



Approved MINUTES OF THE MEETING

Greg Nickels
Mayor

Diane Sugimura
Director, DPD

Mary Johnston
Chair

Andrew Barash

Graham Black

Brendan Connolly

John Hoffman

Julie Parrett

Nathan Polanski

Dennis Ryan

Norie Sato

Guillermo Romano
Executive Director

Valerie Kinast
Coordinator

Tom Iurino
Senior Staff

March 5, 2009

Convened 8:30 am

Adjourned 4:00 am

Projects Reviewed

Bicycle Advisory Board Briefing

Pike Place Market Briefing

Vacations Briefing

Planning Division Update

West Seattle Junction, Conner Homes Alley Vacation

Commissioners Present

Mary Johnston, Chair

Andrew Barash

Graham Black

Brendan Connolly

John Hoffman

Julie Parrett

Nathan Polanski

Dennis Ryan

Norie Sato

Staff Present

Guillermo Romano

Valerie Kinast

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Celebrating 40 Years 1968-2008



March 5, 2009

Project: Seattle Bicycle Advisory Board (SBAB)
Presenters: Sean Cryan, Chair, Bicycle Advisory Board

Time: 1 hour

(122)

ACTION

The Commission appreciated the SBAB briefing. Recommends to maintain direct communication with the SBAB and identify future opportunities for support and collaboration.

Presentation

Sean Cryan said he appreciates the increasing awareness and coordination with other groups from the transit agencies, city departments, design review boards and the commission to SDOT toward implementation of the bicycle master plan. He supports the joint consideration of the light rail/multi-modal/neighborhood plans. Consideration of underserved areas is important (Southeast Seattle, West Seattle). Support implementation of new and innovative bicycle storage and service, within buildings, on streets and on sidewalks.

Bicycle Sharing Program – Encouraged to hear Seattle has taken the first steps to consider implementation of a city-wide system, which the SBAB supports.

Supports enhancement of SDOT standards and specs., integration of bicycle and multi-modal issues into the Zoning and Land Use codes and Neighborhood Plan updates and looks forward to SBAB working with the Commission to assist with further bicycle improvements.

Key to the creation of successful bicycle and pedestrian environments is the overall quality and scale of the built environment, and in this respect the commission can directly contribute to the understanding of the issues that will shape that environment.



Link Stations: ¼, ½ and 1 mile radius

March 5, 2009

Project: **Pike Place Market Improvements**

Phase: Briefing

Presenters: Carol Binder, Pike Place Market PDA

Attendees: Dennis Haskell, SRG

Heather McAuliffe, Seattle Department of Neighborhoods

Jan Oscherwitz, Seattle Department of Finance

Peter Dobrovolny, Seattle DPD Green Team

Rick Sieve, SRG

Time: 1 hour

(122)

ACTION

The Commission thanks Carol Binder and her team for her comprehensive and detailed briefing. As with the Bike Advisory Board, the Commission pledges to maintain direct communication, offers support for the Pike Place market efforts and hopes for future opportunities for collaboration. The Commission made the following recommendations:

- **Maintain the “Mystery” sense or individual mode of discovery of the market as an asset or design paradigm.**
- **Contact Seattle Steam for energy strategies.**
- **Understands the challenge of LEED certification in an historic structure and encourages Pike Place Market for creative sustainable practices and educational opportunities.**
- **Include in graphics the Western Ave trees.**
- **Pay special attention to all places for activation.**
- **Considers The Market as the “Soul of the City” and offers its participation for any future collaboration.**

Presentation

The last major renovation to the Pike Place Market was in the late 1970’s. The intent of the current project is to complete upgrades while keeping the market the same in terms of character and aesthetics.

Summary

- Grass roots urban design at its best.
- Applaud depth of historic approach.
- Upgrades, public space, hill climb.
- Experiential look at the place.
- Sustainability and retaining character of market, understand the challenge.
- Everyone has secret spaces and discovery is an important element. Gives native an ownership of the place.
- Places that are going to be more public places – list
- Heating systems and other systems, understand you looked at sustainable measures, and encourage it further.
- Understand we don’t review the projects but would like to follow it.

Market History

Originally, farmers marketed their products along Western Avenue, selling to commission men, who turned a profit on the transactions. Because of the profits the commission men were making, the city stepped in and created a place where farmers could sell their products directly to customers.

Pike Place is an L that starts at the end of Pike Street and leads down to Western. The Market was established in 1907. In 1971, when the Market was in danger of being demolished, the nine acre Pike Place Market Historic District was created. A PDA (Preservation and Development Association) chartered by the City of Seattle in 1974 manages 80% of the properties at the Market.

