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APPROVED MINUTES OF THE MEETING

November 20, 2008

Convened 8:30 am

Adjourned 4:30 pm

Projects Reviewed

Neighborhood Planning and Station Area Planning

SR 519 Phase II Grade Separation

Burke Gilman Trail Missing Link

Conner Homes, West Seattle Junction

Commissioners Present

Karen Kiest, Chair

Tasha Atchison

Brendan Connolly

John Hoffman

Mary Johnston

Juanita La Fond

Dennis Ryan

Norie Sato

Darrell Vange

Darby Watson

Unconfirmed Commissioners Present

Andrew Barash

Nathan Polanski

Staff Present

Valerie Kinast

Shannon Glass

Celebrating 40 Years 1968-2008



November 20, 2008 **Project:** **Neighborhood Planning and Station Area Planning**
Phase: Briefing
Last Reviewed:
Presenters: Lyle Bicknell, DPD

Time: 1 hour

(121/RS02031)

SUMMARY

The Commission thanks Lyle Bicknell for the briefing on the Neighborhood and Station Area Planning, and adds the following comments:

- The focus of the neighborhood and station area planning appears to be more on urban design than urban planning as compared to the neighborhood planning effort of the 1990s.
- The Commission encourages a balance between the city of the future and the current existing conditions.
- Early study is recommended of the North Link station areas that are slated for construction in five to ten years.
- Apply zoning classifications that correspond more closely to development types that the market will support.
- Station area plans should not drive neighborhood plans; ensure light rail stations do not overwhelm the neighborhoods.
- The Commission recommends consideration of how neighborhoods connect, and early reconsideration of neighborhood boundaries.
- Work at a larger scale with issues such as sustainability, transportation, and corridor studies.

Presentation

Mission Overview

The goal is to evaluate key defined objectives that were set in the 1990's neighborhood planning effort for almost all the 38 neighborhood plans, and to see how well the key objectives have been implemented. There will be three plan updates in 2008, and three more plan updates in 2009. Those include Mt. Baker, Beacon Hill, and Othello. Those station areas were selected due to the fact that the light rail stations are viewed as catalysts and opportunity to knit together urban design interventions. There are development opportunities, as well as the parks levy possibilities for shaping open space plans.

Timeline

Status reports on the existing neighborhood plans will be completed by the end of 2009. Ballard, light rail, bus rapid transit, West Seattle may receive special attention. The next series of updates will be more focused on design than policy and planning. A charrette for each on the first three station areas will occur in March and April 2009, and it is hoped a Commissioner will participate.

Outreach

With language and cultural barriers, it is important to have illustrative examples in order to effectively communicate design intent. Any examples or suggestions to the types of images that are relevant to non American place making would be helpful. It is a graphically strong opportunity, and has been found to be an effective communication tool.

An advisory meeting will be held on December 3, 2008 and the group will meet monthly for the next year.

Outreach will be held in places like community churches and will draw on established organizations like the Southeast District Council.

Commissioners' Comments & Questions

In the process of neighborhood planning, there should be a message that balances city planning with neighborhood planning.

Long-term planning is important to balance with more immediate concerns.

Encourage looking at the north segment of the proposed light rail line, including the University of Washington, where there hasn't been upzoning

Height and density changes have yet to be addressed, and need to be to create town centers.

Recommend that zoning classifications are dovetailed with development aspirations.

Clarify that there are neighborhood plans, and not station area plans; emphasize support of the neighborhoods. With economically challenged neighborhoods, a concern is developing micro-businesses and supportive zoning.

There need to be connections between neighborhoods, and activity happening along their edges.

The Planning Commission shared the same concern about corridors and connections.

Are you confident the South Lake Union and South Downtown studies are adequate to address those neighborhoods? For example, Little Saigon should be addressed separately from the International District.

There is some reluctance to making changes to the delineations of neighborhoods, but it may be worthwhile to do so.

Encourage recognition of corridors growing together, with special nodes.

What is the status of the Roosevelt and Northgate neighborhoods?

Roosevelt had a major update in the last five years; there are opportunities at Northgate with height and density.

