



APPROVED MINUTES OF THE MEETING

Mike McGinn
Mayor

Diane Sugimura
Director, DPD

Marshall Foster
Planning Director, DPD

Mary Johnston
Chair

Andrew Barash

Julie Bassuk

Graham Black

Brendan Connolly

Lauren Hauck

Laurel Kunkler

Julie Parrett

Norie Sato

Donald Vehige

Guillermo Romano
Executive Director

Valerie Kinast
Coordinator

Tom Iurino
Senior Staff

February 18, 2010

Convened 9:00am
Adjourned 3:00pm

Projects Reviewed

Bell Street Park
DPD Planning Division Update
Waterfront Planning Briefing
Alaskan Way Viaduct and Seawall Replacement – Portal Area Planning
9th Avenue NW Park

Commissioners Present

Mary Johnston, Chair
Andrew Barash
Brendan Connolly
Julie Bassuk
Graham Black
Lauren Hauck
Laurel Kunkler
Julie Parrett
Norie Sato
Donald Vehige

Staff Present

Guillermo Romano
Valerie Kinast
Tom Iurino
Jenny Hampton



**Department of Planning
and Development**
700 5th Avenue, Suite 2000
PO Box 34019
Seattle, WA 98124-4019

TEL 206-615-1349
FAX 206-233-7883



February 18, 2010 **Project:** **Bell Street Park**

Phase: Concept Design

Last Reviewed: N/A

Presenters: Kris Snider, Hewitt
Nate Cormier, SvR Design
Patrick Donohue, Dept. of Parks and Recreation

Attendees: Katie Zemtseff, Daily Journal of Commerce
Gary Johnson, DPD
Casey Hildreth, SDOT
Lloyd Douglas, Cascade, Neighborhood Council
Patricia Hopper, Arts and Cultural Affairs

Time: 1 hour

(000/RS0000)

ACTION

The Commission thanks Kris Snider, Nate Cormier, and Patrick Donohue for the presentation on the Bell Street Park and applauds the rigor with which the team has developed exciting concepts that will anchor the new design to the history of the space. The Commission approves the conceptual design with the following recommendations:

- Consider the experiential quality of the four blocks and how they will feel across the design. Is the intent to create consistency from block to block or a series of spaces that feel open and sunny, more sheltered and closed in. The size and number of trees can be used to this end.
- Drawing on the history of the neighborhood for producing films, consider the idea of frame to frame changes in setting the pacing and movement along the street as a historic and educational reference.
- The Commission appreciates the intent to preserve existing street trees. Take special attention at the intersections with crossing in order to promote views and the identification of a unique space. A few large trees that produce a canopy might signal people passing and create a sense of closure. Balance the number of trees with transparency, use and views.
- The way water is presented in historical precedence could be more brought to the forefront of the design. In the current design state, the water seems less connected to its historical movement and appears to be forced into the polygons of the design. Consider using the water as a strong catalyst, forcing new processes.
- Focus on creating edges that are softer throughout the design.
- The Commission encourages the City and design team to extend the design concept into the cross streets and further along the corridor to make cohesion for the future.
- Consider the spaces when they are empty, particularly with the measured movement scheme as it relies on people to activate the space. A simple palette gives a better and more flexible use of the space.
- Recognize the overall costs and budget concerns for both schemes, but especially the sluiced surfaces design. In order for this scheme to be effective, it would need to be completed fully. The Commission encourages the concept of shared space to allow for behavior changes instead of relying on signage, curbs, and demarcation to dictate movement. Keep clutter to a minimum, thinking carefully about how bike and other movement is clarified and how lighting is provided.
- Continue pursuing the design solutions that allow the most flexibility of movement possible.

Project Presentation

This project is a streetscape re-design of Bell Street with a scope of First and Fifth Avenue in downtown Seattle.

For this project, there are two proposed concepts in review. Both concepts incorporate past site re-grading and topographical changes, water connections, and historical neighborhood plans. The concepts proposed include the following goals

- pushing the pedestrian zone and narrowing the vehicular throughway
- inclusion of functional lighting, a bioswale/raingarden feature and art throughout.
- sidewalk expansion on the sunny northern side of the street allowing for additional plantings
- creation of a wider flex zone to reduce parking on the street giving potential for a separate bike lane

Concept 1: Sluiced Surface plan: faceted planes, dynamic movement

This proposed scheme references the Denny regrade technology by being responsive and worthy to this transformation of earth through water power. This scheme takes advantage of spaces in front of buildings as activation zones and contains water elements that incorporate movement and bold gestures throughout the site.

