



Meeting Summary
NORTH RECYCLING AND DISPOSAL STATION REBUILD PROJECT
Stakeholder Group Special Meeting
Hamilton Elementary, 4400 Interlake Ave North, Seattle
January 20th 6:00 to 8:00 PM

ATTENDEES

Stakeholders

Bill Bergstrom
Toby Thaler
Paul Willumson
Pat Finn
Cathy Tuttle
Bob Quinn

Observers

Shawn Mulanix
Rob Gala
Norm Davis
Erik Pitl
John Teutsch
Erika Bigeton
Ted Lockery
Katherine Braydon
Mary Heim
Richard Floisand

Seattle Public Utilities

Tim Croll
Henry Friedman
Jeff Neuner

Triangle Associates

David Harrison
Jennifer Howell
Renee Stern

MEETING PURPOSE

The purpose of this meeting was for SPU to provide an update on the status of North and South Recycling and Disposal Stations and for the stakeholders to decide whether or how they would like to proceed in reconvening the North Stakeholder Group.

SUMMARY OF ACTION ITEMS

- The stakeholders asked for a two-week delay to discuss the idea of reconvening the North Stakeholder Group. If feedback from the stakeholders is positive, a meeting will be scheduled in February or March to confirm if the group would like to proceed.

AGENDA ITEMS AND DISCUSSION

WELCOME, AGENDA REVIEW AND RECAP

Facilitator David Harrison welcomed the stakeholders, led introductions and outlined the purpose of the meeting. He reminded the group that the North Stakeholder Group process had been suspended during the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) appeal. Since the last meeting, a hearing examiner issued a decision that did not overturn the Determination of Nonsignificance (DNS). This decision has been appealed to the Superior Court where it will be likely heard this spring or summer.

David added that a four meeting process was originally proposed to engage the neighborhoods near the North Station and create a formal record of exchange between stakeholders and community. The North Stakeholder Group has had two meetings. David noted that this meeting is not the third meeting, but is instead a chance for the stakeholders to discuss and decide how to proceed given the status of the SEPA appeal.

Stakeholder group member Toby Thaler addressed the group and stated that he anticipates a ruling on jurisdictional issues would be made by April 1st. He added that the City will need time to put a record together and the legal arguments would likely take place this summer with a decision made by judges hopefully by September.

SPU then provided an update on the status of the North and South Station Rebuild Projects and the group then discussed whether to reconvene the group. Members of the community present were also invited to ask questions about the project.

UPDATE ON STATUS OF THE NORTH TRANSFER STATION

Tim Croll, Seattle Public Utilities provided a brief update on the status of the North Transfer Station Project. He noted that another step in the process was to change the zoning of the 1550 Building which is currently zoned commercial. Current regulations require that industrial zoning in order to have recycling in conjunction with a transfer station. City may ask for a rezone to allow recycling on that part of the property. The Department of Planning and Development (DPD) would ask the City Council for a spot re-zone of the area. SPU also will request a street vacation of Carr Place, which provides an opportunity for the City to provide benefits to the community in return. A street vacation provides the City with more flexibility in providing a benefit that is not a direct mitigation of a project impact. SPU anticipates working with the stakeholder group and the larger community on recommendations for public benefits.

UPDATE ON THE STATUS OF THE SOUTH STATION

David Harrison explained that the stakeholder process was completed for the South Recycling and Transfer Station (SRDS). Four stakeholder meetings were held and stakeholders provided their ideas both for the design of the new facility and community benefits for street vacation. A final open house was held for the South Park community which allowed citizens to ask questions and provide input into the rebuild of the station.

SPU made many commitments to the South stakeholder group and responded to over 60 issues of concern. SPU committed to pick up litter and patrol the area around the station and throughout much of South Park for illegal dumping. SPU also agreed to first advertise in the South Park community for any local jobs at the station. With regards to traffic, SPU promised to route garbage trucks to avoid using the South Park Bridge unless the route includes areas on both sides of the bridge or the 1st Avenue Bridge is up. This will help minimize garbage truck traffic in the center of South Park.

Since concluding the stakeholder meeting process, SPU has remained in contact with the South stakeholders so that they can provide feedback on the selection of the design-build team for the new facility. SPU has narrowed down the selection of a proposed design-build team to four

teams and plans to issue the final Request for Proposals in March or April. Following site preparation and clean up, it is hoped that by winter of 2010 construction will have started on the new South station. It may take a total of 2 years to complete the new transfer station from the start of construction.