Can the Commission help establish visions?

That would be very helpful, because a bigger vision is needed in order to avoid being lost in parochial needs.

November 20, 2008 **Project:** **SR 519 Phase II Grade Separation**
Phase: Schematic Design
Last Reviewed: March 20, 2003; September 6, 2007; January 17, 2008
Presenters: Mike Johnson, SDOT
 Ryan Lambert, HBB
 Jocelyn Freilingner, HBB
 Jim Howard, HBB
 David Sowers, WSDOT
 Ann Hegstrom, Kiewit
Attendees: Vaughn Bell, SDOT
 Katherine Clays
 Gavin Wong, Aecom

Time: 1.25 hours

(169/RS0606)

ACTION

The Commission thanks the SR 519 Project Team for their presentation of design build team's 30% schematic design for State Route 519 Phase II, and with a vote of seven to two approves the design with the following comments:

- Consider turning the western street end into a pedestrian plaza, making it feel more like a woonerf.
- On the east side of the stairwell in the west plaza – make sure there are no pedestrian dead ends and CPTED issues.
- Encourages boldness in the design, especially for the significant areas of the stairs and elevator; use hardscape, lighting, and bollards to direct pedestrian flow; consider the relationship to the light rail station and the larger context.
- Recommends simplifying the east plaza, as the design is focused on the movement of people as the main function of the area.
- Bring design attention to the stairs and elevator plaza, providing a spirit of place. Look at ways to express the place in the design of the structural elements. Use structures to create the space, and avoid decoration. There is an opportunity for boldness.
- Reconsider the use of plantings; make sure the landscape is integral to the design.
- Art needs a bigger vision, in order to avoid trivializing the art, artists and their role.
- Reevaluate the language of two plaza geometries, and look for opportunities to create a more unified relationship between them.
- Support greater use and activation of the areas under the bridges for safety; consider providing bike racks under the bridges, and opportunities for vendors on the west side.
- Support more sustainable stormwater treatment; encourage stormwater bioswales in the pedestrian areas.
- Recommends attention to vertical elements.
- Recommends consideration of wayfinding and tactile paving for vision-impaired patrons moving to and from the Light Rail Station.

Recusals: Commissioner Barash recused himself from the presentation.

Note: Dissenting votes because of the architecture component and that the design needs a bigger vision.

Project Presentation

Project Background (See Project Summary Sheet)

The City is collaborating with the State to finish implementation of State Route 519. The Edgar Martinez Bridge completes the westbound approach from the freeways to the Seattle waterfront. The project is a design build and is informed by urban design guidelines. The design team will return for review at 60% and 90% urban design progress to solicit Design Commission feedback.

The second phase of work is complete, which includes intersection improvements at First Avenue and Atlantic Street, and a new ramp that connects Atlantic Street to I-90 and I-5.

The project is largely financed and administered by WSDOT. The bridge and plaza will be owned and maintained by the City. The context and design is very important to the project.

The request for proposal process is complete. Proposals were evaluated for intent to meet the urban design theme developed by Makers Architecture. The purpose is to maintain consistency with the two stadiums. Kiewit was awarded the contract in September, and has completed 30% design.

Construction

Kiewit has constructed signature projects for the City, such as Safeco and Seattle Center. This site is considered a key project in making Seattle a world-class city, as well as an important stage between the two sports venues.

Landscape Context

The site is divided into east and west plazas. There is a vehicular overpass with a pedestrian ramp on one side, which crosses the railroad tracks, in between the stadiums. An elevator and staircase descends to the plazas.

The Context-Sensitive Design Criteria report completed by Makers Architecture recommends responding to the surrounding environment, engaging in a community process, urban design features, and creating a pedestrian-friendly and safe environment. The overall vision for the project is to create a sense of movement through the site, to enhance wayfinding and establish a subtle reference to the sports theme of the surrounding context.

The report recommends lighting, paving, wall finish, landscape, railings, and site furnishing treatments. The paving recommendations are consistent with City of Seattle standards. Additional paving considerations include intuitive wayfinding, simplicity, longevity, ease of maintenance, and reflecting the overall concept.

