



Seattle Design Commission

Gregory J. Nickels,
Mayor

David Spiker
Chair

Pam Beyette

Adam Christiansen

John Hoffman

Karen Kiest

Anindita Mitra

Sheri Olson

Nic Rossouw

Dennis Ryan

Darrell Vange

Guillermo Romano
Executive Director

Layne Cubell,
Senior Staff

Approved
MINUTES OF THE MEETING
June 1 2006

Convened: 8:30am
Adjourned: 3:00pm

Projects Reviewed

Woodland Park Zoo Garage – Schematic Design
Spokane Street Viaduct – Briefing
East Marginal Way Flyover (Grade Separation) – Briefing
Commission Business
First Hill Transit Connections – Briefing

Commissioners Present

Adam Christiansen
John Hoffman
Karen Kiest
Anindita Mitra
Sheri Olson
Nic Rossouw, Acting Chair
Dennis Ryan

Staff Present

Guillermo Romano
Layne Cubell
Tom Iurino
Valerie Felts



Department of Planning and
Development

P. O. Box 34019
700 5th Avenue, 19th Floor
Seattle, WA 98124-4019
phone 206/233-7911
fax 206/288-7883

June 2006 Project Woodland Park Zoo Garage

Previous Reviews: January 2006, March 2006
Phase: Schematic Design
Presenters: Paul Diedrich, KPFF
 David Hewitt, Hewitt Architects
 Jim Maxwell, Woodland Park Zoo
 Dan Phillips, Woodland Park Zoo
 Scott Ringgold, DPD
Attendees: Paul Andrews, Save Our Zoo
 John Bito, Phinney Ridge Community Council
 Craig Fryhle, community member
 Stephanie Pure, Office of Peter Steinbrueck

Time: 1 hour 30 mins (SDC Ref. #169/RS0612)

Action

The Design Commission appreciates the team’s logical presentation that identifies the many forces at work. We also understand and applaud the team’s effort to fit this large facility into a very sensitive site and appreciate the sincere and dedicated approach to providing good design for the Zoo. At this time, by a vote of 4:3, the Commission does not recommend approval of the schematic design, noting the following comments and concerns:

- **would like to see how the west entry plan works and is integrated with the site plan for this garage. As it stands, the scheme shown does not reflect the major entry point from Phinney Avenue to the Zoo. We would like to see that developed further.**
- **is concerned that the walkway from the north parking lot between the proposed future event center and the east façade of the garage is too narrow and not appropriately scaled for pedestrian comfort.**
- **suggests again that integration of other buildings in an upholstered technique be reconsidered, perhaps integrating the ticket facility with the garage in some form so that the major entry point can be a destination .**
- **finds that this building has deviated from the original design concept of a “non-building” fully integrated with the landscape into a free-standing screened building. Emphasis should be placed on the green screens in all the various forms, techniques and elevations. We would like to see a landscape architect’s concepts for the plant species, materials, and maturity over the lifetime of the facility.**
- **agrees it is good use of the grade to nestle the building into the elevation. Also, appreciates the design challenge of a building trying to be a friendly door on many facades and supports the idea that it can become a lantern or beacon to enter the Zoo, particularly at the southeast corner. While the garage is trying to hide, it is also an**

important point of entry, especially the southwest corner in relation to the West Entry Gate

- **finds the technique of notching the corners to reduce the scale to be a good response and that the layering of the façade - the trees, screening, colors, and materials - is doing all it can for a building this size.**
- **would like to see the project again in the Schematic Design stage**

Proponents Presentation

In reviewing changes to the site plan and the design of the project, proponents addressed issues identified as concerns at the last Commission review. These items are more detail on the landscape to the west, noise impacts, application of the Long Range Development Plan (LRPDP) design guidelines to the project, a request for additional site photos and more detailed renderings of the project.

