



MEETING MINUTES
Garfield Superblock; Elliott Bay Connections

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

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March 7, 2024

Convened 10:00 am

Adjourned 2:30 pm

Projects Reviewed

Commission Business

Garfield Superblock

Elliott Bay Connections

Commissioners Present

Adam Amrhein

Phoebe Bogert

Kate Clark

Jill Crary

Kevin O'Neill

Ben Gist

Brian Markham

Zubin Rao

Commissioners Excused

Jay Backman

Molly Spetalnick

Staff Present

Michael Jenkins

Valerie Kinast



March 7, 2024 **Project:** Garfield Superblock
10:00 am – 12:00 pm **Type:** Capital Improvement
 Phase: Schematic
Previous Reviews: April 1, 2021, initial review; Concept Designs, March 2, 2023
Presenters: Roma Shah, Seattle Parks and Recreation; Aimee Rozier,
 Site Workshop; Elisheba Johnson, WaNa Wari; Sharon Khosla and
 Stephanie Ingram, Garfield Superblock advocates.

Project Description:

The Garfield Superblock project is in the Central District neighborhood, on a city block bounded by E. Cherry St, E. Alder St., 23rd Ave, and 25th Ave. The block includes several civic investments including the Garfield Community Center, Garfield Playfield, Medgar Evars Pool, Quincy Jones Performing Arts Center, and Garfield High School.



Beginning in 2005, community leaders in the immediate area developed proposals to upgrade the block, focused on highlighting the cultural diversity of the Central District. These initial efforts were paused between 2005 and 2014, and were restarted in 2019 as the Garfield Super Block Coalition (Coalition).

In 2019, the Coalition received City funding from the Seattle Department of Neighborhoods to develop concept designs for the block. Since that work, the Coalition received additional City funding to further the initial concept designs. The project was also advanced to a Seattle Department of Parks and Recreation capital improvement project.

The \$9.5M project is funded from a variety of sources including Seattle Parks and Recreation, Seattle Parks District, Federal Land and Water conservations funds, King County Open Spaces grants, and the State of Washington:

The proposal calls for significant upgrades to the public spaces in the northern portion of the site. Those updates include:

- Creation of an accessible loop path that surrounds the existing playfields
- Creation of a new play area and a parkour station
- Installation of publicly accessible art integrated with the new accessible loop
- New significant structures including a restroom facility and covered- picnic area
- Improved pedestrian access points from 25th Avenue, 23rd Avenue and E Cherry Street

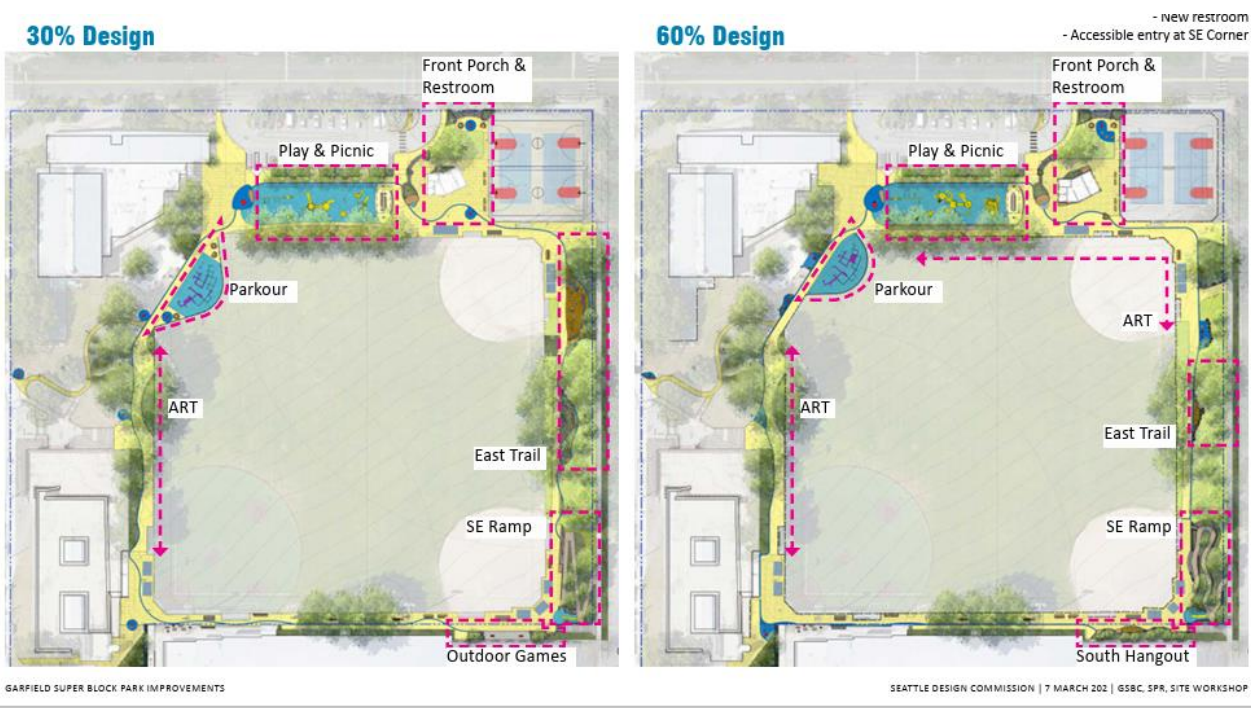
Meeting Summary

This was the Seattle Design Commission’s (SDC) third review of the Garfield Superblock project. After the presentation and discussion, the SDC approved the project 8-0 and provided recommendations and conditions for further development of the design.

