MARTHA WASHINGTON PARK VICINITY (BASIN 45) CSO REDUCTION PROJECT COMMUNITY MEETING SUMMARY REPORT

Thursday, June 9, 2011
6:30-8:00 p.m.
Graham Hill Elementary School
5149 S Graham Street, Seattle

Seattle Public Utilities hosted a community meeting on Thursday, June 9, 2011 for the Martha Washington Park Vicinity (Basin 45) Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) Reduction Project. This report provides a summary of meeting outcomes.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Combined sewer overflows (CSOs) happen when pipes that carry both sewage and stormwater overflow into our waterways during heavy rain. Seattle Public Utilities is working to control CSOs throughout Seattle to protect property, human health and the environment and to comply with state and federal regulations.

Overflows occur at the outfall near Martha Washington Park approximately seven times per year. Ten overflows occurred in 2010, releasing 1.3 million gallons of untreated sewage and rainwater into Lake Washington. The Martha Washington Park Vicinity (Basin 45) CSO Reduction Project will reduce the amount of untreated sewage and polluted stormwater that is overflowing into Lake Washington combined sewer overflow outfall near Martha Washington Park (CSO Outfall #45).

Project Alternatives

Seattle Public Utilities proposes to construct an underground storage facility in the vicinity of Martha Washington Park to temporarily hold combined sewage and stormwater runoff. When there is capacity available, the facility would gradually send flows to the downstream sewer system for treatment and discharge.

Seattle Public Utilities is currently considering four alternatives:

- Alternative 1 - Martha Washington Park Underground Storage

Seattle Public Utilities is considering two options for 200,000 gallons of storage underneath Martha Washington Park. Option 1 - Build twin storage pipes using open-cut construction. Each pipe would be 72 inches in diameter, approximately 475 feet long. Option 2 - build either twin 72-inch diameter or a single 108-inch diameter storage pipes using trenchless technology. With either option, an underground facilities vault - approximately 45 feet long x 25 feet wide - would be constructed. Seattle Public Utilities is in the process of evaluating alternative locations for the facilities vault, which would house electrical, mechanical, and odor control equipment. A 230 foot, 18-inch diameter gravity pressure main would also be constructed.

- Alternative 2 – 57th Avenue S Underground Storage

Build a series of three storage pipes underneath 57th Avenue South from S Holly Street to just south of S Morgan Street, on the city owned right-of-way. The 200,000 gallon storage pipes would be approximately 8 feet in diameter, 530 feet long, and built approximately 3 to 9 feet below ground (from the road to the crown of the storage pipe). An underground facilities vault, approximately 45 feet long x 25 feet wide, would be constructed at the corner of S Holly Street and 57th Avenue South. The facilities vault would house electrical, mechanical, and odor control equipment.

- Alternative 3 - Underground Storage on Private Property

Build a 200,000 gallon underground storage facility on private property if there was a property owner willing to sell to Seattle Public Utilities. Only a small area within Basin 45 is appropriate for a private property solution, and Seattle Public Utilities is in the process of contacting property owners to determine if there is a willing seller within this area. Seattle Public Utilities would only consider a private property option if there was a willing seller.

While the exact dimensions of the facility would depend upon the specific site, it is likely that the tank would be approximately 60 feet long, 45 feet wide, and 15 feet deep. Other elements would likely include an approximately 50-foot long, 18-inch diameter gravity sewer and 30-foot long, 12-inch diameter force main.

Seattle Public Utilities would consider two options for an underground facilities vault to house electrical, mechanical, and odor control equipment, either at grade with access hatches from above ground or an above ground facilities vault with a small building.

- Alternative 4 - Infiltration Reduction + Storage Alternative 1, 2, or 3

Infiltration is groundwater that enters the combined sewer system through cracks and openings in the sewers or foundation drains. With Alternative 4, Seattle Public Utilities would repair or replace broken side sewers and sewer mains in Basin 45 to eliminate sources of stormwater from the collection system.

