



**Seattle
Design
Commission**

**APPROVED
MINUTES OF THE MEETING
4 September 2003**

Gregory J. Nickels,
Mayor

Donald Royse
Chair

Laura Ballock

Ralph Cipriani

Jack Mackie

Cary Moon

Iain M. Robertson

Nic Rossouw

David Spiker

Sharon E. Sutton

Tory Laughlin Taylor

John Rahaim,
Executive Director

Layne Cubell,
Commission Coordinator

Projects Reviewed

Bitter Lake Reservoir Open Space
Lunch with Planning Commission
Alaskan Way Viaduct Meeting Preparation
Gasworks Park Staff Briefing

Convened: 8:30am

Adjourned: 2:00pm

Commissioners Present

Donald Royse, Chair
Jack Mackie, Vice Chair
Iain M. Robertson
Nic Rossouw
David Spiker
Sharon E. Sutton
Tory Laughlin Taylor

Staff Present

John Rahaim
Layne Cubell
Lisa Baker



Department of Design,
Construction & Land Use

700 5th Avenue, Suite 2000
Seattle, WA 98104-5070
phone 206/233-7911
fax 206/386-4039

4 Sep 2003 Project: **Bitter Lake Reservoir Open Space**

Phase: Schematic Design

Previous Reviews: 17 July 2003 (Concept Design), 1 May 2003 (Concept Design)

Presenters: Tim Motzer, Seattle Parks and Recreation

Jim Brennan, J. A. Brennan Associates

Tanja Wilcox, J. A. Brennan Associates

Attendees: Michael Shiosaki, Seattle Parks and Recreation

Time: 1 hour (SDC Ref. # 169 | DC00303)

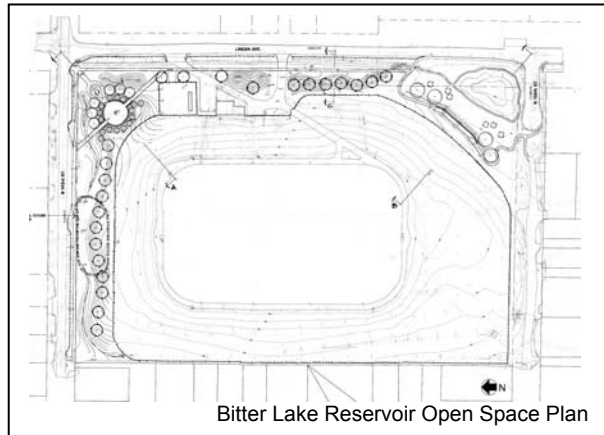
Action: The Commission thanks the team for bringing this project back to the commission in such a timely manner and would like to make the following comments and recommendations.

- The Design Commission applauds the evolution of this project and the clarifying and focusing of ideas, especially the poetic notion of the reservoir as a fortress of water;
- feels that the programmed uses on the site are in the appropriate locations;
- applauds the team's endurance in coordinating the work on this project among all of the involved agencies and urges them to continue to push active coordination with SPU to find an aesthetic solution for the fence surrounding the reservoir;
- suggests that the team further integrate the 3 primary design elements, including the vertical water pipe, the natural land forms, and the seating wall to reinforce the primary idea of the fortress of water;
- recommends that the team lengthen and reinforce the seating wall at the Southeast corner of the site and to look at its relationship to the adjacent path, treating the path as an element that penetrates the wall and helping to better unify the 2 corners;
- urges the team to engage the artist of the existing artwork on how best to soften or integrate the bow wave of the sculpture into the new plaza form at the Northeast corner of the site;
- applauds the intimacy of the plaza space;
- suggests that the team make use of the natural gathering point on the Northeast corner of the site to tie in to the adjacent trail; and
- recommends approval of schematic design.

This project involves moving the fence around the Bitter Lake Reservoir in order to create usable public open space at the perimeter of the site. The Parks Department is funding this project with money from the Pro-Parks Levy. Although the project is relatively small there has been a lot of coordination between different city departments. Seattle Public Utilities has partnered with the Department of Parks and Recreation in order to resolve drainage/flooding issues. SPU is providing equal money to the Parks Department. The Department of Neighborhoods also has \$120,00-\$130,000 of street money to contribute to this project. They have not yet determined how this money will be used. The Police Department is involved in this project to address parking issues and public safety.

The design team feels that the project has improved based on the feedback they have received from the design commission as well as from the community. The team organized their presentation by responding to the Commission's comments from their previous review.

