

Portage Bay Park

Edward B. Murray
Mayor

Samuel Assefa
Director, OPCD

Shannon Loew, Chair

Ross Tilghman, Vice Chair

Brodie Bain

Lee Copeland

Ben de Rubertis

Thaddeus Egging

Rachel Gleeson

Laura Haddad

Jescelle Major

John Savo

Michael Jenkins
Director

Aaron Hursey
Planner

Juliet Acevedo
Administrative Staff

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

TEL 206-615-1349
FAX 206-233-7883
seattle.gov/dpd/cityplanning/

Commissioners Present

Ross Tilghman, Vice Chair
Brodie Bain
Lee Copeland
Rachel Gleeson
Laura Haddad
Jescelle Major

Commissioners Excused

Shannon Loew, Chair
Ben de Rubertis
Thaddeus Egging
John Savo

Project Description

Seattle Parks and Recreation (SPR) is proposing the development of Portage Bay Park, located along the north shore of Portage Bay in the University District. The 3-acre site, 1.65-acres of which is comprised of dry land, is west of the intersection of NE Boat Street and 15th Ave NE and is adjacent to Sakuma Viewpoint, an open space owned by University of Washington. The site was purchased from the University of Washington as mitigation for impacts from the SR520 expansion project.

The project proposal includes the removal existing structures and include onsite remediation and habitat restoration. The park will also provide recreation opportunities, community gathering space, water access, and shoreline habitat areas.

The design team is currently preparing an environmental mitigation plan due to soil conditions from historical uses at the site. In addition, the design team continues to develop refinements for park programming. SPR and the design team will hold four public meetings throughout the design phase of the project. The park will start permitting, bidding, and construction in mid-2017 and is planned to open in late 2018.

Meeting Summary

This was the Seattle Design Commission's (SDC) fourth review of the project. At this meeting the SDC reviewed the design development phase of the project. After the presentation, questions, and deliberations, the SDC voted, 6-0, to approve the design development phase of the Portage Bay Park project with one condition.

Recusals and Disclosures

There were no recusals or disclosures.

January 5, 2017

9:00 - 10:30 am

Type

CIP

Phase

Design Development

Previous Reviews

[08/04/16](#), [03/17/16](#), [10/15/16](#)

