

Seattle Design Commission

APPROVED

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

03 March 2005

Gregory J. Nickels,
Mayor

David Spiker
Chair

Charles Anderson

Pam Beyette

Karen Kiest

Hannah McIntosh

Anindita Mitra

Sheri Olson

Nic Rossouw

Darrell Vange

Guillermo Romano,
Executive Director

Layne Cubell,
Commission Coordinator

Projects Reviewed

Bethany Church Alley Vacation
Seattle Center Garage
CIP Departments Debriefing

Convened: 8:30am

Adjourned: 5:00pm

Commissioners Present

David Spiker, Chair
Pam Beyette
Karen Kiest
Hannah McIntosh
Anindita Mitra
Nic Rossouw
Darrell Vange

Staff Present

Guillermo Romano
Layne Cubell
Tom Iurino
Emily Podolak



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Development

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03 Mar 2005 Project: Bethany Church Partial Alley Vacation

Phase: Vacation Briefing

Previous Reviews: none

Presenters: Kristen Smith, Bethany Community Church
Bob Hull, Miller Hull Architects
Sian Roberts, Miller Hull Architects

Attendees: Tom Walsh, Foster Pepper Sheffelman
Marni Heffron, Heffron Transportation, Inc.
Brad Hennessy, Bethany Community Church
Teresa Russell, Miller Hull Architects

Commissioner Hannah McIntosh recused herself from the presentation;
her firm is involved in the project.

Time: 1 hour (SDC Ref. # 170 | DC00352)

Action: The Commission appreciates the excellent presentation and makes the following recommendations

- **believes that the proposed alley vacation is justified based on their assessment of existing urban design conditions in the public realm; and does not think that the proposal detracts from the public realm;**
- **expresses concerns about the alley access and traffic issues and bok to Seattle Department of Transportation to successfully resolve these issues;**
- **does not believe that the proposed public benefit package has been fully developed; the shared use parking and playground improvements at Daniel Bagley Elementary and public use of the sanctuary are all in the right spirit;**
- **has some concern about the scale and character of the pedestrian access between the new and existing buildings ;**
- **feels that the proponents' work is headed in the right direction, and looks forward to their next presentation;**
- **encourages proponents, at their next presentation, to present graphics that better illustrate their proposed public benefits ;**

Bethany Church, located in the Greenlake Lake neighborhood on Green Lake Dr. and N. 80th seeks a partial alley vacation to accommodate the expansion of their facilities. This presentation is the first review by the Commission and required for any proposed street/alley vacation. The Commission recommends two actions on alley vacations: one action based on urban design considerations and one action based on the public benefits package offered by the proponents.

Proponent Presentation

Bethany Church is seeking to expand its main sanctuary in order to meet the growing number of attendants. The current sanctuary's space constraints requires that five services be held on Sunday, one of which is a video link of a prior service in Fellowship Hall located across Stone Avenue. Space constraints are also felt by the young children; the nursery space is inadequate and out of code which requires it be adjacent to the sanctuary.



The property is uniquely bisected by a street and an alley way. After careful consideration of design alternatives that would meet their three greatest needs (sanctuary space for 600 people, child care space for infants through age 2.5 years, and restrooms located on the sanctuary floor) they believe that a partial alley vacation is necessary to meet their design goals. The design alternatives not requiring the partial alley vacation could not accommodate the required seating, along with adequate child care space for young children, and restrooms, which is a necessity for their elderly population.

Public Benefit Package

Proponents believe that their proposed development plan will provide long-term public benefits that have a positive impact on the community, which include :

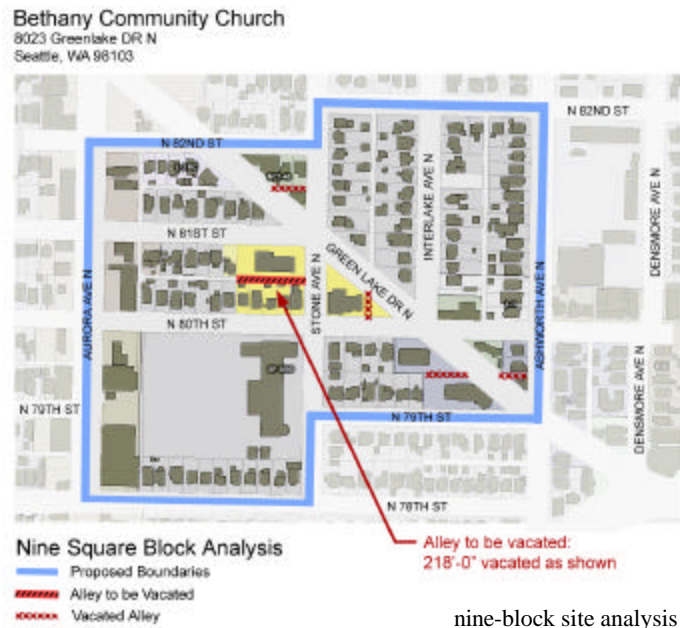
1. Off street parking area at the neighboring Daniel Bagley elementary school
 - the proposed lot for shared use between the school and the church would greatly improve the existing condition of deteriorating asphalt
 - school currently has no off-street parking. Parents park across the street and walk their children to school across the street
 - incorporate an art fence and natural drainage strategies

