



**Seattle  
Design  
Commission**

**APPROVED**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING**

**6 March 2003**

Gregory J. Nickels,  
*Mayor*

Donald Royse  
*Chair*

Laura Ballock

Ralph Cipriani

Jack Mackie

Cary Moon

Iain M. Robertson

Nic Rossouw

David Spiker

Sharon E. Sutton

Tory Laughlin Taylor

John Rahaim,  
*Executive Director*

Layne Cubell,  
*Commission Coordinator*

Projects Reviewed

Gasworks Park Site Plan  
South Lake Union Park  
Kubota Gardens  
Joint Meeting with Planning Commission  
Seattle Monorail Project

Convened: 8:30am

Adjourned: 5:00pm

Commissioners Present

Donald Royse, Chair  
Laura Ballock  
Ralph Cipriani  
Cary Moon  
Nic Rossouw  
David Spiker  
Sharon E. Sutton  
Tory Laughlin Taylor

Staff Present

John Rahaim  
Layne Cubell  
Brad Gassman  
Anna O'Connell



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Construction & Land Use

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**6 Mar 2003** Project: **Gasworks Park Site Plan**  
Phase: Conceptual Design Update  
Previous Reviews: 6 Feb 2003 (Conceptual Design)  
Presenters: Jeff Girvin, Berger Partnership  
Guy Michaelson, Berger Partnership  
Attendees: Alley Rutzel  
Jerry Malmo  
Chris Mapes  
Michael Shiosaki, Parks and Recreation  
Tim Motzer, Parks and Recreation  
Susanne Friedman, Parks and Recreation

Time: 1 hour (SDC Ref. # 169 | DC00297)

**Action:** The Commission thanks the team for coming and giving them the opportunity to see the project before the next stage of development and would like to make the following comments and recommendations.

- The Design Commission applauds what the team has done with comments from the different groups and feels that the design is true to the original concept;
- applauds the creation of future possibilities for water connections;
- encourages the team to develop the tank remnant idea in keeping with their design principles to create a strong, bold expression and to look at precedents of reuse of industrial sites, especially in Europe;
- encourages proponents to go back to the original thinking with regard to the northwest corner because the proposed slope is too soft and is a compromise to the original concept;
- would like to clarify the comment of the last meeting was to cut the wall with clean, bold cuts;
- urges bolder use of trees including in defining the remnant tanks and encourages the team to consider safety issues in developing a shrub layer around the edge;
- given budget constraints and the environment, supports the new location of the off-leash area outside of the wall south of the parking lot and northwest of Kite Hill, however would like to see better integration of this area with the edge and the surrounding environment;
- encourages the team to go back to SDOT to make a stronger argument for angled parking toward the water in the parking lot; and
- recommends approval of the concept design.

This project is funded by the Pro Parks Levy, which allotted \$1 million for park improvements. For the west part of the park, the improvements might require a comprehensive plan change. The design principles for improving the park are

- continue to tell the history of the site;
- improve access and visibility;
- allow future link connections;
- create a design that is bold in scale and character; and

- keep the details subservient to the boldness of the design.

The team took elements of schemes A and C from the previous review to create the current proposal and responded to a number of the Commission's earlier concerns. They considered how the parking might also be a viewpoint and discussed this with SDOT. With regard to incorporating an artist, they currently have no art budget. They have met with Harbor Patrol, Pro View, and the Landmarks Board and these groups have supported the concept plan. The most contentious issue is that advocates want the off-leash area to be in the containment wall and be greater than one acre. In a previous proposal the off-leash area was to the west and was 4700 ft<sup>2</sup> and in the current design it has been moved to the southwest of the improvements area and is 9500 ft<sup>2</sup>. A challenge in this project has been to weave together the input of multiple groups.

A number of formal changes have resulted with the combining of schemes A and C. In response to a suggestion at the last Commission meeting, the design team has made a visual axis to tie the park to the Wallingford Steps rather than a physical axis. An entry plaza is the formal element that crosses the street to make a connection. In addition, proponents have created several penetrations in the containment wall. There is a major opening to the north and another to the east to make a connection with the parking lot. They propose to lower the wall along the south edge of the parking lot and retain it at full height at the corner and have it also lower along the northeast side. They are retaining the grade at the prow and opening the corner to visual access to address safety concerns.

In deciding how to breach the wall, the Landmarks Board liked the sledgehammer approach, but did not outright endorse it. They felt that it could become too gimmicky if overused. The team has changed the hill at the corner to become more rolling and less architectural than in scheme C. The path network is as was proposed before and materials and hierarchy will be the same as existing circulation. Proponents are being more deliberate in their use of vegetation and are bringing in medium scale, deciduous trees at the east. The trees will reinforce the area around the tank ring and the reference to the tank ring will be the same size and in the same location as one of the original tanks. A picnic area adjacent to the parking lot is a more programmed, formal area. The off-leash area will be designed as such rather than just putting a fence around an area and the surface profile will be changed due to contamination. In the western part of the improvements area, the team is visually opening up the spot with the mound and evergreens to allow for a potential connection to the future Watershed Center. Runoff is being directed to a low point that currently has a sewer pipe, but the hope is that in the future surface drainage can be used. SDOT only allows the angled parking to the west to be back-in parking, which puts drivers facing away from the water. The team has angled the parking so that the view is to the park rather than the street.

### **Key Commissioner Comments and Concerns**

- Would like to know what the tank ring is.
  - Proponents stated that they do not know exactly what it will be yet, but they like the idea of incorporating art there. It will be flush with the grade and about 2 feet wide.
- Would like to know how flat that area is.
  - Proponents stated that it is quite flat and has just enough angle to shed water. It is a passive open space.
- Suggests the team consider doing the tank ring as a whole circle instead of just the circumference, i.e. a different type of grass.
- Would like to see the area as paving for kids to zoom around on their tricycles. Feels that the team

could introduce an artist to work with the paving and an industrial theme.

