



**Seattle
Design
Commission**

**APPROVED
MINUTES OF THE MEETING
6 February 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

Gasworks Park Site Plan
Northgate Library, Parks, and
Community Center Site Plan
Retreat Follow-up
Dexter Court
Joint Meeting with Planning
Commission Seattle Monorail Project

Convened: 8:30am

Adjourned: 4:00pm

Commissioners Present

Donald Royse, Chair
Jack Mackie, Vice Chair
Laura Ballock
Ralph Cipriani
Cary Moon
Iain M. Robertson
Nic Rossouw
David Spiker
Sharon E. Sutton
Tory Laughlin Taylor

Staff Present

John Rahaim
Layne Cubell
Brad Gassman
Anna O'Connell



Department of Design,
Construction & Land Use

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6 Feb 2003 Project: **Gasworks Park Site Plan**

Phase: Conceptual Design

Previous Reviews: None

Presenters: Tim Motzer, Seattle Parks and Recreation

Jeff Girvin, Berger Partnership

Guy Michaelson, Berger Partnership

Attendees: Karen Gordon, Dept of Neighborhoods

Jerry Malmo

Michael Shiosaki, Seattle Parks and Recreation

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

Action: The Commission thanks the team for coming and would like to make the following comments and recommendations.

- The Design Commission appreciates the careful context analysis presented;
- appreciates the clear statement of principles and rationale for the park and hopes that proponents will continue to expand those principles and use them in clearly guiding the result;
- recommends that the details be subservient to sweeping gestures and encourages the team to be bold in all design decisions such as in the way they breach the wall, deal with topography and the bioswale, recognize the tank forms as historical references, and deal with the issue of formality versus informality;
- suggests that putting the dog run inside the wall destroys the bigger gesture and is a disruption of the overall scheme, will create additional costs for a park project with a small budget, and creates an exclusive park use that has to be separate;
- encourages proponents to think more flexibly about how to meet the goal of having an axis, perhaps it is a visual, open axis or a louvered-view axis;
- appreciates the connection to Waterway 20 shown in scheme A and if scheme C is selected, encourages the connection to the waterway be brought into that design;
- encourages the team to see parking not just as a place to leave cars, but as a place to view the water;
- urges proponents to include an artist on the project team very soon and allow the artist to address the park holistically;
- encourages the team to recognize the region-wide significance of the park and the importance of responding to all citizens' needs, not just neighbors;
- suggests that schemes A and C are most appropriate, and scheme C has strong characteristics in terms of scale, topography, and geometry; and
- recommends approval of early concept design and looks forward to seeing the preferred concept.

The scope of this \$625,000 project is to make general improvements in the northwest corner of the park in the containment wall area and create a connection with the Wallingford Steps. In Rich Haag's original plan, this part of the park was shown as a parking lot. Because Gasworks is a landmark park and has an approved master plan, any changes require a comprehensive plan update. Two end products are expected

from the team's planning process: a list of the elements that can be funded with the \$625,000 and comprehensive plan changes that need to be made. The Berger Partnership was hired as the consultants for the planning process and asked to prepare three concept plans and three derivative plans. The derivative plans delineate the elements that can be funded with the allotted budget.

The design team's work has been and will continue to be reviewed by Pro View, Gasworks Park's internal group. In addition, the process involves two public meetings, one of which took place on December 10, and review by the Landmarks Board. At the public meeting on December 10, attendees were divided into focus groups to identify things they want to see in the park. The team was surprised to find that people were interested in having an off-leash area in the park. In addition, the public would like more green space with minimal hardscaping, and possibly habitat and wetland areas. The Pro View group

- favors scheme B;
- would like to look at less wall;
- likes the walkway along Northlake Way;
- would like shrubs to be minimized and trees to be emphasized; and
- likes the openness of all the plans for views.

The Landmarks Board gave the following input:

- feel the Rich Haag plan is monumental and should be a major influence;
- favor replication of the circumference of one of the two tanks;
- recognize that safety and openness are key issues;
- are supportive of opening and removing parts of the wall, but because it is historically significant, some should be retained;
- do not like scheme A because it is too formal; and
- like scheme B, particularly the path inside the wall.

The northwest corner was not developed as originally designed because it was still an operational right-



Gasworks Park site plan context photograph.

of-way. The defining elements of this area are that it was used as a dumping area for broken concrete, so there is a layer of concrete under the surface. It is surrounded by a wall on two-and-one-half of three sides because it was a tank farm for oil. Part of that wall has been demolished, but much still remains. Inventory and key analysis issues are

- Formal connection to Wallingford Steps and Wallingford Ave.
- Retain the large cedars that were planted at the south edge of where the railroad once was, but

thin them for views, particularly from Wallingford Ave.

- Recognize and work with the long-term vision of having a Watershed Center in the park because of the vantage point of the lake.
- Intention to acquire adjacent lands owned by Harbor Patrol and Metro, and a public Waterway 20 in order to give more access to the water.
- The northwest corner is situated in such a way that it is the glue that brings all of these elements together.

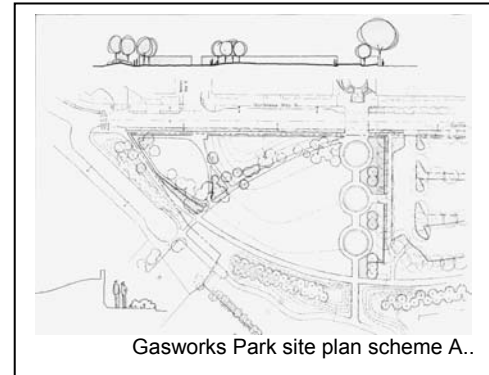
The team created a list of design principles from which to work and develop a concept plan.

