Seattle Design Commission

APPROVED
MINUTES OF THE MEETING

20 October 2005

Gregory J. Nickels,
Mayor

David Spiker
Chair

Charles Anderson

Pam Beyette

Karen Kiest

Anindita Mitra

Sheri Olson

Nic Rossouw

Dennis Ryan

Darrell Vange

Guillermo Romano
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Layne Cubell
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Projects Reviewed

Goodwill Redevelopment
Queen Anne Park
Northgate Thornton Creek Water Quality Channel
Northgate 3rd Avenue Street Improvements

Convened: 8.30

Adjourned: 4.00pm

Commissioners Present

David Spiker – Chair
Charles Anderson
Pam Beyette
Karen Kiest
Anindita Mitra
Sheri Olson
Nic Rossouw
Darrell Vange

Staff Present

Layne Cubell
Tom Iurino
Guillermo Romano
Alison Maitland Scheetz

20 Oct 2005 Project: **Goodwill Redevelopment**
Phase: Street Vacations
Previous Reviews: none

Presenters: Bill Fuller, Fuller Sears Architects
Bob Parks, TRF Pacific
Ken Colling, Seattle Goodwill Industries

Attendees: Rich Hill, McCullough Hill
Matt Porteous, Hewitt Architects
Lani Johnson, Johnson Partnership
Tammy Frederick, SDOT
Beverly Barrett, SDOT
Moira Gray, SDOT

Recused: Darrell Vange, Design Commission

Time: 1.5 hours (SDC Ref. # 170)

Action: The Commission appreciates the early presentation on three street vacations proposed for the Dearborn Street Urban Retail Center, and

- **is concerned about the project's relationship to the surrounding neighborhood and encourages more permeable edges, especially at the corners.**
- **are particularly troubled by the current proposal for 13th Avenue South and feel that in the current design proposal, it no longer functions as a public street.**
- **is also concerned about the design of South Weller Street and encourages wider sidewalks and the use of street trees.**
- **question the location of the Goodwill loading dock off Dearborn and suspects that it may be too close to the corner.**
- **would like to see significant improvements of the pedestrian crossing at Rainier and Dearborn.**
- **recognizes the importance of this project in terms of its position between Rainier Valley and the International District, but propose that the proponents consider the impact and monolithic architectural expression that the project could have on the neighborhood.**
- **recommends reconsidering the unilateral placing of residential units over retail and suggest that proponents forge better connections to the residential neighborhoods.**
- **supports the L-shaped layout of the streets as providing good public access through the site.**
- **recognize the potential neighborhood that could be achieved by incorporating small retail businesses into the project, but would like assurances on how this would be achieved.**
- **commends the inclusion of workforce housing, but again feels this needs greater definition and explanation.**
- **generally supports the direction of the proposal, it does not have adequate information to make a formal recommendation on the urban design merits of the project at this time.**
- **thinks the proponents are on the right track and encourages them to persevere, as there is still a lot of design work to do.**

Proponents Presentation
This project is a complex master plan for the redevelopment of the Goodwill Industries site at the corner of Dearborn and Rainier, just west of the ID in the South Downtown area. The project entails 1.6 million sf of mixed –use housing and retail spread over several blocks to be designed as an Urban Retail Center. The project is still in the early stages. It has been presented to the Design Review Board on two occasions and is reported to have strong community support. The current proposal seeks to vacate three streets to accommodate the development and create vital new public spaces.

Development Objectives:

- Incorporate Goodwill as a major, integrated component of the project. The redevelopment will consolidate and increase the amount of programmable space providing retail space and meeting rooms, which will be available to the public
- Create a vibrant and active urban mixed-use project with a variety of large and small tenants
- Bring significant and varied residential options to the neighborhood
- Include both neighborhood and regional retail tenants

Design Objectives:

- Integrate the property into the neighborhood
- Revise the street/grid block pattern
- Create an active public realm – get people out of their cars into pedestrian-oriented project
- Minimize the visual impacts of parking
- Use site topography to mitigate building bulk
- Make sure all streets appear public and inviting regardless of ownership

