

# Waterfront - Overlook Walk

**Edward B. Murray**  
Mayor

**Samuel Assefa**  
Director, OPCD

**Shannon Loew**, Chair

**Ross Tilghman**, Vice Chair

**Brodie Bain**

**Lee Copeland**

**Ben de Rubertis**

**Thaddeus Egging**

**Rachel Gleeson**

**Laura Haddad**

**Theo Lim**

**John Savo**

**Michael Jenkins**  
Director

**Patrick Donohue**  
Interim Project Coordinator

**Aaron Hursey**  
Planner

**Juliet Acevedo**  
Administrative Staff

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

**TEL** 206-615-1349  
**FAX** 206-233-7883  
seattle.gov/dpd

## Commissioners Present

Shannon Loew, Chair  
Ross Tilghman, Vice Chair  
Lee Copeland  
Ben de Rubertis  
Laura Haddad  
John Savo

## Commissioners Excused

Brodie Bain  
Thaddeus Egging  
Rachel Gleeson  
Theo Lim

## Project Description

The Waterfront Seattle team proposes to construct a new east-west connection between Pike Place Market and the Alaskan Way waterfront. Named the Overlook Walk, this connection will include a variety of open spaces and buildings, as well as pedestrian walkways, stairways and elevators to link the waterfront and Pike Place Market.

The proposed open spaces include seating, play slides and climbing blocks, open lawn, meadow plantings, and panoramic overlooks. The project also includes a three-story structure – Building B— that would be to the east of the portion of the Overlook Walk over the realigned Alaskan Way. Building B would extend the small retail stalls of the Market along the Overlook Walk, provide tenant spaces at the street level below and include a restaurant space with panoramic views on the top floor. Building B will also include a public elevator linking Western Avenue to Alaskan Way.

## Meeting Summary

This was the Seattle Design Commission's (SDC) second review of the project. The purpose of this meeting was to review the revised concept design, which added a legible and direct connection from the Overlook Walk to the waterfront Promenade and integrated the Seattle Aquarium proposed new pavilion building. . At this meeting, the SDC voted 6-0 to approve the design development with several conditions and recommendations.

## Recusals and Disclosures

**Lee Copeland**, disclosed he had previously worked with James Corner Field Operations on previous projects.

**Laura Haddad**, disclosed she was a part of the seawall project team and has designed textured elements for the Pier 62/63 project.

**Shannon Loew**, disclosed he and Marshall Foster are exploring business opportunities that are unrelated to the pier 62/63 project.

**July 21, 2016**  
**10:00 - 12:30 pm**

**Type**

Major Project

**Phase**

Revised Concept Design

**Previous Reviews**

[06/19/14](#)

