



Summary Minutes – DRAFT

Agenda

- I. Welcome and Approval of May Meeting Summary
- II. What's Happened Since Our Last Meeting?
- III. Interchange Review
- IV. Traffic Model Assumptions
- V. Urban Design Considerations
- VI. Public and Closing Comments

Attendees

Design Advisory Group

- ✓ Fran Calhoun
- ✓ Dakota Chamberlain
- ✓ John Coney
- ✓ Bob Derry
- ✓ Eric Fahlman
- Grant Griffin
- Bob Holmstrom
- ✓ Lise Kenworthy
- Doug Lorentzen
- ✓ Jose Montaña
- ✓ Mike Smith
- David Spiker
- Dan Bartlett (alternate)
- Robert Foxworthy (alternate)
- ✓ Janis Traven (alternate)

Project Team

- ✓ Lesley Bain, Weinstein A|U
- ✓ Sarah Brandt, EnviroIssues
- Richard Butler, Shapiro
- Hadley Greene, EnviroIssues
- ✓ Brad Hoff, EnviroIssues
- ✓ Katharine Hough, HNTB
- Steve Johnson, Johnson Archts
- ✓ Kirk Jones, City of Seattle
- ✓ Anthony Katsaros, Shapiro
- Andrew Laski, KPFF
- ✓ Teresa Platt, City of Seattle
- ✓ Don Samdahl, Mirai Associates
- ✓ Lamar Scott, KPFF
- ✓ Peter Smith, HNTB
- ✓ Marybeth Turner, City of Seattle

Meeting Handouts

- ✓ Agenda
- ✓ Design Advisory Group #7 Summary Minutes – Draft
- ✓ Transportation Analysis Methodology



I. Welcome and Approval of May Meeting Summary

Brad Hoff, EnviroIssues

Brad Hoff welcomed the group and invited comments and corrections to the minutes from the seventh Design Advisory Group meeting (May 7, 2003). To clarify what economic issues would be addressed in the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), Brad read the economic study requirements for an EIS from the WSDOT *Environmental Procedures Manual*, which stated the following:

457.05 Technical Guidance

(1)(b) Economic Elements

This Discipline Report covers such things as the area's general economic climate, established business districts, and businesses related to transportation facilities (see checklist, Exhibit 457-2). The "affected environment" covered by this Discipline Report includes: overall economic climate, farm and business activity, employment, property values, and local economy.

Kirk Jones, SDOT project manager, assured the DAG that the economist brought onto the team would cover many of the economic issues cited by the group over the course of the project. Lise Kenworthy noted her concerns with the distinction between socioeconomic and economic impacts, which she expressed in an email to Sarah Brandt. The meeting summary will be revised based on these and any additional comments, and approved at the next meeting.

Conclusion: With discussion of the May meeting summary concluded, Brad asked Kirk to update the group on the previous month's project developments.

II. What's Happened Since Our Last Meeting?

Kirk Jones, SDOT Project Manager

Kirk explained that May was an eventful month, starting with a meeting with BNSF staff. BNSF has promised to respond with comments on the proposed interchanges in the near future.

On May 13th, members of the project team met with monorail staff, including Bob Derry, who Kirk welcomed as a new member of the DAG. At the May 13th meeting, there was discussion of the monorail guideway alignment and how the guideway, railroad track, and street infrastructure will interact. Alternative H in particular could create engineering issues at Armory and Wheeler. There were also concerns about where certain monorail columns would be sited, and the length of left-hand turn-pockets along 15th Avenue at the southbound left turn to the West Galer Street Flyover. There was also talk about future intermodal connections near the location of the Magnolia Bridge. Kirk characterized the meeting as a successful exchange of ideas and project updates. The Magnolia Bridge project team also learned that the monorail is leaning towards siting the maintenance base at the Northwest Industries site. The two project teams will continue to share plans and collaborate.

On the evening of May 13th, the project team met with P-Patch representatives and answered questions about Alignment H. There is concern among P-Patch gardeners that the ramp turning right from southbound 15th Avenue onto the westbound Wheeler route will remove part of the garden's buffer and handicapped access. Alignment H would also remove the informal parking area on Wheeler Street. There were also more general concerns about the impacts of shifting large amounts of traffic near the P-Patch.

On May 14th, the project team presented the interchange alternatives to CityIce, but hasn't yet received a response. Trident Seafood did respond with reactions to the interchanges, and expressed interest in A6 (a "T"-intersection in the bridge and a single ramp down to the surface) because it appeared to have the least potential impact on their operations.

