

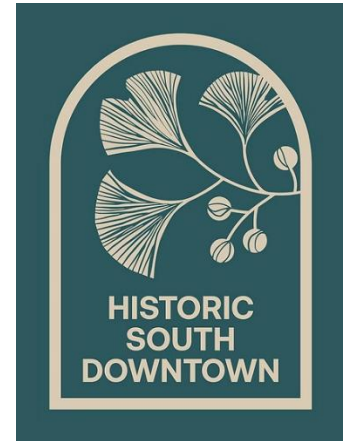
Historic South Downtown Board of Directors Meeting

Tuesday, March 22, 2022

Present: Nuria Hansen, Diane Le, Derek Lum, Quynh Pham, Dana Phelan, Stephanie Pure, Jessica Rubenacker, Jessa Timmer, Ken Takahashi, Tuyen Than

Staff: Kathleen Johnson, James King, MaryKate Ryan

Public: Betty Lau



CALL TO ORDER (Action)

Dana Phelan called the meeting to order at 5:01 pm.

Public comment

Betty Lau: context for Sound Transit initiatives; this is the third and last Chinatown, Chinatown would take the brunt of the new ST line. Original Chinatown was on the waterfront/on the docks; Chinatown was then forced down to the hilly cliffside of what is now Second Ave; after the regrade in the 1920s, Chinatown moved to where it is today in what was a tide flat. Yet again outside interests want to shift Chinatown. Strongly urge board to get letter out to Sound Transit to save what remains of the CID. Once Chinatown is gone, Japantown will follow. This isn't going to stop before Asian American character is a distant but fond memory. Please urge ST to choose 4th Ave, a viable option. The reason why they don't want it is because it costs less money. People vs. Pilings. Choose People.

GRANT PROGRAM UPDATE (Information)

Presenter: James E. King, Jr.

Status of contracting

- A few projects are having lawyers look over our standard contract and waiting to hear back
- Contracting mode, over 50% of contracts should be sent out as of today
- Still advocating for grantees to use the new system and not fall back on old ways, i.e. encouraging grantees to update information directly into the system

CONSENT AGENDA (Action)

Presenter: Dana Phelan

- *Finance Reports (December 2021, January 2022 and February 2022)*
- *Meeting Minutes (February 2022)*

Motion by Jessa to approve the consent agenda. Second from Ken. Approved by all.

COMMUNITY UPDATES (Information)

Presenters: Jessa Timmer, Quynh Pham, Diane Le, Tuyen Than

Pioneer Square City Hall Park

Little Saigon

- Jessa: City Hall Park, there are a lot of conversations around the County wanting to take over the park from the City; County had issues with safety measures in the park and wants to make a land transfer from city ownership to county ownership. The County approved that transfer in December. The City is still considering this. There is a coalition of folks trying to shape what that can look like (public input); there hasn't been a lot of public input yet. It will be going in front of City Councilmember Lewis' committee on April 6 discussing land transfer. Jessa will keep us updated about any upcoming meetings or public comment/public push. Part of the conversation is that the County hasn't done a lot of community outreach about this process. One of the biggest issues from the Pioneer Square side is that County Councilmember Joe McDermott wanted to include language that says this is permanent park use and County council voted this language down – that is concerning as this is some of the only green space in the neighborhood. Without that assurance, it's hard to see this transfer as a good thing. Right now, under the City, the park is protected as a green space. A lot of local users are pushing for more public engagement on how best to use that space. Concerning language around how the County Council phrased this transaction as a real estate transaction (which would have a lighter SEPA implication). Rather, community sees this as a community amenity that people in the neighborhood use. Last discussed at County Council in December, just waiting for City to pass counterpart legislation.
- Diane: sharing perspective as a business owner that it has been nice to get some attention from other orgs; feels better walking around the neighborhood feels like moving in right direction; hopefully that continues
- Tuyen: still folks who need services and assistance; still people lighting fires under freeway; a lot of business owners in Little Saigon are happy; does feel a little safer walking around the neighborhood
- Kathleen: mentioned mobile precinct in Little Saigon; JustCares moved people out; was hoping to discuss any concerns with how permanent this change is and if things should be on the radar
- Quynh: been convening biweekly meetings with community and elected officials (just had fourth meeting); trying to narrow down on strategies; keep getting sidetracked with new people joining and questioning certain topics being brought up; that's been the challenge is that they want to hear everyone's perspectives but get down to actionable items; longer term issues need to be addressed; big take away is that they don't want to criminalize those involved with EBT fraud but create systems to support and get services to people who need it and also do some education. They're starting to gather the right folks to continue that dialogue; biggest impact from clear out is that a lot of folks have gone to Lam's Seafood; Bottom line thing is that even if all this crime is going away, the longer-term impact is that businesses are leaving. Ding How building is down to two businesses left out of 10 store fronts in the last two years and will be a lot of work to rebuild the businesses back up. Kathleen and Quynh will connect on trying to create a planning coalition within the City departments and County, connected to issue something similar to Jackson Street Hub as a model; getting a longer-term joint planning committee in place. Also been pulled into some of the BIA conversations with various city council members to push for key needs that all of our neighborhoods are experiencing in commercial districts. Lisa Howard is involved as well. The last update is that they've been talking about CSO (community service officer) program, which needs to be scaled up to our needs; right now, it's really not doing what it's supposed to do. What it's supposed to do: unsworn civilian folks who are hired within Seattle Police Department who are

