



Mike McGinn
Mayor

Diane Sugimura
Director, DPD

Marshall Foster
Planning Director, DPD

Mary Johnston
Chair

Andrew Barash

Julie Bassuk

Graham Black

Brendan Connolly

Lauren Hauck

Laurel Kunkler

Julie Parrett

Norie Sato

Donald Vehige

Valerie Kinast
Coordinator

Tom Iurino
Senior Staff



**Department of Planning
and Development**
700 5th Avenue, Suite 2000
PO Box 34019
Seattle, WA 98124-4019

TEL 206-615-1349
FAX 206-233-7883

APPROVED MINUTES OF THE MEETING

September 16, 2010

Convened 8:30 am
Adjourned 2:00 pm

Projects Reviewed

Jefferson Skatepark
Boston Street Vacation
Linden Ave. N Complete Streets

Commissioners Present

Andrew Barash
Julie Bassuk
Graham Black
Brendan Connolly
Lauren Hauck
Laurel Kunkler
Julie Parrett
Norie Sato
Donald Vehige

Incoming Commissioners Present

Tom Nelson
Malika Kirkling

Staff Present

Valerie Kinast
Tom Iurino
Tim Trujillo



September 16, 2010 **Project:** **Boston Street Vacation**

Phase: Street Vacation

Last Reviewed: N/A

Presenters: Scott Clark, Clark Design Group

Attendees: Beverly Barnett, SDOT
 Jason Land, Clark Design Group
 Scott Woodcock, Windrose Landscape Architecture
 Ann Shi, student

Time: 10:30am-12:00pm

ACTION

This presentation consisted of two parts: The Urban Design Merit and the Public Benefits Package. The Design Commission took an action regarding the former and a summary for the latter.

The site fronts on Aurora at the eastern base of Queen Anne hill, south of the Aurora bridge. The back of the site contains steep slopes. Work lofts are proposed. The Boston St right of way runs perpendicular to Aurora through the center of the site. The ROW to be vacated is 60 ft wide and approx. 165 ft. long. A possible connection of Boston St to the upper part of Queen Anne is unlikely because of very steep slopes.

As a public benefit the designer is proposing improvements to an existing public trail that runs down the hill behind the site, connecting the neighborhood above to the bus stops along Aurora. The trail is designated as an important connection in the neighborhood plan. The improvements would be between Crocket and Lynn St. The trail runs in SDOT ROW, but Parks maintains it. It is currently in disrepair and overgrown with invasive plants. The proposal is to provide improvements similar to the trails in Discovery Park. This would include removing invasives and thus improving views and eyes on the trail, improving surfacing, railings, and stairways. The trailheads at each end would be improved.

ACTION ON THE URBAN DESIGN MERIT

The Design Commission thanked the Boston Street Vacation team for their presentation of the Urban Design Merit of the proposal. The Commission approved the Urban Design Merit of the street vacation with a 7 to 2 vote. The Commission did express concern about traffic ingress and egress in the absence of the portion of Boston St. proposed for vacation, but most agreed these issues could be resolved with later SDOT and DPD permit review.

The two opposing votes were because of a lack of information. The two Commissioners believed there is potentially urban design merit, particularly with regards to traffic flow on and around the project site, but that without a more developed site design it was not possible to conclude this.

SUMMARY OF THE PUBLIC BENEFIT

Design Commissioners thanked the team for their presentation of the Public Benefit package. The Commission considers the proposal to improve the existing off-site public pedestrian path a possible public benefit. All agreed though that any public benefit that is proposed would need to be more fully developed. What was proposed is conceptual and it would need to be brought to a design development level of planning. Also, issues of safety and long term maintenance would need to be resolved in order for the Commission to weigh whether the public benefit is in proportion to the loss of right-of-way.

The Commissioners also asked the proponent to consider other possible public benefits. These include:

- 1. Enhancements on the project site such as the public space created by the utility buffer;**
- 2. Street improvements that exceed what is required by code, in front of the site or extending up and/or down Aurora;**
- 3. Exploration of areas further afield of the project site and the larger network of accessibility connections;**
- 4. Bus shelter enhancements;**
- 5. Lighting improvements; or**
- 6. Other safety features.**

These ideas were given as a menu of options that might be used in lieu of, or in addition to, the idea of improving the path down the hill.