Kirk noted that May 22 was a busy day for the project, as official agency and public scoping meetings were held. The agency scoping meeting was held that morning, and approximately 12 agency representatives attended, including the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, the Port of Seattle, Qwest Communications, and others. The project team gave a project briefing and asked for comments. Of note, the National Guard expressed concern that adding traffic next to their facility would make it even tougher to get to and from the site. A bus tour of the final alignments followed the meeting, allowing agency representatives to see firsthand various aspects of the project area.

On the evening of May 22, the official public scoping meeting and open house was held. Again, a project briefing was offered, and 19 people chose to testify. Since the meeting, Kirk explained that he has received about ten emails from folks voicing their alignment preference, and he has also received a couple of lengthier letters. June 6 is the deadline for filing official scoping comments. Kirk noted that P-Patch supporters were well organized and vocal at the meeting. Kirk also explained that he was hoping to receive more comments on environmental elements to be studied, rather than simply on the alignments that people supported. Kirk said that he'd also received a letter from People for Puget Sound outlining approximately six specific environmental issues that the group would like the project team to study.

Finally, Kirk noted that he'd attended a joint City of Seattle/Port of Seattle meeting to discuss all projects relevant to both agencies. This quarterly meeting is intended to help keep both groups informed about important projects. Kirk briefed the group on the Magnolia Bridge project, and noted that the viaduct project was also described. An interesting comment that came out of the meeting was that the City is thinking about constructing a new underpass at the north end of the viaduct (at Broad Street) that would go under the railroad tracks and new Sculpture Garden before tying into Elliott Avenue. If completed, the trolley barn will need to be moved, and people are now talking about moving the barn as far north as the Amgen site. This would extend the trolley tracks and provide additional transit service to Terminal 90/91. At the meeting, Tom Tierney (Port of Seattle) also reconfirmed the agreement the Port has with the National Guard to relocate them if another, more attractive site can be secured. For this reason, the Port is planning to incorporate the National Guard property into their overall master planning process, with the assumption that the move will be successful (and an awareness that the status could change).

Kirk provided a brief look-ahead, explaining that comments will continue to be collected for the next couple of days, compiled, and given to the Interdisciplinary Team (IDT, a multi-disciplined group made up of various city departments and designed to provide oversight for the duration of the project). The project team has also compiled a report that documents all of the studies completed to date and the process used to narrow down to three alignments. At the IDT meeting, the team will also go over the purpose and need statement and study plan. With IDT buyoff, the project team will send the study plan to state agencies in mid-July or August. The project team is also getting started on different technical discipline reports.

Discussion

There was no discussion under this agenda item.

Conclusion: With no additional questions, Kirk asked members of the DAG to review the packet of interchange graphics for discussion of their merit.

III. Interchange Review

Kirk Jones – SDOT Project Manager

Kirk asked DAG members to review the interchange options Lamar Scott presented at the May DAG meeting and comment on whether they believed the team was on the right track.

Kirk walked through the alignment interchange options and described some of their pros and cons:

- There are some problems with **A5**—primarily the amount of area required to bring the ramps down to the surface. **A6** with the elevated “T” intersection requires less area.
- **D6** and **D8** also seem to have significant problems, and **D9** or **10** seem most promising.
- In terms of southern Alignment H routes, **H1** was shown to folks in earlier documents, **H2** is too circuitous, and **H4** has many surface roads and operational problems, and takes a lot of Port property, to get all necessary movement. **H5** has less operational concerns, but still has problems. Either **H5** or **H1** are our probably leaders, although **H1** takes buildings, which is a serious consideration.
- In terms of the northern H alignments, **H5N** (which goes straight across Wheeler) has a long, expensive structure to span all tracks. **H6N2** follows the existing right of way and ties in at Halladay. The team is leaning towards **H6N2**, where we dropped the southbound 15th Avenue deceleration lane, and either **H5S** or **H1S** as the southern component. Kirk then asked if DAG members had any thoughts about whether the team was leaning in the right direction.

Discussion

Smith It seems like there are a ton of alternatives. I thought you were culling down to only a few.

