

MEETING MINUTES

Bruce A. Harrell
Mayor

Rico Quirindongo
Director, OPCD

Jill Crary, Chair

Kevin O'Neill, Vice Chair

Adam Amrhein

Jay Backman

Phoebe Bogert

Kate Clark

Ben Gist

Brian Markham

Zubin Rao

Molly Spetalnick

Michael Jenkins
Director

Valerie Kinast
Strategic Advisor

Windy Bandekar
Planner

Juliet Acevedo
Administrative Staff

**Office of Planning and Community
Development**

600 4th Avenue, Floor 5
PO Box 94788
Seattle, WA 98124-4019

TEL 206-615-1349

FAX 206-233-7883

seattle.gov/designcommission

July 18, 2024

Convened 9:00 am

Adjourned 1:00 pm

Projects Reviewed

Commission Business

West Seattle Link Extension (WSLE) segments
(Corridor Context, SODO Guideways, Pigeon
Point, Duwamish Crossing)

Commissioners Present

Kate Clark

Jill Crary

Ben Gist

Brian Markham

Zubin Rao

Molly Spetalnick

Commissioners Excused

Adam Amrhein

Jay Backman

Phoebe Bogert

Kevin O'Neill

Staff Present

Michael Jenkins

Valerie Kinast

Windy Bandekar

Juliet Acevedo



Commission Business (8:30 – 9:00 am)

The following items were discussed:

1. Project briefing

Briefing – West Seattle Link Extension – Context & SODO Guideways

(9:10 – 10:45 am)

The Commission received a presentation by Sound Transit staff of the SODO Guideways Preliminary Engineering designs, and context information related to the Package 2 Preliminary Engineering plans for the West Seattle Link Extension (WSLE) project. Package 2 consists of the SODO Guideways, Duwamish Crossing, and Pigeon Point. The context that was presented was on the topics of engagement, corridor opportunities (under-guideway and surplus properties), and the SODO TPSS.

The following people were presenters, or were present to answer questions:

- Dirk Bakker, Sound Transit
- Leda Chahim, Sound Transit
- Daren Crabill, Sound Transit (attended virtually)
- Mark Epstein, Sound Transit (attended virtually)
- Andrea Gousen, Sound Transit (attended virtually)
- Dezerae Hayes, Sound Transit (attended virtually)
- Becki Kniveton, Sound Transit (attended virtually)
- Kate Lichtenstein, Sound Transit (attended virtually)
- Barbara Luecke, Sound Transit
- Julie Montgomery, Sound Transit
- Alex Stevenson, Sound Transit (attended virtually)
- Tats Tanaka, Sound Transit
- Phoebe Wu, Sound Transit

The following people attended:

- Justin Clark, WSP
- David Goodman, SDOT
- Saranya Gujuluva Rajan, SDOT
- CJ Holt, SDOT
- Lindsay King, SDCI

Context (SODO to Delridge Station)

Following the presentation and discussion of the corridor-wide context, the Commission expressed appreciation for:

1. The work of engaging with federally recognized tribes and non-federally recognized Indigenous groups.
2. Pursuing opportunities for Indigenous expression in station features and art.
3. The early work developing a broad range of under-guideway and surplus properties aimed at finding place appropriate uses and treatments.
4. Setting sustainability targets and using nationally recognized sustainability planning and reporting tools.

The Commission did not take an action. The Commission provided the following recommendations for Sound Transit and the City to consider as both parties continue to develop plans for the new light rail line to West Seattle.

Engagement & Equity

1. Consider engaging more extensively with those communities who will be in closest contact with the new structures and spaces, especially at Pigeon Point.
2. At 30% review, please present initial strategy for possible locations and types of station features and art informed by the input from recognized and non-recognized tribes and the broader Indigenous communities.

Corridor Opportunities

1. Continue to comprehensively develop ideas for safe active and passive use of under-guideway areas and surplus properties, paying attention to the unique context of the industrial part of the city near a culturally and naturally significant waterway.
2. Consider what “in-between spaces” are being created amidst the many infrastructure structures along the corridor. Together, the areas under the Spokane Street Viaduct, the new guideway under-areas, and the surplus spaces between them will create a large land area with challenging potential for use. Creative strategies will be needed so they do not become a nuisance or unattractive.
3. Seek partnerships on the properties that have water access, where columns or pilons are located, to increase equitable access to the water.

