



# Seattle Design Commission

Approved

## MINUTES OF THE MEETING

February 16th 2006

Gregory J. Nickels,  
*Mayor*

David Spiker  
*Chair*

Pam Beyette

Adam Christiansen

John Hoffman

Karen Kiest

Anindita Mitra

Sheri Olson

Nic Rossouw

Dennis Ryan

Darrell Vange

Guillermo Romano  
*Executive Director*

Layne Cubell,  
*Senior Staff*

### Projects Reviewed

318 Westlake Avenue North/Group Health – Skybridge  
Swedish Medical Center Orthopedic Institute – Skybridge  
DPD Division Update  
Seattle Center Garage  
Goodwill Redevelopment – Street Vacations

Convened: 8:30am

Adjourned: 4:00pm

### Commissioners Present

David Spiker, Chair  
Pam Beyette  
Adam Christiansen  
Tom Iurino  
Karen Kiest  
Sheri Olson  
Nic Rossouw  
Dennis Ryan  
Darrell Vange  
John Hoffman

### Staff Present

Guillermo Romano  
Layne Cubell  
Tom Iurino  
Valerie Felts



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Development

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**16 Feb 2006 Project: 318 Westlake Avenue North/Group Health Skybridge**

Phase: Skybridge Follow up

Previous Reviews: October 2005, November 2005

Presenters: Sharon Coleman, Vulcan Development

Jim Rothwell, Callison Architecture

Kris Snider, Hewitt Architects

Pablo Schugurensky, Arts consultant

Claudia Fitch, Artist

Jess Harris, Department of Planning and Development

Julie Carpenter, Seattle Department of Transportation

Nonila Jimenez, Seattle Department of Transportation

Susan Mueller, Seattle Department of Transportation

Attendees: Jim Wood, Trammell Crow Co.

Mark Brennan, Callison Architecture

Rachel Ben-Shmuel, Vulcan Development

Time: 1 hour (SDC Ref. # 170)

### **Action**

**The Commission appreciates the presentation and follow-up by the team and recommends approval of the design development of the skybridge and public benefits. The Commission had the following comments:**

- **agrees the project has a strong public benefits package**
- **finds the bridge design to be minimal and non-intrusive**
- **finds the artwork to be compelling, defines space, and is striking in itself**
- **appreciates art component as significant addition to art in public spaces and were pleased to hear from artist Claudia Fitch**
- **appreciates the 5-ft setback on Thomas Street**
- **recommends the landscape be simplified while at the same time turned up in volume**
- **finds the design sets a precedent for development of the surrounding area**
- **agrees the design on the block between Thomas and Terry Streets enriches the urban fabric of the area**
- **questions the curb-bulbs in the alley**

## **Proponents Presentation**

Proponents provided follow-up information on two concerns from a previous Commission review: integration of art and landscape and skybridge design details. The team secured Council concept approval of the skybridge in early December, but wanted to return to the Commission to close the loop on the design details. The location of the skybridge provides a pedestrian link between Westlake/Terry Avenues. Lighting and landscape design as well as clear green glass and brick-like material that will be incorporated in the skybridge were illustrated. Two access options were presented: ramp stairs and a lift transition. A public benefit component of the project is the art program on the public street. Landscape design and art have been well integrated with use of similar elliptical forms. Artist Claudia Fitch discussed the concepts behind the art: a blending of sculpture and streetscape, meant to provide pedestrians with a feeling of movement while at the same time reflecting the urban character of the site.

## **Commissioner Questions and Comments**

- Commission appreciates being involved and commends design
- Art program is developing well, would like to hear more about pedestrian experience
- Landscape is too minimal, could more trees be added?
  - Has been discussed by team, usually only one survivor tree is used
- The unique shapes of the sculpture pieces make it a special place along sequence of the street. However, there are too many unique forms in the streetscape: too much going on with the raised landscaped; seating ovals are a bit overdone. Overall it is too precious for one block only. Considering that Thomas will connect to Seattle Center, this one block it should be designed with the entirety in mind. Unique shapes give richness to the streetscape, making it a special place along sequence of the street.
- Articulation of bridge is coming along well
- Is there need for seismic joint? If so it should be aesthetically pleasing
- Questions curb-bulbs in alley, seem to work against pedestrian environment



CURRENT DESIGN

ALLEY VIEW LOOKING SOUTH

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**16 Feb 2006 Project:** Swedish Medical Center Orthopedic Institute  
**Phase:** Skybridge petition  
**Previous Reviews:** none  
**Presenters:** Vince Vergel De Dios, NBBJ  
Kristina Ryhn, NBBJ  
Tom Berger, Berger Partnership  
Darren Redick, Swedish Medical Center  
Tom Walsh, Foster Pepper LLC  
**Attendees:** Dale Grandlic, Trammel Crow  
Diane Lasko, NBBJ  
Cathy Abene, Seattle Department of Transportation  
Julie Carpenter, Seattle Department of Transportation  
Nonila Jimenez, Seattle Department of Transportation  
Michael Jenkins, Department of Planning and  
Development

Time: 1 hour

(SDC Ref. # 170)