- Likes the development of the design. With topography, encourages the team to push back to what they had and not make this a soft, sweet space. Would like to see the feeling of an industrial area retained. Agrees that the sledgehammer approach to the wall everywhere is too gimmicky. Would like to know what contains the dog run.
  - Proponents stated that it is now just a chain link fence. They have relocated the path north and it forms that boundary; to the south, the south edge of the park forms the boundary; the toe of Kite Hill forms the southeast edge; and the existing property line with Harbor Patrol forms the southwest and west boundary.
- Supports the placement of the off-leash area and encourages the team to try and make it work.
- Compliments the team on the development of the project and feels that they have taken the best elements of the two schemes and refined them without losing the crispness of the design. Likes the path that runs across and connects the park and agrees that the high point of the hill should be kept far to the northwest to open the center bowl of the park more. Feels that now the end of the park is turned outward, which makes it less usable and like an edge. Feels that the off-leash area is a good compromise.
- Is concerned about the placement of the trees and feels that it is going away from crisp delineation of tree masses. Encourages the team to use the trees to reinforce the overall project that uses big bold landforms and reinforce Haag's original scheme.
- Likes the team's sweeping gestures, but feels that the team should go back to what they had before with regard to the topography at the prow. Agrees that the vegetation needs to be simplified and encourages the team to use the vocabulary in the rest of the park. Would like to know if the plantings by the prow are shrubs.
  - Proponents stated that from that point west there are plantings instead of lawn. They are trying to incorporate the idea of habitat and wetland and are looking to the future possibility of having on-site water treatment.
- Would like to know if these plantings are shrubs or groundcover.
  - Proponents stated that they are diverse plantings of shrubs.
- Feels that that is the most unsafe feeling place in the park now with the wall and abandoned cars and does not want the planting to accentuate that. Feels that the story of where the tank ring is needs more interpretation than just paving. Would like the perforations in the wall along Northlake Way to be more irregular rather than repetitive.
  - Proponents stated that there is only one penetration in the wall along Northlake Way.
- Urges the team to have one more meeting with SDOT to get them to allow the angled parking to be front-in parking. For locations with high traffic it makes sense to back-in, but not here where it is essentially a cul-de-sac. Feels that that tank ring's location should be linked to the historic structure and encourages the team to push the envelope more and not make it just a concrete ring.
  - Proponents stated that developing the tank ring idea more is part of the plan.
- Would like to know why, in the off-leash area, there is a hard line to the southeast when there is topography.
  - Proponents stated that they could expand the edge and make it more rounded and that

people do not want square edges in the dog run area.

- Suggests that, given the constraints, the team find a better interface between the park and the dog run area.
- Would like clarification on the ownership of Waterway 20.
  - Proponents stated that the Department of Natural Resources owns it and Harbor Patrol has a long-term lease. The reaction from SDOT and Harbor Patrol regarding the possibility of the waterway having public access at some point was that they did not know how realistic it was, but they did not say no. That area is not part of this design, so the goal is to present the opportunity but not have the design rest on getting access so the design is not a failure if it does not happen.
- Suggests the team contact those who worked on the design of landscape on a former U.S. steel manufacturing site east of downtown Pittsburgh and jointly developed by the City, Carnegie Mellon University, and the University of Pittsburgh to see how they treated the historic value of the industrial site.
- Last time, the Commission suggested the team look at Duisberg Nord and Emshar Park. Feels that what is successful in these projects is that they have left these decayed things and let patrons find a way to use them.

#### **Key Visitor Comments and Concerns**

- A member of Citizens for Off-Leash areas (COLA) and Wallingford resident, stated that in designing an off-leash area human use of the space should be considered first. They prefer a design that is attractive and offers amenities for humans with consideration for the impacts of dogs and humans. In the northwest corner of the park, they would like the off-leash area and other use alternatives such as an informal sports area. COLA would prefer a design that incorporates the off-leash area as part of the Gasworks ProParks project and budget in the park and not in the public right-of-way of N. Northlake Place. They feel that the northwest corner would avoid interference with other established uses, will have minimal impact on the visual character of the park, and will lessen any potential for spillover into areas not designated for off-leash use.
- A Wallingford resident stated that an overriding theme through the community meetings is that the hills being created will provide another grand stand for viewing the fireworks. She felt that the wedge at the northwest corner feels too enclosed and is opposed to lowering the wall in the northwest corner. Feels that the northwest edge is a good spot for the off-leash area. Feels that they are too often plopped in the middle of a park and would like to see this one better integrated with the park. Would also like to see more trees and vegetation.
- A Wallingford resident stated that he prefers the wall to stay tall and is happy with the design of the entrance. Feels that a chain link fence around the off-leash area is not the way to go and wants to see pockets of trees and vegetation at the north.

**6 Mar 2003 Project: South Lake Union Park—REVISED**

Phase: Schematic Design

Previous Review: 19 December 2002 (Conceptual Design), 2 August 2000 (Design Development), 21 June 2001 (Predesign), 18 May 2000 (Scope Briefing/Update), 7 February 2000 (Briefing), 20 August 1998 (Briefing), 2 April 1998 (Briefing)

Presenters: Steven Wright, Parks and Recreation  
Mary Margaret Jones, Hargreaves Associates  
Marcel Wilson, Hargreaves Associates

Attendees: Paul Maynard, Dept. of Design, Construction, and Land Use  
Karen Tsau, Fleets and Facilities  
Janet Pelz, Pelz Public Affairs  
Carolyn Law, Office of Arts and Cultural Affairs  
Michael Shiosaki, Parks and Recreation  
John Eskelin, Dept. of Neighborhoods  
Lyle Bicknell, CityDesign

Time: 1 hour (SDC Ref. # 169 | DC00051)

**Action: The Commission thanks the team for presentation and would like to make the following comments and recommendations.**

- **The Design Commission appreciates the thorough analysis, understanding of the larger urban context, consideration of the historical and archeological layers on the site, and the continuing appreciation of the broader civic implications of the site;**
- **supports the idea of using set piece programmatic elements to create local conditions;**
- **recommends a comprehensive and integrated approach with the Vulcan properties to the east along the shoreline;**
- **supports the idea of the Valley-Mercer configuration reversal to create a local pedestrian precinct on Valley and supports the integration of the north-south streets into the pedestrian experience;**
- **encourages the team to further explore the east-west axis;**
- **encourages SDOT to work with the team to create an integrated streetscape and perimeter around the project;**
- **recommends that the team continue to consider treatment of the canal's borders and edges including blurring the distinction of urban and natural elements;**
- **recommends further exploration of the site's historical context and how those recollections can be incorporated into the scheme;**
- **and applauds the design team on this exemplary project in terms of generating social life and understanding of how people use space to create a very energetic civic realm;**
- **recommends approval of early schematic design.**

**Note: Commissioner Sutton disclosed that she is a member of the Parks Foundation and the Commission felt that there was no need for her to recuse herself.**

The first public presentation of this project was last November, which allowed the community to meet the

designers. The team presented to the Commission in December and then in early February with the Public Advisory Team (PAT). Currently, the design team is in the middle of the public process for concept design. The goal is to return in May with a rough preferred alternative, which will then be taken to the board in June. In addition, the team is looking at costs and phasing for the project as well.

