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**Brodie Bain**

**Lee Copeland**

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**John Savo**

**Ross Tilghman**

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### Commissioners Present

Shannon Loew, Chair  
Ellen Sollod, Vice Chair  
Brodie Bain  
Lee Copeland  
Thaddeus Egging  
Rachel Gleeson  
Theo Lim  
Martin Regge  
John Savo  
Ross Tilghman

### Commissioners Excused

### Project Description

The applicant is proposing a 38 story, mixed use project on the block bounded by University Street, 1st Avenue, Seneca Street, and 2nd Avenue. The petitioner plans to vacate a portion of an alley that connects University and Seneca streets and develop the project on approximately three-fourths of the combined block. The remaining portion of the block, currently occupied by the historic Diller Hotel, will remain. The partial alley vacation is approximately 2,560 square feet, with 1,280 square feet to remain. However, the applicant is currently working with the Diller family on agreement that would allow the applicant and the Diller family to pursue a full alley vacation.

The vacation allows (under full or partial scenarios) for the construction of an "L" shaped building to include up to 690,000 sf of office space, an estimated 25,000 sf of retail and mixed commercial space, and below grade parking. The entire building will be elevated above the ground plane an estimated 60-85' in order to provide publicly accessible open space, a mid-block plaza, five through-block passageways and hill assist given the steep grade of the site.

### Meeting Summary

This was the Seattle Design Commission's (SDC) first review of the proposed public benefit. Following the presentation, public comment and SDC review and deliberation, the SDC voted 9-0 in favor of the public benefit package, with several conditions and recommendations.

### Recusals and Disclosures

There were no recusals or disclosures.

**October 16, 2015****9:00 – 11:00 am****Type**

Vacation

**Phase**

Public Benefit

**Previous Reviews**[10/15/15](#)**Project Team Present****Lisa Picard**

Skanska

**Anthony Markese**

Pickard Chilton

**Barbara Swift**

Swift Company

**Jim Graham**

Graham Baba

**Attendees****Beverly Barnett** | SDOT**Sean Canady**

GGLO, neighbor

**Jessica Clawson**

McCullough Hill Leary, LS

**Nancy Clayton** | Pickard Chilton**Francesca Cooke** | Skanska**Tom Diller** | Neighbor**Lloyd Douglas**

Cascade Neighborhood Council

**Clair Enlow**

Daily Journal of Commerce

**Brandon Glenn** | CBRE**Christian Gunter** | Skanska**John Hansen** | CBRE**Marni Heffron**

Heffron Transportation

**Gareth Loveridge**

Swift Company

**Mike Norman**

Samis Foundation

**Adrienne Nelson** | Pickard Chilton**Courtney Rossi** | Swift Company

January 21, 2016

**Summary of Presentation**

The public benefit package was presented by Anthony Markese of Pickard Chilton Architects, Lisa Picard of Skanska, and Barbara Swift of Swift Company. Mr. Markese provided a brief summary of conditions addressed by the project team and presented to SDC staff prior to today's meeting. Mr. Markese also provided background information and site context for the development (see figure 1). Ms. Picard reminded the SDC of the developer's values, which places an emphasis on equity and sustainability. The project is designed with consideration for human and environmental health, while the proposed public space is designed for impartial use as well as ease of approach to and navigation through the site.

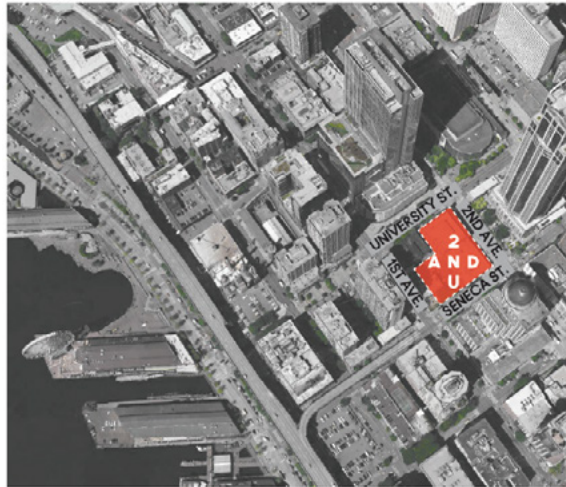
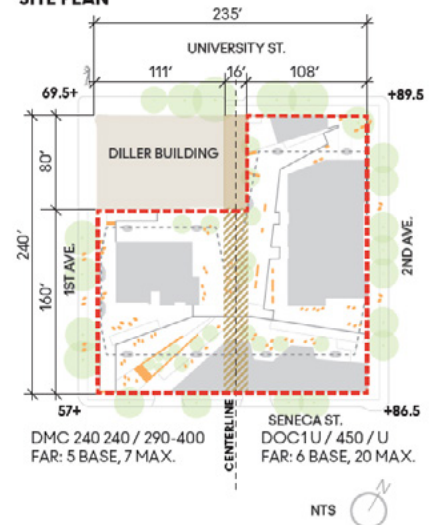
**CONTEXT MAP****SITE PLAN**