- continue to tell the story—pass down site's history like folklore, create more interpretation because there is not a lot that tells this story

- emphasize the railroad right-of-way that used to go through the park the fact that the Burke Gilman trail was once the railroad
- improve accessibility and visibility of the park to the neighborhood
- allow for future lake connections
- use topography as a site element—several years ago fill was dumped and spread on site; it's too expensive to haul off site and acts as insulation from contamination, so work with it in grading

Scheme A

In this scheme a formal axis is created with the Wallingford Steps and Kite Hill. The view corridor has been opened a berm has been reestablished for users to pass through at the entrance to make it more formal. There is a raised pedestrian crossing into the park to signal the entrance. A promenade is used as a metaphor for the tanks that used to be there and offers an opportunity for art and interpretation. The wall around the site remains largely intact; there is a smaller penetration from the parking lot and Densmore, and the wall is opened up to make a connection with Waterway 20. Perforations in the form of sawcut windows open intact piece of the wall up a little to allow visibility. The main path is asphalt like existing paths, and all other paths are informal and line with crushed rock to discourage high-speed traffic.

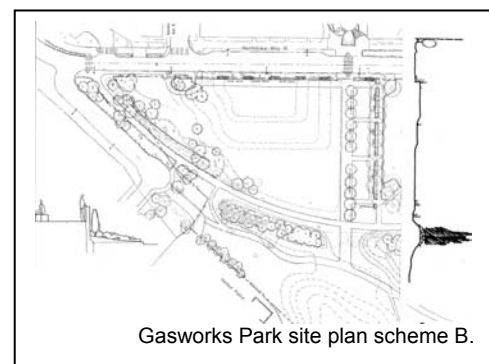


Gasworks Park site plan scheme A..

Along the path to the waterway is an informal grove of trees. New crossings have been created at both ends of Northlake Way and proponents would talk to SDOT and SPU about creating a sidewalk along Northlake. The grading is such that there is a slight slope to the southwest to allow views to the cracking towers. A steeper slope against the wall allows people to climb up and look over the wall.

Scheme B

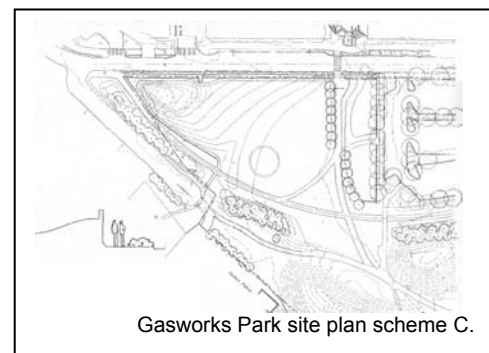
This scheme also has an axis into the park, but the city grid is also brought in. There is a formal promenade and three smaller paths that go through perforations in the wall to the parking. Larger chunks of the wall will be removed. Terraces with a larger view corridor are created and step down toward the water. Again, a view toward the cracking towers is emphasized. Plantings are natural and organic in character. A sidewalk is created along Northlake just from Densmore to the wall and connecting to this is sidewalk inside the wall.



Gasworks Park site plan scheme B.

Scheme C

This scheme is the least structured. A simple crosswalk ties into the existing path. Most of the wall is retained, including the prow of the wall, which is used to form Prow Hill. The backside of this hill slopes gently to the southwest. The wall is again perforated with windows and entrances to parking.



Gasworks Park site plan scheme C.

One of Pro View's concerns is with parking and would like to see parking added to the cul-de-sac. With regard to the

incorporation of an off-leash area, there are issues with contamination. Contaminated areas necessitate very specific vegetation and a dog run cannot be in a place that requires green grass. The team is considering capturing runoff from the site and directing it to the west part where there could be a wetland and/or habitat area.

Key Commissioner Comments and Concerns

- Would like to know proponents' assessment of the key reasons for the success of the park and what existing things now work and what do not.
 - Proponents stated that with the original design Rich Haag wanted to explore topography. A big element of the park was to be a morning bowl at the southeast, but this could not be done because of contamination. Rich favors scheme C because it is on the same scale as the rest of the park, it explores topography, and it allows a wide view to the cracking towers, while tying into the rest of the park; it is not a subentity of the greater park, but part of it.
- Suggests that if the team breaches the wall, it should be done boldly; tell a story and cut sections so it draws attention. Is concerned about the view corridor because with the angle of the trees, passersby will not get this view from the streets at the east.
 - Proponents stated that they do not mean the view from there; the view corridor is meant to be visible from the streets at the west end.
- Suggests proponents considered louvered views rather than just one large view corridor. Also feels that the palimpsest of the tanks that existed should be bigger and bolder than what was shown.
- Would like to know if the dog run is a given.
 - Proponents stated that it is not and they are limited as to where it could go aesthetically and functionally, especially given the contamination cover system. However, there was a strong contingent at the public meeting who wanted a dog run.
- Feels that it could present problems with the path and the effort to do it in a sustainable way. Also feels that they could end up spending a lot of money on it.
 - Proponents stated that with the preliminary costs, even if a dog run is introduced, it will not happen on this budget. A lot of the details proposed will not be there in this first budgeted part of the improvements/changes.
- Agrees that the team should be bold in their treatment of the wall and park. Feels that scheme C is the closest to the original conception of the park as a series of large landforms. Feels that B is the weakest with the sidewalk inside and outside the wall, flattened landforms, lack of clarity. Would like to see cleanly delineated edges and simple, bold design.
- Greatly appreciates the way the team has gone about the project, looking at the site carefully with respect to its context, site elements, and the original plan. Compliments the team on using the original plan, but not to slavishly following it.
- Is not sure that there needs to be an axis, or one that is so literal. Feels that there could be a visual axis, but circulation could be different. Likes the connection with the waterway in scheme A and feels

that C could use that aspect. Suggests that instead of Prow Hill in scheme C, there could be grand stairs. In the principles, the team talks about importance of scale and no exclusivity of uses and feels that the dog run presents a problem with regard to these. Believes the team is on the right track with the vegetation and it should be big and bold. Suggests that the bioswale concept be taken used to make a large, sweeping gesture. Feels that the parking should be put on the other side so people can sit in their cars and look out onto the water even on rainy days. Urges the team to make sure the details are subservient to the big, sweeping concept.