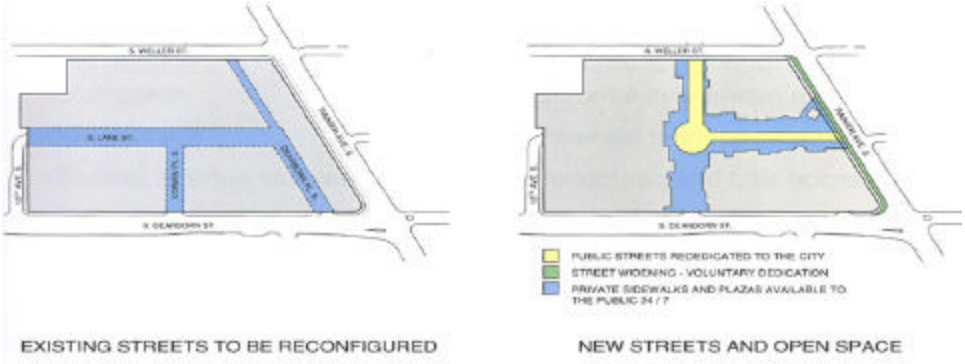
In order to achieve the objectives listed above a number of massing and street configuration studies were completed.

Model A slightly amends the existing street arrangement with virtually no vacation. However, this model creates a canyon in the center and a weak retail front.

Model B raises the pedestrian plane and seeks vacation of Dearborn Place South, which would allow for an at grade connection between Rainier and South Lane Street.

Model C, the preferred study, also seeks vacation of Dearborn Place South, but it further provides pedestrian access from Weller, vehicle access from Dearborn and creates a wide central public space to engage all users.

The Commission is requested to endorse two primary design concepts:



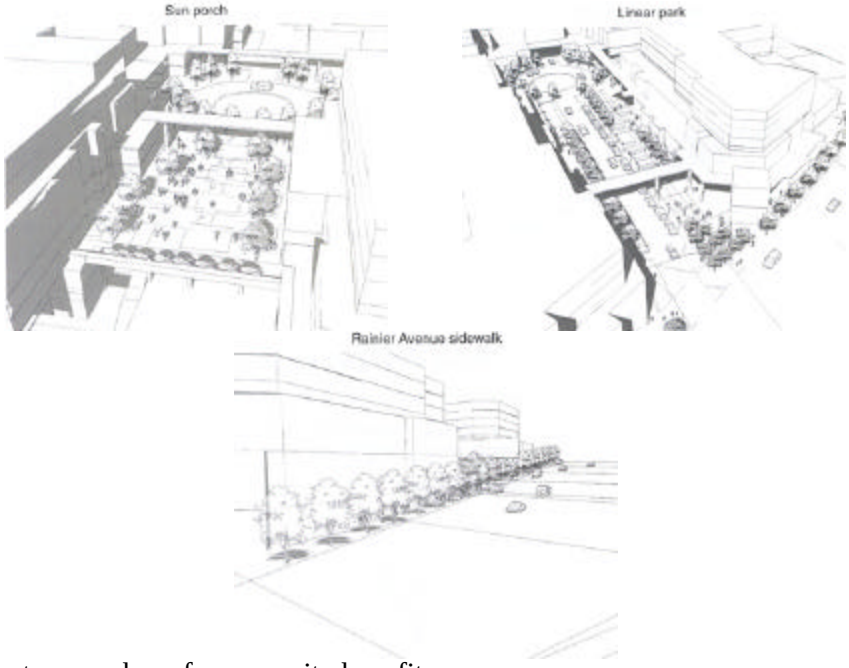
EXISTING STREETS TO BE RECONFIGURED NEW STREETS AND OPEN SPACE

1. Raising the pedestrian plane to meet the surrounding streets

2. Redirecting the street grid to engage the neighborhoods

This design proposal provides a number of public benefit opportunities:

1. it offers open space experience through a sun porch, linear park and Rainier Avenue sidewalk.



