



**Seattle
Design
Commission**

APPROVED

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

18 September 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

City Monorail Implementation Team
High Point Master Plan
Center City Circulation Study
Fremont Bridge Approach
Sustainable Design Checklist
Design Commission 35th Anniversary Project

Convened: 9:30am

Adjourned: 4:00pm

Commissioners Present

Donald Royse, Chair
Jack Mackie, Vice Chair
Ralph Cipriani
Cary Moon
Iain M. Robertson
Nic Rossouw
David Spiker
Tory Laughlin Taylor

Staff Present

John Rahaim
Layne Cubell
Brad Gassman
Lisa Baker



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Construction & Land Use

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18 Sep 2003 Project: City Monorail Implementation Team

Phase: Quarterly Briefing

Previous Reviews: None

Presenters: Cheryl Sizov, DCLU
Ethan Melone, SDOT
Scott Dvorak, DCLU
David Graves, DCLUAttendees: Norm Schwab, City Council Staff
Rachel Ben-Shmuel, Seattle Monorail Project
Bill Bascus, Seattle Monorail Project

Time: 1 hour (SDC Ref. # 169 | DC00231)

Summary: The Commission thanks the team for coming and appreciates the attendance of the Seattle Monorail Project members and would like to make the following comments and recommendations.

- The Design Commission feels that they are generally comfortable with the project urban design templates as they have been developed so far but that the templates need to include system wide elements as well as individual stations;
- is concerned that the SMP process currently calls for sign-off at 35% development and notes that this needs further discussion prior to agreement;
- is concerned about accurate representation of trees and other landscape in the SMP design guidelines;
- appreciates the three strategies being taken by the City team, namely the Monorail Review Panel, station area planning, but especially the urban design collaboration aspect;
- believes it will be necessary with station area planning to clearly define what SMP is able to provide, what the City of Seattle tax base will be required to provide and what private development will be required to provide in terms of both construction and maintenance;
- urges the team to ensure that station designs accommodate and provide good design for all economic sectors of the population, especially the poor, and that SMP provide public restrooms accessible to all at each station;
- suggests that the team consider corridor appendages as key elements of the project, using I-5 as a model of what not to do in terms of urban design;
- encourages the team to look at current zoning and potential zoning changes, to make recommendations as appropriate, and to be as bold as is required without fearing NIMBY issues;
- is encouraged to hear that stewardship is a guiding principle, and suggests that it be given more of an active role, by thinking of it as a realization strategy; and
- urges city oversight of the full transit coordination and integration goals in planning the station areas with adequate space for bus access, using McClellan Light Rail station as a difficult example.

The City's Monorail Implementation Team met with the Design Commission to give the first of their regular quarterly briefings on this project. The City has improved its process in planning major transportation projects by making urban design an equal consideration to other project components. These projects shape our urban form whether it is planned for or not. Now all projects have an urban design lead who is on level with the civil engineering lead for the project. Cheryl Sizov is the urban design lead for the Monorail Project. The urban design component of the Monorail Project is focused on three areas:

- Design review
- Station area planning
- Design collaboration

Design collaboration is an umbrella for the other two projects, but will also have distinct products. The first two components are already underway and are working to meet a very aggressive schedule. The focus of this meeting is to update the commission on the station area planning; there will also be a brief update on the Monorail Review Panel. Vanessa Murdoch is the lead on the station area planning, but she was unable to make it to this meeting. Maureen Colaizzi will no longer be the Monorail Review Panel coordinator. DCLU is also looking to fill an administrative position to support the Monorail Team.

Monorail Review Panel

Draft guidelines have already been developed for the Monorail Review Panel. The panel is still considering how these guidelines will be used in the review process. The MRP is also developing design templates for two phases of design review. The first template is for concept design and the second is for design development. These templates will include the drawings and content that should be reviewed at each of these phases. There could be further reviews beyond the first two, but only two templates will be developed. The panel would like to see lots of context information including elevations of adjacent buildings.

There are questions about how the panel will review the Pioneer Square projects, and also how the review schedule will work with the DBOM (Design Build Operate and Maintain) contractors. The Panel would also like to act as a catalyst for developing other studies that may be necessary. One study might consider the termini at the ends of the line.

Key Commissioner Comments and Concerns

- Feels that the draft template was helpful. It was especially useful that the draft was based on a real project in Vancouver rather than leaving all of the design information blank.
- Is concerned about how plants are being considered in the design guidelines. The guidelines show perfectly formed trees under the guideway. There needs to be an understanding of the reality of the environment, this does not yet seem to be accepted or recognized.
- Wonders how the design of stations can be reviewed before the guideway location is finalized.
 - Proponents stated that in order to meet the schedule station design will need to begin before the guideway location has been finalized. They explained that if the guideway location changes from what is assumed in the station design then the design will change and there will be a review of the new design.
- Would like more information about the email that was sent regarding scheduling issues.
 - Proponents stated that the scheduling issues that were raised in the email included how

project reviews will differ between projects that are reviewed one month after design begins as compared with projects that are reviewed three months after design has begun. The email also questioned the timing of the design reviews in relation to the DBOM contract.