- Is uncertain about the suggestion for stairs where people enter at Prow Hill and feels it looks constricted.
- Believes that you could take away the corner and back the hill with large sweeping steps.
- Agrees and feels that the entrance is too hidden.
- Likes the hidden element of the entrance and the way that you park in the lot and have to walk over the hill to find the views.
- Agrees, but feels that the prow seems unnecessarily pinched.
- Disagrees and feels that that corner should not be whittled away at.
- Believes that he might reject formality if in a place like New York or somewhere where the naturalness is hard to find. However, here there is informality everywhere and feels that for a city that wants to be more urbane, formality should not be rejected. Also feels that there needs to be more of a balance of the city's needs *vis-à-vis* the neighborhood and that this park is region-wide treasure. Believes the big sweeping gestures need to be looked at from a broader perspective of the region.
- Feels that the best way to make the project work is to develop a gutsy list of design principles so when the team has a discussion with the neighborhood, they have principles to guide it.
- Suggest the team look at Gorkitzer Park in Berlin as a precedent because it uses walls and bold landforms.
- Feels that the history of the park provides formality. Urges the team, in echoing the form of the old tanks to whatever extent it is used, it be an accurate reflection of their original location. Feels that it would be hokey as a re-representation.

Key Visitor Comments and Concerns

- A member of the Landmarks Board stated that their review committee for this project values the modern design of the existing park. They do not mind having a different treatment of the wall, but want to keep enough of it to reflect the hard edge and industrial history. They like the idea of combining schemes B and C and favor less formality to reflect the industrial character. The committee also supports representing the tanks' form and has no problem with the removal of some trees. They are also concerned with the idea of a dog run.

6 Feb 2003 Project: **Northgate Library, Parks, and Community Center Site Plan**

Phase: Pre-Design

Previous Review: None

Presenter: Alex Harris, Seattle Public Libraries
 Erin Devoto, Seattle Parks and Recreation
 Stan Lokting, ARC Architects
 Terry Reckord, McLeod Reckord

Attendees: Tim Motzer, Seattle Parks and Recreation
 David Kunselman, Seattle Public Libraries
 Greg Maffei, Library Trustee
 Bob Morgan, City Council Central Staff
 Jess Harris, Dept. of Design, Construction, and Land Use
 Kristian Kofoed, Dept. of Design, Construction, and Land Use
 Lyle Bicknell, CityDesign
 Phyllis Shulman, Councilmember Richard Conlin
 Gretchen Stromberg
 Michael Shiosaki, Seattle Parks and Recreation

Time: 1 hour (SDC Ref. # 221 | DC00108)

Action: **The Commission thanks the team for the introduction to this important addition to the Northgate environment and would like to make the following comments and recommendations.**

- **The Design Commission appreciates the complexity of this interagency project with the Department of Parks and Recreation and Seattle Public Libraries joining together, and urges the many players to keep the overall integrity of the project as the primary goal;**
- **appreciates the clear and thorough analysis of the possibilities of the site and the potential of the various alternatives;**
- **urges the team explore joint use of parking with other facilities in the community;**
- **urges the team to consider an imaginative approach to grading as a way to mitigate the effects of the parking, and furthermore strongly recommends considering all possibilities for under building parking and eliminating surface parking;**
- **supports the recommendations for on-street parallel parking on 5th Ave NE, and urges SDOT to give that serious consideration;**
- **encourages SPU and SDOT to reconsider the need for 105th St. to be a neighborhood “collector” and supports a reduction in its width;**
- **recommends locating the new park to the southeast corner in order to visually link it with nearby Thornton Creek park land and open space;**
- **strongly suggests developing the appropriate scale necessary for successful city presence in this ragged suburban landscape;**
- **recommends development of design principles that relate to the intent, scale, civic quality, and use of the park in addition to development of the built structures; and**
- **recommends approval of the pre-design phase.**

Seattle Parks and Recreation and Seattle Public Libraries, in searching independently for a community center site and library site, found that they could co-locate facilities to make for an efficient and civic site. Northgate is an area of increasing density that currently has no real access to a library. Major program elements for this 10,000 ft² library include planning for the possibility of future expansion of 5000 ft² and a reading room, collection area, and public meeting rooms. Libraries is looking to see how they can share uses of some of these areas with Parks Dept. The community center is to be a 20,000 ft² full facility with a 1.67 acre park area that has no schedule fields, but is green space for general pick-up activities like Frisbee. Other parameters include the desire for a 5000–8000 ft² plaza, a 2000–2700 ft² terrace associated with the community center's multipurpose room, a 2500 ft² play area, and required parking area of 67 spaces. Big picture site issues include Thornton Creek, which is located on part of the site, and transit development. Both the neighborhood plan and the Parks Dept. Comprehensive Plan included the vision of having a community center in the area.

The team has just begun the design process and focused first on site planning because they did not know if the project needed to be one building for all program elements or made up of several buildings. In addition to program elements, the team is analyzing environmental issues particularly related to Thornton Creek, storm drainage on the site, and traffic considerations. The site consists of the Bon Tire site on the east side of 5th Ave. NE and a commercial site north of that. Northgate Mall is across the street to the west and at the northwest corner of the site is a major entrance into the mall. To the east is a residential area. External contextual factors include adjacency of a major arterial (5th Ave. NE), the signaled intersection at the northwest corner, and the relationship to Thornton Creek, which creates an opportunity for a pedestrian connection. Internally, issues include dealing with vegetation, steep topography, and difficult urban soils. The high point of the site is at northwest corner and the low point is at the southeast corner; there is a 20-foot drop between these corners. Much of the site is made up of fill from the construction of the mall. The steep hill at the east and south edges is vegetated with some native plants including alders and maples. The residential street at the south, NE 105th St., provides the possibility of an important pedestrian connection. Regulatory issues include zoning, slope (the steep slope requirements regulate a 15-foot setback), the Northgate overlay, which moves toward a more pedestrian environment. The entire site is 3.67 acres, but the usable space is about 500 feet by 170 feet.

