



**Seattle
Design
Commission**

**APPROVED
MINUTES OF THE MEETING
2 October 2003**

Gregory J. Nickels,
Mayor

Donald Royse
Chair

Charles Anderson

Pam Beyette

Ralph Cipriani

Iain M. Robertson

Nic Rossouw

David Spiker

Sharon E. Sutton

Tory Laughlin Taylor

John Rahaim,
Executive Director

Layne Cubell,
Commission Coordinator

Projects Reviewed

Homer Harris Park
SR 520 Project
Design Commission 35th Anniversary Project
I-5 Open Space
Montlake Library
Belltown Community Center

Convened: 8:30am

Adjourned: 4:00pm

Commissioners Present

Charles Anderson
Pam Beyette
Iain M. Robertson
Nic Rossouw
David Spiker
Sharon E. Sutton
Tory Laughlin Taylor

Staff Present

Layne Cubell
Lisa Baker



Department of Planning and
Development

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2 Oct 2003 Project: **Homer Harris Park**

Phase: Conceptual Design

Previous Reviews: None

Presenters: Cathy Tuttle, Seattle Parks and Recreation
Steve Worthy, Worthy and Associates

Attendees: Michael Shiosaki, Seattle Parks and Recreation
Ann Rennick, community member
Kari Stiles, Seattle Parks Foundation

Time: 1 hour (SDC Ref. # 169 | DC00318)

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

- The Design Commission feels that the design is moving in the right direction by recognizing that this is not a view park and encourages the team to move further in that direction possibly by thinking of it as more of an inward looking park;
- notes that the focus of the park is unclear so that it feels like a kit of parts rather than a strong design statement;
- is not convinced by the physical forms that have been presented that the vision of celebration and community building is assured, especially to users who may not already be admirers of Dr. Harris;
- recommends that the team create the design principles focusing on elements that can be achieved through design, rather than text;
- encourages the team to develop a stronger, more inspired concept, to better express the creation of a “warm center” for the park, and to clarify the circulation in relation to that center;
- supports the inclusion of the play area, but recommends that the team look further at how the play area reinforces the central concept of the main gathering space;
- encourages the team to develop a stronger physical reference to the adjacent William Gross property, given its existence and significance;
- would like the team to bring in the artist as part of the initial design concept, especially given the symbolic nature of this park;
- would like to see an analysis of the intersection of the ecology of the site and the human use of the park;
- supports the direction of scheme D, but not its execution;
- and does not recommend approval of concept design.

This park project is being funded by the Pro-Parks Levy and through the Seattle Parks Foundation. The biggest portion of the funding was a \$1.3 million contribution from an anonymous donor in Homer Harris's name. The \$1.3 is specifically for property acquisition. There is also \$400,000 available for development of the park.

The Pro-Parks Levy specified that the money should be used to develop a view park on 23rd Ave E. The property that has been acquired for the park is on 24th instead of 23rd. There is a view of the Cascade Mountains to the east from this property but the only protected view is from the northeast of the site. The area surrounding the park is zoned for multi-family so the building heights could increase in the future. There has been a lot of development nearby the site. Many single family lots are being combined and turned into multi-family developments. The adjacent properties have a 35 foot height limit. The only protected view is the view along the street right of way.

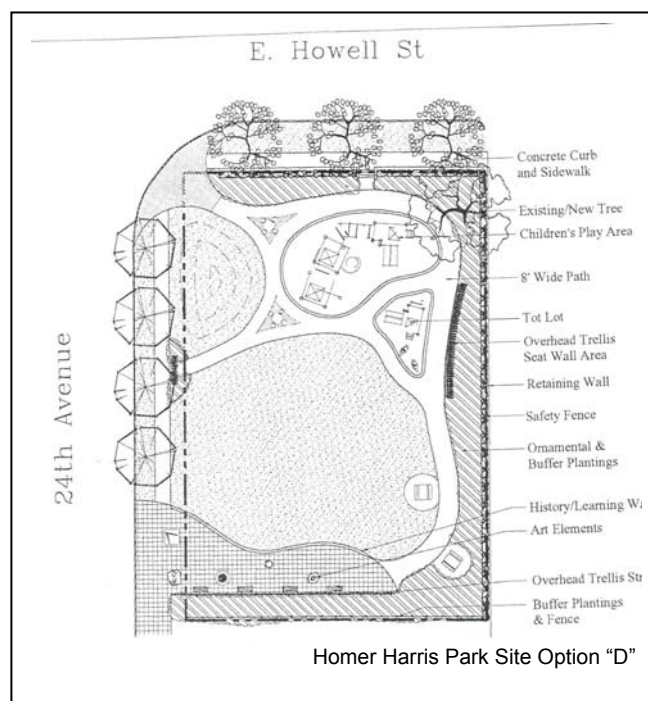
The park property is across the street from the YMCA parking lot. Another activity nearby the site is a play area a block and a half away. This play area, called Plum Tree Park, is not well used. The community would like a play area in the new Homer Harris Park. There is a lot of foot traffic to the YMCA and there will be additional foot traffic to the new Safeway complex on East Madison. 23rd is also a busy arterial.

The site for the park was four single family lots which have been combined. The site is approximately ½ acre and is 120 ft wide by 180 ft long. The site is not large enough for a basketball court or for other sports. The site is very flat with only an eight foot drop from the SE corner of the site to the NW corner. Along the eastern edge of the site there is a steep 1:1 slope which is covered in blackberries. There is only one significant tree on the site. It is a big leaf Maple tree. The team is concerned about committing to preserve the tree because the tree is on the steeply sloped portion of the site, which may need to be re-graded. Another site consideration is the house on the site to the south of the park, which is only 6 feet away from the property line.

The second community meeting was recently held to review this project. Roughly 50 people attended this meeting. This park project is strongly supported by the older community in the neighborhood, as well as by newer community members.

Dr. Homer Harris was an African-American pioneer in sports and intellectual achievement. In his lifetime he has overcome many barriers. He is still alive and is currently 87 years old.

The site of the Homer Harris Park is very close to the estate of William Gross, another African-American pioneer. The community is very interested in recognizing the achievements of Homer Harris and also recognizing the achievements of the African-American community in this neighborhood. The project team is extremely excited to be working on this project which honors Dr. Homer Harris. They are also excited to be working in this diverse and vibrant neighborhood.



The project team plans to include sweeping walls in the design of the park, where key points in Homer Harris's life can be highlighted. The central area of the park will be well lit. Low trees will be included on 24th to address the power lines. There will also be a 12 foot wide planting strip on Howell St with evergreens or wide deciduous trees. All of the schemes include a path which forms a continuous loop around the park. There will also be a stage area on the southern side of the park. The park opens up to the street at the corner of Howell and 24th.

