



APPROVED MINUTES OF THE MEETING

Greg Nickels
Mayor

Diane Sugimura
Director, DPD

Raymond Gastil
Planning Director, DPD

Mary Johnston
Chair

Andrew Barash

Julie Bassuk

Graham Black

Brendan Connolly

Lauren Hauck

John Hoffman

Julie Parrett

Dennis Ryan

Norie Sato

Guillermo Romano
Executive Director

Valerie Kinast
Coordinator

Tom Iurino
Senior Staff



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October 15, 2009

Convened 9:30 am
Adjourned 2:45 pm

Projects Reviewed

SPU Director
Thomas Street Pedestrian Bridge
Fire Station 6 Central District
University of Washington West Campus

Commissioners Present

Mary Johnston, Chair
Andrew Barash
Julie Bassuk
Graham Black
Brendan Connolly
Lauren Hauck
John Hoffman
Julie Parrett
Dennis Ryan
Norie Sato

Commissioners Excused

Lauren Hauck

Incoming Commissioners Present

Lolly Kunkler

Staff Present

Guillermo Romano
Valerie Kinast
Tom Iurino

Celebrating 40 Years 1968-2008



October 15, 2009 **Project:** **SPU Director**

Phase: Briefing
Last Reviewed: November 6, 2008
Presenters: Ray Hoffman, SPU Acting Director
 Linda DeBolt, SPU

Attendees: None

Time: 1 hour

(121)

SUMMARY

The Design Commission wants to thank Ray Hoffman and Linda DeBolt for their comprehensive and thorough presentation. It appreciates the historic references that helped understand the present work and the magnitude of the needed changes and upgrades to the City's systems. The Commission has expressed a direct interest in the Ballard Green Street/Roadside Rain Garden program, recommends close coordination with SDOT and DPD work to maximize opportunities like the Bell Street Boulevard Park and the educational opportunity that represents on regard to environmental, low impact and stormwater management work. The Commission also reiterates its support for the revised Stormwater code proposal and how language like "Maximum Extent Feasible" needs to be defined with measurable products.

The Commission also expressed interest in the South Park Pump Station. As shown in the presentation, it reflects a massive structure that should have been reviewed. The Design Commission staff will follow-up on this and schedule a review. The Commission applauds the progress in the reservoir cover program and looks forward to being part of the transfer stations projects.

October 15, 2009 Project: Thomas Street Pedestrian Bridge**Phase:** Design Update**Last Reviewed:** February 7, 2008; January 17, 2008; December 7, 2006; July 6, 2006; December 16, 2004**Presenters:** Kit Loo, SDOT**Attendees:** Patricia Hopper, Office of Arts and Cultural Affairs
Barbara Lee, ABKJ
John Coney, Uptown Alliance
AJ Yang, UW**Time:** 1 hour

(169)

ACTION

By unanimous vote, the Design Commission denies approval of the design of the Thomas Street Pedestrian Overpass for the following reasons:

This project has suffered from its long planning and development process. It has seen several changes in terms of SDOT personnel and design consultants and although the current SDOT project manager, Kit Loo, is doing an exemplary job, we feel the current budget constraints and the ambitious size of the project have combined to compromise the design to an unacceptable degree. Although the Design Commission has a long history with this project and has given approval to earlier iterations, the current design bears so little resemblance to earlier schemes that our previous support is irrelevant.

The Design Commission considers the length of the span to be the main problem. We recommend that a shorter structure, spanning just the railroad tracks, would meet the intent of the project and be more fiscally responsible.

Traffic patterns, commercial patterns, pedestrian patterns and residential development along the Elliot corridor are all changing rapidly and it is within our purview to look at the long range goals of the city. Although Elliot Ave. will have to do more work until the Alaska Way Viaduct Replacement project is complete, the impact and the cost of this extensive overpass may not meet the long-term goals of the city along this corridor. A better investment may be to slow traffic on Elliot. As more and more people work and live in the area, the streetscape needs to be humanized and enhanced, not dominated by an overly large concrete structure. If this overpass were scaled down, more funds could be devoted to upgrading the finishes and details.