Sustainability

1. At 30% review, please provide information on how the project is meeting Envision and LEED targets. The SDC is interested in embodied carbon and climate adaptation, and how they are addressed with choice of materials, plants, and other design decisions.

TPSS

1. Consider how to design the TPSS facility in a way that expresses its location in an industrial area. Design each TPSS facility as appropriate within its built and natural context.

Before the SODO station review, the SDC requests:

1. A context briefing by City of Seattle staff about the broader bicycle network in SODO and the Duwamish area.

SODO guideways

Following the presentation and discussion, the SDC thanked the project team for the presentation. The SDC recognized the challenges of placing guideways in this area of the city where the geotechnical conditions and complexity of below grade utilities pose immense constraints. The SDC supports the following design characteristics of the SODO Guideways:

1. The general scale and character of the guideways.

The Seattle Design Commission approved the **Preliminary Engineering** phase for the **SODO Guideways** unanimously 6 to 0 with the following recommendations.

1. Provide more continuity between the designs for the various column types. Consider reducing the number of column types from three to two.

At the SODO Station review, the SDC requests:

1. More information about the compatibility and contribution of the project to the Seattle bicycle network.
2. Please show the complete sequence of guideway designs from SODO to Delridge, so that we understand the relationship of the family of structure types.

Review – West Seattle Link Extension – Pigeon Point (10:45 am – 12:15 pm)

The Commission received a presentation by Sound Transit staff of the Preliminary Engineering designs for the Pigeon Point segment of the West Seattle Link Extension (WSLE) project. The plans entail removing part of the Pigeon Point hillside and constructing a light rail line between the hill and the West Seattle Bridge. Soil and vegetation will be removed. Guideways and a segment of at-grade rail will be constructed. The hillside will be redeveloped with retaining walls, plantings, and trails.

The following people were presenters, or were present to answer questions:

- Dirk Bakker, Sound Transit
- Daren Crabill, Sound Transit (attended virtually)
- Mark Epstein, Sound Transit (attended virtually)
- Andrea Gousen, Sound Transit (attended virtually)
- Becki Kniveton, Sound Transit (attended virtually)
- Kate Lichtenstein, Sound Transit (attended virtually)
- Barbara Luecke, Sound Transit
- Julie Montgomery, Sound Transit
- Tats Tanaka, Sound Transit
- Phoebe Wu, Sound Transit

The following people attended:

- Justin Clark, WSP
- David Goodman, SDOT
- Saranya Gujuluva Rajan, SDOT
- CJ Holt, SDOT
- Lindsay King, SDCI

Following the presentation and discussion, the SDC thanked the project team for the presentation. The SDC recognized the challenges of building the light rail line between the existing West Seattle bridge and the Pigeon Point hill. They concur that meeting critical areas ordinances and environmental protection requirements takes priority in design decisions.

The Seattle Design Commission approved the **Preliminary Engineering** phase for the **Pigeon Point segment** unanimously 6 to 0 with the following recommendations:

Preferred Alternative

1. The SDC prefers the alternatives that terrace and reforest the hillside while also providing trails and pedestrian access and connectivity to the local and broader communities.

Aesthetics, Sustainability

1. Design the site so that the visible portion of the retaining walls recede from view as much as possible.

2. Explore developing Pigeon Point as a destination with overlooks. This hill may hold the potential of providing a view experience on par with Kerry Park.
3. Consider the sensory experience of people walking and biking along the hillside.
4. Explore how the trees that must be removed can be reused on the site, such as nurse logs or elsewhere.
5. Use climate adaptive tree species.
6. Continue to develop the cut and fill strategy.
7. Consider the challenges of the area where the route of the guideway breaks from its proximity to the West Seattle Bridge and leaves a larger gap south of the eastbound West Seattle Bridge onramp from Delridge Way SW as you plan for and design under-guideway and surplus lands. This area is cut off from other areas of the neighborhood, surrounded by large, imposing transportation structures and fast-moving traffic. It is loud.

Circulation, Access

1. Examine how to connect any new recreational destinations at Pigeon Point to the new Delridge light rail station to serve people from across the city.
2. Consider opportunities for creating a destination that welcomes cyclists as a departure point for rides in West Seattle.
3. Design the guideway crossing of Delridge Way SW as a gateway to the neighborhood.