- Jones** Remember that there are only a few alternatives for each of the three alignments, so we have narrowed down the list of possibilities, we're just trying to identify the more detailed alignments to study in the EIS.
- Kenworthy** Is A7 the closest alignment to existing?
- Jones** Yes.
- Smith** So you already know what alternatives are weak?
- Jones** Yes, but we wanted to show you our process. We'll choose one of each alignment to study in depth in the EIS.
- Montaño** None of the A's have a very convenient route to the marina or Smith Cove Park, but D6 and D8 seem to do that well. Both have a very good approach in solving this problem.
- Jones** Yes, D6 and D8 provide direct routes to Magnolia. All routes also include the north-south surface road that will allow good access from Thorndyke Avenue via 21st Avenue. [This will require the Port to revisit the agreement with the Neighborhood Advisory Committee to gate 21st Avenue.]
- Smith** So access at 21st Avenue will probably happen to service the Port property?
- Fahlman** That's why it seems like under Alternative H we're talking about a 5th access, with the north-south spine road. My concern is drawing several thousand cars through neighborhoods west of Thorndyke and creating significant local impacts.
- Coney** Thorndyke could be widened to handle that additional traffic.
- Fahlman** I understand that, but it's the side streets like Boston, Newton, and others that I worry about. I have personal insight that many people already use those streets to cut through the neighborhood.
- Scott** That is a major pitfall of Alignment H.
- Hoff** Just so I'm clear, since I missed the last DAG meeting, how are we counting access roads? Are we counting the number of crossing points over the railroad tracks, or something else?
- Fahlman** If you look at 21st Avenue, and how it goes down to an "A-type" configuration, it could connect to other routes if parts of bridges are out.
- Coney** I've observed Magnolia's continuous pressure to isolate themselves, and using 21st Avenue would be a very slow alternative if one bridge went down. A traffic circle might help route people in the right direction.

- Kenworthy** I didn't know that we were going to be asked for definitive feedback, and I would ask that we have a few days to review the alignments and email our comments to you.
- Jones** That's fine. We just want you all to know that this is the direction we're heading, and want you to let us know as soon as possible if you have any significant concerns with any of the alignments.
- Kenworthy** I appreciate that A6 and A7 look promising. The northern H components all appear to have potential impacts on mobility along 15th Avenue. I'm not sure we really understand those impacts yet, but if we're adding things up, that would be a concern. If nothing else, we ought to have more information about those impacts. Also, historically we've heard from the P-Patch, and they tied up the golf course for 8-10 years in litigation. This is a practical matter that needs consideration.
- Hoff** I would suggest that you have comments about the alignments to us by June 11th.
- Smith** Do all alignments have elevations similar to those that were previously shown?
- Jones** Yes. A grade of 6.5% or lower is required, and that's why ramps are so long to reach the ground. That's also the reason for concern over some of the options.
- Smith** During this project, many have made it clear that they don't want more people going down to the marina, so great. Let's make sure they go to 21st Avenue instead and give them that alternative route.
- Kenworthy** If we have some time to review the alignments, can we see the grades for each alignment? I would suggest that you provide mainline and ramp profiles, because I don't want to propose something that's not feasible from an engineering perspective.
- Scott** Nothing we're proposing has an unacceptable grade, and all steep sections are at the most grade allowable. All alignments meet design standards or you wouldn't see them.
- Kenworthy** Are there any factors that make some alignments less attractive that we should consider?
- Scott** As Kirk described, some of the alignments are proving to be less attractive than others, but for now they're all feasible.

- Coney** I'd like to suggest something outside of the box. Could we make an extra connection by improving the Dravus Street bridge?
- Jones** We'll have to look at that. Wheeler and Armory intersections look like they'll have an effect on 15th Avenue, which is always in our minds, and Dravus already has big ramps, some railroad land at the junction of Thorndyke continuing north (which becomes 20th Avenue). There would also be room on both sides of the alignment. The cost might be high, but there might be funding elsewhere. We would also need to reconstruct pedestrian connections to meet the needs of the monorail.
- Hoff** With that, I'd like to suggest that you get any comments about the alignments into the project team by June 11th. Let's now shift to Don's discussion.
- Conclusion:** Brad suggested that DAG members return any comments about the alignments by June 11th. With no further discussion, Brad introduced Don Samdahl to discuss the traffic modeling methodology.

IV. Traffic Model Assumptions

Don Samdahl, Mirai Associates

Don explained that the project team started traffic modeling several months ago. In general, the team is required to look at a base year (2010), and then project and model at a point 20 years ahead (in this case, 2030). The project team also looked at both morning and peak hours. Don explained that the team started with the Puget Sound Regional Council's (PSRC) regional land use model, which covers an entire four-county region (King, Snohomish, Pierce, and Kitsap), and includes every facility and land use. The team then made the model more detailed based on data available from the City of Seattle, for example breaking the project area into traffic zones.