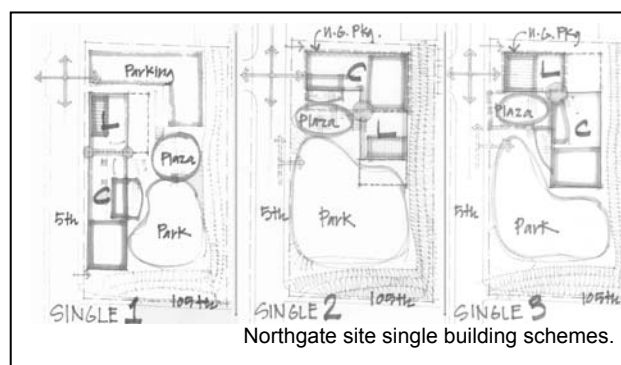
Four conceptual models for possible schemes were developed:

- single—one building with one lobby for both uses, but uses themselves not shared
- attached—single entrance, but some shared uses of space
- linked—two buildings, but close enough to connect
- separate—two buildings further away

There is potential in all these schemes to connect with Thornton Creek across 105th St., which is part of Park 6. In each of the conceptual models, the team looked at one option with surface parking and the other two with below-grade parking. However, the agencies are not expecting to have the money for underground parking.

Single

The team looked at this model with only the park associated with 5th Ave. NE, but that lacked sufficient public presence and created safety issues. They also looked at having the building on the street for a more civic presence, which then hid the park and the plaza. Having a piece of the plaza and park on the street became a design principle, along with having the building



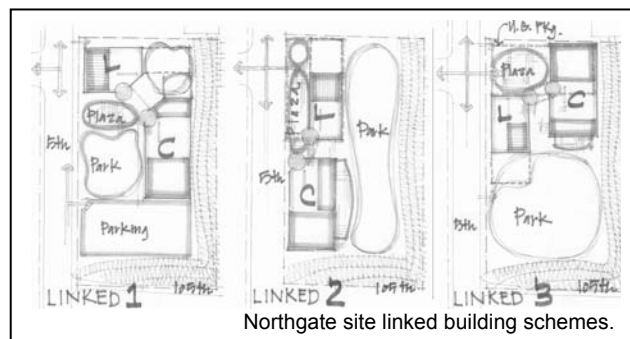
presence at the street edge, while not taking up the entire frontage. This was the most desirable scheme for the client group.

Attached

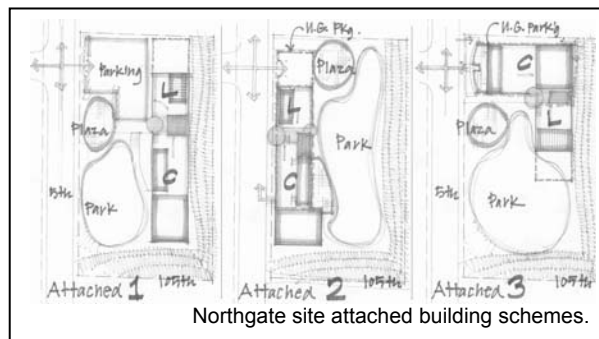
They looked at a suburban scheme with surface parking toward the street and the park along 5th Ave. NE. This concept was quickly off the table, but allowed them to look at the idea of linking the two programs with the shared use spaces in the middle.

Linked

One of the schemes of interest in this group allowed



Northgate site linked building schemes.



Northgate site attached building schemes.

for a drop-off point at the northwest corner where parking and drop-off and delivery of books could be accessed. The park is located to the south and this became another design principle. Buildings in this scheme would be heavily glazed so you could see the activities of both buildings as you move through the site.

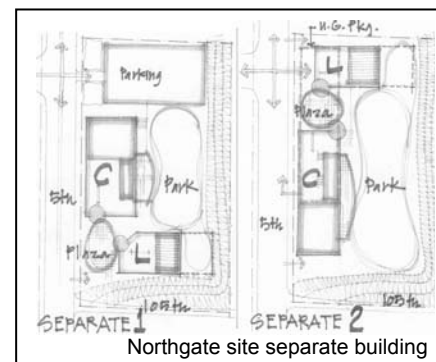
Separate

From this concept came one layout of interest,

which has the park to the street and the plaza has some relationship to the park, the street, and both buildings.

The design principles that came out of these explorations are:

- park and plaza toward street
- building edge to street
- drop-off for people and books is important, as well as book delivery
- southern light/exposure for the park
- daylight for the library
- relationship of access: mall access used for this site, pedestrian connection to mall on 5th Ave. NE



Northgate site separate building

Key Commissioner Comments and Concerns

- Would like to know the building height of both buildings.
 - Proponents stated that they are not studying that yet, they are primarily looking at placement. The allowed height on the site is 65 feet and both uses need at-grade access. The highest project use is the gym that requires about 24–25 feet.
- Commends the team on their clear, thorough analysis. Would like them to redo all the schemes with just parking at the surface because of that constraint. Feels that in the description of the constraints and principles there was little mention of what will happen in the park and encourages them to have design criteria for the park.
 - Proponents stated that there will be some articulated spaces including the children's play area and community garden. The community does not want the park to be over-

programmed and would like a large lawn area.

