



**APPROVED**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING  
June 19, 2008**

**Seattle  
Design  
Commission**

Convened: 8:30am  
Adjourned: 2:45pm

**Greg Nickels**  
*Mayor*

**Karen Kiest**  
*Chair*

**Tasha Atchison**

**Brendan Connolly**

**John Hoffman**

**Mary Johnston**

**Juanita LaFond**

**Dennis Ryan**

**Norie Sato**

**Darrell Vange**

**Darby Watson**

**Guillermo Romano**  
*Executive Director*

**Valerie Kinast**  
*Coordinator*

Projects Reviewed

1200 Stewart  
Mercer Corridor Improvements Project  
King Street Station  
Green Factor Audit  
Myrtle Reservoir Park

Design Commissioners Present

Karen Kiest, Chair  
Tasha Atchison  
Brendan Connolly  
John Hoffman  
Mary Johnston  
Juanita LaFond  
Dennis Ryan  
Darrell Vange  
Darby Watson

Staff Present

Guillermo Romano  
Valerie Kinast  
Tom Iurino  
Ian Macek



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**19 June 2008**

**Project: 1200 Stewart**

**Phase: Alley Vacation**

**Last Reviews:**

**Presenters:**

Jack McCullough, McCullough Hill  
Guy Michaelson, Berger Partnership  
Dave Reddish, Sclater Partners Architects  
Jay Reeves, Sclater Partners Architects

**Attendees:**

Beverly Barnett, SDOT  
Jessie Clawson, McCullough Hill  
Fred Jala, Berger Partnership  
Eric Midby, Lexas Companies, Inc.  
Jeff Schramm, Transportation Engineering NorthWest, LLC  
Kristen Simpson, SDOT  
Joe Strobele, Lexas Companies, Inc.  
Geoff Wentlandt, DPD  
Bradley Wilburn, DPD

Time: 1.0 hours

(SR170 /RS0605)

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## **ACTION**

**The Design Commission unanimously approves the first step of the alley vacation process; the removal of the alley does not encumber the function of the urban fabric. In fact, the commission agrees that the existing alley configuration may be causing unsafe conditions.**

**The Commission requests the following information at the next meeting:**

- **Map showing other proposed developments in the immediate vicinity, especially ones across Minor/Stewart**
- **Current and future pedestrian counts to the extent they are available**
- **Area and square footage of the alley**
- **Contextual map of the area with actual and planned pedestrian crossings over Denny**

**The Commission did not vote on the quality of the public benefits package, but makes the following suggestions and comments:**

- **12 ft. sidewalks on Denny are not adequate as this is a primary pedestrian route between Capitol Hill and Downtown. Work closely with the city and stakeholders group to get feedback and go forward with some of their recommendations. Consider a building setback on both Minor and Denny as a potential public benefit.**
- **Maintain consistency with DPD's Plan for Denny Way to the extent such plans exist. The team may have to take the initiative in proposing a sidewalk program to be used more broadly along Denny Way.**
- **Concern that the rain gardens in the street right-of-way may present a barrier and make the walkways additionally tight.**

- **Consider an open space on the corner of Minor and Stewart or a retail use that would enliven and enhance that corner instead of building to the lot line.**
- **The DC is concerned over the lack of a plan or specific direction from the City of Seattle. While the Commission appreciates the efforts that DPD has done to address Denny Way design, they recommend that more resources be given to urban conditions and proactive planning vs. reactive planning.**
- **The base of the building appears rather massive and not very porous. Consider using smaller forms, lowering the scale to a pedestrian level and increasing functional and visual connections through this development.**
- **Work with SDOT on the location of pedestrian crossings on Denny Way. Their locations will have an important impact on the pedestrian flow around the building. The reconfiguration of Pontius on the north side of Denny Way may provide an opportunity to create a new crossing.**
- **Consider `consolidating the driveways and curb cuts on Minor. The Commission appreciates the narrowing of the pedestrian crossing on Minor and Yale, as well as the bulb-outs and buffer on Denny Way.**
- **More design attention needs to be paid to the service area, the blind façade portion of the corner and the relationship with the public realm, as well as the retail on the Yale corner and the relationship to the Metro stop.**
- **Support the incorporation of a public art component on the proposed sidewalk garden areas. We always recommend the participation of local artists.**
- **We encourage further exploration of the sidewalk garden areas on both corners of Denny.**
- **We encourage the design team to clarify the character of the “Main Gate” element on Denny, which incorrectly suggests it is the principal entrance. This reference is not consistent and might create a wayfinding conflict with a drop off area, pedestrian circulation and public space.**

## **Project Presentation**

### *Project Background*

The team worked with the Design Review Board before coming to the Design Commission. They have finished the early design process, but have not applied for a MUP. The team will incorporate any comments from the DC into subsequent designs for future meetings.