- Notes that the Stations in Vancouver were developed through a design – bid – build process, while the Monorail will be developed through a design – build – operate – maintain process.
- Remarks that the review panel originally thought they would have their final review of the station design at 60% development. Is concerned that it has been proposed to have the final review at 35% development. Does not think it is appropriate or possible to hand off the design at only 35% of development. Would like the DBOM contractor to come back at 60% development.
- Notes that the review would not be purely at a 35% point of development. The design development would be a bit of a hybrid with some components more developed than would be typical of a 35% completion.
- Reiterates that there would still be 65% of the decisions to make after the final review.
- Agrees that the project development will be a jagged line with some pieces more developed than others. Is concerned about the pieces that will be less developed at the 35% review.
- Notes that there are some issues that won't be known until the DBOM contract is in place.
- Feels that the review panel should take a stand sooner rather than later if they want to have three reviews instead of two.
- Notes that it is especially important to plan ahead of time for a third review if this review will be after contract is awarded. Feels that the final review needs to be part of the contract language.
 - Proponents noted that the intention is to develop the portions of the project that affect the design of the stations sooner than the other components. Also stated that many of parts of design will be consistent system-wide.
- Feels that templates should be developed for the system wide components as well as the stations. Notes that there will be between 12 and 21 electrical sub stations which will range in size from 1,200-2,100 sf.
 - Proponents stated that there is a good precedent from Sound Transit on how ancillary structures should be treated.
- Would like to know which substations can be incorporated into stations and which will be free-standing.

Station Area Planning

DCLU staff will be able to help fill in some of the gaps between the MRP review process and the final design of the stations. Michael Jenkins is the lead land use planner on the monorail project. Two other DCLU staff members are also assigned to this project. All three have already been integrated into the Monorail Team.

The station area planning for the monorail project is focused on three issues:

- Access
- Placemaking
- Stewardship

The access component of the work deals with how people get back and forth from their starting point to their final destination. Placemaking is less defined and is concerned with what types of spaces are being made around the stations. Stewardship focuses on how the community takes ownership of the stations and what opportunities there might be for public-private partnerships.

Background reports have already been completed for the green line. They include documentation of existing conditions. One component of the documentation is existing transportation. This includes:

- Public transportation
- Automobiles
- Pedestrian environment

Other components of the existing environment documented in the background report are:

- Natural features
- Zoning
- Land use
- Comprehensive plan – housing and employment targets

The background reports have been distributed to employment centers and local libraries. So far DCLU has not gotten much feedback on these reports.

The station area planners have been attending all community meetings along the proposed green line. Most groups are focused on the DEIS at this point. The planners have been primarily introducing themselves at meetings so that community members know who to contact if they have questions or comments on the Monorail Project. The station area planning team also made a presentation to City Council recently to update them on their goals and progress.

The current thrust of the station area planning effort is to follow up on the background report with an urban design assessment. This assessment focuses on the three components described earlier:

- Access – concerns how people get to the station and to their destination including; buses, bikes ferries, and the pedestrian environment.
- Placemaking – looks at opportunities for public spaces connected to the monorail stations.
- Stewardship – ties in with the public spaces being developed in the placemaking component.

The goal is to have a draft of the urban design assessment complete by the end of the year. The station area planners are currently involved in an ongoing process of meeting with communities. After the draft of the urban design assessment is complete the station area planners will present the draft to the community in order to get feedback before finalizing the report. The final product will be station area action plans which should be complete in summer 2004.

The monorail team has not yet determined what the final form of the action plans will be. They are trying to balance realism with the big picture. At the moment there are financial limitations to the scope of the project, while at the same time the future scope of the project is very large. The planning team is trying to identify what portions of the project will be developed by the city and which will be developed by SMP, as well as what work other groups will do.

Key Commissioner Comments and Concerns

- Wonders if the city has an alternative planned for the monorail if light rail doesn't get built. Is concerned that the monorail planning assumes that the light rail system will be completed. Is especially concerned that the northern alignment of the light rail network will not be constructed.
- Notes that local transit service is extremely important to non-local transit. Explains that buses will be extremely important for broadening the catchment area of the monorail stations. Is worried that the focus of the monorail project is exclusively on the monorail itself, and not on local transportation to support it. Also feels that suburbs are starving the city of its ability to add bus capacity and increase the frequency of its existing routes. Suggests that Metro, Pierce Transit, and CT should be involved in the station area planning for the monorail. Notes that having buses stop in front of the monorail

stations is not enough.