2. Streetscape and landscape designs along both sides of N 80th, Stone Ave and Green Lake Dr.
 - These streets were identified as key neighborhood-commercial areas that provide an entrance to Green Lake
 - Upgrading their appearance with landscaping, along with a building design that perpetuates the community character through similar materials as the existing church and school structure and is consistent with the Green Lake Neighborhood Plan
3. Creation of a sanctuary/meeting facility for community use
 - Available for neighborhood meetings, concerts, film festivals etc,
 - Provides seating and lighting that are atypical for churches, but in need for the greater community.
4. Additional playground improvement needs, as determined by the Daniel Bagley Site Council
 - Financial crisis in Seattle Public Schools has limited access to these improvements,
 - growing attendance calls for improved play space

Proponents have taken steps to engage the community, presenting their ideas and preliminary design and receiving feedback. They met with the Green Lake Community Council (November 2004 and January 2005), held two neighborhood meetings: one with alley residents (which they received public acceptance of the partial vacation, through required petition signatures, and another with residents living within .5 mile (sent 450 invitations) from Bethany Community Church. In addition, the proponents designed their public benefits package based on the Green Lake 20/20 Plan, which identified key issues, specifically the walking, biking and driving experience down Green Lake Drive and N. 80th, from Aurora down to Green Lake. Proponents are scheduled to meet again with the school district in April 2005.

Urban Design Issues

Proponents presented a nine-block site analysis which demonstrated the high diversity of land uses in the blocks while the broader landscape of Green Lake is predominantly single-family residential. The alley patterns vary in the area; back end alleys off of Aurora, a commercial street create dead ends. Four other alley vacations exist in the nine square blocks. The school sits on two blocks without an alley. There is a difficult pedestrian crossing across Green Lake Drive. The pedestrian crossing of N 80th is popular because there is a stop light at the intersection.



The alley way proposed for partial vacation currently functions as a drive through, parking area. A resident garden located west of the church blocks the ability to drive all the way through the alley, but it is possible to walk through. Proponents stated that the garden is widely accepted by the surrounding residents and most residents don't want to encourage the use of the alleyway for through traffic so they do not mind that the garden blocks ability to travel through alleyway.

Alternative designs considered:

1. Replace existing sanctuary with new sanctuary on the same site, could not fit nursery or bathrooms in the space. This alternative did not meet the design goal to not require crossing of traffic when traveling between the sanctuary and the rest of the campus.
2. Build new sanctuary on the site of the existing five residential buildings, could not fit nursery into space. This alternative created a narrow sanctuary space, rather than the preferred wider, more inclusive design

The proposed design alternative increases the amount of buildable area, creates more of a campus feel of courtyards and pedestrian crossings between the buildings. A new curved alleyway would be rededicated, in place of the alley vacation, to the northwest of the building site through the proposed parking area.

The proposed building design includes courtyards on the east side of the building for spill out areas that are designed for the neighborhoods use, not cloistered off. Proponents aim to preserve the existing trees on site and propose planting larger trees on the corners of the block and smaller trees in the middle to provide feeling of embrace and improve connectivity through the site. The elevations of the proposed building consist of lower forms against the street and higher forms in the middle for the sanctuary. The curved shape of the building supports an indoor seating regime that is more inclusive by focusing everyone to the center of the space. The building will be constructed of brick, concrete, heavy lumber and some metal, which is consistent with the old sanctuary and school buildings.

Public Comment

None

Commissioner Questions and Comments

- Asks what the plans are for the site of the existing sanctuary
 - House of ministry, place for offices, ministry (youth, college, children), expanded area for administrative
- Asks where do and will people cross between the two buildings
 - The crosswalk on N. 80th
- Asks for the total capacity of the proposed parking areas
 - Right now there are 22 spots on site. The proposed design will have 36 spaces on the Bethany property, 56 in the proposed parking lot and the church would utilize up to 157 parking spaces on streets in the vicinity.
 - Asks if proponents have concern about relying on 100+ spaces in street parking, and if the residents have a problem with the church goers' parking in this area
 - It has not been raised as an issue; more concern related to traffic than parking
 - Proponents are also working with a strip mall located 800 feet from the church to gain an additional 10 spaces which are not used by the businesses on Sunday morning
- Comments that 56 spaces seems like a lot for an elementary school
 - Proponents surveyed six other schools and all spaces were always used. Two years ago the elementary school PTA prioritized parking as primary issue for the playground master plan and an off street drop off area, aimed for 40 spaces. A year ago Bethany Church also declared that they needed additional parking but did not have the room. The design of 56 spaces at Bagley Elementary will help both institutions with their parking situations.

- Proponents clarified that they will file two MUPS, one for the proposed church property parking and one for the Bagley Elementary property parking
- Asks the width of the walkway between the two buildings
 - 10 feet
- Asks if walkway will be open to the public
 - Yes, but there has been expressed concern of homeless gathering between buildings at night, proposed after-hours gates will block off passage after dark but walkway will be public during daylight hours
- Asks about surface treatment of building along the walkway
 - Vertical windows on proposed building will mimic adjacent existing building, proposed building will be fiber cement siding,, existing building is brick
- Asks how proponents plan to incorporate green design/natural drainage in parking area
 - Proponents plan to allow the garden space to stay and create additional green space between the church parking lot and the neighboring residence
- Inquires about the proponents point of view in regards to the garden plot blocking the alleyway
 - Understands that it is an encroachment. On Monday proponents introduced a new petition for the partial alley vacation and have not heard from SDOT yet and are not sure how SDOT will respond to the encroachment either requesting its removal or allowing it to remain
- Comments that there are always complications with partial right of way vacations regarding the radius required for the proposed L turn of future alley way, the future use of the alley and traffic implications
- Asks how alley functions now
 - Used for loading and parking. Residents located at the other end of the block enter and exit alley from that side and also use it as loading and parking area. And in one instance used as a garden plot.
- Asks why proponents plan to acquire the adjacent house and how it will be used
 - The site will be used for the proposed parking lot. It will contain a buffer between parking lot and neighboring home and the parking lot entry and exit can be established as a replacement alleyway.
- Asks what proponents relationship is to the homeless
 - Provide groceries, rides to shelters and free community dinners open to everyone on Sundays.