The team considered creating a high point on the site to maximize views. The team has decided not to mound the earth in order to create specific views. There will be mountain views from the park in any configuration.

The team has developed five different concept plans for laying out the park. Scheme D has the largest central lawn area and is the one that the community favors. The community liked this plan, but felt that the play area did not need to be so large. This scheme includes a wide multi-purpose space, as well as some game tables, which the community requested. These tables would be clustered on the site. The scheme would also include some trellis elements. The trellises would be structural forms, but not planting areas. The Parks Department has maintenance issues with overhead plantings.

The overarching design principle of the park is that of people celebrating the overcoming of adversity. People also see this park as their common front yard. There will be many small rooms within the park, and sub-rooms. This will allow people to form safe-distance seating patterns and then get to know their neighbors.

Key Commissioner Comments and Concerns

- Thinks it is wonderful the way the community is embracing this park.
- Would like to know what the focus of the park will be.
 - Proponents admitted that the park may be trying to be too many things to too many people. They noted that the play area will be reduced, and will be less dominant. They explained that the community is excited about the open gathering space as a place for active celebration. Proponents also noted that the stage can work with the lawn area, as a place for people to perform. This can act as a platform for celebrations of both large and small sizes.
- Would like to know what the center of gravity is for each scheme.
 - Proponents stated that the center of the schemes gravitates around the sunny area in the NW corner of the site. They see this as the warm center of the park.
- Notes that the smaller the park the simpler the idea needs to be.
- Agrees with the community that scheme D is the best option.
- Suggests that the path around the park should be continuous around the without going through the paved area to the south. Explains that this would allow kids on bikes to make continuous loops around the park without interrupting people playing games.
- Thinks that the inclusion of the play area in this park is a great idea. Notes that this will provide opportunities for parents to get to know each other while their children are playing.
- Remarks that in the current configuration of scheme D that the central lawn looks like it is being encroached upon by other uses in the park. Suggests that the scheme should be reconfigured so that

the central lawn is the dominant form in the park, and that it should cause other forms to bend rather than vice versa.

- Suggests that the play area in scheme D should be rotated so that it curves around the roots of the maple tree. Urges the team to do whatever it takes to preserve the tree.
- Likes the fanning out of the park towards the corner of E. Howell St and 24th. Suggests that the design incorporate a concave form at this point, instead of a convex one. Explains that this would give the feeling of funneling through a narrow space and then opening up into the central lawn area.
- Wonders how Dr Homer viewed as an athlete and a healer could be used to inform the park. Feels it is important to acknowledge the mission of a doctor, not just the achievement.
 - Proponents stated that the park will draw in quotations and statements that have been written about Dr. Harris. They noted that Homer Harris had the largest dermatology practice west of the Mississippi. They added that the park will include bits of discovery as well as fanciful pieces.
 - Proponents stated that Homer Harris was the 1st African-American captain of the Garfield Football Team. They suggested that the park could include a bronze statue of a bulldog in recognition of his role on the football team.
- Suggests that in the tot lot the development of motor skills could be incorporated into this narrative.
 - Proponents noted that there will be places for people to stretch and other athletic amenities.
- Questions if team has talked to Homer Harris about his ideas for the park.
 - Proponents stated that they have met with Dr. Harris and that he was not very demonstrative in making specific suggestions for the park.
- Encourages the team to look at the topography of the site and find ways of incorporating the eight foot drop into the design of the park. Suggests that retaining walls could also be used as seating walls or information walls. Urges the team to combine functional elements in the park with artistic elements.
- Notes that the idea of the view park seems to have been diluted by the site constraints. Wonders what the status of the view park component of this park is.
 - Proponents stated that a 16 foot platform would be necessary to ensure views that would not be obstructed once the neighborhood is built out to the zoning allowances. They explained that the park will always have a view of the cascades through the street right of way. They added that this park will be similar to the arboretum in terms of allowing views, but will not be a substantial view park like the one in Queen Anne.
- Is glad the team has decided not to construct a large mound in order to make this a view park. Appreciates that the team is not trying to make the park something that it isn't.
- Notes that the design team is very engaged in the inspiration of Homer Harris for this park. Feels that as the designers of this park they also need to have their own inspiration for the park.
- Notes that the design is relying on text for a lot of the excitement of the park. Urges the team to arrange the text so that people read it while they are engaged in activities within the park.
- Is glad to see that there are design principles for this park, but feels that overcoming adversity is a difficult concept to use as a design principle because it has no physical form. Urges the team to expand the design principles to include how they will be achieved i.e. "celebrate Dr. Homer Harris's

life by _____.”

- Would like to know how much the design team has engaged the artist in the design of the park. Feels that the artist could be very helpful in transforming the design principles into the physical configuration of the park. Notes that the instances in which the team has mentioned the incorporation of art into the project it has seemed like an afterthought.
 - Proponents stated that an artist has not yet been selected for this project. They noted that a gate could be incorporated into the park, or some other form that helps users to feel that they have moved from one place to another.
- Is concerned that an art committee will decide where the art will go within the park. Would like the artist to be involved as soon as possible. Is uncomfortable with art being brought in in pieces.
 - Proponents stated they are working with the Central Area Arts Commission to define what the art will be and to get community support.
- Worries that there is too much design by committee taking place in the design of this park. Urges that the artist and the landscape architect should be more involved in the design. Feels that it is dangerous for the committee to have so much power.
- Feels that the design is moving in the right direction, but has not yet arrived.

Key Visitor Comments and Concerns

- The Community feels that the team has done a good job of taking a lot of varied ideas from the community and incorporating them into the plan.

02 Oct 2003 Project: **SR 520 Project**

Phase: Project Update

Previous Review: 16 October 2002 (Briefing), 7 March 2002 (Briefing)

Presenter: Maureen Sullivan, WSDOT

Julie Meredith, WSDOT

David Allen, SDOT

Time: 1.5 hours

(SDC Ref. # 221 | DC00262)

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

- **The Design Commission reiterates the importance of creating a transportation project that also makes urban places, and appreciates that the team is working with the community and SDOT to integrate this transportation project into the fabric of the city;**
- **encourages the team to look at all possibilities for including flexibility in the future, noting that General Purpose lanes might be changed to HOV lanes and hoping that the reverse won't happen;**
- **recommends that the team look at the new alignment and consider how it fits into the city including any ramps and lids;**
- **urges that the noise walls be used to mitigate not just noise but stress, recognizing that stress is caused by visual and auditory noise and that plants may eliminate stress even though they do not reduce noise;**
- **encourages the team not to use ivy on this or any other project;**
- **recommends that the team work with the SDOT artist in residence Daniel Mihalyo to develop new solutions for the noise walls;**
- **compliments the team on attempting to plan the noise walls so that they will not need to be replaced during future construction;**
- **appreciates the concern for the residents and for livability that the team has expressed and the work done to mitigate the impacts of this project on the surrounding neighborhoods;**
- **encourages the team to consider that, as the bridge meets land, the taking of land can be a problem for the neighborhood;**
- **urges the team to be clearer in explaining to the community the size of the proposed bridge options in relation to the size of the existing bridge recognizing that it is not simply a replacement as the bridge will be both wider and higher; and**
- **supports a transportation improvement that keeps the width to the absolute minimum, recognizing that the wider the bridge is the greater the impact on the community.**

In November of last year this project went on hold because there was no funding for it. The legislature has approved the 10 year nickel package which will generate some of the funding for this project. This money will cover the EIS, the initial purchase of land, and a significant portion of the project design. There is also \$3.5 million included in the budget for the design and construction of noise walls along the I-5 corridor. This portion of the work will move ahead of the rest of the project. There is also \$250,000 available from the state to mitigate the local impacts of this project in certain neighborhoods. This

funding requires a match of \$250,000 from the City of Seattle.

