



**Seattle
Design
Commission**

APPROVED

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING
19 September 2002**

Gregory J. Nickels,
Mayor

Donald Royse
Chair

Laura Ballock

Tom Bykonen

Ralph Cipriani

Jack Mackie

Cary Moon

Iain M. Robertson

David Spiker

Sharon E. Sutton

Tory Laughlin Taylor

John Rahaim,
Executive Director

Layne Cubell,
Commission Coordinator

Projects Reviewed
Lincoln Reservoir
Yesler Community
Blue Ring Strategy
Bergen Place Park
Transportation Discussion

Convened: 8:30am

Adjourned: 4:30pm

Commissioners Present
Donald Royse, Chair
Jack Mackie, Vice Chair
Laura Ballock
Ralph Cipriani
Cary Moon
Iain M. Robertson
David Spiker
Sharon E. Sutton
Tory Laughlin Taylor

Staff Present
John Rahaim
Layne Cubell
Brad Gassman
Anna O'Connell

The Commission is an advisory, not regulatory, body providing professional, multidisciplinary design expertise to the Mayor, City Council, and City departments. They review projects during the design process and may recommend changes in the project designer's work or may recommend approval.



Department of Design,
Construction & Land Use

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19 Sept 2002 Project: Lincoln Reservoir

Phase: Design Update

Previous Reviews: 6 September 2001 (Master Plan Phase 1 Concept), 15 February 2001 (Playfields Shelter Schematic Design); 4 January 2001 (Playfields Shelter Schematic Design); 28 October 1999 (Schematic Design); 5 March 1998 (Conceptual); 16 October 1997 (Scope Briefing)

Presenters: Jeff Girvin, Berger Partnership
Doug Hollis, artist
Jonathon Morley, Berger PartnershipAttendees: Don Bullard, Parks and Recreation
Brent Middleswart, SPU
Kay Rood, Groundswell Off Broadway
Stephen Wagner, Tetra Tech/KCM Inc.
Colin Walker
Chuck Weinstock, CHHIP
Ruri Yampolsky, Seattle Arts Commission

Time: 1 hour (SDC Ref. # 169 | DC00032)

Summary: The Commission appreciates the design team's update and the long, remarkable interagency and intercommunity process that has led to the development of this space, and would like to make the following comments and recommendations.

- **The Design Commission commends the team for its fortitude and keeping the vision throughout, which has resulted in a design with strong integrity;**
- **appreciates the integration of historic restoration and contemporary pieces in the midst of a very public process;**
- **appreciates the exploration of the source and cycles of water and the focus that brings to this found urban space, making it exciting and rich;**
- **recognizes the importance of this project as a trailblazer in the reclamation of land over reservoirs and believes the team has paved the way for this process;**
- **commends the study of where technical requirements and an aesthetic vision can meet;**
- **strongly recommends that efforts not stop with completion of this piece of the project and urges the team and involved agencies to pursue and carry these trends into the future through restoration of the gatehouse;**
- **urges the team to continue to look for opportunities to enrich the social spaces and remember the experience of the environment is one of all senses;**
- **appreciates the high bar that has been set for all future liddings of reservoirs to develop truly unique public spaces; and**
- **commends all of the involved parties including the public agencies, the community, and the design team in the cooperative work.**

This project was begun in 1995 and has been reviewed by a number of entities including the public, Landmarks Board, SPU, Parks and Recreation Department, SDOT, Friends of Seattle's Olmsted Parks, Arts Commission, and the Design Commission. It is a collaboration of Groundswell Off Broadway, Friends of Seattle's Olmsted Parks, the project artist Doug Hollis, and Berger Partnership.

The team has addressed a number of issues brought up in previous Design Commission reviews. The hierarchy of paths is articulated in relation to the formality of the spaces, frequency of use, and type of use. Most of the paths are lined with 1/4" minus crushed rock with flush concrete that defines the edges and makes the paths and lawn easier to maintain. Granite cobbles and precast pavers are used in spaces where the level of detail is higher, such as near the water feature. The design includes an extensive, but simple lighting plan. It is technically functional and responds to the character of the park. Throughout the park, the fixtures will be globe poles, similar to those in Volunteer Park. The entries will be lit with wall-mounted fixtures.

This is a working site and to that end the design team has tried to use site features to incorporate utilities in order to make seamless the functions of the reservoir and the functions of the users. There are four raised hatches located on the east side of the water feature. These 7' x 7' hatches are 18" high and allow access into the reservoir. The Landmarks Board advised the proponents on the design of the hatches and recommended that they have fenestrations so they do not look like utility structures. Planters with a form similar to the hatches help integrate them into the park. Additionally, some hatches may be covered with chess boards.

Water is a key aspect of the park. The pond implies the presence of water below, but for health reasons is not directly connected to the reservoir. Part of the original parapet wall around the reservoir will be retained to reinforce the visibility and presence of water.

While restoration of the gatehouse itself is not within the scope of this project, the gatehouse is the jewel of the site and is honored with restoration and recreation of surrounding details. True restoration of elements around the gatehouse includes a portion of the parapet wall, metal fencing in front of the gatehouse, and the stairs to the gatehouse. In addition, there will be some recreated details including another section of the parapet wall.

The main entries are east and west sides of the park, which will create a main flow in those directions. This creates a new east-west axis across the site. The west entry is expected to host the most traffic and will therefore have more durable materials. Future phases of Lincoln Park Reservoir will address the entries to the north.