- Appreciates Libraries and Parks Dept. working together and feels that the civic is easily overwhelmed by the commercial in this area. Would like the team to focus on maximizing the sense of scale, civility, and perception of space.
- Believes that, with the look toward possible expansion, the agencies need to keep in mind the valuable resource of land that surface parking takes up. Feels that in the interim this space could be used as parking, but with an eye on the future. If the community wants a civic presence, they need to figure out how to develop shared-use parking.
- Compliments the team on the clarity of the site analysis that led to these alternatives. Agrees that the sense of scale is of paramount importance and feels that parks do not give the sense of scale and buildings need to move closer to the streets. In addition, feels that people may regret having the park on the street because of the noise. Feels that the park entry could be to the street and be grand—there can be tokens of the park to the street, but not the entire frontage of the park. Suggests the team look at ways to nuance the parking underground in future development, i.e. under future expansion.
 - Proponents stated that one of the elements they are working with is having the entrance at the signal across from the mall. That sets up what they are able to do in terms of entering the site and underground parking anywhere else. If the grading were flipped, parking underground would be easy.
- Agrees that the team should use the existing signal as the entry.
- Agrees that the blight of this neighborhood is surface parking and urges the team to think of the scale and ways to finesse the buildings together to pay for underground parking. Would like the buildings to be a bigger scale to compete with the overwhelming commercial blight. Feels that with 5th Ave. NE being planned as a more pedestrian street, surface parking is a problem. Also feels that park with a relatively small presence toward the street and privacy is a good idea.
- Encourages the team to figure out how to make this park more of Thornton Creek Park 6; how to make this big and co-opt what is there to draw in everything around it and make it bigger.
 - Proponents stated that 105th St. is a neighborhood collector and is 32 feet wide. This large size is an issue and they have talked to SPU about changing it to make it a pedestrian corridor. Recognize that it might be difficult to convince the community, but are exploring the regulatory framework.
- Feels that the park uses need to be delineated more clearly. Assuming the steep banks are not changed, encourages the team to look at terracing and how the park might terrace down and give access to Thornton Creek. The terracing could be used for different activities.
 - Proponents stated that the Parks Dept. and Libraries decided that the surface parking needs to be screened if they have to have it and they are willing to work with DCLU to reduce the parking requirements.
- Supports the team putting as much building edge mass along 5th Ave. NE. Feels that 2/3 of the building edge could be along the street with just a part of the park. This puts park in the larger context of Thornton Creek. Urges the team to everything they can to get underground parking.

Key Visitor Comments and Concerns

- CityDesign staff stated that in the 5th Ave. planning, they strongly recommend including parallel

parking along 5th Ave. NE. SDOT was concerned there was insufficient need for on-street parking and this project creates it, so this could help reduce parking requirements for a surface lot.

6 Feb 2003 Project: **Retreat Follow-up**
Phase: Staff Briefing

Time: 1.5 hours (SDC Ref. # 169 | DC00009)

Summary: **The Commission reviewed followed up on issues discussed at their annual retreat on January 9 and the work plan for the upcoming year. The Design Commission would like their design principles to be more evident and clear for themselves, proponents, and the public. To that end, the Commission suggests that principles from their Handbook be posted during future meetings. The Commission feels that public visibility and advocating for urban design in proactive ways is important and can be addressed through a communication plan. Asks that staff, during briefings, give more background information and their assessment of projects and would like to be more aware of CityDesign's work. The Commission confirmed that it will issue letters of commendation this year and discussed other events, including recognition of its 35th anniversary. With regard to the Monorail Review Panel, the Commission continues to discuss its optimal form and scope, but is supportive of an alternative structure to deal with the added work load that the project presents.**

Key Commissioner Comments and Concerns

- Feels the Commission should couch suggestions in terms of design principles.
- Suggests that the principles from the Commission Handbook be placed on a board as a reminder of their purview during meetings.
- Also feels this is important and would help proponents and outside visitors/community members be clear on what the Commission is looking for in presentations.
- Suggests that staff can do some follow-up work so projects do not come back to the Commission too many times.
- Would like staff to give a specific analysis and their assessment during briefings for the projects Commission will see that day.
- Believes that a communication plan will be useful and that it is something the Commission and staff can create together. This plan will involve the Commission getting articles in local papers and look at how the Commission can use their position to advocate for urban design in a more proactive way.
- With the 35th anniversary of the Commission coming up, feels it is important to celebrate what as working as well as critique what needs to be improved.
- Likes the suggestion from a client to go to public agencies once or twice a year to discuss with project managers and others who may be involved in Commission projects about what the Commission does and how meetings and presentations function.
- Feels that it may be a good idea to make the reception for this year's letters of commendation a more public event, and perhaps have the Mayor participate.
- Would like to know more about the projects that CityDesign is working on. Feels it would be a good

idea for CityDesign to hold an open house in their office to show this.

- There is a proposed structure for a Monorail review panel that would start now.
- Feels that the full Commission could see the Monorail for the first few reviews and then a subcommittee could be formed.
- Believes there needs to be a fuller discussion on this subcommittee's form and scope, but agrees that an alternative structure is necessary to deal with the additional work load.

6 February 2003 Commission Business

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|-------------------------|----|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| ACTION ITEMS | A. | <u>TIMESHEETS</u> |
| | B. | <u>MINUTES FROM 6 DECEMBER AND 20 DECEMBER 2001-
APPROVED</u> |
| DISCUSSION ITEMS | C. | <u>OUTSIDE COMMITMENT UPDATES- CUBELL</u> |
| | D. | <u>URBAN DESIGN RESOURCE CENTER STRATEGY- CUBELL</u> |
| ANNOUNCEMENTS | E. | <u>ETC/ MONORAIL WORK SESSIONS- JAN 23RD, 10AM-2PM, 36TH
FLOOR, COLUMBIA TOWER</u> |
| | F. | <u>ETC URBAN DESIGN OPEN HOUSE- JAN 24TH, 5-9PM, SEATTLE
CENTER-NORTHWEST ROOMS COMPLEX, LOPEZ ROOM</u> |
| | G. | <u>DESIGN COMMISSION RETREAT- FEB 7TH, 12-5PM</u> |

6 Feb 2003 Project: **Dexter Court**
 Phase: Street Vacation Follow-up
 Previous Reviews: 21 November 2002 (Street Vacation Follow-Up), 2 May 2002 (Design Development), 4 April 2002 (Design Development), 6 May 1999 (Schematic Design), 3 April 1999 (Conceptual Design)
 Presenters: Jeff Wiper, Opus NW
 Greg Blount, Driscoll Architects
 Thomas Rengstorf, Thomas Rengstorf and Associates
 Julie Berger, Julie Berger Designs
 Attendees: Beverly Barnett, Seattle Department of Transportation
 Lisa Rutzick, Department of Design, Construction, and Land Use
 Tom Warren, H