The 520 floating bridge was state of the art when it was built. There are not many floating bridges in the country and the majority are in this state. WSDOT learned during the construction of I-90 that the narrow piles of the bridge are vulnerable. The bridge is also vulnerable to wind storms. WSDOT has already done as much as they can to retrofit the bridge. The purpose of this project is not to expand the bridge to increase capacity. The bridge needs to be replaced regardless of its capacity because it is nearing the end of its useful life.

This project is currently in the cost estimation and evaluation process. There are four alternatives. The costs associated with the knowns and unknowns of the options are being assessed and the risks of each option are being studied as well. The costs being identified are the costs at the mid point of construction. They are not in today's dollars. In the past people were shocked by the change in cost from the initial estimate to the actual construction. The budget model includes 3% inflation. This is the same rate of inflation that is being assumed for all WSDOT projects. The inflation rate for real estate used to estimate property acquisition costs is higher. A committee has been formed of elected officials from both sides of the bridge to oversee this project.

When this project started it was looking at the entire corridor. The project extents have been moved and changed. The project extents are now from just east of I-5 to Bellevue Way. Previously the project team was ready to drop the 8 lane option, and just include the 4 lane and 6 lane options, but 8 lane option has been put back on the table.

There are four options for this project:

1. The first option for this project is a replacement of the existing four lane bridge. It would also include shoulders in both directions.
2. The second option would include 4 lanes of traffic plus bigger pontoons that could accommodate High Capacity Transit (HCT) in the future.
3. The third option includes 6 lanes of traffic and would add an HOV lane in each direction.
4. The fourth option includes 8 lanes of traffic which adds General Transit (GT) lanes as well as HOV lanes in both directions.

All of the options include a bike and pedestrian trail. This project does not include a fix for I-5. Previously the preliminary approved plan was the 6 lane option. At this point the preliminary approved plan has been taken off of the table, and all of the options have a fair chance of being selected. There is a desire to have the HOV lanes connect to the HOV lanes on I-5 which would take place in either the 6 lane or the 8 lane option. A year has been lost in the development of this project because of the lack of funding, and also because the 8 lane option has been returned to the table.

It has always been assumed that tolling would be included as part of this project. The tolling cannot fully pay for the project, but will pay for maybe 1/3 to 1/2 of the cost. This bridge was tolled in the past, when it was first constructed. The tolling will not be on I-90, it will only be on 520. EIS will include the project with and without tolling. It will also include a fully electronic tolling option, as well as a toll booth option. By the time this project is constructed many cities will have fully electronic tolling systems. High Occupancy Transit (HOT) lanes, where drivers can pay more to go faster, are not being proposed as part of this project.

There is currently \$3.5 million budgeted for noise walls. This amount is reduced from the original budget, because some money has been lost to other projects. Noise walls will be located in Roanoke, East Lake, and Capitol Hill. Specific locations have not yet been identified. The project team is working with

the neighborhoods to prioritize the location of the noise walls within the budget. The project could provide noise walls in N Capitol Hill, but they would block views, so the community will probably choose not to have them. The noise walls for this project will be particularly expensive, because in many cases they will need to be built on top of existing walls. The walls must be constructed by July of 2005, because the money cannot be moved to another biennium. To meet this schedule, locations for the walls will need to be determined by February or March.

The project team is working with an advisory committee made up of members of the community in N Capitol Hill, Roanoke/Portage Bay, and Montlake to investigate how to mitigate the impact of traffic from the expansion of 520 on these neighborhoods. The advisory committee will select consultants to conduct a mitigation study.

Key Commissioner Comments and Concerns

- Wonders if the noise walls need to be masses or if they could use sound, such as a waterfall.
 - Proponents stated that the typical approach is to try and reduce decibels, rather than mask the noise. They explained that there are requirements tied to the funding that dictate the performance criteria of the walls.
- Questions if it would be possible to use a different type of road surface to reduce the noise.
 - Proponents stated that there are some study materials being developed with noise reducing qualities. They explained that with these materials the level of sound reduction degrades over time.
- Wonders if the walls are just deflecting sound, or if they actually absorb it.
 - Proponents stated that there are some noise walls by the University District that do absorb some sound. They noted that if these walls are tagged with graffiti and are repainted they lose their ability to absorb sound.
- Questions if the walls could be combined with plant materials.
 - Proponents stated that plant materials could not be included on the freeway side, because the WSDOT does not want to include features that could distract drivers. Suggested that they could be added on the other side of the walls.
- Wonders if landscaping could be used for sound absorption.
 - Proponents stated that plants do not provide good sound absorption. They added that they do not have a planting strip or space adjacent to the walls where they could plant landscape materials. They noted that any planting would be a trade off with the amount of wall, as the budget is fixed.
- Notes that the Capitol Hill Library project was able to include a planted wall within a one foot space.
- Remarks that the most sound absorptive part of a forest, is the forest floor, not the plants. Explains that vegetation is essentially worthless in terms of sound absorption.
- Suggests that the surface of the walls could be shaped so that places where walls have been tagged and repainted would not be obvious. Notes that the paving pattern around the International Fountain in Seattle Center might be a good example of this type of pattern.
- Suggests that the team could collaborate with SDOT's artist in residence Daniel Mihalyo to explore creative options for treating the sound walls.
 - Proponents reiterated that they are working within a very constrained budget, and that

any addition to the cost of the walls would reduce the amount of wall that they will be able to build.

