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BEFORE THE CITY OF SEATTLE HEARING EXAMINER

In the Matter of the Appeal of
PROTECT VOLUNTEER PARK,

of a Determination of Non-Significance
Certificate of Approval issued by the
Seattle Department of Construction and
Inspections for construction in Volunteer
Park.

Hearing Examiner File No.: MUP-17-015

SDCI No.: 3024753

DECLARATION OF SAM MILLER

SAM MILLER hereby declares as follows:

1. I am a principal at LMN Architects, the architects for the Seattle Art Museum’s project in Volunteer Park (“Park”). I have personal knowledge of the following facts. I am over the age of 18, and I am competent to testify.

2. As the lead architect, I have presented various aspects of the project to the Landmarks Preservation Board (“Landmarks Board”) or the Landmarks Board’s Architectural Review Committee (“ARC”) at seven of their meetings over the past year. Chris Jones of Walker Macy, the landscape architect for the project, joined me on a few of those occasions. Kimerly Rorschach, who is the Chief Executive Officer for Seattle Art Museum, also joined me on several occasions. On each occasion, Landmarks Board members provided feedback on

DECLARATION OF SAM MILLER

Page 1

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1 the proposed design, and the project's design was subsequently revised in response to the
2 feedback. Below is a summary of the design elements presented at each meeting, the
3 Landmarks Board's feedback, and the design response.

4 3. On May 27, 2016, I presented the initial design concept to the ARC.

5 a. Presentation: The initial design presentation included outlining the key
6 components of the project, including the proposed gallery, education, and meeting space
7 improvements, loading dock enhancements, seismic upgrades, and new mechanical systems to
8 provide interior environmental controls. The presentation also included a discussion of three
9 massing alternatives for the project's proposed building expansion. Alternative "Option A"
10 proposed an expansion located off of the north half of the east side of the building and would
11 necessitate removal of a European Beech tree considered exceptional under the City's Tree
12 Ordinance (SMC Ch. 25.11). Alternative "Option B" proposed a two-part expansion, with two
13 discrete expanded areas: one located off of the north side of the building, and one located off
14 of the east side of the building. It was explained that Option B would not be big enough to
15 meet SAM's programmatic objectives for the project. Alternative "Option C" was the
16 preferred alternative, which proposed to locate the expansion area predominantly off of the
17 south half of the east side of the museum building, with a smaller expanded freight elevator
18 proposed off of the north side. As it was the preferred alternative, the component parts of
19 Option C were resolved to a schematic design level. The proposed schematic design presented
20 included a 3-level expansion with an interior circulation stair visible through significant
21 glazing on the north and east sides, and an outdoor terraced patio to the rear of the expansion
22 area.
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1 b. Board Feedback: Landmarks Board members responded favorably to
2 the preferred alternative, Option C, although members expressed concern about the size of the
3 new freight elevator on the north side of the building and the potential for it to block views
4 through the interior of the Park. Landmarks Board members acknowledged Option C
5 represented the logical place to locate the expansion, as the exterior of the building at that
6 location was added in the 1950s and is not original to the 1930s construction. Landmarks
7 Board members also stressed the importance of retaining the historic east gable and of
8 replacing the exterior cladding in-kind.
9

10 c. Design Refinements: Based on the feedback from the meeting, LMN
11 refined and revised Option C further to resolve the location and extent of the interior and
12 exterior improvements, including the proposed terrace. LMN also studied different cladding
13 treatments for the exterior of the expansion area and building.
14

15 4. On June 24, 2016, I presented the refined design concept to the ARC.
16

17 a. Presentation: The presentation included a discussion of the proposed
18 interior improvements to the Garden Court, the galleries, library, and auditorium, along with
19 alternatives for the approach to exterior cladding. The discussion of the improvements to the
20 Garden Court included the location and height of the proposed openings into the expansion
21 area. Three exterior cladding alternatives were shown, each of which proposed a different
22 combination of new materials for the exterior of the expansion area, loading dock, and other
23 areas.
24

25 b. Board Feedback: Again Landmarks Board members were generally
26 supportive of the scope of work presented. Landmarks Board members discussed the Garden
27 Court openings, and suggested the design team continue to study a range of potential heights.
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1 Some Landmarks Board members expressed a preference for tall openings and a design that
2 preserved the strong symmetry of the space. There was also continued concern over the
3 potential for the freight elevator to block views through the Park, and Board members
4 requested a rendering of the freight elevator to better understand what it would look like.
5 Finally, Landmarks Board members discussed the exterior of the building, and requested
6 additional details on the terrace. Landmarks Board members also expressed support for the
7 third cladding option presented, which proposed two cladding materials.
8

9 c. Design Refinements: Based on the feedback from the meeting, LMN
10 studied options for different heights for the openings in the Garden Court. The landscape
11 architect, Walker Macy, also further refined the details of the terrace proposal.
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13 5. On August 12, 2016, I presented the refined design concept to the ARC along
14 with Chris Jones of Walker Macy.