Infiltration reduction alone would not be sufficient to completely meet the regulatory standard of one overflow per outfall per year. Seattle Public Utilities would monitor the effectiveness of infiltration reduction. A smaller storage facility would need to be built later to store remaining control volume. The storage facility would be a smaller version of alternative 1, 2, or 3, to provide approximately 50,000 to 130,000 gallons of storage (according to preliminary estimates).

Community members review information about the Basin 45 project alternatives.

EVENT OVERVIEW

On Thursday, June 9, 2011 from 6:30 - 8:00 p.m., Seattle Public Utilities hosted a community meeting to review project alternatives and continue dialogue with the community on potential project alternatives. A total of 13 people signed in at the meeting, with approximately 25 people in attendance.

The purpose of the meeting was to provide participants with the opportunity to:

- Summarize the public process to date and what we've heard
- Demonstrate how public comments received to date have influenced project decision-making
- Present basic project information and explain the environmental review process (SEPA Checklist)
- Build awareness and understanding for the decision process and project timeline.
- Present visualizations for the four alternatives Seattle Public Utilities is considering for Basin 45
- Present the opportunity for participants to comment on all of the alternatives and take home project materials

The community meeting was a follow-up to a series of public meetings Seattle Public Utilities hosted in late 2010 and early 2011 to work with the community to identify community preferences and gather input to help Seattle Public Utilities identify a short list of alternatives to advance for further design and evaluation.

Public Notification

Seattle Public Utilities advertised the workshop through a variety of methods including:

- Notice on the North Henderson project website;
- Postcard announcement mailed to approximately 1,700 households in the North Henderson basins and to about 100 people representing organizations that have reserved facilities in Seward Park over the last three years;
- Messages to the North Henderson listserv;
- Meeting flyers delivered to community centers, libraries, Synagogues and post offices;
- Display advertisement in *The Medium; and,*
- Earned media providing advanced notice of meeting in *Rainier Valley Post*

Meeting Format

At the beginning of the meeting, participants signed in as they arrived and Seattle Public Utilities staff informed them of the meeting purpose and format. Each participant received a packet containing copies of the alternatives display boards, a comment form, and a document containing a side-by-side comparison of the project alternatives.

Participants broke into small groups to visit four stations with display information about each project alternative.

- Station 1: Martha Washington Park Underground Storage
- Station 2: 57th Avenue S Underground Storage
- Station 3: Private Property Underground Storage
- Station 4: Infiltration Reduction + Alternative 1, 2, or 3

At each station, a project team gave a brief overview of the alternative and responded to participant questions. A scribe documented comments and questions on easel pads. Participants spent 15 minutes at each station and then moved to the next alternative. At 7:45 pm, the meeting facilitator invited participants to rotate through the stations one more time to ask clarifying questions and submit additional comments. At the end of the meeting, participants were invited to provide comments at the microphone.

COMMENT SUMMARY

This section contains a summary of comments received as of June 16, 2011.

Key Points

- Some participants commented that Alternative 1 was cost effective, but expressed concerns about impacts on Martha Washington Park.
- Community members are very concerned about impacts to Martha Washington Park and the potential for the project to change the character of the park.
- Alternative 2 was the least popular among participants who submitted comment forms because of the impacts on the street and access to adjacent homes.
- Support remains for Alternative 3, if a willing seller can be found.
- Some participants think that Alternative 4 is an interesting idea, with potential to lessen the impacts of constructing an underground storage tank. However, there is concern about its cost.
- Community members reiterated concerns about disturbances to and safety of nearby homes – this is a theme of comments for all alternatives.
- Participants raised questions about cost assumptions and would like more clarification on cost breakdowns.

Break Out Group Comments

The following provides an overview of participant comments and questions recorded at each of the alternative stations and during the public comment portion of the meeting. Please note the following comment summary is not intended to be a verbatim summary of comments, but rather a representative summary of questions and comments.

