



**MEETING NOTES
CENTRAL WATERFRONT
DESIGN OVERSIGHT SUBCOMMITTEE**

**MEETING #5 April 28, 2011
12:00 — 1:30 PM Room #4050, Seattle Municipal Tower**

Meeting Attendees

Subcommittee Members

- Patrick Gordon, Co-Chair
- Mark Reddington, Co-Chair
- Brian Steinburg
- Bob Donegan
- Vlad Oustimovitch
- Cary Moon
- Martha Wyckoff

Other Central Waterfront Committee Members

- Carol Binder
- John Nesholm
- Julie Bassuk

City Staff & Consultants

- Steve Pearce
 - Marshall Foster
 - Hannah McIntosh
 - Stephanie Brown
 - Jennifer Wieland
 - Drew Gagnes
 - Paul Elliott
 - Norm Schwab
 - Alan Justad
 - David Graves
 - Ruri Yampolosky
 - Valerie Kinast
 - Mike Johnson
 - James Corner
 - Tatiana Choulika
 - Lisa Switkin
 - Ken Johnsen
 - Lee Copeland
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Design Updates & Discussion – Working Session

Primary Design Concepts

- **Consultants (jcfo) noted that:**
 - Our intention today is to talk about our early design concepts in further detail, including the Bay/Green Ring, Urban Framework, the Tidelines and the Folds.

Urban Framework:

- The project is being thought of on four scales: the Waterfront in the context of City, in the immediate urban district, in the Waterfront zone itself and in specific places and instances that work on a finer scale.
- We're looking at the 29 streets leading up to the Waterfront in terms of:
 - Destinations along them that define the varied, subtle character of each route to the waterfront; rather than having overly scaled, overly grand monumental nodes of access.
 - Corresponding waterfront destinations anchoring them to the water.
- We're looking at north-south links, as well, since the new Alaskan Way will transform traffic patterns; we're being cautious for the time being because we have not yet finished the traffic analysis.
- We're also looking at public transportation; we hope for a great variety of modes of public transportation.

Bay Ring/Green Ring:

- The Bay Ring also includes spokes/connections that lead out from it to other locales in the city on the Green Ring.

Tidelines:

- The Tidelines concept is intended to do three things:
 - Register shifting edges and the idea of tides moving in and out—this may be a physical design technique to blur the edge between the land and water so it becomes dynamic and ephemeral.
 - Work in sections going back into the city reflecting the topographic condition; with contour lines you have stairs, ramps, terraces and an opportunity to make something of that physically.
 - Relate to how water is managed as a total system—we can have different experiences segment-by-segment and we can manifest the lines differently in different locations.

Folds:

- In terms of Folds, we're looking at four places:
 - Belltown;
 - Connecting Pike Place Market to the Aquarium; and,
 - Working with the Coleman Dock and pier connections to the sports district.
 - Belltown at the south end of the Battery Street Tunnel
- In response to questions from the Subcommittee, consultants (jcfo) noted that:
 - We're working closely with the seawall team in order to understand and incorporate the needs of the migrating salmon into our design.
 - We're hearing two main themes in the comments we've collected: "put me back in touch with the water/don't take the view away" and "keep the Waterfront authentic."
 - The views are incredible up and down the viaduct and we understand there is the feeling of not wanting to lose that connection.
 - We also want to develop a tree story to bring a strong sense of consistency at a grand scale—the trees are very important for bringing the canopy to life along the Waterfront.
 - We want to imagine the beaches in a more abstracted way, including the tactile change from the floor of the city to floor of beach.
 - The technicalities of making a beach and grading it so that it's big enough are complicated; if there is a beach somewhere it will not be naturalized like Myrtle Edwards.

- **Design Oversight Subcommittee Members noted that:**

Bay Ring/Green Ring:

- The concept of the Bay Ring really sings; we also love the idea of the Tidelines—it’s evocative and poetic.
- It’s important to remember that that the Bay Ring could literally be a physical connection since it’s level and cohesive. By contrast, the Green (outer) Ring is unusually disrupted compared to most cities in terms of topography including hillsides and water.
- At the right scale the Green Ring could be a powerful idea—it gets to the idea of Seattle being less about a downtown core and more about a collection of neighborhoods that are could become waterfront-centric. The waterfront will be an asset for the entire City, which is a really important aspect for us all to own and hang onto.
- Seattle has a history of love and respect for the Olmstead Plan, and to tap into that further when you talk about the Green Ring might be smart so that people feel ownership.

Folds:

- We understand that some of the great affinity for keeping the viaduct up is really about the views that are available from the viaduct. It seems that how you describe a Fold does exactly what the viaduct does: giving the public the experience of looking from the City to the Waterfront, but doing so in a more powerful and strategic way.
- While there may be some argument for acknowledging the “authenticity” represented by keeping a portion of the existing viaduct, there are very significant aesthetic, cost and practicality issues that suggest it is infeasible. Of major concern would be the continued negative impact the structure has on the understory or surface realm.

- **City Staff noted that:**

- When we looked at maintaining a portion of the viaduct in the past, we would end up having to almost replace the entire structure for safety purposes; this would negate the historical aspect.

Design Conversations with Key Partners & Stakeholders

- **City Staff noted that:**

- We’ve been having rich, parallel discussions with key stakeholders and those who are directly affected by the Waterfront work; the discussions are productive.

Goals for the May 19th Event

- **Consultants (jcfo) noted that:**

- The primary design concepts will be the focus for the May event; we’re trying to explain the structure that holds the larger design concepts together.
- Because this a big, complicated project, we must have simple ideas that will create a strong story with longevity for diverse audiences: the Tidelines and Folds and the narratives that go with them.

Seawall City Council Presentation

*Committee reviewed and referenced documents including: *Seawall Costs (PowerPoint Excerpt)*.

- **City Staff noted that:**

- We presented the two bracket alternatives to City Council on Monday, April 25th; City Staff reviewed handout including information on:
 - Previous Planning Level Cost Estimate;

- Current Cost Assumptions—10 Percent Design;
- Current Seawall Costs—10 Percent Design: Alternative A: \$335 million & Alternative B: \$416 million.
- In response to questions from Subcommittee members about funding the seawall, City Staff noted that:
 - There are many different ways to secure additional financing.
 - Right now we have a mix of funding including Commercial Parking Tax, King County Flood Control District Funding; there is also talk of a future vote.
- **Design Oversight Subcommittee members noted that:**
 - It's important that we continue to underscore that there is a range of possibilities to choose from within the two bracketed alternatives so people don't think there are only two solid options.

Additional Comments

- **City Staff noted that:**
 - The next Design Oversight Subcommittee has not yet been scheduled; the next time you'll see this group will be at the event in May.