DISCUSSION ON RECONVENING NORTH STAKEHOLDER GROUP

The stakeholder group weighed the pros and cons of proceeding with the stakeholder process. Tim Croll proposed that the stakeholders should continue the process. SPU would like the opportunity this year to develop a package of community benefits for the Wallingford/Fremont area. He stated that he does not perceive a downside to proceeding with the stakeholder process given that it does not impact the SEPA appeal. He also noted that this year is a good time to negotiate with the City given that it is between federal election years and the Council is supportive of the project.

The question arose about the economic impacts of not proceeding with the process. Tim Croll stated that he can't say if the economic environment it will be much worse later, but reiterated that this year is a good time to negotiate with the City. He also noted that in general, construction prices only go up over time and that any alternative site would be more expensive than the current site. The distance and time of issuing the Request for Proposals (RFP) could be shortened by the actions of the stakeholder group. Henry Friedman of SPU added that delays can increase the cost of the project in a number of ways such as making expensive repairs on an out-of-date facility.

The comment was made that SPU could have avoided the SEPA lawsuit and delays if an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) had been done a year ago. The rationale for the appeal is to ensure that the city evaluate the environmental impact of the project and consider alternatives before moving forward. Henry Friedman, SPU, responded that SPU had conducted several indepth environmental studies prior to determining that a full-EIS was not required.

Stakeholders and members of the public discussed the issue of full community engagement during time of the SEPA appeal. The concern arose that many community members will not participate in the process until the lawsuit is resolved.

One stakeholder noted that the station is old and out-of-date and she stressed that the sooner the community starts addressing noise, toxins, and other issues, the better off the community will be.

A member of the Wallingford Community Council (WCC) stated that a meeting will be held on February 4th to engage the community and find out how citizens would like to proceed with the public involvement for the rebuild of the North transfer station. An online survey will also be distributed to Wallingford community members to assess opinions.

Toby Thaler, who represents both the Fremont Neighborhood Council and the plaintiffs in the appeal of the SEPA decision, proposed to the group that the decision of whether or not to proceed to be put in abeyance while the WCC proceeds with their process over the next few weeks and while he has the opportunity to discuss it with his clients. He also noted that the Fremont Neighborhood Council (FNC) will shortly have its monthly meeting. After input is

received from the WCC, the FNC, and plaintiffs, the group can make a better decision about whether or not to move forward with the stakeholder process.

Facilitator David Harrison asked the group if they approved of Toby's proposal. He asked the group if they would accept the setting up a third meeting in February or March if a clear indication is given that the group would like to proceed. If the feedback from the group is negative and the stakeholders decline to proceed, Meeting Three will not be scheduled. If the feedback is unclear, the group may reconvene. The first order of business then would be to discuss the input from the community meetings and confirm whether to proceed with the stakeholder group processor not. Each of the North stakeholders present at the meeting agreed with this proposal.

ADDITIONAL ISSUES OF CONCERN

During the meeting, members of the public as well as stakeholders took the opportunity to ask SPU staff questions about the project. David Harrison noted that we would track these questions and add any new issues to the list and review them with the stakeholder group when it next reconvened.

Traffic

Questions arose about traffic impacts with regard to the new station and concerns related to station customers using and speeding on side streets with small children such as Ashworth and Densmore. Tim Croll emphasized that that SPU hopes to prevent trucks from cutting through side streets in Wallingford and reduce wait time at the station. He added the new station will likely include more slots for dumping and more space for waiting on the property as opposed to the street. Specific ideas suggested included

- Traffic calming measures should be considered as part of street vacation. Speeding trucks in residential areas near the station are a problem.
- Consider adding a dead end to 35th.

Design Build Process

The group also briefly discussed why SPU is interested in a design-build process for the new transfer station. A member of the public stated that in his experience, the quality of design is often lower with design-build. Tim Croll stated that the City has found design-build to be an efficient, cost-effective way to do a project. Design-build is being done with the South transfer station, but the North station could be done differently. He emphasized that SPU is looking for creativity in design and the City will indicate in the RFP that they want award-winning quality.

A member of the public asked if it would be possible for community members to be a part of the design-build selection process after signing a confidentiality agreement. Tim Croll stated that he would take this idea into consideration.

Soil Quality

The concern was raised that the soil at the site may be dangerous to the health of nearby residents, particularly during construction when particulates are airborne. The City should test the soil at the transfer station before any construction is started.

Building Height

The suggestion was made to keep the height of the new building low enough so the community does not feel boxed in. A preference for keeping the height of the building the same as the existing building was stated.

ADJOURN

Facilitator David Harrison reviewed the outcomes of the meeting. The stakeholders asked for a brief delay to discuss the idea of reconvening the North Stakeholder Group. If feedback from the stakeholders is positive, a meeting will be scheduled in February or March to confirm if the group would like to proceed.