parks and Recreation Funding

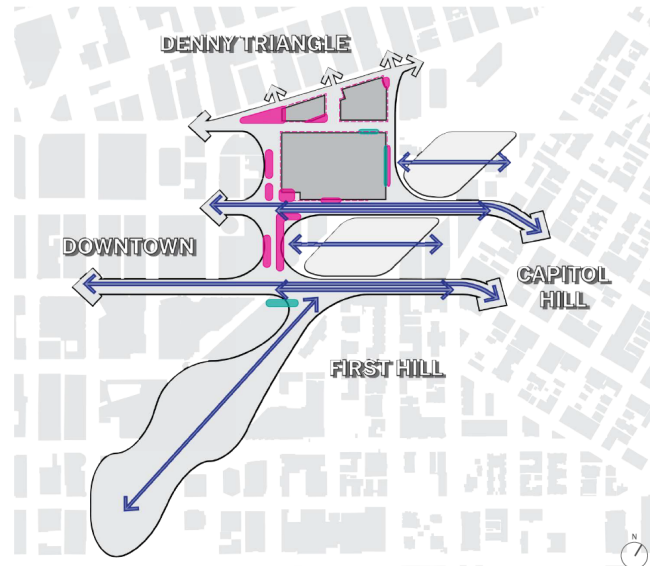
Affordable Housing Funding

Figure 1: Proposed public benefit elements

- 1 9th & Pine Plaza
- 2 9th Ave R.O.W. at Pine St
- 3 9th Ave R.O.W. at Pike St
- 4 Flatiron Plaza and Olive Triangle R.O.W.
- 5 Terry Ave Green Street Plaza
- 6 Denny Triangle Corner Plaza
- 7 Boren Ave Garden
- 8 Pine St Sun Garden
- 9 Historic Building Lighting

Additional Improvements Beyond Code

- Overhead Weather Protection
- Seating
- Planting

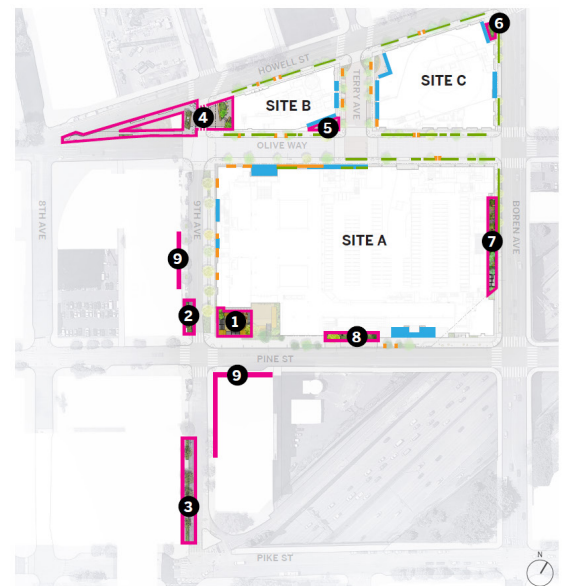


Figure 2: Proposed physical benefits

Summary of Presentation

Bernie Alonzo of GGN, Matt Griffin of Pine Street Group, Mark Reddington of LMN, and Lyle Bicknell of OPCD presented the updated public benefits package, with changes responding to Commissioner feedback from the May 18th and July 6th meetings. The overall vision for the package is to create a hub that connects diverse neighborhoods through improvements to the pedestrian experience. Community connections are made through physical public benefits, public benefit art, funding for neighborhood improvements, and funding for affordable housing. The proposed \$58 million¹ dollar public benefit package relative to the vacation was developed in part from public outreach conducted over the summer, and through agreements made with the Community Package Coalition. See figures 1& 2 for more detail.

Since the July 6 meeting, there have been several changes to the proposed public realm improvements. The updated plaza at 9th and Pine dedicates a smaller area to count towards public benefit, with more planting as a buffer between Pine St and the portion of the plaza that is not counted as public benefit. See figure 3 for more detail. The Pine Street Platforms leading to the rooftop garden have been removed, and

¹WSCC has indicated that their proposed contributions total approximately \$92 million, \$58 million of which is to fund public benefits that offset the impacts of the street and alley vacations. The remaining \$34 million funds other improvements or enhancements outside the vacation process.