The site is bordered by Denny, Stewart and Minor, is the cornerstone for the development of this area, and a gateway for downtown. Denny Way acts as the barrier. It carries 24,000 vehicles a day and is where the grid shifts. Stewart is a one-way in the SW direction, carrying 16,000 cars a day. Minor carries 4,000 cars a day while the alley has 200-300 cars a day. There are a number of curb-cuts that exit onto the arterials from the site. There are a large number of vehicles that take the Yale cut to go to Southbound I-5. The area also has a high number of accidents.

Although the alley is signed as a one-way going northwest bound, there is two-way traffic. In addition, the alley does not intersect onto Denny at a 90 degree angle, making it

difficult to navigate. Trucks entering and exiting the alley onto either Denny or Stewart need to go into a second lane of traffic to make the turn. There have been a number of other alley vacations in this area.

The buildings in all massing studies will have a commercial base, hotel use, and condos in the towers. It will be a LEED Silver building, maximizing the height at 400 ft. on all models.

### *Massing Study One*

The first proposal will not vacate the alley. It will have three residential towers with a 120 ft. podium, above grade parking, and street level commercial. The hotel drop-off, residential parking, and service functions would be integrated. With the amount of hotel space and residential units, there would be a tremendous increase in the number of vehicles using the alley. The alley would not be able to fit all of the uses that are required, so access is put onto arterial streets.

### *Massing Study Two*

This proposal is a two-tower option with an 85 ft. podium, and below grade parking. It would require both a subterranean and aerial vacation of the alley to put parking below and span beams for commercial above. The DRB commented about the amount of coverage over the alley, and keeping vehicles in the alley for service, hotel, etc. They were also concerned about the amount of traffic put onto Denny Way.

### *Massing Study Three: Preferred*

This proposal has two towers, split as far apart as they can be to allow light and air. All parking is below grade, and the podium remains at 85 ft. Service is located off Minor and was put in the least visible corner of the project. The team was challenged to find uses that could be put along Denny to activate the sidewalk because there is no on-street parking. Entrance into the site is only from Stewart to the internal arrival area. The building footprint comes to the street edge. The arrival court and indoor courtyard are all interior spaces.

The team spent five hours with the DRB. The hotel needs a drop-off area, and the DRB wanted the team to move away from a street drop-off to an interior drop-off.

In addition, the eastern tower was brought down to the base to act as gateway. The team talked to the DRB about open space at the ground floor and the DRB stated it is not particularly hospitable; therefore, the team focused on other ways to activate the space.

### *Public Benefits*

Streetscape and the public realm benefits:

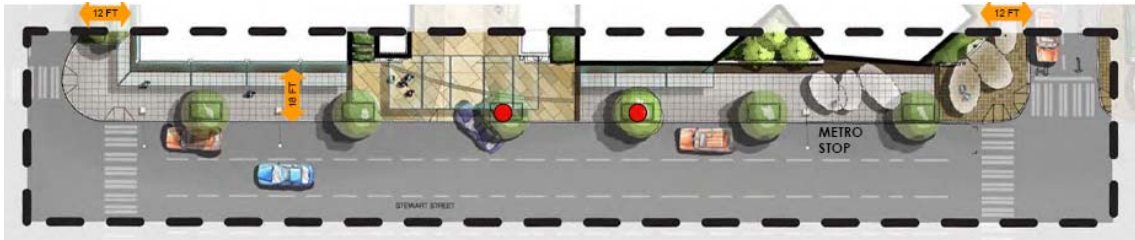
- Streetscape planting exceeding requirements



**Figure 1: Current building design**

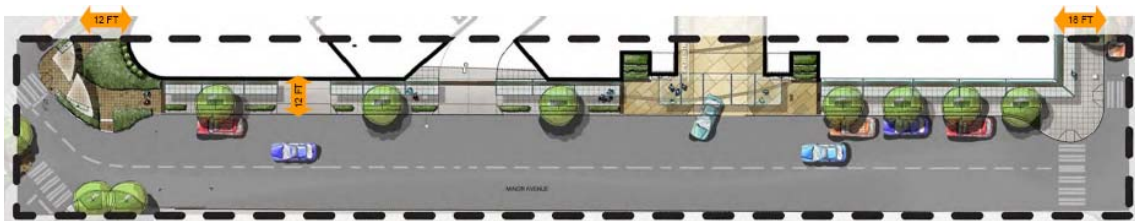
- Rain gardens, street furnishings, public art at a number of locations (work with and select from the Mayors roster, would be paid for by the project)
- “Urban gardens” at Minor and Denny and Yale and Denny
- Weather protection (canopy and freestanding structures)

#### Stewart Street:



- Widened sidewalks to 18 ft., art bus stop, lean bars, bike racks.
- Adding two new street trees. Working with Metro to enhance the stop. Specialty paving will be extended through the egress to invite the public in.

