



APPROVED MINUTES OF THE MEETING

Mike McGinn
Mayor

Diane Sugimura
Director, DPD

Marshall Foster
Planning Director, DPD

Tom Nelson, Chair

Osama Quotah, Vice Chair

Bernie Alonzo

Brodie Bain

Megan Groth

Debbie Harris

Laurel Kunkler

Shannon Loew

Martin Regge

Ellen Sollod

Michael Jenkins
Director

Valerie Kinast
Coordinator

Joan Nieman
Administrative staff

October 17, 2013

Convened 8:30 am

Adjourned 5:00 pm

Projects Reviewed

Waterfront – Union Street

9th & Stewart Alley Vacation

Commissioners Present

Tom Nelson, Chair

Osama Quotah, Vice Chair (8:30-2:30 only)

Bernie Alonzo

Megan Groth

Shannon Loew

Ellen Sollod

Commissioners Excused

Brodie Bain

Debbie Harris

Laurel Kunkler

Martin Regge

Staff Present

Michael Jenkins

Valerie Kinast

Joan Nieman

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October 17, 2013
3:00 – 5:00pm

Project: **9th and Stewart Alley Vacation**

Review Type: Vacation

Phase: Public Benefit

Previous Reviews: 7/18/2013

Presenters: Mark Reddington LMN Architects
 Marni Heffron Heffron Transportation
 Mark Brands Site Workshop

Attendees: Michael Abate Unite Here
 Genevieve Aguilar Puget Sound Sage
 Maura Ahearne Seattle Theatre Group
 Andrew Barash CH2M Hill
 Beverly Barnett SDOT
 Lyle Bicknell DPD
 Kaaren Black Gethsemane Lutheran Church
 Mark Brands Site Workshop
 Shauna Decker R.C. Hedreen Co.
 Michael Dorcy DPD
 Joanne Engquist Gethsemane Lutheran Church
 Michael Hall community member
 Greg Harris R.C. Hedreen Co.
 Harry Hoffman Affordable Housing Advocate
 Rick Hooper Office of Housing
 William Justen Justen Company
 Nicole Keenan Puget Sound Sage
 Robert Kelly Unite Here
 Luke Korpi DOT
 John Otto Liljenstolpe Church Council of Greater Seattle
 Jen Mabby Unite Here
 Jasmine Marwaha Unite Here
 Terry McCann EA Engineering, Science and Technology
 Stefan Moritz Unite Here
 Mickie Newby Puget Sound Sage
 Claudia Paras Puget Sound Sage
 Bruce Parris Unite Here
 Joe Raglans Unite Here
 Ron Reisinger Unite Here
 Adele Reynolds Plymouth Church
 Cindy Richardson Unite Here
 Rebecca Saldana Puget Sound Sage
 Michele Sarlitto EA Engineering, Science and Technology
 David Schneider LMN Architects
 Morgan Shook Berk Consulting
 Sharon Sutton University of Washington
 David Thyer R.C. Hedreen Co.
 Laune Torres Puget Sound Sage
 Yuri Tucker Unite Here
 Sarah Warren Unite Here
 David Watkins Seattle Hotel Association Other
 Kristen Wendt Puget Sound Sage
 Maggie Wykowski Puget Sound Sage

Recusals and Disclosures

Commissioner Quotah recused himself and was not present.

Purpose of Review

The purpose of this meeting was to review the public benefit of the 9th & Stewart Alley Vacation project for the first time. The team provided a follow-up presentation on the urban design merit. At the last review, the Commission approved the urban design merit of the project with conditions.

Summary of Proposal

The applicants are proposing to vacate the L-shaped alley in the block bounded by 9th Ave, Howell St, 8th Ave and Stewart St in the Denny Triangle neighborhood in the Downtown Urban Center area of Seattle in order to develop the full block with a convention-oriented hotel with large ballrooms. The right-of-way proposed for vacation is an “L” shaped 16-foot wide alley between the north margin of Howell St and the west margin of 9th Ave. The “L” was created in 1927 when the northern half of the original alley was vacated and the connection to 9th Ave was dedicated. There is a small remnant stub at the angle of the alley left from the previous vacation. The alley is paved and provides access to existing buildings and parking lots on the block. The alley area is approximately 6,000 square feet.

The program consists of 1,550 hotel rooms, 150,000 sf of meeting room space, including two large ballrooms, 150 affordable housing units, retail and restaurants, approximately 700 parking spaces, 12 below grade loading bays. A six story podium would contain the ballrooms, meeting and exhibit space, lobby, restaurant and a mid-block through connection between 8th and 9th Avenues. Two towers would stand on the podium: the south portion of the project would contain a 35 story hotel tower; the north portion would contain eight stories of affordable housing. Entry to the housing would be located at the north end of 9th Ave. Entry to the below grade service area would be located on the north end of 8th Ave. The approximately 20,000 sq ft two way diagonal connection from 8th to 9th would include two entries to the parking garage, guest drop off, and pedestrian entrances to the hotel lobby and retail spaces.