2. it presents a number of community benefits:
   - a community meeting room in the new Goodwill complex
   - potential park
   - pedestrian and bike access
   - additional lane on Rainier Ave. and pedestrian crossing

The proponents requested Commission advice on:

- how to ensure the interior streets feel public and inclusive
- how to minimize the difference between interior and perimeter, public and private.
- design input to get maximum utility from the open space opportunities

Commissioner Questions and Comments

- SDOT states that "no vacation" in model A is incorrect and clarifies that proponents need to acknowledge that Corwin Place exists. They told the proponents to break up the massing of the building in order to present the correct design implications to the public.

- Although SDOT acknowledged that traffic studies have not yet been completed, they expressed concern over the truck and vehicle access off Dearborn.

- SDOT claimed to be baffled by the notion of vacating and then rededicating the streets. Feels that the after the vacation the streets would become private, and can not imagine why the city would want responsibility of them since they would no longer have a general transportation purpose.

- SDOT expresses skepticism about the redirection of the street grid and the notions of public benefit presented. Feels that most of the benefits are interior and therefore only of benefit of those who go into the development, and not the public in general.

- While SDOT feels there are a lot of interesting notions in the project, it thinks that the design is very imposing. Request that the proponents consider the edges, especially along Dearborn, to make sure they are accessible to the larger public, and not just garage and loading access.

- Requests clarification of the park location.

  Parks is keen to increase the amount of park space in the area and is currently exploring possibilities around Jackson and King Street. Proponents have been in discussions with Parks and have made proposals to Wash DOT to acquire an undeveloped property to the south east of the site, but this has been unsuccessful. They are ideally interested in areas adjacent to the Goodwill redevelopment site.

- Made reference to precedents where developers have made contributions to park space and public benefit elements off site. SDOT clarified that while this does and can occur, it is standard for the public benefit to be on site, especially in larger developments such as this.

- Questions whether retail development is a good urban design solution.

- Finds the issue of work force housing intriguing and would like greater definition and guarantees.

- Sees great benefit in establishing small retail and local businesses. Does not feel there is a need for more national chains.

- Requests that the project provide significant attention to the pedestrian crossing across Rainier and Dearborn. Feels this is a critical opportunity for the project to provide an essential public benefit.

- Is concerned with the proximity of the loading dock on Dearborn to the corner of Rainier.

- Would like to see greater design of 13th Ave. Is concerned that the current proposal presents this street as a prime access and drive ways.

- Asks for clarification of the proposals for Weller.

  At present the north side is composed of small industrial buildings. The proponents believe that this design proposal with will be a catalyst for further development and as it evolves development could extent up to Jackson.

- Asks if the proponents are proposing changes to the streets.
  Intend Rainier to extend the aesthetics and connection of Lane Street and have 12' sidewalk lined with street trees. This would also extend and wrap around to Dearborn, where it is possible to have on street parking, unlike Rainier.

- Appreciates that this is an early stage of the development and recognizes the value of the massing models, but questions the circulation patterns. Although understands the vehicular flows for the parking garage off Dearborn, is less convinced of the pedestrian connection, experience and scale from Rainier to Weller. Does not feel this achieves the proponent's goal of creating a streetscape that appears public.

- Feels it is a misnomer to call the east west access a liner park because of the focus on vehicular access and parking.

- Is concerned with the layering of the residential development over the retail. Is concerned that this negates the different personalities of Dearborn and Weller. Suggests that any retail on Weller could create more of a neighborhood feel, rather than big box developments.

- Is troubled by the vehicular access strategies from Weller and Dearborn because the proposal does not seem to provide a successful pedestrian or vehicular access. Feels the design does not seem to encourage public access or have standard public street characteristics.

- Would like stronger public benefits for the neighborhood and a real park, not the linear park currently outlined.

- Requests figures to clarify the number of parking facilities proposed and those required by code.

- Encourages the use of on street parking to enhance the pedestrian experience.

- Stresses that this is a transitional area between the ID and Rainier Valley and therefore this area should serve as a gateway. Asks the proponents not to be generic or vanilla in their approach, and make it an extension of the districts, especially the ID.

- Commends the mixed use approach, but reiterates earlier comments regarding the concerns of layering the residential units over the retail. Feels this is not a reflection of the vernacular architecture.