#### Minor Avenue:



- Lowest volume street and the only one with parking.
- Landscape exceeding requirements with the intent that the landscape be rain gardens. Sidewalks are 12 ft. so could be difficult. Curb bulbs, bike racks, rain gardens.
- Service access, parking access and egress to interior drop-off.

#### Denny Way:



- Landscape
- 12 ft. sidewalk width. Provide a buffer so the pedestrian experience feels safer. Site furnishings (artistic railings), rain garden, widened sidewalk “eddies”. The sidewalk widens to 20 ft. at the entrance with special paving.

#### Denny Divide:

- Connecting South Lake Union with Denny Triangle development. One of the goals of the project is how to get people to the crosswalks for safe crossing.

Denny Way and Minor – large width to cross.

- Take part of the vehicular realm and put it back into the pedestrian realm. Reduce pedestrian crossing distance from 100 ft. to 24 ft.
- Improved traffic flow and control
- Rain garden and reduced impervious area
- Art providing partial weather protection

Denny Way and Yale Ave

- Reduce pedestrian crossing distance from 60 ft. to 24 ft.
- Enlarged public pedestrian space
- Improved traffic flow and control
- Bus stop improvements
- Art providing partial weather protection

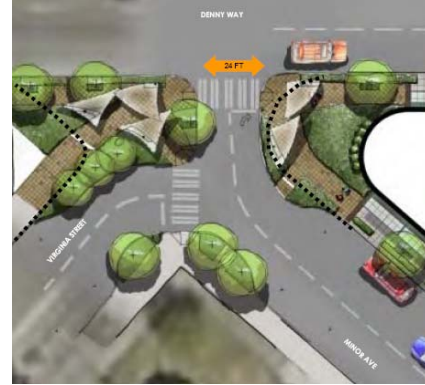
### Public Comments

**Bradley Wilburn, DPD, Land Use Planner for the project**

- The project has recently gone through the design review process. The DRB felt comfortable with the project moving forward with the understanding that after the meeting with Seattle Design Commission there may be substantial changes to the proposal as it relates to providing a public benefit in exchange for approving the alley vacation request.
- The DRB was concerned with the Denny Way street experience, the team has not done enough at street-level. Suggest the design team be more gracious at street-level to open up the pedestrian realm. The vast internal lobby areas fronting Denny Way continues to be problematic in achieving a greater connection to the pedestrian corridor. The Board was willing to take suggestions from the DC on Stewart and Minor. Along Yale they asked for the building to be solidly grounded, expressing itself more fully and opening up to the public domain.

**Beverly Barnett, SDOT**

- The odd block shape and the way the alley interconnects with a principal arterial at an odd angle are problematic. Vacating the alley makes sense, and gives more flexibility to address the unique grid shape.
- The structure is pretty imposing from the pedestrian environment. The way the building engages with the public should be addressed. Minor has the least amount of traffic and there are many entrances on what is a neighborhood street. Putting all the vehicular entries on the street that could be the most pedestrian friendly is a concern.
- Stepping back at one of the corners could be a way to provide more open space.
- Support increasing pedestrian space along Denny Way.



**Figure 3: Improvements at Denny and Minor**



**Figure 3: Improvements at Denny and Yale**

- Privately acquired art in private space can be addressed in reviews; however, art in the public ROW would include Arts Commission review, and Metro if including the bus stop.

**Kristen Simpson, SDOT**

- Haven't reviewed the traffic revision at the corners, but the concept has been received positively.
- Reducing the crossing distance is a priority.
- Stewart will be a peak hour transit lane, and could be replaced with a permanent transit lane.

**Geoff Wentlandt, DPD**

- Many of the site specific issues are ones all along the Denny to I-5 corridor. What the team is proposing for the grid change could be replicated along the corridor.
- Looking at the buffer treatment so it doesn't become a barrier, as well as at the crossings and how the neighborhoods can be knit together. There is the desire for additional pedestrian crossings along Denny Way.
- The substation will be reconfigured so Pontius will be realigned. This would create surplus City Light property that could be redeveloped.
- Still in the process of determining what the street experience will be like, but Denny will continue to be a very busy street. The goal is to provide a better experience while still getting vehicles and pedestrians through the corridor and provide crossings.