- Proponents stated that they have already spent time meeting with Metro to discuss these issues. They added that Metro is very excited about having the monorail as a main transportation corridor, and about the opportunity to reorient their local service around this corridor.
- Suggests that the monorail team may want to push Metro to consider using smaller buses with more frequent service. Notes that this would be a much more flexible system.
- Notes that providing areas for buses to pull up will require a lot of space. Feels that the largest impact may not be from the stations themselves, but from the other areas required to support the stations. Adds that waiting rooms can be very important public spaces.
- Is excited to hear that stewardship is a component of the station area planning. Suggests that the team push this concept further. Notes that stewardship paints a picture of neighbors working on the weekends. Recommends that the stewardship component be called “realization strategy” instead. Explains that this suggests a more active role, and that it is not just neighbors who should be involved in this effort.
- Suggests that placemaking should not be focused solely on making public spaces, but on making all kinds of social spaces, both public and private.
- Feels that the team should clarify what parts of the project SMP will provide financially and what the taxpayers, and other entities will need to provide.
- Urges the city to oversee the full transit coordination and integration of the station areas.
- Is concerned that the Monorail will not be able to reach its full potential, because of NIMBYism in the city that will resist increases in density along the Monorail line. Notes that we are making a large investment in a system which could serve a much larger population than it will at current densities. Urges the Monorail Team to push the city to increase density along the Monorail alignment.
- Feels that the green space needs to be a part of the DBOM contract. Does not believe it will happen otherwise. Notes that the City will not maintain this landscaping.
- Urges the team to be clear about what components of the design will happen during the initial construction and which will happen later. Reiterates the importance of clarifying who will be responsible for each part of the project.
- Suggests that the team consider the design of the 1-5 corridor as a model of what not to do. Notes that the focus of the design was entirely on the corridor itself and not on the appendages that connect it to the city.
- Wonders how planning for this sort of transportation has been done in other cities. Also questions how the Monorail design process is being informed by the Light Rail design and other transportation systems. Suggests that the team look at other cities, not just Vancouver, to see how they have planned for major transportation projects.
- Questions what the Design Commission can do to help with the urban design work for the Monorail.
 - Proponents noted that they have already gotten ideas for workshops and additional studies from this meeting with the Design Commission.
- Notes that any public project reflects the values of the communities that contribute to it. Remarks that a typical planning process represents the middle class. Emphasizes that the poor are not being represented. Wonders how we can accommodate and embrace the poor in planning for the monorail. States that the city cannot deal with this the same way that it has dealt with public restrooms.
- Questions if all of the stations will have public restrooms.
 - Proponents stated that they have not yet discussed this.

18 Sep 2003 Project: **High Point Master Plan**

Phase: Open Space Follow-up

Previous Review: 5 June 2003 (Open Space Plan Update), 21 November 2002 (Street Vacation), 18 April 2002 (Update), 15 November 2001 (Initial Briefing)

Presenter: Tom Phillips, Seattle Housing Authority
Brian Sullivan, MithunAttendees: Margaret Harrison, Mithun
Gail Staeger, Nakano Associates
Brad Kurokawa, Nakano Associates

Time: 1 hour (SDC Ref. # 170 | DC00253)

Summary: The Commission appreciates the direction that this project has taken and would like to make the following comments and recommendations.

- **The Design Commission compliments the Seattle Housing Authority on seeing this project as a social venture, not just as a physical design, and appreciates that they have involved Pomegranate Center in the process;**
- **compliments the team on the way in which systems have been integrated including the natural, physical and social systems and suggests that the use of this way of thinking might help to further generate forms for the design;**
- **appreciates the way that circulation patterns and open space have been developed so that they are well linked and clearly allow people to move around the site and encourages the team to continue to think of open spaces as something that will be used by people of all ages and for all types of activity;**
- **urges the team to further refine the pocket parks, and sees responding to particular on-site opportunities as the way to make them distinct and separate from each other;**
- **encourages the team to continue to look at the alleys as walking spaces and as play spaces;**
- **urges the team to look at the central parking lot and think of ways of better integrating its shape with the form of the adjacent community building so that it feels like they are part and parcel of the same larger space;**
- **encourages the team to allow things to continue to happen on the site rather than try and proscribe all aspects of the design; in particular, feels that the inundation of the area around the pond could form a new textural pattern; and**
- **commends the entire team on the arts plan for this project.**

This is the final update on the open space plan for the High Point Master Plan. Construction is already beginning on the pond and also some foundation work. As part of the sustainable plan for the project they are also deconstructing 20 units on site. Saving a number of trees on site is another component of the sustainable plan. Trees that are to be preserved have fences around them with dollar values of how much the contractors will need to pay if the trees are damaged. The Master Plan also calls for setting aside some trees that need to be removed, and using them as benches and art around the pond.

The team is working with Pomegranate center to develop a gathering place in the Community Park. The community will help design the space and also help to build it. This strategy of community involvement

which will become a destination point within the park. An amphitheatre will be developed on the south face of the mound which will face on to the public space.

A play zone will be developed to the NE of the neighborhood center. The play zone will include basketball, gravel beaches, and waterplay. The water from the runoff system will be daylighted in selected areas to activate the play zone. Further north on the Community Park site will be a multi-purpose play area. The play area will be big enough for a small soccer game, but not large enough to have lights and structured competitions. The Community Park will be the active center of the site. People from many different age groups will use it.

