



The City of Seattle

Pike Place Market Historical Commission

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MINUTES

MHC 130/15

Wednesday, October 28, 2015

4:30 p.m.

PDA Meeting Room, 93 Pike Street, Room 307

COMMISSIONERS

Frank Albanese

David Guthrie, Chair

Murad Habibi, Vice Chair

Bob Hale

Deborah Jones

John Ogliore

Christine Vaughan

Staff

Heather McAuliffe

Melinda Bloom

Absent

Rachael Kitagawa

Jerrold Stafford

Chair David Guthrie determined that a quorum was present and called the meeting to order at 4:30 pm.

He reminded Commission members to announce any conflict of interest or ex parte communication prior to review of applications.

102815.1 COMMISSION BRIEFINGS

102815.11 Seattle Parks Department – Victor Steinbrueck design changes
David Graves

Overview of scope of potential improvements to Victor Steinbrueck Park per the 2008 Parks and Greenspaces Levy.

Peter Steinbrueck introduced the project and noted safety issues and inappropriate uses in the park. He said that public safety was the impetus for the levy. He urged changes that will not dismantle the park. He explained the membrane is leaking

and they will look into how extensive it is and what needs to be done. He said he will be involved with the project and the community. He said that Rich Haag, the original designer of the park was in attendance and that he would listen carefully to him.

Lara Rose, landscape architect, went over the approach and said they will make sure the park does not get run over. She said they have come back to understanding the original design intent of a democratic social place, a place of respite where one can enjoy the view of the waterfront.

Chris Jones, landscape architect, went over membrane challenges and said they are researching it now. He said they will preserve Mr. Haag's vision for the park and will disturb it minimally.

Public Comment:

Howard Aller, resident, said he thought this was a preliminary design meeting and will comment at that time.

Joan Paulsen said that in 1981 local members of the community cleaned the park during the summer. She said that this evolved into a DSA program. She said the park was leaking then. She said that 34 years later there is possible structural damage and noted the priority for safety. She said that DOPAR's poor maintenance practices have led to dry rot. She said that PC-1 has been designed for maximum activity of people and the park was designed as a passive environment. She expressed concern about the demolition of the viaduct and the impact to the park. She said they need a repeat feedback cycle and continued review. She said to maintain the park as a passive environment.

M. T. Andrews said he supported the Steinbrueck family and team. He said that they should buy the thing underneath. It is a leaky city and the tideline originally went to Third Avenue. He said that the park is an icon. He said it doesn't block views. He said they had to rally against a hotel. He said that DOPAR should allocate money for adequate maintenance to preserve the park.

Sara Patton said that the Market Historical Commission worked hard on guideline changes as a result of the Hearing Examiner Tree of Life decision. She said a section was created to consider design and use for the park. She said that the Marketfront project maintains a wall between the park and the Marketfront project. She said that the pergola is a gathering place for tribal folks and noted work by Alex Rolluda and Johnpaul Jones. The park was originally designed for low income and SRO residents. She said that a promenade coming through would make the pergola less attractive as a gathering place.

Bob Messina said the park was designed to be the living room of Pike Place Market because of the unavailability of mass seating. He said that he would like to see a breakdown of actual seating capacity of the park and density studies of

people sitting on berms. He said that the passivity of the park is a real benefit. He said that there should be no reduction in seating capacity. He said that the wall has to be there to create a blind corner and be open to talk. He said that it is already a promenade.

Kate Martin, Initiative 123 Director, said they did overview planning to make interconnection with the park and the Market. She said there is no direct connection from the park but there are several from the Market. She said they wish to work with the Market, DOPAR, and the Historical Commission. She said the team is attuned to everything going on in the Market.

Rich Haag said he is a friend and admirer of Victor Steinbrueck Park which is a living memorial to Victor Steinbrueck's work to save the Market. He said to make sure that the park isn't caught in the crosshairs of the Historical Commission and DOPAR; he said he is afraid there is a turf battle and wants to referee the process. He said to be sensitive to passivity of the park. He said originally there was lots of seating and tables at the park and he noted there has been some erosion of process. He cited the Gehl Study that called the park the most active place in Seattle – passive and active. He said don't take the wall down and have the park be part of tour ship migration – have tourists go to the Market. He asked who has to pay for the roof. He said that contract was made with the City of Seattle and the developer of the garage regarding maintenance. He said that the southwest corner is the way the park was designed with London Plane tree and totem poles as a mecca of Native Americans – Alaskan, Vancouver, east and south – when they come that is where they meet. He said by this use they have staked a claim and he reminded all that the City was named for Chief Seattle.