Commissioner Questions and Comments

- Why is the pedestrian entry oriented to the south?
 - It was identified as a logical pedestrian access point, coordinated with the existing bus stop and crosswalk by the West Entry gate on Phinney. It also has excellent sun access. Additional, newer buildings will be built nearby as part of the larger West Entry plan, also there will be a prime ticketing area there.
- One of the ways Olmsted won the competition in New York's Central Park was that he dealt with cars in a new, honest and unique way. The parking garage is needed, it seems to fit the master plan.
- Design shown today balances bold simplicity and articulation. Using steel is a good idea. Takes good advantage of changes in the grade and landscaping to camouflage garage and will not be burdensome to the neighborhood.
- Appreciate the garage is trying to hide, but southwest corner abuts the larger West Entry master plan and efficient pedestrian circulation needs to be studied more with a focus on signage and wayfinding
- What is the garage capacity?
 - 700 cars and bike storage
- What is the footprint of the garage?
 - Slightly less than what is shown in the master plan update.
- Do you envision expansion of the animal exhibits as part of Long Range Physical Development Plan?
 - Yes
- Please describe the treatment of the roof design.
 - In discussion still is a parkable green roof , but that would be at a substantial increase in project cost

- There is some disappointment with the design as presented today. Previous hope was there would be more emphasis on landscape and less on the building, but there now seems to be too much structure and architectural expression. We need to hear from landscape architects at the next presentation – if they are playing a role on the design team.
- The façade needs to be simplified
- How does the future events center fit with the Master Plan? The event center is similar in size to the Stadium garage, which is a 1,000 car garage. This is a 700 car garage. That kind of facility in this neighborhood is a traffic disaster. The scale of the project needs to be questioned. It seems the size of garage is driven by the event center. If there is a way to reconsider the event center for this zoo, it would not only scale down the garage and expenses related to that, but also prevent the traffic surge that happens with event centers. The Master Plan is not clear on its pedestrian intent. There is some confusion as to where pedestrians should enter. There would be much more clarity in how pedestrians experience the site if the ticketing center were moved.
- Has there been any compromise on reducing the capacity and therefore the size of the garage? Is there any neighbor or organization that supports the project? We seem to only hear from those against it.
 - There has been significant Master Plan review, with many supporters. The Environmental Impact Statement looked at the site as a potential site for an 850 car site. That has been downsized by one level.



**Master Plan
Woodland Park Zoo Garage
June 1, 2006**

Public Comments

Craig Fryhle, a community resident, reminded the Commission that Woodland Park is an Olmsted Park. He also noted that the LRPDP did not reference the west garage, but the south garage. He feels the mews/walkway between two buildings is too narrow and resembles an alley. He noted that many questions

from the March 2006 Design Commission review of the project were unanswered by this presentation.

Paul Andrews, of Save Our Zoo stated that although many changes are proposed, they are not changes reflecting community input from the first workshop. Regarding cost constraints, he noted that steel as a proposed construction material is far more expensive than concrete. He urged the Commission to look at the Design Guidelines in the LRPDP. He would like to see photo realistic renderings or a model of the proposed project. He shares concerns about the scale of the project, particularly along Phinney.

John Bito, of the Phinney Ridge Community Council, reiterates concerns of SEPA compliance regarding the size and scale of the project and believes that this is an issue for the Design Commission to consider. He feels the garage does not belong in the park and reminded the Commission to think of the legacy of and impact on the park.

Informal comments from Irene Wall, a community member, sent by email were circulated to the Commissioners. In that, she reiterated her concerns over height, bulk and scale expressed at the March 2006 Design Commission review and urged the Commission to adhere to design guidelines of the LRPDP. Specifically, she notes guidelines referring to “visitor-service buildings and clusters”, which should have an “Arts and Crafts/National Park Service” style. She feels if these guidelines are to be meaningful they should apply to the largest structure at the Zoo.

01 June 2006 Project: Spokane Street Viaduct

Previous Reviews: none

Phase: Briefing

Presenters: Stuart Goldsmith, SDOT
Einer Handerland, Parsons Brinckerhoff

Time: 1 hour (SDC Ref. #169/RS0606)

Summary

The Design Commission thanks the team for a fresh look at an older project. It approves the briefing as presented and looks forward to seeing the streetscape design again with the following recommendations:

- **The Commission commends the team for the creation of a planted median strip along 4th Ave. to replace the existing ramps**
- **Recognizes the project is an important link in the City's infrastructure**
- **Look at ways to enliven the streetscape, making the pedestrian lighting bolder, adding colorful gestures underneath the Viaduct as well as some green planting**
- **Look at art opportunities, especially taking guidance from the SDOT Art Plan**
- **Recognizes the site lies in an industrial area, but also one under transition with bikes and pedestrians whose needs must be addressed**
- **For any streetscape improvements, connecting to the existing bike/pedestrian path should be a priority.**
- **The columns themselves are a good opportunity to do something unique**
- **Also, look at the 1st Ave. triangle site as an opportunity for special design treatment**