Time: 0.5 hours

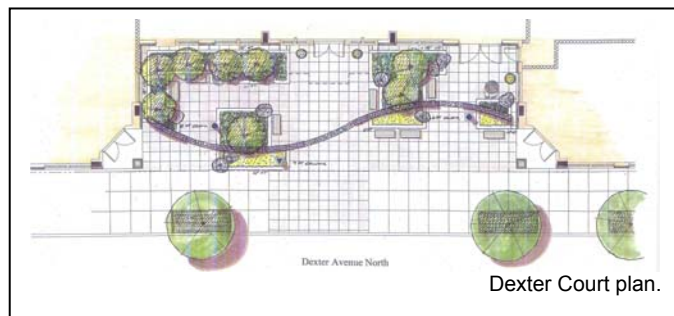
Action: The Commission thank make the following con

- The Commission concerns of th
- supports the d the team decid
- appreciate the resolution of the canopy size and form and suggests that the team distinguish the main building entrance and the location and design of the plaza in that main canopy's shape by making it unique from the others;
- truly appreciates the inclusion of the artist at this stage;
- appreciates that the team relooked at and reworked the social spaces and brought a very specific landscape plan before the Commission this time; and
- recommends approval of the vacation condition and does not need to see the project again.



The team has taken the Commission's comments of last time and responded to those for this presentation. The design is essentially back to its original form, the key element of which is a curve through the plaza. In the original design there were two water features. The space was designed around the surrounding circulation, which includes doors in the corners and adjacent commercial spaces. There was also an aspect of public versus private spaces with the element on the north side tying community space into the street space. Planting beds were low, containing primarily 6-inch vegetation, and where there was slope there was an 18-inch concrete wall. Materials also included natural stone and benches, tables, and planters.

When the interior building space was looked at more closely, the plaza was changed in response to this. With the changed amenity space, the team reversed the curve and lost the large community space at the north end, and created the canopy. The Commission was not happy with the relationship with the north



plaza and the canopy, so the team went back to their original design, except with no water features and an artist instead. The plant materials they are using are magnolia trees, simple low shrubs like huckleberries, and a few perennials and bulbs for color. The trees will be up-lit and there will be additional lighting in the form of sconces on the building because security is a concern. Two-foot square pavers make up the plaza and proponents may push SDOT to allow them to bring the paving pattern out into the sidewalk. There are also public benches in the space. The canopy is steel fabricated with glass panels over the curve and opaque metal over the flanking portions on the side. It is attached to the wall so there are no big supports at ground level. The curved glass portion of the canopy protrudes about 8 feet out, supporting brackets start at 7 feet high, and the highest point of the canopy is 15 feet. The canopy is necessary for protection in this space, is in scale with the building, and serves as an architectural statement for this central entry. There will be flanking canopies over the storefronts in the building and these will slope upward so the water flows toward the building. Within the plaza there are two angled entrances to retail and an entrance to a common room and meeting room for residents of the building. Another small door that will be used very infrequently leads to the stairs. While the building does not have tenants yet, a coffee shop for some of the retail space is desirable.

The artist's approach is to use three sculptures with 3-inch high concrete bases and galvanized steel shafts of varying heights (about 5 feet, 6 feet, and 7 feet). Designs will be cut out of the columns and metal cutouts will be placed around these. The columns will be lit in the interior so that light shines through the cutouts. In addition, the columns will have glass tops for light to shine through, providing for the experience of those inside the building above the columns.

Key Commissioner Comments and Concerns

- Would like to know more about the exterior lighting.
 - Proponents stated that they haven't approached the whole scheme yet.
- Would like to know if there is a way to use lighting in and on the columns as plaza lighting system.
 - Proponents stated they are not sure that is enough light. The columns are reflective inside so that might help and the artist may put a patina on them. The light in the columns is primarily to make the cutouts snap.
- Is satisfied with the direction this project is going in creating an inviting public space and feels that proponents have solved the problems of last time.
- Sees that in the former drawings the plaza has movable seating and in the newest version there are just benches.
 - Proponents stated that they will have movable furniture in the plaza.
- Supports the idea of getting a deviation from SDOT for the paving pattern.
- Would like to know why the glass is not carried through from the main canopy to the storefront awnings.
 - Proponents stated that it is a matter of cost and maintenance. It takes a lot of maintenance to keep the glass clean.
- Would like to know if this solution is satisfactory for DCLU.
 - A representative of DCLU stated that it is.

6 Feb 2003 Project: Seattle Monorail Project: Joint Meeting with Planning Commission

Phase: Pre-Design: Guideway and Station Planning and Design Principles

Previous Reviews: None

Presenters: Ethan Melone, Seattle Dept. of Transportation
Alan Hart, VIA Suzuki
Michele Jacobson, Seattle Monorail Project
Leslie Bain, Weinstein AU

Planning Commission: George Blomberg

Marty Curry
Gregory Davis
Mimi Sheridan
Paul Tomita

Barbara Wilson, Seattle Planning Commission Staff

Attendees: Barbara Goldstein, Office of Arts and Cultural Affairs

John Pastier

Martha Lester, Seattle City Council Central Staff

Donald Loseff, Seattle Center

Dave Buchan, Seattle Center

Rachel Ben Shmuel

Lyle Bicknell, CityDesign

Kristian Kofoed, Dept. of Design, Construction, and Land Use

Time: 1.5 hours

(SDC Ref. # 219 | DC00231)

Action: The Commission thanks the team for coming and is pleased with the dialogue and opportunity to be involved early in the process, and would like to make the following comments and recommendations.

- **The Commission is impressed with the work done already, especially on the analysis of how the system functions at the station and guideway levels;**
- **strongly supports proponents' inclination to find a strong single, unified identity across the system and encourages the team to develop principles in more detail to clarify how that might be achieved;**
- **recommends that the team consider system, local, and civic identities concurrently as they continue to develop the principles;**
- **encourages the team to add bold urban design and planning goals at this phase rather than later on, which address the character of the area under the stations and guideways, the experience of pedestrians in these spaces, and how to make stations civic places;**
- **encourages the team to expand their thinking to the non-physical elements such as station areas and alignment;**
- **is encouraged that there is a lead designer in a central position and is excited to see how design aspirations such as "clean, elegant, and graceful" are played out formally;**
- **suggests, toward the goal of design continuity, that the team adds the principle "minimize atypical situations";**
- **urges that, once alignment is determined, the team perform public outreach services on land use strategies to make this investment a success;**

- **recommends the team begin thinking about strategic measures to be taken to mitigate negative impacts;**
- **in the next presentation, asks for a discussion about the view corridor issues; and**
- **suggests that the team initiate an art program soon to best integrate with the design teams.**

Note: Commissioner Mackie abstained from voting on the action.