**Project Team Present**

**Tatiana Chouluka**

James Corner Field Operations

**Marshall Foster**

Office of the Waterfront

**Steve Pearce**

Office of the Waterfront

**David Miller**

MillerHull

**Attendees**

**David Graves**

Seattle Parks & Recreation

**Dave Goldberg**

LMN Architects

**Lloyd Douglas**

Citizen

**Corbin Hammer**

Reid Middleton

**Jason Huff**

Office of Arts & Culture

**Heidi Hughes**

Friends of the Waterfront

**Amy Kuo**

Magnusson Klemencic Associates

**Eugene Lau**

MillerHull

**Kit Loo**

SDOT

**Sam Miller**

LMN Architects

**Sian Roberts**

MillerHull

**Chris Rogers**

Point 32

July 21, 2016

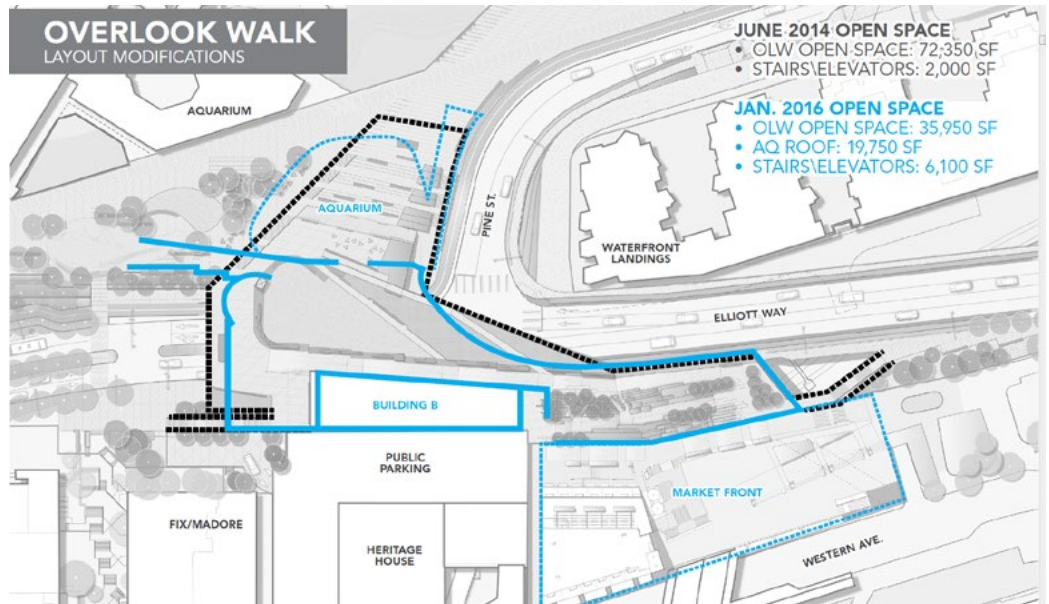


Figure 1: Previous design (highlighted in black) and proposed design (highlighted in blue)



Figure 2: Proposed interim design



Figure 1: Proposed final design

**Summary of Presentation**

Tatiana Choulika, of JCFO, Steve Pearce, of Office of the waterfront, and David Miller, of Miller Hull, presented the project. Steve Pearce provided a brief introduction and discussed the revised concept design for the Overlook Walk. Since the last presentation, the Aquarium Pavilion was relocated to the former site of "Building C", west of Elliott Way. The amphitheater steps were removed and the stairs leading to Pier 62/63 were split into two stairways: The South stair, creating a direct link to the waterfront promenade and the north stair leading directly to Pier 62/63. The 18-20 foot wide south stairway would descend at the south end of the Overlook Walk and land on the waterfront promenade at the intersection with the Pike Street Hillclimb. The north stairway would descend from the northern part of the Overlook Walk and land in front of Pier 62/63. By removing the seating steps and building C and realigning the stairs, a space was created to accommodate the Seattle Aquarium expansion. See figures 1-3 for more detail.

Because the Aquarium Pavilion will be developed at a later date, the project includes an interim phase as well as a fully built out concept (see figures 2 & 3). The interim phase includes the construction of the Marketfront, the bluff, the central open space, the south and the promenade overlooks, a temporary West Overlook, and the south stairway. The final design will also include public access to the roof space over the Aquarium Pavilion, an extension of the central lawn and the west overlook, a second public elevator, and the north stairway. See figure 4 for more detail.

The bluff, which provides a connection to the Marketfront, sits on the roof of the northern portion of Building B, will include a gently sloping pathway surrounded by native vegetation, seating, and play areas. Slides, interactive play elements, retail space, and informational kiosk will also be placed along the bluffs (see figure 5). The primary pathway will continue south along Building B through the central open space, which will include a central lawn, overlooks, café terrace, meadows, and secondary pathways leading to the south stairway. The south stairway will vary in width from the top of the stairway to the promenade below (see figure 6). Public restrooms will be located directly underneath the south stairway.

During the interim phase period, the colonnade along Elliott Way, which is adjacent to the future Aquarium Pavilion, will be exposed to pedestrians along the waterfront. A future service entrance to the Aquarium Pavilion will be located



Figure 4: interim design circulation and views (left) and final design circulation and views