Proposed improvements involve the electrical systems, the structural building elements, heating and cooling systems with a goal of increasing energy efficiency and sustainability. Heating is currently not central so work will be done to improve the system. More public services, restrooms and accessibility for people with disabilities will be created. Roofs, windows, and tiles will be replaced where necessary.

Public and private spaces will be enhanced to increase vitality in certain areas. The project will be LEED certified. Because of the historic elements of the project, some measures are not eligible for LEED credits. The buildings are being preserved, which doesn't receive credit in the LEED system as yet, but is regarded as sustainable development.

New restrooms will be added on the east side of the arcade level along with new elevator service in two buildings. The hill climb is a major entrance to the Market and has no accessible facility.

A shared mechanical system (hydraulic system) across the Market will be installed so cool areas in a targeted way. Areas that need to be heated can exchange energy with areas that need to be cooled, so that no new energy must be supplied.

Although many upgrades will not be visible to the public in the end, the work will be very extensive. The plan is to keep the buildings occupied during construction.

In terms of public and private space, Swift Co. conducted an analysis to produce an emotional understanding of the Market as people interact with it. A hierarchy of public and private spaces was created. Edge conditions were examined and particular characteristics uncovered. Activity nodes and enticements in the spaces were mapped, as were the different light qualities in the public spaces. Sweet spots were identified, where people tend to congregate, as were opportunity areas, where potentials for creating new vitality lie.

A charrette was held that identified areas of opportunity and need that subsequent planning is based on. The ideas that were generated that are central to the improvements being undertaken now are for improving the hill climb, and for invigorating the west side of face of the Market.

Phase I will address the Fairley, the Triangle, and the Leland buildings. The public realm, Pike Place and the Hill Climb are areas of public space work.

Since the late 19th century, there has been a way up from the waterfront to the commercial district of the city. A ramp trestle offered people a way to move goods between the waterfront and the market area. A stairway has also been located in this area historically as has a public plaza type space connecting down to water. Now, the Hill Climb provides a connection from the waterfront to the retail core. The Pike Place Urban Renewal Project in the 1970's produced ideas for the hill climb corridor including zones and directive qualitative statements of how these zones could be designed. A plaza at the waterfront was recommended to draw people into the market. A stairway was envisioned between Pike Place and the waterfront with terraces at various levels, vertical connection by elevator, and with a walkway across the top or along the side of this area. The vision was implemented west of Western, and dedicated by Mayor Charles Royer in 1978(?). Before that, it was dirt with some stairways.

Under the current plans, Phase I work would include development of the hill climb east of Western Avenue. That area today is marked by a long wall along Western Avenue with a "dark hole" doorway with a sign that points visitors to enter market this way. The plans for the new section of hill climb include retaining the children's play

area, which is part of the childcare center in the Market. The proposal is to open up the new segment of hillclimb with an inviting plaza along the east side of Western Avenue. A new elevator is planned in this area too. This will visually open up the space to create a welcoming path, and a welcoming new entry to the Market.

Big functional infrastructure is a major part of the project (electrical vault and sewer issues, elevator). Significant excavation will be required before the new systems can be installed and then the hill can be recreated to accommodate the new stairway and platforms. The existing large trees will need to be removed, but the spirit of the space will remain green - Wisteria, trees in cascading planters. Materials will be consistent with the materials of the market – board poured concrete, galvanized steel railings. Areas for bills to be posted will be provided on a poster wall, retaining the nature of communication of events at the Market. .

The new section of Hill Climb, like the existing lower portion, will be a series of platforms cascading down the hill. A stairway will run along the south side of the space. There is 65 feet of topographic change here. The greatest challenges are balancing the desperate need for upgrades with maintaining of the character of the Market, and retaining businesses during the renovations.

Commissioners' Questions and Comments

Impressed by retaining character of hill-climb. Secret way that residents know how to get to the Market. Enjoy that secretiveness, but will be better for market if it is open.

Areas with less activity – where are those locations?

Along Pike Place – Autos, making more people

Economy atrium – behind DeLaurenti's. People do want quiet, out of the way places, but it is area of Commerce.

Building Pink Door is in – Open atrium with big stair, maybe change retail, more public seating, open up to sidewalk and not garage doors to street.

Hill-climb down under area

Recycling? Heating system.

Joint problem of where to store and how long. On western a loading dock more space there, and working on how long things are stored.