The design team looked at locations for pedestrian circulation, an amphitheater, and a long house, as well as taking into account the Center for Wooden Boats and the progression of the landscape toward the water's edge. Vulcan, who is developing on adjacent property, has hired consultants and the design team is talking with them. The park zone is very large and the team is viewing Valley and Mercer as these streets are proposed to be developed—"little Valley" and "big Mercer." The vision for Valley is that it will reach toward the park and have outdoor cafes and street trees. Mercer will be broader and accommodate more traffic, but will still be beautiful. With regard to materials, the intent is to use trees and paving systems that bring the whole district together.

The site has a lot of curvy and bent conditions like the shoreline and the team would like to play up the contrast of that with the architectural wharf end.

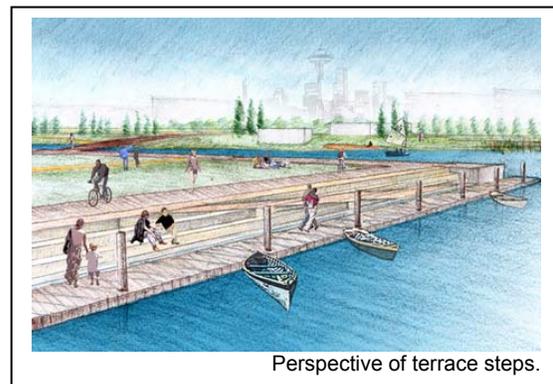
The proposed canal is a functional system connecting two points of topography and brings people into the park to the water's edge. They are still exploring the treatment of the edge of the canal with regard to how to bank it. The width of the water in the canal is 30 feet, the center is about 10 feet deep, and the depth at the edges is about 7 feet. On the edge there must be lay back zone that can change in character so, while the water channel has to be straight, the border can create the sense of variety. The team is exploring making the south edge of the canal urban in feel with steps and terraces and creating a lush north side that works with the amphitheater. The amphitheater will be a simple landform between Valley and the armory with a view to the water. If the channel is not permissible because of toxic soils, an alternative being explored is a bulkhead at the end with terracing down toward the lake.



Perspective of channel.

Close to the water, the team is exploring the idea of islands and grasses. These would be urban gardens that emphasize the concept of water. People would walk on boardwalks to the islands and the surrounding water could be used as a model boat pond. This element provides a water experience that children can enjoy. Another way of designing the space could have grass represent water with islands of trees model boats could be used in Waterway 3.

The tree canopy on the edge toward Valley is an informal, open arrangement. The team feels this space needs to be light and place for exhibition. Until Valley is narrowed, there needs to be some parking. There is a lot of variation along the Westlake edge and opportunities with Waterway 3. Two possible approaches are 1) be broad and take as much landscape as possible or 2) take a more vertical approach and terrace down to draw people to the water's edge. The circulation for the first notion would be meandering, but people would be far above the water whereas with



Perspective of terrace steps.

the second approach the path is configured to follow the layout of the stormwater collection system and bring people to the water. Another alternative in the terraced scenario offers a tighter, more geometric solution with upper paths, paths down the terraces, and a path along the water's edge.

Putting all of these elements together, the team came up with three possible configurations. In configuration A there is a lot of water with broad exposure to the water's edge. Configuration B incorporates a terraced edge for the water channel. In configuration C there is no canal and the edge of Waterway 3 is terraced. Users would experience more of a progression into the park rather than the feeling of crossing a channel onto an island.

Urban connections are a critical component of the park. Pedestrian and bike connections serve as an



underlay for program elements. Boat access from the water to the site is via Waterway 3. The water experience will vary with wetland, beach, and bulkhead interfaces in different parts of the park. Planting areas provide spaces for passive activities and other areas allow for both small and large gatherings. The park has the capacity to hold a festival or farmers market and accommodates Valley as a destination point at the water's edge.

### **Key Commissioner Comments and Concerns**

- Is impressed with the work and would like to know why there are such hard boundaries in the schemes.
  - Proponents stated that there are hard boundaries in some areas and not in others. For example, in the armory precinct, the lines of the terracing and other forms are very clean and a clear connection through the park is made along the line of Aloha. However, the proposal is to use the existing water's edge, so meanders will remain, but where it is defined it will remain defined.
- Would like to know if salmon will go into the channel.
  - Proponents stated that they did not know yet and they are talking to the Departments of Ecology and Fisheries regarding this and there is a desire to use the edges of South Lake Union for mitigation of work done in the Ballard locks. The team is proposing to create a perched wetland, so the canal will have a vertical edge, but with a perched edge with wetland plantings.
- Would like to know what it will take to figure the fish issue out.
  - Proponents stated that they are working with a planner at DCLU to address the issue.
- Commends the team on a superb job. Feels that the preliminary designs react to the horrible existing conditions along Valley and hopes it will be modified to represent more conceptual ideas of a slower,

pedestrian street. Urges proponents to base the program on what could be more than what is today. Likes what has been proposed for the west side and encourages the team to bring the public side even further along.

- Believes that there are really two proposals here rather than three. Feels that the team raised interesting questions about landscape interacting with land and water and manmade land interacting with water. Sees a conflict between the diagrammatic and phenomenological condition; the first diagram shows an extension of the city grid, but also an island. Feels that scheme three is about an extension of the city and does not believe that you really feel like you are on an island on this site. Suggests the notion of the canal and island is a red herring and prefers scheme 3.
  - Proponents agreed that it is not an island, but is a peninsula.
- Suggests the team look at a pool in Como in reference to creating a pool in the middle of the peninsula and feels that the peninsula condition should be expressed.
- Supports the idea of a channel and feels that it is all about fun and body experience and there is nothing like that in Seattle now. Believes that a sense of history is lacking and there should be more of a visual connection to what used to be there to indicate how much has changed and how strange and toxic the site is.
  - Proponents stated that the canal is real and shows what the site used to be—water. They are digging down and exposing what the site was.
- Feels that because the canal is straight it does not remind people of the shoreline, but it does say that everything around is manmade. Would like to see the sense of being on an island enhanced when you cross over.
- Supports the idea of a canal in a region where so much of the waterfront is private and therefore inaccessible to the public.
  - Proponents stated that one diagram shows the connection to the city with the idea of connection culture. The challenge is how to coordinate this with history. In another diagram, the top of the bank, the water's edge, and the two low points express the made quality of the site. The design merges these two diagrams to bring activities within the city's grid to the water's edge.
- Would like to know what mechanism will be used to weave the site into the city.
  - Proponents stated that in reality Vulcan owns most of the land and they are committed to the proposed streetscape project and mixed-use development. The idea of big Mercer and little Valley is not in anyone's control and the more voices supporting this, the better. The finger streets that reach into the park have very real potential because Vulcan feels strongly about having them.
- Suggests that support for the concept of big Mercer and narrow Valley would be helpful. The City hopes that Westlake will become a two-way street to help the pedestrian quality. Terry Ave. will be curbsless for several blocks creating almost an urban plaza feel. Vulcan owns both sides of Valley, so this idea is very likely to happen.
- Supports big Mercer and little Valley and supports having a canal, but would like to know why the canal has to be straight.
  - Proponents stated that the water needs to be straight so as not to create any eddies that would allow create a spot for mosquitoes and garbage collection. In addition, kayaks and

canoes want to be able to go through and straight works better for that function.