Alternative 1 – Martha Washington Park Underground Storage

Participants offered suggestions relating to the position of project components:

- *Move the below ground vault.*
- *If you put bollards on Warsaw, want to see additional parking in park.*
- *What about putting below ground facilities vault on the other end of the park (not Warsaw)?*
- *Would like to put bollards/gate on Warsaw to prevent crime.*
- *Another option is locating the facilities vault close to pump station.*
- *Is a more linear approach possible?*
- *All of the vault options should be underground.*
- *Keep facilities low to the ground.*

Parking at Martha Washington Park was another key concern:

- *Summer parking issues for residents near Martha Washington Park*
- *Put parking in parks*

Participants expressed concern about odor, noise, traffic and impacts on park users:

- *Three action items: dog walkers, summer park users, and neighbors.*
- *What about odors?*
- *How will traffic impacts to residents on Warsaw be handled?*
- *Concern about loss of quiet and enjoyment.*
- *Concern about noise when vehicles go over facilities vault on Warsaw.*
- *What are ways to minimize contractor impacts?*
- *I like that there would be need to access the conduits for maintenance within the park space and not hatches.*

Several questions were raised about flooding, runoff, and groundwater related issues:

- *What about flooding in basements?*
- *Look at downhill groundwater flow during design and construction.*
- *How will Seattle Public Utilities handle flooded basements?*

- *How will Seattle Public Utilities deal with impacts of water runoff?*
- *In the past, a small stream ran through the north side of the park. Will Seattle Public Utilities try to restore it?*
- *How will you mitigate groundwater impacts?*
- *What about hydrostatic pressure?*

Questions and comments relating to project cost included:

- *What is the cost to each homeowner?*
- *Don't want contractor to do the job the cheapest way*
- *Can we shrink construction site cost to tighten construction site in MWP?*
- *Is Alternative 1 cheaper?*
- *Is saying this is the cheapest option really true without factoring in mitigation costs?*
- *Is cost of street use included in all of the alternatives?*
- *By your web page the estimated cost for the whole city is $626,508,000. Your estimate of the value of the homes you considered taking, at one time, on Lake Washington, was $6,355,000. The County Assessor had them appraised at $23,860,000, 3.75 times more than your figures. If your $626 million is adjusted by this factor, total project cost could be over $2 billion. Divided by 170,000 homes in Seattle, the cost to each home would be between $3,700 and $10,000, add interest over 20 years and it could be as large as $30,000 per home. The lake is cleaner than it has been since 1910. This is a boondoggle. We cannot afford nor do we need it. We have been told $4/month, $50/yer for 20 years = $1,000.*

Other general clarifying questions and comments included:

- *Where are the vents located?*
- *What is the difference between a SEPA checklist and an EIS?*
- *Where is the facility vault located?*
- *Been asking for the steps to be repaired for months.*
- *What if issues arise during construction or there are operational issues?*
- *Want to stay as far away from elms as possible.*
- *How much space is needed for the 7.5M cut and cover option?*
- *Twin pipes: fill by gravity one way drain out other way.*
- *What is the length of construction?*
- *Least disruptive to the neighborhood over the year construction period. Also shortest period.*

Alternative 2 – 57th Avenue S Underground Storage:

Concerns about the impact on adjacent residences and mitigation during and after construction was the primary theme of comments submitted in regards to this alternative:

- *Will it back up into my basement?*
- *What will happen to front yards?*
- *Will the section between the road and the sidewalk be replaced after construction?*
- *Are there any benefits to homeowners?*
- *If the street is open, would there be an opportunity to reconnect side sewers?*
- *Is there any mitigation for property owners?*
- *How will Seattle Public Utilities accommodate elderly (mobility-challenged) residents during construction?*
- *Is it possible to move staging to Warsaw?*
- *How is access to homes along 57th and Warsaw affected during construction?*
- *One participant specifically stated dislike for the following:*
    - *Replace sewer & water main*
    - *High cost*
    - *Long construction*
    - *Impacts on residents*
- *Is Warsaw closed in this alternative?*
- *Concern about noise created by vehicles using the area near the existing pump station as a turnaround if access hatches were placed there.*
- *Would Seattle Public Utilities consider moving elderly residences out of their homes during construction if their vehicle access is blocked?*
- *What kind of accommodation is available to residents on 57th to mitigate noise and other impacts of construction?*
- *How would Seattle Public Utilities compensate the neighborhood for the inconvenience during construction?*

Other general clarifying questions and comments included:

- *Will the pipe be adequate to handle a large storm?*
- *What is the cost per home?*
- *Concern about cost/benefit of implementation project*
- *Where is there odor control?*
- *Would a gray water system help with CSOs?*
- *Next best at minimizing neighborhood impacts. (Alternative 1 is preferred)*

Alternative 3 – Underground Storage on Private Property

Participants asked questions about process and cost:

- *Has Seattle Public Utilities had identified/contacted/negotiated with all willing sellers?*
- *Would two properties be required for proposed CSO storage facility?*

Specific preferences cited by participants included:

- *A few participants expressed preference for private property option over Alternative 1 - Martha Washington Park Underground Storage.*
- *Some participants expressed a preference for the underground facilities vault over the above ground option.*
- *Site building is back of the lot.*
- *Prefer an underground facility with landscaping.*
- *Minuses - removes anchor house from neighborhood; diminishes tax base.*
- *Pluses – willing seller; minimizes disruption to the neighborhood; sanity; best alternative.*
- *Least attractive alternative.*

Alternative 4 – Infiltration Reduction + Alt 1, 2, or 3

Participants asked several clarifying questions about what infiltration is:

- *Participants did not realize that it was infiltration into the sewer pipe or side sewer not infiltration into the ground.*
- *How does this alternative reduce flows to the lake?*
- *Where would the infiltration take place? At each individual house?*
- *It only connects certain downspouts?*
- *Property owners would be responsible for connecting roof drains to the storm sewers?*

How does *Seattle Public Utilities* determine the volume of infiltration reduction needed?

- *How do you trace the flow?*
- *Are there measurements on how much is coming through infiltration reduction?*
- *Estimates for volume of infiltration?*
    - *There's a range based on King County's project*
- *Is there a ratio of inflow-to-infiltration?*
- *Can't be sure of how much you're reducing? 30-80% range*

Participants expressed concerns about the cost of this alternative:

- *Not cost effective.*
- *Who pays? The city?*
- *Hill homeowners think water comes from the roof so they're going to choose the least expensive alternative (Alternative 1).*
- *Project does offer benefits to homeowners by having Seattle Public Utilities reconstruct side sewers, but some participants expressed concern that this benefit does not justify the higher cost associated with this alternative.*

Other general clarifying questions and comments included:

- *How long does it take to empty the container after its full?*
- *Makes more sense for new developments it seems.*
- *Rain gardens would not work.*
- *Property owners need to understand their right of way and the city's right of way.*
- *So Alternative 4 is more of a pilot project?*
- *So you would do Alternative 4 first then Alt 1, 2, or 3?*
- *Is Basin 45 a good test because it's a smaller basin?*
- *It's got potential but it's a gamble.*
- *Infiltration = less property disturbances.*
- *It is the most creative alternative.*
- *It would be great if infiltration reduction plan could be endorsed by the property owners – this could serve as a demonstration project for the rest of the City.*

Public Comment Session

Participants provided the following statements during the public comment session at the end of the meeting:

- *Have been working with the Friends of Martha Washington Park group since the 1990s. The group has worked to clean up the park resulting in reduced crime. They do not want a permanent impact on the park—meaning Alternative 1. Alternative 1 is permanent, but it is not visible. If that is the chosen alternative, Seattle Public Utilities must take care of the vents and potential odor problem. Alternative 4 is the most elegant choice and I want to make sure it gets its fair shake. I wouldn't have a permanent impact on the park and solves future problems. There needs to be more discussion and the order of magnitude change considered.*
- *Friends of Martha Washington Park have a strong sense of its users like picnickers, dog-walkers and orcharders. The biggest concern is that the City of Seattle completes its improvements. There are shoreline issues, safety issues, and clearing brush. It scares me to think of the large project coming to the*

park and then running out of money. Large reservation about the park option (Alt 1).

- *Been playing with figures of the $626M on the Seattle Public Utilities website. Seattle Public Utilities says the value of homes is $6M, county assessor say $24M—which is off by a large magnitude. I don't trust their numbers and this project could cost $10,000-$30,000 a household. The lake is as clean as it was in 1910 so this project is a boondoggle.*

Comment Forms

Thirty-four participants returned completed comment forms. Following is a summary of responses.

