



Seattle Light Rail Review Panel

Julie Bassuk, Chair
Design Commission

Graham Black
Design Commission

Catherine Benotto
Planning Commission

Dan Corson
Public Art Advisory Committee

David Cutler
Planning Commission

Kurt Kiefer
Public Art Advisory Committee

Malika Kirkling
Design Commission

Laurel Kunkler
Design Commission

Kevin McDonald
Planning Commission

Tom Nelson
Design Commission

Julie Parrett
Design Commission/
Public Art Advisory Committee

Osama Quotah
Design Commission

Norie Sato
Design Commission/
Public Art Advisory Committee

Donald Vehige
Design Commission

Debbie Wick-Harris
Design Commission

Valerie Kinast
Coordinator

Tom Iurino
Senior Staff

APPROVED MINUTES OF THE MEETING

May 19, 2011

Convened 8:00 am
Adjourned 10:30 am

Project Reviewed

Roosevelt Station Light Rail Review Panel

Panel Members Present

Julie Bassuk, Chair
Catherine Benotto
Dan Corson
Kurt Kiefer
Malika Kirkling
Kevin McDonald
Julie Parrett
Osama Quotah

Excused Panel Members

Graham Black
David Cutler
Laurel Kunkler
Don Vehige
Norie Sato
Tom Nelson

Incoming Panel Members Present

Debbie Wick-Harris

Staff Present

Valerie Kinast
Tom Iurino

May 19, 2011

Project: Roosevelt Station Light Rail Review Panel

Phase: Schematic Design (30% Design)
Last Reviewed: May 5, 2011
Presenters: Ron Endlich, Sound Transit
 David Hewitt, Hewitt Architecture
 Barb Swift, Swift Company

Attendees: Debora Ashland, Sound Transit
 Kristin Hoffman, Sound Transit
 Lisa Rutzick, DPD
 Bob Nichols, Sound Transit
 Christine Scharrer, Hewitt Architecture
 George Hanna, Hewitt Architecture
 Jim O'Halloran, Roosevelt Neighborhood Association

Time: 8:30am – 10:30am

Disclosures

Panel member Corson was an artist for Central Link Light Rail.

Panel member Quotah's firm, LMN, is working on the Brooklyn Street station.

Panel member McDonald completed traffic analysis work-related to the University of Washington, Capitol Hill, Brooklyn and Roosevelt stations.

Presentation

Sound Transit presented the schematic (30%) design of the Roosevelt Station. It is located in the heart of the Roosevelt neighborhood between NE 65th St and NE 67th St just west of 12th Ave. Sound Transit will supply three kinds of bike parking, create a 3 minute drop off on NE 66th St., remove approximately eight parking spots along 12th Ave. NE, and develop a curb bulb and crosswalk to access the high school. Metro is considering relocating the bus stops on NE 65th between Roosevelt Way NE and 12th Avenue NE to provide more convenient access to the station.

The proposed station is comprised of two entrance buildings each 18'-28' tall that extend along the eastern edge of their respective sites. The vent structures extend higher than the entrance buildings. The station's north entrance is at NE 67th St. and 12th Ave NE; the south entrance is at NE 65th St and 12th Ave NE. Both have plazas fronting the entries. The buildings are canted along 12th Ave NE and pulled back at NE 66th St. affording opportunities for placemaking with features such as wide sidewalks, permeable pavers, swales and significant planting. Much of each building's eastern façade is glass, and, in conjunction with clerestory glazing above the entrances, permit light to enter the station below. Below ground the mezzanine is asymmetrical, the platform width is generous, and the stair to the platform from the mezzanine is separate from the escalators, enabling it to be a more sculptural form. Exposed pilasters 5' wide buttress the station box. Sound Transit is developing an RFQ for a lead artist to work with the designers.

