

Spokane Transit Authority
1230 West Boone Avenue
Spokane, Washington 99201-2686
(509) 325-6000

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

MEETING 10:00 A.M.

Minutes of the December 3, 2014, Meeting
Southside Conference Room

MEMBERS PRESENT

Al French, Spokane County*
Candace Mumm, City of Spokane
Shelly O'Quinn, Spokane County
Ed Pace, City of Spokane Valley
E. Susan Meyer, CEO, Ex-Officio

MEMBERS ABSENT

*Chair

STAFF PRESENT

Steve Blaska, Director of Operations
Beth Bousley, Director of Communications & Customer Service
Steve Doolittle, Director of Human Resources
Karl Otterstrom, Director of Planning
Lynda Warren, Director of Finance & Information Services
Jessica Charlton, Projects Manager
Lynn Holmes, Financial Services Manager
Susan Millbank, Ombudsman & Accessibility Officer
Brandon Rapez-Betty, Senior Communications Specialist

GUESTS

Tom Arnold, Coffman Engineers
Bob Moore, Moore Communications
Jeff Warner, ALSC Architects

1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Chair French called the meeting to order at 10:07 a.m. Introductions were made.

2. PUBLIC EXPRESSIONS

None.

Due to the shortened duration of the Planning & Development Committee meeting (30 minutes), Chair French announced that the order of the agenda would be changed to allow for discussion of the Plaza Renovation Project as the first item.

Ms. Mumm arrived at 10:08.

5. COMMITTEE ACTION

B. BOARD DISCUSSION AGENDA

1. PLAZA RENOVATION – PROJECT REVISIONS AND AUTHORIZATION

This item was directed to the Planning & Development Committee by the Board of Directors at the November 20, 2014 Board meeting. Mr. Otterstrom reminded the Committee of the goal of the Plaza renovation project: *to support a vibrant downtown by improving the Plaza's functionality for the customer and community.* Mr. Otterstrom reviewed the background of the project beginning with the May 2014 Board approval of Phase I of the Plaza Renovation project. At the July 24, 2014 meeting, the Board considered moving forward with the full project; however, a group of downtown businesses requested a pause in the project to allow for further review and the Board concurred. July-November 2014, an ad hoc committee of downtown business groups convened to discuss the project; also, extensive additional input was received from the public. November 14, 2014, the ad hoc committee submitted input. November 20, 2014, the STA Board directed the Planning &

Development Committee to evaluate input and recommend a final renovation plan to the Board at the December 18, 2014 meeting.

Mr. Otterstrom said that there is agreement from the ad hoc committee on many elements of the Plaza Renovation. Mr. Otterstrom said there is much that STA can work with to improve the project renovation plan and operations into the future.

The full report from the ad hoc committee was provided at the November Board meeting. Mr. Otterstrom said that staff has reviewed the report and identified the major categories of input from the ad hoc committee including:

- recommendations and input directly related to the renovation project
- suggestions and input related to the transit operations and network design
- suggested strategies and tactics related to facility operations and customer relations

Staff has identified major elements of recommendations within those categories which staff believes could be supported and recommended to the Board by the Planning & Development Committee. Staff recommends and requests Committee concurrence with the following recommendations from the ad hoc committee:

- support for Smart Bus Implementation; indoor waiting areas; moving Customer Service and Security to the first floor (the administrative element of Security would still be recommended to move to the second floor to make room for customer oriented activities)
- reducing the amount of indoor space and reprogramming the second floor (shelling off extra space)
- retail space on the first floor
- eliminating plans for public conference space

Staff is recommending non-concurrence with the recommendation to eliminate the escalators. Staff recommends retaining the re-located escalators. The number of people in the Plaza each day connecting from the first floor to the second floor skywalk system make the escalators an essential element of infrastructure. Removal of the escalators would directly impact the operability of the facility for customers using the skywalks to go to neighboring buildings.

Ms. Meyer remarked to the Committee that the project architects/engineers (Jeff Warner, ALSC, and Tom Arnold, Coffman Engineers) were in attendance at the Committee meeting to answer any questions.

Mr. Pace asked about the extra cost. Mr. Otterstrom said that the net would be a reduction in cost and that additional financial details would be presented further along in the in the presentation.

Staff recommends concurrence with:

- ad hoc committee's request for a Police Department CPTED (Crime Prevention through Environmental Design) review
- other ideas for utilizing public spaces from the ad hoc committee will be further assessed
 - staff is recommending to obtain the services of a national expert in public place-making during the next phase of the design to activate space so it is purposeful and useful

Chair French pointed out that a previous assessment conducted by Auble, Jolicoeur & Gentry in the mid-2000's identified other potential uses for the Plaza. Chair French said that one of the conversations at that time was that locating employment offices and services in the Plaza would change the character of the Plaza in such a way that it would become aligned with the nature of social services or government facilities. For this reason the Board moved away from that idea at the

time. Chair French said that he offered this information as a historical point of view, not that it could not be re-looked at; however, this would be the second time to visit the idea.

In the input related to transit operation and network design, the ad hoc committee supported:

- “satellite depots” (transit centers) to provide new transfer and layover capacity outside the downtown core
- “load and go” operations of frequent routes with off-board fare collection to reduce dwell time and curb space requirement of operations.