Do you have a preference for any of the proposed project alternatives?

Of the 34 participants who returned comment forms:

- Twenty-nine preferred Alternative 1 – Martha Washington Park Underground Storage;
- Three preferred Alternative 3 – Private Property Underground Storage;
- One preferred Alternative 4 – Infiltration Reduction + Storage, and;
- One indicated no preference.

No one who submitted a comment forms indicated a preference for Alternative 2 – 57th Avenue S Underground Storage.

Why do you prefer this alternative?

Participants who supported Alternative 1 commented that the alternative was least expensive and disruptive to surrounding homes:

- *"It will lead to the least amount of disruption for local traffic. It is the cheapest option."*
- *"Least disruptive of all and less costly. Actually dislike ALL alternatives which will disrupt our retirement living."*
- *"Cheaper, faster, much less intrusive on the neighborhood."*
- *"Least cost, gravity feed, low impact. No structures in the park."*
- *"Won't cause disruption to residents & possibly keep drug related issues out of the park."*

While Alternative 2 was not indicated as preferred by any respondents, the following comment was offered:

- *"Doesn't impact the park property. Could make the street better in the end."*

Participants who supported Alternative 3 liked that it was less disruptive to the park and neighborhood:

- *"Minimum impact on neighborhood (access to homes, roads, etc), limited impact on park, cost."*
- *"If you can do Alternative 1 on private property that would be great. Otherwise Alternative 1."* (Note: This is a verbatim transcription of a comment form that indicated a preference for Alternative 3.)
- *"Best if possible. Leaves the park alone."*
- *"Least disruptive to the community, park and park users."*

One comment was offered in support of Alternative 4:

- *"Seems to be a bonus for homeowners to get their sewer lines fixed while helping CSO. May result in less impactful Alternative 1, 2, or 3."*

What do you like about each of the project alternatives? Or, are there any changes to the alternatives you would like the project team to consider?"

Alternative 1 – Martha Washington Park Underground Storage

- *"Alternatives 2, 3, and 4 are costly, disruptive in time and lengthy to build."*
- *"Probably least impact on surrounding homes."*
- *" Recommend an off-leash dog park over the top of the storage pipes to protect from other park development and meet a clear need since this area of Martha Washington park is already used by dog owners as an off leash area."*
- *"Would like you to reduce dramatically the disturbance area. Make some amenities to park, waterline for watering, more fruit trees, paved trail around the park, restoration of Garry Oak."*

Alternative 2 – 57th Avenue S Underground Storage

- *"Provide some compensation to affected property owners like side sewer replacement."*
- *"Lack of vents, fans, noise, etc, as I live on 57th and Morgan…needs to be totally sealed and contained in street."*

Alternative 3 – Private Property Underground Storage

- *"In street where utilities should be,[but] concern about elderly neighbors."*
- *"Best option; keep it available even if there is no current willing seller."*
- *"Great second alternative, but be smart about who you contact, meaning only houses that make sense from an engineering perspective or people will be worried about eminent domain."*

Alternative 4 – Infiltration Reduction + Alternative 1, 2, or 3

- *"Elegant, forward thinking."*
- *"Nice idea, but doesn't seem practical unless you are going to deal with whole solution of stormwater. Too bad you can't see it more holistically."*
- *"Provides an enhancement for homeowners to make project more agreeable/worthwhile."*

Are there any other environmental, community, or neighborhood issues you would like us to consider?

- *"Closing 57th Avenue S for an extended period is a bad idea (my home is north of Morgan Street so it would not be affected, but still a bad idea)."*
- *"Swallows and bird use of the park."*
- *"Swallows and bird use in park. Construction should be timed to avoid impacts."*
- *"Garry oaks, orchard, elms and street trees on 57th protected."*
- *"Number of large trucks."*
- *"Could you present a breakdown of the per household financial commitment over time to the project payoff?"*
- *"Reduce odor problems currently at pump station."*
- *"A park should remain pristine…please do not change Martha Washington Park. Better to use an alternative that's already used for parking lot, tennis court, street, etc. or find a willing homeowner to sell at a compelling price."*