If this project goes forward in either configuration, we offer the following suggestions:

- Return to the spayed railings and throw fence. It is a cost-effective way to add interest to the design. We suggest mesh railing material rather than pickets.
- Explore lighting fixtures that are designed to be mounted on railings.
- Encourage SDOT and the artist to integrate the art into the structure rather than simply applying designs to the concrete support structure. The art can be appreciated more by those crossing the bridge if it is placed in the ground plain of the bridge or higher on the structure.

The Design Commission realizes the value this pedestrian bridge can have to the neighborhood, but it is part of our directive to recommend the best value for the public's design dollars and we feel strongly that a more modestly sized project will best serve the needs of all of Seattle's citizens and visitors.

Presentation

The bridge project connects Myrtle Edwards Park with Queen Anne. It was initially proposed in 2004, when the commission supported crossing Elliott. In 2006, the commission again supported crossing Elliott as well as the simplicity in the bridge design and the additional stairways. The Commission last saw this project in January and February of 2008, when it recommended better integration of the bridge into the natural setting, the addition of belvederes, and the use of green technology.

Since the commission's last review, the project has been delayed due to budget cuts. While the design maintains the same alignment and the potential to incorporate some of the original functional elements of the project, the design has been scaled down. The new design is functional and incorporates a limited art element.

The question now is how to move forward. SDOT reevaluated the scope of the project, streamlined the architectural elements, and examined phased construction. They have decided to maintain the alignment and the simple design using smooth tube sections and standard lighting schemes. They have retained the belvederes and will provide art enhancements based upon Potlatch Trail art concepts. They are at 90% structural design and are looking for alternative funding sources.



Site Plan and Bridge Details

Public Comments

John Coney, Uptown Alliance

The Uptown Alliance is working to revive the Lake to Bay Trail. It ends at this project. The bridge is a key strategy in the Queen Anne plan. Should the bridge not be built, Queen Anne will oppose the Hemp Festival. The park is underused and this bridge will help. We're disappointed about scope creep. We voted for this project to be built as part of Park Levy 2.

Commissioners' Comments and Questions

What about current elevations and sections?

Remains the same. The only difference is the railings. The staircase on the west side will be added in the future.

On the park side, is the bridge approach all structure?

There is a berm.

Is there is no other way to get off the ramp, not at island or Elliott?

Yes. Other exits are an alternative bid item.

What is cost?

We have \$6 million budgeted. The total cost is \$10 million.

The belvedere stair is also an add element?

Yes.

Talk about the railing concept.

The railing height is 54", per code requirements. It is higher over the railroad, per their requirements.

What is the color of the bridge?

We will use a natural color, like brown or ochre. The railings would be light colored.

Where is the location of lighting?

On top of the railing itself.

Where are we in the art process?

There are 2 phases of artwork. The 1% for art has not yet been designed. The art would be a gateway piece. The retaining wall is another spot for art and will have relief designs. That will be in the construction bid documents. I am not sure if this will go before PAC. Vaughn Bell, the artist at SDOT, has been working with Kit on the process.

The locations of the art will not be seen. Can the retaining wall come up and replace the railing above it? That will have a greater impact.

Looking at providing art on the topside of the bridge as well will be in a second phase. We haven't fully investigated it yet. Art could be a platform or portal.

The railings and feel of bridge – did you look at the railing over the rail line, how to make it different? Go back to the v-shape so it's not a cattle chute?

We are looking at retaining the flared option over the railroad, if not the whole bridge.

Employ a much stronger language about the flare. The flare is key is to making it feel like a good space.

I'm concerned about the lighting, specifically the recessed wall-mount fixtures. It feels additive. The lighting design needs much more direct integration with railing design.

The artwork provides an opportunity to tell a story. There might be an opportunity here like the I-90 tunnel.

The artist should look at what he's working with in the shape and the space. The storytelling doesn't work with the structure. Vaughn's work looks applied. Try to work with the column. It's hard to evaluate the art based on the material you've presented.