Hydraulic warm water circulation system with boiler. Flexible and adaptable and as minimally invasive.

And get rid of a lot of small systems.

Seattle Steam?

Did consider them for a long time. Was not best option. Also considered vegetable oil fired plant using oil from restaurants.

LEED is underwhelming considering this organic place.

Working with City Light on photovoltaic. Looked at rainwater harvesting. Space is at a minimum, but working with the department on experimental. Carving out space for it would require changing the character of the market is a risk. Retaining building fabric but increasing energy efficiency. Have high aspirations, but challenges are very great.

Advertise what is being done for sustainability. Great that some of the green is coming back in. Would like to see existing street trees in renderings.

Rooftop terraces, even though can't do green roofs. Vegetable gardening planters are a possibility that is being examined.

Some things are in public ROW. Will we see any of them in official role of DC?

No, Historic Commission.

It's the soul of our City so in our scope on interest.

March 5, 2009	Project:	Street and Alley Vacation Process
	Phase:	Briefing
	Presenters:	Beverly Barnett, SDOT
	Attendees:	James Miller, Conner Homes Jim Westcott, Weber Thompson

Time: 1 hour

(121)

Vacations Briefing

Beverly Barnett, SDOT, manages the street and alley vacation process in SDOT. The Design Commission weighs in on vacations in two phases, urban design merit and public benefits. The only person who can petition for a vacation is an abutting property owner. They can ask for the property up to the centerline and the width of their property and nothing more.

In the Design Commission's urban design merit phase of review, land use impacts, context, and urban design issues are examined. The Design Commission analyses the impact of the project on its surroundings and makes recommendations to SDOT. While the urban design merit is generally fairly clear to deduce, deciding if the proposed public benefits are adequate is a complex and somewhat unclear matter.

Over the past 15 years, the bar has been raised on what is considered acceptable public benefit in exchange for giving away right-of-way that belongs to the public and is in the City's hands for good keeping. Increasingly the City has liked to see something physical and tangible, onsite, and in rare cases offsite, as a public benefit. The issue of whether the amenities offered give the impression of being public or quasi public is important in deciding if a true public benefit is being offered. There has been more latitude toward vacations in industrial areas, and less in residential areas, where the use of the right of way serves a number of varying purposes. Once the Commission has reviewed the vacation proposal, and SDOT has made recommendations, Council grants conceptual approval. After the project is built, an Ordinance is passed by Council, which contains information on the public benefit and applies for the life of the project. When the project is redeveloped, the ordinance no longer applies.

Vacations different from other projects in a number of ways. With private land the owner has an absolute right to develop something. With the public right of way there is not a right to use it, it is at the City's discretion to decide if and how it can be used to public benefit. This is an important responsibility because the streets serve a number of important functions for the public. So while there is a tendency to look at alley or street vacations as single projects, a broad public interest is actually at stake. The effects of the decision last a very long time.

Beverly predicts that the City will continue to see alley and street vacations for fewer, but larger scale projects than 15 years ago, perhaps ten or less a year. The Design Commission would like to place more scrutiny on vacations in industrial areas than in the recent years. Open space in these areas too, becomes more valuable as the city becomes more. The Commission will also be looking at an even wider area when assessing the context of the projects. As with vacations, they will start to scrutinize projects on a much longer time horizon.

Commissioners' Questions and Comments

Does benefit ride with deed, or just institutional benefits?

The benefits are contained in the ordinance that is passed and in a Public Use and Development Agreement. Examples of what is contained in such a document are: 1200 sf plaza with cherry trees and

benches. Such details as what color the window frames should be are not listed. At point of redevelopment, those conditions don't need to be met any more.

It would be good to see projects that have enhanced city by changing the grid. In places where it makes sense it could be an improvement.

Considering the uses, residential vs. industrial, recognizes this. Context of grid situation, such as downtown, dictate if it is good or not.

Industrial areas are traditionally on water, DC does not think even if it's in industrial area it's a given to vacate.

Industrial areas change to other uses where the ROW would have more value. We've seen this in SODO and in Port areas. Public spaces must be in worthy of amount of ROW being vacated.

Context is very important, bigger picture must be looked at. Need to go way beyond the boundaries of the site because the implications are bigger. Need to see other public spaces and parks in the greater area, to see if what is proposed is augmenting, is negligible etc.

How does this review fit in to other processes?

MUP cannot be published or issued until Council makes a decision.

EDG first, then vacation petition accepted, then MUP application, environmental review, DC, landmarks/historic board review, to Council for decision, then MUP can be issued.