The proposed public benefit package consists of: 1. Locating affordable housing onsite; 2. Through-block connector; 3. Voluntary setbacks; 4. Enhanced ROW improvements; 5. Publicly accessible art; 6. Contribution of space for bike share program; 7. Way finding.

Summary of Presentation

Shauna Decker introduced the project. Mark Reddington of LMN presented the PowerPoint dated October 17, 2013, which is posted on the Design Commission website:

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

Marnie Heffron of Heffron Transportation explained traffic patterns and circulation. Morgan Shook, consultant, spoke about on-site affordable housing. Mark Brands of Site Workshop went over the proposed public benefits.

Agency Comments:

Rick Hooper, Office of Housing

Reviewed formula – payment vs performance. He prefers performance – generally always better. Applauds interest. Something more might be needed – additional square footage or a reduction in affordability in units. Would consider that above and beyond.

Beverly Barnett, SDOT

In review process and is guided by SDC. Feels initial PB not robust enough considering scale of project. Alley vacation is essential for project, thus want to see a significant PB balance. Wants to be guided by commission. Interior space that is covered by private development must show how and why general public would use thru block connection. Not understanding what event would interest general public. Off site street improvements introduced. Confused by street scape and public/private character. "What is the experience of the member of the general public" Dimensions of 1-2 feet might not add to public realm. Thru connection is clearly a heavy driveway function. Still see more to come.

Michael Dorcy, DPD

Review process EDG (2) done and (1) rec. meeting dealing with ground plan and housing. Satisfied with housing element and concept of ground plane fine. Next review will be of tower, outside and facade on November 19th.

Maura Ahearne, Development Director STG

Supportive of this project for a variety of reasons. STG uses Paramount Theatre for their offices. Safety benefit for neighborhood with increased lighting and art. Park benefit adding green space will be enjoyed by residents and visitors alike. Positive progress for Denny neighborhood and downtown.

Stefan Moritz Unite Here

Re: Affordable Housing and its fit into public benefit – Not arguing about options, onsite performance cannot be a public benefit. It is part of the city code policy. PB is above and beyond code. In-kind Fee could actually leverage more housing.

Pastor Joanne Enquist, Gethsemane Lutheran

Supports project but has questions about the affordability of housing. Are all people welcome in public space? There is an exclusionary aspect with the building. In truth, no poor are welcomed. Knows area and people who come in and out of their church building. Can PB design include space that welcomes mixes? Only very specific areas targeted for the true public.

All other commenters were encouraged to send electronic statements to

SDC_Administration@seattle.gov

ACTION

The Design Commission thanked the team for the presentation of the condition items of the Urban Design Merit approval, and the Public Benefit of the 9th & Stewart alley vacation request.

The Design Commission did not have sufficient information to evaluate the public benefit package. They stated they would evaluate and vote on the proposal at a future meeting.

The following recommendations were provided:

- Provide more definition of the sustainability goals relative to the 2030 district as required in the conditions of the Urban Design Merit.
- Through block connector
 - Explore providing smaller scale retail
 - Provide for a greater diversity of experiences and uses
 - Provide details on events programming
 - Further develop the integration of the art and consider engaging an art coordinator
 - Develop the space to be more inviting to the general public

- The housing will be considered as part of the public benefit package, but it must go above and beyond what is being provided for zoning gains. This might be accomplished by increasing size or number of units, providing family sized units, or lowering the AMI threshold.
- Further develop the proposal for offsite improvements in coordination with DPD's urban designers.

Commission Business: **(to be removed before posting on web)**

Website Design: SDC's own site, not shared like DRB

Moon distributed handouts outlining pages etc.

Comments:

Completely compatible over all devices.

ES: navigation important...DRB example.

TN/OS: Hierarchy issues

Moon: Follow up: What needs to come up to home page?

MJ: Needs a fourth employee to update etc. Needs framework first.

ES: Awards need to highlighted. Show design excellence examples.

3rd Ave

BA: Consultant panel reviewing whole stretch of 3rd from Jackson to Denny. Urban condition varies greatly. Debate on different proposals. Procedural things like exceeding page length. 3 out of 5 firms too long. City vs Metro. Metro ranked one team high. COS ranked other high. Are scores balanced? Weighted? My ranking was more consistent with COS. Trend toward design – long term. Metro sees it as an engineering problem. Five teams down to four who will be interviewed for whole package- 30% design will address street as transit corridor in urban condition.

Ruri Y. OAC overview: Perri Howard

Presented a power point **(obtain from OAC)**

..use words on the slide that has Ellen's Mercer Street project.

OQ/VK feels they should have art shown to SDC sooner.

PH: Will provide PAAC members to SDC meetings if needed.

OQ: Very helpful, interested in knowing the big picture for city and the goals – possible presentation before SDC in future.