**Commissioners' Comments**

- The only missing piece of information is the location of the other proposed project in this area. It will also be useful to know where other MUP projects are placing their backdoors when assessing the public benefit.
- Is the existing sidewalk width on Denny Way 12 ft.?
  - Denny is currently 11 ft. or so. The project will meet the sidewalk requirements.
- Seems Minor is the street that vehicular and service access should use. See no need for retaining the alley.
- How many current and future pedestrians are using these routes?
  - Only have counts at each intersection node during peak hours.
- The proposal has internal vehicular circulation, but it is private.
- The walls around the service bay will be blank. At what point along the longest façade will there be an enhancement to the pedestrian realm?
  - Looking into making that corner a green wall. If the area is larger due to the intersection improvements it could be seen as a backdrop.
- What activities are flanking the entrance area?
  - It will include common areas for the residential and hotel cores. There will be glass to provide permeability, but programming hasn't been set.
- Regularizing the intersections does a lot to make sense of the neighborhood.
- Has the team considered alley relocation? Big suburban blocks in urban locations. There are other ways to provide public benefit

- It would be nice to know the future development of the area as there will be increased pedestrian counts.
- Partial alley vacation could be considered to provide more light in the area.
- Limiting the connectivity of the streets by pulling the buildings out to the corners.
- 12 ft. sidewalks are not adequate along Denny. The grand gesture would be reinforced in the sidewalks were wider.
- Don't recommend rain gardens along Denny given the width proposed. Permeable pavements may be a better choice.
- Disappointed in the lack from the city in characterizing what the area is and what is going on there. The city needs to stay ahead of the game and not look at the design project by project.
- Vacating the alley is ok, but strongly encourage the team to maintain the morphology of smaller forms and pedestrian connections that the alley brings to the built environment.
- Although the area may not look like a pedestrian area now, it is one. The DC needs to support that.
- The Pontius connection is exciting and should be paid attention to.
- When determining if the corner at Minor and Stewart should be solid or opened up, it would be useful to see what is going on at other corners.
- Stewart has great potential to be a pedestrian conduit down to the water. Any enhancements are a great addition.
- Entrance to Denny leads to a hotel lobby then a port-cochere, which can be difficult to navigate as a pedestrian.
- Denny is a critical link from Capitol Hill to downtown. North face, not an area where people will linger.
- Disappointed that vehicular access is so spread out. Port-cochere could be consolidated to one street.
- SW or SE part of the block can be used in creating the largest impact on providing pedestrian space.
- Wider sidewalks or gathering nodes. 12 ft. on Minor and Denny are too small.
- Would rather see the sidewalks wider than a public open space.
- Support the street reconfiguration and providing more open space on the site.
- Like the fence on Denny without having a physical barrier.
- The fence is out of context with what could be happening.
- None of the interior space will be used by the public. It is space for hotel and residential guests.
- Entry on Denny is misleading because people won't really use it.
- There is as much retail on Minor as can be expected with service uses.
- Treatment at the corner by Minor will be a challenge.
- Metro layover will be removed. Not putting landscape there doesn't make sense.
- Underground parking for hybrid car is in an area not meant for the public.
- Skepticism about the public benefits page. DRB create a façade that contains the area of the street, not as much to build right to the street.
- What is the area of the alley?
- Onus is on the DC to provide vision.



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**19 June 2008**

**Project: Mercer Corridor Improvements Project**

**Phase: Briefing**

**Last Reviews: 2/15/2007, 8/2/2007, 9/6/2007**

**Presenters:** Angela Brady, SDOT  
Sarah Durkee, LMN

**Attendees:**

Time: 1.0 hours

(SR169 /RS0606)

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## Project Presentation

### *Project Background*

SDOT is working with the Department of Parks and Recreation and the Parks Review Committee to infuse as many Lake Union Park elements into the urban design of Valley Street as possible. Valley St. will incorporate trees that are found in LU Park, and will have an irregular placement of trees to strengthen the park-like character. Two black granite

stone benches will be positioned on the north side of Valley at Terry. Mercer will have an in-sidewalk LED light treatment located in the sidewalk at the Green Fingers. Boren and Mercer will also have a tessellated column sculpture commissioned by a local artist. This art column design has been approved by the PAAC. Rain gardens will be located along the east side of Westlake (north of Valley), and a wet median on Mercer, which will both provide sustainable natural drainage stormwater treatment.