- Feels that the approaches to 13th Ave and Weller fail to reflect the needs of the larger community.

- Thinks that the layering is a result of development process, rather than a strong connection to the site's context.

- Recognizes the positive nature and value of such a large development.

- Approves of the focus on providing for local retail businesses.

- Requests that the proponents consider both the corners and edges of the development site to make them more permeable.

- Is concerned that the project is focused on the 'inside' and not the 'outside'. Encourages the proponents to expand the project towards the street and make it more transparent to the neighborhood.

20 Oct 2005 Project: **Commission Business - Skybridges**
Staff Discussion

Attendees: Susan Mueller, SDOT
Sharon Coleman, Vulcan
John Rahaim, Department of Planning and Development

Time: 1 hours (SDC Ref. # 168)

Owing to the recent number of projects that have included a skybridge, the Commission had a discussion about its role of review and assessment criteria, including the public benefit, impact and appropriateness of such structures to Seattle's urban landscape. The Commission identified the following;

- it views bridges over alleys differently than streets.
- no skybridges are better than lots; higher rather than lower; open rather than closed.
- proponents need to clarify public benefits, interests, use and view approach from the street
- bridges should have a distinct character from the adjacent buildings to distinguish their separation from the private realm.

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20 Oct 2005 Project: **Commission Business – Planning Update**
Bi-monthly update

Attendees: John Rahaim, Department of Planning and Development

Time: 45 Minutes (SDC Ref. # 220)

The Commission would like to thank John for his update on the Planning Division. They appreciate hearing about the proposed budget and its impacts on the planning division. They would like to lend their support to the inclusion of funding in the budget for the public Realm plan as it goes to City Council for approval.

- The Green Building team has been consolidated into five positions within DPD and now focuses on private development.
- The Waterfront development team has funding for two additional members of staff. One position will concentrate on the development of Colman dock and the other will focus on shoreline code.
- The transport mitigation assessment used for the South Lake Union district will be streamlined and applied to Downtown, Northgate, and the University District development projects.
- Permanent funding has been established for the Center City Strategy with an orientation towards families, livability and downtown school districts.

20 Oct 2005 Project: Queen Anne Park
Phase: Schematic Design
Previous Reviews: none

Presenters: Iole Alessandrini, Artist
Mark Tilbe, Murase Associates
Michelle Martinat, Murase Associates

Attendees: Cathy Tuttle, Seattle Department of Parks and Recreation
Michael Shiosaki, Seattle Department of Parks and Recreation

Time: 1 hour (SDC Ref. # 169)

Action

The Commission thanks the Parks Department and its design team for presenting the schematic design of Queen Anne Park and commends the design for its purity, simplicity and elegance; expressions rarely heard to describe civic projects, parks or otherwise. A few minor comments and recommendations were offered. The Commission

- **questions the logic of three layers of trees on the perimeter and suggests that the proponents consider removing the middle layer set into the wood decking, and recommends clarifying with SDOT the placement of the corner street trees.**

- **encourages the proponents to secure an agreement with the owners of the adjacent properties with regards to preserving surface finish of the concrete walls since the walls play such a critical role as backdrop to the design and are pleased that the proponents intend to test the lighting on a full scale model.**

- **suggests taking another look at the rail above the angled platform and recommends that the rail, if necessary, be elegant and integral to the overall design of the park.**

- **approves the schematic design and looks forward to seeing this project again.**

Proponents Presentation

The site at the corner of Roy Street and Queen Anne Avenue North is in the current Pro Parks Levy and has $300,000 worth of funding. Owing to its prominent location, the community has high aspirations for the park and is working to raise an extra $500,000 to allow the final design to reflect the full potential of the site. The community already uses the space regularly for festivals and markets.

The design team has reportedly received strong support from the community when it met with them, in June and July, to discuss the current design proposal.

