Creeks, Drainage, and Wastewater Advisory Committee (CDWAC)

December 10, 2014 Meeting notes
Seattle Municipal Tower, 700 Fifth Avenue
Room 5965
5:30 pm – 7:30 pm
Co- Chairs: Kendra Aguilar & Noel Miller

Committee Members & CAC Staff	Present?	SPU Staff & Guests	Role
Kendra Aguilar	N*	Julie Crittenden	SPU, DWW Manager
Jeremy Andrews	N *		
Marilyn Baylor	Y		
Suzie Burke	Y		
C'Ardiss Gardner Gleser	N		
Schyler Hect	N *		
Kaifu Lam	Y, calling in		
Seth McKinney	Y		
Noel Miller	Y		
Devin O'Reilly	Y		
Heidi Fischer, Program Support	Y		
Sheryl Shapiro, DWW Policy Liaison CAC Program Manager	Y		
	**excused (provided notification)*		

PLEASE NOTE ACTION ITEMS ARE √ MARKED AND HIGHLIGHTED IN YELLOW

1) Regular Business

- The Committee Members introduced themselves, and welcomed Seth McKinney, the newest CDWAC member.

- The Program Manager proposed switching the agenda's order to have the work plan discussion earlier, to allow Julie Crittenden, the DWW Planning Manager, to participate in the discussion since she has to leave early in order to attend another community meeting. The Committee agreed.

2) Reflections on 2014

- The Committee has gone through almost all items on the 2014 Workplan.
    - One member commented that it seems like the Committee did so much more than is listed in the 2014 Workplan.
- Some things are still ongoing, including recruitment.
    - With regard to recruitment, the Committee's help is needed in seeking out new perspectives.
- Another Member commented that the Committee did not have much contact with the City Council in 2014, and would like to connect with them.
- The Program Manager reported that there were several joint Community Advisory Committee (CAC) meetings in 2014, including two relating to the Strategic Business Plan, and one concerning climate change.
    - A joint CAC group also met several time to launch a tap water campaign, which is on hold for the moment.
    - There will be more joint CAC meetings next year.
    - Any of the CAC meetings are open to any Member; cross pollination is encouraged.
- Reflecting on accomplishments in 2014, the Program Manager noted that it was good to see the "Make it a Straight Flush" brochure going out to businesses.
    - CDWAC provided comments on the campaign before the brochure was finalized and helped to clarify the message of keeping trash out of the toilet and sewer system. Seth, the newest CDWAC member, reported that the brochure had been received by his place of business and brought in a copy to show CDWAC.
    - Another Member suggested that the recycling/garbage brochures could also benefit from some simplification and clarification of the message, and the Program Manager suggested speaking with SWAC.
- The Program Manager noted that the Committee accomplished a lot of group process work and Race & Social Justice (RSJ) work in 2014.
- She appreciates everyone's commitment and engagement.

3) 2015 Workplan Development

- Julie Crittenden gave an overview of the changes in the area of Drainage and Wastewater at SPU, and provided some background information on items listed in the 2015 Draft Workplan.
- As explained at the CDWAC November meeting, as part of the Strategic Business Plan (SBP) adopted by the Seattle City Council in August of 2014, SPU is in the process of changing its organizational structure

for better alignment around its three lines of business: Drinking Water, Solid Waste, and Drainage and Wastewater.

- DWW has 3 leadership positions to fill, including the DWW Branch Deputy Director and two division directors, one in planning and capital programming, and the other in system assessment operations and monitoring.
  - It will likely take about six months to fill these positions and fully orient staff. While that is happening, SPU continues to make progress on current projects.
- The Program Manager reported that Melina Thung, the new leader of Utility Services at SPU, and her team are currently looking through the SBP action plans and efficiency measures and prioritizing them. There will be a joint CAC meeting on this topic in January 2015.

- With regard to Item #4 on the 2015 Workplan, Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) Long Term Control Plan (LTCP)/Integrated Plan (IP), the final plan needs to be submitted to Washington Department of Ecology by May 29, 2015.
  - SPU's preference is to include the Integrated Plan option as part of the Long Term Control Plan –that will be discussed with the Mayor in the next month.
  - There's discussion about whether the Plan will include creating a large tunnel (in the Ballard/Fremont/ Wallingford area) to combine either three or nine of the largest CSO areas in Seattle/King County, or will build larger but fewer storage tanks in three CSO areas in Seattle/King County. The Plan must also undergo an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) review.
    - The Program Manager noted that CDWAC has commented before on the scoping of the EIS.
  - Julie noted that it might be helpful for CDWAC review the CSO Plan during the City Council review period around February or March, and to weigh in if CDWAC choses to submit a comment letter to Council about the Plan.
    - This might be a good time to ask Ed Mirabella to come to CDWAC and explain the final recommendations of the Plan, which will include 3 major stormwater related projects if the Integrated Plan is included, and will identify the tunnel location, if a tunnel approach is chosen.
      - SPU is considering purchasing some properties in connection with siting the tunnel, including the Ballard old Yankee Diner/hotel site near the possible staging and entry area; the other end of the tunnel would be towards the North Transfer Station in Wallingford.
        - One Committee Member, who lives near the construction site of the new North Transfer Station, commented that it doesn't seem to leave enough room for siting the tunnel.
- With regard to Item #5, Wastewater Source Control, the Committee may want to consider a presentation on Fats, Oils, and Grease (FOG). CDWAC may also want to get input from individual SPU employees about their most exciting project in this area.