Presenters

Lara Rose

Walker Macy

Erik Kantola

Schemata Workshop

Attendees

Lyle Bicknell

OPCD

David Graves

SPR

Grace Kim

Schemata Workshop

Andrea Kuns

Walker Macy

Ann Marie Schneider

Walker Macy

January 5, 2017

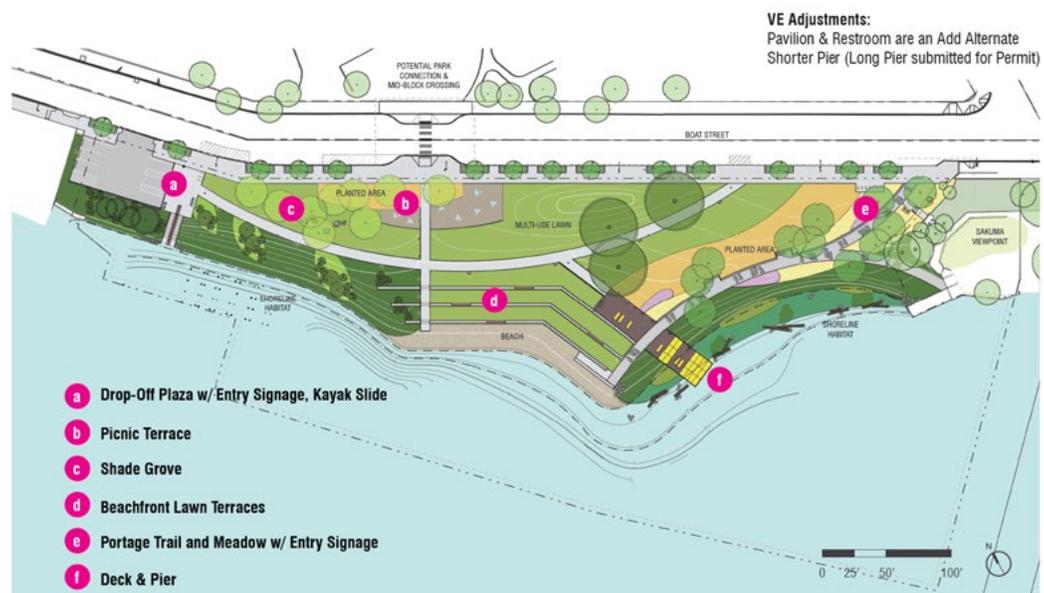


Figure 1: Previous (above) and current (below) site plan

Summary of Presentation

Lara Rose of Walker Macy and Erik Kantola of Schemata Workshop presented the design development phase of Portage Bay Park. Ms. Rose provided site context, the project overview, as well as the previous site plan proposal. Since the schematic review of the project on August 4th, 2016, the proposal has eliminated the shelter including the restroom and storage facility. These features were eliminated due to increased project costs from the onsite demolition and site remediation requirements. The remaining portions of the program including the lawn and terracing, kayak launch, ADA access, waterfront access, pier, lighting, and habitat restoration were retained and their designs advanced based on previous commission input. The area where the shelter was located will include a picnicking area with movable tables and chairs and planting areas. This feature is intended to provide a gateway feature for the park and also provide view opportunities to the water. While the shelter and related facilities were eliminated from the program, they are included as an “add alternatives” and will be constructed if additional funding becomes available. See figures 1 for more detail.

The park will provide open space within the U-District and University of Washington (UW) campus as the area continues to grow. While the park is a City facility, it is included in the proposed open space element for the draft UW master plan. The park will be part of the UW open space system as well as part of the City’s overall open space network. (See figures 2).