Jordan Enk said the park is essentially his front yard. He noted public safety issues in the park which he said has physical and social needs. He noted the Sculpture Park which one can't walk through after 7:00 pm. He expressed concern about the Native Americans and said it is part of the heritage of the park. He said to work with the social aspects of the park. He noted the membrane leakage and said that the rain gutters are full of vegetation. He said that DOPAR hoses it down and water goes over the edge. He said he brought it to their attention and only a small amount was cleaned up. He said that social management should be taken into consideration; he noted people being afraid to go there and said that they get no response from police. He said that the design thought of social dimensions and that it was all for naught. He noted the increase in drug trade in buildings and parks and how smelly the park is and said we can do better. He recalled a time that he and his granddaughters watched Rick Williams while he carved at the park.

Alex Rolluda expressed concern over the loss of the Children's play area at the park. He cited Council Bill 1162 and said that we need to stay true to the Bill. He said to bring children's play area back where it was originally designed – in the Council Ring.

Commission Comments:

David Graves said that 1.6 million dollars in the levy includes the children's play area, but the membrane is not mentioned.

Mr. Habibi asked about outreach.

Mr. Graves said that Friends of the Market, Chief Seattle Club, PDA – he said they just got started. He said they will look at the membrane.

Mr. Jones said that Mr. Haag will be the first.

Mr. Habibi asked about maintenance, public safety improvements and what needs to be done.

Mr. Steinbrueck said architectural and design expertise are involved.

Mr. Jones said that the scope will be determined once we know the membrane issues / needs.

Mr. Graves said that the whole piece of the park might have to come up.

Mr. Ogliore asked if the membrane repair could eat up the whole \$1.6 million budget.

Mr. Graves said that the levy makes no mention of the membrane. He said they will have to look at it and then look at how to pay for it.

Ms. Vaughan asked who was responsible for the membrane.

Mr. Graves said the City is; Unico owns the garage.

Mr. Hale said the way the park was conceived is great and he noted the Native American and the children uses. He asked what can be done to improve the social problems. He said that Occidental Park has 'eyes on the park' and they have had similar complaints there.

Ms. Rose said her office looks over Occidental Park and noted that each park is unique. She said that lighting is crucial as is the perception of safety. She said that spaces should be democratic and there should be no sequestered activities. She said they look at how people move through spaces – spatial considerations.

Mr. Hale said the park is always crowded.

Mr. Steinbrueck said that pedestrian density is an answer in itself. He said he once had an office over Occidental Park and he watched vigilante interventions to

sanitize the park. He said that Victor Steinbrueck Park is not flawed in its design. He said maintenance and operation, cleanliness and sanitation will help a lot. He said that regarding 'eyes on the park,' there are a lot of people in the park.

Mr. Albanese said he agreed with Mr. Enk. He said that he is here every day and that there are needles and condoms in the grass and poop on the sidewalk. He said that it is a passive place but that security is as important as design. He said that the police department can't do it all.

Ms. Jones asked who would pay for added security.

Mr. Guthrie said that it is not the fault of design it is an enforcement issue; a cleanliness and maintenance issue. He said that the park hasn't been maintained; broken benches were removed not replaced. He said the addressing social problems lies outside the purview of the Market Historical Commission. He noted Mr. Rolluda's comment that certain things need to be restored back to original intent of the design. He said the design is passive but it is a very active park. He said to keep this part of the Market. He said he was disappointed with the lack of maintenance that led to the levee and hoped it won't have be redone in 20 years.

Mr. Habibi said to make sure the design is inclusive and said that people actually use the park.

Ms. Rose said that there are 60 groups / individual groups to contact and they have intentionally set up a process to listen and to do outreach.

102815.12

Victor Steinbrueck Park history

Heather McAuliffe, Commission Staff

Photo slideshow on history, design intent and current conditions of Victor Steinbrueck Park.

Ms. McAuliffe presented a slideshow on history, design intent and current conditions of Victor Steinbrueck Park (slideshow in DON file). Following are Commission and public comments.

Rich Haag, designer of the park, said to notice that the benches, stools, and tables were set on concrete pads which have no connection to the membrane at all. He said that the wood in the concrete piers are epoxied on those pads. He said the Park Department told them that it won't work so the manufacturer of the epoxy made a test and they glued these on and when they tore them off it tore off the concrete. He said there is no connection down to the membrane to the slab of the garage in these structures. He said with regard to the Aspen trees the leaves rustle in the slightest breeze and that would muffle the sounds coming from traffic.