15 a. Presentation: The presentation included a discussion of additional
16 changes to the auditorium, further detailed height options for the Garden Court openings,
17 views of the loading dock, the exterior cladding approach, and Park pathway and landscape
18 improvements. Discussion of the auditorium included a focus on the support spaces proposed
19 in the former Davis Gallery, and refinements to the stage and proscenium intended to restore
20 original symmetry. Three options for the height of the Garden Court openings were shown,
21 one with the height to match the height of the existing north and south gallery openings, one
22 with height to match the west lobby openings, and an intermediate height. A simple approach
23 to the exterior cladding was shown in plan that included two material palettes consistent with
24 third option previously supported by the Board, but that was refined with reveals of different
25 scales to further differentiate historic from new exterior. Park pathway improvements
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1 discussed included re-routing the pedestrian path on the north side of the building, in order to
2 promote accessibility and safety. New ADA pathways in the front of the building, necessary
3 for staff accessibility, were also discussed. Last, the details of the rear terrace were previewed,
4 including a seat wall, sculptural seats, a stone garden, and plantings.

5
6 b. Board Feedback: In response to the presentation of details for the
7 auditorium, Landmarks Board members supported the design that restored the original
8 symmetry of the stage and requested further study on the proscenium location. The discussion
9 of the Garden Court openings centered on evaluating the appropriate height, but Landmarks
10 Board members did not reach a consensus on what height was most appropriate. Board
11 members continued to express reservations about the design for the loading dock, and asked
12 for further study on trash screening, the location of the freight elevator, and the necessity of
13 the sunken access platform shown. Landmarks Board members also had many comments
14 about the proposed path and terrace improvements. Although Board members were supportive
15 of the symmetrical paths in front of the buildings and the ADA improvements, they did not
16 support the terrace design, which was considered too intrusive into the Park's landscape.
17 Board members also commented that the proposed stone garden was foreboding and not
18 appropriate for the Park's setting. Overall, Landmarks Board members also expressed
19 reservations about the scale of the terrace and rear entry to the expansion area, which they
20 thought competed with the main entrance on the west side of the building. Instead, Board
21 members suggested that some engagement with the landscape to the rear of the expansion
22 area was appropriate, but that the terrace improvements should be more symmetrical and
23 subdued so as not to contrast with the naturalistic setting of the Park.
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1 c. Design Refinements: Based on the feedback at the meeting, LMN
2 further refined the intermediate height approach for the Garden Court openings. The freight
3 elevator was also shifted further to the west on the north side of the building to better preserve
4 views through the Park. The sunken entrance off of the loading dock was also removed. In
5 addition, the internal stair and significant glazing proposed with the expansion was reduced to
6 lessen the impression that the rear of the expansion would function as a primary building
7 entrance. Last, Walker Macy further refined the design for the terrace area to be more
8 naturalistic.
9

10 6. On October 5, 2016, I presented the refined design concept to the Landmarks
11 Board along with Chris Jones from Walker Macy.
12

13 a. Presentation: As this was the first presentation of the design to the full
14 Landmarks Board, the presentation reviewed the historic elements of the building and park,
15 and discussed the goals for the project and the site constraints. The alternative options
16 presented at the first ARC meeting were explained, along with a new option—labeled “Option
17 C”—that studied an expansion to the south side of the building. As with Option A, that option
18 would require removal of trees considered “exceptional” under the City’s Tree Ordinance
19 (Chapter 25.11 SMC). The preferred option—now labeled “Option D”—remained an
20 expansion located off of the south half of the east side of the building. The overall building
21 form for the expansion presented was consistent with the design refinements made in response
22 to prior ARC meetings, and included a shifted freight elevator, reduced glazing, and
23 intermediate height Garden Court openings. The terrace design was also substantially revised
24 to be symmetrical, reduce the size of the terrace, and remove the rock garden. The new terrace
25 design included a patio area, seating wall, and more naturalistic low plantings.
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1 b. Board Feedback: Overall, the Board’s comments focused on the
2 massing and glazing of the expansion, the freight elevator location, and the terrace design.
3 Specific comments included the suggestion to reduce the size of the freight elevator and to
4 continue to reduce or simplify the terrace plantings. Board members expressed a range of
5 opinions on whether the glazing proposed on the expansion should be further refined or
6 changed, comments ranged from characterizing the proposed design as “elegant and simple,”
7 to the suggestion that the glazing could be expressed differently if desired to further break
8 down the scale of the expansion. Board members also requested additional information on the
9 grading necessary to achieve the Park path improvements, and commented that an appropriate
10 balance or “tradeoff” between the impacts of the expansion on the building and the Park could
11 be achieved through incorporating additional Park improvements.
12

14 c. Design Refinements: Based on Board members’ feedback at the
15 meeting, LMN continued to study whether the freight elevator could be reduced in size. In
16 addition, Walker Macy continued to study whether the terrace plantings should be reduced or
17 simplified, and engaged in informal conversations with historic staff from the National Park
18 Service (“NPS”) on that question.
19

20 7. On December 7, 2016, I presented the refined design concept to the Landmarks
21 Board along with Chris Jones from Walker Macy.
22

23 a. Presentation: The design presentation focused on the different program
24 components that would be accommodated in the building with the expansion, including the
25 new mechanical space, conservation lab, dedicated education space, gallery, and park lobby.
26 The risks of an alternative underground option were mentioned, and view studies of the
27 expansion and loading dock were shown. A substantially revised terrace design was presented
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1 that removed the patio, seating wall, and low plantings, in favor of gentle grading, and the
2 addition of pathway improvements in the broader Park to re-establish original Olmsted-
3 designed pathways.

