North Transfer Station

DRAFT Stakeholder Meeting #2b Summary
Nov. 22, 2010
Institute for Systems Biology • 3:30 to 5 PM

ATTENDEES

Stakeholders
Trish McNeil
Jessica Vets
Pat Finn Coven
Barbara Luecke
Bob Quinn
Rob Stephenson
David Ruggiero
Paul Willumson

Seattle Public Utilities
Nancy Ahern
Tim Croll
Ken Snipes

EnviroIssues
Penny Mabie (facilitator)
Erin Tam
Alissa VandenBerghe

HDR
Dan Costello
Deb Frye (presenter)
Olivia Williams

Observers
Karl Hufnagel
Lyle Martin
Erika Bigelow
Paul Olsen

MEETING PURPOSE

The purpose of this meeting was to discuss the five proposed site concepts, understand the changes, tradeoffs, and constraints encapsulated in the concepts, and approve the five concepts for advancement to next level of development and review.

AGENDA ITEMS AND DISCUSSION

Welcome and Introductions

Penny Mabie, EnviroIssues

Penny convened the meeting, asked everyone to introduce themselves, and reviewed the agenda and purpose of the meeting.

Nine Concepts – What's New?

Deb Frye, HDR

Deb explained that the design team regrouped after the last meeting and read through all of the comments made by stakeholders and observers. She also explained that HDR met with SPU operations staff and made some changes based on their input. She then described each concept and what had changed based on incorporating stakeholder, observer, and operations comments, as feasible.

Concept 2: Maximum Scenario
The operational changes that were made to this scenario included reducing load out ports to two compactors and one open top based on the projected future municipal solid waste (MSW) volumes, calculating the parking needs (20 staff and 5 visitor stalls), and creating an extra outbound scale. The road in the north portion of the site is wider, so vehicles can get around if a vehicle breaks down in the queue. The changes requested by stakeholders included addressing the noise created by the station by adding canopies to the trailer parking area, a wall with a cantilever lid on the north side of the site, and adding sound walls to the building entrances and exits, and adding more green space to the east side of the. Deb noted that the reduction to two compactors and one open top applied to all the concepts, as did the revised parking needs.

A stakeholder asked if the recycling building roof would be accessible. Deb replied that SPU's current position is that there would be no public access on the roof. Another stakeholder asked how wide the green space on the eastside was. Deb said it was 35-40 feet. The stakeholder also asked what the height is of the cantilever lid. Deb said that aspect hasn't been designed yet.

Several stakeholders expressed an interest in switching the location of the parking lot and the recycling building. The thought is that it may be less expensive to create a walkable green roof in the northeast corner of the site because it would be over a parking lot.

Concept 8/9-A: Separate Recycling
Deb explained that this concept also has canopies over the trailer maneuvering areas. The designers added more green space along N. 35th Street and a cantilever lid over the north road. The building was also moved further southwest in this concept. A stakeholder asked where the access point is for the crew/admin building. Deb said there's a sidewalk that people would use to access the building. The stakeholder asked if it would be possible to have an entrance off of N. 34th Street so it looks like an office building.

Another stakeholder asked what the canopy will look like. Deb said that it was still being developed. The stakeholder asked what the height differences where between Concept 2 and this concept. Deb replied that the roof height matched the current roof height and the entrance road is also at the same elevation for both concepts.

A stakeholder asked if the green space would be accessible by the public. Deb said it could be. The stakeholder said he likes the additional green space but he's concerned about the grade. Tim Croll said that the north/south grade difference addressed with a retaining wall.

Concept 8/9-B: Attached Recycling
The designers pushed the transfer station as far west as possible in this concept. One difference from Concept 8/9A is that both commercial and self haul customers enter through the same entrance. This concept also has a different traffic flow than the rest of the concepts. There is a door on the north side of the station but it's across from the industrial property, not the residences. From an operational point of view, the connection between the two buildings is a benefit to be able to move materials between the transfer station and the recycling area. Dan Costello added that there could a viewing gallery added to this concept.

A stakeholder asked to point out to the rest of the group that there would be no backing up in the northeast corner of the site because of the long queuing line. An observer asked what square footage of the green space and driveways is. Deb said that the green space square footage is included in the matrix.

Concept 10: Stacked Without Rezone
This concept was developed with the understanding from the Department of Planning and Development that the road through the industrial buffer must remain in the current footprint in order to prevent any rezoning. However, Tim reported that a recent conversation left him to believe this may be incorrect, so this concept could be updated. Since there is no rezone or street vacation, the Carr Place N. lot remains a parking lot. This concept does include a green lid. This concept also has a very limited recycling area – Deb said the designers struggled to find recycling space. She said there isn't enough room in the current site to have a separate building for recycling and reuse. This concept has all transfer trailer parking located underground.

Concept 12: Western Entry
Deb said the building size was increased and extended into the industrial buffer. The designers simplified the doors to provide better traffic separation. The reuse and recycling building size was also increased.

A stakeholder asked why this facility was so large compared to the rest. Deb explained that this one is larger because all the traffic is inside the building. Another stakeholder asked Deb to explain the route a recycler would take through the site. Another stakeholder asked what the restraining factor was for not moving everything to the east so there could be more space for a recycling building. Deb said that moving the facility to the east would decrease the green space on the eastside of the site. Another stakeholder asked why the recycling building was t-shaped. Dan explained that it has to do with the turning radius for cars with trailers and large vehicles entering and exiting the building. Another stakeholder asked how a self hauler with a mixed load (recyclables and waste) would navigate through the site. Ken Snipes said if a customer has both they may need to drop off one, leave the station and come back to drop off the rest if the customer was not able to drop off recyclables separately prior to accessing the scales.