We need to see more elevations.

This project is a pig. It is anti-urbanism. The barrier is not Elliott but Burlington Northern. There is pedestrian activity on Elliott, and the signal sequence on Elliott enables people to cross like any downtown street. I'd like to see more of the costs. In terms of function, it doesn't work well. Who would use these belvederes? This facility doesn't do what it's intended to do. It will have a view impact on Elliott and is contradictory to public policies about skybridges.

There are a lot of challenges and we are trying to address them. We want to keep the project moving forward.

The bridge may not be worth it. At some point, we should say stop.

The design seems barebones, but not elegant. It has clunky proportions.

This is a fine example of a bad process. We've wasted the \$4 million you're missing in the process. The final design needs to be clean, uniform and simple.

I want more specificity. It is just so big. I doubt the commission suggested it go to Thomas. We've not seen the details of where this touches down. The art concept is not contributing to the design. The railing is not contradicting to the design. Myrtle Edwards is underused. Connecting to Myrtle Edwards is a great idea, but this is not the right iteration.

October 15, 2009 Project: Fire Station 6 Central District

Phase: Schematic Design
Last Reviewed: July 2, 2009
Presenters: Ed Weinstein, Weinstein AU
Eric Higbee, Murase Associates
Jon Mihkels, Weinstein AU
Kirsten Wild, Weinstein AU
Steve Gardner, Project Artist

Attendees: David Jackson, Fleets and Facilities Department
David Kunselman, Fleets and Facilities Department
Dove Alberg, Fleets and Facilities Department
Frank Coulter, Fleets and Facilities Department
Jason Huff, Office of Arts and Cultural Affairs
Jay Feldman, Fleets and Facilities Department
Jayson Antonoff, DPD
Jeremy Nichols, DPD
Lindsay King, DPD
Molly Douce, Fire Department
Rich Hennings, Fire Department
Ruri Yampolsky, Office of Arts and Cultural Affairs
Susan Rosenthal, Fire Department

Time: 1 hour

(169)

ACTION

The Design Commission thanked the design team for the presentation of the plans for Fire Station 6. The Commission unanimously approves schematic design of the project as presented. The Commission noted that the development of the plans since the last presentation was impressive. The architectural strategy of the central stairway form has really gelled this design.

- The Commission supports the use of a curb bulb along S. Jackson St. for public use, if SDOT finds the area is not needed as a traffic lane.
- If the curb bulb is developed, the design should offer much beyond the basic street tree planting strip. It should be used to maximize the corner, increasing the permeability, public use and dialog of the corner of the site to the neighborhood.
- The Commission asks that the options for providing permeability of the north façade be narrowed but remain open in Design Development.
- Along the north façade, condense the storage areas and consolidate the in-between spaces. Although it's not necessary to keep them uniform, consider keeping the corners open at both ends.

- Commissioners applaud the idea of the perforated overhang/eyebrow along the north of the building. Consider plantings on the roof of it.
- See that the trees in the proposed curb bulb along the façade are of an appropriate scale.
- Continue to develop the S. Jackson St. façade with a mind to the pedestrian experience. Bring integration of the fence and façade, and continue to find transparency solutions.
- Consider the art as it will be experienced from near and also from a more distant point.
- The Commission urges the architects and artist not to relegate the art to the north wall but to allow the art into a holistic approach to opening the site at the corner and providing a friendly pedestrian environment along Martin Luther King Jr. Way.
- Further explore the entrance along Martin Luther King Jr. Way and its function as a public entrance to the building.
- The use of a canopy of trees at the south west corner of the site juxtaposes with the neighborhood in an important way.