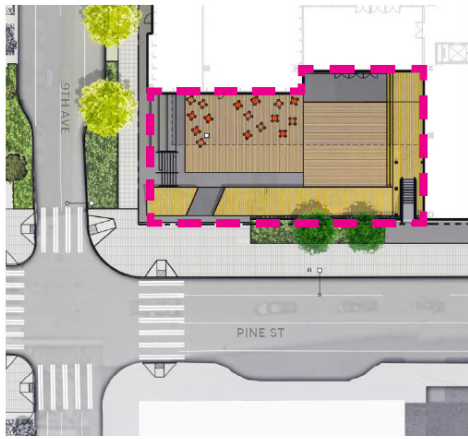
**May 2017 plan**

Figure 3: Evolution of 9th & Pine plaza design

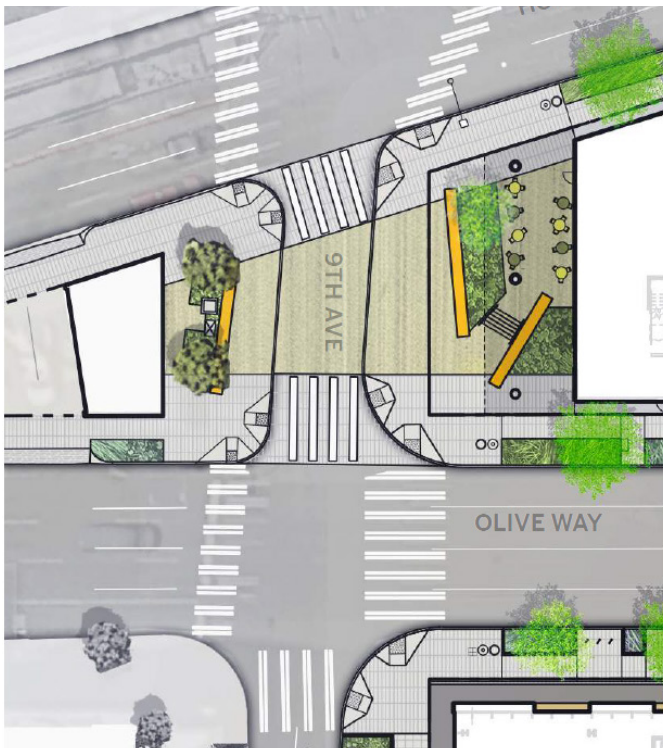
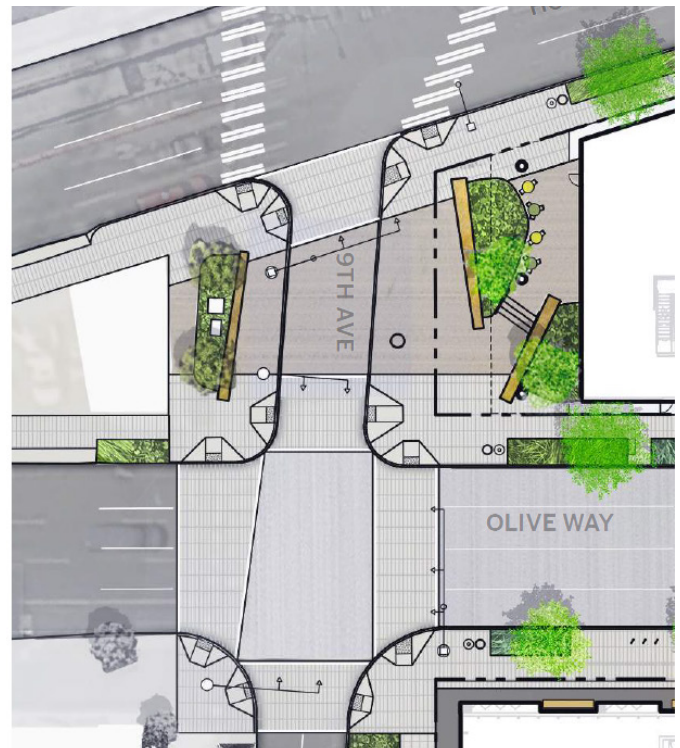
**July 2017 plan****Current plan****July 2017 plan**

Figure 4: Updated design of Flatiron Plaza and Olive Triangle ROW

**Current plan**

the related garden is no longer presented as public benefit. The Planting beds located west of 9th Ave in the Flatiron Plaza have been consolidated and increased (See figure 4). The Terry Plaza has been modified slightly to include more planting within the area considered for public benefit.

Agency Comments

Miriam Roskin, Office of Housing, stated that the office of housing will not own nor operate housing projects receiving proposed funding. Ms. Roskin stated that the funding will be distributed through a competitive process. Ms. Roskin then cited several examples of projects that have received funding from the Office of Housing. Ms. Roskin stated that funding received is leveraged by several sources and that each dollar distributed by them is matched.

Chip Nevins, SPR, Supports the funding for Freeway Park improvements. Mr. Nevins said that SPR is working with the project team to coordinate the timeline for receiving the proposed funding.

Beverly Barnett, SDOT, commended the Community Package Coalition and the project team for reaching an agreement. Ms. Barnett said they are working through a transportation plan addressing access for trucks and how

that will affect the streetscape. Ms. Barnett stated that while SDOT has no technical issues with the proposed benefit elements, she encouraged the Design Commission to evaluate whether individual elements provide value to the public and are commensurate for the size of the project.

Public Comments

Andy Cameron, Restaurant Owner, Stated his support for the project. Mr. Cameron then said that they see a large increase in sales during conventions.