03 Mar 2005 Project: Seattle Center Garage

Phase: concept design

Previous Reviews: none

Presenters: Shelly Yapp, Seattle Center
Craig Norsen, Seneca Group
Bob Sheh, NBBJ
Jeanne Iannucci, NBBJ

Attendees: Jill Crary, Seattle Center
Molly Hurley, DPD
Joe Taskey, SDOT
Lindy Gaylord, Seneca Group
Jack McCullough, McCullough Hill

Time: 1 hour (SDC Ref. # 220 | DC00351)

Action: The Commission appreciates the detailed presentation and makes the following comments and recommendations

- encourages proponents to base the selection of the design/build team as much on the quality of the design team as on the contractors ;
- recommends that the streetscape/public green space be included in the design/build contract;
- asks that the Design Commission have the opportunity to review the project after the design/build firm is selected, during the schematic design or design development stage ;
- prefers the below grade scheme provided that the below grade experience can be as pleasant as possible through layout, and artificial and natural light;
- comments that the design/build team will be important to the outcome of the project;
- requests that in future presentations the proponents provide a plan that addresses potential changes to the street grid;
- understands the need for the skate park relocation but hopes that the new location will remain on or near the street;
- comments that the south west corner is the “sweet spot” of any site, particularly in this situation;
- encourages more emphasis on the green space and public nature of that area;
- recommends approval of concept design.

Seattle Center is in the process of negotiating the sale of Lot 2 to the Gates Foundation for future campus development. As one of the conditions of the sale, Seattle Center will be partnering with the Gates design team up front, several years in advance, to construct a new garage structure to replace the existing Seattle Center parking on site. Seattle Center will own and manage the garage and its primary use will be to serve the Center, some parking will be shared with the Gates Foundation. The design team is moving at a fast track, hoping to construct in 2006. This is the first review of the project by the Commission and the project is currently in concept design.

Proponent Presentation

Located on 12.3 acres the proposed parking garage will hold 1050 spaces of which 350 will be reserved for the Gates Foundation Monday through Friday from 8:00am to 6:00pm. The agreement works well as the majority of the Center's business is in the evenings and weekends when all of the spaces will be open to public use. One condition of the sale of Lot 2 to the Gates Foundation was that the new parking garage must be constructed before the Foundation breaks ground to construct its proposed campus. The project has been fast tracked so that garage will begin construction in 2006 and finish in May 2007 the targeted date for the Gates Foundation to begin construction.



Context Diagram

Parking Studies

project IRIS
03.0305
nbbj

The proponents presented their *Principles to Guide Design and Architectural Treatment for New Parking Garage*, which is included below:

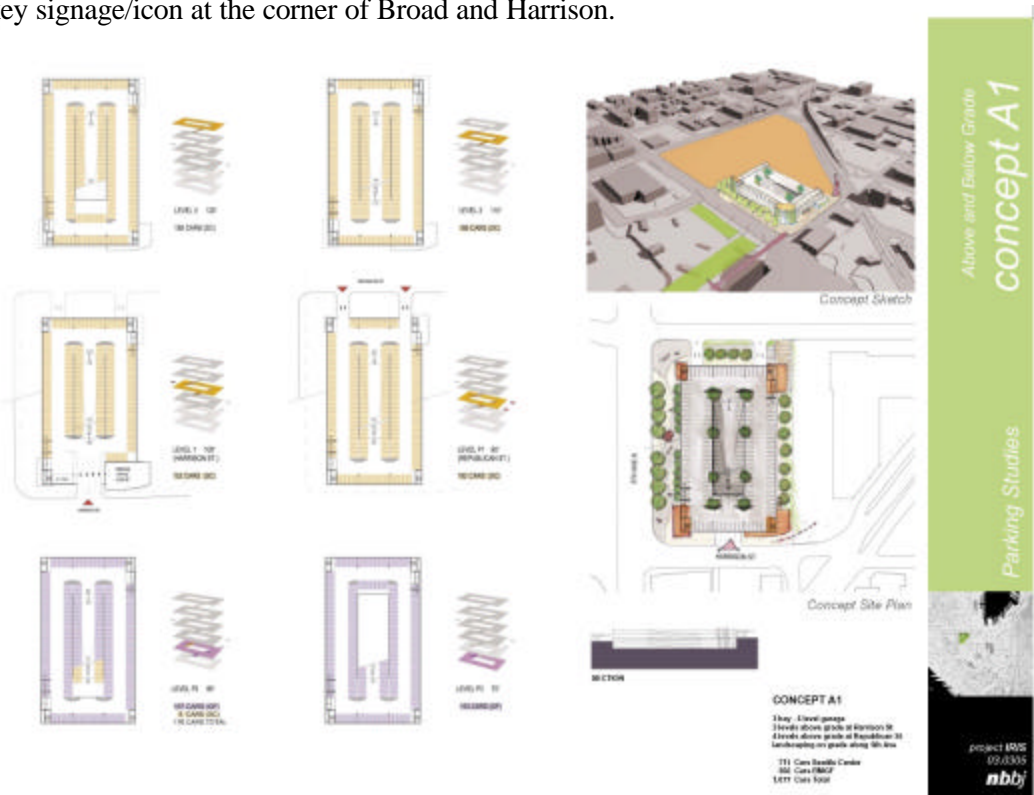
Principles to Guide Design and Architectural Treatment for New Parking Garage