Figure 1: Context map (top left), project boundaries (top right), and site plan (bottom)

Public Benefit	Location / Description	Code Requirement	Public Benefit	Total
<b>1- URBAN NETWORK</b>				
<b>A</b> Cross Block Connections	Openings into the site from the ROW to connect diagonal paths of travel	None	5	5
<b>B</b> Accessibility (ADA Hill Assist)	Elev 1: 1st Ave. up to Alley Plaza + SW Dock, Elev 2: Plaza to 2nd Ave. lobby	None	Elevators	2
<b>C</b> Wayfinding	Intentional design of massing to provide wide, intuitive openings into site and internal landmarks for connectivity within open spaces	None	See Plans	See Plans
<b>2- BICYCLE INFRASTRUCTURE</b>				
<b>A</b> Open Public Parking Racks	Bike Racks (2 bikes per unit) 14 units in ROW, 5 (exterior) units on site	None	19 Racks	38 Bike stalls
<b>B</b> Electric Bike Charging Station	Incorporated into the Alley Plaza bike infrastructure for public access	None	1 unit	1 unit
<b>C</b> Fix It Repair Stand	Repair + air-pump station in Alley Plaza, visible + accessible from ROW	None	1 unit	1 unit
<b>3- OPEN SPACE</b>				
<b>A</b> Gathering Spaces	Multiple large open spaces and spatial variety	1,685 SF (MUP)	28,715 SF	30,400 SF
<b>B</b> Pedestrian Amenities	Seating - A variety of individual seats, benches, and seat steps	None	254 LF	254 LF
	Stand up casual tables w/ lean rails (7 units)	None	46 LF	46 LF
	Drinking fountain	None	1 unit	1 unit
	Restrooms	None	1 (M+W)	1 (M+W)
<b>C</b> Event Infrastructure	Infrastructure to support various events within the open space provided	None	TBD	TBD
<b>D</b> Lines of Sight	Clear + open sight lines into and through open spaces to encourage access and invite use	None	N/A	N/A
<b>E</b> Views	Creation of new public viewing opportunities of Puget Sound and key cultural institutions	None	3	3
<b>F</b> Weather Protection On-Site	Shelter from direct sun and rain under the Lift	None	17,500 SF	17,500 SF
<b>G</b> Family Gathering	Playful seating, site furnishings designed with children + families in mind	None	TBD	TBD
<b>H</b> Materials + Finishes	Stone cobbles, wood decking, rain water runnels	None		
<b>I</b> Trees + Planting	ROW (Tree planting beds) + on-site trees and planting	11 Trees in ROW 2,150 SF Plant	15 Trees On-Site 1,500 SF Plant	26 Trees 3,650 SF Plant
<b>4 SETBACKS</b>				
<b>A</b> Voluntary Building Setbacks along ROW	3 distinct areas where the building is set back from the ROW to provide more generous open spaces accessible to the public	None	greater than 4,000 SF	greater than 4,000 SF
<b>5- ARTS + CULTURAL SPACES</b>				
<b>A</b> Appropriate Cultural Spaces	Appropriate arts + cultural space that provides flexibility to meet the needs of the arts and culture community in the adjacent neighborhood	None	TBD	TBD

Figure 2: Proposed public benefit package

Mr. Markese and Ms. Swift presented the public benefit package for the project (see figure 2). The following five (5) public benefits are proposed for the partial alley vacation petition:

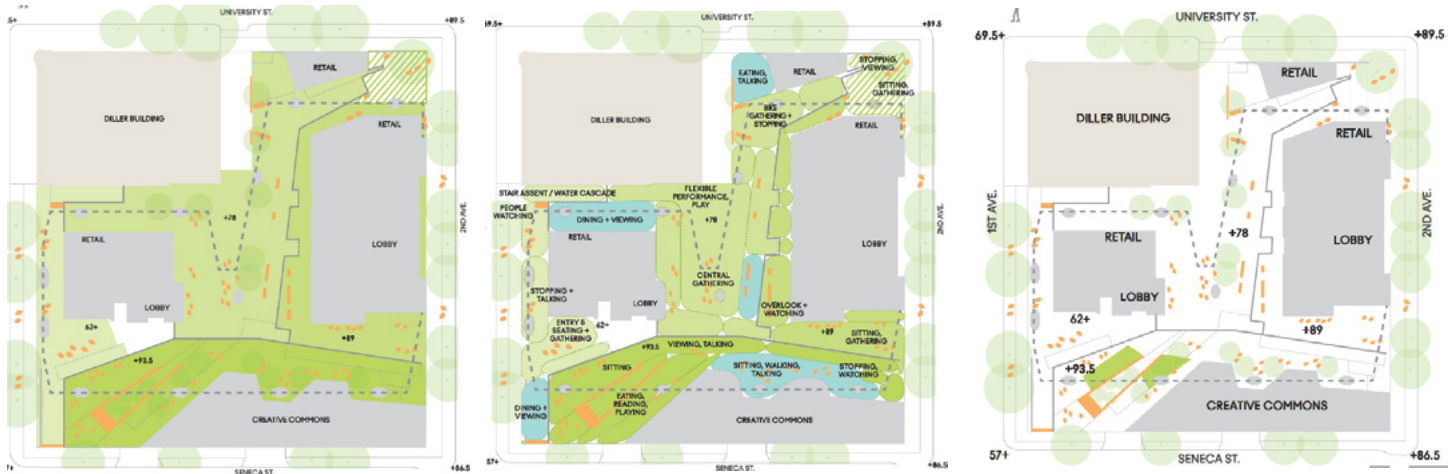
- Open Space
- Urban Network
- Bicycle infrastructure
- Setbacks
- Arts + cultural spaces

#### Open space

As a result of lifting the base of the building, it allows significant proportions of the ground plane to serve as publicly accessible open space. Overall, the proposed open space will provide a mix of smaller spaces that directly relate to adjacent interior uses that are connected by larger open spaces. Within the site, the design includes a central gathering space as well as smaller spaces and overlooks spanning four different levels, which are connected by a series of stairways, ramps, and elevators. Gathering spaces and overlooks are programmed to facilitate seating, stopping, viewing, watching, performing, and playing. A dedicated space for families and children is located near the southwest corner of the site and will include multi-generational recreational infrastructure. Spaces throughout the site are designed with generous site lines, landscaping, and materials as a way to integrate with the surrounding urban form. See figures 3a-3f for more detail.

#### Urban network

In addition to the open space created through the building lift, is the ability to create a pedestrian network through the site. The network would cross through the public space and is meant to enhance the surrounding urban network. The size of the site following the vacation would be approximately 46,250 square feet (excluding the Diller Hotel and 1,280 sf of non vacated alley), or just over an acre. The proposal includes access points from five entrances, three of which are located at street intersections, while the remaining two entrances are located at the midblock along 1st Ave and University St. All routes provide a clear, navigable, defensible pathway through the site. On-site circulation also includes four accessible



