



**Mike McGinn**  
Mayor

**Diane Sugimura**  
Director, DPD

**Marshall Foster**  
Planning Director, DPD

**Julie Bassuk**  
Chair

**Mary Fialko**

**Malika Kirkling**

**Laurel Kunkler**

**Tom Nelson**

**Osama Quotah**

**Julie Parrett**

**Norie Sato**

**Donald Vehige**

**Debbie Wick-Harris**

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## **APPROVED MINUTES OF THE MEETING**

**November 3, 2011**

Convened 10:30am  
Adjourned 3:30pm

### **Projects Reviewed**

Mercer West II  
South Lake Union Mobility Plan  
Alaskan Way Viaduct – North End and Portal

### **Commissioners Present**

Julie Bassuk, Chair (excused from 1:00pm-1:30pm)  
Julie Parrett (excused from 11:00am – 2:00pm)  
Tom Nelson  
Osama Quotah (excused from 10:30am-1:00pm)  
Norie Sato (Chair from 1:00pm-1:30pm)  
Donald Vehige

### **Excused Commissioners**

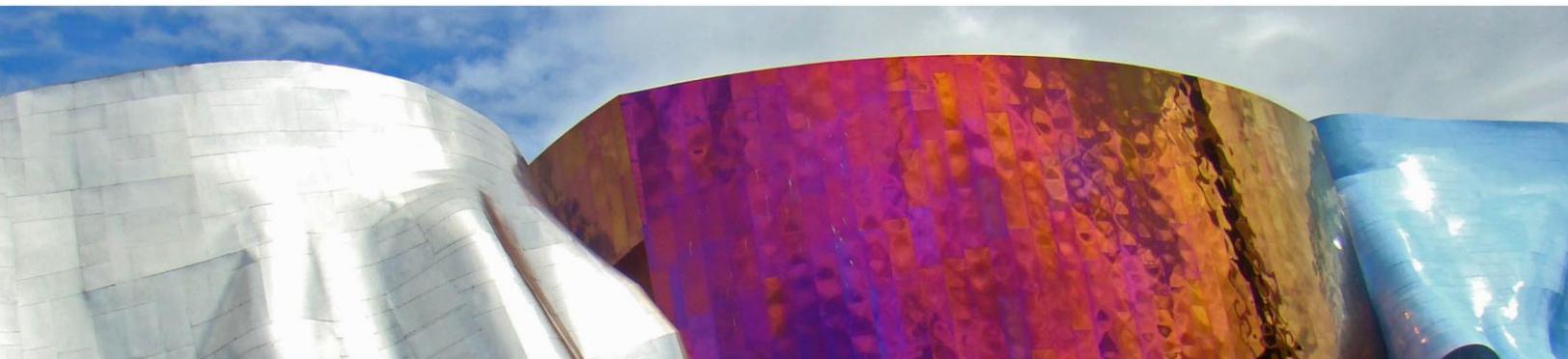
Malika Kirkling  
Debbie Wick-Harris  
Laurel Kunkler

### **Incoming Commissioners Present**

Mary Fialko

### **Staff Present**

Valerie Kinast  
Tom Iurino



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**November 3, 2011      Project:      Alaskan Way Viaduct - North End and Portal**

**Phase:** Briefing  
**Last Reviewed:** May 20, 2010; May 6, 2010  
**Presenters:** Lesley Bain, Weinstein AU  
Terry Bulfin, Seattle Tunnel Partners  
Katey Bean, WSDOT

**Attendees:** Ali Almiri, WSDOT  
Amy Turner, Alaskan Way Viaduct Communications  
Anne Herrick, HNTB  
Brian Elrod, Seattle Tunnel Partners  
Craig Hanway, Queen Anne community member  
Diane Hilmo, WSDOT  
Donald King, DKA Architecture  
Eric OBrien, SDOT  
Eric Tweit, SDOT  
John Coney, Uptown Alliance  
Linda Mallin, DKA Architecture  
Marni Heffron, Heffron Transportation  
Mike Johnson, SDOT  
Paul Diedrich, Grid Engineers  
Susan Everett, WSDOT

**Time:** 1:30pm-3:30pm

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## Presentation

The design team presented its revised design for the Alaskan Way Viaduct North End and Portal project. The project included: new ramps between Harrison and Mercer streets; a new Aurora Ave. surface street with transit stops; and new connections across Aurora Avenue at John, Thomas and Harrison streets. The team hasn't made many changes to the overall design; the portal still features a curved headwall with terraces, significant planting and saving as many trees as possible as prescribed by the design guidelines. The team made several small changes to the landscape, such as a change in the alignment to the 6<sup>th</sup> Ave. sidewalk.

The team also presented the tunnel operations building and the changes they made to its design. The building shrank in size due to the constraints of the tunnel; the existing grade and placement of the superstructure underneath drove the location of the fan box, a major component of the building. The team lowered the fan room, locating it much closer to the street, and illuminated the fan box. The new, smaller building design created a plaza on the northwest corner of the site. Due to the superstructure underneath, it can't be planted with trees; the team proposed wooden-topped seating walls with lighting underneath, an interpretive element, and raised planters. The team also detailed how the new building design better animated the street: lowered, illuminated fan box and plaza on the north side; a secondary entrance on the south side along with rain gardens and other green infrastructure on Thomas, a green street; and more windows on the west side.

## SUMMARY

**The commission thanked WSDOT for its presentation of the Alaskan Way Viaduct North End and Portal Project. The commission believed the team and its design of the landscaping along the highway in the portal area was heading in the right overall direction. The commission made the following comments:**

- **Develop further the concept for landscape design along Harrison; incorporate the best place(s) for views to the highway and other territorial views. Consider both the south and north sides of the street; the form, plants, materials, uses, and views could relate and provide continuity across the street, even though they are different spaces with different purposes. Explore the opportunity for each side to have a bus stop. Provide wayfinding on Harrison to the Seattle Center; the view from Harrison to the Seattle Center is obscured, unlike Thomas, which has a view of the Space Needle.**
- **Develop a clear purpose and concept for the building's plaza on the Harrison Street side; without one, the design of plaza will continue to be problematic. If siting an interpretive element is feasible and supports the plaza's purpose, consider using large scale elements appropriate for this project: "go big". For example, consider expressing the diameter of the tunnel, siting a large piece of equipment used in tunnel construction, etc.**
- **Push the building massing to be more pure and read more strongly. Ensure that the secondary moves don't take away from the parti and detract from the massing, especially on the building's west side.**
- **Accentuate the building's horizontal layering. For example, study expressing this in the hierarchy of the joints. Find the best solution even if it is not included in the guidelines.**
- **Further study the adjoining parking lot and how many spots WSDOT will require for the occupants of its portal building. Consider how the parking requirement might affect the design of the private development that will occur on this site, the surrounding public realm, and the use of Thomas St.**

**At the next presentation, the commission would like to hear about the building's daylighting as part of the sustainability strategy.**