Some key features include:

- a meandering passageway with inlays of material in the pavement and a water feature providing a fluid experience down the street
- low vegetation, metal and stone which frame the space
- a community gathering area
- the potential to add informal play areas throughout



Figure 1: Sluiced Surface Plan

Concept 2: Measured Movement

This scheme is more structured and highlights the rhythms of the street, the passage of time and people on the street. It grew from the historical basis of mechanical technology used in the 2nd Street regrade therefore bringing into the design a more mechanical approach in movement and a marking of time.

Some key features include:

- a more direct straight pathway
- a reference to the Seattle film row in the lighting scheme which will give a sense of movement and activity throughout
- Improvements in safety by layering people and rhythms of movement along the street.
- a ribbon feature of stone (or other material chosen) and water throughout

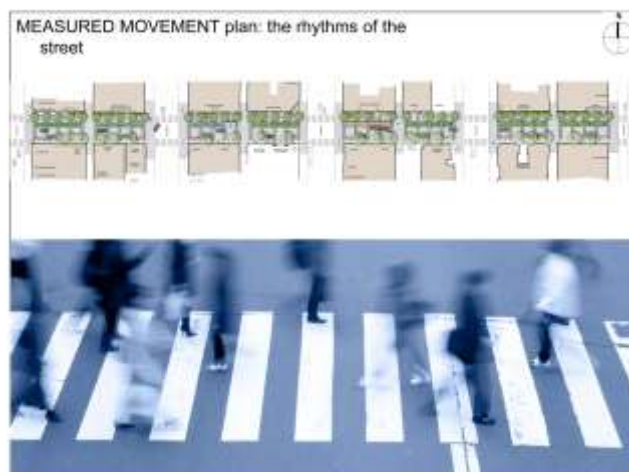


Figure 2: Measured Movement Plan

to tie the street together.

- a gathering space that acts as a pedestrian main stage with flexible program.

State of the project

To date, two of the three public meetings have been held. In both meetings there were over 125 people in attendance. The public has given feedback about many aspects of the designs influencing these two concepts. A third meeting will take place where 5 themes will be discussed, including the streets vibrancy, safety, pedestrian connectivity, vegetation, and drainage systems.

Next steps include hiring an artist, reviewing the budget and consolidating the public feedback.

Public Comments

Gary Johnson, DPD

In support of this project, DPD is applying for grants to fund an expansion of the sustainable and artistic features on the site.

Commissioners' Comments and Questions

What would be your vision for the major trees on this street?

When approaching the public, there is concern about safety and visibility, so we will want to have low ground northwest plants and trees that will allow and keep light into the space.

With the measured movement scheme, you are relying on activity to activate the street, what you are going to do when there is no enough activity.

Being honest about the place, when there is no people present, it might be sparse, so we are working with the parks department programming to come up with solutions. The waterscape will also help to bring in richness to the space.

Its successful because there is an overall strategy and that it is broken down block by block, I would also encourage you to think about it very experientially, so when one goes through different blocks, they will get different experience. The landscape palette might help emphasize these differentiations.

In bringing up the idea of the film culture, it would be useful to think not as just projected light, but also movement from frame to frame and the pacing of film and rhythm. It might add a layer of culture to the environment.

There is inspiration in the historical processes and technology in the concept. One thing that needs to be emphasized is the treatment of the water. Historically, water has defined this space. In the schemes presented water is being seen as a contained force instead of letting it become what it was historically

The first question concerns the city, is there ever any possibility to do something with the street intersections so it has connectivity?

Casey Hildreth from SDOT stated that a portion of the site was just repaved. There could be some poles or something on the corners, however, as far as crossing over the street, the team is constrained with budget.

Is there a way it could be in to the future thinking of this space?

Casey Hildreth from SDOT stated that there is work being done on bus bulbs and this could be an icon.

In really pushing the flexible space, it would be great to have a shared space of bike lanes and traffic so it became a slowed street

When addressing materials, think about the road panel itself and what might be best for bikers and pedestrians. Receiving feedback from the bicycle club might be helpful in addressing this issue.

The edges seem so hard, it would be nice to add softness to both schemes.

In both schemes, recognize the overall costs and budget concerns for future development.