### **Action**

**The Commission thanks the proponents for the presentation of the skybridge petition. The Commission recommended approval of the petition, believing it represents an exceptional case, but looks to see an expanded set of public benefits in follow up. The Commission:**

- **understands the need for the bridge to meet a core and essential function, connecting patients and medical staff from the new wing to the central hospital**
- **does not feel the bridge impacts the character of the area**
- **has reservations regarding the proposed public benefit package. It feels it is inadequate to support the request, so looks forward to presenters returning at a future time with more details**
- **recommends the Cherry Street corridor be addressed, specifically how the ramp connects with Broadway and encourages the team to look again at vehicular access to the project, in general**
- **encourages the team to take the opportunity to incorporate public art into the public realm as has been done at Harborview and elsewhere at Swedish**
- **would like to see clearer articulation of building and site amenities**
- **would like to see an improved pedestrian crossing at Minor/James streets**

## **Proponents Presentation**

The proponents presented an introduction to the project in the context of the master plan, including their rationale on the need for this skybridge. The skybridge will allow improved wayfinding and internal connections. Central to internal connections is the transport of emergency room patients and materials. A public benefits package was described, which includes crosswalk improvements and curb/landscape plantings. Proponents' described construction materials that will keep the skybridge as transparent as possible. It would have the visual impression of glass from top to bottom, yet patients being transported would not be visible to the public. 18 citizen advisory committee meetings were held which resulted in unanimous community support for the project.

## **Commissioner Questions and Comments**

- Are proposed benefits required or above and beyond the Master Plan?
- What is the sole function of the bridge?
- Project provides clear public benefit so should be exception to city policy of discouraging skybridges
- Design should be simple and elegant, avoiding ad hoc nature of some skybridges
- What is existing condition of the Cherry Street loading area?
- Is hospital waste usually moved in the same area as patients?
  - No, waste is moved independently
- Crosswalk at Minor and James St. should be improved



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**16 Feb 2006 Project:DPD Division Update**

Phase: Briefing

Previous Reviews: n/a

Presenters: John Rahaim, Department of Planning and Development  
Lish Whitson, Department of Planning and Development  
Susan McLain, Department of Planning and Development  
Robert Scully, Department of Planning and Development  
Gordon Clowers, Department of Planning and Development

Attendees: Dara O'Byrne, Department of Planning and Development  
Amy Lindemuth, Department of Planning and Development  
Steve Moddemeyer, Department of Planning and Development

Time: 1 hour

(SDC Ref. # 220)

**Summary:**

**The Commission thanks John Rahaim and representatives of the Planning staff for providing highlights on two upcoming/ongoing subarea planning efforts, the South Lake Union Plan Update and the Livable South Downtown Project. The Commission will continue to follow design elements in both these planning efforts and appreciates the update on the schedule and public events.**

**South Lake Union**

The SLU team is trying to build public consensus. An Open House was held in November 2006 and another is planned for this spring. The comprehensive plan amendments will go to Council in August for review and approval next fall. Additional local retail, childcare, art spaces, pedestrian connections, improved transit, and a place for the homeless were identified as needs in the area. Also discussed were parks, park safety, park locations, and the impact on open space by the 8,000 expected households of South Lake Union.

**Livable South Downtown**

An update on Phase 1 of the project was presented. It is a comprehensive project, reinforcing core neighborhoods, and rezoning some industrial areas to allow higher density. It was noted that there is a large amount of vacant buildings in Pioneer Square and the International District. The project offers the potential to transform parts of some neighborhoods. Lofts, similar to those in San Francisco

is one possibility. Phase I of the South Downtown Plan is scheduled to be complete by June and will focus on the street design network. An urban design workshop will be held in Little Saigon this spring.

**Commissioner Comments**

- Look at open space between parks and arterials
- Need for flexibility to accommodate future needs
- Consider knitting together communities
- Providing benefits back to community will be key



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**16 Feb 2006 Project Commission Business**

**Action Items**

**A.** Timesheets

**B.** Minutes from 02/02/06/Felts

**Discussion Items**

**C.** DC Annual Retreat Follow Up/Cubell

**D.** Council UDP Briefing on April12/Cubell

**E.** South Downtown Open House, 3/15, 5:30-7:30pm

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**16 Feb 2006 Project: Seattle Center Garage**  
Phase: Schematic Design  
Previous Reviews: July 2005, October, 2005 (Briefing)  
Presenters: Bonnie Pendergrass, Seattle Center  
Jeanne Iannucci, NBBJ  
Gareth Loveridge, GGN  
Bob Sheh, NBBJ  
Eric LeVine, NBBJ  
Molly Hurley, Department of Planning and  
Development  
Jim McDonald, Seattle Office of Arts and Cultural  
Affairs  
Attendees: Joe Taskey, SDOT  
Lindy Gaylord, Seneca Real Estate Group  
Trevor Schaaf, NBBJ  
Time: 1¼ hours (SDC Ref. # 221)

#### **Action**

**The Commission would like to thank the team for their excellent presentation. It approves the schematic design for the Seattle Center Garage and would like to add the following:**