North of the Community Park 31st Ave SW will take a loose free form shape that follows the path of the water draining from the SEA street toward the pond. At the important intersection of High Point Dr SW and 31st Ave SW the pattern of the water flow will be taken across the intersection. At the Pond Park a bowl has been created around the pond. This form attempts to be a natural extension of the existing land forms on the site. The space around the pond allows people to overlook the pond from all directions. The goal of the park design is to draw people from the intersection of High Point Dr and 31st Ave down to the pond. There will be an overlook between the intersection and the pond which will act as a destination to draw people into the park. There will also be a half court basketball court aimed at kids who are 10 years old and younger.

The pond will fluctuate from three feet deep to ten feet deep. There will be a path around the pond at both levels. The planting around the pond will be turf that is tolerant of the change in water level. Water will be re-circulated through the pond from the top of the hill near the overlook. There will be a series of weirs leading up the hill, connected to an overflow point. On the north side, which is the sunny side of the pond, there will be a terraced grass area for passive recreation.

Key Commissioner Comments and Concerns

- Questions how the plan addresses the Commission's previous recommendations, specifically the last six actions from the previous review.
 - In response to the recommendation to develop stronger identities for each of the parks; proponents explained that the Community Park is more activity based while the identity of the Pond Park is based on the strong natural landscape.
 - In response to the recommendation to further study the uses for the parks; proponents explained that they are trying to provide activities for all age groups. They also noted that the Pond Park will have more passive recreation spaces, while the Community Park will be more active.
 - In response to the recommendation not to build a fence around the pond; proponents explained that the fence will be very low and will be surrounded by planting.
- Wonders what the darker buildings on the map indicate as opposed to the lighter buildings.
 - Proponents explained that the darker buildings are SHA affordable housing, tax credit housing, and public housing. The lighter buildings are market rate housing.
- Is concerned that there are not active spaces for older kids, such as basketball courts and hard surfaces. Notes that this is a key group that SHA needs to work actively to engage in the community.
 - Proponents stated that there is a basketball court at the neighborhood center.
- Suggests that pocket parks could have some hard surface areas.
 - Proponents noted that the pocket parks are programmed as passive recreation space.

- Proponents agreed that young adults are a critical group to engage. They are concerned that anywhere a full court basketball court is located it will tend to drive the other activities away. Proponents noted that they are sizing basketball courts for different age groups. They are locating the smaller courts, for younger kids, closer to the houses so they can be closer to their parents. The recreation spaces for teenagers will be located further away from the concentration of residences, so that teenagers can have the independence that they want.
- Wonders how the pocket parks are each unique.
 - Proponents explained that the pocket parks are not all the same shape. They also noted that some pocket parks have existing trees while others don't. They added that the planting patterns are different for each of the parks.
- Feels that the alleys should be incorporated into the open space plan for the area. Notes that they will be the natural gathering place for the older kids and teenagers.
 - Proponents explained that the alleys are part of the existing street system. They stated that typically there is parking in the alleys and that back yards face on to them. They noted that there are low fences that separate the back yards from the alleys, but that they are not high enough to block visibility. They stated that the alleys are typically 16 foot paved right of ways and they the alleys provide additional connections into the pocket parks. Proponents imagine that children will use the alleys to play ball and ride their bikes.
- Suggests that the parking lot adjacent to the neighborhood center could also be used as a plaza space, where people could gather for protests, or to have a bazaar.
 - Proponents stated that they have considered that this space could be used for a farmers market, or other public activities. They explained that they have not yet designed the parking lot to that level of detail.
- Recommends that the parking lot could have a special paving material that would help facilitate its use other than as an area for parking cars.
- Notes that gathering spaces feel better when they are embraced by buildings. Suggests that the configuration of the neighborhood center should be considered further in relation to the parking lot in order to develop a stronger relationship between the two.
- Feels that the design team didn't push the design of the parks to be as dynamic as they possibly could be. Suggests that the parks could be more funky and unique. For example one pocket park could be a secret garden while another could be futuristic.
- Suggests that the plan should allow for things to happen in the future, and recognize that it won't all be designed right now.
- Questions how many times the terraced lawn to the north of the pond is a lawn, and how many times the pond will fill up.
 - Proponents stated that the pond will only fluctuate to its highest level for a couple of hours. They explained that the high level is designed for a two year storm, which means that it will probably reach that level only once a year. They added that they are developing a lawn that can tolerate this fluctuation.