Ms. McAuliffe said that the cherry log in the Children's Play Area came from a tree in the area. She said that Buster Simpson carved it.

Mr. Haag said he got a call from Buster about 2:00 in the morning; he said he was in hooskow the police caught him down there whittling on the trunk and accused him of vandalizing it. He said that Buster wanted him to bail him out; Mr. Haag suggested Buster call Victor Steinbrueck – who went and bailed him out.

Joan Paulsen said that a large rock -“a historical rock in a historical district” - dug up at the foot of Virginia Street was placed at the park with last minute calls to Victor Steinbrueck who told her to deposit it in the park.

Regarding the totem poles Peter Steinbrueck explained that there was more than one carver involved. He said that his father had a hand in the design working with the designers.

Mr. Haag said Marvin Oliver, Native American, was principal form giver with Steinbrueck. He said Jim Bender stepped in when Oliver was unable to continue and finished the work.

Ms. McAuliffe said that there is a good collection of photos of the carving process in the Municipal Archives. She said the totem poles were intended to frame the view.

Mr. Haag said they were placed them like Piazza San Marco where the verticals focus you on the view. He said the totem pole of the farmer and his wife was Steinbrueck's idea.

Paul Dunn, resident, said Tree of Life applicants said they would maintain it from their funds. He said that lights under the project don't work, the base wasn't sealed properly; a screw is out and the metal is coming up. He said there is very little gang graffiti.

Mr. Haag said the light fixture is rather outdated and ugly. He said there are some lights that have a hood over them and there is already one south of the park.

Ms. McAuliffe said that one is going to be removed.

Mr. Haag said it would be a change that he would advise the MHC to consider because we don't want the light bothering the view so you can see the ferry boats and the stars and the sunset.

Mr. Enk said that homeless regularly disconnect the lights in the park.

Bill Messina said he is glad to see the survey of the park where the park is foremost and the people are sort of sparse. He said that let's not forget the other

comments – put another 200 people into that to see just how heavy the park usage is now. He said he would appreciate a summer shot taken at noon.

Mr. Enk said the park population varies greatly and noted there are visitors, tourist buses, residents, and inhabitants of park. He asked is it fair to say that the structures and character of the park have changed – taking out the Children’s Play Area and the trees.

Ms. McAuliffe noted that features have been removed and altered without MHC approval.

Joan Paulsen said the park is the most used park per square foot in downtown Seattle. She said she would like to think DOPAR would come up with a plan to monitor and evaluate how the park is working and to work with MHC et al to address issues. She said that she would like a joint operating agreement between DOPAR and SPD in order for the park to be a park for everyone. She said that if that takes involvement of social services – all the better. She said that she didn’t think DOPAR and SPD have the ability to think like that. She said what is needed is a long term proactive approach with feedback loops.

John Turnbull said when they get proposals they don’t object to onsite storage for cleaning equipment, plug-ins, good areas in the park area that could work. He said that under driveway there is some planter area where the view is gone where there are areas that could be captured for storage.

Howard Aller thanked Ms. McAuliffe for the overview. He said that MHC plays an important role and noted that DOPAR doesn’t care about MHC. He said to listen carefully and stand ground – the park is for everyone. He said that noise comes with living in the City. He said it is MHC job to protect the Market and to not let DOPAR ‘flim flam’. He said the park would work if it were properly maintained.

Kate Martin noted issues of civility – public urination. She said that SPD will never solve the problem and that she hoped that a collaboration with PDA security might be helpful.

Mr. Haag said he would like to extend this wonderful work into the next generation and if we vote right there is a chance that universal health will realize that shelter is a basic right. He said that a lot of people will never go into a shelter but this is pathetic. He said that you drive into Seattle and you see the tents - that is not there problem it is all of our problem. He said that the term ‘homeless’ is deceptive. He said a lot of people don’t have homes but they have shelter which is a basic requirement of life.

102815.2 **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**
September 23, 2015
MM/SC/CV/DG 6:0:0

Minutes approved.

102815.3 REPORT OF THE CHAIR

102815.4 REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEES:

102815.5 STAFF REPORT

102815.6 NEW BUSINESS

102815.61 2016 Commission Meeting Calendar

Adoption of 2016 meeting calendar.

MM/SC/JO/DG 6:0:0 Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Heather McAuliffe
Commission Coordinator