



## APPROVED MINUTES OF THE MEETING

**Ed Murray**  
Mayor

**Diane Sugimura**  
Director, DPD

**Marshall Foster**  
Planning Director, DPD

**Osama Quotah**, Chair

**Shannon Loew**, Vice Chair

**Bernie Alonzo**

**Brodie Bain**

**Lee Copeland**

**Thaddeus Egging**

**Megan Groth**

**Martin Regge**

**Ellen Sollod**

**Ross Tilghman**

**Michael Jenkins**  
Director

**Valerie Kinast**  
Coordinator

**Nicolas Welch**  
Planner

**Joan Nieman**  
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**July 1, 2014**

Convened 8:30 am

Adjourned 3:30 pm

### **Projects Reviewed**

2026 E Madison St

Leaves of Remembrance

Fire Station 22

### **Commissioners Present**

Osama Quotah, Chair

Shannon Loew, Vice Chair (arrived at 1:20 pm)

Bernie Alonzo (excused at 11:25 am)

Lee Copeland

Megan Groth

Ellen Sollod

### **Commissioners Excused**

Brodie Bain

Thaddeus Egging

Martin Regge

Ross Tilghman

### **Staff Present**

Michael Jenkins

Valerie Kinast

Nicolas Welch

Joan Nieman



**July 1, 2014**  
**9:15 – 11:00 am**

**Project:** 2026 East Madison Street  
**Phase:** Public Benefit review  
**Previous reviews:** 5/1/03; 8/21/03; 12/4/03

**Presenters:** Jack McCullough      McCullough Hill, PS  
 Kris Snider                              Hewitt  
 Bryan Bellissimo                      Encore Architects

**Attendees:** Tejal Pastakia              Pastakia + Associates  
 Scott Rosenstock                      Hewitt

### **Recusals and Disclosures**

There were no recusals or disclosures.

### **Purpose of Review**

The purpose of this meeting was to review the changes in the phasing of the project and its impacts on implementing the public benefit package for this site. The project and associated public benefits were proposed as part of a request for an alley vacation at this site. In 2003 the Design Commission reviewed and recommended approval of an alley vacation, which was approved by the City Council in 2004 (see Clerk File 306083). However, development approved by the Council has lagged in part due to soil contamination from dry cleaner solvents at the eastern portion of the site; remediation began in 2008.

Since the project approval, the site and development rights came under new ownership. Due to the need for remediation of the soil contamination, the current owner has requested and received approval from the Department of Planning and Development (DPD) to develop the project in two phases. In the first phase, all elements of the approved development would be constructed except the portion of the development located on the contaminated soils. This means that 150 residential units and 4,000 square feet of ground-floor retail space would be constructed in Phase 1, and the remaining 70 units and up to 5,000 square feet of ground-floor retail space would be constructed during Phase 2.

For this review, the Design Commission did not consider or revisit urban design merit since the fundamental impacts of the project and associated alley vacation have not changed, only the phasing of the development. Specifically, the Commission looked at 1) whether the changes to the proposed development due to phasing and the updated public benefit package maintain the original intent of the 2003 vacation approval and 2) how the public benefit items would be affected by the proposed phasing of development.

### **Summary of Proposal**

The applicant proposes to move forward with development at the site with the aforementioned vacation of a 10-foot-wide alley linking E Denny Way and a north–south alley at the western edge of the site. Phase 1 of the development would include 150 units on the western side of the site in a very similar design to that portion of the original donut scheme presented to the Design Commission in 2003. The contaminated eastern portion of the site has been partitioned as a separate development site and, after

remediation, would be developed with 70 units as a future Phase 2. Currently the applicant owns only the eastern development site and not the contaminated parcel.

Regardless of site ownership and phasing, the Property Use and Development Agreement (PUDA) which implements the Council approval and required public benefit features applies to the entire area bounded by the remaining right-of-way (ROW). The project team intends to receive its final ordinance with Phase 1.

The original public benefit package approved by Council consisted of the following items:

- 11,700 sf of on-site public open space, including:
  - 8 trees
  - 2,060 sf planting area
  - 9,640 sf plaza
  - 30 sf of seating
  - Pedestrian signage
  - Pedestrian-scale lighting
- Public art or water features

As a result of phasing, the updated public benefit package includes:

- 17,400 sf of on-site public open space, including:
  - 13 trees
  - 5,710 sf planting area
  - 4,200 sf turf area
  - 7,490 sf plaza
  - 260 sf of seating
  - Pedestrian signage
  - Pedestrian-scale lighting
- Public art or water features

The Phase 1 development would implement all of the items of the original public benefit package plus the additional features. If Phase 2 moves forward, the entire open space would be torn up to construct the eastern building and below-grade parking. As a result, the original public benefit items would need to be developed, presumably reverting to the approved 2004 plan. At that time, the project team would be required to return to the Design Commission for review and approval.