trained on de-escalation services for community members (unarmed); idea is to build relationships in communities but it is a city-wide program but not on-call to do outreach, which is what folks would like.

o <https://www.seattle.gov/police/community-policing/cso>

- Jessa: JustCares funding: they did just receive money and contract from the King County Regional Homelessness Authority around \$500k to operate a 90-room program. They are still looking for more funding either from either the City or County for the current folks living in their current hotels (about 150 folks). Not sure if new funding from the Regional Homelessness Authority includes more outreach or not or if just hotelling, so they have some funding but not all that they need. The majority of their funding ends in June which will come up quickly.

WSBLE (Information)

Presenters: Kathleen Johnson, MaryKate Ryan

Introduction

Update on DEIS

Writing and submitting HSD comment letter

- Kathleen: For context, we have been working in partnership with the WSBLE project since early 2018; scoping period 2018-2019 where we scoped out parameters of what we thought would be important for Sound Transit to study during DEIS period. That activity and work has been funded through the City through the DEIS period (now). Kathleen is actively talking to the Department of Neighborhoods to find funding for after the DEIS period. The DEIS has been the goal for a long time; been working with community to know it's coming and with ST to refine their outreach to remember to talk to big players but also the smaller organizations and businesses. Hired consultants Angie Batazzo and Jamie Strausz-Clark for the DEIS work.
- MaryKate: Overview of what we know:
 - o DEIS public comments due April 28
 - o Our printed copy of the DEIS has grown; three more packets have been added that were not printed before, including the full Racial Equity Toolkit.
 - o West Seattle Extension is one project; Ballard Link Extension is another project; two separate lines. They braid together around the CID/PS. Around Stadium Station, the new WS line will connect to new SODO Station and connect to existing CID station. The existing SODO station will connect to the new CID station.
 - o CID segment is bigger than what we think of as just CID or PS; stretches from Holgate St. to the south and north to James St. This encompasses Stadium station in this segment.
 - o Station planning report is a good place to start understanding where these alternatives will go.
 - o 4th Ave Alternatives
 - Either option (deep or shallow) will have an entrance behind Union Station with a connection near Weller St Ped bridge too
 - A new tunnel ventilation building will be built right in front of Union Station, an adverse effect on the building and that does come into play later on. This is not the only location for it, just the only one they have currently proposed.
 - Permanent impacts: some effect to parking in Vulcan Building (less than 10% of parking spaces); station entrance will be permanent behind Union;
 - Temporary impacts: some effect to the parking in Vulcan building; the building that houses ICON apartments and Bartell's will need to be vacated for at least two years

- 5th Ave alternatives
 - Deep and Shallow; also a diagonal alternative
 - Either of those three options, there would be only one new station entrance located on east side of 5th Ave in the building where Joe's Bar currently is
 - **Deep and Shallow Options:**
 - Permanent impacts: new ventilation building would go in the parking lot where Nagomi Teahouse is. The Nagomi Teahouse would be torn down and parking lot would be vacated for this project; additional facilities would be built on the current Bank of America building and parking lot site-- those would be demolished; low lying buildings (two buildings) that currently house Seattle's Best Tea, Joe's Bar, Carpet King, Thai Curry Simple.
 - These buildings would stay: American Hotel and the Buty building that 85 C is in.
 - These buildings proposed to be demolished are eligible for the National Register.
 - Building that Joe's Bar is located in is contributing to National Register's Historic District
 - **Diagonal Option:** Same buildings would be demolished as deep and shallow options. American Hotel and Buty Building would be vacated (between 9 months to two years) and would need structural reinforcing before tunnel drilled beneath them; entry way would still be in the same corner
 - would impact all businesses entirely, that is, can't ask a small business to relocate and/or put business on hold for 9 months and come back; buildings would just close once because they would do some retrofitting to the structure and foundations of the building and then they would move on to digging tunnel
 - ST does have a plan to relocate impacted buildings/businesses although details are standard and not tailored to the situation yet.
 - Social Cohesion: Mitigation money is available for businesses and could be negotiated up; right now a pretty flat one size fits all offer. In the section on social cohesion, ST states CID and PS as neighborhoods have social cohesion/community character and sense of belonging. ST states that these impacted/displaced businesses will be offered support in finding space within the neighborhood and will be compensated and therefore "will not damage community cohesion". At best, that's an oversimplification of what that effect will be. These are small business districts where people live and recreate and are complete communities, which is why they have social cohesion, so if you damage one part of that cohesion, you would damage other parts.
 - Overview of the bridge assessments on 4th Ave, Jackson St, 2nd Ave extension and hesitation to rebuild roadway structures: the cost estimates are higher and construction periods are estimated be longer because of the roadway structure/viaducts. This is an area where Sound Transit and the City would be jointly responsible for the project. All the roadways in this area are built up and structure.
 - 2nd Ave Extensions and Jackson St.: need to do some work on this area – SDOT is already studying this; 4th Ave south of Jackson they're not looking to rebuild any of it; last time these viaduct areas were rebuilt or structurally enhanced was in 1979 according to SDOT files online. One of the concerns we've heard from CID community: what do you plan to do with this structure; tear all this up on 5th and destroy a good chunk of the C-ID neighborhood and then tear up 4th next? We want to make sure that's not going to happen.