Based on the model, the team can then look at different transportation modes, transit usage, etc., and can also estimate monorail use. The team has truck forecasts based on video surveys completed early in the project, so the team has current truck numbers and can estimate how truck volumes might grow. The team is also looking at city plans and bicycle movements. While it is obviously difficult to predict how many people will ride their bikes 20 or 30 years in the future, the team will try.

To do the actual predictive modeling, the team modifies the street system to match each alternative. First, the team started with the "No Action" (i.e., what will be there if we don't do anything). The team assumes that there will be a north/south connector street through the Port, and a connection to the marina. However, the team is not assuming a direct connection between the north/south connector road and the Galer Flyover (although the connection exists in some of the options, it will not be assumed in the model due to the Port's security concerns).

For each alternative, the team identified up to 22 intersections for more detailed modeling. For some (especially along 15th Avenue), the team will consider impacts on traffic flow (i.e., will additional intersections help or hurt traffic flow?).

Discussion

Chamberlain How detailed is your study? It doesn't seem like evaluating 22 intersections will get you too far into the neighborhood.

Samdahl We're looking at volumes throughout the neighborhood, but are not looking at every specific intersection. There would be new intersection along Alignment H that we'll add to the modeling. Also, we have several local streets in the model, so we can see how they change in terms of traffic volumes. From the streets that we do monitor, we can extrapolate impacts on other streets. This is a pretty detailed network that we're looking at, and the streets we're picking could either experience positive or negative impacts. On a more qualitative level, we're also looking at how each alternative affects bike and pedestrian facilities. All of the alternatives will have bike and pedestrian facilities, but all will tie in to the existing networks differently. We'll also look at how transit and transit routing will be affected, as well as how emergency vehicles will access Magnolia (i.e., how will alternatives affect response times?).

Chamberlain Sounder has reached an agreement with BNSF. Has there been any talk of a new station in that corridor? Sounder had been talking about it, but I don't know if they've ruled it out.

Jones That could be an opportunity, but we haven't yet thought about it.

Samdahl That's a good point, we'll need to consider that.

Jones As we look ahead, for each alternative we hope to have the traffic analysis done around the first part of July, and will then send it to the City for review. We won't really be ready to present information by the first of July. The earliest we could would be early August. That's just to let you know when information would be available.

Samdahl Originally, we didn't assume the north/south connector in our "No Action" alternative modeling, but it was hard to distinguish the impact of putting such a road in by itself, as well as calculate the likelihood of whether it will be constructed.

Kenworthy I'd like to clarify the information presented on the travel graphics. The travel patterns in the right-hand chart reflect information gathered in the afternoon. How late in the afternoon? Is that during the time when trucks would be delivering, or when people would be coming home from offices? If it's the latter, it may not reflect freight concerns.

- Samdahl** The “PM Peak” refers to the period between 3 and 6 PM, and we compared modeled numbers to existing counts.
- Kenworthy** There is a freight mobility group in the city, and I don’t know their specifics, but I suspect most of their trips would be in the early mornings and afternoons. Also, what is the size template you’re using for trucks, because in the past the incorrect size has been used (15 feet too short)?
- Samdahl** We don’t get into lengths of trucks in our modeling, but folks who do detailed traffic impacts will. They would look at what percentage of vehicles are trucks, and then would use design templates for turning calculations.
- P. Smith** We’re looking at using a 50-foot trailer. We’ve done video surveying, so we actually have data about the lengths of trucks that use the route.
- Kenworthy** I would suggest that you check with the freight mobility council about their logistical details and work that into your modeling.
- Samdahl** Once we get into the details, we’ll look at peak truck times and look at certain freight movements.
- Kenworthy** That would be helpful, since we want to see the whole picture.
- Conclusion:** The project team will contact the local freight mobility group and inquire about their freight needs. With no further discussion, Brad introduced Lesley Bain to present information about ongoing urban design considerations.

V. Urban Design Considerations

Lesley Bain, Weinstein A/U

Lesley explained that the project team has presented to Seattle’s Design Commission twice, once in the early stages of the project, after which the DAG added Commissioner David Spiker. The team went back again in April, and Lesley explained that this offered the team a chance to take a step back, look at project goals, and make sure that it’s still on track in terms of the big picture.

Lesley went through a series of poster boards to guide her presentation.

- **Project Goals:** The project team is still on track in terms of the project goals identified early in the process.
- **Opportunities:** Lesley reminded the DAG of the project opportunities available, such as beautiful sweeping views, dramatic connections, increasing the visibility of Magnolia Village, and improving access to the waterfront. This allowed the project team to think about the bigger picture concerning the neighborhood’s role in the area.

