



**APPROVED**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING  
July 17, 2008**

**Seattle  
Design  
Commission**

Convened: 8:30am  
Adjourned: 4:30pm

<b>Greg Nickels</b> <i>Mayor</i>	<u>Projects Reviewed</u>
<b>Karen Kiest</b> <i>Chair</i>	Capitol Hill Park
<b>Tasha Atchison</b>	John and Summit Park
<b>Brendan Connolly</b>	Seattle Center Skate Park
	Capitol Hill Light Rail Station
	Great Streets – Denny Corridor and Pike Pine Corridor
	Pike Pine Transit Access Improvements

<b>John Hoffman</b>	<u>Design Commissioners Present</u>	<u>Staff Present</u>
<b>Mary Johnston</b>	Karen Kiest, Chair	Guillermo Romano
<b>Juanita LaFond</b>	Tasha Atchison	Valerie Kinast
<b>Dennis Ryan</b>	Brendan Connolly	Tom Iurino
<b>Norie Sato</b>	John Hoffman	Ian Macek
<b>Darrell Vange</b>	Mary Johnston	
<b>Darby Watson</b>	Juanita LaFond	
<b>Guillermo Romano</b> <i>Executive Director</i>	Dennis Ryan	
	Norie Sato	
	Darrell Vange	
	Darby Watson	

<b>Valerie Kinast</b> <i>Coordinator</i>	<u>Additional Light Rail Review Panel Members</u>
	Present for Capitol Hill Station
	Catherine Hillenbrand, Arts Commission
	Kevin McDonald, Planning Commission



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**17 July 2008**

**Project: Seattle Center Skate Park**

**Phase:** Design Development

**Last Reviews:** 5/15/2008, 11/01/2007

**Presenters:** Lesley Bain, Weinstein AU  
Jill Crary, Seattle Center  
Kyle Dion, New Line Skateparks  
Kathleen McLaughlin, Seattle Center  
Mark van der Zalm, van der Zalm and Associates, Inc.

**Attendees:** Sara Belz, City Council Central Staff  
Patricia Hopper, Arts and Cultural Affairs  
Perri Lynch, Artist, Velocity Made Good  
John West, Visitor

Time: 1.0 hours

(SR121 /RS0611)

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## **ACTION**

**The Commission unanimously approves design development and offers the following comments:**

- **Inspired by the innovation and design and push from the client to create a park that will be a true feature for Seattle.**
- **Ask the team to resolve the emergency generator exhaust vent and its integration into the total design.**
- **Encourage exploring the opportunity to incorporate water and glass, texture and sounds.**
- **Support the artwork. Interested in how it develops and integrates with the structure. Concerns about the legibility of the source of the images and how they are preserved in the art expression.**
- **Concerns about the mix of skateboarding style user groups, and acknowledge the team's ongoing work with the stakeholders.**
- **Encourage a simple and bold landscape. Think about the feature tree and how to really highlight it.**
- **Concerns about the plaza integration with Seattle Center elements and connections, and looking toward the future.**
- **Encourage team to explore, where possible, further design development of the opportunities at the cul-de-sac entry, and acknowledging it if not resolving it for future design.**

## **Project Presentation**

### *Project Background*

The primary entry for the skatepark is at the SE corner of the site. There will be green edges around the site to soften the park. The Thomas Street edge will use a glass wall to compliment the church and art objects. The glass will be floated above a concrete green wall, acting as a permeable boundary allowing people to look in. The north edge is a challenge, as it needs to be safe and still provide access to Pavilion B as it will continue

to be rented out. Securing the space for use during festivals is still a priority and the team continues to work with SDOT on extending the curb.

Artwork is located in three areas throughout the site. Out of the three elements, two will be skateable and glass. The elements will take imagery from skateboards to put into the glass laminate design. A memorial in the SW corner will highlight past skaters in bronze profiles.

#### *Design Development Changes*

The design reevaluated the edge treatments and focused on integrating the park with the rest of Seattle Center. It also blended the three previous concepts based on stakeholder feedback and input. The new design allows for continual movement, as well as a back and forth motion, depending on the

number of users. Integration of glass into the design is a new concept that will be used in the plaza. This will help to create texture and sound variations within the park.



**Figure 3: Skatepark Design**

Separation of space is created through the respectful use of the glass wall. The green wall will look to others on the campus as Seattle Center is working towards a more consistent design language. The team preserves existing landscaping, and provides some new elements, such as an ornamental tree adjacent to the new canopy. Trees provide shade and green, as well as psychological barrier between skaters and onlookers.

In an effort to integrate the plaza with the rest of Seattle Center the canopy has become an entry point. The original canopy will be replaced with one that is lighter and fits better with the design.

The skatepark does not close, but the intent is not to have it skateable at night. The lighting will consist of LEDs that will accent the artwork as well as lighting under the new canopy.

The design has something for everyone and meets different stakeholder groups' needs; all skateboard styles can use the same space. It will also be an iconic destination that people will want to experience.

#### **Commissioners' Comments**

- Presented to the Public Art Advisory Committee on Tuesday and they responded positively. Main concerns were about color. Keeping concrete neutral and have the art stand out. Concerns about how the glass is going to wear over time and if the imagery of scuffs photographed from well-used skateboards will be readable.

- It is also an opportunity to see the process of skateboarding on the material. The main design questions were on how the glass meets the concrete wall, seems it is now flush with the green wall.
- Still exploring the best option, safety is the main concern.
  - Glad to see that the team is floating the glass off the wall.
  - The project has come a far way.
  - How many skaters can it comfortably accommodate at one time?
    - Usually packed at the opening, but after a few months a balance is achieved.
  - What was the catalyst for the project?
    - Wanted to do something new. Always great support and excitement from Seattle Center. Challenge was trying to refine the many designs.
  - Can you skate from the north side into the park?
    - Won't happen on a regular basis, would be a very tricky maneuver.
  - Can anything be done with the emergency ventilator exhaust unit?
    - Wrapping it right now, but nothing to say the green wall cover couldn't be cylindrical. The design is still being worked on.
  - Has water been thought about as an element in the park?
    - Thought about many different things that haven't been done before, but wanted to limit it to what the project can accomplish.
  - Have stormwater issues been mitigated?
    - Yes.
  - How are leaves and sap from trees dealt with? Are they a maintenance issue?
    - They are a challenge, but the user group will clean up after themselves.
  - The glass with images of scuff marks from old skateboards on it has become an interesting abstract image showing movement, but has lost the connection to the skateboards.
  - Cross sections of the park and showing how the canopy plaza meets the Seattle Center paths would be helpful.
    - The SE entry matches the sidewalk and the canopy plaza matches Pavilion B entry.
  - Love the art.
  - Concern over the mix of user groups. Want the design to be functional.
    - Bowl skaters will be forced to change their style to accommodate the plaza, but it's designed in a way that different users won't collide.
  - Appreciate presentation and having the experts on the team.
  - First major new components of Seattle Center Master Plan. Way to draw people into the center.
  - Suggest having a dominant green wall and understating the rest of the landscaping.
  - Reflections from the glass could be a positive for skaters.
  - Keep in mind the larger picture when assessing the glass wall as well as movement from panel to panel.
  - Careful with the structure of the wall and how it integrates into the glass.
  - Inspiration for the art can also be taken from the edges of the skateboard.