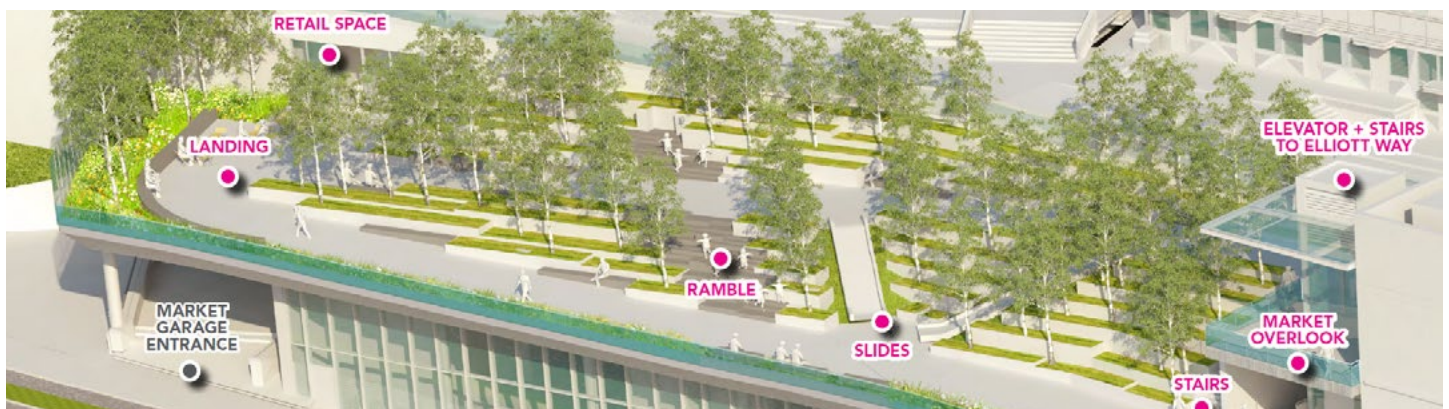


Figure 5: proposed programming - bluff

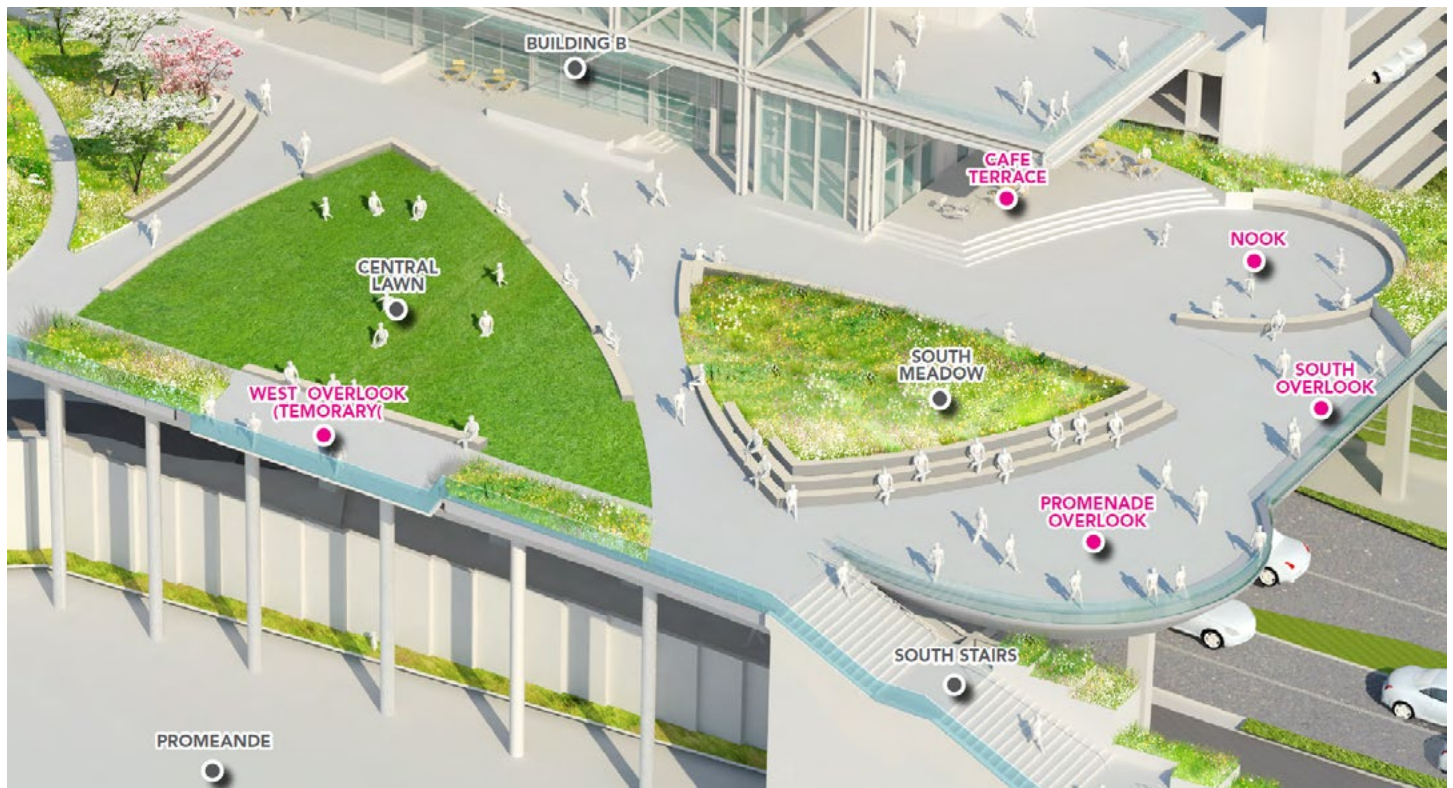


Figure 6: proposed programming - Overlook Walk

along Elliott Way, between the south stairway and the street edge. The expansion over the Aquarium Pavilion roof, the north stairway, and west elevator will be developed at the same time as the Aquarium Pavilion.