At the previous meeting the Commission noted their appreciation of the cooperation between agencies involved to make this project possible. The team



has been continuing to coordinate their work with SPU. They have recently met to resolve the final location of the fence. SPU has agreed to a curved shape for the entire fence. The design team asked SPU's permission to add fill along the Southeast and Northeast edges of the fence in order to create a more continuous landform on both sides of the fence. SPU agreed to the earthwork on the Northeast side of the reservoir, but not on the Southeast side.

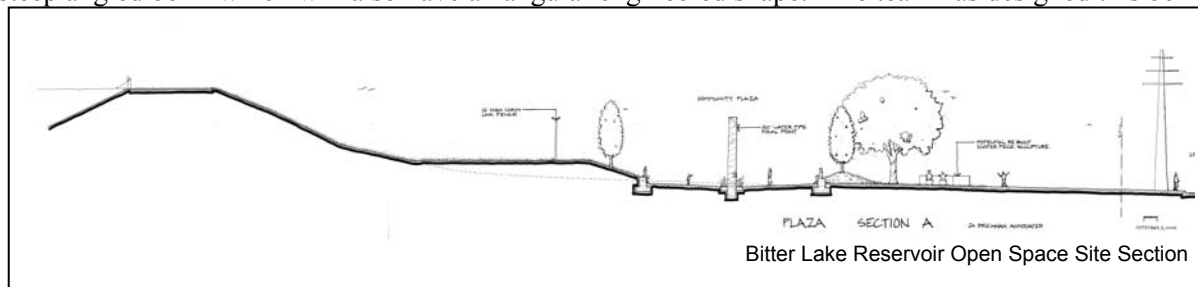
The Commission had cautioned the team at the previous meeting to confine their design work to elements that would be achievable within the budget. The team has simplified their design and the current project is achievable within the budget.

The Commission had encouraged the design team to contact the artist of the scatter piece on site, in order to determine the future of this sculpture. The team has contacted the Arts Commission and they would like to re-commission this piece. The Arts Commission will contact the artist in order to arrange this work. The latest design includes this piece re-built and re-oriented, but remaining generally in its current location.

At the previous meeting the Commission recommended that the design team look at other landscape projects as examples. In particular they suggested that the team look at the work of Peter Walker. The team visited the Renton Water Treatment Facility. They also looked at Peter Walker's work at Stanford as well as a scientific campus in Japan. Additionally the team studied historic examples of castles and fortresses in a book called Designing the Earth. From this background work they have developed an idea of the reservoir as a fortress of water.

Their concept involves highlighting the engineered nature of the slope around the reservoir and adding another tiered slope at the perimeter of the fence. The team is treating the drainage swale as a moat form to compliment the fortress of water. The slopes of the swale will be shaped in an angled engineered manner similar to the slope surrounding the reservoir. This moat form will be strengthened by a row of conifer trees.

The design team is proposing a seating wall adjacent to the infiltration pond which will be tied into a steep angled berm which will also have an angular engineered shape. The team has designed this berm to



be as dramatic as possible without reducing visibility across the site. Visibility is an important security concern for the reservoir. The design includes adding an overflow structure to the infiltration pond, but otherwise the pond itself will remain unchanged.

The Design Commission had urged the team to locate the public spaces in areas that will have the most pedestrian activity. They also asked the team to consider how the site will be viewed in passing. In response the team has chosen to pursue a straight sidewalk that will allow people to move efficiently through the site while also getting engaged in the landscape. By incorporating a standard sidewalk they will also be able to receive D.O.N./SDOT funding for this work. The design incorporates a diagonal path across the Northeast corner which is currently a popular cut-through across the site. They have moved the plaza so that it is along this diagonal path. The focus of the plaza will be a vertical section of 30" water pipe. This is the size of pipe that enters and exits the reservoir. The plaza will drain toward the center, where the pipe will be located. The plaza will be sloped more dramatically than is typical, perhaps at a 3.5% slope, in order to accentuate this slope toward the center. The area around the vertical pipe will be planted in order to make use of the water draining to this point.