- Would like to know if there is a way to integrate the water experience so that people can see the model boat pond from the amphitheater.
  - Proponents stated that the amphitheater is oriented right over the model boat pond.
- Feels that the team has done a great job of developing this project and originally felt lukewarm about the canal, but is now intrigued. Would like to know if the team has thought about how bikes will circulate in the park.
  - Proponents stated that in planning like this you always include a high-speed bike commuting trail. To really get into the park, bikers would have to turn off the bike route onto a smaller trail to the peninsula. This trail might be a place to walk a bike if there is a lot of pedestrian traffic or ride it if there is not many pedestrians.
- Feels that the canal is a fun piece that viscerally indicates moving onto what was not originally land. Hopes that the team would blur the edges of the layback to recognize the old lake edge. Is not comfortable with the flow at the southwest corner, which is a high traffic area, and feels that it needs more development.
  - Proponents agreed that that does need further development.
- Is intrigued with the hybrid and layering of different stories and feels that the canal sets up possibilities for looking at those stories and for creating more habitat. Feels that the design team can accomplish all of those things, but is not convince that compartmentalizing the urban and landscape is necessary. In the canal experience, people sink down and see the waterfront in a new way and feels that there is the possibility of expressing the industrial history. Does not feel it is necessarily appropriate to create a soft edge.
- Would like to know what happened with the dotted line shown as the heart of the site at the last presentation.
  - Proponents stated that it was not necessarily the heart, but the center of the site.

### **Key Visitor Comments and Concerns**

- A representative from Fleets and Facilities stated that the west edge treatment is nice, but is concerned for other parts of the edge such as Valley and along the pier and feels it does not need to be so linear. Feels that up the west edge toward the wharf, the treatment at the east does not seem as well thought out and at the top corner of the wharf toward the long house you do not see that embrace or a beacon that signals the presence of the park.
  - Proponents stated that one beacon is the wall stays up while the terracing goes down.

**6 Mar 2003** Project: **Kubota Gardens**

Phase: Schematic Design

Previous Reviews: None

Presenters: Susanne Friedman, Parks and Recreation  
Brad Kurokawa, Nakano AssociatesAttendees: Beth Dodrill, Historic Seattle  
Nicole Price, Nakano Associates  
Michael Shiosaki, Parks and Recreation

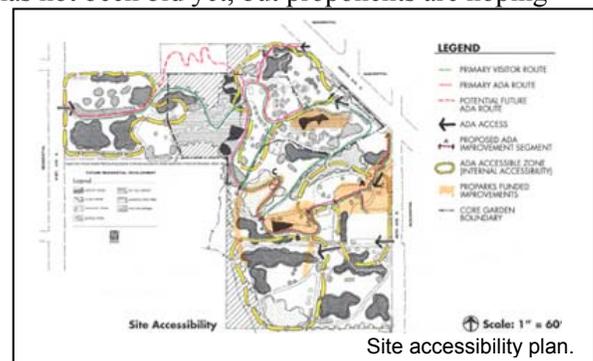
Time: 1 hour (SDC Ref. # 221 | DC00251)

**Action:** The Commission thanks the team for coming and would like to make the following comments and recommendations.

- **The Design Commission applauds the coming together of the groups involved to realize the vision for the garden;**
- **commends the attention to telling the unusual story of this historic garden, recognizing its uniquely Pacific Northwest qualities, and balancing those with the Japanese elements;**
- **commends and encourages continued attention to detail and the way this has been maintained while addressing the circuitous route, increased visitor use, and ADA issues;**
- **strongly supports rethinking the circulation system and the approach of making the primary path for all users while also recognizing and reflecting the secondary routes in signage;**
- **strongly supports SPU's involvement and feels this could be a great demonstration site for a natural drainage system;**
- **recommends approval of schematic design and does not need to see again.**

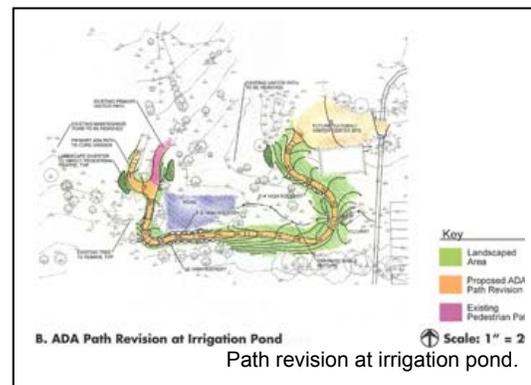
The gardens border Renton Ave. and 51<sup>st</sup> Ave. in a residential neighborhood that is about ¾ miles from Lake Washington. In 1981, a portion of the garden was landmarked. The garden was developed by Kubota in a naturalistic style rather than a traditional Japanese style and was used as a working demo garden to show what plants looked like growing in the landscape. Seattle Parks and Recreation acquired the park in 1987. In 1994 City Council adopted a master plan and subsequently Parks and Recreation did an EIS for the site. The park is in need of better ADA accessibility and some basic landscape improvements. This presentation addresses two issues: 1) enhancing the visitor experience with regard to the parking lot/entry court and accessibility/moving through the gardens, and 2) maintenance.

The house is no longer there and the wall and gate project has not been bid yet, but proponents are hoping to fold this into the ProParks Levy funding. Public meetings have helped define what is most important to both the community and the Kubota Garden Foundation Board. Not all pieces of the improvements and design plan are being implemented now. For example, a cultural visitor center is slated to be built. The public stated that they would like the entry area integrated with the parking lot and wall and gate. In addition, they are supportive of changes in the path system to make ADA circulation.

