



**MEETING NOTES
CENTRAL WATERFRONT COMMITTEE
DESIGN OVERSIGHT SUBCOMMITTEE**

**MEETING #25 November 8, 2012
11:30 AM — 2:00 PM Room #4050, Seattle Municipal Tower**

Meeting Attendees

Subcommittee Members & Advisors

- Mark Reddington, Co-Chair
- Patrick Gordon, Co-Chair
- Vlad Oustimovitch
- Brian Steinberg
- Cary Moon
- Bob Donegan
- Liz Dunn
- Jeff Hou

City Staff & Consultants

- Steve Pearce
- Marshall Foster
- Angela Brady
- Hannah McIntosh
- Goran Sparrman
- Norm Schwab
- James Corner
- Tatiana Choulika
- Andrew ten Brink
- Ken Johnsen
- Ethan Bernau
- Kathy Cox-Czosnyka
- Drew Gagnes
- Erin Tam
- Erin Presentin-Taylor
- Traci Paulk

Other Central Waterfront Committee Members

- Maggie Walker
- Carol Binder
- Diane Sugimara
- Ben Franz-Knight

Additional Attendees

- Susan Mueller
 - David Miller
 - Julie Parrett
 - Richard Labotz
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Committee Feedback on Railroad Way Concept Design

- **Design Oversight Subcommittee Co-Chairs, Members & Advisors:**
 - The last Design Oversight Subcommittee meeting was our first briefing on the Railroad Way Concept Design, and today we'd like to try and summarize our feedback as the team continues its work.

- While Railroad is a logical pedestrian connection from the Waterfront, and is a logical terminus for the Waterfront project, this neighborhood between Pioneer Square and the stadiums has different character and qualities to the Waterfront and those should be reflected in the design.
- The design needs to be simpler, have personality, be muscular and fit into the context of the neighborhood.
- It should also recognize that this industrial neighborhood may have a transitional quality for some time.
- The public space needs to work when there are large crowds during stadium events and at other times when the space may be very empty, at least until surrounding land use changes.
- The project can be a catalyst for change and we lose that benefit if we design something that fits the existing transitional character.
- A few strong, legible elements can give it presence, and keeping it simple doesn't mean "no character."
- However, too edgy/contemporary may not be the right feeling, and uber-industrial may not be appropriate as the neighborhood changes.
- The permanent seating and bike pavilion are questionable elements given the (currently low) surrounding density and the likely numbers of users at non-event times.
- Perhaps built-in elements like seating and artwork should instead evolve over time?
- The Subcommittee has mixed feelings in terms of how the festival lighting encloses or defines the space.
- Perhaps we should hold off on design decisions on elements like seating and pavilion structures that are above and beyond the scope of the basic shared street project until we have a better sense of the overall Waterfront program?
- The project could be done in phases, thinking about basic infrastructure and then letting finer detail evolve.
- It could also be a great transitional place that ties both north and south, but also has function.
- The team's conversations with stakeholders around this site should also become a Subcommittee discussion topic soon.

PC-1/Overlook Walk Design Update

The Waterfront design team (JCFO) and the Pike Place Market PC-1 site design team (Miller Hull) presented a summary of on-going design work integrating the Overlook Walk and PC-1 site project designs.

- **Design Oversight Subcommittee Co-Chairs, Members & Advisors:**
 - These are new and great improvements that have exceeded expectations.
 - The team took four hard challenges and I'm amazed at the problems you've managed to solve.
 - It is a brilliant synthesis of the nooks, crannies and spirit of discovery of the Market.
 - It builds on, and respects, the patchwork character of the Market, and does not feel all new.
 - There is generous space, active program and the democratic view of the Overlook walk.
 - The staircase directly onto the bridge is an interesting move.
 - The raised Overlook Walk also helps the space underneath and that area feels more likely to be populated now.
 - Applaud the extended walkway on the north side of Building B, which helps activate that facade, and suggest exploring extending it further around Building B.
 - JCFO and Miller Hull are so close in their thinking, there's no reason not to be fully supportive.
 - However, what happens along the new Elliott, in the cross-section below the Overlook, the vertical connections and the street frontages, are all important elements not discussed here—

the MOU between the City and the Pike Place Market should somehow leave open the expectation all of that is resolved just as well as the Overlook Walk and connection through the PC-1 site.

Phase I Land Use Code Revisions

City staff presented a summary of Waterfront Phase 1 Zoning Changes.

- **Design Oversight Subcommittee Co-Chairs, Members & Advisors:**
 - I applaud the intent and understand the complexities—there are many ramifications.
 - Along Alaskan Way, the vacated railroad right-of-way has created a uniform setback of about 17 feet for older warehouse structures. Maintaining the existing building line is an important issue for Waterfront planning. Complementing the public sidewalk area along the eastern side of the redesigned Alaskan Way with a setback area that provides additional space for pedestrian use and activity would enhance the scale and presence of the Waterfront promenade.
 - If buildings get taller, and there's a big wall of buildings on the Waterfront, it will be imposing to pedestrians.
 - We have a narrow Waterfront—and having no new buildings in that 17 feet would make a huge difference.
 - For hotels, it may be difficult to use hotel rooms as a “separating use” to meet proposed requirements to separate parking areas on upper floors from the street frontage with other uses. There are dimensional issues for hotels’ modules and requirements, which should be researched.
 - Ideally, proposed development standards should not be so “use specific.” We should also encourage a purpose-filled product—which means accommodating adaptable, 200-year buildings with floor heights and other dimensions that are generous enough to change use over decades of an evolving city.
 - Stronger incentives are needed if property owners are to be required to provide a setback along Alaskan Way; Phase I does not get us there.
 - There are a lot of tools available and combining them into a viable policy will dictate development policy.
 - Incentives must have limits and balance. It should not be necessary to provide an incentive in every instance to achieve desired development outcomes, since we're already giving up a lot for the building owners.
 - We could say that if the building line is maintained, we would allow above grade parking?
 - Development standards should not go too far in dictating design solutions. We also need to allow as much freedom and creativity as possible for these buildings.

Waterfront Art Plan – Briefing on Final Plan

The art team presented a summary of the final Waterfront Art Plan: *A Working Plan for Art on the Central Seattle Waterfront*.

- **Design Oversight Subcommittee Co-Chairs, Members & Advisors:**
 - We need to study this further, but it looks promising and terrific and provides an important framework for art that is commissioned as part of the Waterfront Program.

ACTION: City Staff to mail copy of art plan to Subcommittee members not in attendance at meeting.

Public Comment

- **Seattle Design Commission Representative:**
 - It's fantastic where the PC1 site and Overlook Walk design has evolved.
- **Public Comment:**
 - Could you have microphones at future meetings in order to accommodate people with hearing aids?

ACTION: City Staff to research hearing accessible capabilities at Subcommittee meeting locations.

Additional Items

- **Design Oversight Subcommittee Co-Chairs, Members & Advisors:**
 - Given time constraints, we'll discuss the detailed program for Waterfront public spaces in our next meeting.
 - For this and future meetings, the format has also been modified slightly:
 - The project team/City staff will now brief us at the beginning of each agenda item;
 - They'll remind us where the item stands in the overall design process, when we saw last, what the issues were, what's been studied to-date, what we're looking at, what happens next and decisions to be made.
 - That way, we can focus our discussion and provide productive and conclusive feedback when possible.
 - Meeting summaries will also be briefer and should include main topics, key issues and action items.