Presentation

The project is a new neighborhood fire station serving Seattle's Central District. The new site is located on the southwest corner of Martin Luther King Way South and South Jackson Street. An existing 3,150 SF warehouse/office building will be demolished. The Fire Levy has allocated a total project budget of \$10.4 million with a maximum construction cost estimated around \$4 million dollars. Public bidding is anticipated in the fourth quarter of 2010. This new facility will replace the existing historic landmark Station 6, which is an iconic building located a few blocks to the northwest. The new station will have two apparatus bays, an engine and a ladder and staffed with eight firefighters. The new facility will be construction to essential facility performance standards and has a project goal to achieve a minimum LEED Silver certification.

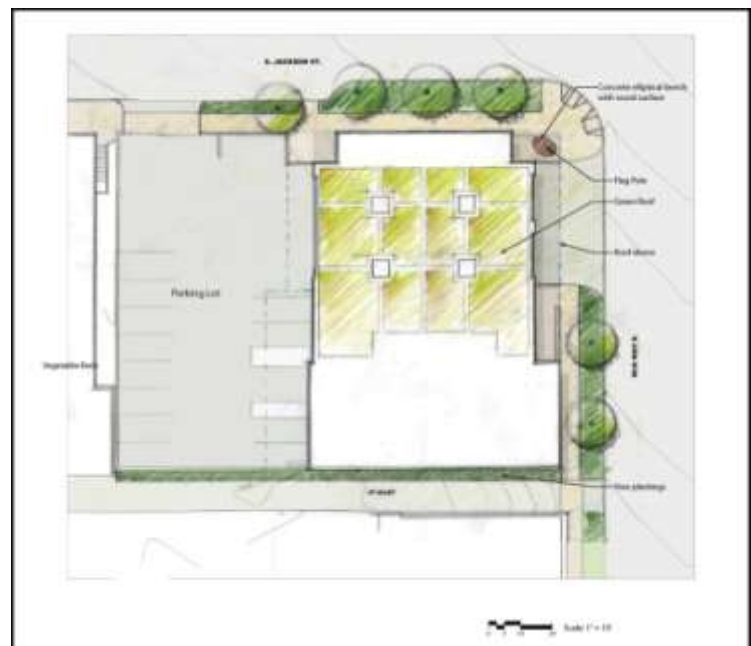
The site's intersection at 23rd and Jackson will become be more pedestrian oriented but unlikely would be very commercial, given the uses. Operational imperatives drive the project's design. It is a very tight site. The commission's first review suggested more attention be paid to the north face of the building, participation by an artist and landscape architect early in the process, and creation of a more civic presence and more detail and context.

The only opportunity for an intense pedestrian realm is on the north side. The sidewalk is very narrow. They propose to borrow space from on street parking to create a wider public sidewalk. How do they integrate the landscape, art and permeability in this zone?

As they evolved the design, they redesigned the stair. As a result, the beanery and day room now activates the apparatus bays and station. This helped them erode the northern wall to make it more permeable. The flagpole will be at the corner. The fire station doors will generate the pattern of the façade. The building will rest on a concrete plinth that will form the base of the building.

The north wall will have windows above as well as oblique views at street level into apparatus bay. They examined places to put public art. They seek input – should it be bold and higher or should it be engaging to the pedestrian? The north wall could be an armature for art.

Another option (A) is to have three openings in the north wall. A third alternative (B) is to have 4 openings, that



Schematic Plan

would be smaller, for washed river rock. This could have a perception of transparency. A fourth option (C) has 5 openings.

The landscape opportunities are in the right-of-way. The big move is to expand the curb bulb at Jackson and to have it respond to the art and architecture. There is some opportunity for bio-infiltration. A low elliptical bench is proposed at the corner where the flagpole stands.

The artist, Steve Gardner, works with terra cotta and glass panels.

Commissioners' Comments and Questions

Is there a roof deck?

Yes, but not on the top. It is at the second level. The green roof could be used for gardening.

Is the fence solid or perforated?

We don't know yet. It may be part of the art.

Where are you with SDOT? That's a default right-hand turn lane on Jackson. If SDOT says no, what do we do? We're in a bind.

We've had initial conversations with them. They are looking for a more formal request. The existing sidewalk is very limited. We want a win win. Support from the design commission would help us with SDOT.