- Parking for a minimum of 1,010 stalls in a structure on the northeast corner of 5th Ave N and Harrison St. that will be either above/below grade or all below grade. Some surface lot area is desirable as the location for busses, oversized vehicles and van-accessible disabled stalls.
- The design treatment of the garage needs to integrate its identification as an entry point to Seattle Center and serve as a transition from the Foundation campus to Seattle Center.
- The Harrison St. corridor, east of 5th Ave N, should visually and thematically link with the Harrison St. turnaround, west of 5th Ave N, to create a strong Seattle Center identity and arrival experience on Harrison St, with special emphasis at the 5th Ave N. intersection.
- The Republican St. corridor, east of 5th Ave N, should serve as the focus of arrival to the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation campus.
- The design should provide flexibility for different parking program requirements including convenient access, security, and independent exclusive use of certain floors.
- The design should optimize functionality for user-friendly and efficient operations and quality aesthetic design that makes the garage an interesting and pleasing structure both inside and out.
- If it is an above grade structure, the design should enliven and make the facility attractive and iconic. The design features should minimize the perception of bulk, scale, and monotony typical of many garages.
- Above grade component should include landscaping, street furniture, and entry paths to create an attractive and inviting streetscape. Setback design should consider the context of its location as a major Seattle Center entry point, its impact on adjacent transit waiting/drop-off areas, and relations to street crossings.
- The design should respect the pedestrian nature of Seattle Center, and emphasize the creation of a fully accessible, pleasant and welcoming pedestrian experience. Conflicts between vehicles and pedestrians should be minimized and the pedestrian favored.
- The Parking Facility and signage should be designed to welcome visitors to Seattle Center, inform them of current events at the Center, and make way finding to and on Seattle Center's campus clear and easy, including Seattle Center event signage, in the form of an electronic reader board, located at the 5th and Harrison corner. Signage should be attractive, informative, and a little fanciful and should be intended to surprise and delight visitors, as well as inform them.
- Public Art will be incorporated into the site. Initial thoughts focus on the 5th Ave N "Potlatch Trail" corridor and/or the 5th and Harrison "arrival pavilion" structure.
- The design should fully review opportunities for including energy efficiency and sustainable building design elements, especially where such elements conserve natural resources and/or can be integrated to create a unique and interesting design feature (e.g. motion-sensor lighting, recycled building materials, creation of a water feature out of rooftop rainwater run-off).
- The physical design of the site should create an environment that enhances a sense of personal safety and sensitivity to human scale design elements and be based on accepted CPTED (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design) principles, to ensure safety and security for parked autos and patrons.

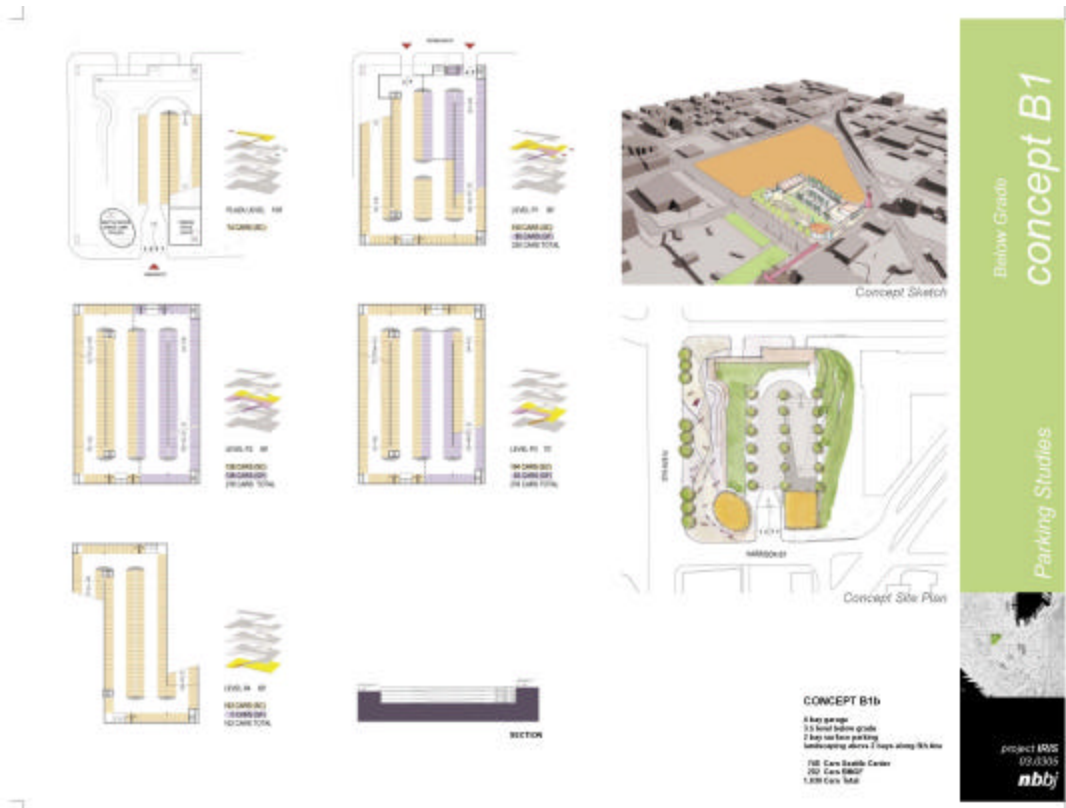
- The design needs to be informed operationally by the Seattle Center's overall Transportation Program and policies, procedures, operational and equipment standards that are used in the existing operations of Seattle Center's parking operations and Operational Program Elements include:
 - The ability to dedicate some areas to secure exclusive daytime use. Consider gated, secured key-card access with capacity to open for public parking during other times.
 - A 4,000 square foot headquarters parking office located on the main at-grade level adjacent to a garage entry and with exterior windows.
 - Vehicular access directly to/from 5th Avenue North via the vacated Republican Street driveway, and to/from Harrison Street, with 2 lanes in and two lanes out at each entrance. And attendant booths at all entrances.
 - Access that minimizes on-street queues for event use.
 - Target for egress to enable flushing of a capacity garage after an event in less than 30 minutes, with assistance from parking staff and SPD.
 - Small area reserved for covered bicycle parking.
 - Incorporation of advanced technology to allow for automated tracking of occupancy, for use in variable message signs located on inbound roadways to direct patrons to garages with space available.
 - Integrated self-pay system that takes credit/debit cards, can be monitored from remote location and networks all machines for integrated reporting; use of technology standard, equipment, and vendor already in use in Seattle Center's other parking facilities.
 - Design that minimizes operational and maintenance costs and creates an integrated operational plan with all of the Center's existing parking facilities.

