

**University District
Future Development and Urban Design Working Group Meeting #6
September 20, 2012**

Draft Meeting Notes

Members in attendance: Nancy Amidei, Rebecca Barnes, Chuck Broches, David Cohan, Dan Eernisse, Ann Gantt, Barbara Quinn, Ruedi Risler, Roger Wagoner, Patty Whisler, Max Blume

Also in attendance: Sonja Warner, Kateri Schlessman, Marty Curry, John Gaines, Jeffrey Linn

Staff in Attendance: Brian Scott (facilitator), Susan McLain (Seattle Department of Planning and Development-DPD), Dave LaClergue (DPD), Tony Mazzella (Seattle Department of Transportation)

At this meeting, working group members and other participants focused on frontage, or how buildings face onto streets and public areas. We discussed to what extent specific corridors should emphasize specific uses along the street edge. We also discussed what frontage qualities are most important to create an attractive neighborhood.

Also, city staff provided updates on two transportation planning topics:

- 1) High-capacity transit study for the U District. Tony Mazzella (SDOT) reported that the mayor's 2013 budget includes a \$2M proposal to study high-capacity transit from South Lake Union to the U District. If this proposal is approved by City Council, SDOT would be directed to evaluate a range of options, including small tweaks to speed up the existing bus routes along Eastlake, a full upgrade to bus rapid transit (BRT) along that route, and a streetcar connection. The mayor's proposal does not include funding for construction, but this study would help make high-capacity transit to the U District eligible for federal funding or other local sources.
- 2) Bicycle master plan update. SDOT is in the process of reviewing and updating the City's bicycle master plan. Sara Zora (SDOT) will be holding a series of public meetings in November to solicit feedback on proposed bicycle plan recommendations – these meetings are not scheduled yet, but Dave will forward that information to the working group as soon as he receives it.

The University provided an update on "U District Next: A Community Conversation" events. These events will take place between October 2012 and January 2013, and are being designed to broaden public participation in discussions about the future of the U District. The first two events are as follows:

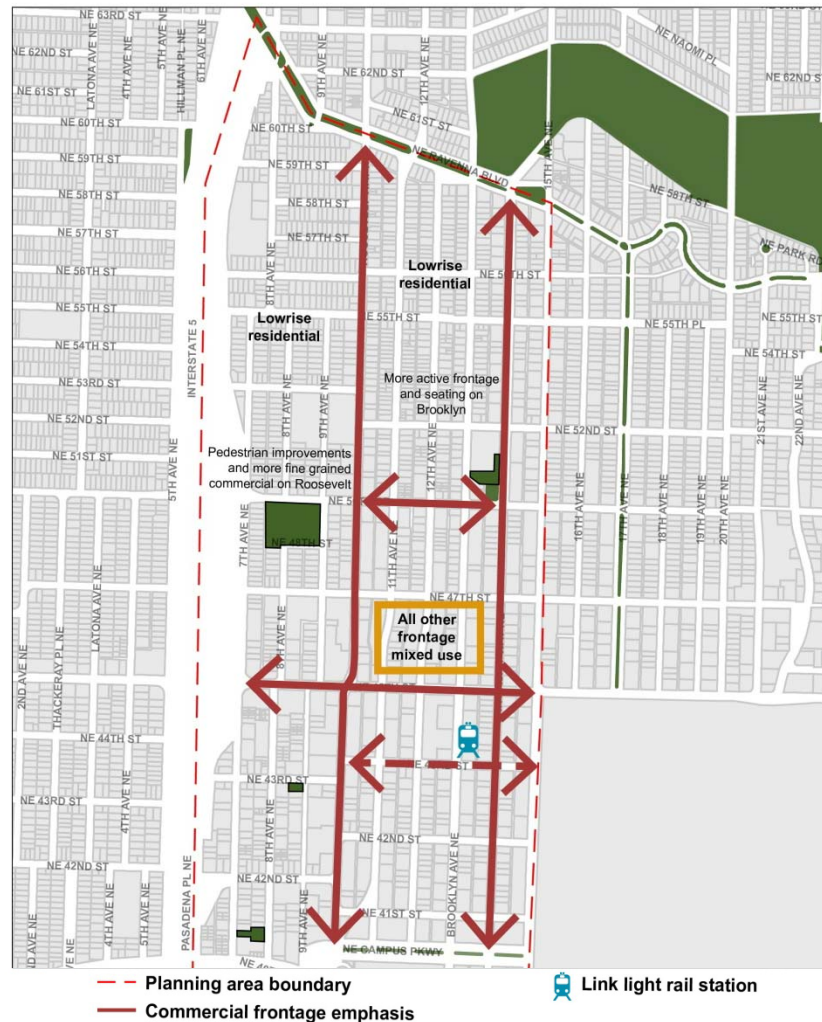
- Kick-off happy hour. October 9, 2012, 5:30-7:30. Lucid Lounge, 5241 University Way NE.
- Feet First Walk & Talk. October 11, 2012, 5:30-7:30. Walking tour meets at the future light rail station (Brooklyn and 43rd St.)