Proponents Presentation

Proponents provided the following overview of project goals:

- safety and traffic control improvements
- reduction of conflicts between modes and enhanced freight mobility
- new access to surface streets from upper roadway
- facilitate transit access between West Seattle and downtown



Project elements include widening the structure by 41 feet between 6th Ave. S. and E. Marginal Way to accommodate a new westbound acceleration/deceleration lane, an eastbound transit lane, wider lanes and shoulders, and a permanent median. Seismic strengthening of the viaduct will be completed and the existing upper roadway structure will be repaved. An eastbound off-ramp at 4th Ave. S. will be added. The West Seattle Bridge transit lane will be extended from SR 99 to 4th Ave. A sidewalk on the north side of Spokane will facilitate pedestrian activity and create a link for bicyclist between the bike paths west of East Marginal Way and the planned Busway bike path.

Proponents outlined the following project construction schedule:

2006-2007 Complete Design

2007-2008 Utility Relocation

2008-2010 Construction (likely to be divided into phases due to funding constraints)

Commissioner Questions and Comments

- Would encourage guerilla techniques on the planting. Idea of having what looks like a suburban strip will not be successful. Use of mulch instead of gravel, and planting of small trees would be a good approach to the underside of freeway.
- Look for some other use for gap rather than incidental parking. Paving alone is not enough
- Color/patterns for columns ala ID dragon columns or earthwork/dunes underneath
- Look at SDOT Art Plan for art opportunities
- Is there anything in local neighborhood plans regarding lighting?
Lighting underneath for trail will be important
 - Yes, standard highway lighting will be used

- Wayfinding signage could be improved
- Perhaps landscape architecture funds could be used for community project
- Space underneath structure deserves hardscape vs green
- The roadway needs improving as it is a dangerous corridor
- Look at alternative design/form for columns

1 June 2006 Project Commission Business

Action Items

A. Timesheets

B. Minutes from 05/04/06/Felts

Discussion Items

C. Outside Commitments/All

D. Councilmember and Mayor's Office
Meetings/Cubell

E. Urban Design Letter, Mitra

F. Viaduct and Waterfront Outreach/All

G. Arcade Reception, 6/1, 5:30–7:30pm, SLU
Discovery Center

H. Walter Hood, 6/5, 5:30–7:30pm, Central Library

Announcements

I. SLU Open House, June 12, 5:30–7:30pm, ConWorks

M. COW Waterfront Plan, 6/5, 2:30pm

N. South Lake Union Open House, 6/12, 5:30-7:00pm

1 June 2006 Project East Marginal Way Flyover (Grade Separation)

Phase: Briefing

Previous Reviews: none

Presenters: Bob Fernandes, Berger/AMBA

Alexa Miller, EnviroIssues

Ron Scharf, SDOT

Gary Wallinder, Port of Seattle

Attendees: Joe Taskey, SDOT

Teo Yuling SDOT/CPRS

Time: 1 hour

(SDC Ref. #169/RS0606)

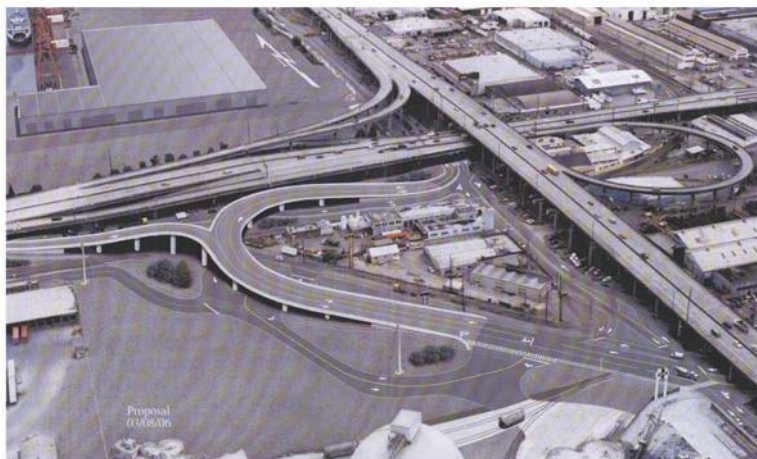
Action

The Commission appreciates the project team's briefing and approves the early design work with the following comments and recommendations.