### **Summary of Presentation**

Jack McCullough provided historical background for the project, noting the original Council vacation approval in 2004, changes in ownership and revisions to the Master Use Permit (MUP), and the discovery of contamination on a portion of the site due to a dry cleaner that operated here from the 1950s to 1970s.

Kris Snider began the presentation dated July 1, 2014 and available on the [Design Commission website](#). Existing conditions photographs showed nearby buildings, both new and longstanding, and the currently vacant lot at the project site. Mr. Snider identified the north–south alley that forms the western edge of the site. The 10-foot-wide east–west alley segment to be vacated connects this alley to E Denny Way.

Mr. Snider showed a 2009 site plan, which was approved by the City Council when the MUP was granted. The 2009 design differed somewhat from the 2004 design but did not change the public benefit features. Bryan Bellissimo described building elevations from the updated 2009 design. Tejal Pastakia identified the contaminated zone at the eastern portion of the site and summarized the remedial actions that the Department of Ecology required. As part of the remediation, this area has been partitioned as a separate development site; the uncontaminated area to the west will be developed by Lennar as Phase 1. According to Ms. Pastakia, 2017 is the target date to complete the remediation, after which this portion of the site could be developed as Phase 2.

As a result of the project phasing, the area under remediation would be developed as an expanded open space. Mr. McCullough reiterated that, If Phase 2 is developed, the open space would need to be redesigned to meet the minimum 11,700 sf requirement approved by Council. Mr. Snider detailed the elements of the expanded open space. He described the design as a porous, welcoming, and activated area that holds the corner and retains the visual energy of the original concept. He also noted that the Design Commission might subsequently review the art piece when it is more clearly defined. Mr. Bellissimo then showed the updated 2014 elevations.

Lastly, Mr. McCullough stated that the design team did not have to return to the Design Review Board and would likely receive its final ordinance with Phase 1.

### **Summary of Discussion**

The Commission asked several questions to clarify how issues of phasing, current and long-term ownership, and changes in project design will affect the public benefit items. The Commission believed the project had changed in fundamental ways and found it difficult to evaluate the merits of a public benefit package that could be interim or permanent given the uncertain future of the Phase 2 development. The Commissioners noted that public space depends not only on physical connections that people move through but on visual and material connections between landscape and hardscape, which separate ownership for the two parcels could complicate. There was also concern that the lobby originally shown at the northeast end of the eastern building in a lobby was shown as a one-bedroom unit and private courtyard, making that space feel like a private area.

Overall, the Commissioners believed the presentation did not show enough information about materials, the experience of a pedestrian in the open space, the delineation of public and private space, and the design and integration of the proposed art piece to approve the updated proposal. There was interest in seeing additional perspectives and more detailed renderings at the next review to supplement the site plan and sketch shown in today's presentation.

### **Agency Comments**

none

### **Public Comments**

none

### **Action**

The Design Commission thanked the project team for their presentation of the revised public benefit package for the 2026 E Madison St alley vacation. The Commission recognized that the applicant had already been through the Design Commission process in 2003, that the City Council approved the

vacation in 2004, and that the applicant is currently seeking a street improvement permit (SIP) from the Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT). The Commission appreciated having a greater understanding of the environmental contamination and remediation and, given the consequent changes to and phasing of the development proposal, looked closely at the quality of the revised public benefit items and the impacts of potential future Phase 2 construction.

Overall, the Commission agrees with the broad concept of separating the parcel and phasing the development of the site. Furthermore, the Commission supports the following elements: open lawn space, a fenced dog park, seating, enhanced landscaping, integration of artwork into the design of the public open space, and pedestrian connections both from the alley to E Denny Way and within the public plaza. However, the presentation did not show enough detail for the Commission to adequately evaluate design details. The Commission requests additional information and detail about the use, placement, and relationship of materials and elements in the open space prior to the issuance of a SIP.

With a **vote of 2-3**, the Design Commission did not approve the revised public benefit package. The project team shall return to the Design Commission with a higher level of resolution of details and materials for the public benefit items given the aforementioned comments.

The reasons for the votes against were as follows:

Commissioner Alonzo: There is too much ambiguity here. What we're approving is not clearly enough defined: the basics of the square footage permanently in Phase 1, details on the proposed artwork, what happens to the artwork when the eastern portion of the site redevelops, etc.

Commissioner Groth: I second Commissioner Alonzo's comments. There is significant detail that we have not seen. With just square footage figures alone, we cannot evaluate how the elements of the public open space fit together.

Commissioner Sollod: I second the previous comments and add that it's not just quantities but quality of space. We need a much better understanding of what it's like to be a pedestrian in this space. While recognizing that the Design Commission previously approved certain things, we still must ensure that it's a space that feels welcoming. There isn't enough information or detail here to answer that.