Engagement and Partnerships

1. Develop the pedestrian routes through the hillside with City departments and community. Consider community input on where to best locate trails that will attract visitors from across the city.
2. Continue to work with recognized and non-recognized tribes and the broader Indigenous communities on the potentials for the trails and spaces you are designing, including art, interpretive signage, educational information, landscape restoration, and use of Lushootseed language.
3. Continue to work closely with Seattle Parks and Recreation in creating the spaces. Begin to identify who will own and maintain the various parts of the new hillside structures and spaces.

We request the following information to be presented at 30% design. This list supplements what is requested in City submittal requirements:

1. Provide views of how the hillside will look to riders on light rail, drivers on the West Seattle Bridge, people on the trails.
2. Provide renderings of how the hillside will look once the trees are fully grown and in interim states, when more of the walls are visible.
3. Provide information on the interim bike route condition, including views.
4. Provide high level information on how you are meeting your Envision goals, and how other goals of the project can integrate.
5. Please show the complete sequence of guideway designs from SODO to Delridge, so that we understand the relationship of the family of structure types. You may include this in the reviews of SODO guideways or Delridge guideways packages so that we see this segment in context of the whole family of guideways in the alignment.
6. Please show the design of the spaces at the base of the structures in the Pigeon Point segment, from the Duwamish Crossing to the Delridge Station, including the uses and circulation.

At the Delridge Station PE review, or some time before the end of PE, we request that the following information be presented:

1. The long span segments over Delridge Way SW, with an emphasis on how they will be experienced by people entering and leaving the neighborhood.

Review – West Seattle Link Extension – Duwamish Crossing (12:15 – 1:00 pm)

The Commission received a presentation by Sound Transit staff of the Preliminary Engineering plans for the Duwamish Crossing segment of the West Seattle Link Extension (WSLE) project.

The following people were presenters, or were present to answer questions:

- Dirk Bakker, Sound Transit
- Daren Crabill, Sound Transit (attended virtually)
- Mark Epstein, Sound Transit (attended virtually)
- Becki Kniveton, Sound Transit (attended virtually)
- Kate Lichtenstein, Sound Transit (attended virtually)
- Barbara Luecke, Sound Transit
- Julie Montgomery, Sound Transit
- Tats Tanaka, Sound Transit
- Phoebe Wu, Sound Transit

The following people attended:

- Justin Clark, WSP
- David Goodman, SDOT
- Saranya Gujuluva Rajan, SDOT
- CJ Holt, SDOT
- Lindsay King, SDCI

After the presentation and discussion, the SDC thanked the project team for the presentation and expressed appreciation for the early design of this new river crossing, which the Commission considers a new feature in the Seattle landscape as important as the Waterfront Park.

The SDC expressed support for the following aspects of the design:

1. The cable stayed bridge type.
2. That there are no structures in the water.
3. The diamond pylon shape.
4. That the pylon is slim where it meets the ground.
5. That there is no pedestal or other visible foundation of the pylon.
6. The rounded outside edge of the pylons and the contrast of the flat interior edge in the “eye of the needle.”
7. That it is a conventional bridge expression used across the world and not a unique, Seattle-specific, structure.
8. Its relationship to the existing West Seattle Bridge, and forward compatibility with a replacement bridge in the future.
9. Its relationship to the maritime industrial built context and natural setting.

The Seattle Design Commission approved the **Preliminary Engineering** phase for the **Duwamish Crossing** unanimously 6 to 0 with the following recommendations.

1. Continue to explore a range of expression from restrained to bolder. Support the sculptural form of the bridge with choices for color, surface texture, lighting. Think about how it will be experienced from various vantage points, including by the riders crossing the bridge. Consider a temporal, controllable intervention.
2. Continue to pay close attention to the areas where the bridge meets the ground.
 - Retain the thin, no-pedestal base.
 - Consider how the solutions fit into the family of columns across the alignment.
 - Understand the views of the pilons from bikes.
3. Continue to refine the relationships and transitions between the various structure types of structural elements across the whole alignment.

We request the following information to be presented at 30% design. This list supplements what is requested in City submittal requirements:

1. Please render the bridge so that all aspects of the design are accurate and all visible components, such as the catenary system and potential sound walls, are depicted.