Urban Design Framework (UDF) for the Capitol Hill light rail station development sites

Workshop I - Desired Uses, October 16 2010.

Green Team Notes

General Mix, Composition and Character

Questions to be addressed at the workshop:
What do you envision as the general makeup of uses in the development around the station? What uses will have the strongest presence? I.e., is the four site redevelopment:

- A mostly residential redevelopment with active ground level retail.
- A pronounced retail hub – with other uses on the sites.
- A pronounced community services campus - with other uses on the sites.
- Something else – i.e. a substantial office / employment component.

Notes:

Summary points:
- This should be a cohesive development – master planned, perhaps a single developer, but with multiple architects
- Achieve a balance in serving various incomes. Locate destination retailers on Broadway and smaller retails on plaza and walkthroughs

Development is one entity
Plaza is heart and soul of redevelopment
Developer needs an incentive to provide community amenities
Station plaza should have a glass roof above so the plaza can have a winter market as well as summer fair weather activities
Closing E Denny between Broadway and Nagle Place would include site C in the development, bring it in and not make it feel separate.
Not in favor of extra height
New development should fit in with the neighborhood context
Benefits to the developer could be the value of the additional eight going from a 40 ft. height limit to a 65 ft. height limit.
Concern about too much destination retail – that is more appropriate in Bellevue or Downtown Seattle; smaller retail is more appropriate.
If height is increased, break down mass
Agree with smaller retail
Important to be able to shift density around – flexibility that might be gained through a Master Plan.
Can Site D be built out over the station?
Performance criteria should be set around additional height – let developers make proposals – see what they come up with.
Like destination retails – Elliott Bay Books has been a boon to surrounding businesses
Destination retail and/or anchor tenants are not necessarily large chains – they could be local
Retail and/or Office – How Much / What Kind / Where?

Questions to be addressed at the workshop:

- How much of the retail should be targeted to small local business – some, most, all? Where on the site should they be located?
- Should there be a larger anchor tenant, and what type of business might that be? Where might it be located?

Notes:

Summary:

- More local businesses in a variety of sizes.
- No chains
- Ideas: Hardware store, bakery

Income level within walking distance of sites is lower than the outré circle of Capitol Hill (N Cap Hill, etc) - this suggests the need for destination retail in order to bring in the outer ring of Cap Hill residents and make the area economically thriving.

Redevelopment needs to support and attract people who will walk here as well as those beyond walking distance.

Split ground floor spaces on Site A so some spaces face Broadway and some face station place

In support of destination retail, there is plenty of capacity elsewhere on Broadway in existing buildings for smaller, more affordable rent retail – lots of vacant space on Broadway

Key to a retail district is a balance of destination and local retailers. Smaller retail wants and benefits from pedestrian traffic generated by destination retail.

Farmers Market is a destination

Joule would not have been built without the rezone to 65 ft.

10,000 sq. ft. of available retail in the Bank of America redevelopment.

Do anchors need to be here if they are in other adjacent, non publically owned redevelopments?

You need half a dozen anchors along Broadway and Roy to support a thriving retail district

Examples of anchor or destination – Sur La Table – 5000 sq. ft., Apple

A bazaar is a destination – lots of little shops.

Key is adaptability of space,

Businesses on Broadway are failing

Suburban malls are also going out of business – don’t use them as models

Small retail is preferred – look at other countries

2 reasons why people don’t come to Broadway to shop “Nothing to buy there” and “nowhere to park”

Current mix is dominated by food and drink

Need a variety of size and a variety of goods/entertainment

Cultivate the Broadway frontage. People will initially drive, then take rail.

Flexibility of space is important
Urban Design Framework (UDF) for the Capitol Hill light rail station development sites

Workshop I - Desired Uses, October 16 2010.

Green Team Notes

Housing – How Much / What Kind / Where?

Questions to be addressed at the workshop:

- About how much of the housing in the redevelopment should be affordable housing?
- What type of affordable housing should be the primary target – Moderate Income, low income, very low income, special needs, senior?

Notes:

Summary:

- Half of housing on sites should be affordable – half of that amount should serve lower income levels (30 – 50%)
- Keen lack of supply for the 30 – 50% Area Median Income (AMI)
- Look to 2010 Census demographics to determine the current need

Affordable housing makes sense here given proximity to transit and retails
Lack of subsidized housing on the Hill
Excess supply of 80% AMI and higher
Mixed income housing is desirable
There is a lot of housing at 30% and below AMI and at 50-60-% AMI, 40% AMI not well served currently
Look at elderly demographics
sites B2 and C affordable
Lack of LGBTQ elderly housing and services – B2 a good site for those uses.
Extra height on C is ok, given site D can go up to 105 if a college related uses(assuming it will be)
If we go higher, we must be creative -

Community Facilities & Services

Questions to be addressed at the workshop:

- Should the community center be co-located with other community elements such as artist’s spaces, live/work spaces, etc.
- Should the community center have adjacencies, and/or an ownership connection with the affordable housing?
- What uses adjacent to the station plaza (Nagle Place Extension) are best suited to activate the plaza?