- Wonders if the team is including air pollution impacts in the mitigation study.
 - Proponents stated that they are only looking at the ground impacts at this point.
- Questions if the team is looking at specific points within the neighborhoods.
 - Proponents explained that they have not yet identified specific points. Generally the mitigation will look at livability in the neighborhoods, and will look at the impacts on multi-modal transportation. The team has been conducting many public meetings, as well as round-tables with local community groups.
- Wonders if WSDOT has a preferred alternative.
 - Proponents stated that they supported the initial preliminary preferred scheme. They also noted that including elements that promote car and van pooling seems appropriate for this project. They added that very few facilities are being expanded for capacity. They noted that additional GP (General Purpose) lanes could be desirable for this project, but that it is unlikely that there would be funding.
- Remarks that there is a lot of public interest in having general purpose use of HOV lanes. Wonders if there is any legal protection of HOV lanes.
 - Proponents do not believe that there is any protection of HOV lanes. They noted that tolls are another good way to encourage multiple passengers, because cars with 3 or more passengers, could be exempt from the toll.
- Notes that tolling could also be used to encourage low emission vehicles, or low noise vehicles.
- Remarks that it seems inappropriate to build the 4 lane option which would not accommodate high capacity transit (HCT) in the future. Feels that the baseline should include a provision for future HCT.
 - Proponents noted that the expandable pontoons are intended for HCT only and are only included in the EIS for that purpose.
- Notes that even the replacement scheme is both wider and higher than the existing bridge. Adds that it would be roughly 1.5 times as wide as the existing bridge.
- Remarks that the schemes show shoulders on both sides of the bridge. Notes that if this were a suspension bridge it would not have these shoulders.
 - Proponents stated that suspension bridges typically have a shoulder in the center, and that there are much longer delays on these bridges when accidents occur.
- Wonders if there are any rules that prevent a general purpose lane from being replaced with an HOV lane.
 - Proponents felt that their partners in the project, who are providing funding, would not support that change. Notes that Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) could potentially be included in this project.
- Wonders if there is not a fix for I-5, what the traffic modeling shows that the capacity of this bridge needs to be.
 - Proponents stated that the six lane alternative would work.

- Questions what the lifespan of this project is. Also wonders if these schemes could accommodate the monorail.
 - Proponents stated that the monorail could be accommodated in all of these schemes.
- Wonders what the plans are for the visualization of this project.
 - Proponents stated that those materials will not be developed until a preferred alternative is selected.
- Notes that there is a lot of enthusiasm in the community for this not to be treated simply as a transportation project.
 - Proponents reiterated that other materials will be developed once a preferred alternative has been chosen.
- Questions what happens when the bridge hits the land.
 - Proponents stated that the current bridge will stay in operation as long as possible during the construction of the new bridge. They explained that this bridge will be located to the north of the existing bridge. They added that they are trying to reconnect to the land as close as possible to the existing connections, so that the land take for this project will be very small. They noted that some of the ramps to nowhere in the arboretum will be eliminated.
- Wonders how far the 6 lane option would continue as 6 lanes.
 - Proponents stated that the bike/pedestrian lane would come off once the bridge reaches the land and would join other trails. They also explained that the HOV lane will end when the bridge reaches Montlake. They noted that the shoulders may need to be narrowed at the ends of the bridge.
- Notes that the HOV lanes will not be continuous to I-5. Also notes that traffic often backs up where HOV lanes end.
 - Proponents stated that the hope is that because many people will get off at Montlake it will mitigate this effect.
 - Proponents noted that an Environmental Impact Statement is being prepared for I-5. They explained that I-5 needs to be repaired, and almost replaced in the next 5-10 years. They added that part of the I-5 study would include the possibility of adding one lane in each direction, for Boeing access and access to Northgate.
- Wonders if there would be lids added in Montlake when the I-5 project is pursued.
 - Proponents stated that there would be some lids, but that there would not be other mitigation.

02 Oct 2003 Project: **Design Commission 35th Anniversary Project**

Phase: Staff Follow-up

Previous Reviews: 18 September 2003 (Briefing), 21 August 2003(Briefing), 17 July 2003

Time: .5 hours (SDC Ref. # 170 | DC00310)

Summary: **The Commission discussed details of the upcoming 35th anniversary celebration in December. The Mayor will attend the event during the presentation of letters of commendation. The Commission reviewed a draft agenda for the event. DCLU staff noted that the letters of commendation will recognize entire project teams including the project managers. The Commission was concerned that the event might be too inward focused if it is centered primarily on current and past Commission members. They would like to invite members of Seattle's civic community to share their thoughts about the Commission's impact on Seattle's urban character.**

02 October 2003 Commission Business

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|-------------------------|--|
| ACTION ITEMS | A. <u>TIMESHEETS</u> |
| | B. <u>MINUTES FROM 18 SEPTEMBER 2003</u> - APPROVED |
| DISCUSSION ITEMS | C. <u>PROJECT UPDATES</u> - CUBELL |
| | D. <u>MRP UPDATE</u> - CHERYL SIZOV |
| | E. <u>RECRUITMENT UPDATE</u> - CUBELL |
| | F. <u>WATERFRONT UPDATE</u> - CUBELL |
| ANNOUNCEMENTS | G. <u>OCTOBER 16 DESIGN COMMISSION MEETING</u>
<u>CANCELLED</u> |
| | H. VIADUCT OPEN HOUSE – OCT 2 ND , 5-8PM. LAFAYETTE ELEMENTARY
SCHOOL, 2645 CALIFORNIA AVE SW |
| | I. MRP MEETING – OCT 6 TH , 4-7PM, KEY TOWER 4050/60 |
| | J. CENTER CITY FORUM - TRANSIT INTEGRATION – OCT 9 TH ,
5-8PM, UNION STATION, 401 S JACKSON ST |
| | K. CENTRAL WATERFRONT PLAN FORUM #2 – NOV 7 TH |

02 Oct 2003 Project: **I-5 Open Space**

Phase: Schematic Design

Previous Reviews: 1 May 2003 (Draft Site Plan)

Presenters: David Goldberg, Seattle Parks and Recreation
Lorraine Pai, Cascade Design Collaborative
John Roloff, ArtistAttendees: Carolyn Law, Office of Arts and Cultural Affairs
Michael Shiosaki, Seattle Parks and Recreation
Eric Schmidt, Cascade Design Collaborative
Chris Leman, community member
Marilynne Gardner, Department of Finance

Time: 1 hour (SDC Ref. # 169 | DC00301)

