



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

Martin Regge

Osama Quotah

Ellen Sollod

Debbie Harris

Valerie Kinast
Coordinator

Tom Iurino
Senior Staff

April 4, 2013

Convened 8:30 am

Adjourned 4:30 pm

Projects Reviewed

10th Avenue Hillclimb
Railroad Avenue
Arena

Commissioners Present

Osama Quotah
Debbie Harris
Laurel Kunkler (joined at 11:00am)
Shannon Loew
Tom Nelson
Martin Regge
Ellen Sollod

Commissioners Excused

Julie Bassuk
Julie Parrett
Seth Geiser

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



April 4, 2013

Project	Railroad Way S., Occidental to Alaskan
Review Type	ROW and CIP
Phase	60% Design
Previous Reviews	n/a
Presenters	Mike Johnson, SDOT Andrew tenBrink, James Corner Field Operations
Attendees	Ali Amiri, WSDOT Andrew Barash, CH2M Hill Dana Olson, EnviroIssues Genna Nashen, Department of Neighborhoods Eric O'Brien, SDOT

9:00 am – 11:00 am

Recusals and Disclosures

There were no recusals or disclosures.

Purpose of Review

Summary of Proposal

Mike Johnson, SDOT, explained that this project is part of the South Access WSDOT project. Picking up with the concept designs the Design Commission approved as part of the South Portal review, the new designers started work in January and hope to reach 90% design in May. Historically Railroad Ave was a bridge over the tidal flats. It is in an area of confluence of the highway project, waterfront, Pioneer Square, and stadium and industrial areas. This project is meant to serve as a strong pedestrian linkage from Alaskan to the stadiums.

Summary of Presentation

The team reviewed the *powerpoint* presentation which is posted on the Design Commission website.

http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/Planning/Design_Commission/Project_Review_Meetings/Minutes/default.asp

Of note is that some of the furnishings are not included in the budget, but possible locations and elements have been proposed. Also, a change since the concept design is that there will be a crossing of S Dearborn St on the west side of First Ave S instead of on First Ave S on the south side of that intersection. Pedestrians coming from the north are meant to move south along the west side of the intersection and cross at S Charles St.

Summary of Discussion

The Commissioners discussed how this project integrates in the area, which will be changing greatly. They felt that given where it is situated, between stadiums, waterfront, port, the International District, etc. it should help knit these areas together. Commissioners discussed how the design related to the design by Leslie Bain of Weinstein AU of the WSDOT South Portal Area, and how it furthered the goals of the projects in the area to create connections. They were concerned about the amount of vehicular traffic that would be exiting SR-99 and moving through the subject area, where big groups of pedestrians will be moving along, and the potential for pedestrian vehicular conflicts where the new Railroad axis crosses 1st Ave. They were also concerned about the lack of funding for elements of the design. These elements would be defining to the design and for the use of the public spaces. They struggled to understand how the ground plane, lighting scheme, and art integrated along the edges of the planning area.

ACTION

The Seattle Design Commission thanked the project team for the presentation of the 60% plans for Railroad Way. Concept plans for part of Railroad Way were approved by the Design Commission as part of the SR-99 South Portal project. It is now being designed as a component of the Waterfront Seattle project.

With a vote of 6 to 4 the Design Commission approved the 60% design of the Railroad Way S right-of-way between Alaska Way S and Occidental Ave S with the recommendations listed below. The project will be presented for review again when it reaches 90% design.

1. The City should integrate planning efforts in the area, including stadium area planning, social service delivery, etc.
2. Coordinate with the other stakeholders on a funding strategy so that the unfunded elements of the design can be provided.
3. Provide better cues for where the various modes should be moving in the right-of-way, with attention to pedestrian-car conflicts and way finding. Employ visual cues and such things as pedestrian lighting to provide stronger visual cues.
4. Further develop the Stadium Plaza to clarify its purpose and function, providing clearer edges so the space does not bleed out, and elements that serve the needs of the various users and different times and under different conditions.
5. Consider how the Stadium Plaza will perform when a game or event is not going on and when there is not. Think of programming, scale, and design of the space and pay mind to how elements might be “used wrong.”
6. Integrate the design of the ground plane with the design of adjacent buildings. Especially integrate with the tunnel operations building, which was designed recently and is meant to be a beacon in this part of town. Pay attention how lighting strategies work together.
7. Consider light pollution.
8. Where possible, provide a substructure that allows for and provides water treatment and tree growth.

When the project is reviewed next, please explain the material palette. Also, explain how art is integrated and coordinated at the south end of the Waterfront Seattle project, which this is a piece of.

The reasons for the dissenting votes were:

Debbie Harris – The design is not refined enough. Basic concepts are not defined enough to approve a project of this type. Appreciates that the stadium plaza is in the scope of work now.

Osama Quotah – How this project stitches together the neighborhoods is not resolved enough. There are also still pedestrian-vehicle conflicts that need a higher level of resolution. Appreciates the details and how elements are fitting together.

Ellen Sollod – There was not enough explanation on how the design will evolve, given the alternatives and number of optional items. The connection to the waterfront is not adequately developed. The strategies should be more complete at 60%.