Everything is tied together and each department, board, or entity covers a certain aspect of review.

Clearer presentation about what is a benefit and what would have been provided anyway helps keep issues separate and helps in review.

Other City decisions not made with 500-year perspective. Maybe they should be. Double standard.

Showing the amount of land for amount of land – sf for sf – is not enough. Issues much broader.

Numbers help with balance. But it's harder to get the balance.

Do not forget it is an expensive and unpredictable process for owners. Risky investment. Asking to use an alley the City may have never used. They have to pay fair market value, mitigate transportation impacts, and provide public benefit.

March 5, 2009 **Project:** **DPD Planning Division Update**
Phase: Briefing
Presenters: Ray Gastil, DPD Planning Division Director

Attendee's: Lloyd Douglas, Cascade Neighborhood

Time: 1 hour

(220)

Ray Gastil, Planning Division Update

The Commission welcomed Ray Gastil, Planning Division Director for an informal conversation of different items of interest to the Design Commission and related to the Division's work.

Skybridge Review: A general discussion occurred around the process, the Director's Rule and CAM. Emphasis was given to existing Skybridges applying for a new term permit after 30 years since their construction. These structures will be coming to the Commission for review after their 10-year term plus two 10 year extensions have expired. Current economic and environmental contexts will have to be taken into consideration when evaluations are made. Granting grandfather rights could have ramifications for other policies. Mitigation measures should be made in the short term, to enhance existing conditions.

Economic climate: Ray informed the Commission on the Mayor's jobs forward program:

- Local stimulus. Considering special action to areas like Interbay, not changing uses, but allowing for development over time, without constantly returning for smaller permits, close to a master planning process.
- Permit processing improvements and extension of permits.

DPD Budget/Layoffs: DPD adjustments include 26 layoff notices and some 40 positions eliminated in DPD recently. General fund expenditure 3% cut for all departments, including Planning Division.

Waterfront: No Federal funding went to Mercer and Spokane projects. While the Central Waterfront area related to the Viaduct replacement project is included in the overall program. The City is looking at the possibility to have this as a City only managed project, simplifying its execution. SDOT in coordination with DPD and Parks will have a lead role in support of the utilities. This is a major Public Space opportunity to define the City's "front yard" concept. WSDOT could be independently managing the bored tunnel portion and coordinate with city only at both north and south portals. However, the immediacy of the project relates only at the decision process more than the design phase. DPD is identifying short-term goals to develop an implementation strategy that will follow in the next year and in coordination with the Viaduct and Sea Wall replacement program. RFP phase will be identified later while we need to revisit and reaffirm design principles.

The Commission appreciated Ray's visit and reaffirms its interest and involvement in defining the City's Public Realm.

March 5, 2009	Project:	Conner Homes, West Seattle Junction
	Phase:	Alley Vacation
	Presenters:	Joseph Hines, Weber Thompson Peter Greaves, Weber Thompson
	Attendees:	Beverly Barnett, SDOT Charlie Conner, Connor Homes Gabe Hanson, Weber Thompson James Miller, Conner Homes Jim Westcott, Weber Thompson Joseph Hines, Weber Thompson Peter Greaves, Weber Thompson Scott Evens, TRA Sheronn Meeks, Fairmont Community Tom Rengstorf, TRA Tracy Record, West Seattle Blog

Time: 1 hour

(170)

ACTION

The Design Commission would like to thank Weber Thompson and the project team for the very thorough presentation including new drawings and diagrams in response to previous Design Commission comments. The Design Commission approves the Public Benefits package for the Subterranean Alley Vacation as presented including the following:

- Continued public access to the Alley at the street level.
- Widened sidewalks and building entrances along California, Alaska and 42nd Streets and the Alley.
- Landscape and planting strips and upgrades to sidewalk paving with scoring and color on California, Alaska and 42nd Streets.
- Upgrades to the Alley including paving scoring and color, bollards and a landscaped plaza at the building entrance off of the Alley.
- Public mid-block passages articulated with the building façade, paving scoring and color, landscaping, lighting, street furniture, bollards and structures from California to the Alley and from 42nd Street to the Alley.