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

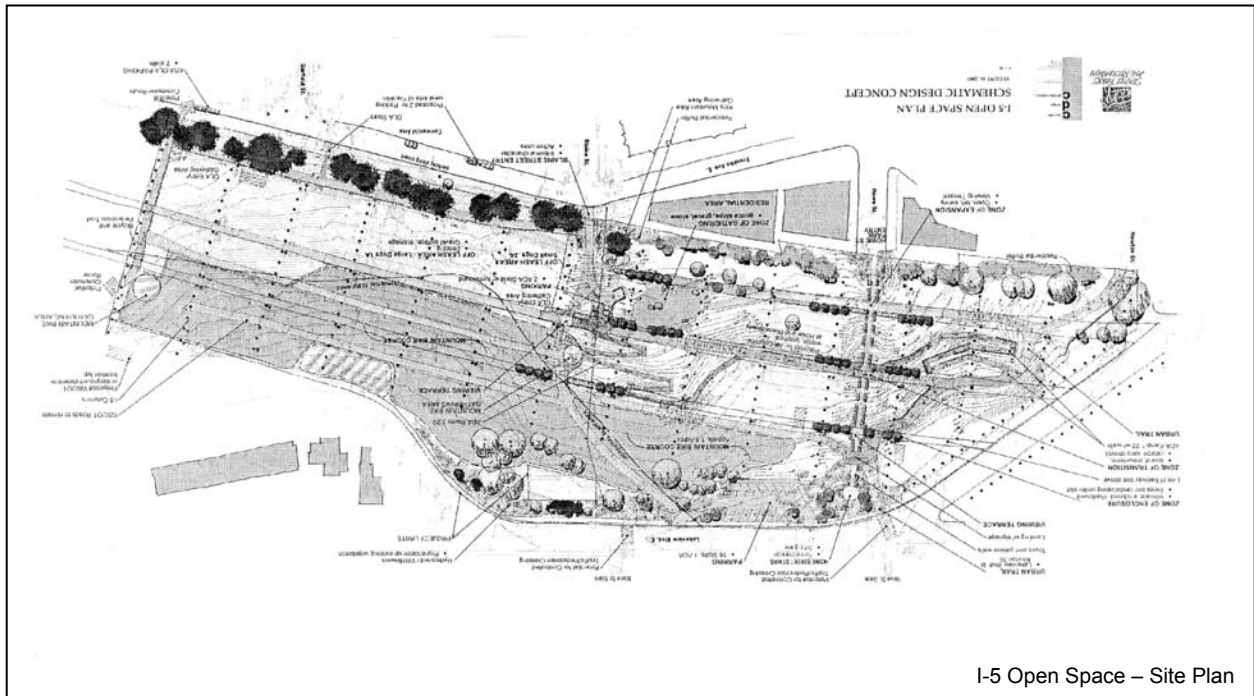
- **The Commission appreciates the attempt to create an abstraction of nature in an uncanny environment, and would like the artist's work to be better integrated into the project;**
- **urges the team to continue to work to control dust and erosion;**
- **suggests that the team consider how the design will function at different times of day;**
- **feels that the location of the functions work well in relation to the neighborhood and that the circulation including the accessible circulation works well;**
- **encourages the team to study whether a small lawn area or areas could be incorporated into the design;**
- **urges the team to look at where places to contemplate the sculptural power of the space could be inserted in the plan;**
- **is concerned about whether the vegetation envisioned with the art will actually grow;**
- **looks forward to seeing how rainwater would be incorporated into this design;**
- **feels that the dog run is a function that takes a lot of space and that the size shown is appropriate, and asks the team to continue to consider creating separate areas for small and large dogs;**
- **encourages the team to work further to develop the entries into the park;**
- **looks forward to seeing the details of the design and the specific materials that will be used; and**
- **recommends approval of schematic design.**

This open space project is being funded through the Pro Parks Levy. The last time the commission saw this project the mix of uses had been established and the commission was interested in seeing the design direction of the project. The orientation of uses is similar to what was previously presented to the Commission. The mix of uses includes the following:

- Unstructured recreation

- Off-leash area
- Mountain biking trails
- Pedestrian paths
- Sport climbing facility

In order to accommodate all of the uses ½ of the on-site parking proposed in the previously reviewed concepts will be removed. Instead, existing unregulated street parking along a portion of E Franklin St. will be converted to two-hour parking in order to compensate for the loss of on-street parking. SDOT is supportive of this parking conversion.



I-5 Open Space – Site Plan

The project is currently at the schematic design stage. The parks board has recently reviewed this project. Two issues that need further consideration are lighting along the pathways, and drainage of the off-leash area.

The uses of the site have been arranged to respond to the adjacent neighborhood. The non-programmed spaces will be located closest to the adjacent residential neighborhood, while the active spaces will be closer to the commercial areas. The team has tried to locate the mountain biking trails as efficiently as possible within the steepest portion of the site. The team has struggled to incorporate circulation on such a steep site. The park has accessible routes for bikes and joggers, as well as an ADA accessible route. The ADA accessible route connects to the parking lot. Back Country Bicycle Trails has been very supportive of this project. They will even lead the design and construction of the bike trails.

The off leash area will have separate areas for small dogs and for large dogs. The team is investigating geological studies of soil percolation for the off-leash area.

The team has recognized the uncanniness off this man made site. The park design recognizes that this is a found place. The team is trying to take advantage of views along the corridors as well as movement within the park, such as joggers moving east-west through the site. The landscaping will be focused in

the areas that can sustain plants. The best areas for plants are under the slots where there is natural light and rainfall. The team is also considering integrating the plants that are already on the site, as long as they are not found to be too invasive.

Currently many homeless people congregate on the site for this project. The team notes that there will be a high level of activity on the site once the open space project has been developed. The level of activity should make park users feel safe, and the number of people using the site should discourage undesirable activities.

One of the concepts behind the open space design is the idea of transition in space and time. The team would like to include opportunities for people to look up and see cars while at the same time they are aware of the east west movement of joggers. Another concept is evanescence, or the lasting power of a vapor. The team is also considering this space as an urban Coliseum. Another idea is to use the highway deck above to produce soundscapes. Additionally the team has discussed incorporating gabion walls possibly with embedded cultural objects. The team has noted that because it is generally dark under the freeway that the light entering the space through the slots is very dramatic. They are considering ways to enhance this effect, possibly using reflections.

John Roloff is the artist working on this project. He helped to write the arts plan for the Pro Parks Levy. His work is very experimental. He would like the art to take into account the program, but also create its own identity. He uses materials and concepts that are related to the natural world.

John Roloff presented his early ideas for this project, noting that they are not intended as proposals. He noted that this is an amazingly unique place where it is possible to create a new ecology unique to itself. The dominant feeling of the space is the arcade like areas between the columns. One of his initial ideas is to conceptually dissolve the freeway. In this concept when it is raining above, it would also rain in the space. Additionally the artist would create a gradient of light that would mimic the light outside.

The artist is also exploring the use of mirrors. Mirrors could be used to project the columns up through the roadway. Mirrors could also project the columns down into the earth. The artist would like to build on the uncanny nature of the space through his work.

Another possible concept for the art would be to encase some columns in mesh in order to grow moss, or orchids that do not need soil. These could be watered by the freeway runoff. This concept could also include mirrors to project the columns both upward and down.