- Resources:

- <https://nbmnorthwest.com/maps/>
- <https://www.historicsouthdowntown.org/advoc>

General Comments:

- Nuria: How many people are actually looking at this, actively thinking about what is going on? Some engaged neighborhood groups in CID and throughout West Seattle; SODO and all the way up to Ballard and Queen Anne. A lot of people city wide and a lot of giant transit nerds who are invested in this discussion
- Jessa: concerns about venting in front of Union Station Building; no visual quality analysis (we don't know) or noise analysis. Surge events not mentioned at all. Things not included scare us more than things included.
- Kathleen: HSD's Statement (Action)
 - DEIS is a huge doc with city wide ramifications; connects our neighborhood to Everett (north) and Tacoma (south)
 - Increasingly clear that 5th Ave option is a great blow to the core of the Chinatown historic district, the entryway, a block from Hing Hay Park;
 - HSD has been trying to stay neutral by presenting info from DEIS and will continue to try to do that and encourage anyone with an opinion in the community that every comment counts.
 - But if you speak to folks in the Rainier Valley, folks did not feel compensated for their businesses and losses; part of that is because government is trying to get the best deal they can.
 - Small businesses particularly in the a historically marginalized community may not necessarily keep the right kind of financial records ST wants to see to prove that their value is higher than what ST sees as a stock value.
 - HSD staff feels that the more you read the DEIS and the more you understand, this really is a dangerous impact on the cohesion of the community. It's about commerce vs. culture: no guarantees small businesses will be placed back in the district;
 - With all of these unmitigable impacts, Kathleen is asking board if everyone feels comfortable about advocating that the 5th Ave options (all three) are not tenable for the health of the C-ID.
 - There's a draft DEIS letter right now; to speak to "if you move forward with the 5th Ave option, ST will sustain permanent damage onto the CID"; community needs to see we're their advocates
 - Other questions: Do we advocate for the 4th Ave option in the letter? We could also advocate for another alternative not in the plan.
 - Jessa: procedurally, for folks on board part of government entity, will they be able to sign letter? Conflict of interest? From Kathleen: individuals will need to assess individually; always better to abstain if you're feeling conflicted
 - Jessa: if people abstain from approving the letter, will that be reflected in the letter? In the past we have used our letterhead (with everyone's names) and Kathleen signs. It's entirely possible that we would just use a letterhead that doesn't list the names of all board members and then Kathleen can sign. In cases of conflict, before the vote takes place, board members state any conflicts and abstentions and that would be reflected in the board meeting minutes.
 - Ad hoc committee with Derek, Jessica and Dana (Executive Committee) to review letter, share draft electronically for an electronic vote and then finalize ahead of April Board Meeting for approval
 - Nuria: noting the change from HSD committed to being neutral and now we've shifted; Kathleen noted that DON noted a third of the Chinatown historic district would be impacted

- Stephanie: not prepared to discuss bus service impacts on 4th Ave tonight but (from Kathleen) it would be great if info from Metro's perspective for 4th Ave options could be presented later; Chris (former board member) would be a great person to bring information

Motion by Quynh to form an ad hoc committee to work with Kathleen on a draft letter from HSD board with a plan to vote prior to next meeting electronically with time for Kathleen to rewrite before April board meeting. Tuyen seconds. Stephanie abstains. The remaining members vote aye. Passed.