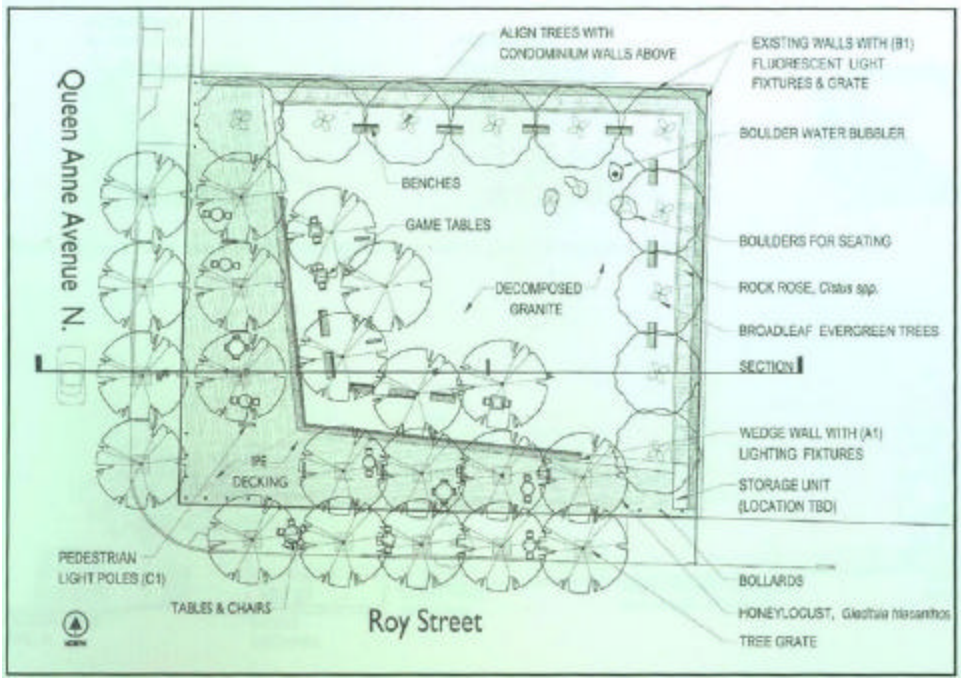
The design aims to address the characteristic nighttime and daytime differences of both the neighborhood and the site itself.

Overall, the design presents a convex light corner at the edge of the park counterbalanced with a concave light corner defined by the two existing walls. Light shines upward, along the length of existing walls, illuminating the sides of the park. New walls on the sidewalk edge of the park are lit to create a glowing Light Corner. Lights can be programmed to change color for special events, holidays, and changing seasons.

The Light Corner divides the park into two distinct spaces.

Outer Space: The outer space, between the sidewalk and the Light Corner, is surfaced with wood or alternative linear decking. Tables and chairs are placed under the open canopy of deciduous trees.

Inner Space: To accommodate special events, the inner space, between the deck and existing walls, is wide and open. It is surfaced with decomposed granite. Benches are placed along the sides of the park, in front of the existing walls, and beneath the canopy of deciduous trees.



Commissioner Questions and Comments

- The whole commission highly commends the simple, pure, elegant design and the compelling presentation.

- Commends the Uptown Alliance for their full understanding of how a city park can function.

- Is particularly delighted with the use of wood for the ground plane in the outer space.

- Asks for clarification of the material for the new outer corner wall
    - Blank concrete

- Questions the use of the guard rail and recommends its removal.
    - Don't need because the wall height is less than 30".
    - However, it provides a back rest.

- Asks if the light units will be continuous
    - Yes, they are linear with no space between the units

- Questions the community reaction to the provision of bench seating.
    - The community is supportive
    - The benches are divided with arm rests

- Is surprised that there was not a request for a rest room

- Questions the maintenance of decomposed granite
    - Compacts and easy to clean

- Commends clean spare design

- Reiterates the concern that the railing detracts from the overall simplicity and asks rail instead could be an extension of the wall.

- Recommends contacting the adjacent building owners to get a voluntary agreement with regards to the wall surfaces.
    - The property owners have been fully involved and supportive of the park design

- Questions the need for two lines of trees on the perimeter of the park and suggests the removal of the middle row from the outer wood space.

- Recommends contacting SDOT with regards to the corner street trees.

- Applauds the sound and light study and supports a full scale light test.