18 September 2003 Commission Business

ACTION ITEMS

A. TIMESHEETS

B. MINUTES FROM 4 SEPTEMBER 2003- APPROVED

DISCUSSION ITEMS

C. PROJECT UPDATES- CUBELL

D. RECRUITMENT UPDATE- CUBELL

E. QUARTERLY UPDATE- DOCKINS

ANNOUNCEMENTS

F. MONORAIL DEIS PUBLIC HEARING- SEP 29TH 1-9PM, SEATTLE

CENTER NW ROOMS

G. VIADUCT OPEN HOUSES- SEP 30TH, OCT 1ST & OCT 2ND, 5-8PM

18 Sep 2003 Project: **Center City Circulation Study**

Phase: Briefing

Previous Reviews: None

Presenters: Ann Sutphin, SDOT

Time: 1 hour (SDC Ref. # 170 | DC00312)

Summary: **The Commission thanked the proponent for briefing them on this project and would like to make the following comments and recommendations.**

- **The Commission is encouraged by the integrated look at multiple systems of circulation downtown;**
- **suggests that the team consider the potential expansion of the ride free zone into Belltown;**
- **feels that, in the long term, if the City wants to take a leadership role in transportation planning they need to look at creating some necessary redundancy in our system which is currently lacking;**
- **encourages the team to look at gateways into and out of the downtown from all directions, specifically major arterials;**
- **suggests that the team look at simplifying the multiple technologies and jurisdictions that operate our systems;**
- **urges the team to be assertive and critical about the needs of downtown and likewise to be assertive about the need to take space for bikes in order to make the bike system work downtown;**
- **encourages the team to make clear statements that address streetcars as real transportation options and include linkages beyond the downtown if that is what is necessary;**
- **urges the team not to lose sight of the importance of the ferry system as a major pedestrian entrance to the city;**
- **suggests that the team not forget about east-west connections, even through buildings, to get up and down the grade; and**
- **is encouraged by the ideas of incorporating the Center City Wayfinding project and also addressing the bus tunnel closure during Light Rail construction.**

The Center City Circulation Study is currently a draft and a work in progress. It will be finalized in October. The Mobility Management Section in the Policy, Planning and Major Projects Division initiated this study. There is a modest budget to do this timely study very quickly. The main goal of the study is to identify key opportunities and gaps in the downtown transportation system. The Center City Circulation Study is focused primarily on public transportation and non-motorized transportation. There was a previous study done in 1998 on the bus system downtown and the Center City Circulation Study has attempted to build on that study. The Center City Circulation study focuses on the pedestrian network and bike routes, and also looks at key transit hubs, such as King Street Station, Westlake Center, and Colman Dock. The study also considers the ferry system which carries 26 million riders per year half of whom come through Seattle (either Downtown or Faunlteroy). Of particular interest is the Washington State Ferry's plan to change their business model and end their passenger-only ferry service.

Nelson Nygaard, a transportation consulting firm out of San Francisco has been hired to complete the Center City Circulation report. They conducted a charrette in August which involved all of the transit

agencies; Monorail, Ferry, Sound Transit, and all branches of Metro. There are three sets of recommendations in the back of the Center City Circulation Study report:

- short term – which can be implemented right away
- mid term – which can be integrated into new projects
- long term – which require policy changes

There is also a project specific section of the recommendations.

Of particular interest is projected demand in ridership given future growth assumptions and assumptions about changes to mode split with a higher share of trips downtown arriving and departing by transit. The study team noted that Seattle has a natural traffic metering system. The limited freeway system off-ramps, the topography, and the colliding street grids all control traffic access to downtown Seattle. Almost all of the intersections that have a poor level of service such as “F” are at the perimeter of the downtown. Because of this metering, there is a higher level of roadway capacity within downtown. There is flexibility (or choices) in what can be done with this extra room. It was noted that one drawback to the metered (or constrained) traffic system controlling the flow into downtown is that it is extremely fragile. Large events can break down the system and cause major back ups.

The 1998 study of the bus system concluded that the quantity of bus service is good, but the quality could be improved. The routes and scheduling are confusing. There is room to improve the system by simplifying the service. The Center City Circulation Study proposes a bus network reorganization. The plan would focus buses on 3rd Ave as a transit spine as part of the tunnel closure project. This makes 3rd Ave the place to go for light rail or bus transit. Off of this spine would be fingers heading out of the city in different directions.

The study also looked at the existing Waterfront Streetcar, and possible streetcar expansion. There is a proposal to run a streetcar line into South Lake Union via Westlake. In addition, the Waterfront Streetcar will need to be taken out for the viaduct replacement project. The study did a brief look at options of how a rebuilt waterfront street car could operate as a part of the Alaskan Way viaduct project. One, option is to rebuild it generally where it is, today. To be an effective system that creates possibility for extension and improved frequency, it was recommended that it be doubletracked. This would allow for possible extension north into Interbay area or South to Terminal 46 and to the International District.. Another option for a new waterfront street car would be to moving it to Western so that it can run during the Viaduct construction. Similar extensions were looked at in this option, as well as ways to connect to the South Lake Union streetcar.

Looking at the bike network, the study team noted that the area has planned and constructed many regional trails into downtown. Unfortunately there is not a good network for getting bikes through downtown. The study notes that if the City wants a significant mode shift to bicycling, facilities need to be designed for average people, not just extremely athletic people. In Holland, the bike network is designed to suit a middle-aged rider with groceries. The Center City Circulation Study suggests that a northbound bike lane should be added on 4th Ave to work as a pair with the bike lane on 2nd Ave. There are also suggestions for other north south pairs, as well as connectors moving from east to west across the grade. The study also includes recommendations for the major downtown transit hubs and how they can better accommodate bikes.