Proponents proposed two concepts for the garage design

Concept A1: Garage sitting 3 levels above grade and 4 levels below grade with center ramp scheme. 3 bays, 6 levels, 3 levels above grade at Harrison St., 4 levels above grade at Republican St., landscaping on grade along 5th Avenue to Potlatch trail, has an iconic piece at Harrison Street, and key signage/icon at the corner of Broad and Harrison.



Concept B1: Garage below grade sitting back off of 5th Avenue. 4 bays, 3.5 levels below grade and 2 bay surface parking, landscaping along the two bays on 5th Avenue



Proponents suggested that they would benefit significantly during this early stage from the Commission's feedback. They offered the Commission the following questions :

1. We are interested in strengthening our Harrison Street presence as an entry to Seattle Center. How might the west and east sides of 5th Avenue best relate?
2. The crossing of 5th Avenue is a key pedestrian entry experience and is currently a major car vs. pedestrian challenge. How might this conflict be resolved?
3. The new Monorail station will be located approximately 2 blocks from the garage site. How should these transportation facilities, as they serve Seattle Center, relate to one another? What implications are there for design of the garage?
4. The Republican St. entry to the garage will be a multi-purpose entry serving the public and Seattle Center clients and serving the Gates Foundation. How should these multi-purposes be represented in the design of the Republican St. entrance?

Public Comment

- John Coney, Uptown Alliance and Queen Anne Community Council Expresses his support for the Gates campus and garage as necessary 1st step for Seattle Center redevelopment. Proponents should consider street level commercial use in this structure to avoid a sterile garage and given its location and potential to provide an important connection to both the Uptown Urban Center and the nearby Monorail Station.

Commissioner Questions and Comments

- Asks for clarification on future site access and its affects on the street grid
 - With lowered Aurora (only), all city streets will be reestablished on site. There will be a 50' buffer/set back on the south edge of Mercer
- Asks about construction process
 - The proponents will pursue a design/build team, input from the Commission will be included in the design package
- Asks about the RFP (request for proposal) process for design/build team
 - Three to five teams are on the list. Clients will have ongoing design oversight. Proponents aim to award contract in January 2006 allowing construction to start mid 2006 and be complete by 2007
- Asks about funding situation
 - The Gates Foundation will pay upfront. Seattle Center estimates it will cost \$15.3 million. The Seattle Center will retain latitude to expand budget if necessary. This is a real partnership
- Asks if way finding, landscaping and public art are included in the contract
 - Will need to incorporate it in the design/build scope of the contract. The art situation will be pursued separately
- Asks what is to ensure that design will not be compromised in the design/build process
 - There are lots of checks and balances, the partnership will oversee
- Asks if the Commission can be involved in the design/build selection process or if the design/ build team could present to the Commission
 - The design/build team will consider both options
- Asks if proponents considered a concept that had all underground parking and surface landscaping
 - Yes gave it a look
- Asks about the relocation of the skate park, the basketball courts and the waste reduction facility
 - City Parks will take lead on skate park and basketball court.
- Asks about the future use of other structures that currently exist on site
 - The Sonics will stay until 2010
- Asks for details on the future use of the triangle site shown in green on the master plan
 - Seattle Center doesn't currently own the site but would consider purchasing it in the future
- Does land use code require commercial use at grade level in this area
 - No
- Asks about the Gates Foundation future parking plans and needs
 - There will be monthly space rental in the garage and future garages around the campus might be considered

03 Mar 2005 Project: CIP Departments Debriefing

Phase: Briefing

Previous Reviews: 16 December 2003

Attendees: Erin Devoto – Seattle Parks Department
Michael Shiosaki – Seattle Parks Department
Alex Harris – Seattle Public Libraries
Rob Gorman – Seattle Department of Transportation
Kristen Simpson – Seattle Department of Transportation
Amanda Allen – Seattle Department of Finance
Candice Chinn – Seattle Department of Finance

Time: 1.5 hours

(SDC Ref. # 169 | DC00009)

Summary: The Commission thanks project managers from City of Seattle capital improvement project departments for joining them for the debrief session and offers the following recommendations.