The water feature is more contemporary than the recreated and restored elements. It uses a different vocabulary such as different materials, but does not totally contrast the older details. In the last Design Commission review, there was a discussion about there being some acknowledgement of the reservoir underneath the water feature. Due to budget rest and security there cannot be windows down to the reservoir. However, what the reservoir expresses is access to water and that is the primary concept of the water feature. The active, sonic water feature explores the notion of access to nature and the qualities of water through ideas of its sources. The water flows through a series of spaces, initially from the small pool into an aqueduct which leads to main pool. Here, people can get their hands in the water and actually adjust things to see how water flows around different shapes and objects. The water then flows out of here into a grander space represented by the main pools and grand lawn. The pool here is an active texture pool with a gradation of different sized stones from large to small. The water will flow out of the trough from the previous pool, but water will also be coming from additional entry points to address the idea of networks and watersheds. The gradation of large to small stones represents erosion in natural systems. Finally, the remainder of the water features is a smooth, shallow pool that reflects the sky. This completes the representation of the hydrologic cycle by bringing the sky down to the water. If phase III occurs and the gatehouse windows are replaced, the pool will reflect the light from the gatehouse at night as well.

At the south terminus of the water feature there are overflow weirs. This area also transitions around the south side of the gatehouse or gatehouse terrace. The team's goal is to highlight this south-facing space to

make the transition between the southern end of site with the shelter house and restroom building and the upper site that has the water feature.

The original planting design was done by the Olmsted brothers and the team was cognizant of this throughout their design process. There are some old, landmark trees such as a Chinese Scholar tree and hedge maples that will be retained. The park is primarily unprogrammed open space with broadleaf, deciduous trees. The goal of new plantings is to provide large trees with interesting leaves and bark and seasonal color. Around the entries and the water feature, plants will be at a smaller, more human scale and will have finer textures/details.

Key Commissioner Comments and Concerns

- Feels that the new water feature's connection with the old reservoir could be thought about in terms of the relationship of the earth's surface representing something below. Fog or mist could rise up to indicate geologic features underneath and one of the properties of water is its ability for heat transfer. The form of the water feature is like a volcano and this would be an obvious take on that imagery.
 - Proponents stated that if this effect occurs naturally, that would be fine, but do are conservative when it comes to special effects. Proponents further stated that, although the pond has a conical form, they are not making a case for it being recognized as a volcano, but as a source.
- Believes that the length of the process was well-invested time and perhaps sometimes designs move too quickly. The process allowed for the structural/technical and aesthetic details to be integrated to create a wonderful experiential park for sight, touch, and sound. Would like to know what the team has done to address the sense of smell and if they have considered what the smells will be throughout the four seasons.
 - Proponents stated that to battle the chlorine smell, they are using trees that have some aroma. Other smells will be present temporarily, such as mown lawn and aromatic plants near the water feature.
 - Proponents stated that there are community perennial gardens at some of the entries and that these will be expanded.
- Would like to know how long it will be before the gatehouse is restored. Would also like to know if there are plans for a temporary intervention such as lighting the inside of the gatehouse if it will not be worked on for a long time so that the jewel is not a blight.
 - Proponents stated that restoration of the gatehouse is not part of this project and it is not known when that will happen. There is some informal lighting around the gatehouse now, but they do not want to highlight it in its current form.
 - Proponents stated that they have taken pains to keep mechanical items and tools away from the gatehouse windows and are doing everything they can to avoid precluding future restoration.
- Feels that the team has managed to clarify what is important through the lengthy process and would like to compliment the design team, Parks, and the public for the elegant, sophisticated design. Can see elements of the 19th century happily married into a 21st century park. Likes that everything has been considered and the different elements reinforce and complement one another. The richness of the art piece offers a contrast to the relative simplicity of the park. Compliments all of the players, but would like to recognize that the park is not finished yet.

- Is concerned about the spaces with regard to where socializing will occur, where the intimate spots are, etc.
 - Proponents stated that there are areas throughout the park for different kinds of socializing. At the north end are areas for movement and in the core are places for people to gather.
 - Proponents stated that people will gather in the sun bowl and shelter house at the south end where there is an arbor overhead, a place for performances, and seat walls and steps to sit on. The nature of this building is a place for the community to gather.
 - The water feature core is handled very pragmatically as a place people will want to be. The hatches and planting band help define the space where people can interact with water and people watch, and there is seating. The large, open lawn also allows for people to gather.
 - Proponents stated that the community does not want the park overly programmed to allow it to grow with changes in the community.
- Would like to know, since there is a wading pool, what the Parks Department's attitude will be toward people in the water.
 - A Parks Department representative stated that people will be allowed in the wading pool, but the larger pools are not for wading.
 - Proponents stated that they have designed the water feature to encourage people to get in and near the wading pool and discourage people from getting into the other pools. They are chlorinating the water to a human-safe level of water quality and the water filtration/purification system is designed to allow people in the water. They have also accounted for the fact that people might bathe in the pool.
- Would like to know how proponents have dealt with the uncertainty of what will happen across the street on the SoundTransit station site. Recalls that in the last review, they discussed connections and design linkages.
 - Proponents stated that if they were to wait for something to happen with that site, it would be a very long time. The main east-west axis in their design would likely serve as a circulation route for accessing the future station. Most utilities have been moved to within the borders of the now-existing reservoir so if ever anything happened, it would not disrupt the function of the park. The West Howell entry and existing trees would be most affected by development there, so the team is not investing a lot in this. Proponents stated that because the park will be there first, it will be SoundTransit's responsibility to adjust to the park.
- Would like to know what has changed with the design of the bridge since the last presentation.
 - Proponents stated that it is wider at the water feature to allow for easier access and that they are reinforcing turf on either side of it.
- Feels that the proponents have maintained a clear, strong vision throughout the design process. Would have like the lighting and seating to be more interpretive and transcend time rather than be so traditional.

