

The Keller Group  
City of Seattle  
Municipal Jail Project  
June 11, 2008

## **Notes from South Park Neighborhood Association Meeting June 10, 2008**

Following are notes taken from the discussion at the South Park Neighborhood Association meeting held at the South Park Community Center on June 10, 2008. Approximately 40 people were in attendance. Catherine Cornwall from the City and Cynthia Scheiderer from The Keller Group attended; Ms. Cornwall briefly presented, and immediately following Ms. Cornwall's presentation, King County Councilmember Dow Constantine briefly presented. Both Ms. Cornwall and Councilmember Constantine addressed questions and comments. These notes are an attempt to capture the questions and comments that were raised, in the order that they came up.

Questions and points raised by meeting participants:

- What about the Eastside cities? It's only logical to go with Eastside cities and do something regional, and put it on the Eastside.
- You narrowed down immediately to low-rise sites because it's safer. The county is operating one of each, high-rise and low-rise. Is there a compelling difference in safety? Statistically what is the difference?
- I don't disagree that the RJC is a nicer facility than the downtown jail. But in every other area the City is forcing density on us, so the City isn't walking its talk. A high-rise jail downtown would be closer to services and more efficient. And what about the expense of transporting people to and from a low-rise facility away from courts?
- Have you done the drive down Aurora or across the bridges? I think it's going to take corrections officers a lot of time to transport people.
- I want to follow up on the City embracing density. The two jails we have now are both integrated with courts and what you're proposing is not, it's just a jail, so it's different.
- Is there room for expansion at the existing King County jails? Wasn't expansion built in to the RJC?
- Isn't it true the City's misdemeanor population is going down? So you want to build a jail for a population that's going down? How does that make sense, especially since the County says they're willing to work with you on alternatives?
- I worked years ago on a project with a landfill and we, the community, helped determine what the criteria should be. So I'm asking that you listen to our criteria, we haven't had a chance to have our say.
- What happens to the mentally ill? Putting them in jail isn't the answer. And what happens to people who are mentally ill when they're released, and what happens to the community where they're released?
- If the misdemeanor population continues to go down, and there's space in the jail, might we end up with higher-level criminals in the jail?
- We've heard Dow Constantine say that there are County sites downtown and room to expand the RJC. I know it would mean working together, and I know there's a little rift there, but is there any possibility that the County and City would work together on this? Is the City willing to accept the extra two years and work with the County?
- Is it realistic that in six months, according to your handouts, you'd have the land purchased for a site? How does that go with the policy that Dow Constantine talked about to work on a regional solution? Is it possible you could buy land and then end up working with the County on a different solution?
- I don't know that a jail is necessarily bad, but obviously there are uses that are better, and we've taken our share of uses like the transfer station for example.

- There is a stigma with South Park and people have worked hard on this neighborhood, it's really coming up, and I don't think this is good for the neighborhood.
- If we said fine, we won't protest a jail here, would you give us something in return? Could there be trade-offs? Like a bridge?
- Wherever it goes, put a certain percentage of employees from that zip code, hire people from that neighborhood.
- The RJC is much nicer looking and seems like a nicer facility, and I'd like to drive a Porsche or something too; I think we need to hear more about high-rise instead of low-rise.
- Has there been any planning on partnering with Eastside cities?
- You hear we don't want it in South Park. Is it being taken into consideration that Seattle already hosts a regional jail and is doing more than its share already?
- When you do choose a site and build, is the City interested in building smart, building green?
- It looks like everything North of downtown except one site was crossed off right away. Two of the sites are in wetlands. What criteria did you use to get to the four sites?
- Why did residential zones get eliminated?
- Regardless of where you put it, can treatment for substance abuse, social services, be part of mitigation?
- Find a place with access to resources and services. The Eastside has more wealth, and more access to resources and services.
- I think ruling out residential areas is a mistake. You're siting in the South End in places adjacent to residential. I lived downtown, there are residences downtown, and there's a jail downtown.
- I would really hope you re-look at low-rise versus high-rise. If you go high-rise, it might be a lot easier to find a place.
- It's really easy to see negatives with a jail. Are there any positives?