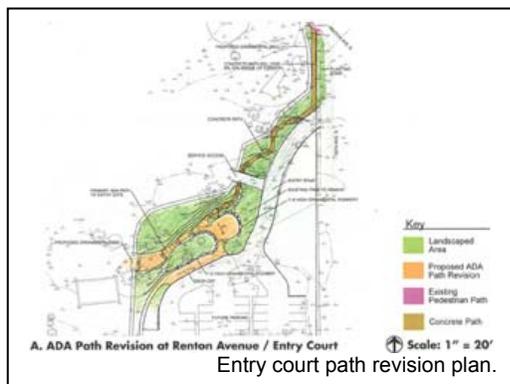


Nakano Associates has been involved with this project for a long time. There is a partnership among Kubota Garden Foundation, the neighborhood, and Parks and Recreation. Nakano has used Murase's master plan as a launch pad for improvements. They would like to run electricity from the main maintenance area to the terrace because it is used for events such as weddings. To create a loop for maintenance to drive on, perimeter maintenance paths will be extended to the lower area.

One of the key things about being a public park now is that ADA access is very important. This site has a lot of topography changes and consequently there are steep grades. The team wants to find a balance between how much ADA they can feasibly provide while still keeping the integrity of the gardens. The existing parking lot is gravel and there is a bus stop very close on Renton Ave. The team would like to add a bus route to the main entry. They are proposing ADA access along a section of unimproved right-of-way at the entry. In the future the cultural visitor center will be in this area and visitors will move from there into the gardens. From the bus area and parking lot to the ornamental gate is a proposed ADA path. From the cultural visitor center, they will put in signage and landscape plants. To the north, the site is fairly flat. The main visitor's route currently has about a 20 percent slope, but they have identified an ADA route that will bring visitors from the upper to lower parts of the gardens. The path along the north end ranges from 6–10 percent and there is not enough room laterally to move it and make it an ADA path. In the ADA path revision and irrigation pond plan, the team has brought the path around the pond in a meandering fashion. It requires attention to drainage because this area can be muddy. This path change will consist of a little cut and fill and the team is saving the existing trees. In the path revision northwest of the irrigation pond, it winds through existing conifers to reach the area. There is a main route and an alternative ADA path.



One of the major challenges with enhancing the entry experience is how to plan for and accommodate the need for more parking in the future, especially with



the addition of the visitor center. They are programming for 88 stalls and a bus drop off. The neighborhood does not want a big bare lot, so they are trying to mitigate this and create a garden experience in the parking lot. The lot is configured so that plantings also serve as drainage and tie into the rest of the garden and the team is trying to work with SPU and get funding to use a natural drainage system. Currently, there is a narrow gravel road through a garden area and into the parking lot and people want to keep this historic precedent. The design team intends to use stone paving and to work around existing trees.

### **Key Commissioner Comments and Concerns**

- Applauds their working with SPU and coming up with an alternative drainage system. Feels that this could set a precedent for parking lot designs. Would like to know if there will be community education regarding this.
  - Proponents stated that the opportunity exists for education, especially if drainage is

coordinated with the irrigation plan. It could be part of the interpretive story in that the ponds were dug out because the area was wet and it was an opportunity to create a water feature.

- Would like to know what happens if they do not get funding from SPU.
  - Proponents stated that the same system will be put in place, but it will be phased over a much longer time period.
- In the distinction between the primary route and the ADA route, feels that the primary route should be the one that is accessible. Urges the team to put interpretive elements and amenities along the accessible route. Feels that it is clear how cars and buses get into the site, but is less clear where to go once you are out of a vehicle.
  - Proponents stated that the circulation works from a drainage perspective and they are working with SPU who preferred this orientation. Proponents feel that they can work with this and they will have to deal with potential conflict of buses and cars only during peak use periods. People walk through the parking lot and drop-off zone.
- Suggests that what proponents are calling ADA should be the primary route.
  - Proponents stated that it is an issue of wording and that they are looking at the primary route as the one that everyone can take through the site. They heard from the community that there is not one way or a preferred way to go through the site. People like to wander and get lost and take multiple routes.
- Would like to clarify whether the same kinds of amenities and interpretation would happen on all routes.
  - Proponents stated that just that one piece of path closest to Renton is not ADA accessible. They feel that it is not worth the expense to regrade it and is not historically appropriate. They are maintaining the original historic entrance to tie back historically.
- Urges the team, when they make the maps and signs, to map ADA as primary route.
- Appreciates the subtlety and care with which the design team has taken in the entry. Even when people drive in, they will experience the garden and with people walking through the parking area, cars will be encouraged to go more slowly. Feels that this is a successful design.

#### **Key Visitor Comments and Concerns**

- Would like to know if Nakano Associates is involved with the design of the gate and wall.
  - Proponents stated that they are not, but they are reviewing that design because each affects the other so they are making an effort to coordinate with it.
- Would like to know if the gate is a traditional Japanese tori style gate and what the wall is like.
  - Proponents stated that the wall is concrete masonry units with stucco and a cap. The gate is an ornamental one designed by Sukokawa and is a more modern interpretation of a sun gate, not a traditional tori gate.

