

MEETING MINUTES

Bruce A. Harrell
Mayor

Rico Quirindongo
Director, OPCD

Jill Crary, Chair

Kevin O'Neill, Vice Chair

Adam Amrhein

Jay Backman

Phoebe Bogert

Kate Clark

Ben Gist

Brian Markham

Zubin Rao

Molly Spetalnick

Michael Jenkins
Director

Valerie Kinast
Strategic Advisor

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March 21, 2024

Convened 9:30 am

Adjourned 1:45 pm

Projects Reviewed

Commission Business

Bitter Lake Reservoir

Commission onboarding

Commissioners Present

Phoebe Bogert

Kate Clark

Jill Crary

Kevin O'Neill

Ben Gist

Brian Markham

Zubin Rao

Molly Spetalnick (attended via WebEx)

Commissioners Excused

Jay Backman

Adam Amrhein

Staff Present

Michael Jenkins

Valerie Kinast

Juliet Acevedo



Commission Business 9:30 – 10:00 am

The following items were discussed:

1. Staff briefing – Bitter Lake Reservoir
2. Overview of upcoming WSLE reviews before the Commission
3. Election of Kevin O’Neill as Vice Chair (unanimous)

Project review – Bitter Lake Reservoir 10:00 am – Noon (Recorded on WebEx)

Seattle Public Utilities (SPU) is building a new drinking water reservoir in the Bitter Lake neighborhood, at Linden Ave N and N 143rd Street. The new 21-million-gallon Bitter Lake Reservoir will replace the existing reservoir that is reaching the end of its service life. Seattle Parks and Recreation plans to turn additional open space at the reservoir into a park. Park construction will occur after the new reservoir is built.

SPU is collaborating with the Seattle Office of Arts & Culture (ARTS) and Seattle Parks and Recreation (SPR). Engagement efforts between the three agencies have been coordinated and designed to inform project outcomes.

The Commission received a presentation on the design development phase of the reservoir portion of the site and initial concepts for the portion of the site to be developed by Seattle Parks and Recreation.

The following people were presenters:

1. Andrew Karch, Seattle Public Utilities
2. Aaron Luoma, HBB Landscape Architects
3. Kate Clark, Parkeology ¹
4. Lael Alderman, Consor Engineering

The following people were present:

1. Kevin Bergsrud, Seattle Parks and Recreation

Commissioner recommendations and conditions – Reservoir

This was the final Commission review of the reservoir. The Commission made the following recommendation for Seattle Public Utilities.

1. Continue to coordinate with both Seattle Parks and Recreation, and the Office of Arts and Culture, on refining grades for pedestrian facilities.
2. Continue to evaluate the location of solar panels, including how they can be visible to the public.
3. Continue to refine pedestrian path to include pause locations between beginning of path up to its terminus.
4. Continue to evaluate and refine fence design.
5. Continue to evaluate lighting both for safety and for the overall experiential quality it provides.

¹ Kate Clark was confirmed as a member of the Seattle Design Commission in February 2024. Her contract for work on this project predated her appointment as a commissioner. This was disclosed at the start of the meeting.

6. Continue collaboration with Parks on views into the reservoir portion of the project, including gateway areas.

Commissioner recommendations – 30% Park Design:

The Commission made the following recommendations related to the park portion of the project:

1. **Phased Construction:** The commissioners stressed the importance of phased construction to ensure that parts of the park remain open and accessible to the public throughout the development process. This approach minimizes disruption and maintains community use of the park's amenities during construction.
2. **Community Feedback Integration:** There was a strong emphasis on using community feedback to shape the park's features. This includes ensuring that the park's amenities, such as playgrounds and picnic areas, are located according to community preferences and needs. It was recommended that ongoing engagement processes be used to gather and integrate this feedback effectively.
3. **Visibility and Safety Enhancements:** Improve visibility across the park to enhance safety. To accomplish this, include strategic placement of lighting and the design of pathways and layout to ensure clear sightlines and safe, accessible routes for all park users.
4. **Aesthetic and Environmental Enhancements:** The park's design should incorporate aesthetic elements that make it an inviting space for the community. This includes landscaping that enhances the natural beauty of the area and environmentally sustainable practices that support biodiversity and ecological health.
5. **Programming and Amenities Alignment:** The park should offer a variety of programming that caters to different age groups and interests. This includes integrating amenities that support active lifestyles, such as sports facilities and playgrounds, as well as quiet areas for relaxation and socialization. These recommendations are focused on ensuring that the park not only meets functional and safety standards but also becomes a valued and integral part of the community, enhancing the quality of life and environmental sustainability.

The Commission voted 7 to 0 in support of the project.

Commissioner onboarding - Noon – 1:45 pm

Michael Jenkins provided Commissioners with an overview of the Commission's work and role in project reviews. Dakota Billops-Breaux updated the Commission on her work in developing an online resource related to equity in the design of public spaces. Commissioner discussion was focused on best practices for Commission deliberations and actions.

The meeting adjourned at 1:45 pm.