Key Commissioner Comments and Concerns

- Wonders what the paving material is on the path areas perpendicular to the sidewalk on the East side of the site.
 - Proponents explained that these are paved access paths for service vehicles. The team is working with SPU to consolidate these entrances in order to have less sidewalk crossings.
- Wonders what the infiltration pond will be like.
 - Proponents explained that it is mostly a grassy slope and is only full during a few weeks in the winter.
- Questions if people will walk in the infiltration pond.
 - Proponents stated that people currently walk in the infiltration pond so they imagine that they will continue, although this is not a typical circulation route.
- Questions if the path at the Southeast of the site needs to meander.
 - Proponents explained that this area is steeply sloped and that the path must switch direction in order to maintain an ADA accessible grade. They noted that the path could be more direct if it started further to the west.
- Suggests that the wall element could continue across more of the site even in segments as a consistent and unifying element.
 - Proponents explained that the budget limits how far this wall can be extended.
- Wonders if the project could use reclaimed concrete from SDOT projects in order to build the wall more affordably.
 - Proponents explained the labor for this type of wall is very expensive.
- Suggests that the seating wall could be extended or moved just slightly in order to work with the bend in the path and to allow the path to "break through" the wall.
- Wonders if the designers are allowed to include planting such as wildflowers within the fenced area.
 - Proponents stated that SPU requires this to be a consistent manicured lawn so that they can visually detect any failures if they were to occur. They also noted that SPU would find it inappropriate to expend water to irrigate this area.
- Proponents remarked that there will be a dramatic contrast in the summer between the irrigated park space and the un-irrigated slope.

- Applauds the team's excellent job in responding to the Commission's comments. Particularly likes the idea of the reservoir as a fortress of water.
- Encourages the team to extend the bow wave landform beyond the sculpture further. Suggests that the trees could be arranged on diagonals to emphasize this form.
- Notes that the plaza form is very static in contrast to the rest of the site. Feels that the bow wave idea could be used to activate or impact the shape of the plaza.
- Suggests that the three elements, the wall, the pipe and the landscape could be better integrated in order to reinforce the larger idea of the site.
- Likes the pipe element. Wonders if a grate or manmade element at the base of the pipe would be more appropriate than planting.
 - Proponents reiterated that they would like to make use of drainage water to support the planting. They also explained that they are concerned that a grate at the base of the pipe could become a place for debris to collect if it is not able to be properly maintained. A water feature will not be permitted by Parks.
- Wonders how wide the sidewalk is.
 - Proponents stated the sidewalk is six feet wide but expands to eight feet in proximity to the Northeast plaza and the Southeast viewpoint .
- Recalls that the neighborhood was concerned about having too many gathering spaces. Wonders how they feel about the current plan.
 - Proponents stated that the neighborhood was interested in having some gathering spaces. They added that the park is mostly a moving space. They noted that the seating wall adjacent to the infiltration pond is a linear element rather than a gathering space.
- Suggests that the team could incorporate an element such as a drinking fountain in the plaza so that it can function as a rest-stop for the Inter-Urban Trail.
- Questions what the fence material is at the perimeter of the reservoir.
 - Proponents stated that the fence is not part of their scope of work. They noted that it is twelve feet tall. They have not yet discussed the fence material with SPU.
- Suggests that the design team look at the fence that was used at the Broad Street substation. They noted that this fence is more attractive than a standard chain link fence, but is still affordable and was approved by City Light for use in their facility.

4 September 2003 Commission Business

ACTION ITEMS

- A. TIMESHEETS
- B. MINUTES FROM 21 AUGUST 2003 - APPROVED

DISCUSSION ITEMS

- C. CHAIR & VICE CHAIR- CUBELL
- D. RECRUITMENT UPDATE- CUBELL
- E. MRP REPRESENTATIVE- CUBELL
- F. PROJECT UPDATES- CUBELL
- G. SEATTLE UNIVERSITY UPDATES

BEVERLY BARNETT AND MICHAEL JENKINS UPDATED THE COMMISSION ON THE SEATTLE UNIVERSITY PROJECT. THERE ARE TWO PUBLIC BENEFIT ALTERNATIVES FOR THIS PROJECT. OPTION 1) CREATES TWO PEDESTRIAN PLAZAS ON CORNERS OF THE LOGAN FIELD SITE AND PROVIDES \$75,000 FOR SDOT PROJECT DEVELOPMENT. OPTION 2) PROVIDES \$150,000 FOR OPEN SPACE ACQUISITION. THE PARKS DEPARTMENT SUPPORTS OPTION 2, BUT MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY WOULD STILL LIKE TO CREATE AN ARTS/CULTURE SPACE. THE COMMISSION NOTED THAT BOTH OPTIONS NOW PROPOSED SEEM WORKABLE, BUT THEY WILL LEAVE THE FINAL PUBLIC BENEFIT DECISION TO CITY COUNCIL. THERE WILL LIKELY BE NO FOLLOW UP FROM THE DESIGN COMMISSION REQUESTED BY COUNCIL.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- H. MONTLAKE LIBRARY COMMUNITY MEETING- SEP 22ND, 7-8:30PM
- I. DC/PC WATERFRONT SUBCOMMITTEE- SEP 12TH, 12N-1:30PM
- J. SEATTLE UNIVERSITY COUNCIL HEARING- SEP 5TH, 2PM
- K. CITY HALL OPENING CEREMONY- SEP 5TH, 12N-2PM AND OPEN HOUSE, 5-7PM
- L. RICHARD FLORIDA LECTURE- SEP 4TH, 7:30PM, TOWN HALL