- **encourages project managers to get together with Commission staff ahead of time to seek guidance on the Commission’s review of projects;**
- **consider opportunities for site tours of upcoming and finished projects;**
- **invites all of the departments to let them know if there is any way that they think the Commission can improve in terms of helping the departments with their projects while ensuring that the Commission fulfills its mandate of design review and supporting good design in the public realm.**

The debrief focused on the Commission’s review of capital improvement projects (CIP) and their relationship with the respective city departments: Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT), Seattle Parks Department (Parks), Seattle Public Libraries (SPL), Seattle Fleets and Facilities (FFD), Seattle Center, Seattle Public Utilities (SPU) and Seattle City Light (SCL). The Commission addressed the departments with some thoughts and comments and then opened up the floor to the CIP department representatives to give their feedback and thoughts on the Commission’s role in their design processes. While all departments were invited, only three departments sent representatives: SDOT, Parks and SPL.

As a reminder, the Commission also sees projects in the public right of way, including any type of street, alley or aerial vacation, however today’s debrief is focused on their review of capital improvement projects (CIP).

Commissioner Comments

Seattle Department of Transportation

Over the last couple of the years the Commission has reviewed two main types of SDOT projects, a number of specific projects, such as the Fremont Bridge and also larger projects, such as the Viaduct. The Commission commends SDOT for its efforts to collaborate with other city departments on these mega projects, creating a more integrated approach to urban design.

Seattle Parks Department

The Commission has reviewed many Parks projects over the last couple of years; with two major levy programs, Parks has been a mainstay of the Commission’s CIP reviews. The parks reviewed have ranged in scale and complexity. From the Arboretum project, a high profile project with a

large constituency to smaller parks with little to no constituency. The Commission applauds the department for exploring new solutions for park programming, such as the off-leash dog park proposed at Boren Pike Pine Park. The Commission recognizes that lots of personalities are involved in the design process through community meetings and neighborhood stakeholders and asks the Parks Department for feedback on how to best advise the projects, given all of the constituency feedback and programming requests. The Commission looks forward to many more reviews this year.

Seattle Public Library

The Commission has not reviewed many library projects recently, but has seen a whole bunch in the last couple of years. The Commission has always found their relationship with the Seattle Public Library both fascinating and productive. The Commission was involved in some of the projects not just at the full Commission review level, but on a couple of projects at the Library's request participated on a one on one basis, pairing one of the commissioners with a particular project in order to better address and follow up on important design issues. The Commission thought that this process was very effective. The Central Library continues to amaze the Commission, and they applaud its success.

Seattle Fleets and Facilities

The Commission recognizes the complicated issues surrounding very public space such as the Municipal Civic Center. They commend the Department for creating strong, dynamic public space, and in particular the green design of the Joint Training Facility (JTF). The Commission will be working with Fleets and Facilities in the future reviewing projects funded by the Fire Safety Levy, including 12 of the city's 32 fire stations, over the next couple of years. The JTF was the first project funded by the levy and the Fire station 10 Improvement Project and Service Center is currently under review by the Commission. Addressing the issue of sustainability, which is of course near and dear to Seattle and the northwest in general, the Commission would certainly like to receive feedback from the departments. The issue of sustainability comes up often in project reviews. There is an obvious pro for wanting to have sustainable projects and green buildings, and an obvious con of budgets being tight and project managers not being able to see how they can afford the green facility. The Commission would appreciate hearing the departments' comments on this issue.

Seattle Center

The Commission commends Seattle Center's commitment to urban design and larger city wide issues. The Commission toured the Seattle Center before the Center's presentation in front of the Commission which discussed plans for the new shared Seattle Center/Gates Foundation parking garage. The tour was a great opportunity for the Commission to learn how and where Center staff works and the challenges of facility planning that they face. The Commission encourages other departments to offer field trips of sites prior to their reviews.

City Light

The Commission has not reviewed many City Light projects in the past couple of years, but did have the opportunity to review the Broad Street Substation Restoration and Facility Improvements at its 2/17/05 meeting. The review of that project was different than other projects because it does not involve much public interface. As a technically specialized project, it has a much more limited scope for Commission feedback and the design elements could be seen as more abstract. The project is visible on the edges but not on the inside. The Commission's review and discussion of the project was on a different level than more public-oriented buildings so it was an interesting exercise. The Commission will review two new sub stations in the next few years.

CIP Department Comments

- Over the last year, there have been a lot of projects that have truly benefited from the insights of the Commission and they appreciate it. On several of them, because of Commission input, they have made some fairly drastic changes to the approach of the project. Parks is taking Van Asselt Community Center back to scratch and are trying to figure out how to redistribute money. This was based on recommendations by the Commission and they found it very helpful.
- Thinks that the interaction has been good.
- Appreciates the Commission's plan to limit public comment because there are many forums for public comment and want to receive feedback from Design Commission at the reviews.
- Expresses issues with budget constraints, forecasting increased construction costs.
- Community presentations and meetings are charged to the project; having people always ask why our soft funds are so high is hard and it is difficult getting the public to understand that all of these presentations cost money.
- In regards to the sustainability issue, a lot of City projects were budgeted prior to the LEED initiative. At the end of the day, the department would rather spend additional money adding sustainable elements to the building as opposed to paying for the LEED certification. On two to four million dollar projects, \$40,000 to \$50,000 is spent to pay the consultants, contractors, etc. to get the certificate, as opposed to putting that money into sustainable features.
- Suggests creating some kind of analysis that demonstrates this cost tradeoff that can be given to Councilmembers to show them what is going on administratively with promoting and requiring sustainable design.
- Agrees that many projects have benefited from the Commission's design critique. During public meetings, there are quite often so many people at the table with so many different voices that projects end up being a mish mash of a bunch of little ideas. This is one of the biggest challenges, and departments try to have open processes and then have project managers weed through feedback and pare down the scope as to what really should be in a project. And to find that clarity, thinks that the feedback from the Commission really has helped.
- Conversely, on a few of the projects where there has been some significant use issues adopted through the public and political process that have become part of a project, it has not helped the department to hear from the Commission "why are you doing that, that is really a bad idea". Sometimes the department can't separate out those use issues, and this has caused tension between the Commission and the consultants.
- Asks the Commission to recognize public comments in their larger context. If a member of the public shows to comment at the Commission, they are likely just one of many comments that have been expressed
 - Asks if it would be helpful to present earlier to the Commission to help develop overall program before presenting at community meetings?
- Expressed that they will have to think about it.
- Comments that Commission members often have very different points of view, which is valuable, but even more valuable is if the Commission can provide a synthesis of recommendations to help guide the consultants after the review. Believes that the actions help synthesize this info, but encourages further follow up from the Commission to clarify how the consultants should go about making adjustments to meet the recommendations.