**Figure 4: Improvements at Boren and Mercer**



**Figure 5: Valley Street improvements.**

During the early design stages, the design team had proposed to use an overhead hanging lighting scheme (catenary lighting) on Valley St. The team re-evaluated this lighting proposal after an initial meeting with the Design Commission where consistency in lighting throughout the project was brought up as an issue. The team has been working hard to create a consistent lighting scheme throughout the project area, but also incorporate some of the special lighting treatments used within the Park along Valley St. A final decision regarding lighting design has been reached as follows:

**Mercer St.:** Use Chief Seattle base poles with alladin arm fixtures for street lighting; street lighting will include an LED finial lighted band at the top of each light to make a statement along Mercer; traffic signal poles will also include Chief Seattle bases to match light pole bases (these are larger than typical poles and will require special larger castings); pedestrian lighting will be supplemented by adjacent developers.

**Valley St.:** The team worked with Parks to select pedestrian lighting that would complement Parks lighting; After looking at several options, the team decided on using black Flex lights along Valley Street with black Chief Seattle bases on the traffic signal poles.

The Chief Seattle base will also be used along Westlake and 9<sup>th</sup> Ave. The poles on Fairview that hold the overhead lines for Route 70 bus vary greatly in diameter and will remain smooth rather than creating multiple Chief Seattle base castings.

A 2x2 score cut paving pattern will be used on the sidewalk at all locations except on the north side of Valley just adjacent to LU Park, where we will be using a 4x4 score pattern to match Parks sidewalks. In addition, a dense under story of plants is being used. Street names will be inlayed in the sidewalk at corners.

**Commissioners' Comments:**

- Going with the more contemporary fixture works well in this area. The globes were thrown in there originally because there were already some located there.
- Is signage your purview?
  - There are street signs, which will be the standard City signs. The goal is to use the poles that there are and have as many joint poles as there can be.
- Is construction management planned?
  - That is the next hurdle. Construction will not be started until next summer. SDOT does have staging plans and have been talking with local businesses already.
- Is this project in the Urban Mobility Plan?
  - It is not. Looking to extend 2-way Mercer to Elliott, which is part of the Urban Mobility Plan.
- Appreciate the overall simplification of the plan and the lighting.
- Appreciate the improved connection with the park
- Congratulations on securing the landscape plan for gateway at I-5 on and off ramps.
- Appreciate the art.

**Recusal: Commissioner Watson**

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**19 June 2008**      **Project: King Street Station**

**Phase:** Briefing

**Last Reviews:** 8/18/2005, 5/2/2006

**Presenters:** Trevina Wang, SDOT

**Attendees:** Mark Palermo, SDOT  
Vinh Nguyen, SDOT

Time: 1.0 hours

(SR169 /RS0606)

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**The Commission made the following comments on the King Street Station briefing:**

- **It is the City’s responsibility – not just SDOT’s – to develop a larger concept and long-range plan for this critical area. This planning work needs to involve the appropriate stakeholders including SDOT, DPD, Sound Transit and Metro, Amtrak, Pioneer Square, and South Downtown, etc. and address functional, qualitative and iconic objectives for this multi-modal urban node in Seattle.**
- **The new design team is being selected for the immediate building restoration and seismic upgrade work should be encouraged to participate in steps that move this project towards Phase III, including issues of street infrastructure and circulation connections, development and zoning potentials.**
- **Encourage SDOT to move towards a stakeholder’s workshop and the Design Commission offers its support.**
- **Understand it is the City’s responsibility to take on the Phase III, but not specifically SDOT.**

## **Project Presentation**

### *Project Background*

King Street Station was designed by Reed and Stem. The clock tower was inspired by Campanile at San Marco Piazza, Venice Italy. The station opened to the public in May 1906 and cost \$450,000 to construct. It is on the National Register of Historic Places, as well as designated as a local landmark, and part of Pioneer Square Preservation District. The station has 28 daily trains that leave the station. Amtrak leases the first floor and will add 8-9 trains to the schedule this year. The 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> floors are vacant.

The City of Seattle acquired the station four months ago. The design to this point had been done by WSDOT. The goals of the project are to restore the historic building, make the building self-sufficient, and turn it into a multi-modal transit hub. The work done will take these goals into consideration. The project will be completed in three phases:

- Phase IA      Roof replacement
- Phase IB      1<sup>st</sup> floor exterior restoration, seismic and structural upgrade
- Phase II      Leasing and tenant improvements
- Phase III      Multi-modal

The roof replacement will include using green terracotta tiles, repair and replace windows in the clock tower, remove the microwave dish and support structure, restore glass tile

roof on tower, and add exterior lights to provide transition lighting between clock faces and base of building.

The 1<sup>st</sup> floor restoration will reference the WSDOT designs, but new ones will need to be made due to seismic requirement changes and the desire to attain LEED Silver status.