19 Sept 2002 Project: **Yesler Community Center**
Phase: Schematic Design
Previous Review: 6 June 2002 (Pre-Design)
Presenters: Toby Ressler, Parks and Recreation
Roger Williams, Mithun
Attendee: Paul Fitzgerald, SHA
Rich Franko, Mithun
Deb Guentner, Mithun
Scott Kemp, DCLU
Tom Rooks, Mithun

Time: 1.25 hours (SDC Ref. # 169 | DC00275)

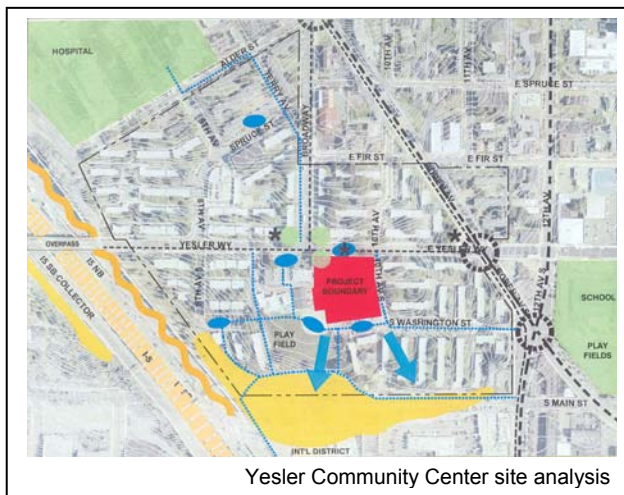
Action: **The Commission thanked the team for coming and continuing to involve them in this challenging project and would like to make the following comments and recommendations.**

- **The Design Commission respects the constraints and peculiarities presented by this project such as budget constraints, the surrounding community's varied desires, and adjacent property ownership;**
- **feels strongly that this project must set the future direction for a much higher density neighborhood and that this extremely valuable site will drive changes in this community;**
- **supports the direction of the street wall scheme as their preferred option;**
- **believes the west edge opens onto an important end of Broadway needs to be reconsidered as a public edge;**
- **feels that the proposed parking scheme is suburban and needs to be redesigned for an urban setting by, for example, having fewer spaces, excavating for underground parking, creating a multiple-use parking lot, or allowing parking to be appropriated for other uses as the neighborhood develops;**
- **encourages the proponents to continue looking at the more public east, street-facing wall of the gym and how that differs from the west side, which faces the courtyard;**
- **acknowledges that this is a place for children and encourages the team to make the interior gym space and childcare center reflect that it is a place for children;**
- **urges the team to further investigate how the south end of the site can be used for ecological functions as suggested by the proponents;**
- **urges the team to make the circulation connect visually and experientially to adjacent open spaces that will be developed in the future so as to set parameters for engaging these spaces;**
- **urges the team to define design principles that will guide the evolution of this project and its relationship to its context;**
- **approves schematic design with a strong recommendation that the team reconsider the parking and the plan configuration.**

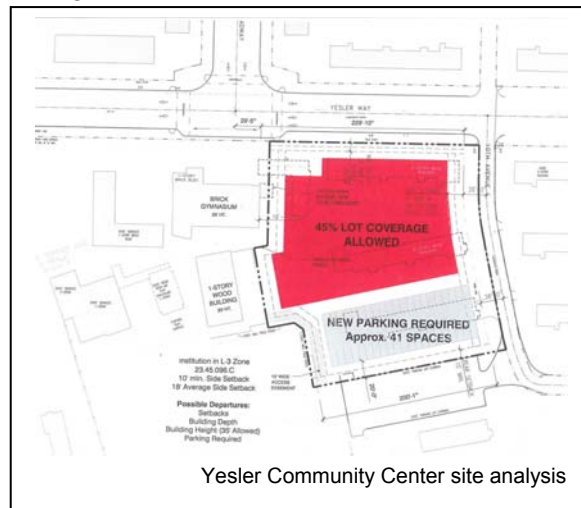
The original plan was to build a community center, housing, and parking on this site. The design team

developed three schemes based on Parks Department’s and SHA’s programs. The client agencies decided that none of the schemes—neither ground-related nor stacked alternatives—were satisfactory. The ground-related scheme produced urban design and architectural problems including creating a suburban rather than urban scale and severely limiting open space. With the stacked schemes, half of the housing units were too shaded, facing north into the trees and the number of units was minimized. These schemes also required that the community center be depressed 5’ below Yesler, which would have created operational and urban design problems. A key factor in the rejection of the mixed housing and Community Center was the limitations imposed by the 30’ height limit of the L-3 zones. In the end, the agencies and design team found that fitting all of the program elements on this site was a compromise and they wanted either excellent housing or an excellent community center.

The program has been reduced to eliminate housing from the site and retain the services—the community center and parking. The adjacent existing gym will be maintained through the construction of the new gym. SHA is no longer involved (although they are keeping the property to the west of the site) because their funding was going to come from the housing, so the site boundaries have changed. The new negotiated site is much smaller, but the program has not changed.

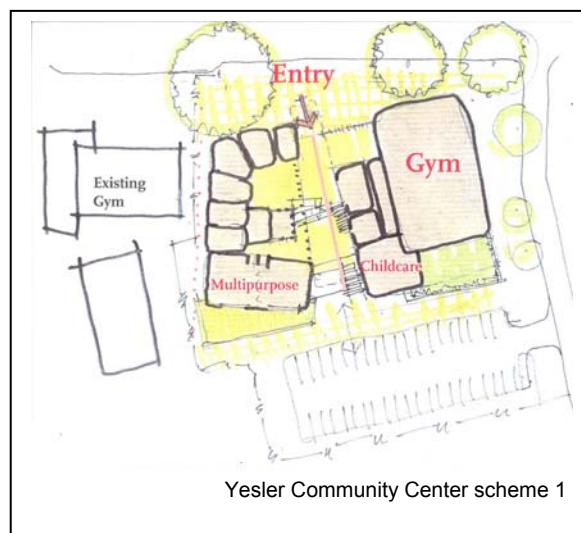


Yesler Community Center site analysis



Yesler Community Center site analysis

The proponents developed two parts. Scheme 1 has a mid-block entry and a central axis. Scheme 2 has a diagonal entry into the central open space and a streetwall. In the future, this open space may connect with open space on the SHA property. Transparency is one of the main goals for the site: in scheme 1, this is addressed by have the building set back from the street; in scheme 2, it is addressed with a diagonal view into the central gym and open space. Having adjacent open space by the multipurpose room is important. In scheme 1, there is a terrace adjacent to the multipurpose room and the courtyard has southern exposure. In scheme 2, there is open space at the southwest corner of the site, also adjacent to the multipurpose room.