4 Sep 2003 Project: **Lunch with Planning Commission**
Alaskan Way Viaduct Meeting Preparation

Time: 1.5 hours

Summary: The Design Commission met with members of the Planning Commission to prepare for their upcoming meeting(s) with the Viaduct team.

The group's intention is to create an agenda for the meeting(s) in order to allow for a focused and productive discussion. The group is concerned that the Viaduct team has not presented a clear set of different surface alternatives for the Viaduct replacement project. They are also concerned that the team has been analyzing the potential solutions only from the standpoint of traffic flow. Both Commissions would like the Viaduct team to analyze and compare the Viaduct alternatives based on a broad set of criteria including, but not limited to, pedestrian circulation, amount of impervious surface, quantity of usable space, economic impact on downtown businesses, and impact on ferry traffic. The areas for analysis should be driven by the Design Commission/Planning Commission's original principles for the Viaduct project drafted in October 2001. The joint Commissions would also like to discuss specific design "hot spots" by category. For example, they would like to review all of the ramp issues together. They would like to apply their original principles in order to derive a design approach for each category rather than propose solutions on a case by case or option by option basis. The group acknowledged that the Viaduct team will not have time to prepare the analysis they are requesting before their next meeting, but would like them to lay out a road map for how they intend to complete the analysis work. The Design Commission and Planning Commission staff will draft an agenda for the upcoming meeting including additional analysis pieces and design "hot spots" categories.

The Design Commission met with members of the Planning Commission to prepare for their upcoming meeting with the viaduct team. The group would like to prepare an agenda in order to focus the discussion. The Design Commission/Planning Commission is concerned that the viaduct team has not clearly articulated the differences between the surface alternatives in all of the proposed schemes. They feel that all of the surface treatments involve a "railway yard" of transportation modes. The group is unsure if the frontage service roads included in most of the schemes are necessary. They are particularly confused as to why the tunnel bypass option includes the same number of surface lanes as the fully surface option. They noted that the viaduct team has stated that the surface scheme only accounts for 70% of the traffic demand. The group questioned where the other 30% will be accommodated. They are concerned that the viaduct team is not considering the surface alternative as a viable option.

The group feels that the viaduct team is only evaluating the different viaduct replacement alternatives based on their capacity for through traffic. They feel that other criteria should be considered in judging the effectiveness of the schemes. Other criteria could include the amount of impervious surface, the amount of usable space, the pedestrian access to the waterfront and other measures that are not strictly related to traffic through put. The group noted that it would be valuable for the viaduct team to model pedestrian access to the waterfront in all of the schemes as thoroughly as they have modeled traffic flow. They noted that the viaduct replacement project is a joint effort between SDOT and WSDOT. The group feels that the studies thus far have focused primarily on the larger regional transportation issues rather than on the impacts on the city. The group also questioned how much traffic moves through the ferry system each day. They noted that it will be important to understand how each of the alternatives would

impact ferry traffic. The group also noted that the construction phasing will be important in measuring the impact of the different options. They understand that a temporary replacement may be in place for 5 years or more. The group feels it is critical that the viaduct team study the impact on downtown businesses based on the nature and duration of the construction work for each of the alternatives. The joint commission agreed that they need to establish a list of additional criteria by which each of the schemes can be measured.

The joint commission group would also like to discuss specific design “hot spots” with the viaduct team. John Rahaim prepared a list of eight of these key issues based on the waterfront subcommittee meeting on August 21, 2003. The commissions would like to discuss these design issues with the viaduct team by grouping them according to themes. For example they would like to discuss all of the ramp issues as one topic. One ramp issue is the entrance to the broad street underpass which has been proposed within the Olympic Sculpture Park site. The team noted that the Sculpture Park is working to get this entrance relocated. The joint commission also remarked that if this entrance is moved further south it will create a barrier between Pike Place Market and the waterfront. They are concerned that while there is a group advocating for the sculpture park there is no one representing the interests of the market. The group agreed that they do not want to decide between slighting one place and favoring another. They want to use broad principles to guide these decisions rather than make recommendations on a case by case basis. In particular they will likely recommend that all tunnel entrances and ramps be kept as far outside of the central waterfront as possible. This principle would then suggest that the entrance to the broad street underpass should be located as far north as possible (toward the Olympic Sculpture Park), rather than toward the center of the waterfront (and Pike Place Market).