Is the recessed north wall entirely transparent?

Yes. The firefighters could close the shades.

You need to keep the northeast corner from being a tripping hazard.

Yes. There is a grade change.

What are the ideas from the artist?

The art could be a mix of steel and cast glass. Right now, all I have are concepts. It is still pretty early to discuss.

Is there a fence or wall around lot? Why is this needed?

Yes, it's needed. It's a public safety facility. We need security and don't want public coming in. A wall allows to hang hoses and test equipment.

Is there an expression of the green roof for the pedestrian? You could use taller grasses, or could make roof more permeable.

One possibility is that you could see the roof from further up MLK to the north. Or we could have some water conveyed to the swale in some way. And it will also be seen if other properties are developed in the neighborhood.

What is the wall material?

The wall would be either masonry or metal panel. It depends on the rest of the materials.

What is the structural system of apparatus bay?

It would be exposed steel. A big tray would drop down and be winched back up, where there is the most heat to dry the hoses.

For the fence on north side, I would vote for more transparency. The railing of the balcony could be the same for continuity.

The MLK side is appealing.

Thank you for addressing permeability on the north side. Treat the glass as the punched opening; it still needs to read as a box. I'm not sure all the punched openings need to be symmetrical.

Your approach to the stairs provided a strong architectural strategy.

On the north side, you need to carefully pick the trees. Creating an overhanging eave and puncturing it is a great idea. The flagpole could be mounted on the building itself, which might give you some freedom on the corner. The entrance doesn't read as an entrance yet.

Good comments. We will better understand this with 3D simulation.

For the expanded curb bulb, I need to understand the transportation plans for the future. Within a vacuum, it's great.

Regarding the MLK façade, maybe the art work could be on the corner, so it's not so focused on the north side of the building

We'll look at it. But it could be view obstructing.

I worry the numerous nooks inside will be filled with boxes, or if the nooks are outside they will be filled with trash. If you're subdividing the box on the north wall, shrink it down and keep it simple.

Consider planting some trees in the southwest corner of the property.

I have concerns that the MLK façade is too blank, especially the southern section. I also have concerns about the Jackson side; you need more options than just the alternatives of one concept. A lot hinges on the curb bulb being accepted by SDOT. This needs to actually be space, not just a planting area. You need to look at the species you plant. You should green up the parking lot. The fencing along Jackson needs to be integrated and as transparent as possible. The drive-through imperative creates a loss for the pedestrian experience.

October 15, 2009 **Project:** **University of Washington West Campus**

Phase: Alley Vacation
Last Reviewed: N/A
Presenters: Anne Schopf, Mahlum Architects
Mark Cork, Mahlum Architects

Attendees: Laura Haley Lohman, Seneca Group
Michele Sarlitto, Blumen Consulting Group
Terry McCann, Blumen Consulting Group
Jan Arntz, UW
Laura Lohman, Seneca Group
AJ Yang, UW
Beverly Barnett, SDOT

Time: 1 hour 30 minutes

(121)

ACTION

The Design Commission thanks the University of Washington's project team for the thorough presentation. Unanimously the Commission approved the urban design merit phase of the proposal to vacate a segment of alley north of NE Campus Parkway and west of Brooklyn Avenue referred to in the University of Washington materials as 32W. With a vote of five to four the Commission approved the urban design merit phase of the proposal to vacate a segment of alley south of NE Campus Parkway and east of Brooklyn Avenue referred to as 35W. There was reservation about approving 35W for the following reasons: 1) the loss of light from the south on to NE Campus Parkway, 2) the lack of function of the pedestrian pathway across the site, 3) that it has not been demonstrated that views would not be blocked, 4) the corridor is insignificant.

Generally, the Commissioners saw the four urban design merit criteria better met in 32W than in 35W. There was concern that 35W as designed wouldn't contribute to a positive urban design situation as much as 32W would, and might even be a detriment.