The Commission believes that the new and revised graphics have been helpful in describing how the spaces would be beneficial and work within the public realm. In particular, the Commission likes the new occupiable plaza and specimen tree that terminates the mid-block passageway from California to the Alley as opposed to the previously shown green wall. In general, the Commission supports the use of different paving patterns and colors and plant materials to create consistency, wayfinding and legibility throughout the public spaces, including the extension of the “rug” paving into the sidewalks, however some concern was expressed about deviating from the City of Seattle standard paving within the sidewalk along Alaska. The Commission expresses some concern that the private landscape spaces of the live-work spaces and adjacent benches may cause the mid-block passageway to feel private rather than public and encourages the project team to consider carefully

how this area is designed. The Commission suggests that adding bike racks within the mid-block passages would help the passageways feel more like sidewalks and therefore more within the public realm. Additionally, the Commission encourages the use of movable tables along both mid-block passages so they can be moved into sun or shade depending on which is desirable. In general, the Commission does not have a problem with the garage entrance being located off 42nd Street, although one Commissioner expressed his desire for the entrance to be located off the Alley.

Presentation

The project will be going back to the Design Review Board (DRB).

The building steps out at the predominant corner of California and Alaska, to 17.5 ft. from storefront to curb. Flexible pedestrian flow is made possible by this move. Three conditions of public space are provided with the varying widths of sidewalk including eddies and nodes.

Attention has been given to how the midblock passage addresses the sidewalks along the streets, where the two intersect. Also, with the way the shift at the alley is dealt with has been refined. Pavement differentiation creates a crosswalk situation in alley. At junctures of walkway with alley and sidewalks, pavement gives cues as to how the buildings interface, and how pedestrians might move through the space. Runners, boarders, shadows - color and /or textural cues are given.

The bird's eye view on page 12 of presentation illustrates the structure over the walkway where trellises, lighting and plants could be used to create a particular atmosphere in the space. Areas were created for benches and landscaping. Where pedestrians are led from California into the cross block passage, an area has been created at the alley by hollowing out the building on the east side of the alley for a small plaza. The plaza is marked with paving and bollards and has a specimen tree at the center visible from California Ave. SW

The seam between the Harbor Properties site and the subject site was given further attention. There is a grade differentiation along the property line, which affects the solution in this area. Harbor Property's trellis is proposed to carry over onto the subject site. Boarder rug and shadow elements will give visual cues to pedestrians to move through the area. In front of the live-work units there is a series of steps that are broken down into separate sections. There is one section near 42nd, another near the alley and a central one, with stairways connecting the three.

The landscape and plant materials were presented.

There is no RapidRide stop in front of the site as previously presented. RapidRide passes along the project but stops a block away.

The location of garage access from 42nd is so that it is more apparent to visitors that parking is available under the building, because the community is concerned about traffic, and businesses are concerned parking availability won't be apparent. Locating the garage entrance there, and obtaining a subterranean alley vacation, takes away the necessity of two garage entrances from the alley.

Since the last presentation, the building footprint has been shifted toward the alley to provide more sidewalk space along 42nd Avenue SW. It is the desire of the DRB to recess the upper portion of the building, and this locks the footprint to about a foot from the lot line to 15 ft. from the lot line. The east building has been moved south a foot and slightly east to give more room to the alley pass through.

Commissioner's Comments and Questions

P. 15 in walkway the paving surface identified. Is it same material as on Alaska.

Runner. A different color and texture of Seattle standard. Darker, shadows too. Maintainable.

Node where crossing is in alley is better with specimen tree, destination is a good move.

Segway in passageway – Lack of frames lets you achieve better space and integration of buildings.

Bollards and paving make z movement clearer.

Two passageways different but related. Proposed plantings different, with some overlap. Low-mid-upper form would be good to carry over into both.

Plantings at live work units? Would you feel you were going into private space?

Plantings in front of live work at this point planted as part of concept, but if they become personalized it can strengthen. Would be guided past the parts that might be considered private.

Do people park in alley and run into stores now?

Yes.

One reason Commission got stuck was that solution is different than what some people would have come up with. New graphics very helpful – more real. Tradeoff of partial subterranean vacation and what is offered tips in public benefit.

Pedestrian crossing along north end where it crosses alley is misleading, but some Commissioners also feel that it makes it clearer that the alley and pass through are public too. Recommend a good amount of contrast. Do really like tongue of special paving reaching out into standard sidewalk – pull people in.

Bike parking? Need more inside passages too.

P. 19, garage access, don't see problem of it coming off 42nd because of extra width of sidewalk, generous environment for pedestrians.

Live work spaces, benches shown on page 29, listed as public, but if they're in front of someone's front door. Will depend on if it's more work or more living.

Tables in pass through on south side where there's less sun.



East Mid-Block Pedestrian Walkway Plaza at 42nd Avenue SW