McCaella Daffern, Capitol Hill Housing, stated that, while not all pieces of the community package were met, Capitol Hill Housing are pleased with the agreement to providing funding for affordable housing.

Alex Hudson, Community Package Coalition, stated the Community Package Coalition's support for the project. Ms. Hudson said the project team had scaled up their investments and then stated that most of the proposed public benefit elements came from the Community Package Coalition. Ms. Hudson commended the Design Commission for being open to this process.

Abby Lawlor, Unite Here local 8, stated her support for the project. Ms. Lawlor said the project will provide work and support for a community to people who need it the most.

Bob Messina, resident, stated his support for the I-5 lid study and encouraged the Design Commission to approve the project.

Summary of Discussion

The Commission organized its discussion around the following issues:

- I-5 Lid Study
- Freeway Park
- Affordable Housing
- Pike Pine Corridor
- Lighting of historic buildings
- Open Spaces

I-5 Lid Study

The SDC discussed if the I-5 lid study should be accepted as a public benefit element. Commissioners acknowledged the community support for providing a feasibility study, but raised potential issues with accepting a study rather than a physical public realm improvement. The SDC then discussed the potential outcomes and alternatives that might be generated from the feasibility study. Several commissioners voiced a desire to see tangible outcomes from the study, including a strong methodology for evaluating funding and feasibility. The Commission agreed that a study like this should be considered as a public benefit element in the unique context of this vacation request. However, the commissioners indicated that accepting this type of a study should not set a precedent for future vacation public benefit packages.

Freeway Park

The SDC thought it was appropriate to include funding for Freeway Park improvements as a public benefit element. The Commission recommended the project team provide further clarification on the funding of improvements and long-term maintenance for areas owned by SPR as opposed to property owned by WSSC and others. The SDC then agreed that the Freeway park proposal will continue to be reviewed by the Commission as a CIP project. Commissioners encouraged the design team to focus their efforts and proposal on the restoration of fundamental elements of the original park design.

The Commission encouraged the project team to explain how Freeway Park will be connected to the surrounding network of public spaces, including the I-5 lid. Commissioners recommended that the project team address park entrances and associated signage located on WSSC property, so that they are clear, visible, and accessible to the public.

Affordable housing

The SDC fully supported project funding for off-site affordable housing. The Commission, recognizing this as benefit

that is unique to this project, agreed this should not set a precedent for future projects.

Pike Pine Corridor

Should the local improvement district funding not be approved, the SDC recommended that the funding from the WSCC be used to plan for improvements along Pike St and Pine St between 9th Ave and Melrose Ave.

Lighting of Historic buildings

Although the SDC expressed support of the Landmarks Board's decision to accept the proposed lighting plan for the Camlin and Paramount, several commissioners questioned whether it should be considered as a public benefit element. However, the Commission then agreed that, although it does not qualify as a preservation measure, the proposed lighting will enhance the surrounding pedestrian realm.

Open Spaces

The SDC discussed the proposed open spaces on and near site. Commissioners were supportive of the updated design proposals for the 9th and Pine Plaza, 9th Ave right-of-way, Flatiron Plaza and Olive Triangle right-of-way, and Pine St Sun Garden. Commissioners commented that the Pine St Sun Garden will be heavily used and suggested the project team provide more seating opportunities. The Commission recognizes the importance of the relationship between the Terry Green Street Plaza and Terry Ave. To enhance the public nature of the space, Commissioners recommended that the door swinging outward into the Terry Green Street Plaza be changed to the opposite hand.

The Commission agreed the Denny Triangle Plaza added value to the overall network of open spaces. Commissioners strongly encouraged the project team to consider providing an onsite tribute to John T. Williams.

The SDC then commented on the Boren Ave. Garden. Commissioners agreed the garden could serve as a place to rest along the road's steep incline. The commission cautioned the project team from removing and/or replacing seating with artwork once it is installed. Commissioners also encouraged the design team to include plantings that will enhance the public space year around.

Action

The SDC thanked the project team for their presentation of the public benefit package for the WSCC Expansion. The SDC did not take an action during today's meeting. The Commission provided the following recommendations that should be addressed prior to its next review of the public benefit package:

1. Clarify the boundaries of the I-5 Lid feasibility study.
2. Clarify how proposed funding will be spent on improvements for Freeway Park.
3. Consider thinking of how Freeway Park might relate to a future I-5 lid.
4. Consider the reallocation of proposed funds to improve Pike St. and Pine St. between 9th Ave and Melrose Ave. if Local Improvement District (LID) funding is not approved for the Pike Pine Renaissance Project.
5. Provide a long-term maintenance strategy for planting improvements made in the right-of-way and clarify who has the maintenance responsibility.
6. Clarify proposed tree species along Boren Ave.
7. Consider alternative strategies for fixed seating in the Pine St. Sun Garden
8. Consider acknowledging John T. Williams in the Denny Triangle Corner Plaza