Notes:

Summary:

- Community center space must be flexible to meet market /economy as well as needs of community
- Station plaza should be the town square, community space should relate to town square
- Consider balcony above station plaza on site A2 for Chamber of Commerce office, LGBT not profits and services, etc. Transform to art space at night.

2nd floor live/work units facing the station plaza on B2
Community center should have flexible space that can be used by many groups, meeting space, office space for nonprofits – how to program the space?
LGBTQ non profits and orgs currently occupy 50,000 sq. ft. on Hill
Desire for shared facilities -
Smaller retail on plaza
Gay community needs a center
Capitol Hill Chamber needs an office
Take advantage in the change of grade from Broadway across the site moving east
Public WiFi
Health services
Think about hours of operations and how each tenant will activate the space and during what time period.
This should be an 18 hour activity place, not a 24/7 activity hub

**Parking – Bikes and Cars**

*Questions to be addressed at the workshop:*
- Should there be a central bicycle parking facility? If so where? What types of bicycle users should it accommodate? i.e. commuters, residents etc.
- About how much auto parking should be provided in the development and how should it be allocated?
- How can auto parking provided in the building be decoupled from residential and commercial units?
- Should there be an auto parking maximum?

**Notes:**

**Summary notes:**

- Put bike racks along E side of south station entry for commuters and more visible bike racks on street for retail customers
- Bike racks in front of buildings is inviting to cyclists – also works as a buffer between sidewalk and traffic
- If Denny is closed between BWay and Nagle – great spot to attract cyclists and park bikes (in a portion)
- Shared car parking is desirable
- Plan for change over time – what may be built as car parking today, may be transformed into another use in the future and fewer people have and park care – example an emergency facility

Appreciation for bike racks that take over an on-street parking space
Accommodate bikes and cars – have parking for everyone
Stack of hang bikes on n end of n entry – save space, interesting to look at
Concentrated cycling activity attracts cyclists
Bank of America redev. has 77 parking spaces, 40 of which are dedicated to Bank of America (employees), plus 1 spot for every 500 sq. ft of retail
Type of business drives amount of parking needed
At Joule, parking is decoupled from rent
Providing a small amount of shared parking and severely limiting residential parking will ensure that less than market rate is built.
Destination retail needs parking
Businesses cannot flourish with no parking
Design parking so it can be converted down the road
Provide no parking for commuters, just short term for retail
Parking access should be from 10th and John
Centralize all parking for whole development

**Master Planned or Individual Sites**

*Questions to be addressed at the workshop:*

- To what extent do you envision the redevelopment around the station area as:
  - A single, master planned development with extensive integration of uses and design across the 4 infill sites?; or
  - A cluster of separate infill projects within a general framework?

**Notes:**

**Summary:**

- Master plan, with different architects to achieve a variety within a common language
- Differentiate retail spaces
- Avoid monolithic, homogenous development

Good to have each building have unique character
The Bailey Coy/Pagliacci block has distinguished storefronts – this is good
Not in favor of modulation
Broadway historically had variation within a common language
Design Guidelines can help address master planned ‘monolithic’ nature

**Modifying the Envelope**

*Questions to be addressed at the workshop:*

In general do you think that the City and Sound Transit should consider modifying zoning and development standards for the sites to help facilitate the preferred uses? For example:

- Should movement and shifting of the allowable height and density within the four sites be allowed to facilitate the preferred uses and design?
- Should upzones of height or density be allowed on some portions of the sites if it can help facilitate preferred uses and design?
- If increased height and density is considered – what areas of the sites are best suited for such an increase?

**Notes:**

Difference in opinion within group on height increase

B site heights should be raised from 40 to 65 feet
Mapping exercise notes

No agreement on height
Some support for 1 or 2 towers with smaller buildings around
Provide benefit of height in exchange for community amenities
Interest in family housing to accommodate a variety of families
Does the ground floor of site C make sense for commercial space?
Why is the north station entry on the prime corner? Can the station entry be built over above the first or second floor?
Set the FAR by site
If A2 and C were to be built to full height, they would cast shadows on station plaza
If A2 comes down to 40, A1 needs to go up to at least 105
A1 residential should have public access to top floor
Remember floor to floor height when thinking about uses and height increases
Lots of individual storefronts or one large shared space with cars and smaller businesses – a la Melrose Market
Put studios overlooking station plaza, family sized units facing 10th
Live/work units overlooking plaza
Community center that faces/has relationship to station plaza is more inviting
Bug burden for 1 single building to carry responsibility for community center - argument for a master developer
Buffer needed between retail and housing (either office or community center)
Invite SCCC to move their bakery into ground floor of site D
Provide a diversity of housing that represents the neighborhood
What is the needed amount of community space? What is the neighborhood willing to give up in exchange for that space?
Desired uses: Hardware store, Office supply store, Bakery, Drycleaner, Childcare
Bars are problematic – enough on the Hill already
Put food on station plaza to generate foot traffic
Through Design Review and UDF, inform retail architecture
Need a developer/architect team familiar with urban retail and transit oriented businesses. Proceed with caution; line up good tenants ahead of time
Broadway frontage needs to be active and transparent