ACTION

The Light Rail Review Panel thanked Sound Transit and its design team for its presentation of the schematic design of the Roosevelt Station. The panel appreciated the team's design intention for the station: the response to site and slope, the prioritization of 65th St., the play of light in both the architecture and landscape

architecture, and the ample accommodation for bicycles. By a vote of 8-0, the panel approved the schematic design with the following comments:

- Refine the design to better fit the context of the Roosevelt urban village. Given the project spans two long blocks and includes large vent structures and a high porch and portico, further break down the project's scale and use materials to better connect the architecture to the neighborhood.
- Further study station access from the larger neighborhood, especially connections from 65th Street. Examine all modes: transit, bicycles and pedestrians. Make a presentation to the bicycle advisory board and incorporate their feedback in the design.
- Enhance details and use materials to differentiate the north and south buildings.
- Further explore the "play of light" in the architecture and landscape architecture. While we appreciate the interplay of transparent and translucent glass, use something other than glass blocks.
- Examine the progression of spaces from the plaza to the station platform. Study the mezzanine's touchpoints and scale and to insure adequate space, circulation, and function.
- Refine functional spaces around the 66th St. drop off. Provide cover for those waiting.
- Provide an active beacon and push button for the 12th Ave. crossing.
- Develop a wayfinding plan. Integrate signage with Metro.
- Develop the design to encourage food vendors and performance artists. Refine the design of the mezzanine to make possible such programming.
- Study the queuing for the card readers. Design the progression for boarding the train and making payment as effortless as possible.
- Design the vent structures and roof plane to accommodate views from the future TOD to the west.
- Develop a lighting plan.
- Ensure a comfortable ambient noise level of the interior spaces. The high vaults, while striking, may reflect too much noise.

Panel Members' Questions and Answers

There are historic facades in the neighborhood. Are there any references to them in this building?

We believe we pay more respect through differentiation. Our design complements the neighborhood. We have discussed referencing the record store, but it wouldn't influence our design. Elements of the record store could be part of an art opportunity.

What are the heights of the vent structures and buildings?

The building is 18' at corner of 66th and 28' at 65th. The heights are the same for the building to the north. The height of the vent structure is 38'. These structures are important for emergency ventilation. They may become more sculptural or moved with further refinement.

When are the grills closed at 65th?

They are night security grills. Perhaps it will be a coil, maybe two pieces or even sliding; we need to look at it.

What materials are thinking of using specifically where the wall cants in?

We've proposed clear glazing at the main entry, with the knuckled articulation as opaque. Along the escalators and stairs it may be glass block, one foot square.

How do you connect to other transit?

The entire block of 65th could have bus connections. We don't see the park and ride at 65th and I-5 as a primary source of riders.

What are the building's materials, especially the canopy?

The canopy would be a substantial edge. We are still looking at materials. It is early in the design and materials are yet to be defined.

Are you proposing ground cover besides trees?

We would like to plant shrubs and lower vegetation on 12th and to wrap them around 65th. We propose a rain garden up and down 12th Ave. We are exploring placing tree grates or pavers around street trees.

Will street food be available?

As part of the Sound Transit program, we have provided a place adjacent to the entry along 65th under canopy. Or it might be located just inside the entry. We provide electricity for future vendors.

At the mezzanine level, what are the uses for the rooms off to side of the platform?

Those are not public spaces. But they are crucial as they serve station requirements and emergency functions.

Did the context guide your decision to make the buildings symmetrical?

They are and are not symmetrical. They are balanced in function. But in three dimensions, they are quite different. There are different amounts of light in each side. We view it as one facility and two head houses. We looked at other ideas but they seemed too self conscious.

Is there room for public art on the wall under canopy?

Yes, art could be placed there.

Did you consider surge capacity when you created the crosswalk to football stadium?

There is a strong desire line to cross 12th, which is an arterial. We are holding ongoing conversations with school and SDOT about the size and composition of the crosswalk. Football games are not held at the High School; only practice is held there.

You propose generous accommodations for bikes. Is all bike parking covered? The draw for it will be huge.

Yes, at the moment all the parking is covered. But we may add additional racks. We think bikes will be colorful addition.

What bike corridors do people use to access the station? What wayfinding plans do you have? You should make a presentation to and work with the city's bike board.

There is a bike lane northbound on 12th and a bike lane southbound on Roosevelt. There are no bike lanes on 65th. We will look at the bike connections more closely.