These guiding principles will be developed based on the original viaduct principles established by the group in October 2001. Their original viaduct principles will also structure the additional criteria that they will request the viaduct team use in evaluating the replacement alternatives. The group noted that the summary notes from the first waterfront forum, particularly the role playing event, would help support the idea of evaluating the impact and success of the viaduct alternatives from many different perspectives. Design Commission and Planning Commission staff will prepare a draft agenda for the upcoming meeting. This agenda will include new analysis criteria for the viaduct team as well as design categories that need to be discussed. They will reference both of these pieces to the joint commission’s original viaduct principles, as well as the summary of the first waterfront forum. The group noted that the viaduct team will not have time to prepare the analysis pieces that they are requesting in time for the meeting. They would like instead for the viaduct team to show them a roadmap of how they plan to complete the analysis pieces.

4 Sep 2003 Project: Gasworks Park Staff Briefing

Phase: Schematic Design Update

Previous Reviews: 6 March 2003 (Conceptual Design Update), 6 February 2003 (Conceptual Design)

Presenters: Tim Motzer, Seattle Parks and Recreation

Attendees: Cheryl Trivison, Friends of Gasworks Park
Catherine Maggio, Friends of Gasworks Park

Time: 1 hour (SDC Ref. # 169 | DC00297)

Summary: The Commission thanks the Parks Department team for their attention to this important part of Seattle's open space system which is also one of the few modern city landmarks and would like to make the following comments and recommendations.

- **The Design Commission appreciates the department's efforts to examine and resolve difficult and contentious issues such as the off-leash area and the preservation of existing trees;**
- **understands the various community concerns;**
- **supports the tank remnant ring if it is pursued in the exact location of one of the existing tanks;**
- **continues to support and urges the team to consider narrowing the opening in the existing concrete wall to connect Gasworks Park to the Wallingford Steps;**
- **asks the team to consider a small opening in the wall at Densmore, as well;**
- **supports the removal of a portion of the northwest corner of the concrete wall as necessary to create a gracious entrance to the park;**
- **supports the elimination of the south curved portion of the wall; and**
- **recommends that three openings be created in the eastern wall instead of four.**

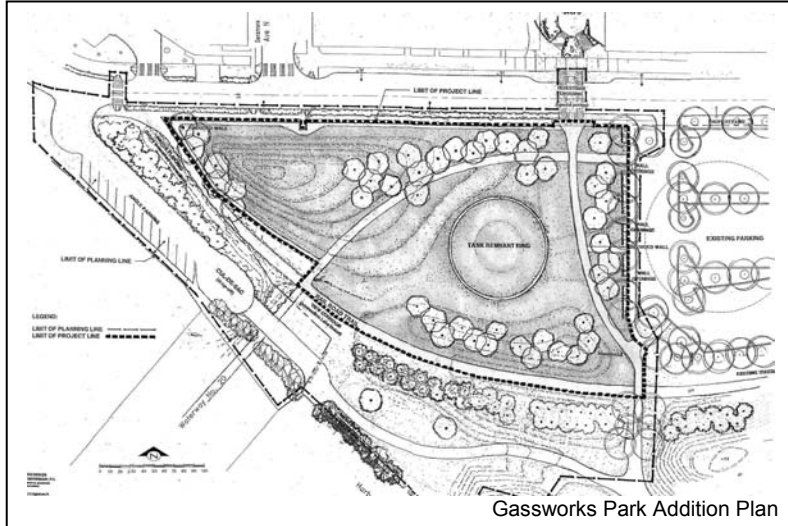
The Parks department would like to update the Commission on changes that have been made to the design for Gasworks Park since their last review. The addition to the park was called for under the Pro-Parks Levy. The original Pro-Parks project scope was very brief and merely stated that the project should improve Gasworks Park especially the connection to the Wallingford Steps. The project has since undergone extensive program development and The Berger Partnership has been hired as the landscape architects.