20 Oct 2005 Project: **Northgate Thornton Creek Water Quality**
Phase: Schematic Design
Previous Reviews: none

Presenters: Jackie Kim, Office of Policy and Management
Miranda Maupin, Seattle Public Utilities
Tom Fawthrop, Seattle Public Utilities
Benson Shaw, Artist
Greg Giraldo, SvR Design
Melanie Davies, SvR Design

Attendees: Jean Wu, SvR Design
Richard Loo, Lorig Associates
Kristian Kofoed, Department of Planning and Development
Marcia Iwasaki, Office of Arts and Cultural Affairs
Jeff Reibman, Weber & Thompson
Iden Zaima, ERA Care
Kris Effertz, City of Seattle
Don Bleasdale, King County Dept. of Transport
Mike O'Neil, King County Dept. of Transport
Brad Tong, SOJ
Masako Lo, Seattle Public Utilities
Mike Johnson, Seattle Dept. of Transport
Wayne Wentz, Seattle Dept. of Transport

Time: 1 hour (SDC Ref. # 169)

Action: The Commission appreciates the schematic design presentation of Thornton Creek Channel. However, they

- **feel this project has become two separate development schemes.**
- **is impressed with the resolution of the hydrology and engineering aspects of the project, but still has concerns with the surface elements, such as the landscaping, pedestrian paths, paving, and artworks. These elements have not been developed as far as the Commission hoped.**
- **approve the schematic design, in part, commending the hydrological function of the water quality channel, but requests to see the landscaping, pedestrian and art components again, at a later date.**

Presentation

The project aims to

- improve the storm water entering the Thornton Creek by enhancing water quality, and slowing down and infiltrating flows from smaller frequent storms.
- Provide a safe and pleasing open space that fits well with the Northgate Commons and surrounding streetscapes.
- Provide pedestrian connections through the site.

- Use native landscaping
- Provide year-round flowing water

Water Channel Overview

The proposed plan uses both channels and swales to remove pollutants on two different scales in a three step process.

- The first diversion point treats 20a acres from a relatively high elevation in the south west corner of the channel. From this point the primary treatment takes place in a cascade water feature, which allows for pooling and deposition of course to fine sediments. The secondary treatment occurs in the water quality control swale that allows for biofiltration and infiltration for fine sediments and dissolved pollutants.
- The second diversion point treats 660 acres at a relatively low elevation at the center of the channel. The primary treatment at this point occurs in a sediment pool and the secondary treatment occurs in water quality control channel.

Site Design Overview

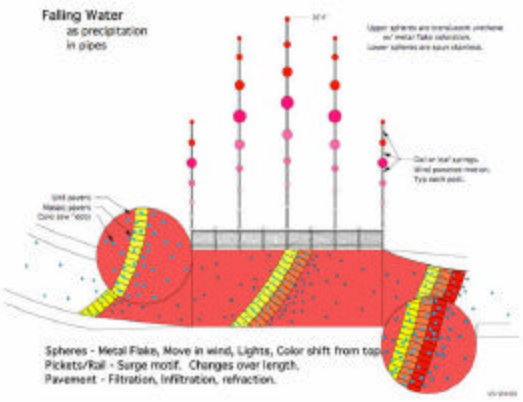
This channel design provides many functions that shape its form. Most importantly, it serves as a water quality facility, as described, but also serves as

- a pedestrian connector, with a primary NE-SW ADA accessible pedestrian and maintenance path.

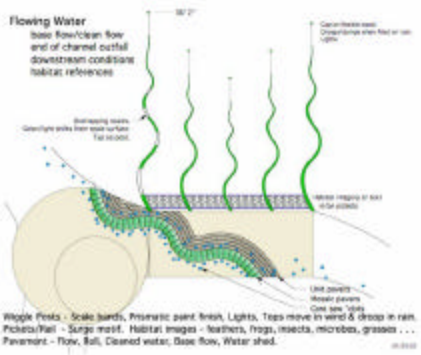
- a linear park where people can walk, run, sit, read, meet friends, and experience the water in its changing form through the site and seasons.
- wildlife habitat, which provides water, food, and cover for birds and other wildlife by using native plant materials.