## 6 March 2003 Commission Business

- ACTION ITEMS**
- A. TIMESHEETS
- B. MINUTES FROM 20 FEBRUARY 2003—APPROVED
- DISCUSSION ITEMS**
- C. RETREAT FOLLOW UP AND OBSERVATIONS—TURKOVICH
- D. GET ENGAGED PROGRAM UPDATE—FIELD AND LEVY  
STAFF OF THE GET ENGAGED PROGRAM CAME TO GET FEEDBACK FROM THE COMMISSION. FUNDING FOR THE PROGRAM IS A QUESTION RIGHT NOW BECAUSE THE TWO-YEAR GRANT THAT CURRENTLY MAKES IT POSSIBLE RUNS OUT AND THE CITY IS UNSURE IF THEY WILL BE ABLE TO FUND IT. THE COMMISSION ENTHUSIASTICALLY ENDORSES CONTINUING WITH THE PROGRAM IN THE UPCOMING YEAR AND WOULD LIKE THE YOUTH APPOINTMENTS TO BE INSTITUTIONALIZED IN THE CITY. THE COMMISSION OFFERED TO SEND A LETTER OF SUPPORT TO MAKE THIS POSITION CLEAR.
- E. SEATTLE UNIVERSITY VACATIONS UPDATE—BARNETT  
A REPRESENTATIVE FROM SDOT PRESENTED THE MOST RECENT PUBLIC BENEFITS PROPOSAL FOR THE VACATION OF TWO ALLEY SEGMENTS. THE COMMUNITY IS CONCERNED THAT THE ALLEY FUNCTIONS ARE BEING TRANSFERRED ONTO A RESIDENTIAL STREET, JAMES COURT. THE COMMISSION FEELS THAT PROPONENTS HAVE NOT MET THE FULL SPIRIT OF PUBLIC BENEFITS, IS ALSO CONCERNED THAT ALLEY FUNCTIONS ARE BEING TRANSFERRED TO JAMES COURT, AND WOULD LIKE TO SEE PROPONENTS WORK WITH THE COMMUNITY TO IDENTIFY APPROPRIATE PUBLIC BENEFITS.
- F. HARBORVIEW VACATIONS UPDATE—RAHAIM AND BARNETT  
THIS PETITION INVOLVES AN AERIAL VACATION ON 9<sup>TH</sup> AND AN ALLEY BETWEEN 9<sup>TH</sup>, 8<sup>TH</sup>, ALDER AND JEFFERSON. CONCEPT APPROVAL WILL BE CONSIDERED AT COUNCIL SOON, BUT FOLLOW UP WITH THE COMMISSION IS LIKELY. THE COMMISSION WOULD LIKE TO CONTINUE TO REVIEW THE STREETScape, THE BUILDING OVER THE RIGHT-OF-WAY, AND THE PUBLIC

OPEN SPACE, INCLUDING BETTER CONNECTIONS TO HARBORVIEW PARK. THE PARK NEEDS ENHANCED STREETScape AND WAYFINDING ELEMENTS.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- G. PROJECT UPDATES—CUBELL AND GASSMAN
- H. OUTSIDE COMMITMENTS
- I. ARCADE OPEN HOUSE—3/6, 5:30–7:30, 1000 N. NORTHLAKE WAY
- J. STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN PUBLIC MEETING—3/6, 5:30–8PM, MOHAI
- K. MONORAIL COMMUNITY MEETINGS—3/17–3/19, 6:30–8:30PM, VARIOUS LOCATIONS

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**6 Mar 2003** Project: **Seattle Monorail Project: Joint Meeting with Planning Commission**  
Phase: City's Monorail Implementation Team  
Previous Reviews: 6 February 2003 (Predesign: Guideway and Station Planning and Design Principles)  
Presenters: Ethan Melone, Seattle Dept. of Transportation  
Lesley Bain, Weinstein AU  
John Rahaim, CityDesign  
Marty Curry, Seattle Planning Commission  
Planning Commission: George Blomberg  
Marty Curry  
Gregory Davis  
John Owen  
Angela Brooks  
Denise Lathrop  
Tony To (Commissioner-elect)  
Mimi Sheridan  
Paul Tomita  
Attendees: Newell Aldrich, Nick Licata's Office  
John Taylor, City Council Central Staff  
Eileen Norton, Seattle Monorail Project  
Rachel Ben-Schmuel, Seattle Monorail Project  
Cynthia Robinson, Seattle Dept. of Transportation  
Dan McKillop, Seattle Dept. of Transportation  
Dave Boyd, Dept. of Neighborhoods  
Barbara Goldstein, Office of Arts and Cultural Affairs  
Lyle Bicknell, CityDesign  
Roger Wagoner, AIA  
John Eskelin, Dept. of Neighborhoods  
Kristian Kofoed, Dept. of Design, Construction, and Land Use  
Vince Lyons, Dept. of Design, Construction, and Land Use

Time: 1 hour (SDC Ref. # 219 | DC00231)

- Action:** **The Commission thanks the proponents for the great presentation and feels that this collaboration among departments is very important, and would like to make the following comments and recommendations.**
- **The Commission is encouraged that there is a beginning policy and planning framework;**
  - **would like the team to provide strategic milestones of the design as soon as possible of what, how, and when so the Commissions can provide input at the critical times;**
  - **urges the team to provide clarity on which agency is responsible for what as soon as possible;**
  - **encourages the team to pump up the volume on the "Planning and Design Criteria for the Monorail" document with stronger, clearer language;**
  - **asks that the team include more meat about corridor planning in "Planning**

**and Design Criteria for the Monorail”;**

- **suggests that the staff team use the planning and design criteria to organize future reviews so we can keep Commission reviews parallel to your work;**
- **urges the team to add sustainability as one of the criteria; and**
- **when working with the neighborhood planning stewards, help them keep the bigger picture in mind so they are not focused only on their neighborhoods.**

The team would like the Commissions’ input on station area planning and today will review planning and urban design criteria that the City has drafted. On March 27, Seattle Monorail Project (SPMA) will give the City the draft preferred alternative.

*Station Integration Planning*

The City is in the process of hiring people to augment this team. The City’s team will work closely with the planning team of SPMA and they have laid out an initial scope. Understand of this will help ensure that the City and SPMA maximize opportunities and make sure stations incorporate and respect neighborhood plans. The parameters for station area planning are as follows:

- city-driven process based on city policy
- collaboration with neighborhoods
- will not create new neighborhood plans
- ¼ mile land use focus
- ½ mile consideration of access
- excludes single-family areas
- considers land use, access, transportation, safety, emergency services, and streetscape/landscape
- considers longer term city-shaping issues

For the process itself, they are doing the footwork in house to see how the stations will fit in with neighborhood plans. A series of meetings will be held with people in station areas and the team will start and work with neighborhood stewardship plans. The majority of work this year will be in finding key points where the City and SPMA coordinate, but the City is not trying to be done at the same time as SPMA. They will develop station area planning summaries and, out of this, recommendations that will go to Council.

**Key Commissioner Comments and Concerns**

- Would like to know if the team expects this product to be in terms of direction to City, SPMA, or both.
  - Proponents stated that they are focusing more specifically on what the City takes responsibility for, but will include recommendations to SPMA. Some things that arise may give indication to design issues for stations.
  - Proponents stated that planning work will result in City actions, but in the form of some things that need to be addressed by SPMA. The team will work with SPMA to figure out what to do when because early decision items need to be those that inform SPMA.
  - Proponents stated that they have learned from the Light Rail Review Panel that the panel and City staff was not enough of the audience and that the City itself is a key part of the audience.