Because the park is designated as an historic landmark by the city this project must be reviewed both by the Design Commission and the Landmarks Board. The process has been arranged so that the Design Commission reviewed the project first in order to give feedback on the general design direction. Next the project will be reviewed by the Landmarks Board. The commission will have a final review of the project to ensure that the early design direction has been maintained through the development of the project.

The Parks Department wants to update the Design Commission on changes that have been made to the project since their initial review. These changes have been necessary to resolve contentious issues surrounding the design and use of the park. The first such issue was the proposed off-leash area. The Parks Department originally proposed a potential off-leash area to the south of the containment area. Supporters of the off-leash area instead wanted the off-leash space to be within the containment area. The Parks Department did not support having the off-leash area in such a central location within the park.

Their final decision was not to include any off-leash area within the park.

The second contentious issue regarding the park design was the preservation or removal of existing trees in the park. The original design called for the removal of some existing trees in order to make a stronger connection between the existing park and the new expansion.



In order to make a strong connection between the two spaces a number of sizable trees would have been removed. Based on objections to the removal of existing trees the Parks Department had developed an alternative compromise scheme that would make a smaller connection between the two parks spaces and would not require the removal of as many trees. In the end the Department decided to retain all of the existing trees. They are aware of and comfortable

with the implications this will have on the use of the new space.

The Parks Department has since decided that it is limiting the design to the areas for which it currently has funding. The design issues currently under development primarily involve the treatment of the existing concrete wall surrounding the containment area. The Landmarks Board is supportive of allowing cuts in the wall so long as a substantial portion of the wall remains. Some community members are concerned about lowering or making openings in the wall because they are afraid it will allow too much noise and light from the street into the park. On the other hand residents of the condominiums across from the park are concerned about the safety of the area and would like to have the wall removed entirely.

The manner of the cuts in the wall has also been a subject of discussion. The Landmarks Board would like the cuts in the wall to be jagged while at the previous review the Design Commission encouraged the team to pursue clean saw cuts in the wall.

Key Visitor Comments and Concerns

- Feels that the Parks Department is not allowing proper public review of the park design. Notes that the public meetings have been dominated by discussions about the off-leash area and the preservation of the existing trees. Is concerned that the public will not have an adequate opportunity to review other issues of the park design.
- Notes that this is one of three parks in the city that is designated as an historic landmark. Also notes that it is the only one of the three that is a work of modernist landscape architecture. Feels that the public does not understand and appreciate modernist landscapes.
- States that the friends of Gasworks Park are interested in preserving the modernist integrity of Gasworks Park. Adds that this group has developed a series of design preferences for the addition to the park that they feel are in keeping with the original design intent of the park.
- Notes that clean soil was brought onto the site in the containment area during another parks project. Feels that this fill should be removed from the site.

- Remarks that The Berger Partnership's current design calls for lowering the existing concrete wall in some places, and making cuts in others. Feels that existing height of wall should be maintained in all areas. Suggests that openings in the wall should be limited. Recommends that an opening in the wall should not be made directly opposite of the Wallingford Steps. Supports the removal of the southwest portion of the wall. Feels that openings in the wall should be made with jackhammers to create a rough edge.
- Urges that the parking along the east wall should be removed in order to allow a more gracious park space.
- Feels that the proposed tank ring should be eliminated from the design. Is concerned that this false historic reference will threaten the validity of the authentic artifacts on the site.

Key Commissioner Comments and Concerns

- Feels that clean cuts will show the construction of the wall. Questions if Rich Haag has an opinion about the nature of the cuts in the wall.
 - Visitors stated that Rich Haag would prefer jackhammer cuts in the wall that would reveal the texture of the aggregate and the composition of the wall.
- Is concerned that the tank ring may be a pseudo historic element. Feels that if the tank ring is pursued it should be identical in size and location to one of the historic tanks.
- Does not agree with the Friends of Gasworks Park regarding the soil removal. Feels that the proposed mounding works well with the existing park.
- Feels that the Northwest Corner of the wall is important but is concerned that keeping the wall in this location does not allow a gracious entry to the park. Suggests that the wall should be removed in this corner of the park only as is necessary to create a comfortable entrance. Notes that this opening could be smaller than what is currently being proposed.
- Notes that the connection to the Wallingford steps is extremely important. Thinks it would be inappropriate if pedestrians were faced with a blank wall at the bottom of the steps. Suggests that the opening could be slightly more constricted than the current design.
- Questions if there is lighting included in the design. Notes that street lights will cast shadows on the inside of the concrete wall.
 - Proponents stated that there is no plan for lighting within the scope of this project.