Art Work Overview

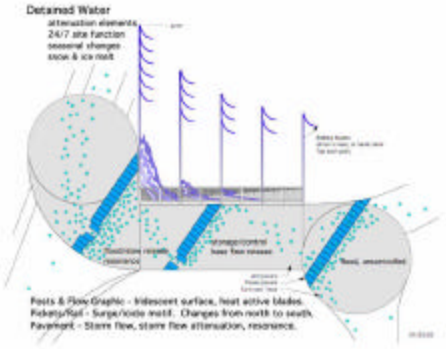
The concept for the artwork focuses on a vertical element relating to time and water flow. The three art installations are integrated into the design of the bridges that span the water channel. Each artwork is a different color, manipulates extended railings and involves patterns in the paving.



- falling water – as precipitation in pipes (red)



- detained water – attenuation elements, as snow and ice melt (green)



- flowing water – as clean flow, end of channel outfall, downstream outfall (blue)

Commissioner Questions and Comments

- Confirms that the project does not truly daylight the creek.
- Asks what sort of surge and flood control the channel improvements can address
    - 6^{th} month storm and 25 year storm event
- Asks if the proponents are concerned with back flow
    - No, but still checking this out
- Is pleased with proponent's response to previous Commission comments regarding a 'pinch' point. Feels that this has been addressed with greater setbacks and channel dimensions.
- Asks if Peggy Gaynor still has a formal role in the design team.
    - Yes
- Is impressed with the resolution of the hydrology and engineering aspects of the project, but feels the issue of this as a public park space is less resolved.
- Is concerned that the current design proposal fails to address the experience of moving through the space.
- Questions the connectivity and public access, especially from NE 100^{th} St and 3^{rd} Ave NE.
- Is disappointed in the art work.
- Expresses concern that the project been studied more as a hydrology problem, rather than a design problem.

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20 Oct 2005 Project: **Northgate 3^{rd} Avenue NE Street Improvements**
Phase: Concept Design
Previous Reviews: none

Presenters: Jackie Kim, Office of Policy and Management
Ron Posthuma, King County/METRO
Lyle Bicknell, Seattle Dept. of Planning and Development
Mike Johnson, Seattle Dept. of Transport

Attendees:

Time: 1 hour (SDC Ref. # 169)

Action: The Commission thanks the interdepartmental team for the early design presentation on the street improvements for 3^{rd} Avenue NE and makes the following recommendations and comments.

- **asks that the proponents identify key locations for art installations and suggests focusing those at the gateways to the park-like space of the Channel.**

- **recommends that, given the width of the right of way, proponents consider using smaller trees placed at tighter intervals to create a more pedestrian experience on the sidewalk.**
- **questions whether the 12' sidewalk is adequate enough for the potential long term residential proposals and recommends an emphasis on pedestrian movement.**
- **recommends approval of the early concept design as proposed with a 5:1 vote.**

Presentation
3rd Ave NE will link Northgate Mall with an existing office park, and will provide site access to two planned mixed use developments. With no bus lay over, no overhead wires it offers a rare opportunity to build a significant public street.

Current design concepts include:

Street trees to provide a separation between pedestrians and traffic and a large tree canopy
Illumination along the length of the project
Art works located on both the ground plane and vertically
Way finding to the water channel/linear park
On street parking, approximately 34 on street stalls
Bench and paving detailing

Commissioner Questions and Comments

- Appreciates the attempt to narrow the street, but questions the need for on street parking.
- Feels that this could be a perfect area in the Northgate area for a pedestrian focused street and recommends an emphasis on pedestrian movement.
- Would prefer no central left turn lane
- Questions whether vehicular access to the LORIG Development is necessary from 3rd Ave NE.
    - Yes, three access points are required
- Recommends saving the public art for the entrance to the park at the south of the street
- Suggests considering special paving
- Recommends smaller trees at a closer spacing
- Questions the curb the use of curb bulbs at the mid-block intersection
- Is uncertain that 12' sidewalk are adequate enough for the potential long term residential proposals.