



## APPROVED MINUTES OF THE MEETING

**Greg Nickels**  
Mayor

**Diane Sugimura**  
Director, DPD

**Raymond Gastil**  
Planning Director, DPD

**Mary Johnston**  
Chair

**Andrew Barash**

**Julie Bassuk**

**Graham Black**

**Brendan Connolly**

**Lauren Hauck**

**John Hoffman**

**Julie Parrett**

**Dennis Ryan**

**Norie Sato**

**Guillermo Romano**  
Executive Director

**Valerie Kinast**  
Coordinator

**Tom Iurino**  
Senior Staff

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**September 17, 2009**

Convened 9:30 am  
Adjourned 4:00 pm

### Projects Reviewed

South Lake Union Urban Design Framework  
Lake Union Park Street Vacation  
Shared Streets  
Rainier Beach Community Center  
Councilmember Jan Drago

### Commissioners

Mary Johnston, Chair  
Andrew Barash  
Julie Bassuk  
Brendan Connolly  
Lauren Hauck  
John Hoffman  
Julie Parrett  
Dennis Ryan  
Norie Sato

### Excused Commissioners

Graham Black

### Staff Present

Guillermo Romano  
Valerie Kinast  
Tom Iurino

Celebrating 40 Years 1968-2008



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**September 17, 2009 Project: Shared Street**

**Phase:** 60% Design  
**Last Reviewed:** N/A  
**Presenters:** Megan Hoyt, SDOT

**Attendees:** A.J Yang, UW  
Diana Holloway, SDOT  
Justin McConachie

**Time:** 1 hour

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## **ACTION**

The Design Commission thanks Megan Hoyt of SDOT for her presentation of the design of a shared street, a section of 45<sup>th</sup> Ave S that runs between S Cloverdale St. and S Trenton St. The Design Commission unanimously approves the 60% design of the street segment.

The Commission appreciates the novel approach taken by SDOT in providing for a shared street where a more standard street would have been less appropriate. Commissioners applaud how well the community was drawn into the project. The Commission has the following recommendations:

- Document the project and share its outcome such that SDOT can take advantage of what is learned from this exploration of shared street solutions. The manner in which this is documented and showcased is going to affect how well this alternative way of providing pedestrian facilities in the right of way is accepted and used in future cases.
- Use as little regulatory (restrictive) signage as possible.
- Explore use curb sections, reflective buttons and/or paint to demarcate and clarify edges and functions.
- Consider establishing a design datum to visually tie together the variety of objects and treatments proposed in the right of way.
- Ensure that the roadway is safe and intuitive for night drivers and pedestrians as well as during the day.
- Consider using other more conventional materials and objects in an interesting and artistic way to demarcate functions in the right of way.

## **Presentation**

The site is in Rainier Beach. The street is narrow and drainage is poor. Sidewalks were planned in standard design, but issues of drainage onto abutting properties, and the need to raise and lower sidewalk where it meets driveways would have made it difficult. Water and gas lines location would have dictated no vegetation.

The community contacted SDOT asking for sidewalks and this street met the criteria for prioritizing it for sidewalk construction.

Concerns of neighbors about people speeding led to thought of traffic calming. The neighbors desire for green and the utilities locations led to ideas about unusual siting of vegetation.



### 45th Street Site Plan

The team contacted the Fire Department, SPU and the Neighborhood Traffic Program within SDOT to explore idea of shared street.

The proposed shared street retains 13 ft. of access. It would have asphalt paving, established parking stalls, and landscaping. Some landscaping would be in what would have been roadway in a conventional design. Motorists turning onto the street would get many visual cues that it's no longer a quick, straight shot to get through it. Eventually pedestrians would become comfortable using this type of shared space.

The team talked to neighbors about street furniture and there were some reservations. Artwork was not something the neighbors showed signs of creating or maintaining.

This project will give SDOT a chance to see how behavior changes along the corridor.

Parking space delineation will likely be stamped, painted asphalt. Ideas for raised crosswalks at entry to street are not possible, but will use stamped colored asphalt. Still thinking about what form of signage to use.

The street will be curbless so ideas are being considered for the asphalt edges – short concrete curbs, thickened asphalt edge, wheel stops.

New trees will be planted, 3,000 sq. ft. of new landscaping will be installed.

September 28th is construction start.

### Public Comments

Justin McConachie, Resident

*Pedestrians tend to stay along the edge of street. How did you design to draw people into center?*

Observation was that people walked along center. In new design, there are not a lot of pinch points.

### Commissioners' Questions and Comments

*What about drainage?*

Subtle channels will be formed with asphalt. Reconstructing the street in area of largest puddling of that area.

*You couldn't French drain it?*

No.

*With the visitor parking, there's playfulness, but there should be some sort of prescriptive elements that would keep people from parking where they shouldn't.*

The Fire Department is also concerned about this. In the present situation, there is parking all over the street. We tried to get parking in where possible without removing landscaping. There is a lot of off street parking in driveways, so there's room for visitors too. There are parking spaces in the right-of-way also though. Enforcement will be further explored.

*How frequent are Residential Parking Zone signs?*

Not too frequent. We are considering temporary painted signs at start so people get the idea. We are allowing for failure on part of compliance without it causing too much disruption.

*How much traffic will there be?*

Low volume, although there is cut through. It's local access basically.

*Has the SDOT traffic calming group reviewed it?*

*The Neighborhood group in SDOT reviewed it and will sign it.*

*Who does the maintenance?*

Residents.

*Overall, the amount of landscaping that can go in because of this approach is wonderful. Some landscaping is only a few feet wide and long. Do these pieces connect into green on abutting property? Traffic circles that are small don't seem to fare well. I am concerned about small isolated islands; you may need a back-up plan. Consider a minimum size threshold. The islands could just get run over if there is no curbing. These are red flags to look at a few years down the road.*

The team is looking at these issues. We did base the location of plantings on where there were enough for a significant size and where they were likely to be maintained. We will revisit and find solutions as time passes.

*What about monitoring? Make it official, even though there is a lot of department interest in the project now. See how it fairs and whether it is something to do in other locations.*

*The relationship of agency and neighbors is a good one. Get feedback on what's working; conscript gardeners for public space. Be courageous.*

*Is there lighting? Consider boundary of landscaping and asphalt.*

*It is powerful how the neighbors are coalescing. This type of project needs it. Edges are something you have power over. Give a unifying character to the edges; head on edges and corners especially.*

*Consider playful and interesting artistic elements along certain edges, such as reflectors. Think about how edges could bleed into yards.*

*Without documentation of what works and what doesn't work, there is a lot of opportunity lost. Document it so future project managers can learn from it. All groups should know about it and the outcome – the neighborhood SDOT group, Urban Design group in SDOT, Pedestrian Master Plan team. Get funding to document.*

*The idea of dropping the original design for sidewalks was great.*

*Signage and clarity of use of parking, try to get away with as little signage as possible. Cue should be in design, and not from a lot of signs.*

*Use some type of painting and reflectors to show where to go and not where not to go.*

*There was law department was concerned about mixed use message of saying "shared" but then delineating where cars were supposed to travel.*

*Is it possible to add just a few, artistic punctuations?*

*You could number the spaces. But that could cause feelings of ownership. Or perhaps name them for tree species, or in some fun way emphasize them. Glassphalt maybe? Stencil? Something fun. Provide more clarity with the application of other materials.*

*Pedestrians tend to stay along the edge of street. How did you design to draw people into center?*

*Observation was that people walked along center. In new design, there are not a lot of pinch points.*