Phase II will consider creating A/A office space, a boutique hotel or other use. Amtrak is currently the largest tenant and pays \$1 year for the space, utilities, basic maintenance and security. SDOT is looking into different ways to redevelop the station. The team is hoping in the future that revenue from the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> floors will financially sustain the whole building.

SDOT is in negotiations with WSDOT to transfer the funds to restore the building. The project has \$26.5 million so far: \$10 million from “bridging the gap”, \$20.5 million from WSDOT (\$4 million has been spent). The team is also looking at tax credits, Federal, State and Local grants, and sustainability related grants and incentives.

### **Commissioners’ Comments**

- Does Sound Transit use the station?
  - No, only the platforms. When talking about the station, it is just the station proper.
- Planning for Phase III should be started now.
  - It will take \$80-100 million to upgrade the infrastructure surrounding the station and the capacity has already been exceeded.
- When is preliminary planning for Phase III going to begin?
  - SDOT is looking into it, but there is no allocated money. The main goal is restoration due to its current state and the funding that has already gone into it. Also trying to determine how much should be city and private funding.
- Development is going to take place. If there is no place for the public infrastructure, it will all be reactionary.
- There are many transportation agencies involved in the project that use the station, have they contributed money?
  - Sound Transit has contributed some money to the station restoration.
- How long is the Amtrak \$1 lease?
  - It expires in 2011 and will be renegotiated. SDOT has inherited many BNSF agreements with Amtrak, not sure what the flexibility is in increasing the rent.
- What is underneath the plaza/parking area?
  - Baggage area of the 1<sup>st</sup> floor.
- What will the design contract be for?
  - Restoration and seismic upgrade portion.
- There has been talk to use the current parking as public space.
- Encourage the city to look at a development proposal similar to Union Station.
- When will be a good time to get stakeholders together?
  - Waiting to figure out who the design team is first.

- The Commission is concerned with how the building relates to the surrounding blocks, and how it becomes a focal point to a larger multi-modal transportation neighborhood.
- Will the people you hire have any input into that at all?
  - A little bit. They would be helping SDOT. Haven't put much effort into that at this point, due to lack of funding. After most of the restoration process has started there will be more time to pay attention to this.
- Who is the project manager?
  - Jude Wilson
- Most decisions are being made by separate jurisdictions and are a done deal. It would be a shame if the station is not a player in these decisions.
- Will ask the deputy mayor if there is a way to spearhead a stakeholders meeting for this area.
- Will the glass tower be lit from within?
  - It is lit, as well as the clock tower.
- Will the project replace the tiles that are fine?
  - No, just replacing broken tiles.
- What about the tiles in the tower?
  - They were from the former skylights, not the tower.

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**19 June 2008**      **Project: Commission Business**

Time: 1.0 hours

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- Action Items**
- A. Submit Timesheets
  - B. Minutes of June 5, 2008
    - Approved
- Discussion Items**
- C. 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Update
  - D. Announcements
  - E. Outside Commitments

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**19 June 2008**

**Project: Green Factor Audit**

**Phase: Briefing**

**Last Reviews:**

**Presenters:** Dave LaClergue, DPD

**Attendees:** Rebecca Herzfeld, Central Staff

Brice Maryman, SVR Design

Peg Stacheli, SVR Design

Time: 1.0 hours

(SR220 /RS)

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**The Commission appreciates Dave LaClergue's briefing and made the following comments on the Green Factor Audit:**

- **Supportive and excited about the impact the Green Factor has on design, but urges caution as completed examples of projects are still not available nor their benefits measured.**
- **Recommends creating definitions and clarifications of different components of the Green Factor. For example, how a green roof is defined compared to other rooftop landscaping will be helpful**
- **The Green Factor tries to address a broad range of environmental concerns, such as stormwater, but need to remember a primary importance is its ecological value of livable materials and its important priority of increasing biomass for its inherent benefits.**
- **Hope that the Green Factor as applied to multifamily may be a mechanism to improve the current townhome designs that people are concerned about.**
- **Encourage the preservation of significant trees. The definition, identification and preservation of these are important to the city. The Commission encourages adjusting the Green Factor to accommodate additional preservation.**

### **Project Presentation**

#### *Project Background*

The Green Factor is part of the neighborhood business district strategy and was a replacement for the previous landscaping and open space requirements. Current challenges in the city are dealing with livability in an increasingly dense city, stormwater runoff as main source of contaminants in Puget Sound, and air quality. Anticipated challenges include flooding, urban heat island effects, and energy costs. Green Factor is a landscape requirement that values both the aesthetic and ecological functions of planted areas. Several Green Factor projects are under construction, but none have been completed yet.