Key Community Comments and Concerns

- Applauds the Park's Department's effort to create connections. Is disappointed that other agencies such as SDOT, or WSDOT have not gotten involved.
- Is concerned that there is no money for lighting the stair that leads into this open space. Notes that this is a critical connection for pedestrians and bikers and that it needs to be lit.
- Notes that the community is frustrated that there is no lawn space. Feels that there is no place to play Frisbee, or to sit and rest.
- Feels that the team is not focusing enough on finding plants that could thrive in a shady, dry area.
- Urges the team to study a smaller off-leash area. Notes that the off-leash area requires a full irrigation system, and extensive maintenance.

Key Commissioner Comments and Concerns

- Notes that parks can be all kinds of things, and all sorts of materials. Wonders if turf is intended on the steeply sloped areas.
 - Proponents stated that the flat areas that are shown shaded on the map will be gravel. They added that there will be some rock, and retaining on the slopes.
- Questions how the team intends to control dust on the site. Notes that there don't seem to be any plants in the bike area.
 - Proponents stated that the bike areas will be gravel surfaces. Added that there will need to be erosion control ground covers in these areas.
 - Proponents stated that SDOT has used a spray-on tackifier for dust and erosion control on other projects.
 - Proponents stated that bikes will be restricted to designated trails on the slopes, and will not be just be free to bike anywhere on the sloped areas.
- Compliments the team on their abstraction of the mystery of nature, without trying to duplicate it.
- Notes that there are two elements to the plan:
 1. Linear spaces that run through the park
 2. a conventional plan

Questions how these two parts interact, and how the design addresses transition vs. permanence.
- Wonders if the artist's interventions will be throughout the park, or focused in just one place.
 - Proponents stated that the artist's work will be limited to one area in the park.
- Questions how this part of the park interacts with the other spaces. Notes that it would be useful to indicate the artist's work on the overall plan.
- Likes the artist's use of landscape and mystery. Wonders how it functions through the day and night and season changes. Feels that it would be mysterious in the evening, but wonders what the effect would be during the day. Questions if the art would have real longevity, and is concerned about how it would be maintained over the long run.
- Is concerned about the art. Feels that the concept is interesting, but isn't sure that it will work, based on a physical understanding of plants.
- Finds the idea of taking a man made covered area, and making it rain perverse.
- Compliments the team on grappling with the reality of the site, including problems such as dust.
- Suggests that the park could include a lawn area at the west side of space for people who are coming from the adjacent neighborhood. Agrees that a lawn space would not make sense under the freeway.
- Is interested by the idea of passive space within the park. Notes that there is a powerful sculptural quality to this space, which is formed by the intersection of a natural ground plane with a man made structure. Feels that it would be valid to include a place where people can stop and contemplate this condition.
 - Proponents stated that they are considering including boulders within the site, for people to sit on.

- Notes that dog runs require lots of space. Feels that to make it small would frustrate the purpose.
- Congratulates the team on creating an accessible route through this steep site.
- Notes that the team did not mention much how people will come into the site. Urges the team to explore the experience of entering the site, and to think about why people will be drawn to the park.
- Feels that the design is moving in the right direction. Notes that the team has developed a good diagram for the site, but needs to take it to the next step of real materials, real boundaries, edges, and forms.
- Would like to see how water is integrated into the site. Notes that because it is covered it could potentially incorporate water collection, instead of irrigation.

02 Oct 2003 Project: Montlake Library

Phase: Design Development

Previous Reviews: 20 Mar 2003(Schematic Design), 21 November 2002 (Pre-Design)

Presenters: Ed Weinstein, Weinstein A|U

Richard Yancey, Weinstein A|U

Attendees: Alex Harris, Seattle Public Libraries

Cory Harris, Weinstein A|U

Justine Kim, Seattle Public Libraries

Matt Aalfs, Weistin A|U Architects + Urban Designers

Time: 1 hour (SDC Ref. # 221 | DC00110)

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

- **The Commission compliments the team on facilitating a layperson/expert collaboration with such a fine outcome, and feels that this is an elegant and exciting solution that is both a civic expression that responds to community concerns and at the same time elevates their idea of what compatible contextual design can be;**
- **compliments the team on the way they have utilized the grade change as an asset, and encourages the team to proceed in thinking about how the grade change can create a very interesting exterior plaza;**
- **looks forward to the continued investigation of the exterior social spaces as well as the interior spaces, especially how people will occupy the East wall with its window seats, and also the detailing of the brick wall and the integration of art into the design;**
- **fully supports the zoning departures that the team is seeking and supports on street parking along 24th St.;**
- **would like to see this design again with the landscape architect and artist; and**
- **recommends approval of design development.**

This project has changed since the last commission review as a result of the community input process. This library project is on a small site of roughly 5,000 sf. The site is on the corner of E McGraw St and 24th Ave E. This site is just east of an intensive commercial block. 24th Ave is a high velocity arterial, and McGraw is a significant pedestrian arterial. McGraw connects the elementary school with the arboretum. The site is zoned for residential, but there are many non-residential uses nearby. There is a significant grade change that needed to be accommodated in the design. There is a 12 foot differential across the site. There is also a lot of parking required for the size of the site.

The parking will be located at street level with the library above. This has the benefit of elevating the reading room and allowing views to the arboretum. The original design included a butterfly roof. This roof form increased the buildings scale on 24th, and the opposing roof related to the neighboring residential.

There were issues of stylistic preference from the community. Many felt that the design was too aggressive and too contemporary. The community also had concerns about performance issues of the library. One of their concerns was that there wasn't enough space for congregating in the plaza. They



Montlake Library Exterior View

also noted that there weren't enough areas for casual conversation in the interior. The stylistic issues reflected community members desire to have an historical or extremely contextual building. Many would have liked the library to look like the bungalows in the neighborhood. The Library supported the idea of creating a contemporary building. The design team feels that the butterfly roof was one element too much, and has revised the design to include a simpler flat roof. The community room portion of the building is rectilinear and brick, with a modernist window that allows the activity in the community room to be seen from the street. The expression of this piece is more vertical than horizontal. There is also a vertical circulation element which is expressed through to the exterior. The reading room is treated with a window wall along its length. The community commented that there was too much glass, and that it was too cold and harsh. The design team has introduced purposeful solid panels to break up the window wall. These panels are book cases on the interior, with window seats in between. There will be a solid wall below the reading room that will surround the parking level.

The massing of the building has been articulated to respond to the context. The administrative area relates to the scale of the adjacent single family buildings, while the community portion relates to the scale of the commercial building across the street.

The interior of the building will include glue-lam beams. The idea is to express the virtue of technology in a modest way. The hope is to create a contemporary building that is very tactile, by introducing natural light.

The entry court has been revised to be more penetrable both visually and physically. Coming from the corner there is no grade differential entering the plaza. Entering from the west there have been steps introduced. The front plaza will include stone paving and seating if the budget will allow it. The team would also like to clad the building if the budget allows. The back plaza will be on grade with the meeting room and with the community activity room. The entry gasket element has been pulled out further to create a more generous waiting area. This connects to the main stairs. The circulation spine helps to zone the rest of the interior of the building.