- Believes that the last time SPMA was here, the Commissions' action items were aimed at stating it is their job to make great streets. Would like to know if this is SPMA's responsibility and at what point is this defined. Is concerned that if it is not defined early, the review will be too late.
  - Proponents stated that is part of what they are trying to do here today. Both entities have to agree on responsibilities and they are in agreement that they want great streets and must work collectively to achieve this.
  - In part of the process, the City team will work with SPMA to develop the preferred alternative design. It is necessary to have tools to make this happen and guiding criteria, which the City will help to develop, will be a critical tool. The City team will then change hats in the environmental process. Some of their job will be to mitigate impacts, but that responsibility also falls on SPMA, so there is some gray area. The team has not defined the guidelines yet because they would like feedback on how to create great streets and great stations.
- Is struggling with how the public process will happen and feels that there will be confusion for people on issues raised when the project is inconsistent with their neighborhood plan. Would like to know how the team will move through and address these issues.
  - Proponents stated that they will focus with the neighborhood stewardship groups so as to start with people who are implementing the plans to take out the first cut and point where there will be issues on how the Monorail and their plans interface.
- Would like to know if this would be an SPMA group or will there be development of neighborhood toolkits.
  - Proponents stated that it is a neighborhood process, but people from SPMA will participate. While it is important for the community to understand how meetings relate to each other, they have learned from light rail not to do joint meetings. It did not work for Sound Transit to have joint meetings because they ended up being too focused.
  - Proponents stated that with regard to parking and access workshops they had originally talked about having them jointly sponsored, but decided not to. The City team is working with SPMA to help prepare policies and tools and have a presence and there could be some City people on a panel or have staff present, but SPMA will run the process to find out what people want in terms of how to access stations.
- Would like to know if there will be a separate meeting for each station.
  - Proponents stated that they have not developed a plan yet.
- Is surprised to see in the parameter's list of land use topics that density is not listed. With regard to community involvement, is concerned that if neighborhood stewards have autonomy in a city-driven process, how this will not undermine the process.
  - Proponents stated that the model for neighborhood plans was collaboration and now they will need to collaborate with the City. There has been a lot of interaction of neighborhood stewards with commissions. City staff will do their work and bring it into the community so that it is a city-driven process, not a city-imposed process.
  - Proponents stated that they are thinking of density as part of land use because it is clearly an issue around the stations.
- Believes that the list of parameter's is missing cultural and historic resources, environmental issues, and economic issues.

### Planning and Urban Design Criteria

The team has worked from the Commissions' papers and found that the big topics fall out into subcategories based on City policies. A lot of policy that is relevant needs interpretation and its interface with the Monorail falls into three categories; on one extreme, they would not affect one another, on the other extreme there would be a conflict, and somewhere in between policy and the Monorail would be amenable. Planning and design criteria for the Monorail are:

1. Make the most of the monorail as a transportation system.
  - foster quality development in the station area that will attract riders
  - plan carefully for intermodal connections with well-design pedestrian environments
  - ensure an efficient, safe system
  - follow parking policies that result in less need for cars and encourage other modes of travel
  - consider the range of alternatives that can extend the draw of stations
  - minimize impacts to the freight mobility and emergency services

Under each of the above, the team looked at policy framework. They will also need to look at each in the context of neighborhood plans and tie each item into the policy that is in place.

2. Like transportation planning and land use planning
  - encourage nodes of activity near stations with appropriate land uses
  - consider strategies to reduce the impact of cars in station areas
3. Prioritize the quality of the pedestrian environment.
  - minimize impacts of the new infrastructure on the streetscape
  - emphasize ground-level streetscape design and landscape
  - ensure quality of pedestrian environment as integral to the system
  - design welcoming, safe stations

They are looking for input on the draft of these principles.

4. Respect cultural and historic resources.
  - protect historically designated building facades and other resources
  - minimize impacts on open spaces and views
5. Balance the civic nature of the monorail system with the various contexts and neighborhoods along the route.
  - ensure high design quality for this highly visible new infrastructure
  - keep visual integrity of the monorail system as a piece of civic architecture
  - design the system, stations, and station areas to respond to the scale and character of their context

There is no policy for this now and they need to explore the effects in along the corridor. What does it mean to plan in a corridor and how can you make a corridor work well.

### **Key Commissioner Comments and Concerns**

- Encourages the team to pump up the volume on the verbs in the criteria and get to the action verbs, not to be aggressive, but to state expectations early and be very clear.
- Agrees with this and feels that an example would be to state, 'Create a mixed-use transportation community around the Monorail.'

- Feels that the language will also help bring out potential conflicts with neighborhood plans.
- Believes that the substatements are where the conflicts will come out.
  - Proponents stated that some of it may come out through neighborhood plans.
- Feels that this is a great start and likes it being linked to comprehensive and neighborhood plans. Suggests that they develop an accompanying summary document.
  - Proponents stated that these are not just directed at SPMA, but will inform the City's work as well. With a strategic urban design analysis they will not only have verbiage about it, but an opportunity to illustrate it.
  - Proponents stated that they need to package the policies for everyone's use so there are clear criteria, principles, and directions.
- Encourages the team to add to the third goal spatial urban design items such as creating vibrant surrounding streets and urban, civic space.
- Feels that in the criteria, the corridor stuff is not explicit.
  - Proponents stated that the principles as they are fleshed out in another document does address this, but agree that it would be good to have criteria that explicitly relate to corridors and they are working on that.
  - Proponents asked if there was any additional advice they had and whether they are going in the right direction from the Commissioners who are involved in station area planning.
- Feels that, given the speed with which SPMA is progressing, communities could be reactionary. Stewardship groups can envision potential development, but because of dynamics in some areas, it is hard for people to see how things are going to be and how they can be a part of it.
- Recommends that the team put economic development and how this is going to be an example of sustainable infrastructure somewhere on this document.
  - Proponents stated that there is someone on both urban design and civil infrastructure teams who will have that expertise.
- Believes that the sustainability criteria are imbedded and urges the team to pull it out and be explicit as to what is sustainable.