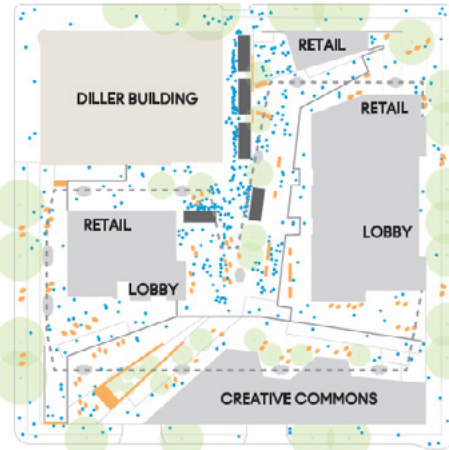
a: Proposed open space

b: Proposed open space programming

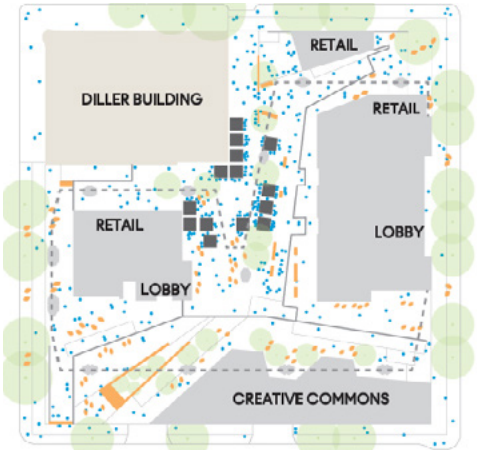
c: Proposed site furnishings



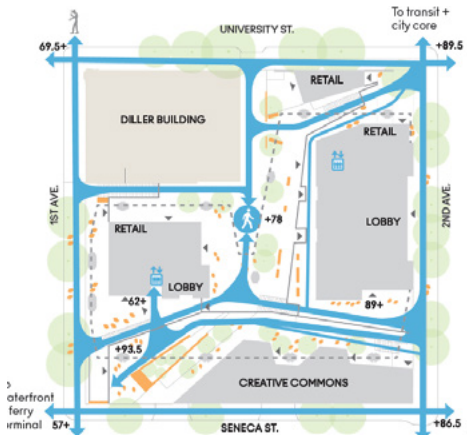
d: Use - early morning



e: Use - mid-day



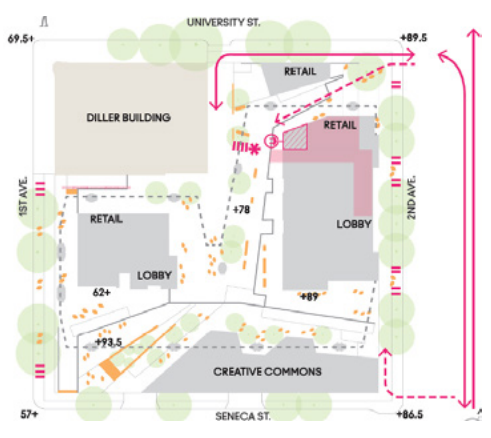
f: Use - after work + evening



g: Circulation



h: ADA accessible circulation



i: Bicycle facilities



j: Voluntary building setbacks



k: Proposed arts + culture locations

Figure 3: proposed public benefit diagrams

routes that provide access to plazas, terraces, and elevators within the public space. See figures 3g and 3h for more detail.

#### *Bicycle infrastructure*

Bicycle facilities are located within the Alley Plaza and include covered bicycle racks, a fix-it station, air pump, and e-bike charging station. Ideally, the facilities will be located near privately programmed space directly related to bicycle services. See figure 3i for more detail.

#### *Setbacks*

The design includes voluntary setbacks from the right of way (ROW) along 1st and 2nd Ave as well as at the intersection of University St and 2nd Ave (see figure 3j). The setbacks will create an additional 4,000 square feet of open space that are immediately adjacent to the ROW.

#### *Arts + cultural spaces*

Because of its close proximity to existing cultural centers such as The Seattle Art Museum, Benaroya Hall, and various music venues, the project team has proposed to include a minimum of 800 square feet for appropriate arts and cultural uses, such as art, music, and or dance. The applicant has preliminarily identified two potential spaces, one across from the Seattle Art Museum and Benaroya, and one in the western portion of what is called the Creative Commons. See figure 3k for more detail.

### **Agency Comments**

**Beverly Barnett**, of SDOT, stated that the design has really moved forward, providing a greater amount of clarity since the previous review. Ms. Barnett feels like the project not only includes a clear vision and set of goals, but also merges spaces together to create a well thought-out project. Ms. Barnett stressed the need to articulate what will be counted as public benefit. She further explained the general public needs to feel like they can move through the space without thinking they need to make a purchase in order to feel welcome. Ms. Barnett also stated there are several challenges regarding significant grade changes, which the project team will need to coordinate with SDOT. Ms. Barnett is not certain all of the space present in the public benefit package should be defined as public benefit. She encouraged the design team to continue designing the public spaces in a way that mirrors the proposal for on-site bicycle facilities, which goes above and beyond what code requires. Ms. Barnett understands the site is very challenging and will be interested to see how the design team addresses specific issues.