FOR THE GOOD OF THE ORDER

State of the Neighborhoods

Other announcements

- Jessa: house bill for ticket tax is up now on the website (future funding for HSD); there has been a little bit of conversation among stadium folks; a bit of a surprised for folks that it showed up in legislation; would be a good topic to discuss how we want to message this before they hear about it through other channels
- Nuria: neighborhood looking pretty with flowers; encouraging folks to walk over to the park Occidental to see new plantings and celebrate spring!
- Dana: Soft opening of offices at 4Culture on April 1

ADJOURN (Action)

Meeting adjourned at 6:35pm.

ZOOM COMMENTS

17:02:30 From Quynh Pham (she/her) | Friends of Little Saigon to Everyone:

sorry having audio problems

17:03:29 From Stephanie Pure (she/her) to Everyone:

BRB

17:04:57 From Stephanie Pure (she/her) to Everyone:

BRB

17:11:08 From Jessica Rubenacker (she/her) to Everyone:

I think we need to pass the consent agenda?

17:11:48 From Kathleen Johnson HSD (she/her) to Everyone:

James needs to leave soon so we'll do this first.

17:12:27 From Jessica Rubenacker (she/her) to Everyone:

Got it, thanks!

17:13:45 From Stephanie Pure (she/her) to Everyone:

Thank you, James!

17:18:02 From Tuyen (iPhone) to Everyone:

Thanks Jessa!

17:18:07 From Tuyen (iPhone) to Everyone:

New information to me

17:21:55 From James King Jr to Everyone:

Yes

17:23:15 From Stephanie Pure (she/her) to Everyone:

When was this last discussed at the County?

17:33:22 From Kathleen Johnson HSD (she/her) to Everyone:

Does anyone have an update on Just Care's funding.

17:33:34 From Jessa Timmer to Everyone:

I do, somewhat

17:33:57 From Stephanie Pure (she/her) to Everyone:

Are they also unarmed?

17:34:23 From Stephanie Pure (she/her) to Everyone:

<https://www.seattle.gov/police/community-policing/cso>

17:35:38 From Stephanie Pure (she/her) to Everyone:

Just thank you to everyone working this challenge.

17:42:25 From Tuyen (iPhone) to Everyone:

Loving the visuals MK!

17:44:32 From Ali Lee to Everyone:

Will you be able to share the slides? Thanks

17:45:02 From Kathleen Johnson HSD (she/her) to Everyone:

Yes. We'll post on our website.

17:47:28 From Kathleen Johnson HSD (she/her) to Everyone:

Can you talk about the impacts to Bouty and American Hotel?

17:51:34 From Stephanie Pure (she/her) to Everyone:

Maybe you can do a video of you doing this presentation.

17:53:26 From Stephanie Pure (she/her) to Everyone:

Is there mitigation \$\$\$ for those business impacted?

17:54:56 From Jessica Rubenacker (she/her) to Everyone:

I'm curious about mitigation as well^^

17:57:23 From Jessa Timmer to Everyone:

Can you give an overview of the bridges assessments on 4th, Jackson, 2nd Ave extension and hesitation to rebuild?

17:58:49 From Kathleen Johnson HSD (she/her) to Everyone:

One might say it's disingenuous

18:01:27 From Tuyen (iPhone) to Everyone:

Oooh

18:03:42 From Kathleen Johnson HSD (she/her) to Everyone:

You can find this map here: <https://www.historicsouthdowntown.org/advocacy>

18:04:49 From Tuyen (iPhone) to Everyone:

<https://nbmnorthwest.com/maps/>

18:06:29 From Nuria Hansen to Everyone:

This is great information, thanks

18:06:59 From Stephanie Pure (she/her) to Everyone:

Very helpful, thank you.

18:10:00 From Jessa Timmer to Everyone:

Also surge events (from stadiums) are barely mentioned! thousands queuing in line for elevators for deep options. yikes.

18:12:19 From Betty Lau to Everyone:

And does anyone know anymore that the exiting transit tunnel on 4th is part of the National Register Historic District? No, because there's not even one Asian character there. It was wiped out.

18:12:47 From Betty Lau to Everyone:

I meant existing transit tunnel formerly Metro bus tunnel.

18:21:02 From MaryKate Ryan, HSD (she/her) to Everyone:

We already have that letterhead drafted -- it's not even fake.

18:24:34 From MaryKate Ryan, HSD (she/her) to Everyone:

I volunteer to take all of your top concerns and collate them for the ad-hoc committee moving forward, if that also helps.

18:27:55 From Kathleen Johnson HSD (she/her) to Everyone:

I asking for a motion to form ad hoc committee to work with Kathleen on letter. With plan to submit for up/down vote with time to rewrite before. April board meeting.

18:28:45 From Jessa Timmer to Everyone:

There's also a small group of folks looking at the station options and opportunities to reactivate Union Station.

18:28:53 From Jessa Timmer to Everyone:

Some are better suited than others

18:29:09 From Jessa Timmer to Everyone:

(just noting, there are a lot of moving parts/pieces to think about here)