What decisions led to a constrained mezzanine level? It seems small. Could it have more program at that level?

The scale of the drawing is misleading. The space is quite generous for what it needs to do. There is no additional program on it. The purpose of the space is orientation and circulation, for people to figure out where to go what to do next. We believe the stair enlivens space.

Why is the 3 minute load spot not on 12th closer to the portals?

Along 12th Ave NE the traffic is northbound, so any stopping would require passengers to open their doors into the arterial. Along 65th there will likely be bus loading and 67th is a narrow residential street. At 66th, it is close enough to the entrances and offers the safest route to entry.

Will parking remain on the west side of 12th?

Yes.

What is the purpose of the curb bulbs?

They are offer an opportunity for placemaking, a generous sidewalk for walking, and a place to plant vegetation to meet the city's green factor requirements.

How many cars can use the drop-off?

Each drop off is 40 feet long, which can accommodate two cars on each side of the street.

Is the pedestrian path to the 3 minute parking zone covered?

No.

Did you consider a green roof or other sustainability measures? The TOD project to the west will look down on the station.

We created a design to provide a good long term return that does not encumber the agency with burdensome maintenance requirements. Sound Transit is looking at numerous sustainability elements.

However green roofs can be maintenance intensive and therefore costly. To have the same effectiveness of a green roof, we could bring water off the roof and soak it up in other manners. We don't want to build the supplemental water system that a green roof would require. Sound Transit's program does include sustainability principles; daylighting is a big one that we intend to employ at the station entrances.

Please recognize that even though it may not be legal and not according to your plan, 65th St. may be the main location for cars to drop off passengers.

Yes, they may do that. Our main strategy to prevent that will be enforcement.

When will you reach 60% design?

Next year.

What is the height of the plinth at the glazed wall?

It is at the height of neighborhood retail. In the landscaped portion of the site, it would be scaled to landscape.

Is there an alley behind the site?

The TOD would come right up to the station property line. We completed a preliminary study of what project might look like so that would aid our design.

I am concerned about the vertical circulation, specifically the touchpoints of the escalators. Their location may impede circulation.

The vault area may be too high. It is a tall space. In your design, consider the progression through spaces.

The project appears symmetrical. You could differentiate the two entrances through the exterior plazas.

At 66th St. and the plazas, consider an overhang and a more generous waiting area for pick up. Transit riders waiting for rides are not going to wait at the front entrance.

I like the way you're developing the plan.

Make the portals a larger, more open expression. Break corner as you come around and engage the landscape.

Use something other than glass block.

The design may be too simplistic for the type of neighborhood it is in. Choosing appropriate materials will help. Reflect Roosevelt neighborhood. Don't rely on artist alone to address the neighborhood context.

Provide spaces for food vendors and music.

Consider how ORCA card readers are used and how people queue up, both could be better designed for the flow of movement on and off of the train.

Provide more detail on wayfinding elements.

Provide covered walkways, especially in load and unload area.

Provide an active beacon and a push button at the crossing on 12th.

Consider the layout of vents and views from the future TOD. What you build could reduce value of that property.

I appreciate the design's simplicity and its relation to the natural slope. I like the pilasters and large vaulted spaces. But those spaces will create lots of sound. How best to deal with that? I don't like glass block; play off the translucency.

Consolidate Metro and Sound Transit wayfinding.

Choosing the right materials and details will be key. Bring handouts next time so we can see and study the details.

I am excited to see renderings of interior spaces.

I like the play of light, and the strategy of animation; it works for architecture, landscape and the pedestrian experience. Stick to those intentions.

JUNE 2 ADDENDUM TO MAY 19, 2011 REVIEW

On June 2 Sound Transit provided additional information about the Roosevelt station in response to questions that had come up after the May 19, 2011 review. This section documents that discussion.

Panel Members Present

David Cutler
 Julie Bassuk
 Laurel Kunkler
 Don Vehige
 Norie Sato
 Tom Nelson
 Dan Corson
 Kurt Kiefer
 Malika Kirkling
 Kevin McDonald
 Julie Parrett

Incoming Panel Members Present

Debbie Wick-Harris

Disclosures

Panel member Cutler's employer, GGLO, is under contract with the Roosevelt Development Group to pursue a contract rezone for a whole-block site that is three blocks east of the station.