- Some misunderstandings from the public as to the influence of the Commission's comments on the process; in some cases, the public has felt that the department was listening to the Commission and not to them; expresses need to collectively educate the public on what the Commission is and what it is about.
- Project managers in one department are strongly encouraged to present projects to the Commission; but it is left to the discretion of each individual manager. Believes that the general feeling is that those who come to the Commission feel that the nature of the comments is often not relevant or beneficial to their design process. The department already reaches out for public opinion through other venues like Arts and Cultural Affairs, the community and they employ urban design consultants when there is a need and get good feedback from all of these different areas.
- Projects are really constrained tightly by grant budgets, usually more scope than budget available and doesn't seem like there is a whole lot of opportunity to do a bunch of creative things that the Commission would often like.
 - Asks what can be done to make the review more beneficial.
- Not so sure, would like to hear Commission's thoughts. One way they can help is by recommending low-cost treatments to enhance the urban design of streets, sidewalks or landscaping. Most departments are guided by design guidelines, so it may be more beneficial for the Commission to review those. Landscape architects on staff are aware of plantings that meet the guidelines.
 - There is a question of when it is helpful for Commission feedback. Certainly some projects are more concerned with the pedestrian environment and have greater urban design issues, i.e. Mercer Corridor. Viewing them early on allows more opportunity for effective feedback on these projects.
 - Explore other possibilities for the Commission to touch base with the department design staff early on in projects.
 - Informing the Commission of the limitations and the constraints that a department is under will help guide Commission recommendations
 - States that Fremont Bridge was of such interest to the Commission because it was stepping outside of what the department usually does, seized on that opportunity and recognized some of the design opportunities that came out of that. Asks if the Commission's feedback was helpful on this project
- The helpful thing was the Commission's support of the concept that had been developed.
- Expresses the value of demonstrating "stamp of review" from the Commission when promoting their project.
- About the sustainability issue and the City's policy that any new project over x amount of dollars needs to try to get LEED certification, would agree that some departments are finding that they would rather put in the elements and not go through the process of certification which takes extra money that could go into the project
- Asks if there is anyone in the city's Office of Sustainability who could do the certification for the departments.
 - Don't know if it is possible, seems feasible, something to look into.
- Comments that they did ultimately get certification on the Central Library.
 - Asks about branch libraries.
- A number of branch projects would be close, if not qualify for LEED status, if submitted, but the department hasn't gone through the process, and doesn't intend to. The levy funding was set before the goal was adopted. The department established a priority of putting an emphasis on the items that had an impact on long term operating costs and used green items that met this objective.

- Majority of Parks projects aren't built structures, so LEED certification is not possible, but the department has a system or checklist that targets what sustainable systems can be put in projects. This checklist records real things that the department is doing, many that are not certifiable by LEED standards, but still represent a huge leap over doing nothing. It allows the department to review what sustainable systems are working or will work. The department is willing to share the checklist with other departments.
 - The department gave a presentation to the Commission last November and also a year and a half ago when the checklist idea got started. Commission's comments were very supportive and encouraged that to be seen as a model for other CIP departments.
 - Asks if the checklist's use has been discussed more broadly among CIP departments
- No, thinks the department is particularly focused on landscaping elements, but thinks that this would be a good topic to take to the Capital Cabinet.
 - DOF staff in attendance agreed and offered to follow up by bringing the issue to the Capital Cabinet.
 - Get Office of Sustainability involved at the structural level, the city has got to do this from the top down.
- Continues to look at how departments can reduce soft costs, asks if there is a way to pare down number of design reviews. Asks Commission for advice on this.
 - Comments that the Commission doesn't want to be something the department project managers go to by default and not for the real sake of getting input.
 - What the Commission contributes to the process is not so much design solutions, but letting project managers know if they are or are not getting the value out of their design team, the design team either has the program nailed or they don't.
 - Look less at the details of the Commission's recommendations and more to the tenor of the Commission's comments. The Commission sees a lot of projects, design problems, etc. and can tell when designs are working and when they are not, project managers can see it, as well.
 - Asks, is it a benefit to departments or a nuisance when the Commission says that a project is not getting value out of the design dollars.
- There have been times when the stature of the Commission as peers, the message is heard better from the Commission than the project managers. Maybe project managers have expressed concern about elements, but hearing it from the Commission meeting better motivates the consultants to address the concerns. Project managers have called ahead of time to express concern about upcoming reviews and ask for help from the Commission. Thinks that the Commission does serve a useful role in that regard. Hopefully, project managers can communicate adequately to the consultants they hired and they should be responsive. But every project is different and thinks there are times when different voices different ways of saying it and the stature of the Commission has an effect on motivating the project managers to do what needs to be done.
 - Reminds project managers that all of them can call and ask the Commission for help and get a Commissioner to attend those meetings because it does help to close a loop in a small group setting unlike the bigger and more formal full reviews. The earlier in the process the better for remedying any real issues. Redirecting a design team kind of going awry is most helpful in the beginning.
- In regards to reducing soft costs, in recent weeks we have seen some projects, particularly straight-forward projects where the presentation is going well, in which proponents asked if they needed to come back and the Commission postured that an additional review would be needed. It's kind of a trust thing and departments need more give. If the

Commission feels like things are going well, maybe it makes sense to come back for very specific review of a detail, if needed.