Key Commissioner Comments and Concerns

- Is encouraged to see this kind of overview of the downtown transportation systems.
- Suggests that the free ride zone should be expanded north into Belltown, to serve the dense

population in that area

- Proponents stated that there is some discussion at the Regional Transit Committee (note: proponent clarified appropriate group after meeting for accuracy in minutes), of extending this zone. They are primarily looking at the operational and financial implications of this change rather than the policy implications. This study discusses extending the free ride zone to King Street Station, and possibly up to First Hill. Any changes to ride-free areas will require more policy discussions on a regional level.
- Feels that in the long term if the city wants to lead, rather than react in terms of transportation planning, that they need to incorporate a level of redundancy into the system which is currently lacking. Notes that when the next big earthquake comes we will not be able to move people and goods in the aftermath.
- Notes that many of the gateways into downtown are ugly and inefficient. Adds that the poor quality of paving detracts from the efficiency of the roads. Explains that people dodging potholes significantly slow down traffic.
- Is concerned that the multiple technologies and transportation systems create inefficiencies. There needs to be more simplicity in the system. The BC Transit system in Vancouver is a good model. The public has a much better understanding of how to use this system.
 - Proponents stated that the focus of their study was on the downtown. They took as givens the existing and proposed transportation systems downtown:
 - Monorail
 - Light rail
 - The proposed South Lake Union Streetcar
 - Viaduct replacement project
- Suggests that the team should be clear about the streetcar systems, and whether they are vanity projects or legitimate modes of transportation.
 - Proponents stated that the proposed South Lake Union Streetcar has a different Operating model than the Waterfront Streetcar.
- Questions what the usefulness of a streetcar loop is as opposed to a spine.
 - Proponents said that loops could be the solution in some cases. However, most important is creating good connections between places. Noted that it is not always an appropriate solution as it is less of a connector between places that are spread out across the city.
- Suggests that a map showing a larger context would be helpful in understanding how the transportation fingers relate to the rest of the city.
- Notes that we need a finger of transportation along the waterfront.
- Urges the group to be assertive about the need to take space for bikes.
- Doesn't see the ferry on any of the Center City Circulation Study maps, or any of the connections to it. Notes that the ferry system is a major pedestrian entrance to the city
- Suggests that this study should also look at east-west connections moving across the grade.
- Notes that this study will be useful for the Center City Wayfinding project, and also the bus tunnel

closure during the construction of the Light Rail System.

- Proponents noted that this study builds on the transportation plan for the bus tunnel closure.

18 Sep 2003 Project: Fremont Bridge Approaches Improvements

Phase: Preliminary Design

Previous Reviews: None

Presenters: Rob Gorman, SDOT

DeWitt Jensen, Parsons Brinckerhoff

Attendees: Ruri Yampolsky, Office of Arts and Cultural Affairs

Daniel Mihalyo, SDOT Artist in Residence

Time: 1 hour (SDC Ref. # 169 | DC00316)

Action: The Commission appreciates the presentation and would like to make the following comments and recommendations.

- **The Commission commends the team on their community outreach and encourages them to continue to work with all segments of the community including local businesses as the project proceeds;**
- **applauds the thoughtfulness of the proposed construction process and the low impact on the community;**
- **encourages the team to continue to identify any possible sources of funding to bring art into the project;**
- **urges the team to consider the environment under the bridge, as well as on top of the bridge, as part of the public realm and believes that an honest structural approach, rather than something with unnecessary frills, is the best approach for this project;**
- **recognizes that the project includes both gateways and links and encourages the team to think of them as broadly as possible for pedestrians, for bicycles and for cars;**
- **encourages the team to look at lighting as a possible art project, but also as a way of making the underside of the bridge more comfortable; and**
- **recommends approval of preliminary design.**

This project combines three separate projects into one. The primary project is the approach replacement project. The second element of the project is an electrical/mechanical system upgrade of the mechanism that raises and lowers the bascule bridge. The third component of the project is the reconstruction of the bridge maintenance shop which is physically attached to the south approach structure.

The approach replacement project will be paid for with federal funding and a local match fund. Funding Sources have not yet been identified for the other two components of the project. The approaches to the bridge are; the roadway between N 34th and the bascule pier, and roughly one half of the roadway between Nickerson St and the south bascule pier. In 1998 there was a seismic retrofit of the main bridge structure. It would not be economical to retrofit the approaches, and as they are not historic structures, they will be replaced instead.

Planning for this project started last July. The team was required to do a Type, Size and Location study (TS&L) before proceeding with preliminary engineering. The TS&L was completed in March, 2003 and preliminary engineering started in July when the consultant was given a notice to proceed with environmental and geotechnical studies for the project. The project design will continue until December 2004. There will be an 18 month construction period from the 2nd quarter of 2005 through the 4th quarter of 2006.