Panel member Vehige lives on 16th Avenue Northeast within walking distance of the station, and his employer, GGLO, is under contract with the Roosevelt Development Group to pursue a contract rezone for a whole-block site that is three blocks east of the station.

Presentation

Sound Transit thanked the panel for approving schematic design at its last review. They noted that the public, at a meeting attended by over 175 people the week before, made favorable comments about the station design; most comments focused on construction.

Sound Transit explained it intended to permit overbuilding at the Brooklyn Station in the U-District which is designated as an Urban Center in the Seattle Comprehensive Plan. The Roosevelt Station is in a different location, in a neighborhood designated as a Residential Urban Village, and it would not be economical to overbuild. Sound Transit said it designed stations to existing zoning and wanted to stay neutral on the density debate that is underway in the neighborhood.

The design team explained its interpretation of the neighborhood context and the reasons behind the proposed design. The team created the station buildings as an edge and used them to transition in scale to the neighborhood to the east. The green edge along 12th related to the community. The design team believed that 12th Ave NE was not a suitable location for retail and, with the school across the street, had a different quality than Roosevelt or 65th.

As part of the station design, the design team prepared a TOD study of that portion of the Sound Transit property that will not be used for station activities. The study showed that the property could be developed to include approximately 265 residential units and as well as retail uses which would be located on Roosevelt as an extension of existing retail activities on Roosevelt and 65th. It would be one of the largest developments in the area. Subsequent to this study and to the station design, Sound Transit explained that it had also prepared a financial analysis that showed that building over the station entrances as designed would be of limited value to developers.

SUMMARY

After further discussion, the Light Rail Review Panel added the following comments to supplement its action from the 5-19-2011 review of the Roosevelt Station. With a vote of 11-0, the panel asked Sound Transit to:

- Coordinate with the city to develop an urban design framework for the Roosevelt station area to guide the neighborhood's evolution into a vibrant transit community.
- Explore design alternatives that reduce the footprint of the station entrance buildings; land and active sidewalk frontages are valuable urban resources in our growing city. Specifically, study how reducing the size of entrance buildings can provide opportunities for uses including TOD and open space that enhance and activate the streetscape on 12th Ave NE.
- Explore design alternatives that permit overbuilding of the station entrance buildings.
- Review the design of the entrance buildings to better integrate them into the fine-grain elements of the neighborhood.
- Create a clear hierarchy for the entrances based on the neighborhood context and projections for ridership; determine an appropriate size for each entrance. Consider developing the south entrance to include a civic space, and reconsider the size and design of the north entrance to better fit in with the neighborhood and allow for other uses of street frontage.
- Review the current location of the bike racks and the drop off so that the travel path to and from the station entrances is clearly visible, convenient, enjoyable, and safe. Study CPTED principles and how transit users will likely use these features.

Panel Members' Questions and Answers

How much developable area is lost by not allowing overbuilding?

2-3 stories. These stations won't be open for 9 years. Development can't occur until the station is finished. We can't predict the real estate market that far out. We can't buy more property than we need for station construction. Most developers have a shorter time frame, 2-3 years, not 9 years. It is a challenge to work with developer at this early stage; they might want to develop a different building type 9 years from now. Sound Transit doesn't actually develop property; we select a developer to do so.

What are the sizes of the TOD and the station buildings?

The footprint of the TOD is 55,000 sq ft. The lot area at the north entry is 17,000. The actual area of the north entrance, including covered bicycle storage, is 11,230 SF.)

How did you evaluate the cost of overbuilding at Roosevelt relative to Brooklyn or Broadway? At Broadway, where overbuilding was not accommodated, the Urban Design Framework recommends that future development cantilever back over the station entrances, which reveals an apparent missed opportunity, At Brooklyn, it seems that Sound Transit has been responsive in its design and recaptured this development potential. Why was the decision made to not allow overbuilding at Roosevelt?