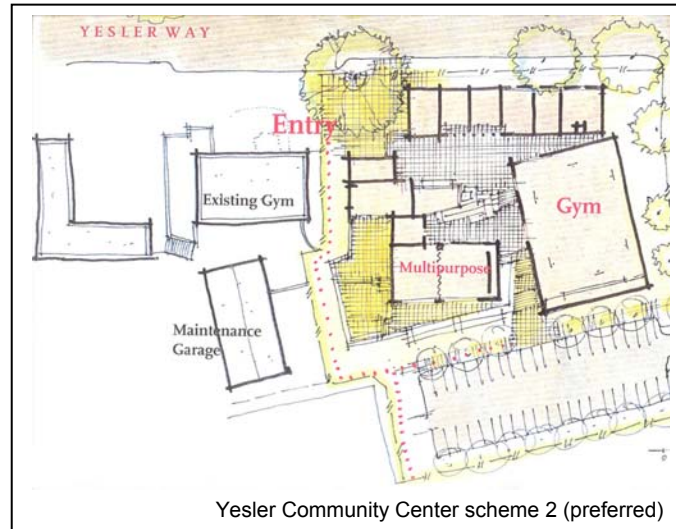


Yesler Community Center scheme 1

Having open space is a priority and parking is a given in both schemes. Parking is located in the lowest part of the site to facilitate and allow room for

stormwater treatment. Treating the stormwater is a tradeoff—some open space would need to be sacrificed for ecological function. The goal is to consolidate the little open space that is left.

The design team's preferred alternative is alternative 2, the streetwall scheme. This plan has open, defensible space in the southwest corner that has the potential for connecting with adjacent property. The future of the adjacent space to the west is unknown and this creates opportunities for a relationship to it. Alternative 2 also allows for opportunities for social space along the Yesler Way street edge. Yesler has good tree canopy and is a pedestrian scale, so it is a desirable social space. The street edge in front will remain porous. Along 10th, hardscape would be brought up to the building for seating, chess tables, and active zones; there will be ventilation at this side of the building, so hardscape also allows the space to be open and clear. To the south, there is 20' of space where trees would be planted for shade, reducing the need for air conditioning. At the south end of the site, a handicap ramp is integrated with the landscape.



Key Commissioner Comments and Concerns

- Recognizes that the site has shrunk, but feels that it is still necessary to know what SHA plans for the open space because in option 2, the site is closed off to the adjacent SHA property, while in option 1, it is more open to that property.
 - Proponents stated that SHA has looked at a number of options for developing their property including creating a very dense space, but they do not know for sure. Proponents further stated that they are struggling with deciding how much to open up to the SHA site.
 - An SHA representative stated that the future of their site is unknown—no master plan or anything beyond a preliminary plan has been made. They have not yet thought through how redevelopment will relate to this site.
- Believes that if development on the SHA site is a Hope VI development, it will probably not consist of highrise buildings.
 - Proponents stated that discussion are of a high-density development on SHA property—6 stories or more—but with stronger street relationships. The development would likely be of a size that would be shading and compromising view of this site.
- Believes it would be helpful if the design team along with Parks and Recreation and SHA could agree on clear design principles for future development. Would like them to define a few things that will inform work and help maintain the potential for a connection between sites.
 - Proponents stated that they have focused on the intersection at the northwest corner of the site as a potential connector and gathering space.
- Acknowledges that the proponents have recommended one diagram, the streetwall scheme, that

relates better to future development. Believes that there is some ability for proponents to make future projects relate to the pattern that they start.

- Feels that there are broader planning issues that must be addressed. A directive of open space strategy is to enhance view corridors and create connections to open space. Suggests that a massive structure in this zone would create conflicting urban design issues. Supports the streetwall scheme and encourages proponents to emphasize the edge and set up a direction for future development.
 - Proponents stated that the diagonal entry scheme would do that because the southwest corner as the active, lively space. In addition, it defines the street edge nicely and allows for flexibility in the future and the possibility for space to be reconfigured.
- Feels that the design process has been driven more by physical design considerations than by the perspective of people's use and benefits from the facility. Believes that strengths of this project is the preciousness of the land and its location in a very urban setting, and feels that the proposals do not fit in this setting because they are suburban paradigms. Would like to work with proponents to help them lessen the parking requirements and provide more opportunities for the design and program.
- Would like drawings to show the property at the foot of Broadway as they have shown Yesler, even though it is not part of this site. Like Broadway, the uses along Yesler are very important to the presentation because they are the components that make it a community center.
- Would like proponents to look at the strength of the presence of children and the childcare center and the impact of those on the courtyard. Believes that the childcare center should have more of a presence on the courtyard at the intersection rather than at the back. Feels that the childcare center and gym should be more visible at the front as beacons for strengthening the community.
- Suggests that the team keep working on what to do with east side of gym. Realizes that it poses a challenge with it being on a downhill slope, but feels that it is an important edge.
- Believes that the parking should be brought closer to the building because the space in between is not useful. This provides more space for stormwater treatment and feels that losing open space for water treatment is a worthwhile tradeoff.
- Feels that the more this space opens up to its neighbors, the more the neighbors will open up to it. Believes that the potential 8' wall is intimidating and that the point at the southwest corner is too sharp. Would like proponents to ease up on that corner and possibly use the handicap ramp as part of the circulation system. Suggest that they think of the ramp as part of the stepping down of that slope rather than as being at the base of an 8' wall.
- Believes that proponents are building a neighborhood service center geared toward a neighborhood soon will not exist, the neighborhood will change. Feels that it is a suburban plan for a place that is becoming more urban. Would like these buildings to establish a design direction and be more urban because what we see now in the neighborhood will not exist in the future. Believes that if there is an 8' differential, perhaps the parking should be underground rather than at grade.
 - Proponents stated that some of the design decisions are based on financial constraints.
- Suggests that this plan is more than a gesture and that the team can define the edge of the site by terracing stairs, which establishes urban element between the properties. This provides access to the building, but also establishes a tone for the building and for the future. Believes that, although excavating and putting parking underground is expensive, it is the best solution.