The project team presented preliminary plans for public benefits at both sites and the Commission has the following recommendation on the proposals:

- Please show the property line, the delineation of the passthrough pathways etc.
- There is concern over the solar access at the public space at 35W because it is located inside the block.
- While the urban market is seen as a positive feature, consider how the use will interface with the public open spaces of the building.
- There is also concern over what would happen if the large tree that the public plaza in 32W is created around were to be removed eventually.
- To increase the quality of the open spaces around the site, consider breaking down the scale on both sides of 35W.

- In the next presentation please include information on pedestrian counts around the site and in the vicinity. Include sidewalk dimensions.
- In designing the right of way improvements, celebrate the transit oriented nature of the project.

Presentation

The University of Washington is requesting that two alleys be vacated on blocks within the University’s West Campus. A total of four blocks are currently being planned for redevelopment as student housing, adding approximately 1,645 beds to the area. The first two blocks are slated for occupancy in 2011; the second two blocks are slated for occupancy in 2012 and are the subject of the requested vacations. The alley vacations are sought to enhance program continuity and to maximize the number of beds to be provided on campus. The design team has work to ensure that service functions continue to be provided internal to the sites and that the resulting projects are positive additions to the neighborhood. For each site, a comprehensive package of on- and off-site public benefits are being incorporated into the design in the form of new public open spaces, active uses at the street level, pedestrian enhancements along the street edge and significant right of way improvements. The alleys vacated are in the vicinity of NE Campus Parkway and Brooklyn Avenue.

The Campus Parkway is an important axis emanating from Red Square. This project can strengthen the parkway. Getting accessibility into all side of the buildings is a major driver in the design. Many of the program elements are open to the public, such as cafes and shops. They want to maintain the walking goat path through the sites; it follows the level topography. The buildings will clad in brick, weather steel and hardwood. Plants will be native.

Site 32W

442 beds, fitness center, residential terrace and elm plaza.

The reasons for the vacation:

- Encourage pedestrian flow between sites
- Maximize development capacity
- Integrate housing above grade
- Create new public open space

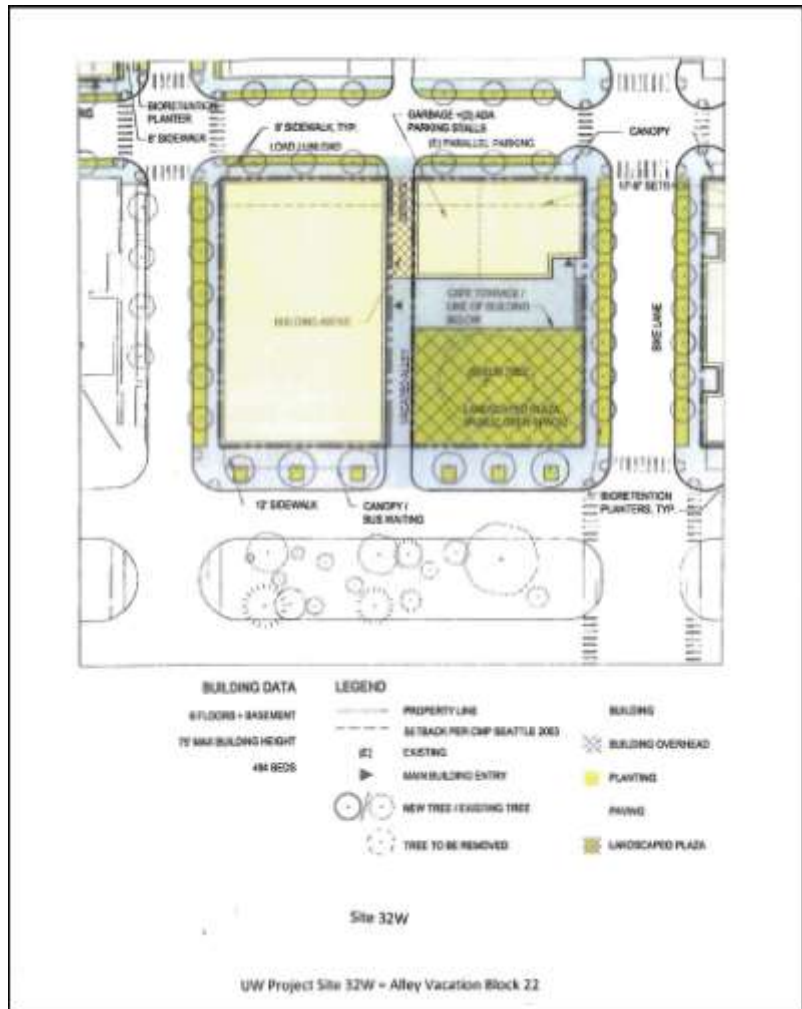
A development with no vacation means diminished pedestrian activation. For example, the alley would have vehicles, entrances would be separated in two buildings, services would need to be duplicated, and there would be no plaza.