- With regard to Item #6, Seattle Waterfront Issues/Plans, the Program Manager will arrange a briefing for the Committee in the first quarter of 2015.
- With regard to Item #7, the Shoreline Master Plan, the Committee expressed interest in a briefing.
- With regard to Item #9, the Green Stormwater Infrastructure (GSI)/Natural Drainage Systems Partnership, Julie noted that this is one of the approaches being used to address the goals of the Integrated Plan.
    - ✓ The Program Manager will check on the project's status and arrange for a briefing for CDWAC, perhaps in the first or second quarter of 2015.
- With regard to Item # 10 on the Workplan, DWW Planning Program, the first plan to be created is for the Greenlake/Aurora Area.
    - As SPU engages the community in giving input, we will continue to see how best to adjust the plan.
    - Area characterizations have been created, and Holly will brief CDWAC sometime in 2015.
    - SDOT is also working on the Aurora Corridor, and SPU is working with them to leverage our drainage projects for maximum efficiency.
- With regard to Item #11, Thornton Creek, there are two projects nearby that might make an interesting field trip for CDWAC – Knickerbocker and the Confluence.
    - For other creek projects in Seattle: The Taylor Creek Project is in very preliminary stages; the Mapes Creek Restoration Project construction is complete.
- With regard to Item #12, Development Services Office, a project to streamline utility procedures for developers, the Program Manager will check on scheduling a CDWAC briefing.
- With regard to Item #13, Surface Water Assessment Management Program, a briefing was planned but had to be cancelled.
    - ✓ The Program Manager will check in with the program manager to schedule a presentation .
- With regard to Item #14, Drainage & Wastewater Policy Gaps, SPU is actively working to fill these.
    - For example, one area we are focusing on now is deciding when stormwater could go to the separated sanitary sewer system, by what process, and how to effectively coordinate this with King County.
    - Another gap area is whether SPU should put in a formal drainage system in some areas that currently have ditch and culvert systems, and if so, how to pay for it, and how to prioritize the areas that need it.
    - Another gap area is side sewers (a side sewer connects the plumbing in a building to the public sewer in the street, and carries wastewater from a building's sinks, toilets, and drains to the public sewer).
        - SPU did some investigation on this in 2014, considering issues of ownership (SPU doesn't own side sewers, and sometimes ownership is shared between different houses or building owners), and how SPU should manage side sewers, given that replacing them is a big expense for customers and, when needed, is almost always an emergency.

    - Another area we might tackle is a ditch filling policy to provide guidance on when a ditch can be filled. Sometimes people get permits from SDOT, but sometimes people do it themselves.
- With regard to Item #15, Sewer System, CDWAC had a presentation about this recently, so if the information does not change, the Committee will not plan for further action on this item now.
- With regard to Items #16 - 19, these topics are broader and tend to involve all Community Advisory Committee (CAC) members: Communications, the Strategic Business Plan, and further Race and Social Justice training will be addressed in joint CAC meetings in 2015.
- With regard to Item #20, Charter Revision, the Program Manager will be working on this in the first quarter of 2015 and will seek input from all CACs.
- With regard to Item #21, Education/Leadership Development Opportunities, the Program Manager will continue to send these out to the CACs and is interested in any additional suggestions from members.
- Item #22, Committee Recruitment, is ongoing.
- With regard to Item #23, a member orientation did not happen in 2014, but the Program Manager would like to have one in 2015 that provides more context for SPU's role, actions, and decision making criteria, and includes information about how SPU relates to the Mayor and City Council.
    - ✓ Perhaps the SPU legislative liaisons can make a presentation to the Committees as part of this orientation. The Program Manager will look into this.
- With regard to Item #24, Outreach, there has been a lot of interest in all CACs, including defining Committee messages and using virtual social media.
    - SWAC was talking about specific plans for doing outreach, including geographic district representation at the 13 Neighborhood District Councils, perhaps rotating to have SWAC members attend one meeting per quarter, where they could listen to the community and bring back messages to SWAC, as well as communicate messages from SWAC.