The 2007 Audit was conducted by UW graduate student Liz Stenning. The Audit looked at MUP applications, permitted projects, interview results, and examples. In the study there were 60 confirmed Green Factor MUPs, of which 42 landscape plans/score sheets were obtained. The parcel size varies from 6,000 to 440,000 sq. ft.

The study looked at how often each type of landscape element was used, with lawns and green roofs having the largest areas. It was also determined that ROW plays a large role in how the Green Factor is obtained. Projects with more ROW have an easier time meeting it.

The key findings include:

- Landscape Architects are involved much earlier in the site design
- Confusion about certain landscape elements: lawn, green walls, water features
- Frustrating disconnects between DPD and SDOT – shrub height, pervious paving
- Numerous concerns about inspections and enforcement

#### *Proposed revisions*

A new score sheet is being developed that includes the following revisions:

- Areas deeper than 2 ft of soil encourage more filtration. The 0.7 for lawn was really what that credit was getting at.
- Increased factor for exceptional trees and existing trees.
- New credit for structural soils and similar products that are load bearing, but promote porous soils.
- Clarified drought-tolerant or native plant species.
- Areas landscaped with harvested rainwater called out as a separate credit.
- Landscaping in food cultivation

Green Factor is proposed for inclusion in multifamily residential. Typical projects currently score in the 0.4-0.5 GF range. Case studies could reach 0.6 through a reasonable combination of pervious paving, rainwater irrigation, and/or vegetative walls, so that is the factor being recommended for all multifamily zones in the city.

#### **Commissioners' Comments**

- Some feel this is just a way to make green roofs happen. Is this valid?
  - Fair to say the Green Factor encourages non-traditional landscape coverage. Most projects where people say they have to use a green roof can incorporate other elements, but choose not to.
- Who defines exceptional trees?
  - There is a set of criteria from SDOT that is used.
- Are you defining what constitutes a green roof?
  - Defined in the director's rule as all plantings above the first storey. If you do the green roof credit you can also count the trees and shrubs if they are used on the roof.
- Audit built projects for design quality and functional benefits?
- Will MFR be the same system and replace the open space requirement?
  - Yes, just setting the minimum requirement higher.
- Is SDOT going to do something to allow permeable pavement?
  - SDOT to allow permeable pavement in the main part of the sidewalk.
- The Green Factor set out to achieve a certain goal, but didn't see anything on that.



- That will take a long term study. SPU is doing some monitoring on green roofs.
- Is it true that green roofs have a larger factor than planting trees?
  - Trees come out equal to or larger than the 0.7 for green roofs based on the way the square footage is calculated.
- Trying to be all things to all people. Should emphasize it is creating more biomass in the city and it is an ecological benefit.
- Permeable paving does not compare to having a tree in the long run, and that should be taken into account.
- Careful not to promise benefits that you are unsure of.
  - Hope to address that with the new stormwater code.
- How much impact will instituting a 0.6 multifamily factor have on positive change and is it high enough?
  - MF proposed code requires lower fences and landscaping on both sides which will be more than what is happening now in multifamily zones.
- DPD permit review treats subdivided parcels (i.e., townhouse projects) as lots of small, separate projects, required to meet Green Factor independently. Should allow for combined design.
- Encourage the push for additional tree preservation.
- Alarmed with the Livable South Downtown factor of 0.4. Is that an aggressive goal for high density residential?
  - Haven't started looking at case studies but continuing to look at what should be recommended.
- Are there other US cities that have a Green Factor?
  - Puyallup might, and DC and Philadelphia are in the process of developing their own model.

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**19 June 2008**

**Project: Myrtle Reservoir Park**

**Phase: Schematic Design**

**Last Reviews: 04/03/2008**

**Presenters:** Virginia Hassinger, Department of Parks & Recreation  
Jim Yamaguchi, Nakano Associates

**Attendees:** Tracy Record, West Seattle Blog

Time: 1.0 hours

(SR169 /RS0605)