Summary of “What We Heard” about frontage

Location

- Retail and services should be concentrated on Roosevelt, the Ave, 45th St. (including larger commercial uses), the segment of 50th St. between Roosevelt and the Ave, and possibly 43rd St.
- All other street frontage should be characterized by a mix of uses. Where zoning differs from one area to the next, those transitions should allow “fading colors” between uses.
- Whatever the mix of uses on Brooklyn, there should be more active frontage and sidewalk seating.
- Roosevelt should become more pedestrian-friendly, with a finer-grained commercial emphasis.

FRONTAGE LOCATIONS: 9/20 meeting summary



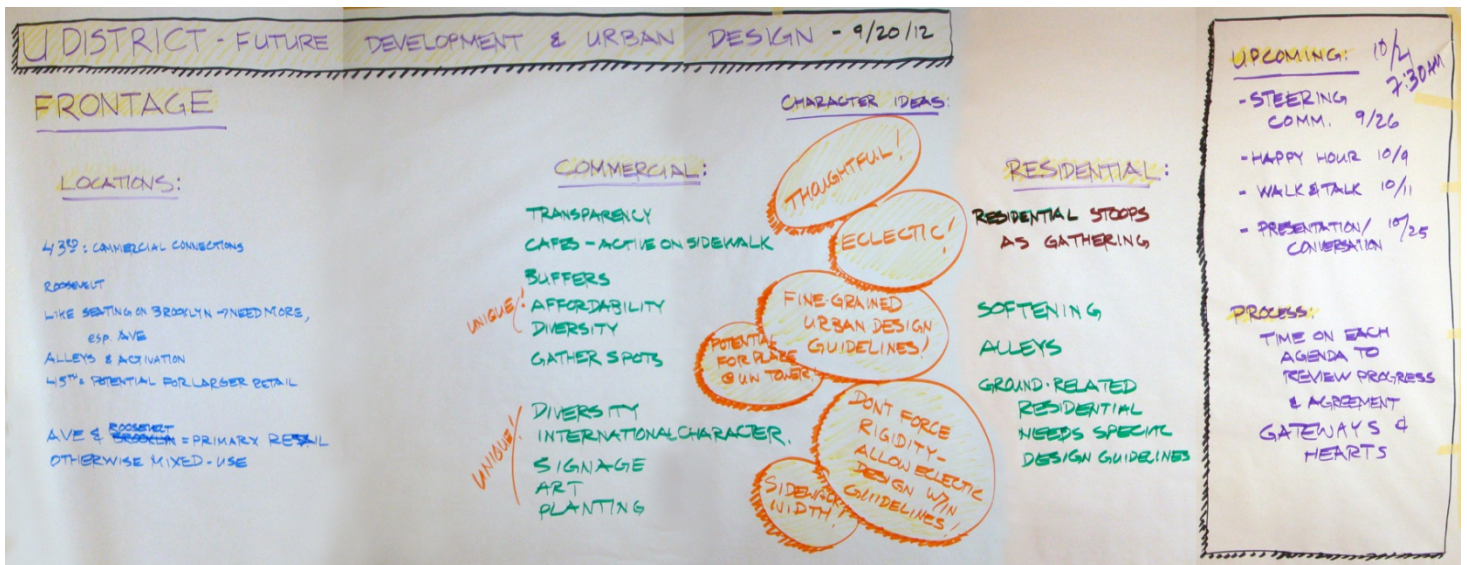
Commercial frontage qualities

- Require high transparency for an active street edge.
- Generally, allow for more sidewalk cafes.

- Build more gathering spaces into these streetscapes, either in the sidewalk strip or in strategic setbacks or pocket parks.
- Small parcels in the neighborhood lead to a diverse range of businesses. Use standards to maintain diversity but incorporate some level of cohesiveness (blade signs, etc.).
- Encourage creative approaches to signage and art to build on the neighborhood’s unique character.
- More landscaping a better maintenance along sidewalks.
- Maintain affordable commercial space to support the diversity of small commercial businesses in the U District, including 140 restaurants.
- Improve the UW tower frontage to make the entry plaza less corporate, more inviting. Historically, it was designed to discourage public use – how can it be reconfigured?
- Make use of more alleys as a secondary commercial frontage.

Residential frontage qualities

- Lower transparency than in commercial, but still lots of windows looking onto the street.
- Use stoops and other “ground-related housing” features to create an active street edge.
- More landscaping, preferably double-loaded; i.e., both in the sidewalk planting strip and in a landscaped setback area.
- Incorporate enough sidewalk lighting for pedestrian safety, but not so much that it saturates residential buildings



Additional Feedback:

- U District is thoughtful in its design and eclectic in character.
- The neighborhood features an international character, both in its residential population and its businesses.

- Fine-grained design guidelines and development standards should be very specific on certain details (like maintaining an active street edge, privacy for ground-level residential units), but allow enough flexibility for a range of building types and characters.
- Sidewalks are too narrow along many streets, but especially a problem on 45th St. and parts of Roosevelt.
- Please set aside time on each agenda to review progress and agreement from past meetings.

Coming up in future discussions:

- Gateways, hearts and edges
- Highrise development and related standards
- Sustainability principles
- Housing and services
- Planning around the immediate station area

Future meetings will be held at the University Heights Center (Room NB1, downstairs) at 7:30 a.m. on the following days:

Thursday, Oct 4th

Thursday, Oct 18th

Friday, Nov 2nd

Friday, Nov 30th