



## APPROVED MINUTES OF THE MEETING

**Mike McGinn**  
Mayor

**Diane Sugimura**  
Director, DPD

**Marshall Foster**  
Planning Director, DPD

**Mary Johnston**  
Chair

**Andrew Barash**

**Julie Bassuk**

**Graham Black**

**Brendan Connolly**

**Lauren Hauck**

**Laurel Kunkler**

**Julie Parrett**

**Norie Sato**

**Donald Vehige**

**Guillermo Romano**  
Executive Director

**Valerie Kinast**  
Coordinator

**Tom Iurino**  
Senior Staff

**April 1, 2010**

Convened 10:00am  
Adjourned 4:00pm

### Projects Reviewed

Waterfront Planning  
1200 Stewart  
Thomas Street Concept Design  
Council President Richard Conlin  
Councilmember Sally Clark  
Councilmember Mike O'Brien

### Commissioners Present

Mary Johnston, Chair  
Brendan Connolly  
Julie Bassuk  
Lauren Hauck  
Laurel Kunkler  
Julie Parrett  
Donald Vehige

### Staff Present

Guillermo Romano  
Valerie Kinast  
Tom Iurino  
Jenny Hampton



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**April 1, 2010**

**Project:** **Thomas Street Concept Design**

**Phase:** Pre-design briefing

**Last Reviewed:** N/A

**Presenters:** Geoff Wendlandt, DPD  
Dave LaClergue, DPD

**Attendees:** Gary Johnson, DPD  
Vaughn Bell, SDOT

**Time:** 1pm-2pm

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## SUMMARY

The Design Commission thanks Geoffrey Wendlandt and Dave LaClerge for the overview and analysis of the Thomas street concept design project update. The commission is encouraged and excited by the work that has been done to date and has the following comments:

- Question the definition of a green street and how it can be used in the context of Thomas Street improvements.
- The Commission encourages consistency and common themes in the treatment of stormwater throughout the street.
- Use the north side promenade as a uniting tool providing a sense of consistency connecting it as a corridor. Pay attention to the south sidewalk for opportunities.
- Consider creative incentives to promote its implementation
- The Commission supports the 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave closure concept and integration to island and possible West Thomas street pedestrian overpass landing.
- Incorporate art and artists early and often in the process
- The Commission supports expansion of the sidewalks and encourages correlation with the framework set for South Lake Union.
- The Commission understands the thematic treatment depending on the corridor character but encourages some elements that will read consistent throughout the whole corridor

## Presentation

The CityDesign office in the Department of Planning and Development proposes a project focused on re-designing the Thomas Street streetscape. This project surfaced as Thomas Street is an important connector within the South Lake Union framework. Thomas Street emerged as an important east/west connection particularly because it will cross the new Aurora Street proposed in the portal plan and it passes through Seattle Center to the water edge. A new streetscape for Thomas can create a link between neighborhoods instead of a stand-alone destination. The proposed goal for this work is a streetscape concept plan that will help to inform new development and capital improvement projects, possibly related to the north portal work or other public projects.

The design team has conducted site analysis and research and have reached out to community and business groups involved in Thomas Street. The team is also working closely with SDOT to correlate the proposed concept and design with new transit visions and infrastructure.

Geoffrey Wendlandt reviewed general comments about the project from the public and business owners. There were suggestions about incorporating more active spaces along the street, pedestrian amenities, landscape, the functions of the businesses along the street edge and logistics of this street long-term. Also, some different options about on-street parking, and the importance of Thomas Street as an important entry point into Seattle Center surfaced.



### Five Areas for Study

The concept breaks the street corridor into five different sections. Some key themes of these sections include an opportunity to reclaim the road for sidewalk and plantings, creating a green promenade, incorporating the Lake to Bay loop trail that will follow along Thomas Street, bio-retention and grading opportunities for water infiltration, and creating human scale pedestrian environments. These themes consider the context of cross streets and the residential plan for South Lake Union.

The proposed project will continue to develop involving additional community and business meetings and a more detailed concept and design development.

### Commissioners' Questions/Comments

*The work that you guys are doing is great. Will this be incorporated into guidelines that will go to developers?*

It will be adopted in the ROW improvement manual There is also opportunity for community members to apply for grants to start these improvements

*What role will Thomas Street play in stormwater? What are the existing conditions?*

This corridor is not a top priority of SPU because of the grade in the west. However, the east section does have an out of compliance CSO. There might be an opportunity to work together for this portion.

*If the project on Yale goes ahead, then it would be good to integrate this into the streetscape plan.*

*You might want to look at the Bell Street plan and how that plan takes advantage of the large sidewalk.*

We are thinking about figuring out what it might mean to be a green street and if this street fits into this concept.

*What about the bike connections and how might you be thinking about them?*

We have been thinking about having bikes in the travel lane as a sharrow treatment instead of lanes. A designated bike trail within that wide area sounds like a great idea, but since the street does change it would not be able to be through the whole street, especially through Seattle Center. Harrison is already the main bike path in this area.

*Is the Lake to Bay Trail proposed? for this street?*

The trail is for the slow moving biker, not the commuter.

*Have you had any feedback from the bike community?*

Not as of yet, but we will be going to the freight, bike and pedestrian board.

*I was curious if you have looked at places where the city owns the adjacent property to the street? It would help to not only rely on developers to carry this through, but the city as well?*

There are not many city owned parcels on our street, except at the city overpass and the island and the property east that connects the island back. These areas might capture an opportunity for open space.

*I would also consider not screening the industrial properties and let those building activities have their own energy.*

We were thinking that this area by the monorail could be a place that could incorporate art and some other items that brings these things together.

*What are you thinking about for the south side of the street?*

Keeping the same sidewalk width and also making the plantings more consistent. Focusing on some bulbs at the corners and where the alleys meet the sidewalk.

*Is there any discussion in tying some of these concepts in with the EIS zoning and incentive tradeoffs and the South Lake Union framework?*

Yes, we want to see that happen and would like it to be built into the zoning standards

*What is your schedule?*

We are shooting for a public open house with drafts by late April. We would like to wrap up draft concept plan by July/Aug.