### Role of the Commissions

The Commissions' reviewing of the project is really only part of their role. This role really consists of three components: project review, the EIS, and station area planning. The joint commission to be set up will focus primarily on the review aspect. Station area planning will fall under the purview of the Planning Commission independently and both commissions will provide comments on the EIS. Given all the surrounding issues, the team is trying to focus the Commissions' concerns by developing a list of key concerns and questions. The questions fall into four larger categories:

1. Station Area Planning
  - codes and policies
  - intermodal connections
  - parking and access—entrances
  - nearby development sites to help form nodes of activity

- urban design plan—massing and density
- 2. Corridor Planning
- 3. System Design
  - relationship to the pedestrian environment
  - landscape
  - view impacts relative to existing policy
  - safety
- 4. Station Design
  - entrances and pedestrian environment
  - civic structures
  - impact on historic resources

### **Key Commissioner Comments and Concerns**

- Would like to see bolder statements for criteria and work the questions under the criteria so they are organized in a parallel way.
- Would like to know how the objectives are going to be met, what the costs are, and what the Commissions' abilities are to influence decisions. This would help Commissioners think about how to best input their recommendations.
  - Proponents stated that they are trying to come up with a family of documents. They will take the principles and think of what actions and what tools will help accomplish the principles.
- Feels it is important for there to be congruence between when the City Council takes action and when the EIS happens.
- Would like to know if the biggest tool is the right-of-way agreement.
  - Proponents stated that it is at the alignment and station location level, but then they will begin the final design after they get the right-of-way agreement. At this point, the Design Commission will still review the project and the City will still be involved.
- Would like to know if the current planning calls for the alignment to be design/build and the stations to be left to bid.
  - Proponents stated that that has not been decided yet.
- Is concerned about the coordination of the two and what affect that will have on the planning. Believes it implies separate station area planning and that it could go on for a long time. Feels that there are two tracks, one is immediate and one is over a greater period of time.
  - Proponents stated that it is a two-step process to hire firms for station designs. There is an RFQ out there now to identify teams that have the ability. In February, the prime contractor was chosen and a notice to proceed will happen later. An understanding of procurement and what most closely relates to the Commissions' is important so the Commissions know the best time to give input.
- Believes that time to comment on the EIS is here and that it is important to integrate the Commissions' ideas and build a stepping stone for further work. Feels this will establish a standing

relationship to both specific and broad issues.

- To get resolution, feels it is important to understand who can answer different questions or address different issues because some will be better directed to SPMA and will be more for the City. Feels that it was frustrating with the light rail because it was confusing to figure out who to talk to about different key issues.
  - Proponents stated that they recognize the frustration with this and are including different disciplines on the teams to get at that.
  - Proponents stated that one role the Commissions should play is highlight issues to SPMA, the Mayor, and City Council.
- Would like to know how this plays into SPMA, whether it is in their station area planning or project review.
  - Proponents stated that the Commission can react to project proponents and provide direct guidance, but this will also go to the Mayor and Council. For the project reviews, members of SPMA will make presentations.
- Feels that this does not allow the Commissions to get all the issues out.
  - Proponents stated that the primary audiences for SPMA now are the Commissions and the City team to get everyone on the same page.
- Believes that in three weeks, the preferred alternative will be chosen and would like to know how wedded SPMA will be to that alternative at that time.
  - Proponents stated that they should ask SPMA that question at their next presentation.

### Preferred Draft Alternative

SPMA is holding a series of workshops with the discipline leads and project managers to identify the draft preferred alternative. Currently, one terminus of the route is in West Seattle on California Ave. at Morgan Junction and the other end is in Ballard on 85<sup>th</sup> St.

The team brought examples of some of the station and alignment issues with regard to the draft preferred alternatives along the monorail corridor. In general, they are looking at context and fit such as icons, sacred places, vistas, and barriers and doing an urban design site analysis that was worked through with stakeholders. They are trying to answer questions like, What will it take to building this? For example, in looking at an alignment you might see a few trees that are directly in its path, but with construction they must also consider the much broader corridor this will affect.

**Seattle Center:** The team held workshops last year to address this alignment. There were issues with the Thomas alignment because it cut through the Seattle Children's Theater and pavilion and they felt this was not appropriate. The Mercer alignment resulted from that, but is problematic because it is long. People from Seattle Center came up with another alternative that still goes through the Experience Music Project, but does not interrupt the vision of the large, open central area.

**Interbay:** In Interbay, there are two possible alignments that have a significantly different affect on mobility in the area. There is conflict between this station location and the comprehensive plan because the site is in a manufacturing and industrial zone, which does not serve the vision for a station.

**Retail Core:** Representatives from DSA want the Monorail to maintain a connection to Westlake Center. There is the possibility of a third beam connection between this area and Seattle Center. The preferred

alternative is at 5<sup>th</sup> Ave. and Stewart St. and this station will be an intermodal hub. It is possible that there will be an elevated connection between the Monorail and Westlake and the Design Commission will be asked to comment if there is a skybridge. They are making an effort to site the station more on 5<sup>th</sup> Ave. or closer to the corner so as not to affect the building because it has landmark status. Here there is a series of issues such as historical properties, alignment, and connection to Westlake. This area is also the proposed terminus of the streetcar line. From an urban design standpoint, the neighborhood plan identifies this spot as a potential place for open space.

### **Key Commissioner Comments and Concerns**

- Would like to know if the third alternative for Seattle Center alignment is the preferred alternative.
  - Proponents stated that they do not know, but the Seattle Center Advisory Group sent SPMA a letter urging that that be the case.
- With regard to the Interbay station, in the current plan there is a station at Davis and Republican, but not at Galer and Garfield and feels this is an odd omission. Feels that this is an area where the monorail could make positive impact because there is no much going on there now.
  - Proponents stated that in the agreed alignment they flattened this out as far south as possible to allow for a future station there. There is potential for layering activities in certain areas along the line like that.
  - Proponents stated that these are the kinds of issues that need to be worked through before the end of the year and this is the start of the process of finding a preferred alternative. The issue in this area now is that it is zoned for manufacturing and industry and not for a vibrant urban zone. The Ballard Interbay Northend Neighborhood Manufacturing and Industrial Center plan does call for transportation access, so it does not preclude the monorail.
- Is concerned that they do not usually come back and put in new stations.
  - Proponents stated that there is an investment in creating a guideway that can accommodate a station in the future. A challenge has been whether to design the alignment for today or the future. The City team feels that the west alignment is likely to have a more significant impact on traffic flow in the freight corridor. There is the potential immediate impact on how accessible businesses are and the broad impacts of changing the zoning and use of the area.
- Would like to know when the preferred route will become final.
  - Proponents stated that will happen at the end of this year, however there are two ways to look at that. The SPMA board will select the route, but then City Council has to act on the proposed right-of-way.
- Would like to clarify that the EIS will be factored into this decision.
  - Proponents stated that it will be and that the preferred alternative has to be one of the options that are explored in the EIS.
- Finds it difficult, with regard to the Retail Core planning, that the City discourages skybridges and then are the ones to go out and build them.
  - Proponents stated that it is City policy to not build them in the downtown view corridors and to discourage them elsewhere. This issue does raise the question of how this could

become an intermodal place.