✓ The Program Manger also noted that elections for CDWAC officers will need to be considered.

✓ The Program Manager requests that, for items on the workplan that ask for briefings plus comments, Committee members let her know how they would prioritize those items.

4) Around the Table

- CDWAC's newest member shared some information about his background. He moved to Seattle a few years ago and lives in the Madrona neighborhood. He has a policy degree, works with the Seattle Good Business Network, and has done green business outreach.
- The Co-Chair of CDWAC reported that he attended training for Board chairs with the SWAC
- Co-Chair. He also attended training on group facilitation with the Program Manager.
    - Topics covered included how to encourage input, how to balance input among a number of people, and how to move forward on a particular topic.
- Another Committee Member reported that she has been paying attention to developments in her neighborhood related to ditches and Piper's Creek.

- Another Committee Member expressed concern about the construction on Stone Way relating to building the new North Transfer Station, specifically, that a drainage tunnel (as might be part of the Integrated Plan discussed above) may not be able to be sited there, and that construction on the Transfer Station had taken longer than expected.
- Another Committee Member reported that Seattle City Light's project to replace the wooden "H-Frame" poles that carry transmission lines from the Creston-Nelson substation to the Duwamish substation is moving forward lately. He further noted that there are a lot of different City Light sites that need restoration, and some are not within the City's boarders, which complicates matters because there are no umbrella organizations to shepherd the projects.
- He also reported that there is a program in King County called Vets Restore, which is a new education and career opportunity for returning military veterans in King County, Washington. Participants are trained in preservation carpentry and introduced to the building rehabilitation trades. The mission of Vets Restore is to connect veterans with the valuable work of revitalizing America's historic building stock. Highline High School and other regional organizations are working with the program.
- Another Member suggested that Vets Restore may want to connect with the Student Conservation Association.
- Another Member reported that he attended a Rethinking Prosperity meeting at the University of Washington, where they discussed what economic development really does for a city and for individuals, and whether it's appropriate to encourage businesses that extract wealth (take wealth out of the environment) rather than create it. For instance, fracking is very profitable on a business level, but how does it fare at the societal level?
- Another Member reported that recently Toledo, Ohio warned residents not to consume its water after tests revealed the presence of a toxin possibly related to algae on Lake Erie. The city warned against boiling because it will only increase the toxin's concentration.
- The Program Manager reported that a program called Democracy Now has information about a International Climate Summit that is currently in session , and reports that the next year's summit will be in Paris where they will be revising the Kyoto Protocol.
- Another Member shared about her experiences in visiting Lima, Peru where she observed that citizens take great pride in having clean streets, and compete to have the cleanest district.

5) Lower Duwamish

- The EPA's Record of Decision (ROD) has been released with the final action plan for further cleanup of the Lower Duwamish Waterway. The Committee reviewed Part 1 of the ROD, the Declaration and the Table of Contents, and the table of contents of Part 3, the Responsiveness Summary.
    - One member noted that the ROD went with a more expensive plan than had been proposed before the public comments.
    - At their November meeting, CDWAC had considered resending an earlier letter of support for the EPA's plan to the Mayor and City Council, but further discussion ensued over e-mail and the letter was not resent.

    - One member noted that he hasn't heard anything yet about the Mayor or City Council disagreeing with the ROD.
- The Committee expressed interest in knowing how costs to SPU incurred by actions required in the ROD will affect costs to ratepayers.
    - The Program Manager confirmed that the actions SPU is obligated to take under the ROD can affect SPU's rates.
        - The Program Manager noted that it could be a generational equity issue, since the costs will likely be borne by future ratepayers.
    - She can take CDWAC's questions back to Dave Schuchardt, who gave a presentation to the Committee last month on the Lower Duwamish Waterway cleanup.
- Another member reported that he had read most of Part 3, the Responsiveness Summary.
    - The final cost of the plan is more than what was proposed before, but not the full upper range that included complete dredging.
    - The ROD presents a plan that is incrementally more than what the Lower Duwamish Waterway Group suggested.
    - He further noted that the Responsiveness Summary was very good, and answered a lot of little things, addressing concerns of most every stakeholder.
- Another Committee Member noted that the ROD provided good information on local hiring for actions required in the ROD.
- He added that he invited the Duwamish River Cleanup Coalition (DRCC) to attend a CDWAC meeting to present their point of view, but they were unable to attend.
    - The DRCC did attend an EPA meeting before the ROD was released, and were told that there was no detection done in the early dredging sites.
        - Another Committee Member commented that there was quite a lot of dredging in the EPA's plan.

6) Team Celebration

- The Committee participated in a brief, fun, interactive activity facilitated by the Program Manager.

7) Closing

- The Committee voted to approve the meeting notes from November 2014.