The ad hoc committee endorsed elements of STA Moving Forward. The ad hoc committee’s suggestions for strategies and tactics related to facility operations and customer relations included:

- a courtesy campaign
- better passenger queuing
- other trespassing consequences
- additional security
- expanding limited commission geographic boundaries for STA security

Staff will provide further evaluation of these items in the first quarter of 2015. Mr. Otterstrom presented graphics illustrating the first and second floor levels of the Plaza with recommended changes included. The plans include areas for future tenants which would be shells until developed by the tenant with tenant funding. The second floor would have shelled-off areas for any un-programmed space which was previously proposed as meeting/conference room space. The rotunda area is proposed to be walled off in an attractive way to allow use for STA events or open houses.

Ms. Mumm asked if there would be a family bathroom. Mr. Otterstrom said there is not a family bathroom on the first floor but the family bathroom on the second floor would be retained.

Ms. Mumm asked what would happen if no money was spent in the northeast quadrant of the second floor (the rotunda). Mr. Otterstrom said that the area would then remain open; the ad hoc recommendation was to wall it off. Ms. Mumm said she has attended many public events in that area and would hate to lose that space from a public perspective. Ms. Mumm said that it is a frequently used, very important space.

Ms. Meyer responded that the plan is to provide a separation of the rotunda area that would provide some degree of transparency (e.g. glass or Plexiglas-type panels) so that events can still be held there and the space could still be publicly accessible on an as-needed basis. Ms. Mumm encouraged the idea of remaining flexible in the design of this area because sometimes a lot of space is needed. Ms. Meyer asked if staff could, based on the recommendation of the Committee and Board, take that consideration to the architect with that objective.

Ms. O’Quinn said that it would seem that there could be some unique ways to put up temporary attractive walls that could be removed when necessary but would take the area “out of production” when not in use. There was further discussion regarding the viability of the need to close off the space and design options. Mr. Otterstrom said that the design option of the space could be further analyzed but that the ad hoc committee’s objective could be met while still maintaining flexibility for use of the space.

The recommended changes from the full renovation plan include:

Element	Cost Impact
Eliminate conference/meeting space	Cost savings
Wall-off un-programmed space on second floor	Increased cost for rotunda enclosure to account for longer-term closure as suggested
Schedule delay	Cost increase (approximately \$70,000)

Based on the proposed modifications, the project is estimated to cost \$4.9 - \$5.2 million (subject to further refinement). The previous estimate for the full project was \$5.83 million.

Ms. O'Quinn asked about the necessity of retaining the escalator since there is an existing elevator and a staircase to the second floor. Mr. Blaska responded that the escalator is used and perceived as a significant passenger amenity for access to the skywalk system. Mr. Otterstrom said that the overall assessment was that it would be very disruptive to bring the escalator in later due to structural developments that need to be completed in the initial phase of the remodel. Mr. Blaska said that from the transit customers' perspective, removing the escalator would have a negative effect on transit service. Ms. Mumm said that a lot of city employees ride the bus and use the skywalk to get from STA to City Hall. Chair French said that he had at first questioned the relocation of the escalators, but after talking with the design team he was convinced of the logic due to how disruptive the current escalator position is with regard to security, visibility and being able to maintain access to the monitors. If relocation is not done now it will become exponentially more expensive to do in the future.

Mr. Pace said that the work that staff has done and the work that the ad hoc committee has done feels like a win-win situation and that he would like to move it forward. Mr. Pace asked if a motion was needed. Chair French affirmed that a motion and recommendation was needed.

Mr. Pace moved to recommend the Board authorize reactivation of the Plaza Renovation project, as modified, effective December 18, 2014, and approve a new project budget, subject to the final preparation and submission of revised final cost estimates prior to said date. Ms. O'Quinn seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Chair French thanked the Board and staff for working through the process and establishing a final result that more people can be supportive of. Ms. Mumm thanked the consultants and contractors for their patience.

Ms. Meyer recommended for consideration, moving to item 4.A.-Approval of the November 5, 2014 Minutes as the only other action item to be covered for the Committee at this time (due to lack of time). The Committee concurred.

3. COMMITTEE CHAIR REPORT

None.

4. COMMITTEE ACTION

A. MINUTES OF THE NOVEMBER 5, 2014, COMMITTEE MEETING

Ms. Mumm moved to recommend approval of the November 5, 2014 Planning & Development Committee meeting minutes. The motion was seconded by Mr. Pace. Ms. O'Quinn said she was not at the last meeting and abstained. Motion passed with one abstention.

B. PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAM

As presented in packet.

5. COMMITTEE ACTION

A. BOARD CONSENT AGENDA

1. Mid-range Planning Guidance – Request for Approval

This item was forwarded to the December 10, 2014 Board Operations Committee meeting for review and approval.

B. BOARD DISCUSSION AGENDA

1. Plaza Renovation – Project Revisions and Authorization

Please see item 5.B.1. above.

6. COMMITTEE REPORTS

None.

7. COMMITTEE INFORMATION

None.

8. CEO REPORT

None.

9. NEW BUSINESS

None.

10. COMMITTEE MEMBERS' EXPRESSIONS

None.

11. REVIEW OF FEBRUARY 4, 2015, COMMITTEE MEETING AGENDA

As presented in packet.

12. NEXT MEETING – WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 2015 10:00 A.M. (NO MEETING IN JANUARY) STA SOUTHSIDE CONFERENCE ROOM, 1230 BOONE AVENUE

13. ADJOURN

Chair French adjourned the meeting at 10:32 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Angela Stephens, Executive Assistant