- **Explore ways to simplify the roadway design and still resolve the complex set of traffic issues in this high use industrial area**
- **Look at non-motorized transit, landscape, lighting and wayfinding for both vehicles and pedestrians**
- **Find ways to celebrate local landmarks.**
- **Look forward to seeing the project again.**

Proponents Presentation

Proponents provided a briefing of the SDOT project, done in partnership with the Port of Seattle. The goal of the project is to facilitate trucks and other vehicles over train tracks that serve Harbor Island, West Seattle and the South Downtown industrial area. It will improve safety and relieve congestion by separating rail traffic from vehicle traffic by eliminating several busy crossings. Issues of streetscape and pedestrian experience in an urban design context were also outlined.



East Marginal Way Grade Separation

Commissioner Questions and Comments

- Has there been community involvement?
 - Open house meetings have been held, more are planned
 - Industrial businesses in area of freight mobility advisory group
 - Information on access during construction
- Are there opportunities for art?
 - Yes, on sidewalls of ramps, particularly by the sidewalk/pedestrian access
- Question placing sidewalk on ramps. Pedestrians prefer to stay on ground level and connect to the exit on the west.
- Are there any landscape architects working on streetscape design improvements and connectivity?
 - Yes, the Cascade Design Collaborative is our landscape architect, and we are working with the city in making landscape improvements
- This looks complicated, is there a way to simplify it to make it more like SR519? It seems like over-design, with too many curves.
 - From an engineering standpoint it accomplishes everything we want it to do, although the pedestrian route is somewhat circuitous. SR 519 is not highly regarded or seen universally as successful engineering.

1 June 2006 Project First Hill Transit Connections - Briefing

Phase: Briefing

Previous Reviews: none

Presenters: Calvin Chow, SDOT

Tracy Reed, Sound Transit

Time: 1 hour

(SDC Ref. #169/RS0606)

Summary

The Design Commission is delighted that Sound Transit and SDOT are seeking input on the design of the First Hill Transit connection from the International District and King Street Station during this early design phase. They offered several comments, recognizing the need to balance costs, use and larger transit system goals.

Proponents Presentation

This transit extension will likely consist of both a streetcar and a bus route. It is scoped to include one block of track connection to the Waterfront line between Jackson and Main on 5th Ave. Additional double-tracking on Main Street through Pioneer Square is not included and will depend on the outcome of Viaduct and trolley planning.

Sound Transit and SDOT staff succinctly described the many options under consideration and clarified that the team is seeking public input to narrow down the options to a preferred layout. These options and associated issues include: the streets that the route could ply on (one-way or two-way routes); how it connects to the waterfront street car line; whether on-street parking is retained; and how the station meets the sidewalk, among others. Commissioners raised questions about how the bus route connected to the streetcar route and whether the original Sound Transit First Hill Station service area was being served through the new routes shown.

When queried about whether the Tacoma design of a center transit lane had been studied for a faster transit alternative, the design team responded that they were not pursuing that alternative since it would have greater right-of-way impacts. The team described the elements



that would improve service time along the route included dedicated rights-of-way, fewer conflicts with on-street parking, and signal pre-emption. These need to be balanced effectively with elements that make great pedestrian environments. The meeting was cut short before further discussion could occur due to a fire alarm in the building.

Commissioner Questions and Comments

- What is the nature of conflicts with bus stops on Broadway? Will they be shared with the streetcar?
 - The team proposes existing bus stops be shared. To accommodate the streetcar they would be 10 inches higher. Metro has confirmed their interest in purchasing in a low-floor fleet the next time they replace their electric trolley fleet.
- Have you explored whether the route alignment works in terms of connecting to the waterfront?
 - Yes. The existing streetcar ends at 5th and Jackson, with only one, one-way lane of track. Track for the other direction would be added.
- Why not a streetcar up Madison?
 - Madison is too steep for current technology
- Will Capitol Hill connection stretch to Aloha?
 - SDOT would like it to tie into Broadway business but needs own funding
 - It stops at John at this point, to connect to Link Light Rail.
- Encourages the exploration of a streetcar system from the International District through First Hill and to Capitol Hill. This type of system has been shown to attract much higher ridership than buses.
- Encourages the team to look closely at the links through First Hill. The proposed route does not seem to serve the dense residential and employment centers in the neighborhood. Perhaps the line could be split so that north and south run along different streets as a way to broaden the impact.
- Suggest the streetcar be funded by Sound Transit as the proposed system will only provide one station in the entire Capitol Hill/ First Hill area, the state's most densely populated residential area.