At this point the building appears to be acceptable to the community. The plan itself is the same as the original design. The significant changes have been to the massing and roofline, the materials in the plaza, and the east façade.



Montlake Library Interior View

The project is going to council for approval for a type 5 decision on a couple of issues. This site for this project is within 600 feet of the elementary school which conflicts with the institutional dispersion rule. The existing library is also within 600 feet of the elementary school, but because the library is being

moved it is an issue. Originally the team had been asked to maintain a 10 foot setback facing the adjacent property. They are seeking a variance in order to have a 5'6" setback instead. Currently the library controls the adjacent site.

Key Commissioner Comments and Concerns

- Feels it is exciting the way the team has facilitated design through the community process. Notes that the scheme may be less bold, but that it is extremely elegant. Adds that the team has maintained the goal of creating an enduring civic building. Commends the team on a great layperson-expert collaboration.
- Appreciates how seriously the team took the neighborhoods concerns without giving in to the idea that all civic buildings need to imitate their context.
- Questions what the intended use is of the other lot owned by the library. Wonders if this is to accommodate future expansion.
 - Proponents stated that they are not planning for expansion at this time, except at Northgate, because the entire library system is being expanded to such a large degree. The Board is concerned about absorbing the costs of planning for the future. The plan is to sell the adjacent property, and return the money to the project. Initially the library wasn't sure how much property they would need, especially because of the grade change, and the amount of parking required. They ended up acquiring more property than they needed.
- Wonders what the building material will be if it isn't brick.
 - Proponents stated that it would be ground face concrete block. They noted that this material will have a different scale, but will still be masonry.
- Feels that the trade off of the butterfly roof for the bookshelves and window seats was worthwhile.
 - Proponents noted that they are working with a zero sum budget. They should have savings from the loss of the roof, and will be able to prioritize other elements.
- Notes that the design team has turned the problem of the topography into an asset, by allowing people to graciously turn the corner into the site. Encourages the team not to think of topography as a problem in the future.
- Likes the way the walls step down the hill from the building entrance. Suggests that they could be turned perpendicular to their current orientation, so that they can act as spatial dams.
- Remarks that at the window seats the quality of light could be very stark. Adds that the traditional way to deal with this is to splay the walls coming into the space.
 - Proponents stated that they are still exploring these details. They added that occupying the window wall with books and window seats is a new idea.
- Feels that the walls are a bit stark. Wonders if the team could find old brick from a building in Montlake being torn down and incorporate the irregular brick into the coursing.
 - Proponents noted that there will be detailed levels of brick patterning. They added that they would like to use wire cut brick. They noted that this brick because is textured, but unlike tumbled brick it does not give the illusion of being old.
- Agrees that the building is a little stark. Wonders if the team has met with the artist. Feels that the art

could add texture to the building.

- Proponents stated that they have met with the artist, but that she is currently out of the country. They explained that the artist is developing a skylight sundial that will cast colored light at different times of the day.
- Wonders if users can access the courtyard in the NW corner.
 - Proponents explained that this courtyard is intended to be occupied visually, rather than physically. They noted that this space could be used for specific events, but would not be generally accessible.

Key Visitor Comments and Concerns

- Notes that the Library supported the initial design and that the changes are not due to a lack of endorsement on the Library's part.
- Notes that there is currently some on-street parking on 24th. Would like that parking to be extended in front of the library. Emphasizes that this parking would act as a buffer between traffic, and pedestrians.
 - Proponents stated that they have been informally discussing this idea. They agreed that it would have both the benefit of providing additional parking, as well as acting as a buffer between the sidewalk and the street.

02 Oct 2003 Project: Belltown Community Center

Phase: Pre Design

Previous Review: None

Presenters: Ed Weinstein, Weinstein AU
Richard Yancey, Weinstein AUAttendees: Glenda Warmoth, DCLU
Lauren Hirt, DCLU
Cory Harris, Weinstein AU
Mathew Flickinger, Low Income Housing Institute
Barbara Sheldon, DAY Belltown C.C.

Time: 1 hour (SDC Ref. # 169 | DC00317)

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

- **The Commission appreciates the care with which the team has looked at the zoning and planning regulatory environment and the community in which they are working, as well as the physical forms of the surrounding development;**
- **believes that the design is moving in the right direction in terms of the distribution of the different uses within the larger building;**
- **appreciates that the community center has a large open airy space and feels it is a very generous and valuable contribution to the streetscape;**
- **is interested in the idea of the community center having occasional access to the roof gardens, but recognizes that this is something that needs to be resolved with the residential owners;**
- **recommends that the proponents investigate the Viaduct redevelopment project alternatives and determine what impacts, if any, they may have on this project;**
- **encourages the team to seek resolution of the zoning issue, which appears to be a legal tangle rather than an intent, and fully endorses the community center use on this site;**
- **looks forward to seeing this project in the future; and**
- **recommends approval of pre design.**

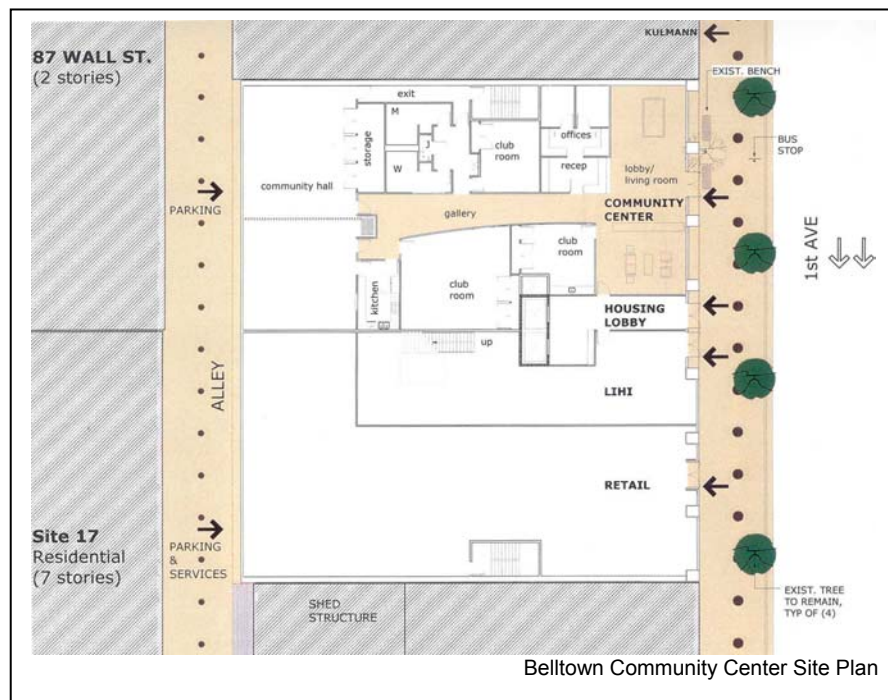
This project is being funded by a community levy. The project team has been working with a Parks Department Project Advisory Team. The site for this project was selected before the architect was involved. There was unanimous agreement to co-locate this project with a low-income housing development. This atypical community center reflects the community's needs and wants. The center will be a collection of meeting rooms, with one large meeting space that will serve as Belltown's living room. Belltown sees itself as a center of diversity, and wants to reflect that in their diverse community center. In addition to the community center, the project will include the following:

- Five floors of affordable housing
- Offices for the Low Income Housing Institute (LIHI)
- Street level retail

- 2 levels of parking

Belltown is well defined by circulation. Traffic moves north on 4th Ave, and south on 2nd, which act as a one way couplet. 1st, 3rd, and 5th are all two way streets, and have a different scale, and more street life, than the one-way streets. There is extremely vital night time activity on 1st Ave. Belltown is currently devoid of public open space. The community has advocated for green streets and pocket parks, but none of them have happened yet. There are not a lot of families in this area. There are younger couples, who form part of downtown's work force, and there are older empty-nesters. This suggests a different type of community center. The community center will be a highly visible tenant improvement in a mixed use building. The building itself needs to fit in with other buildings on the street. The site has visibility on 1st Ave, and is also surrounded by recently constructed housing.

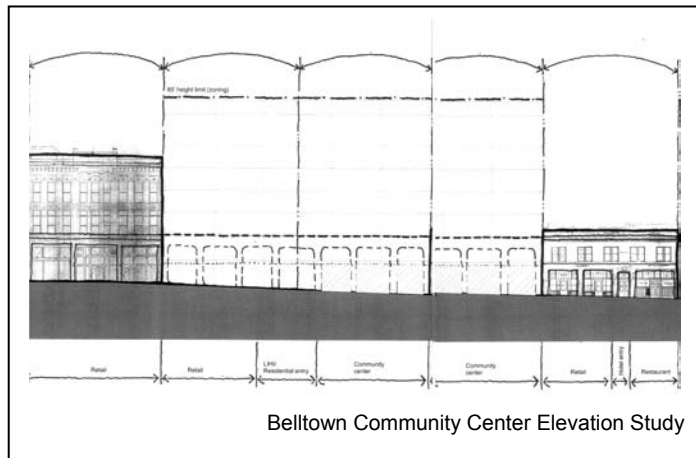
The design team is excited by the site that was selected by the community for this project. This site is at the epicenter of Belltown, located between the pair of streets that have not been designated as green streets. The site is on the west side of 1st Ave and is a mid-block site between Battery St and Wall St. The area is zoned as Downtown Mixed Residential Residential (DMR\R). The height limit is 85 feet if it includes residential units. There are a mix of historic and new buildings around the site. The building to the west of the site is low, and allows views to the sound and mountains. There are stone benches on the sidewalk done as part of a street art project. The team is trying to find information about this project and would like to preserve the benches.



The first floor of the project will be the community center, and retail space, as well as the residential and office entry. The second floor will be LIHI's offices. Above LIHI's offices will be five floors of residential units. The design team has been exploring two different massing options. One option would have the mass of the residential development on 1st Ave, with a courtyard in the back (to the west). The other option would reverse this form and would face the courtyard onto 1st Ave. There is a 17 foot difference between 1st Ave and the alley. The design team is proposing 2 levels of parking

which would be accessed off of the alley. There is the potential to create exterior spaces on the upper roof level, or at the deck level, above the LIHI offices.

The community center will be located in the northern end of the building, to take advantage of the views over the low building to the west. There will be an oversize lobby/lounge space facing the street. At the back of the building there will be a hall that can be rented out. A gallery space will connect the hall to the lobby. The community space will also include three club-rooms (which will be conference rooms of



different sizes), bathrooms, and a small catering kitchen, as well as administrative office space

The team has been studying the rhythm of the adjacent buildings. On the Hull building, to the south of the proposed building, there is a cornice line that distinguishes the first floor of the building from the upper floors. This cornice corresponds roughly to the cornice at the top of the Glaser Building, to the north of the site. The design team is proposing to continue the rhythm of the structure of the adjacent buildings. They feel this building

has a responsibility to the street, and they would like to continue the 16-20 foot rhythm which gives the street a comprehensible human scale.

The design team feels that the community center can be expressive without breaking the form of the building. The community center will be located at the most advantageous position in the building, with regard to visibility. There is a conundrum in the code that does not allow community center as a permitted street level use. The project may go to council in order to try and get relief from this regulation. The code allows 25% of the street level to be any use. ??? The adjacent Hull building is registered as an historic landmark. This project will need to go before the Design Review Board, because of it's adjacency to a landmark building. So far the Board felt that it was too early to make any comment, but they were interested in seeing how natural light will be incorporated into the building.

Key Commissioner Comments and Concerns

- Notes that on the façade of this building there will be one entrance that will be private, and one entrance that will be to an active public space. Wonders how the façade will be developed to respond to this difference.
 - Proponents agreed that this is the big question facing their design. There are many models in the district of discreet residential entrances as compared with more welcoming retail spaces.
- Appreciates the way the team explored issues on a large scale that surround the project. Also appreciates that the program for the community center is responding to the actual community, rather than an abstract Seattle community.
- Feels that this is an appropriate location for this kind of facility.
- Appreciates that the grade change has been used as an advantage.
- Encourages the team to continue to develop an overall identity for the project, while making the parts as distinctive as possible.
- Is intrigued by the possibility of development along the alley. Wonders what kind of cooperation will need to occur.
 - Proponents noted that the 87 Wall St. building across the alley has windows onto the alley, and a secondary entrance.

- Wonders if the roof gardens would be for the community center, or for the residents.
 - Proponents stated that LIHI will be the arbiter of who uses that space. There could be an issue with having unsupervised space on the roof. It will probably not be available for unscheduled activities, but could be scheduled for specific events. Conceptually at this point in the design, the space would be for residents, or the offices.
- Questions which roof level the proponents are considering developing.
 - Proponents stated that the upper roof is more likely to be developed. The lower roof may only be accessible for maintenance because of its proximity to the residences.
- Questions if any of the viaduct replacement alternatives will affect this site.
 - Proponents stated that they have not yet investigated this, but agreed it would be a good idea to do so.
- Wonders what income level the residential units will serve.
 - Proponents stated that they will be for 40%-60% of the mean income – the double minimum.
- Questions if these units will be for families.
 - Proponents stated that that is their hope, and noted current plans for 3-bedroom units
- Compliments the team on the cohesiveness of their approach, and their consideration of the neighborhood plans, as well as talking to community members to explore the context of this project.