- **Olmstead Plan:** Lesley presented a graphic depicting the Olmstead Plan, which the Design Commission had requested. The Olmstead Plan turns 100 years old this year, and leaves a fabulous legacy for this area.
- **Topography:** A distinct challenge in this area is the 140-foot drop from the bluff to the lowland. This elevation difference drives the need for a half-mile run to allow ramps to the surface, and also creates a challenge for getting Magnolia residents down to the waterfront.
- **Street Network:** Magnolia contains a very solid network of streets, and making new connections to such a well-established grid is difficult.
- **Pedestrian and Bike Connections:** The Interbay area has great pedestrian and bike routes, and the project can create some wonderful connections between regional paths.
- **Public Realm:** The Design Commission has the public realm as its purview. The Design Commission attempts to “think big” and to look at the larger context of projects in the city. The waterfront, sculpture park, Myrtle Edwards Park, and other public resources exist in the project area, and this project can start to link them. It will be an interesting challenge to get the public realm and industrial areas to work together. There are great grade separations that could be used once the basic requirement of getting above the railroad tracks is met. Additional grade separations might be coming with projects like the monorail. The project team is trying to figure out how to connect pieces of the public realm without causing conflicts in industrial areas.
- **Connection Points:** Lesley reminded the group how the original 25 alternatives were developed – by connecting the dots between different logical connection points.
- **Land Use:** Land use is trickier than in many other projects because the future of the area has yet to be determined. The Port is on the verge of hiring folks to create a master plan for the area. Therefore, the project team must allow flexibility for the future, but serve people currently in the area. Interbay presents an interesting, rich mix of land uses. Because we don’t know how future land use will play out, we must provide a flexible solution.

Looking to the future, there are some really interesting things happening. The infrastructure the team provides will work with many other projects. For example, the monorail has designated a deferred station in the project area. There is interest in exploring possible intermodal possibilities in Interbay.

Discussion

Fahlman You can also use the Magnolia Bridge to cross Interbay, but you’re taking your life into your own hands.

- Coney** Could you preserve the existing bridge as a pedestrian/bike route?
- Jones** That's an opportunity to explore.
- Fahlman** Could you connect to the Burke Gillman trail, since it's so hard to get through the Locks?
- Coney** Let's connect to the Ship Canal under the Ballard Bridge.
- Jones** They just got an agreement to go under the bridge on the south side, and then on a path along the south of the Ship Canal to connect to the Fremont Bridge.
- Kenworthy** I'm interested in your use of the word "flexibility." Does that mean you're open to the idea of changing zoning?
- Bain** I'm making no comment on zoning. I'm simply stating that it would be easier to plan if we knew what was going to happen in the Interbay area, but we can't speculate. We have to be cognizant that whatever facility we create will be used decades into the future.
- Chamberlain** It's safe to say that there will be some change to the land use in the Interbay area [though not necessarily a zoning change].
- Jones** From a traffic perspective, there will be four lanes of traffic on the structure over the railroad tracks. There will be some sort of interchange to the surface, and there will be three lanes to the west, two up the hill and one down. There will be capacity available for some growth beyond what current zoning will allow.
- Kenworthy** We need to talk honestly if we're alluding to zoning changes. The entertainment zone near Safeco forced warehouses out of the area. If we're going to think of offering family wage jobs to all of the population, we need to carefully consider the land use and zoning implications in this area. Forgive my cynicism, but too often the term "flexibility" plays into the hands of developers building bigger and better things. This City is gaining the reputation for being unfriendly to business. I understand that we need to think broadly, but "flexibility" has become a code word for driving jobs out of the City.
- Bain** I just mean to emphasize that we have had trouble designing for a place without a plan. Physically, we can move over the railroad tracks (we have to), and there will be a desire to connect to places like Smith Cove Park. The public realm can physically co-exist with industrial uses.
- Kenworthy** If your assumptions depend on people staying on marked trails, I know that Ballard has had problems with that. I would like to see historical promises

mesh with what we've actually seen. I'd also like to receive copies of the boards you've presented today.

Conclusion: Lesley will provide paper copies of her displays to the DAG. With no further discussion, Brad opened the floor to public comment.

VI. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Conclusion: There were no objections to postponing the next DAG meeting until September. During the interim, the DAG asks that a monthly email or letter be sent to keep people up-to-date on project happenings. John Coney also asked about the possibility of including a waterfront trolley representative on the DAG. With no further discussion, Brad adjourned the meeting.