The Type size and location study was sent to WSDOT and to FHWA, the federal funding agency, for

review. The team has not yet received formal approval of this document, but does not anticipate any problems. The team is currently trying to determine what the property needs will be for the completion of this project. The team anticipates that property acquisition could be the biggest factor in determining the schedule for this project. Obtaining the environmental permits could also impact the schedule of the project.

The primary purposes of the Type Size and Location Study were to get confidence in the proposed budget and also to get feedback from the community. The community outreach process helped the team to establish their preferred option. The team conducted stakeholder interviews of 15-20 stakeholders in August and September of 2002. They also held a public workshop and an open house in September. Additionally they worked with a citizen's advisory group and also met with City government and other agencies.

The key messages from the community were that their priorities are:

- transportation
- business mitigation
- urban design

The team offered the community a choice between shutting down the bridge and doing the construction quickly, or maintaining traffic, and having a longer construction period. There was nearly unanimous support for maintaining traffic. The community emphasized that this is a very heavily used route. They are concerned about how SDOT will deal with congestion on the bridge and along the detour. The businesses on both sides of the bridge are concerned about noise, dust, vibration, and parking access, during the construction period. One urban design concern of the community is that the historic character of the bridge be considered although they acknowledge that the bascule is the historic structure, not the approaches. Another urban design concern is that the uses under the bridge be considered. They would also like to have art incorporated into this project. Because of the funding mechanism for this project there is not a designated 1% of the budget for the arts. The team is exploring other ways to incorporate art in the project possibly embellishing parts of the project such as light poles or bridge railings. Finally the community has asked the team to recognize the two distinct communities on either side of the bridge; Fremont and Lower Queen Anne.

In replacing the bridge approaches the team would like to reduce the number of columns used to support the bridge. Currently the columns are spaced roughly 20 feet on center. They would like the new spacing to be somewhere between 90 feet on center and 120 feet on center. One portion of the structure has columns that go through Quadrants parking garage. This portion of the approach will be retrofitted rather than replaced, so that SDOT will not need to rebuild the garage.

To maintain traffic on the bridge there needs to be at least one lane of traffic in each direction. The proposed plan is to build the new columns in between the existing columns, and then rebuild one side of the bridge, and then the other. Building the new columns should take roughly 9 months, during which normal traffic can be maintained on the bridge. After the columns have been replaced construction can begin on the top of the bridge. Each side will take roughly 4 ½ months to complete, possibly less, but no less than 3 months per side. Setting the girders will require weekend closures, each side will require at least two weekends. There is a portion of the bridge which may need to be built in thirds, and would require additional weekend closures.

There is some signal work that will need to be done at both ends of the bridge to help mitigate traffic impacts during construction. Traffic is expected to detour across the Aurora and Ballard bridges. One of the key assumptions of this project is that the width of the bridge will stay the same. There are very small

clearances between the north bridge approach and the adjacent buildings.

Key Commissioner Comments and Concerns

- Wonders what the SDOT Artist in Residence's approach is to this project.
 - The artist-in-residence stated that he has had some preliminary discussions about working on this project, but he has not yet decided if this is the project that he wants to attach himself to. He notes that some people in the community would like to have a gateway art piece incorporated into the bridge. He also notes that the treatment of the underside of the bridge, and the space under the bridge are both great opportunities for art. He added that this project could be a good candidate for him to work on, because there is no arts funding for it.
- Is unsure whether the proposed pedestrian/bike ramp is worthwhile. Feels that it seems like too much effort to allow people to get up and down without dismounting their bikes. Notes that there are other ways to make on grade connections onto the bridge.
 - Proponents noted that a wider staircase might be a better pedestrian connection, but it would not provide ADA access. They acknowledged that there are other accessible routes.
- Is encouraged to see the wider spaced columns. Feels it will make a more pleasant space under the bridge.
- Urges the team to find ways to make the underside of the bridge as attractive as possible. Explains that the team should not do this by adding unnecessary decorative elements. Notes that the underside of the Aurora Bridge is a great space.
- Encourages the team to consider all transportation modes in designing connections to and from the bridge.
- Wonders what the use is under the north side of the bridge.
 - Proponents stated that there is likely to be vehicle parking under the north side of the bridge. Notes that there may be an opportunity to get a permanent easement for the bridge approach, in exchange for allowing private use of the space under the bridge.
- Questions what the pedestrian and bike access will be when the bridge is under construction and there are only two lanes of traffic open.
 - Proponents stated that there will be a minimum of 6 feet of sidewalk space. They added that when the bridge is closed for the weekend it will be closed to everyone for safety reasons.
 - Proponents stated that the Burke Gilman Trail will be closed for the entire construction period with trail traffic being detoured to N. 34th St.
- Suggests that lighting could be a good artistic outlet for this project.
 - Proponents noted that the Fremont Bridge was one of the bridges identified by former mayor Paul Schell to be lighted from underneath as part of the millennium bridge project.