A fractured wall-finish is recommended, and additional considerations are a pre-cast stairway, constructability, an allowance for public art, and the color of the bridge underside. The landscape recommendations are low maintenance planting and square grates. Low Impact Development (LID) opportunities, CPTED techniques, and plaza area grates are additional considerations. Special features and areas identified in the report are street ends, public art, the elevator enclosure, the flag pole, and a bioswale.

The bridge design includes a concrete box structure with concrete stress girders over the railroad track.

East Plaza

The East Plaza design refinements include vehicle circulation and two pedestrian routes, one of which is an ADA-compliant ramp. There is a central plaza with a series of stairs in the middle. The proposal incorporates a focal point, introduces movement, and includes wayfinding, a hierarchy of spaces. There is emergency and service access across the railroad tracks.

The areas for further refinement include the treatment of the spaces under the bridge, the treatment of the steps, the compass rose focal point, referencing the Mariners, and pedestrian access from the south. There are ideas for terracing the landscape to deal with grade transitions.

West Plaza

The West Plaza design refinements strive for consistency in terms of pedestrian and vehicle circulation. Additional areas for refinement include the street end treatment, bollards, and the seat wall and planter.

Timeline

Preliminary and final civil design, which include the landscape and urban design elements, is due to WSDOT in March 2009. The construction package is due June 2009. The bridge structure design should be complete by July 2009. The project should be complete 2010.

Commissioners' Comments & Questions

Why is the public art a future project?

Because it is a state-funded transportation project that does not require art.

What water will the bioswale treat?

It will be a biofiltration swale for street runoff, not an infiltration swale.

What is the width of the sidewalk over the railroad tracks?

It is eighteen feet wide.

The plaza and promenade would be more generous if the curbs along the Exhibition Hall garage were eliminated.

In the west plaza, are pedestrians encouraged to move to the east of the staircase? Perhaps paving patterns could be changed there.

After an event at Quest Field, the area is used for walking toward the south; its use is not discouraged.

Concerned about planting beds around stairway in the West Plaza. Encourage design for a stronger stairway element, and caution against too much landscape in that area.

The pedestrian flow patterns are more important than pavement patterns. The pavement should be simplified in the East Plaza.

The driving spirit of the design should come from the design team, rather than the Context Sensitive Design Report.

What happens at the base of the stair and elevator should be emphasized.

The bridge columns dominate the space; there is no structural reason those could be more interesting than simple concrete columns.

Agree with context sensitive design, but not sure there is enough context to drive it. There is an opportunity to create a new context, to drive the design in a new way. Perhaps light and sculptural form could be used to create character and shade.. It will have a different character when there are no games, and should be able to hold its own.

Troubled by the trivialization of art opportunities. There should be bigger art visions, instead of making incremental changes.

It seems like the team is thinking about the elaborate, organized spiral on one side, and a chamfered geometry on the other side. It seems like a bigger move is necessary here; is there an opportunity to create synergy on both sides. The elevator is a dead end area

The elevator was a problem in the design. Opportunities to move the elevator were considered, but other configurations would not fit and created queuing conflicts. It currently increases the amount of space for pedestrian movement, and is the best compromise for the space.

The stormwater treatment seems isolated; perhaps there is a way to incorporate it into the plaza, and use water to activate the space.

Encourage a pedestrian connection to the light rail station. The division of effort in designing elements like the stair is troubling. There is a danger of appliqué design; encourage more integration of design. Simplify the design elements of the plaza, since it will be used mostly on game days.

The west plaza is under cover, so it will be an important vendor and pedestrian place on rainy days. Programming needs to accommodate that.

In the east plaza, wonder about pedestrian access from the south; why not force them onto Fourth Avenue?

The problem is that people will use shortcuts; and they need to stay on the sidewalk. People avoid Fourth Avenue because of game day traffic.