Site 35W

584 beds, auditorium, public courtyard, urban market.

The reasons for the vacation:

- Encourage pedestrian flow between sites
- Maximine development capacity
- Integrate housing above grade



- Convert alley into courtyard space

A development with no vacation means diminished pedestrian activation. For example, the alley would have vehicles, entrances would be separated in two buildings, services would need to be duplicated, and there would be no courtyard and no grocery store.

The right-of-way improvements on Campus Parkway and Brooklyn Ave intend to activate the street. Features include: traffic calming, bus bulbs, wide sidewalks, canopies, seating, planting and lighting.

Commissioners' Questions and Comments

At site 32 West, what is the building to the east?

It's the Playhouse Theater.

Does the streetcar terminate at the UW? The pedestrian flows may change with the streetcar. Are there other increases in density planned to support the diagonal flow?

We don't know. The streetcar is years away.

We don't have an SDOT representative. Can you summarize her position?

She said we needed to be sure we weren't putting service function on sidewalk and that we needed to be cognizant of the other properties could be affected by the vacation. We talked about whether benefits needed to be discrete, so we developed them that way. We learned that turning movements needed to happen internally.

Are these public pass-throughs open all the time?

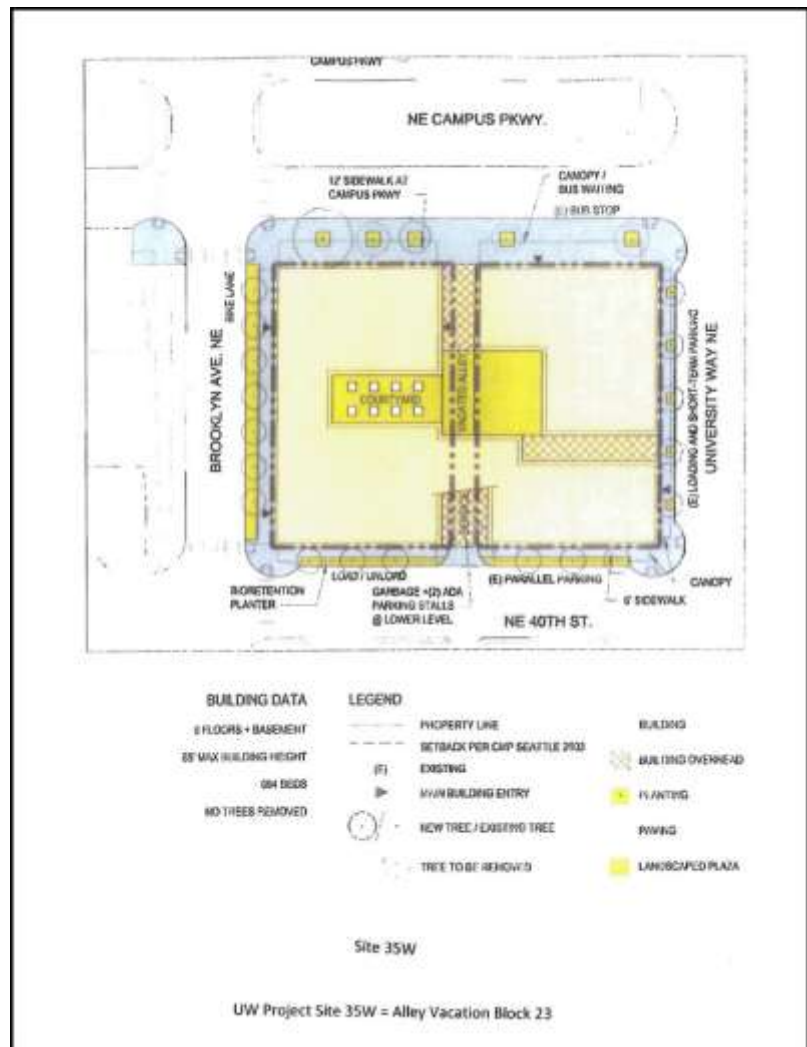
Site 32 is open 24 hours. Since it's enclosed above, Site 35 will likely be more restricted.