For the first couple of months in this process the Planning Commission and Design Commission will meet jointly. Then the structure will evolve into a more formal committee in May, possibly with members from other city boards. The Design Commission is reviewing its role in parallel projects like station area design. The City is staffing up for this project in DCLU and SDOT, and these groups will be working with the DON.

At the last meeting, the Commission was presented with the structure of the City's work on this project. The Commission's key points were that they are interested in system identification and design elements and want to focus on design excellence in light of the goals of being on time and on budget. Michele Jacobson is the staff person in charge of design and engineering part of the Seattle Monorail Project (SMP). She is a planner by training and served as a consultant to Elevated Transportation Company (ETC). Alan Hart from VIA Suzuki is the design lead for the project and combines the skills of urban design, actual design, and design management. He was the lead designer for the Sky Train and the Second Millennium Train in Vancouver.

In addition to being on time and on budget, the team has a third goal of sustainability. Two other guiding principles are transparency and design excellence. Recently, the team has presented to communities to bring people to the same level of understanding and nomenclature with regard to design, guide, and urban design precepts. With this elevated form of transportation, the team feels they are really creating a 14 mile building with "rooms," which are the stations. The stations serve as opportunities to reflect individual communities. The approach to this large infrastructure project is for the lead design team to enable the design community to do what they do best—urban design and architecture. Most transportation projects are built with federal funding and there are hoops you have to go through, but this case is different and allows the process to be designed to fit the project. In addition, urban designers and architects are planning and running the process. In federal projects, the design has to go to 30 percent, but that does not represent that much in the built world. You really need these elements in the very beginning to get proper urban design and alignment. This project will entail urban design and architecture principles working in concert. The lead will do a base design, which then allows good architects without transportation experience to design stations well.

With the alignment of the monorail, designers are working with two elements, the horizontal and the vertical. With the topography of Seattle, designing this is a three-dimensional exercise. The alignment planning principles that will allow for greatest passenger comfort and efficient travel times are:

- optimize horizontal alignment
- optimize vertical profile to provide clearance over roads, railways, and other structures
- maintain straight horizontal alignment
- maintain consistent vertical profile
- minimize curves/changes in direction
- minimize transitioning from one side of a road to the other

The guideway components consist of beams, which can be open making for a more urban character. There is also an opportunity to design the columns. Transitional columns are awkward, so they need to be

careful about where those are placed and long spans of track require columns with bigger haunches. With regard to the height of the system, people in West Seattle were split: some wanted the system high enough so it was out of sight while others want it lower.

Principles for the station locations are

- cannot be located at a curve;
- can be in the right-of-way or on private property
- must be where there can be level, straight sections of guideway on either side
- cannot be at an intersection
- the guideway and station should be separate for more efficient and building-appropriate design of stations

Principles for station design are

- made up of a series of spaces ranging from public to non-public
- sequence of spaces is very important: entry/ticket purchase, ascent to platform, waiting for train, and embarking/disembarking
- entrance identifiable from a distance with low signs: it should be obvious where to go and the signs just act as confirmation
- direct path from entry to the train
- changes in direction within vertical circulation only permissible where there is sufficient space for riders to maintain their sense of direction
- right-hand circulation
- no cross-path circulation to minimize pedestrian traffic conflict
- group vertical circulation elements
- visibility within stations for safety
- establish hierarchy of spaces to create defensible space and distinguish between public and private spaces

Station components include the guideway, which can be apart or together. Thus there can be one platform can be in the middle of two tracks or two platforms, one on either side. Guideways and platforms can also be vertically stacked. Stairs and escalators can be located next to one another or placed in line. Surge spaces are necessary at the top and bottom of stairs and escalators. Ancillary spaces are needed to accommodate staff and mechanical requirements.

There different station types are

- center platform station with access directly from street to platform and all passengers accessing trains from the same platform—long, narrow station
- center platform with mezzanine with access from grade to mezzanine (ticketing) and then onto the platform—long, narrow station
- vertical station with two vertically-aligned platforms that can be accessed from new or existing adjacent buildings—relatively compact station
- side platform station with two platforms on either side of the train and access directly from grade—short, wide station
- side platform station with mezzanine with access from grade to mezzanine and then onto platforms—short, wide station

In addition, there is the steel tulip configuration, which is a vertical alignment. The positive part of it is that it can fit in with existing buildings and the underbelly can tie into open space because it is relatively high. These station prototypes are tested against the different locations to determine what is most appropriate.

The team would like the Design Commission and Planning Commissions' comments today to focus on the principles, particularly alignment and station locations because they will develop a preferred alternative for the environmental document that includes those items.