November 20, 2008

Project:

Commission Business

Time: 0.5 hour

- **Timesheets**
- **Minutes of October 16, 2008 and November 6, 2008**
- **Confirmation and appointments update**
- **Farewell and welcome event**
- **Design Commission Viaduct Waterfront letter**

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|--------------------------|-----------------------|---|
| November 20, 2008 | Project: | Burke-Gilman Trail Missing Link |
| | Phase: | Design Development |
| | Last Reviewed: | |
| | Presenters: | Kirk T. Jones, SDOT Tom von Schrader, SvR |
| | Attendees: | Vaughn Bell, SDOT Elizabeth Dunigan, Groudswell Northwest Shannon Kearney, Norton-Arnold & Co. Eugene Wasserman, North Seattle Industrial Association Jack Whisner, Ballard Citizen |

Time: 1 hour

(169)

ACTION

The Commission thanks the design team for their presentation of the Burke-Gilman Trail Missing Link, and unanimously approves design development, with the following comments:

- The ultimate solution to the “missing link” will result from multi-layered use of the trail by the community.
- The Commission recommends using art along the trail as a strategy to increase awareness. Attention must be given to placement of art elements to avoid distraction where safety is an issue.
- The Commission reminds the proponents that the cyclists and pedestrians using the trail are also patrons and employees of nearby businesses.
- Commissioners caution against changing the route away from Shilshole Avenue NW because some cyclists will continue to use it as the shortest and most direct route. Formalizing this informal right-of-way environment may realign users with safe and legal uses.
- Signage will be very important as a safety tool for both cyclists and truck drivers, to notify both users to be cautious and aware. Safety should be the most important consideration in the design.
- Commissioners hope that in the future an increased awareness of cyclists on the road and multi-user trails will help avoid unnecessary conflicts between user groups.

Project Presentation

Project Background

This project is considered the “missing link” along the continuous Burke-Gilman Trail. A 2002 study reviewed three alternative routes. The selected route is along NW 45th Street and Shilshole Ave NW, following the railroad corridor. City Council passed a resolution defining that corridor, with permanent routes and interim sections. In 2007, a grant was received for the route design.

It is an unusual area, with a mix of industrial and commercial use, vehicles, trucks, bicyclists and pedestrians. A separated trail intends to minimize potential conflicts and overall impact on the industrial community. The design team has contacted and met with almost all of the property and business owners along the trail section.

Preferred Design

The preferred route is located from 11th Avenue to the 15th Avenue Ballard Bridge. The trail is located on the south side of NW 45th Street. The trail is set back from the right-of-way line, providing for two-way vehicle traffic. It is

four feet from the property line, with a vegetated swale drainage system. The swale is designed with scuppers in the road, to minimize water spray from the road. There is also a nine-foot travel lane.

Ballard Bridge to 17th Ave/Ballard Avenue

- Railroad relocation to the south side of the bridge column
- Reconfiguration of NW 46th Avenue and Shilshole Avenue NW
- Signalized intersection at Shilshole Avenue NW & 17th Avenue, with vegetated swale
- Intersection at 17th Avenue NW and NW Ballard Way
- Loading docks
- Separation between bicycles and vehicles
- Railroad operations
- Curb bulbs and rain gardens

Ballard Avenue and Vernon Place, interim trail:

- Signed bike route
- This is a historic district
- No loss of parking
- Increased bicycle and pedestrian traffic for retail

Shilshole Avenue NW – Vernon Place to 24th Avenue NW, permanent trail:

- Signal at Vernon Place and Shilshole Avenue NW
- Crossings on each side
- Parallel parking between railroad and roadway
- Trail between railroad and paved roadway, with shifted railroad
- Twelve foot trail, ten feet off center line of railroad track
- Access drive between Yankee Diner driveway and 24th Avenue, to accommodate future hotel

NW 54th Street to - 24th Avenue NW to 28th Avenue NW, permanent trail:

- Permanent trail, with option for interim trail to accommodate redevelopment of Nordic Heritage Museum
- Twelve foot right-of-way
- Special signage
- Special treatment of driveway crossings
- Truck movements and operations considered
- Retaining walls replaced
- Trail on north side of ROW 24th to 26th
- Coordination with current business owners to maintain business access
- Twelve foot high trail fence