It's not a station cost. Two or three floors of private development above the station entrances would not be economical for a developer to build, due to higher costs per unit given the site encumbrances and lower market demand in Roosevelt compared to denser urban centers like the U-District

Time frame is too far out for developers. You can't sell off remaining property until station construction is complete, so does the RFQ go out right after in construction?

No, it can happen a few years in advance so that a developer can be selected; they complete their design work including community design and permit reviews; so that they can be ready to start construction once the site is available.

We know things will change. This station needs to fit with the future density of the neighborhood. Allocate more space on street where TOD can occur so we're not cantilevering over the station in the future.

Another issue is the streetscape and the amount of people entering the station. Those two blocks are long. Even if there is no density on top, how can this design activate street? It doesn't have to be retail. Why are they symmetrical? What other opportunities have been looked at?

Does 8,000 boardings per day mean 4,000 at each entrance?

South entrance will have higher usage. Probably 2/3: 1/3 split. We looked at smaller entry at north but anticipated growth for future. The activity of station itself activates the sidewalk. 1/3 of the north entry footprint could be something else.

But what would that be?

We think it's possible to do street edges as a delightful experience. As a commercial venture it would die. Will have a waiting area and show you in a future presentation.

Take a finer grained look of how the station fits with neighborhood. Explore how TOD could make up the gap if entries are smaller.

The Capitol Hill station has more than twice as many boardings (20,000 per day) as Roosevelt, yet its station entrances are half the size. We've just heard that Brooklyn has one and a half times the boardings (12,000 per day) as Roosevelt, and its entrances are also half the size. In each case, the height of the entrances are shorter, lower scale, and they seem to be a more sensitive insertion into the neighborhood than here at Roosevelt.

The original Roosevelt Station ridership projections changed. They went up significantly and we added escalators at the north entrance and also accommodated new safety requirements since the PE design was completed in 2005.

The hierarchy and scale of entry foyer need not be so large. If there is a primacy to one entrance, demonstrate that. You don't necessarily need to lose an escalator. This is important because of the extraordinary length of street edge.

The massing and scale is large; it is two blocks. I'm excited about play of light, but that edge needs to be activated. You are forcing behavior for drop offs. They will happen on 12th. The bike storage is hidden and behind walls. Distribution of uses not calibrated to people's behavior. Station entrances are half this size for 1 ½ times the boarding.

Buildings are too big. The open spaces are good. The more this area becomes dense we will wish to have these spaces, at least at the corner of 65th and 12th. Part of your mission should be to create civic space.

That point is good. But these are places to pass through. We are not thinking of it as civic space.

The hierarchy already exists with the two station buildings; look at the different elevation of station entrances. They will figure the details out. I don't think it looks lavish. It will be important for urban growth of Roosevelt.

I like green places; not all retail. You need to explore activation of 12th.

I support the goals of designing elegant civic space, but I am concerned with the activation of street. I recommend balance. The station need not be the presence that it is, but explore open space or TOD to insure that the goals are met.

TOD may not be the only answer to activate the street. What can be done? How can it be a civic gesture?

When we add new stations in emerging neighborhoods, the transitions don't reflect the opportunity. Sound Transit needs to fully engage the city to look at station areas, zoning, program areas, and incentives.

Study CPTED principles.

You should overbuild the station; it is an urban village and an emerging neighborhood. If you engineered the station box you could add more floors.

The architecture makes a civic statement. I am not bothered by the incremental units that are lost. However, do you need the full two blocks and the big footprint?

Need to improve the strategy to mitigate scale change between the TOD to west and east. Like the idea. But it can be stronger.

This design is an attempt to fill the site and to avoid the contention Sound Transit experienced at Capitol Hill.

We need to consider overbuilding. Maybe not over the entrances; build up in the middle. The design, at present, looks like a library.

We happen to have a lot of space at Roosevelt. If we want to use our land area as resource, we need to look at how to develop the land. Maybe we should create a larger park or open space.

*If we're serious about climate change, we need to be reforming places that people will live differently.
Think broader than TOD. Make a civic gesture.
I'm not opposed to overbuilding.
Integrate development of the station with the city's goals.*