- Proponents stated that they are working with a \$4 million construction budget and there is \$6 million in levy money. They looked at a parking structure early on, but in addition to cost issues, there were security concerns in the community.
- Recognizes the proponents have these constraints, but feels that the Commission is here to push the envelope. There is movement to reduce parking in the city and surface parking will be more expendable later. Within the future context of a densely redeveloped neighborhood, feels that the edges need to be further explored. Believes that the gym edge will be uncomfortable because across the street will be highly-developed housing.
- Would like to know if it is possible to just cut the parking in half.
 - Proponents stated that it would be helpful for the Commission to exert more pressure on city agencies to think downstream and push the envelope on issues like parking requirements.
- Feels that designers need to provide the ammunition, i.e., show a significantly better design with half the parking.
 - Proponents stated that this is a catch-22 and that these are great ideas, but in reality they are futuristic thoughts. Further stated that the community does not want to lose any parking.
 - Proponents stated that they could explore densifying the courtyard, having open space around the community center, and getting rid of some parking.
- Believes that if the existing tree on Yesler are to survive, proponents must minimize the paving over the roots.
 - Proponents stated that they have looked into it and that is the most porous side.
- Believes that there are issues with parking, but also with the west edge. Would like to see more connection looking out and see it defined as a public edge. Realizes that this may be a stretch as the big gym belongs to someone else, but would like to see the plan look to the future. Feels that the preferred alternative can be adjusted to do that.
- Would like proponents to make the west edge more open, create a smaller footprint for parking, and provide better experiential conditions relative to the SHA site.
- Would like the team to treat the edge along Yesler as if it were high density.

Key Visitor Comments and Concerns

- A DCLU representative stated that the project is going to Council for several departures, so it is possible for them to seek exceptions to the parking code. The parking spaces are based on what the project needs, but these do not necessarily need to be on site. Alternative solutions could be building them on SHA property; making the lot grass and to be used as parking only for big events; or making the lot basketball courts to be used as parking when there is demand.

19 Sept 2002 Project: Blue Ring Strategy

Phase: Discussion

Previous Reviews: 16 May 2002 (South Lake Union Streetscape Briefing), 4 April 2002 (South Lake Union Streetscape Briefing), 20 Sept 2001 (Open Space Strategy Briefing), 17 May 2001 (Open Space Strategy/Westlake Corridor South), 5 October 2000 (Open Space Strategy Briefing)

Presenters: Lyle Bicknell, CityDesign
Robert Scully, CityDesign

Attendees: Dennis Meier, CityDesign
Eric Tweit, SDOT

Time: 1 hour (SDC Ref. # 592 | DC00184)

Summary: The Commission appreciates the overview of current work on the Blue Ring Strategy and would like to make the following comments and recommendations.

- **The Design Commission feels that there was not enough time during this session for sufficient dialogue or for a complete look at the project and would like the team to come back;**
- **would like the team to present the following three facets of the project in their future presentations: 1) a review at the conceptual level; 2) the South Lake Union piece, especially Terry Avenue; and 3) the implementation strategy and a look at the coordination of existing and future projects; and**
- **would like to raise the importance of the transportation aspects of the project.**

CityDesign staff presented the current work and thinking, in addition to planned future phases of the Blue Ring Strategy. The Blue Ring Strategy is a vision and implementation strategy for a connected system of publicly accessible open spaces in Center City including parks, plazas, streets, and shoreline. Ten neighborhoods make up Center City, which is an expanded area from the original Downtown urban center. The strategy tries to look at gaps in planning—some area plans are more developed than others. With the South Lake Union plan, they intend to take the Blue Ring Strategy to the next level of detail.

In creating the Blue Ring, the team looked back 100 years to the “Green Ring” that was proposed by the Olmsted brothers and has been partially implemented. Most of the Olmsted brothers’ work took place in the periphery areas, leaving a gap in Center City. The Blue Ring focuses on bringing open space to the center of Seattle. The 100-year plan for the 21st century is to:

- connect neighborhoods
- link major civic amenities
- bridge gaps
- use water as a placemaker
- illuminate urban watersheds
- capture important views

The draft Blue Ring Strategy now consists of two documents: 1) the 100-year Vision describes the concept for linking public sites of regional significance and sets up a hierarchy of connections, 2) The Next Decade proposes an implementation strategy for the next 10 years, a project guide, and mechanisms for implementation. Some of the key projects and sites for the Blue Ring are the waterfront, King Street Station, South Lake Union: Park and Neighborhood, Westlake Avenue, stadiums, and the library and civic center. A public presentation on June 25th elicited many comments including a desire for more emphasis on parks and questions as to how the strategy will affect neighborhoods, where community

gathering spaces will be in neighborhoods, and how the use of streets will be balanced. This led into the next phase of working, beginning this fall.

Current activities include:

- creating site selection and design guidelines for public parks and private plazas
- identifying opportunity areas for sub-area planning, such as South Jackson St.
- identifying neighborhood gathering places
- defining the scope for sub-area planning through discussion with SDOT and other DCLU Planning Group members
- working with InterIm and their consultants to find out where CityDesign and the Blue Ring can help and intersect with the International District urban design plan
- collaborating with SPU on a workshop to present and discuss tangible aspects of Westlake Avenue streetscape design with property owners, developers, and other community members in the Denny Triangle
- looking at other neighborhoods for sub-area planning such as Belltown, First Hill, Denny Triangle, and South Lake Union

The South Lake Union sub-area plan is in the northeast corner of the Blue Ring. The 9th and Terry green streets are being implemented and South Lake Union Park will act as the portal to this area. The majority of the property is owned by Vulcan or the City, which affords some opportunities. With regard to land use, there is a pocket of light industrial zoned land right in the center, which specifically excludes housing. There are also a lot of landmarks in the area, many of them churches. The team sees Mercer and Westlake being the important connecting corridors—Denny is too narrow and has difficult topography and Fairview has too much traffic. The Potlatch trail will be somewhere in this zone.