28th Avenue to Chittenden Locks:

- Drainage issues to be addressed
- Transitions to existing trail
- Trail on north side of tracks, with fence in between
- Opportunity for landscape between buildings and trail

Interim Trail: NW Market Street – 24th Avenue NW to 28th Avenue NW:

- Route on existing sidewalk and planting strip

Signed bicycle route only on 28th Avenue NW
No loss of parking on NW Market Street

Funding and Timeline

The first phase, from 11th Avenue NW to 17th Avenue NW, is budgeted for \$6.6 million and construction will begin in late summer to early fall 2009. The second phase, from 17th Avenue NW to the Chittenden Locks, is budgeted \$7.5 million, with construction scheduled in 2009-2010.

Public Comments

Eugene Wasserman, North Seattle Industrial Association

An issue with this trail and design is safety; the choice of the route is unsafe due to the trucks and crossings in the area. In the last year, there have been six bicyclist deaths in Portland and Seattle due to collisions with large trucks. The loss of parking along Shilshole Avenue NW could be devastating. People will choose another route instead of the trail crossing Shilshole Avenue NW at 17th Avenue NW and NW Vernon Place. Part of the design eliminates the loading area for the Ballard terminal railroad. The section between 24th Avenue NW and 28th Avenue NW is unsafe for bikes due to the heavy truck crossings; there is concern about the liability for hitting bicyclists and pedestrians. The business owners are not ok with this unsafe design. It forces out part of a historical and business community.

Commissioners' Comments & Questions

How often are there trains?

Two to three times per week

What are the stormwater solution opportunities for this project? Could pervious pavement be used instead of planters?

Pervious pavement is not suitable for heavy loading and the industrial setting. The focus is on visibility, and for users to understand the need to exercise caution.

Are there ways to use stop signs, lines, pavement treatments, etc. to alert cyclists of their surroundings?

There are signs and different pavements around driveways, to provide a distinct delineation

Encourage strong delineation of change in continuity of the trail, especially the change in route.

The key part is that it is a city right-of-way, with many users; the signage in the whole area needs to function according to SDOT regulations.

SDOT is encouraged to update signage in the area.

Does the project qualify for percent for arts funding?

Yes, it does.

The trail is not lit elsewhere; is lighting in the industrial area similar to other areas of the trail?

Since it is located in the right-of-way, it is likely to be similar.

Is the existing parking free?

There is free parking in the right-of-way.

Very concerned about conflict between trucks and bicycles; should do everything possible to alert both cyclists and truck drivers. The solution has to come from both sides.

Recommend future plans show locations of the rights-of-way.

Multi-use trails are successful in Europe due to mutual respect of all user groups.

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|--------------------------|-----------------------|--|
| November 20, 2008 | Project: | Conner Homes, West Seattle Junction |
| | Phase: | Partial Underground Alley Vacation |
| | Last Reviewed: | |
| | Presenters: | Peter Greaves, Weber Thompson Joseph Hines, Weber Thompson |
| | Attendees: | Marsha Barkman, Harbor Properties Beverly Barnett, SDOT Todd Carden, Elliott Bay Brewery Jessie Clawson, McCullough Hill Michael Dorcy, DPD Scott Evans, TRA James Geimer, Legacy Partners Gabe Hanson, Weber Thompson James Miller, Conner Homes Co. Kerry Nicholson, Legacy Partners Tracy Record, West Seattle Blog Tom Rengstorf, TRA |

Time: 1.25 hours

(170)

ACTION

The Commission thanks the design team for their presentation of Conner Homes West Seattle Junction partial subterranean alley vacation proposal, and unanimously approves the urban design merits, with the following comments:

- The Commission encourages the design team to carefully consider pedestrian flows during and after construction.
- There are concerns about the alley and sidewalk perimeters; Commissioners encourage wider sidewalks along all street frontages of the project to allow nodes or eddies to allow pedestrian rest opportunities.
- The Commission encourages continuous connection of mid block pedestrian flow.
- There are concerns that the alley is tapered where it meets SW Alaska Street and the appropriate balance between retail and public space. The Commission encourages the design team to consider eddies or nodes of respite opportunities along the frontage of the project, as well as enhancing the nodes at alley entries.
- The Commission encourages more retail spillage into the alley.
- The Commission encourages considering the site lines to the loading docks and terminals.
- There is concern about the duplication of ramps at the 42nd Avenue SW alley. The DC strongly encourages a coordinated design response that avoids redundancy between separate parcel developments.
- Commissioners encourage a greater pedestrian buffer from the traffic along California Avenue SW.
- Commissioners hope to see more definition of the landscape design elements.