Figure 2: Park connections with the U-District and University of Washington

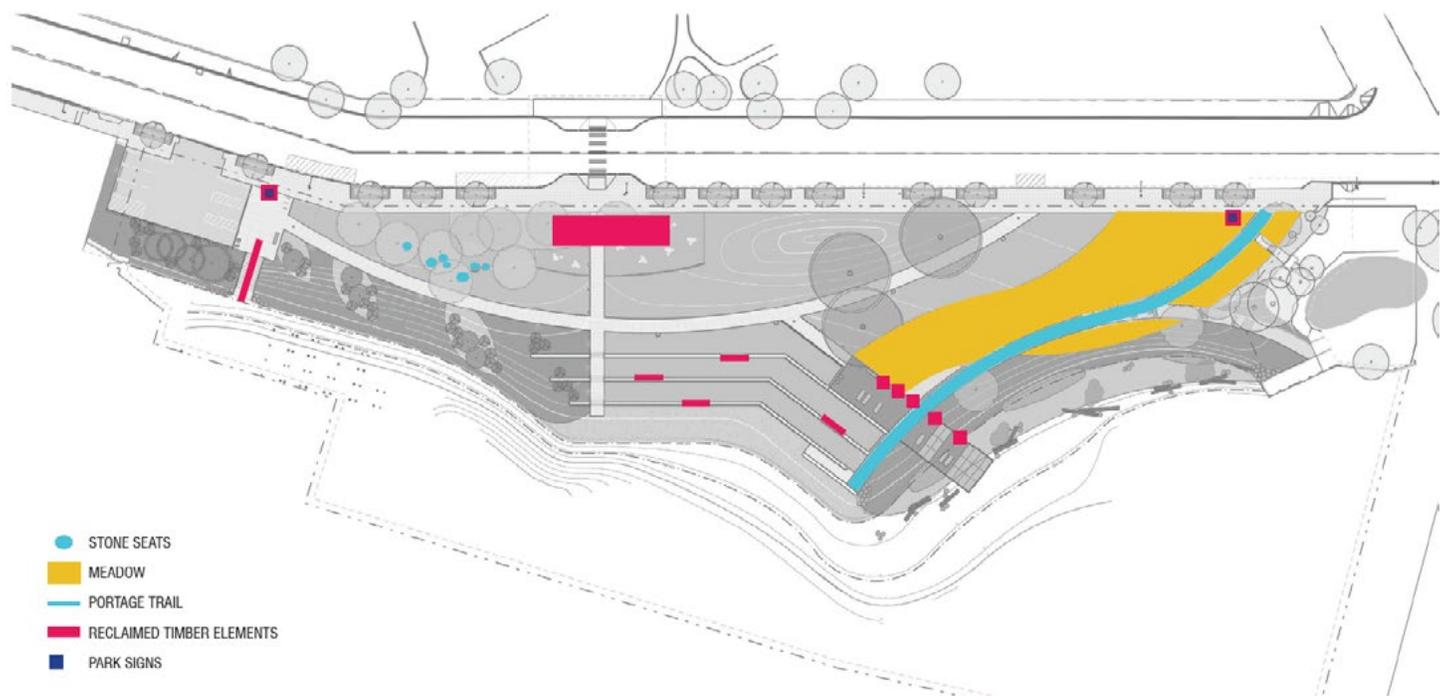


Figure 3: Location of interpretive elements

Interpretive elements will be located throughout the site and will tie into one of two historical narratives – the use of the Portage Bay Trail by Native Americans and the more recent maritime history of the site (See figures 3). The Portage Bay trail elements include the design of meadows with native plantings, reclaimed timber interpretive gateway, and trail pathway. The trail pathway will include a stone slab and aggregate pathway lined by a 1-foot wide concrete curb stamped with text and/or maps highlighting the history of the project site. The pathway will terminate at an overwater pier constructed out of wood and fibergrate decking. The maritime narrative will include the use of salvaged timber for entry signs, interpretive elements, kayak slide, and architectural canopy, which is an add alternative.



Figure 4: Proposed add alternative - shade pavilion

Although considered an add alternative, the presentation included design updates to the shelter, restroom and storage facility. The updated design retains the use of glazed CMU on the restroom/storage facility, vertical screening above the restroom facilities, reclaimed wood soffit, translucent glazing on the roof, and white painted stainless steel support columns and fascia. Instead of providing three swings, the updated design will include 8 individual nylon hammock seats. The updated design also eliminated the use of solar panels on the south side of the roof. (See figures 4)

Agency Comments

David Graves, of SPR, mentioned that the project team has struggled with eliminating specific park features due to budget constraints. Mr. Graves explained that while the shade pavilion and restroom are important design features, it was decided to include the pier in the final design because public waterfront accessibility is limited. Mr. Graves then stated that if the project didn't build a pier during the initial construction phase then it will be very difficult to do in the future.

Public Comments

None

Summary of Discussion

The Commission organized its discussion around the following issues:

- Urban edge & campus connection
- Site furniture, shelter architecture, pier design, and interpretive elements
- Planting & grading
- Lighting & wayfinding

Urban edge & campus connection

The SDC provided positive feedback about how the project team addressed the northern edge along Boat St. and potential future connections to UW. Specifically, the Commission appreciated the alignment of street trees along Boat St, the dense tree plantings near the western edge of the project, as well as the entrance locations. Commissioners agreed this will help set a design standard for UW as they develop adjacent property in the future.

Site furniture, pavilion architecture, pier design, and interpretive elements

The SDC commended the design team for providing a variety of seating options throughout the park design. Commissioners are concerned with lightness and durability of the picnic furnishing located in the picnic grove along Boat St. The Commission recommended the design team provide durable picnic furniture, further recommending the team consider using reclaimed timber to construct picnic tables.

The Commission had differing opinions about the width and color of the shade pavilion's fascia. Commissioners also had differing opinions regarding the programming beneath the proposed shade pavilion. The Commission recommended the programming beneath the proposed shelter reflect the overall purpose of the park.

The SDC agreed with the approach to focus their funding on developing and constructing the pier in the final design, while keeping the shade pavilion and restroom facilities as add alternatives. The SDC appreciated the use of interpretive elements throughout the park. Specifically, Commissioners appreciated the use of salvaged timber for wayfinding, seating, and the kayak slide. The Commission recommended the design team include another timber vertical element near the picnic area along Boat St.

Planting & grading

The SDC appreciated the location and variety of plants used throughout the park design. Commissioners also appreciated the use of topography throughout the site, specifically near the northern edge along Boat St. Commissioners recommended the design team replace the yellowwood trees near the northwest corner of the park with Vine Maple, which will provide better continuity with planting areas located near the southwest shoreline edge.

Lighting & wayfinding

The SDC agreed the lighting plan, including the location and variety of lighting options, was appropriate for the site location. Commissioners recommended the design team consider placing a unique light at the end of the pier, resembling a beacon or marker, to further link the site to its maritime history. The SDC also recommended the project team work with UW in providing wayfinding signs that will direct users to surrounding restroom facilities on campus.

Action

The SDC thanked the project team for presenting the design development phase of the Portage Bay Park project. Overall, the SDC appreciated the project team's responsiveness to previous comment as well as the thoroughness of presentation. The SDC voted to approve, 6 to 0, the design development phase for Portage Bay Park with the following condition:

1. If funding is secured to complete one or all of the components of the 'add alternative' feature, the project must return to the Seattle Design Commission for their review and approval.