The project is being done in phases, with Phase I starting in 2003 and calling for work near the new Vulcan development, the new Cornish School, and south of the South Lake Union Park site. Phase II will occur in 2004–2006 and will consist of projects like Westlake Avenue. Phase III is slated for 2007 onward.

Changes in the streetscape of Westlake north of Denny are being proposed. The street itself could become a two-way street with diagonal parking and the proposed streetcar in the northbound side and one southbound lane accommodating parallel parking. This new configuration allows for wide sidewalks. Terry Avenue will undergo changes, as well. Because it is wider than the standard right-of-way, a woonerf design has been proposed. This would include bollards and street trees that define the pedestrian realm. The east side of the street would be curbless and much of it would be brick. The team has worked with Vulcan engineers on the design for this street.

Key Commissioner Comments and Concerns

- Would like to know if there is a plan to do anything with the street alignments east of Fairview.
 - CityDesign stated that there are no plans for that in the short term.
- Believes that the proposed changes to Westlake Avenue is a contentious issue.
 - CityDesign stated that there are a few vocal people opposed to the proposal because they do not want a two-way street, however this is not the majority.
- Recognizes that the diagram shows Westlake as a major street, but Terry is visually a major street. Would like to know why there is not more emphasis on Terry.
 - CityDesign stated that both streets need emphasis, but in different ways. They cannot

both have continuous retail on both, so there is continuous retail just on Westlake. Terry will serve more as a pedestrian mall.

- Suggests that because these are all drafts at this point, the team reconsider orientation and emphasis. Now it reflects more attention on South Lake Union and certain parts of downtown, but would like more attention given to SODO and the stadium district. Suggests that more documentation should be done even if it is cursory. Believes that if the City documents address the need for pedestrian design in these areas, it will make a better case for WSDOT.
- Advocates that the Commission treat CityDesign projects differently than they do at present. With the current method, the Commission is not given time to provide thoughtful comments and contributions to the work.
- Believes that a more precise process than a casual information presentation is necessary between the Commission and CityDesign projects.
- Feels that the Commission needs another session on the Blue Ring Strategy at the conceptual level and that something is presented to the Commission every month to keep them up to speed.
- Believes that transportation issues are currently the big, driving issues and would like to look at the Blue Ring with an equal level of importance because other projects fit in as pieces of the Blue Ring.
- Points out that the previous project (Yesler Community Center) is on the Blue Ring, but it is being designed without looking toward the Blue Ring.
- Feels that there needs to be a recommendation at the city level that the Blue Ring and other strategies are part of their vision and be made city policy.
- Feels that there are three facets of the project that the Commission would the team to come back and present: 1) a review at the conceptual level; 2) the South Lake Union public realm, especially Terry Avenue; and 3) the implementation strategy and the coordination of existing and future projects.
- Believes that the team should keep focusing on the vision and the implementation will happen in pieces.

19 September 2002 Commission Business

ACTION ITEMS

A. TIMESHEETS

B. MINUTES FROM 5 SEPTEMBER 2002—APPROVED

DISCUSSION ITEMS

C. HIGH POINT JOINT MEETING UPDATE—GASSMAN

D. HIGH POINT COMMUNITY CENTER UPDATE—ROYSE

DON ROYSE PRESENTED THE CHANGES MADE TO THE COMMUNITY CENTER SINCE THE COMMISSION LAST SAW IT. THE COMMISSION FEELS THAT THE DESIGN HAS BEEN MUCH IMPROVED AND APPRECIATES THE EXTRA WORK OF THE DESIGNERS AND CLIENT IN MAKING THIS A BETTER PROJECT.

E. APPOINTMENTS & REAPPOINTMENTS—CUBELL

19 Sept 2002 Project: **Bergen Place Park**

Phase: Conceptual Design

Previous Reviews: None

Presenters: Cathy Tuttle, Parks and Recreation
Kris Snider, Hewitt Architects

Attendees: Dave Boyd, DON
Katy McNabb, DON, Ballard Avenue Landmark Board
Michael Shiosaki, Parks and Recreation

Time: 1 hour (SDC Ref. # 169 | DC00287)

Action: **The Commission thanked the proponents for the excellent presentation and would like to make the following comments and recommendations.**

- **The Commission commends the team for coming with three ways of thinking about the project site rather than three ideas to defend, which elicited an open, conceptual dialogue;**
- **urges the proponents to consider the functional needs of the users first;**
- **encourages the team to simplify and clarify the design wherever they can;**
- **urges the team to look carefully at the edges of the site;**
- **suggests that the team come up with three more quick design variations when presenting at the public meeting this week;**
- **feels that the proponents should consider the possibility that this may be a symbolic space rather than active, usable space and that they should not force uses onto the site;**
- **urges the team to define the space through its geometry and prominent corner;**
- **feels that 22nd should be maintained as a through street with parking on it; and**
- **approves this phase of the design with clarification that the project is in the concept design phase.**

This is a small ProParks project with \$170,000 available to actually put into the ground and an overall levy of \$240,000. There is not funding enough for what the community has in mind, but it is an active community group and they are involved in raising more money. The team is holding a charrette on the project in the community this upcoming weekend. At this point, the project is more in the conceptual phase of design rather than the schematic phase.

Bergen Place Park is a gateway to other districts; it is important because of its adjacencies. The park is within a very dense urban fabric. The adjacent sidewalks are fairly wide—16' to the east side and 12' to the west. The Ballard Landmark District borders the park, but the park is not within it. High-density buildings of 400–500 residential units are slated for development near the park at Ballard and Leary and between Leary and Russell. In addition, a new civic center will be built nearby.

Although the park is centrally located, it lays fallow amongst the surrounding activity. The park is 7000 ft² at the corner of a five-way intersection. The space feels isolated being at this awkward intersection, which is compounded because none of the adjacent buildings actually front the park. Existing broad-leaf trees and a large awning make the space very shaded and static feeling. Fifteen

different elements, including movable pots, a kiosk, a flag pole, a mural wall, and a performance deck, clutter the park but do not relate that well to the space or one another.