Project Presentation

Project Background

This project is a subterranean alley vacation for a site that is bounded by SW Alaska Street, California Avenue SW, 42nd Avenue SW, and SW Edmonds Street. It is in the heart of the West Seattle junction urban village.

The proposed project features two buildings, which share an underground parking garage, hence the need for an alley vacation. There is a building on the corner of California Avenue SW and SW Alaska Street made up of eighteen-foot retail along the street, with six stories of housing. The other portion of the project is located at the corner of SW Alaska Street and 42nd Avenue SW. The proposal connects the two projects, in order to optimize use, minimize the number of curb cuts, and minimize excavation.

The east site occupies 28,000 square feet, and the west on occupies 16,000 square feet. The proposed alley vacation is 2,800 square feet, which is 28 feet deep with a four-foot cover.

A single point of parking garage access from 42nd Avenue SW encourages mid block pedestrian connection across the alley. It also allows for a visible garage entry. Since the building residents and retail share it, the garage is used publicly and privately.

The connection of the garage below grade also enhances a green lattice network, referencing the 1999 West Seattle Neighborhood Plan, which envisions using streets and alleys to create a network of pedestrian spaces running north-south, with mid block connections to create a third lattice. The alley vacation allows for an enhanced mid block pedestrian corridor. Harbor Properties has recently developed the site on the southeast part of the block and they set back their building eight feet from their north property line where it meets the proposed Conner Homes project. The Conner Homes project is set back fifteen feet which, in addition to the eight feet of setback by Harbor Properties, provides a nice pedestrian zone. This pedestrian walkthrough takes a jog along the alley toward the north, and connects west to California Avenue SW. The block is 600 feet long by 300 feet wide.

An urban design analysis covering a nine-block area is complete. Diagrams show area zoning, development, street classifications, transit routes, peak hour traffic volume patterns, parking lots, and nearby commercial use.

Existing Alley Use

There are public and staff alley entries existing along the alley. Businesses are casually used as mid block cross throughs. Pedestrians heavily use the alley, and businesses recognize them with “back door” alley entrances.

The site plan shows the proposed mid block location of the garage entry on 42nd Avenue SW, the building setback, and residential entries. It also shows the use and animation of alley spaces by locating the residential amenities at the ground floor of the alley.

No vacation Option

No alley vacation requires two garage entrances from the alley. Two entrances create conflicts between garage entries, alley traffic, and pedestrian flow. There is less retail opportunity at the mid block crossing. It also requires more excavation, and the number of parking spaces is reduced because of the space taken up by ramp circulation structures.

Proposed Alley Vacation

The proposed alley vacation allows opportunity for ground floor retail. The retail space wraps into alley, providing an amenity for both buildings, and opportunity for live-work space on the ground floor. The design offers a variety of sidewalk widths around the building as a pedestrian amenity. In the alley, there is no required building setback, but the proposal is to set back two feet from the sixteen-foot right-of-way, creating a twenty-foot distance between the buildings flanking the alley. Terraces and units facing the alley increase visibility. It is a vibrant mixed-use location, because there are two active facades on each building.

The proposed sidewalk width is wider than City of Seattle standard requirements; and the requirements of the West Seattle Neighborhood Plan are either met or exceeded. The entries are recessed to provide additional space at the pedestrian level.

The proposal also shows enhanced landscape and permeable paving. The proposed public benefit consists of 9,092 square feet of open space above and beyond what is required by code, which is a 54% increase over the existing public area. There are also overhead rain protection canopies along the sidewalk. If the alley is vacated, the public space along the storefront area increases by 140 square feet.