Summary of Presentation

Roma Shah of Seattle Parks and Recreation led the presentation. Aimee Rozier of SiteWorkshop presented the project designs. Stephanie Ingram presented details on the architecture of the various structures. Sharon Khosla provided an overview of how the neighborhood has shaped the project outcomes. Elisheba Johnson provided an overview of the proposed Art program, highlighting BIPOC artists that will create both individual pieces as well as a collective piece. The art program is privately funded.

The following image depicts overall changes between 30% design reviewed in March 2023 and the current proposal:



The presentation was organized around 7 program elements:

- Project Overview and update following March 2023 commission review
- Outreach and Fundraising
- 60% Design
- Access and Materials
- Art Plan
- Parkour
- Funding and Adjacent projects

Agency Comments

None

Public Comments

None

Commissioner Questions:

Following the presentation, Commissioners asked a variety of questions about the advancement of various design features. Some of the questions included:

- Status of 25th Avenue improvements to support access to the site and program features
- Approach to the number and location of bike parking
- The redesign of the comfort facility, including the change to a barrel vault roofline
- The inclusion of a bioretention facility and its role in site drainage
- The status of project funding for design, maintenance, and arts acquisition
- The location of project signage (GSB) on the community center in context with larger project
- Ideas to integrate the project with the community center
- The visibility of proposed artwork locations community center – both internally and externally
- How does art, lighting, signage, etc. help provide wayfinding into southern portions of the project, including along 23rd Avenue
- Interior portion of comfort station, including ceilings in restroom area
- The approach on site lighting, including how existing site and field lighting will be detailed and integrated with the overall designs
- The design and strategies for parkour fencing
- The relationship of specialty paving throughout the trail area and its role in tying various portions of the site and program together
- Location and grouping of inlaid salmon pieces to reinforce path versus art.=
- Options to distinguish between perforated metal uses that are being internally lit on both the collaborative art piece and the comfort station
- The use, locations, attributes, and role for porous concrete
- Relationship between designs of comfort station and shelter
- Fit and finish between barrel vault as a concrete shell and top of CMU wall.
- Architectural proportions between door opening, garage opening, and drinking fountain

Commissioner Deliberation and Comments

Commissioners organized their deliberations and comments around the following themes:

1. Overall Design
2. Project cohesion/narrative – relationship of spaces/places on the site
3. Wayfinding - access connectivity and legibility
4. Comfort Station – the design, program, siting, and stormwater component
5. Previous comments and how the project has responded (potential)
 - Art incorporation
 - Funding
 - Access
 - Materiality
 - Architecture
 - Program
 - Lighting
 - Expression of Stormwater/Sustainability (porous paving)
 - Outreach

The Commissioners provided the following comments on the current designs:

- A stronger architectural relationship should be established between the comfort station and picnic structure, using materials, orientation, detailing, etc.
- The architectural designs and themes of the existing buildings should be a guide when trying to create more cohesiveness between the comfort station and the picnic area, and with the other buildings in the superblock. Establishing those relationships will create a stronger relationship between the proposal and the larger superblock
- The proportions of the doors on the Comfort station should be aligned to the overall proportions of the comfort station
- Refine the ‘fit and finish’ of the relationship between barrel vault system on the Comfort station and the concrete building structure it supports
- There should be some additional thinking about how the pedestrian experience is heightened using the various design elements (signage, wayfinding, art, paving materials, etc.) and how those work together to create a cohesive experience
- Commissioners support the idea of the parkour system and how the project refinements have strengthened that space and its relationship to the overall project
- Commissioners support the use of specialty paving within the loop, and recommend that additional design detailing, (color, additional materials, etc.) be considered
- Commissioner are interested in seeing how the existing facilities at street corners can help with overall loop concept – art distribution, use of materials/paving etc.
- Continue working with SDOT to advance project goals, including a mid block crossing on both 23rd and 25th, crossing on E Cherry over to NOVA, and other similar investments

- Look for ways to reduce barriers that are present on ROW edges to get people into new areas – location of crosswalk, midblock crossing, 25th avenue, etc.
- Work with SDOT to establish a ‘stay healthy street designation on 25th to help support project
- Consider an additional access point for entry/exit at Parkour station
- Consider how use of perforated metal at the comfort station can be incorporated in other parts of the program

Action

Overall, the Commission appreciates how the project has advanced elements including

- The art plan and its implementation
- Integration of and design response to community
- The sustained collaborative effort with the community
- The parkour system

The Commission also sees positive changes and advancements in the articulation and development of all components

The Commission voted 8-0 to approve the project with one condition and several recommendations.

Condition:

Return to a subcommittee prior to your final review for Commissioners to evaluate and make recommendations on:

- How you have established architectural relationships between the comfort station and picnic shelter
- How you have created architectural relationships with the existing structures at this location (community center, high school, etc.)
- How you have advanced the wayfinding plan to include stronger relationships between the art plan and the various paving strategies

Recommendations:

1. Continue to strengthen the pedestrian experience around the block.
2. Continue to articulate/strengthen the site narrative by bringing the project elements together. A way to achieve this may be to expand and strengthen the role played by the ‘blue line’ path treatment.
3. Wayfinding is important yet advocating for improved crossings will better support access.
4. Consider the relationship between the internal loop being created and the larger loop provided by the surrounding rights of way and its related pedestrian system.