What happened to the other concepts?

Deb explained that Concept 11 (Non-IB) was eliminated because it didn't function as well as 12 and was no longer truly a "non-IB" concept as parking would have to be added in the buffer. Tim added that based on the stakeholder straw poll from the last meeting these were the most favorable options.

Discussion
Penny Mabie, EnviroIssues

A stakeholder asked what options the group is selecting from. Penny explained that the stakeholders are not selecting from anything at this meeting; instead, the stakeholders are confirming that these five concepts meet the stakeholder's concerns and the operational concerns and should move forward in the design and development process. She added that the design team will be looking at the comments from tonight's meeting and seeing if they can add to the designs without undoing what has already been accomplished. Nancy Ahern agreed and said there could be more changes to the concepts at Workshop #3. She wants to know if they are good enough to move forward but she doesn't want the stakeholders to think that these are final.

Penny asked the stakeholders if they were comfortable moving these options forward for sustainability, floor plans, grade/elevation, and cost evaluations. The stakeholders agreed. Several stakeholders raised concerns about the limited recycling/reuse space in Concept 10 but indicated that they were comfortable moving them forward to Workshop #3.

Stakeholder and Observer Comments on Each of the Concepts

Penny opened the floor for comments that the design team will take and work try to work into the concepts.

Concept 2: Maximum Scenario
A stakeholder reiterated that they would like to see if it would be possible to swap the parking lot and the recycling building and put a walkable green roof over parking. He believes it would create a better public space in the northeast corner. Another stakeholder would like the recycling building to move south to decrease the possibility of noise and smell. One stakeholder would like the administration building to be located along N. 34th Street so it looks like there's an office building that will break up the industrial space.

One stakeholder said it would be helpful for the group to have an assessment of the operational and costs advantages over time. He would like to know what is vital and important to have in the new transfer station as compared to what would be nice but is not necessary.

Another stakeholder asked if anyone expected there to be problems with the traffic crossing. The design team doesn't expect there to be problems. One stakeholder asked if the northern cantilever lid would be below the sightline on N. 35th Street. Tim said that pedestrians would be able to see it partially. He added that there will be more information about views at the next workshop. Another stakeholder asked how customers would exit the recycling building. Deb explained that customers would exit the building and drive through the parking lot to leave the site.

Concept 8/9-A: Separate Recycling
One stakeholder said it appeared that Concept 2 and this concept have interchangeable east sides. Tim said that the differentiating factor is that this concept has underground facilities where Concept 2 does not.

Concept 8/9-B: Attached Recycling
A stakeholder asked why the community amenities are limited in this option. Deb said that the design team determined that there could be a viewing gallery in this concept and that the layout will be updated for the next workshop.

Concept 10: Stacked Without Rezone
A stakeholder said the recycling space in this concept is compromised. Tim added that this concept could be revised slightly if their current zoning interpretation is correct. Another stakeholder would like the administrative building to be located on N. 34th Street near the entrance gate.

Concept 12: Western Entry
One stakeholder thinks the left hand turn where recyclers rejoin the traffic stream is awkward. Another stakeholder said it could be very challenging to make that turn during the worst of the self haul days.

One stakeholder was concerned about the length of road in this concept and said it seems like a lot more driving distance. Another stakeholder said he thought that was the advantage of this concept because it takes the traffic off of the surrounding roads. The stakeholder also likes that all of the building entrances are located on the southwest side of the facility. Another stakeholder said he was concerned about the logistics of the recycling facility since it's not square.

Penny told the stakeholders that the design team will take these comments with them as they further design the concepts into more complete pictures.

Next Steps
Penny Mabie, EnviroIssues

Penny explained that the stakeholder group would need to determine weighting criteria to help them narrow the options from five to two at the next workshop. She presented one method of evaluating the weighted criteria and asked stakeholders to start thinking of the criteria that will help them evaluate the concepts. Penny will send more information about the weighting criteria, and there will be email discussion before the next workshop so that the stakeholders can come to the meeting with an understanding of the evaluation process.

One stakeholder asked for a more formal method of down-selecting. Penny said the group could start with a more formal method but unless there's consensus on which options to move forward there will need to be a discussion to get everyone to come to agreement. Nancy added these types of weighted evaluation methods inform the decision and help the stakeholders grapple with the various criteria. Another stakeholder asked what happens to the opinions of the stakeholders who aren't able to make it to the next meeting. Penny explained that some of this would be taken care of by e-mail prior to the meeting, but it is the stakeholders' responsibility to attend the meeting. It won't happen until early to mid February so there is plenty of time to plan for the meeting. If a stakeholder absolutely can't attend they could send a proxy to represent them.

Penny told the stakeholders they will receive their packets further in advance so they can absorb the information and come prepared to make a decision. An observer asked if it would come to a vote. Penny said that it was her intent not to have to have a vote, and that it's Penny's job to help the stakeholders through the process to come to a decision together. Another observer asked the stakeholders to consider the mutually exclusive options and what strong points of one scheme could be added to another.

At the next stakeholder workshop, SPU will present the sustainability elements, floor plans, grade/elevation, architectural views, and cost evaluations for these five concepts. The stakeholder group will narrow the concepts down to two. The meeting will take place in early to mid February. All stakeholder meetings are open to the public

Information about the next meeting will be posted online when available: www.seattle.gov/util/transferstations.