18 Sep 2003 Project: Sustainable Design Checklist

Phase: Briefing

Previous Review: 15 August 2002 (Environmental Action Agenda Briefing)

Presenters: Richard Gelb, Office of Sustainability

Time: .5 hours

(SDC Ref. # 170 | DC00315)

Summary: The Commission appreciates the update on this work and would like to make the following comments and recommendations.

- **The Commission acknowledges the long way that this project has come from an initial idea about sustainability to a scorecard which is a useful tool for developing sustainable projects;**
- **would like to see the scorecard at the schematic design review of all Parks Department projects;**
- **likes the approach of looking at upstream, midstream and downstream impacts;**
- **particularly likes the weighting of points to favor those actions that work for the life of the project;**
- **would like the checklist to offer points also for the inclusion of long-lived plants, and would like to have a specific line item for re-using plants that are on the site; and**
- **on the Parks checklist, encourages the proponents to reconsider item number six which encourages the use of signs, and instead advocate that projects make their processes clear to users without relying on signage.**

The Sustainable Design Checklist project came out of a Commission request to have a sustainability checklist which they could use in evaluating all projects that they review. Richard Gelb originally began developing this system to meet the Commission need, but he recognized that project proponents have a need for this sort of tool as well. In developing this system he did not want to promote ecological solutions that don't work with social and economic conditions as well. This system was developed by looking at all three aspects of a project from a life cycle perspective. This particular model has been developed primarily from a Parks Department perspective. The checklist would be slightly different for different types of projects. The categories should be specific to the proponent agency's goals.

As a first step in developing this checklist Richard Gelb created a more general template that considers a range of issues and goals. This starts with the big picture policies and drivers for the particular agency. The first step in developing a checklist for a particular agency is to look at the organization's mission. All departments are now required to have an Environmental Management System (EMS) which is the most likely place to find the sustainability goals for that department. Any department can then use the triple life cycle approach to identify department and project goals and eventually develop a score card tool.

A key part of the scorecard tool is the evaluation of past achievement in order to continue to raise the bar. Sustainable design should be considered as a process of continual improvement. The evaluation of past achievements is critical to this process.

This scorecard is not just an accounting tool. A target score is set up front for each project. The aim is not to set up any projects for failure but to try and push the envelope of sustainable design on every project. The scorecard is currently being used internally, but the Commission could request to see the scorecard at their reviews.

The Parks Department has a website where project managers can indicate which sustainable features they are able to provide. The department is then able to produce a report overall on what systems are being implemented and what maintenance and energy savings can be expected.

Key Commissioner Comments and Concerns

- Questions if this system was in place before the proponent started doing this work.
 - The proponent stated that this is a new system he has developed for the Parks Department.
- Questions why the social issues are included in this tool which is aimed at improving the sustainability of projects. Is concerned that if the scope of this tool is too expansive, it will lose its effectiveness in addressing sustainability. Notes that this tool should not try and be all things for all people.
 - The proponent explained that this tool cannot effectively promote sustainability if it doesn't consider sustainability in relation to other project factors. As an example the proponent noted that he was originally not in favor of having turf areas in parks, looking at it purely from a sustainability perspective. He has since realized that one way to promote overall sustainability is to make people feel comfortable living at higher densities, and has changed his view of turf in parks. The proponent noted that if agencies do not look at social and economic factors, as well as factors that affect sustainability then they cannot make informed decisions.
- Notes that the scorecard seems to be weighted toward environmental concerns.
 - The proponent explained that the scorecard is actually weighted toward economic concerns, but that there are many overlaps between the two, particularly in energy savings.
- Feels that the approach to this process is good. Notes that the tool emphasizes the overlap of economic, social, and environmental concerns.
- Supports the upstream, midstream, and downstream analysis that has been used in developing this tool.
- Suggests that this tool could have a rating system such as grey, blue, and green to acknowledge different levels of achievement.
 - The proponent explained that the scorecard is intended to be used by a variety of different projects. The desire is to set an appropriate goal for each project. Notes that there is an inequity in the LEED system, as it is easier for large projects to get higher ratings.
- Would like the Design Commission to see the scorecards at schematic review of Parks Department Projects.
- Is concerned by item #6 on the Seattle Park's Development Scorecard which gives points for explanatory signage. Notes that the Commission has often advocated against literal and descriptive signage. The Commission instead supports elements that encourage users to explore and investigate on their own. Adds that mystery and discovery are often better tools than literal explanations.
 - The proponent reiterated that all projects are not expected to incorporate all of the items on the scorecard
- Notes that inventorying existing plants is not sufficient. Would like the scorecard to include a line

item for preserving existing plants.

18 Sep 2003 Project: **Design Commission 35th Anniversary Project**
Presenters: Brad Gassman, CityDesign

Time: .5 hours (SDC Ref. # 170 | DC00310)

Summary: CityDesign staff members met with the Design Commission to select projects for commendation at the end of this year. They prepared a list of projects that the Commission has reviewed since their last letters of commendation in 2001. The Commission discussed these projects and proposed a short list of projects to be voted on for letters of commendation. Each Commissioner will vote for five projects and the top projects with the most number of votes will receive letters of commendation to be awarded in early December.