4 b. Board Feedback: Overall, Landmarks Board members' comments
5 focused on the need to balance the expansion with the Park, recognizing both are landmarks.
6 Board members also requested additional information on the programmatic needs of the
7 Museum. Landmarks Board members encouraged continued study of any opportunities to
8 decrease the size of the expansion and the park lobby, and asked the design team to consider
9 whether the glazing and light spillage would impact neighbors to the Park. One Board
10 member also requested further study of opportunities for circulation alternatives to the Garden
11 Court openings.

12 c. Design Refinements: Based on the feedback at the meeting, LMN
13 studied the view and light impacts of the expansion on the Park and neighbors, alternatives for
14 the Garden Court openings, and the size of the freight elevator and trash screening at the
15 loading dock. Walker Macy also continued to develop the design for the broader Park path
16 improvements.

17 8. On February 24, 2017, I presented the refined design concept to the ARC.
18 Chris Jones of Walker Macy and Kimerly Rorschach of the Museum joined me in the
19 presentation.

20 a. Presentation: Prior to the discussion of the design response, Kimerly
21 Rorschach gave an overview of the Museum's programmatic needs. The subsequent design
22 presentation covered the proposal for a smaller freight elevator, view studies, circulation
23 alternatives to the Garden Court openings, and the site design and path improvements.

1 Renovation details including the octagonal gallery skylights, gallery lighting, handrail
2 concepts, auditorium seating, and Davis Gallery and hallway changes were also covered. Two
3 alternatives to the Garden Court east openings were presented, one with circulation through
4 existing galleries, and one with circulation through an opening on the south side of the Garden
5 Court. Last, information on the historic preservation treatment approaches to the Park path
6 improvements was discussed.
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8 b. Board Feedback: Board members discussed the programmatic
9 information presented and the massing of the expansion. Board members recognized the
10 expansion was needed, but questioned whether there were any alternatives that would reduce
11 the size of the park lobby. In addition, Board members discussed the defining features of the
12 Garden Court and the appropriateness of the openings on the east side. The Board requested
13 further study of the circulation challenges without the openings. In addition, the Board
14 requested additional detail on whether an underground expansion was a viable alternative.
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16 c. Design Refinements: Based on Board members' feedback at the
17 meeting, LMN studied the alternatives to the Garden Court openings and the height and depth
18 of the park lobby. LMN also requested the project's structural engineer, MKA, study whether
19 an underground expansion was a viable alternative and present its findings in a letter to the
20 Board.
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23 9. On April 19, 2017, I presented the refined design concept to the ARC.

24 a. Presentation: The presentation included a discussion of the refinements
25 to the Park pathway improvements, the alternatives to the Garden Court openings, the design
26 of the Garden Court openings and the viability of an underground expansion. It was noted that
27 the scope of work now included restoring portions of original Olmsted pathways. The existing
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1 circulation paths within the museum, and the original design for an expansion were discussed
2 in conjunction with the two alternatives for interior circulation without the Garden Court
3 openings on the east side. The pros and cons of each circulation path were identified in
4 comparison to the preferred option of openings on the east side of the Garden Court. In
5 addition, reduction of the height of the Garden Court openings was proposed, along with a
6 reduction in the size of the park lobby. It was also clarified that the underground expansion
7 was not preferred due to structural risk to the building and the segregation of the gallery and
8 functional spaces, in addition to other concerns.

10 b. Board Feedback: Board members spoke in favor of the Garden Court
11 openings with the reduced height and smaller park lobby. Board members also generally
12 recognized there were issues with the underground expansion, and acknowledged it was not a
13 preferred or viable alternative. There was discussion of whether the Garden Court openings
14 should have “headers” similar to the existing openings to the north and south.

17 c. Design Refinements: LMN is continuing to work on a final design
18 proposal, to be reflected in the construction documents for the project, which incorporates all
19 of the Board’s feedback to date, including lower height Garden Court openings and a smaller
20 park lobby.

22 10. In addition to coordinating the design work for the project, I have helped
23 facilitate the Historic Preservation Certification Application for the project to receive tax
24 credits. The Application requires a recommendation from the State Department of
25 Archaeology and Historic Preservation and approval from NPS. Nicholas Vann, the State
26 Historical Architect recommended the project without conditions to NPS in January 2017.

28 **Exhibit A** attached hereto is a true and correct copy of correspondence from Mr. Vann

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informing me of his recommendation. The National Park Service has now reviewed the project in relation to the Secretary of the Interior Standards for Rehabilitation and determined that it is compliant with the Standards. **Exhibit B** attached hereto is a true and correct copy of the NPS's compliance determination, dated May 10, 2017.

DATED this 15th day of May, 2017.



SAM MILLER