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## **ACTION**

**In a vote of 5-2 the Design Commission approves schematic design with the following comments and recommendations:**

- **Recognize the as-built conditions on the site are tending to vary from the schematic design assumptions in terms of grading and spillway elements. But encourage the team to embrace the changing conditions as an opportunity for design improvement and/or adaptation.**
- **Concern there is redundancy with Highpoint, the school and the play area. Create the park as a complementary resource, rather than one that competes with surrounding elements. Support providing facilities that meet teenage group needs.**
- **Encourage incorporating the SPU maintenance access road as a passive pathway.**
- **Concern over the lack of tactile material diversity in the walkways. Encourage the exploration of a diverse material experience, especially in the circulation pathways.**
- **The plan seems overly formalized and premature without responding to design development considerations.**
- **Respect the park standards and maintenance concerns for materiality, but urge the design to respond to the reality of materials and be true to what they are and how they should be used.**
- **The design is lacking a strong concept or intent. The design language is aggregated, eclectic, and not consistent.**
- **Encourage tree density and decisive planting as the trees are too far removed and spaced out and seem undecided in their purpose.**
- **Encourage integrating the viewpoint with the eco-lawn and the walking loop.**
- **Concern with the 12' chain link fence. Encourage continued thinking and dialog with SPU on arts or other opportunities.**
- **Integrate the isolated corner of the site into the design.**
- **Encourage the team to create a strong legibility from the street of this as a park resource and improve the clarity of entrances.**

**Dissenting votes based on the opinion that significant changes in the character of the design are needed.**

## **Project Presentation**

### *Project Background*

SPU designed the reservoir before the pro-parks project was created. The team is waiting on the final grading plan from SPU before they can be put in the site plan. SPU does not want any vegetation around their facilities. However, the team has proposed some plantings to lessen the starkness of their industrial presence.

The schematic design has been tweaked and refined, and the team has responded to the Commissions comments. The main entrance has been changed to create a more gradual increase due to the current elevations. The team is still working to achieve the ADA accessibility and movement within the site. Benches will be located throughout for respite. Seat walls have also been incorporated around the play area. Eco-lawn will be used in areas of the parks, which gives the area a natural look and feel.

The drainage swale drains away the water that the lid captures and goes into a spillway that is quite large. The team hopes to soften its appearance. There is a catch basin at the end and a second detachment basin that flows back into the reservoir.

A skatepark will not be included; however, there is an area where a skatepark could be included at a later time.

### **Commissioners' Comments**

- Is everything proposed budgeted for?
  - Yes.
- It looks like there is a play structure adjacent to the site when looking at the aerial. Is the plan creating redundancy?
  - That was an issue that came out in the public meeting as part of the argument in favor of a skatepark.
- Does SPU plan on painting the tanks?
  - They have a program coming up in the next couple years, but unsure of the details.
- Is the darker green a bioswale near the play area?
  - It is a bioswale that captures the runoff from the hardscape and goes to a rain garden. It is separate drainage feature.
- Does that suggest that some portion of the lawn or play area is going to be soggy all the time?
  - It will capture the water and go to the rain garden, so it shouldn't be soggy.
- Is the SPU access road 20' wide with curbs?
  - It is no longer that large, and has been reduced. Also, the public desired to have an internal loop rather than incorporating the access road as the major route.
- What is the access road surface?
  - Asphalt and it has already been built.
- What are the surfaces of the other paths?

- It is park standard concrete. Asphalt is more of a maintenance issue than concrete.
- Unfortunate there can't be more surface options.
- Have other paving materials been explored? Or do all paths and steps need to be the same materials?
  - There is that possibility. Originally looking at porous materials, but the new superintendent said to use concrete to reduce maintenance costs.
- If the paths are in concrete they don't look as 'loopy' as shown. Concrete has incredible form possibilities and scoring patterns. There needs to be a hierarchy of paths, which isn't showing up on the plans.
- SPU facilities should be integrated into the design. What are the fencing materials?
  - The fence will be open black chain-link. SPU has stated that there are homeland security measures that regulate what the fence materials can be. Originally looked at connecting the viewpoint to the site, but a staircase can't be put through the SPU area.
- What is inside the fence?
  - Asphalt parking lot and access to the underground structure. It all looks industrial. Even SPU signage would be nice.
- SPU has some arts money for their green initiative, and may be able to incorporate art in their area.
- Not clear what the concept plan is supposed to be.
- Encourage pushing the viewpoint into the eco-lawn area.
- Opportunity to naturalize area along the bioswale, perhaps by adding more trees.
- Is the project proposing to redo the Myrtle Street Viewpoint?
  - No, Seattle Parks and Recreation has no ownership of that area.
- Why is the upper portion of the park by SPU getting irrigated?
  - Not sure.
- The Superintendent wants to use materials that are long-lasting, so the team should make sure they are in the right place.
- Project has two or three street edges that should read as a park.
- Hope there is some rethinking of the park elements.
  - SPU is still completing the building of the reservoir. Still uncertain if the elevations are as first projected. Concerned that the elevations have not been held to as SPU originally stated.
- Independent of the grades, the layout needs to be joined together again.
- The plan needs more integration of elements, independent of SPU facilities.
- Apologize for the miscommunication between the design team and Design Commission staff and pushing the team to return too early.