Public Comments

Michael Dorcy, DPD

There have been two public meetings. Early design priority guidelines have been completed, and the design team has responded to those guidelines.

Both the Board and public were not enthusiastic about an earlier presentation, which showed access to retail along the alley. Another concern is the possibility for 85 feet height on the corner of California Avenue SW and SW Alaska Street. Nearby existing buildings are one or two stories high. The Board is not concerned about the structure on the east side of the alley. It is focused on the bulk and scale of the proposed building at the corner of California Avenue SW and SW Alaska Street.

Beverly Barnett, SDOT

SDOT just started looking at traffic coming onto 42nd Avenue SW. The community concerns about disruption during construction is under review. The alley vacation does not contribute to scale and density of the project. The development proposal is running into classic vacation problems, with amenities in alley instead of street. It is trying to respect West Seattle alley tradition; but every step to enhance the alley takes away from opportunity to create active frontage on California Avenue SW. Widening the alley to aid pedestrian safety does not solve vehicular problems. There is concern about delivery truck access, and there are pedestrian-vehicular conflicts at the mid block crossing.

Policy and technical issues with the proposed alley vacation have not been completely resolved, but there are no major red flags. SDOT lacks policies on subterranean alley vacations. SDOT is unable to recommend it yet, due to concerns regarding pedestrians and development.

Marsha Barkman, Harbor Properties

Harbor Properties supports the temporary route of alley during construction. They hope to restore public access to the alley in six or seven months instead of eighteen months.

Commissioners' Comments & Questions

Are there any utilities in the alley that will need to be relocated?

A gas line that can be capped off, and electrical lines will be rerouted.

What paving is proposed for the alley?

Scored concrete for the driving surface, and permeable paving.

What traffic control exists at 42nd Avenue SW and SW Alaska Street?

A stoplight.

If there is no alley vacation, is there a reason the east portion of the site would not enter from 42nd Avenue SW?

It seems logical that the garages should have alley access for the residents.

See no problem with urban design implications of the proposal. It enhances the urban village plan.

See no physical, functional, traffic or utility reasons why it should not move forward.

Appreciate thorough and complete presentation package. Does the street landscape fulfill Green Factor requirements?

There is some overlap. A series of vertical green screens on the alley side is proposed.

Some elements will not count toward the Green Factor. It is unclear if rain gardens in the right-of-way are counted.

The mid block connection and alley activation is very positive. There is a point when a sidewalk becomes so wide that it is no longer a utility.

Trying to reinforce the streetscape on the corner is appreciated.

What happens if one walks along the mid block route, toward SW Alaska Street?

It reduces in width north of the alley. There is a pedestrian zone, but not a crossing. There is a connection to encourage movement between California Avenue SW and the corner.

The southwest sun exposure on corner offers opportunity for retail space.

Retail and public space is not synonymous. California Avenue SE is very restricted for pedestrians. There are few opportunities to stop. There is little emphasis on respite. Nodes or eddies could be enhanced.

As the design matures, there is opportunity for flexibility in the storefront skin.

At the midblock crossings, it is important for that area to be lively – otherwise uncertain it is a public benefit.

In response to early design guidance, the hybrid response is retail and residential amenities.

More detail in the landscape, lighting, bollards, paving patterns, and entries which will draw people in . A green passage is a time-honored idea. The arcade has opportunities.

The arcade may appear like a tunnel; encourage making it a welcoming, attractive portal.

In terms of traffic on 42nd Avenue SW, encourage change in pavement treatment for definition.

Encourage more sidewalk dimension along 42nd Avenue SW, due to the amount of vehicular traffic.

There is continuous planting along there, for a soft edge.

Retail enlivens the street, but narrows the sidewalk in some cases. Encourage more width in those areas.

How many parking stalls are gained by using the underground alley?

Spaces are not gained, however, excavation is minimized.

West Seattle is unique in breaking up blocks with active alleys. It does not detract from California Avenue SW.

Encourage working with Harbor Properties design team on the ramp in the alley.