- **recommends revisiting the concept design scheme and reconsider housing the visitors' center under a single roof form**
- **agrees the geometry of the green roof makes it more viable than before**
- **suggests taking advantage of possible roof access to the north of the visitors' center and above the southeast entry oval so that the public can visually experience the green roof**
- **suggests that if art is used for wayfinding it be kept distinct and uncluttered by graphics**
- **recommend pedestrian safety be carefully considered at the Harrison Street entry which is an extremely wide opening for vehicles**

#### **Proponents Presentation**

Proponents presented their latest building designs and streetscape plans which now include a Visitor Center at the north end and a crosswalk on the north side of the 5<sup>th</sup> Ave. and Harrison Street intersection. Graphics illustrating a minimalist design similar to the Gates campus were presented. Three primary elements of

the landscape design are: 1) a green roof 2) a safe streetscape environment and 3) a plaza on 5<sup>th</sup> Ave. The green roof will be 1½ acres in size, the largest in the city. It will open at its seams to allow daylight in. The streetscape, patterned after guidelines of the Potlatch Trail, will have no dark or enclosed spaces. In relation to the latest lowered Aurora Ave. plan by the Viaduct team, the Garage/Gates team is considering two alternative streetscapes: an open and a closed 6<sup>th</sup> Ave. In response to Design Commission comments of a July 2005 review, the project will have an art element in an effort to enliven the pedestrian environment. Art could be placed in the oval space of the elevator core. Signage at both the garage and the pedestrian core will be an attractive draw for people.



### Commissioner Comments

- Is the entry structure and circulation core solid or screened?
  - It is fairly transparent
- Can people get on the roof?
  - There is a possibility of a terrace, but it is not intended to be a park
- Is the roof design part of the LEED process?
  - The entire campus seeks LEED rating
  - The roof will help Lake Union
  - Water on campus may be reused
- The public could learn about the green roof at the Visitor Center
- What are the materials used for the garage?
  - Possibly bronze metal and limestone veneer

- Is there access to the core from all levels?
  - Yes
- What about pedestrian safety along Harrison?
  - It is being considered
- Path to garage should be clearer so pedestrians do not go into the garage office
- The vehicular access apron is too wide
- The Visitor Center does not visually help the garage. The previous version, when one building was considered, was preferable

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**16 Feb 2006 Project: Goodwill Redevelopment – Street Vacations (3)**  
Phase: Briefing  
Previous Reviews: October 2005 (Briefing)  
Presenters: Bill Fuller, Fuller Sears Architects  
Kris Snider, Hewitt Architects  
Bob Parks, TRF Pacific  
Ken Colling, Seattle Goodwill Industries  
Beverly Barnett, Seattle Department of Transportation  
Attendees: Bill Bradburd, Jackson Place Community Council  
Rich Hill  
Tammy Frederick, Seattle Department of Transportation  
Time: 1 1/2 hours (SDC Ref. # 170)

**Commissioner Vange recused himself from the presentation.**

#### **Action**

**The Commission would like to thank proponents for their presentation and appreciates the update on three street vacations. In a vote of 7 to 1, the Commission approves the urban design analysis but does not approve the public benefit package. The Commission would like to add:**

- **A broader urban analysis of the future relationship of the project to the surrounding area is needed, understanding that this project will have an immense impact on the surrounding area over time**
- **The project itself will have a big part in redevelopment of the area**
- **There is still concern over the interior oriented nature of the project, and its lack of public edges but finds the streetscape is improved in terms of streetscape and urban character**
- **It appreciates clarification of the residential component but is unclear on relationship of that component to lower commercial components**
- **It continues to question quantity and quality of the public benefit package, and finds it insufficient at this time**

#### **Proponents Presentation**

This is a complex project of the redevelopment of the Goodwill Industries site at the corner of Dearborn and Rainier Streets, west of the International District in the South Downtown area. It consists of 1.6 million sq. ft. of single-family mixed-use housing and retail designed as an Urban Retail Center. Proponents

provided follow up information on urban design concerns and suggestions voiced by the Commission at the last review. These were: pedestrian connectivity through the site; landscape treatment of peripheral streets and the internal plaza; quality of retail; connections to open space and surrounding neighborhoods; scale consistent with residential development; and the L-shaped vehicular access. Proponents discussed proposed housing, which will be affordable for the local workforce. They referenced proximity of the project to the Livable South Downtown area and Little Saigon. The project is said to have strong community support.



### Commissioner Comments

- How does utility relocation work?
  - Utilities are relocated before the project is built
- Why try to re-dedicate the streets? The City is not likely to accept responsibility/liability with structures above and below.
- What about the service access points?
  - They explain service entrances
- Suggest a block analysis of how the project fits into the fabric of the community
  - Park acquisition elsewhere would help make connections
- Who is the retail audience? Can the area support two large retail tenants and 100,000 sq. ft. of retail space?
- The interior works better as pedestrian oriented, but there is concern about the pedestrian experience on the perimeter

- The public benefits package is not compelling with retail on all three sides of project
- Little has changed since October 2005; the project looks like a wedding cake without enough design detail or site integration
- The public benefit needs to speak more to animating the corners
- There is concern over lack of a connection to Dearborn Street