### Agency Comments

None

### Public Comments

None

### Summary of Discussion

The Commission organized its discussion around the following issues:

- Reconfiguration of the stairway
- Circulation
- Overlook locations and configurations
- Character of spaces
- Landscape

#### *Reconfiguration of the stairway*

The SDC agreed with the proposed realignment of the stairway from its original design to a new 20-foot wide stairway running parallel to Alaskan Way. The redesign also included a second stairway extending from the Overlook Walk down to the north side of Aquarium Pavilion. Because both stairways will serve as an important route to the Aquarium pavilion, promenade, pier 62/63 and waterfront, the Commission thought it critical to design the landings in a way that will feel welcoming to the public. Commissioners also encouraged the design team to provide a greater amount of program along the wall of the south stairway.

#### *Circulation*

The SDC supported the overall proposed pedestrian circulation - including primary and secondary pathways. Although they appreciated the connections from the proposed market stalls to the south overview over Alaskan Way, Commissioners questioned whether the proposed width and path alignments are adequate to support the number of pedestrians that will be attracted to the Overlook Walk. The Commission recommended the design team reeval-

ate the width of the main pathway leading users from Overlook Walk to the south stairway. The Commission is also concerned with the proposed location of the elevator near the south stairway. They recommended the design team relocate the elevator to a location that is accessible while not interrupting sight lines to the west overlook.

Commissioners agreed with the location of the service entrance along Elliott Way between the south stairway and road, but recommended that deliveries be limited to a specific period of time so as to avoid conflict with pedestrians and cyclists. Commissioners requested the project team provide a series truck movement diagrams to better understand how the space will be used.

#### *Overlook locations and configurations*

The SDC agreed with the location and configuration of the proposed overlooks. Commissioners agreed the curved shape of the aquarium building was appropriate for providing scenic views for users above, but are concerned the proposed configuration above the aquarium depends too much on the layout of the aquarium building, which has yet to be designed. Commissioners feel that if the curved shape of the future building were to be altered then the above overlook would also be greatly affected.

#### *Character of spaces*

The SDC encouraged the design team to better integrate the colonnades underneath Overlook walk with the Aquarium Plaza in its interim condition before the Aquarium expansion. Commissioners suggested that the team look at ways to upgrade the space and landscape through the use of light, color, and artwork. The Commission recommended the design team continue to understand how the future aquarium plaza will affect the design and character of the lower promenade and stairway to the Overlook Walk.

#### *Landscape*

The SDC supported the proposed landscaping throughout the project. Commissioners encouraged the project team to not allow market stalls to spill out onto the open space and surrounding landscaping, allowing the public space to be clear for all users. The Commission agreed the amount of open space and landscaped areas are adequate and recommended the project team use a variety of native plant species. The SDC also recommended the project team incorporate a greater amount of seating throughout the site. They encouraged the design team to soften the walls located along the promenade below the overlook walk with a blending of hardscape elements, seating, and vegetation.

### **Action**

The SDC thanked the project team for the presentation. Overall, The Commission appreciated the refinement of the concept and split stairway design to accommodate the flexible program of the space. The SDC voted to approve, 6-0, the revised concept design for the Overlook Walk project with the following conditions:

1. Consider design strategies to make the south stairway and its west wall better integrated through a combination of vegetation, seating, and public art to enhance its integration with the aquarium plaza, promenade, and overlook above
2. Refine the location of the elevator from the Overlook Walk to Aquarium Plaza
3. Increase the width of the connection between the south overlook and south stairway
4. Increase the width of pathways directly leading to the south stairway
5. Verify site lines to the stairway from the project lid over Elliott Way
6. Refine design of the area underneath the lid
7. To the extent possible, minimize conflict between pedestrians and service vehicles
8. Provide service truck movement diagrams for the delivery area along Elliott Way with the goal to reduce impacts on the pedestrian environment at that location
9. As it begins to develop, better integrate the north stairway with the aquarium building so that it is more welcoming to visitors

The SDC also provided the following recommendations:

1. Provide greater detail regarding aquarium building and plaza as it evolves
2. Continue to be flexible with material used near the aquarium plaza and promenade
3. Verify the amount of seating required by the city within the proposed landscape
4. Consider a greater amount of tree variety and native vegetation throughout the project
5. Include considerations of equity in design of the public spaces