How much traffic is in the alleys?

It's primarily students walking. I see very little driving. The most traffic consists of UW service vehicles.

35W is going to read as space that serves the students. You will have a hard time selling it as a public benefit.

I'd like to hear more about the conflict of pedestrians, waste removal and parking under the tree at 32W. The main entrance to the building is right there. How is that going to operate? If the bollards are moved back, what will stop others from stopping there?



We are trying to make it feel like a pedestrian environment. We are trying to maximize the pickups by using compactors; we expect once every two weeks for trash pick-up. We schedule the visits, early in the morning. The building staff will monitor the use.

Is there a load-only zone?

Yes, there will be. We need to work it out with SDOT.

The public parks. Who will own them?

The UW.

The function of the alleys are fourfold: service, light, scale, and attractive pedestrian paths. You're retaining the last one, and that's good. Service is being taken care of elsewhere, so that's good. The view corridors, you're not blocking Campus Parkway. The view corridor to the south from 35, you need to consider, you can see Capitol Hill. The scale of the blocks you should consider, recognizing the scale of the buildings on campus. I would support the alley vacation.

The level of analysis is good and rich. How long will these public benefits remain? I appreciate the architectural response. In terms of the benefits, I am undecided but appreciate the spirit.

My concerns tie to the nature of 35 and whether it is public. There is great treasure in the elm plaza. We need to future-proof the public space, to prevent it being used in the future.

For Site 32, I see the urban merit. For Site 35, it is inward focused. I'd rather seen it turned inside out. I don't see an urban merit now for 35.

The open air feeling worries me about 35. That will be lost when 35 is developed. The development of 32 makes sense.

The goat path diagram was deceptive. People move along a rectilinear grid. What I see is an interruption of a view corridor for 35W. We need to look at what would be a good design without the vacation. Have you calculated the public benefit? I don't see the urban design merits yet. Definitely not for 35, and for 32 I don't see the merits either.

The loss of the alley doesn't impact the surrounding properties.

For 35, I think we're taking away view and light corridors. I do appreciate 32W.

Who owns the alley on the south side of 35?

I think it's the UW.

32 seems more obvious to me. I have a hard time with 35; it is half-way there. Need to know about the south side of 35. What is the view corridor? Is it significant?

We haven't talked about the densification of this urban center. What I liked about this proposal was the mixing of the uses. The market, the restaurant is a huge step. We need more of that.

October 15, 2009 **Project:** **Commission Business**

Phase: N/A

Last Reviewed: N/A

Presenters: N/A

Time: .75 hour

(168)

DISCUSSION

- Voted on the design awards. Guillermo and Tom will tally.
- Liz Martini discussed frame options. Smaller was better. The Mayor's award should just be a framed B&W photo from John Stamets at the UW. Mary will contact John.
- Discussed the tight January timeline for the bored tunnel RFQ and how the design quality might suffer if driven entirely by the engineering objectives, which contains the largest portion of the project's dollars. Decided to meet next Thursday to devise a position on the design-related items the commission would like in the RFQ.
- Andrew will track the SR 520 project.
- No vote on minutes.