- Thinks that it is helpful when Commission explicitly states what it would like to see at the next review. It tells the design team where to focus their efforts.
- Agrees that it is about the tone that the Commission gives rather than the detailed advice. Leaving with a general sense or tone is the key. The Commission tries during the final actions to craft that tone and then let the detailed comments follow. Recognizes that often times things said in dialogue are contradictory, but there is usually always a general sense that comes out on overall direction and support.
 - Asks if there is a value in doing this kind of meet and greet session with capital project management units.
 - The Commission went to the Parks Department one year and met with 25 to 30 project managers during their regular staff meeting. The Commission had a lengthy discussion about this responsibility during its annual retreat this year. It is important for the Commission to know that it is providing service to all departments in a meaningful way.
- Might be good to do outreach to consultants and go through a “if you are going to work with the city, this is what to look for” kind of session. Maybe in conjunction with the Design Review Boards.
 - Like the AIA training session.
 - Rely on the handbook which is very clear on good design and what the Commission expects.
 - At the last CIP briefing a couple of years ago, the Commission was very supportive of encouraging all departments to go outside of their comfort zone and bring on young more adventurous design firms, the commission recognizes that there is risk with that for CIP departments.
 - Gets back to the original purpose of the Commission which was to sit on selection panels, right now usually one Commission member sits on a selection panel, it used to be a lot more; but any involvement that the Commission can have with departments on consultant selection is a positive one.
 - Asks if it would help at all if a Commissioner was assigned to one or two different projects and then could attend community meetings and provide feedback at that point to make sure that what the Commission is saying is not absolutely opposite to what the community is saying so that there is more relevance in the advice that we give.
 - For lack of better term, that is what the Commission calls the triage approach when we send one or two commissioners to follow a project along if determined to need some extra attention outside of the review process; and it has happened on a couple of different projects
 - The advice can be given better on a one on one basis.
 - Typically, Commission staff meets with project teams especially new project teams upfront to help coach them through the process and walk them through what the handbook says and what they can expect and really try to prepare and prep the team as well as get the early information to share with the Commission up front. This is the beginning, thinks where the difficulty sometimes happens is later once the design is going down a path and how Commission can make sure that it gets that extra helping hand or is working.
 - appreciates the Commission because they want to have a say in the process, which means not so much as an approval, as the commission likes to participate a little bit in the process. It seems that the projects that have done really well are ones where the project manager presented to the Commission, something that

- wasn't quite finished so that the Commission could provide feedback. Projects that are actually more done at time of presentation have fared worse
- The typical or seeming mantra for the Commission has been come early, come often. And in the budget crisis and recognizing people feel they make compromises all the time, err on the side of coming early if can't come often or at least come early because that is really when the design decisions are being made and seeing them later, there is a disconnect.
 - one of the other things just getting back to the question of consultants is that the Commission sees a range of projects. A couple of reviews ago, four ex-commission chairs were in the room presenting projects. All of them were prepared and knew exactly what to say. On the other hand there are people who are not quite as clear about the roll of the Commission and treat it like a community meeting. Thinks that is where we need to coach better.
 - Asks about the state of design in the city of Seattle
- Expresses that the only regret that they have is that the Central Library gets so much attention and doesn't think that the branch projects have gotten the attention that they deserve. Are very pleased that the branches are open. Asks if the library doing anything to spread information about the branch libraries, handouts, etc.
 - They will talk to their communications office. Talked to a freelance writer today who is doing something for the times and wanted more information about the branches and the way she happened upon that query was she went on one of our central library tours and the tour guide at the end talked about the branch program. We do need to figure out good ways to communicate we have a lot of information on our website but of course not everyone uses the website as an information tool. Conference at the end of April, where we have a lot of library-world people coming in who know that we have a day devoted to the branch program.
 - Reminds the Commissioners and project managers that the annual site tour will be held in the fall; in an effort to review upcoming projects. Last August-September, the Commission toured Beacon Hill Library, High Point, and others. The Commission is eager to do it again this year keep that in mind for this fall and if there is a way for the Commission to meet with some of your staff on site that would be great.
 - Asks what is the future for all of the departments, CIP projects
 - 2007 bond measure for libraries, bulk of large complicated projects are complete by next year
 - Expresses how the Commission turned around some critical projects, here to promote great design, not good design in our city, the feedback I would appreciate is how can we help you reach your goals in our comments and how we present minutes.
 - Questions how to get there with the money they have. Earlier on that the Commission can get involved to let the department know if headed in the right/wrong direction. Suggests pulling Commissioners' aside not in front of the consultants, to say they don't see how you are going to get there. The department's reticence grows further down the line no where to go; there is no contingency on the community center levy.
 - Asks how expensive it is to maintain open space. Sometimes in the park the gestures don't have to be elaborate and detailed and very messy just one or two very bold, evocative gestures, it is not always about money but about what the department does to the park. The Commission has to be more aware that there are real limitations on budgets, particularly in public work. Generally speaking, good design costs more than bad design.