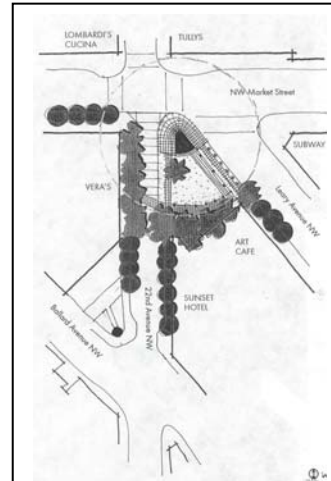
The challenge is to define what the attitude should be for this urban space—an activated, busy space or a softer, garden-like space. Bergen Place Park is part of a system of open spaces that will happen in the Ballard neighborhood. Already there is Marvin Gardens, which is dark and full of plants. In one of the schemes, the team looked at relating these two spaces to one another. Not all of what exists in this space is bad; the team is looking at historical cues to find a balance of existing and new elements.

In talking with the community about their desires for the park, the team has found that they want comfortable places to sit; an open, light, and airy space; and some kind of art, sculpture, and color to activate the space.

Following are the three design concepts for Bergen Place Park:

1. Street life

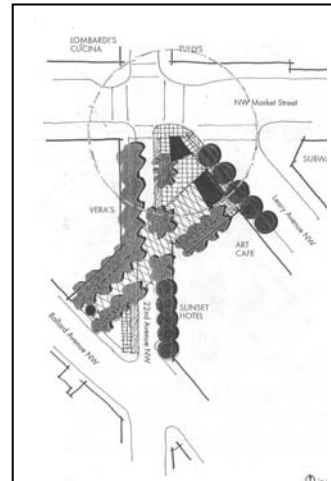
This design places a singular, iconic element on the corner—the form of this element is undecided, but could be something like art or lighting. This piece will be a civic gesture toward the intersection. Places to sit are provided and define the park’s edges, while softening and providing a buffer from the street. The whole park rather than just a strip is connected across 22nd, which would need to be discussed with SDOT.



Bergen Place Park alternative 1: Street life

2. Marvin, Meet Bergen

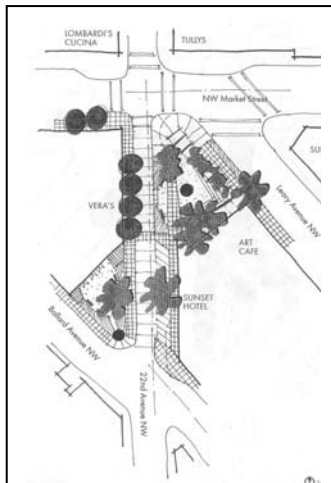
This design combines forces of Bergen Place and Marvin Gardens across 22nd. A terraced water feature or art piece serves as a play element, noise buffer, and grade transition. An alley of trees and benches create an urban promenade that also links Bergen and Marvin together. An undefined element at the corner would create an edge/buffer.



Bergen Place Park alternative 2: Marvin Meet Bergen

3. Reclaiming a public plaza

An arbor defines the edge while allowing views out, allows solar access, and provides shelter and seating. Trees frame the edges of the park and low plantings along Leary and 22nd define the public space for pedestrians. Back-in angle parking along 22nd slows vehicles and makes the area safer for pedestrians. In the center of the plaza there is some kind of sculptural piece.



Bergen Place Park alternative 3: Reclaiming a public plaza

Because it is early in the design phase, the team asks that the Commission comment on whether they are heading in the right direction, how to define this space that is located between structures, and how the 1% for Art program can fit in.

Key Commissioner Comments and Concerns

- Would like to know how often the stage is used and what other uses the park currently serves.
 - Proponents stated that the stage is used three times each year and the rest of the year it is primarily used by transients because the awning provides shelter.
- Would like to know how much traffic there is on 22nd.
 - Proponents stated that there is a significant amount of traffic and a popular restaurant on this part of 22nd. Further stated that it is closed for the three major events of the year, but it could not be closed permanently.
- Would like to know if there would be resistance to losing parking on the east side.
 - Proponents stated that the parking there is very valuable and they are trying to maintain the present number of spaces.
- Likes the attitude of having everything and everyone together in a space. Would like to know, with this being a suburban neighborhood, what kind of park this is going to be.
- Believes this is not a suburban, but rather an urban neighborhood with many people living in apartments.
- Agrees that there is a lot of urban development happening in this area.
- Would like to know what kind of a space people want.
- Feels that there is an inherent tension because it is an important gathering space on some occasions, but the rest of the time it is used in a passive way. At first, felt that scheme 2 was most appropriate, but there are significant times when a connection across 22nd is important.
- Recognizes that there is a lot of pass-through and symbolic use of the space.
 - Proponents stated that that is true and most people's knowledge of Ballard from driving through experience.
- Believes it's a good idea to pull back and look broadly at the area. Ballard has the potential to be the liveliest neighborhood in the city, but is challenged because it is geared for auto use with wide streets. Feels that it is critical to create linkages and establish an overall pedestrian environment that links future and present spaces and provides greater safety and security for pedestrians. Believes it is appropriate to do what they can to make a more pedestrian-friendly area south of Market like linking pedestrian oases such as Marvin Gardens and Bergen Place.
- Would like to know if there was ever a building on this site.
 - Proponents stated that at one time there were single family houses.
- Feels that on paper, we can make the spaces connect, but in reality the spaces are too small. Prefers an alternative that does not connect Marvin Gardens and Bergen Place. Suggests the designers look at Lake City Park where you feel like you are going into a building when you enter the space. Also suggests that the essence of the upcoming charrette should be to look at how users are going to use the park.
- Recognizes that proponents have identified this space as a big deal several times a year. Believes that in its new form, it still has to be able to operate on that level and be open enough to tolerate crowds of people.
 - Proponents stated that a new, large public space to the north will take on some of those

people.