Key Commissioner Comments and Concerns

- Would like to know if there are specific places in mind for the stations and when they will discuss those.
 - Proponents stated that there are not specific locations yet, just the station prototypes.
- Appreciates that SMA hired people with extensive transportation experience. Would like to know what the fundamental difference is between this system and others proponents have worked on, what are the unique conditions here, and what they have learned.
 - A proponent stated that in San Francisco, BART is much different because it is a light rail, not a monorail and the station designs are different. The lessons that apply are how the stations interact with the community. Found that it is important to express the entire system but at the same time express the uniqueness of the communities where the stations are located.
 - A proponent stated that he has designed many different kinds of systems and what is different in the monorail is the guideway is less intrusive. In addition, has worked on a monorail system before, but it was underground.
- Believes that this condition is very different because the system is above ground and would like to know what are the fundamental differences that can be learned from that or principles that the situation might elicit.
 - Proponents stated that this system is one of the first in North America to do that. An important principle is that you cannot look at infrastructure in the same way as other places—it must be art and world-class architecture.
- Suggests that the team add the principle to balance neighborhood identification with civic needs and believes there is also the added element of the technical needs of the system. Feels that community impacts need to be minimized and the team must elaborate on the principles to include balancing local, city, and system identity.
- Believes that there is much independence in Seattle's neighborhoods and advocates that the team be clear in laying out how far the localized neighborhoods need to drive the designs and where it becomes a system/city-wide issue.
 - Proponents stated that there do need to be elements of continuity and a Seattle-wide solution. Feels that process is important here and they will keep moving down in scale in terms of getting a community fit, but having reference to the system. Proponents further stated that the system is not just a reflection of Seattle, but a reflection of a point in time and one of the goals should also be timelessness.
 - A proponent stated that one of the reasons the SMA chose VIA Suzuki is because of the goal they had to oversee the system-wide aspects while allowing individual firms to come in and do individual stations.
- Feels that of the five station types, the vertical station has the least residual impact on high density. Would like to know if the agency has the authority to go in and give condemnation if the owner does

not agree to having their building used.

- Proponents stated that they do have the authority, but do not want to use it.
- Applauds the thoroughness of the work done and would like to see the principles expanded to include things like landscape, lighting, space under the stations and guideways, whether or not to stay off the sidewalk, whether stations can be in buildings or not.
- Feels that the team talked mostly about station design principles and not enough about urban design principles. Also, especially in neighborhood, stations will be dominant elements so the character and image of these neighborhoods will, in the future, be defined by these.
 - Proponents stated that they are looking at station and guideway locations and as they get to the station area planning level, these will be stated.
- Feels that not all the objectives have been followed through in the principles and that the team should first find out if the objective is right and then follow all of them up with principles.
 - Proponents stated that in previous ETC work when route and general station sitings were selected, they included relevant zoning, land use, and neighborhood plans.
- Would like to know why the center platform configuration is longer and why there has to be transition areas before and after curves.
 - Proponents stated that platforms need to be about 150 feet long and a side platform can be wide enough allowing for vertical circulation behind the platform so that it does not take up any of the length. Whereas, with a central platform the vertical circulation is in line with the platform so there needs to be room for both. Proponents further stated that the transition area between a curve and a station is necessary to give the train time to calm down before entering the station.
- Appreciates the analysis given, but on the planning principles feels that the statement regarding providing opportunities for civic architecture is tentative. Feels that the civic architecture and design principle should be as strong as the rest. Likes the idea of an overriding designer looking out for things. Would like to know if the system could use steel columns.
 - Proponents stated that the system is open to concrete or steel columns. Steel allows for design flexibility, but requires more maintenance and can be noisier. Believes that the most expression will be in the columns and wants to make them as lean and elegant as possible.
- With regard to the offset columns and their awkward appearance, suggests that proponents add to their principles to minimize atypical situations, otherwise they may end up with clutter and chaos.
- Feels that station designs need to be anticipated by guideway changes.
 - Proponents stated that with the level they are at now, the exact location of stations is open.
- Would like to know how these decisions get made and how a solution that works in one area can be replicated in another.
 - Proponents stated that this is part of the process of coming down in scale. The team went through community workshops and had proposed alignment routes. They took studies and factors into account and came up with workable alternatives. These station and alignment alternatives were brought to community meetings and they are now

chronicling comments. Out of all this and the meetings, the team will go back to the community in mid March with preferred alternatives. They will identify alternatives created where the preference is unclear, where they need more study and come up with other alternatives. In the EIS, the impacts will be analyzed and a decision will be made on alignment choice.

- Proponents stated that the urban design and architecture process is in synch. They will identify station areas so there is continuity and will hire an urban designer or landscape architect to study the more fine grain aspects and identify opportunities. VIA's role is to connect all these dots appropriately.
- Appreciates the team's looking at how land use opportunities and the environment around stations and corridors can help make decisions on alignment. Feels that once the alignment is selected it is incumbent on the City to begin the process of rezoning and working with neighborhoods and feels it is necessary to have a public education component in this.
 - Proponents feel that the best next Commission discussion topic is station integration planning and urban design criteria. The SMA can bring, or the City can present them with what they already have regarding urban design criteria.
- Urges the team to think about the possible unintended changes in the city at the level of the monorail and how to forestall any negative, unintended impacts.
- Feels that the City has a strong basis for making urban design decisions and would like to know how urban design is being incorporated now.
 - Proponents stated that they first looked at the existing set of regulations and policies.
- Would like the team to bring back a framework and interpret where the intersections and conflicts of these ideas of urban design come into play.
 - Proponents stated that right now they are looking at a lot of alternatives and cannot look at them all in detail. There are particular areas of sensitivity and the team wants to focus on things that they can work on productively. The route in many ways is set and they need to look at what is not set.
- Believes that a successful valued and used public transportation system begins and ends with the pedestrian experience. Pedestrians should be put at peak of the urban design criteria and criteria need to also address the social impacts of the structures. Would like to know how this system will accommodate the downtown view corridor.
- Feel that if the Commission asks the City for urban design issues and goals they are letting the SMA off the hook. Feels that they need to do the thinking about what kind of structure they are putting in the city.
 - Proponents stated that it is important to have all the best information so they are dealing with these issues in informed ways. Agrees that they need to generate these criteria, but need all the information to do this.
- Feels that the Planning Commission and Design Commission need to incorporate and include their urban design issues, too.
- Feels that it would be helpful if both would approach the urban design issues and then compare notes to see how their approaches are similar and/or different.

- Feels that, with regard to the arts component, the time track is nearly impossible. Believes that they have not seen the fundamental integration of an art component and feels that it needs to be included early.
- Would like to know about how many columns there will be total.
 - Proponents stated that there will be about 2000 columns.
- Would like to know if the principles are the output of the joint meetings.
- Feels that is part and that CityDesign staff will brainstorm to come up with more.