### **Public Comments**

**Lloyd Douglas**, of the Cascade Neighborhood Council, is concerned with navigation and wayfinding throughout the project site. More specifically, Mr. Douglas is concerned with the lack of clear signage and graphics near public entrances. Mr. Douglas stated the project team should be required to have a signs that shows how pedestrians are going navigate through an area that includes such a significant grade change.

**Tom Diller**, Owner of The Diller Hotel, continues to be very impressed with the project design. He stated that although you would typically be afraid of such a large building dominating the surrounding block, this design enhances the block and surrounding downtown area.

### **Summary of Discussion**

The Commission organized its discussion around the following issues:

- Concept of the lift (Urban network, bicycle infrastructure, and open space)
- Issue of building and setbacks
- Art and culture spaces

#### *Concept of the lift*

Overall, the Commission understands the building lift is critical in creating publicly accessible open space. The SDC appreciates changes made to the design in order to make site edges and entrances more welcoming to pedestrians, especially the entrance along 1st Ave and Seneca St. The Commission noted the lift concept allowed for a better integration of proposed site features with the existing Diller Hotel. Commissioners agree added programmable areas underneath the lift, especially family friendly areas and areas for arts and culture help create a better quality public space. The SDC expressed concern with the lack of wayfinding and lighting throughout the site and encouraged the

design team to further create a safe and accessible environment underneath the building lift by providing additional signage and pedestrian oriented lighting. The SDC wants to make sure that the accessible pathways through the space are very obvious, inviting, visible, and clear. The SDC is also concerned with the lack of programming for two designated areas. The Commission recommends the design team come back for an administrative review once programming details have been decided for the family friendly and arts and culture areas. The SDC also recommends the project team provide a detailed list of guidelines regarding long-term management in the event they decide to sell the project upon completion of construction. The intent here is to create guidelines for management, while still allowing the applicant flexibility over the life of the building.

#### *Building materials and setbacks*

The Commission agreed the quality of building materials used, coupled with a high level of transparency at each intersection and corner, provide cues that the space is intended for public use. Because the building materials are essential to the space feeling publicly accessible, the SDC recommended the design come back for review if quality of the materials change. Commissioners also agreed the additional building setbacks are essential in creating public space that not only feels open, but also encourages pedestrians to walk through.

#### *Art + cultural spaces*

Although the SDC supports the idea of providing space for arts and culture, they expressed concern with the lack of strategy to find long-term tenants for the designated space. The Commission encouraged the project team to not only provide a detailed plan regarding the quality and characteristics of the space, but also to create a plan that provides long-term commitment for managing designated space for art and culture, while maintaining flexibility so that the spaces and building may evolve over the building's lifetime. Commissioners encouraged the project team to focus on long-term programming guidelines that actively engage the public.

### **Action**

The commission appreciates the detail regarding the design of spaces underneath the lift as well as building setbacks. The SDC approved, 9 to 0, the public benefit package for 1201 2nd Ave with the following conditions:

1. Prior to the issuance of a Master Use Permit, SDC will review the additional programming related to the family-friendly components of the public open space. Specific details related to the family friendly components should include lighting, public safety, and hours of operation, as well as long-term management plans for the proposed space.
2. Prior to Council concept approval, SDC will review a detailed list of guidelines and management plan, submitted by the project team, addressing how any subsequent owners will manage and maintain the original concept and idea of open space and continued use of commercial/retail uses to activate the open spaces. Specific detail should be given to the requirement of subsequent owners to observe the guidelines and management plan.
3. Prior to Council concept approval, SDC will review additional detail and guidelines, provided by the project team, regarding long-term commitment to specific programming within the proposed arts and cultural spaces, and the integration of this programming into the overall project, in order for it to be accepted as a public benefit.
4. Prior to the issuance of a Master Use Permit, SDC will review the location of additional wayfinding identifying accessible routes throughout the site, including to onsite elevators that provide accessible routes.

The SDC also provided the following recommendations:

1. Provide additional detail on the expected choice and use of paving materials within the alley, in particular how the materials will be used to delineate the portions of alley to be vacated versus the portion that will remain in public ownership. If the alley is fully vacated then details need to be shown administratively about how the design may change.
2. Provide additional information and detail on how the remaining portions of the alley that will not be vacated will provide access and related services to the Diller Hotel site. If the full alley is vacated show how the public benefit will interact with the Diller in a non-alley function.
3. Provide additional information that illustrates the design details of how the remaining portions of the alley, and the area of the alley to be vacated, will connect to University St and its related urban realm.