- Feels that a series of uses does not activate a space. Would like to see a return to a simpler notion of what spaces can be. Feels that attempting to link to Marvin Gardens squeezes the street and goes against making an interesting space on the corner. Would like to see a big, simple design rather than a fine-grained solution, such as an architectural frame or trees. Believes that in the future, two trees could link the spaces identifiably. Would also like to see the corner well defined.
- Believes that a connection between the parks is an interesting idea. Although much of the new traffic can move to the park to the north, people will move through these spaces naturally across 22nd. Would like to see that movement reinforced in a way that still defines Bergen.
- Senses that one function in the future will be as a gateway to the commercial district on Ballard and Leary. Currently, if people are not familiar with the area, there is no indication of what is there.
- Believes that realistically the Parks Department will not have the funds to do anything with Marvin Gardens. Feels that perhaps the relationship between the two spaces can be something other than being alike; perhaps they can be linked through their differences. Also, feels that getting from one to the other is not a problem now.
- Suggests that the best use of the site would be a flatiron building because it is at a big intersection and is a wayfinding place. Realizes this is not an option, so suggests that a big, iconic element would be appropriate.
- Believes that this space is the center of the neighborhood, the core. It has symbolic value.
- Feels that the money should be found somehow after the best solution is developed rather than compromising a design.
- Believes that there is a need to define the triangle—the diagonal bisects and defines the grid. Would like to see that definition created in this park. Suggests that perhaps trees could make that definition and points out that is a departure from any of the three schemes where connection is key in the vegetation analysis.
- Believes that there are several givens: the space is an icon that helps people understand they have arrived in Ballard and it needs to stay that way; the space does relate to Marvin Gardens; and it is a waiting and meeting space. Suggests that the team use the upcoming meeting with the community to figure out how else they want to use this space, i.e., café space; tactile/engaging space (eg. climbing wall); empty, unprogrammed space.
- Suggests that the team some of their money to get an artist on board now.
- Would like to know why the team dismissed the idea of using water in this space.
 - Proponents stated that they cannot propose a water feature because of the difficulty and expense of maintaining them.
- Would like to know if the team has considered creative adaptive reuse of some of the elements already in the park.
 - Proponents stated that they have considered this for such elements as the wood columns.

Key Visitor Comments and Concerns

- A representative from Parks and Recreation stated that every neighborhood would ideally like a water feature, but the Parks Department cannot afford to maintain that many.

19 Sept 2002 Project: Transportation Discussion

Phase: Staff Briefing

Previous Reviews: 15 August 2002 (Staff Briefing), 1 August 2002 (Staff Briefing)

Attendees: Ethan Melone

Time: 1 hour (SDC Ref. # 170 | DC00231; 221 | DC00262; 219 | DC00231;
169 | DC00242)**Summary: The Commission discussed the Monorail, Viaduct, SR 519, and SR 520 and how they can stay involved in these projects.****Key Commissioner Comments and Concerns**

- There will be a planning meeting for several forums on the Monorail sponsored by Town Hall. They are proposing three such forums, each focusing on a different aspect—technology, governance and financing, and design.
- Commission stated that they would like to be involved in the forums. Don Royse and staff will be attending the planning meeting.
- Several Commissioner's met with representatives of the Mayor's office to discuss the Viaduct and future waterfront project.
 - The Mayor's office recognizes that now is the time look at other Viaduct alternatives, and surface design issues will be thought about more closely. In addition, they would like to form a different balance of assignment of responsibilities and figure out how to best merge urban design issues with all of the other issues surrounding this capital project.
 - They are looking to the Commission and CityDesign to play a role in and set an agenda for the project.
- Believes that the City needs a full-time urban design employee at the table for the Viaduct project and feels that the Design and Planning Commissions should be part of scoping for that job/person.
- Believes that there are many practical questions about the attendant visual, noise, and environmental impacts of different options that need to be researched such as, "If a tunnel is built, how many vents will it need, how big will these be and how far apart will they be placed?"
- Believes that this kind of research is a massive undertaking and will require a lot of time. Feels that these kinds of questions can only be answered by permanent staff.
- Feels that perhaps the Commission should think about having another engineer on the Commission given all of the new engineering projects on the horizon.
- Commission would like to continue working with the Planning Commission on the Viaduct project, acknowledging that at some point they might divide if it's appropriate.
- Recalls that the Mayor asked for the Commission's assistance in looking at SR 519. Would like to know where they are on that.
- SR 519 is linked with the Viaduct and is being looked at holistically by SDOT. When there is more

information, the Commission will pursue this topic further.

- WSDOT staff will come to the Commission at the end of October to discuss the SR 520 Trans Lake WA expansion project. Lots of misinformation has been circulating so clarifying the current proposal will be good.
- The Trans Lake Board's preliminary preferred option for this project is the 6-lane alternative with pontoons that could accommodate transit in the future. It was noted that the City has a different position on this project.

Key Visitor Comments and Concerns

- A representative from SDOT stated that they have met with the SR 520 project team to discuss the upcoming presentation to the Design Commission. He emphasized to the team that when they present to the Commission, it would be good to start with the basics of the project and bring the Commission up to speed on what work has been done.

19 Sept 2002 Project: **Commission Business**
Phase: Discussion

Time: 1 hour

Action: The Commission discussed their relationship with CityDesign and how this might be further clarified for themselves and the public. The Commission struggles with what autonomy means for them on big projects. Further clarification of functional roles and processes should be pursued.

Key Commissioner Comments and Concerns

- Would like to hone the draft diagram developed by staff that conveys the relationship and clarify what is in the overlap between the Commission and CityDesign.
- Believes that it would help to define roles and clarify the day-to-day machinations of each in written form.
- Suggests that a list of criteria for projects such as type, scale, and scope be developed to help define the overlap.
- Feels that clarification, in writing, of external and internal communication protocols would be helpful.
- Would like to discuss what is appropriate for Commission action language, given their role as an advisory body.