

CENTRAL WATERFRONT STAKEHOLDERS GROUP

MEETING SUMMARY

Meeting #1

January 27, 2011

MEETING INFORMATION

Meeting #1, January 27, 2011

5:15 – 7:15 PM

Seattle City Hall, Bertha Knight Landes Room

ATTENDANCE

Stakeholders

- Warren Aakervik
- Brett Allen
- Geoff Anderson
- Chuck Ayers
- Don Benson
- Richard Breslin
- Ching Chan (for Michael Yee)
- Bob Davidson
- Steve DeForest (for Tom Tanner)
- Bob Donegan
- Dave Easton
- Katherine Fountain Mackinnon
- Gary Glant
- Craig Hanway
- Susan Jones
- Brian Kenny
- Charles Knutson
- Nicole McIntosh
- Lee Newgent
- Vince O'Halloran
- Katherine Olsen
- Vlad Oustimovitch
- Ted Pantan
- Lisa Parriott
- David Ramsay
- Theresa Schneider
- Leslie Smith
- Mickey Smith

Staff

- Bob Powers, Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT), Deputy Director
- Bob Chandler, SDOT, Alaskan Way Viaduct and Seawall Replacement Program Director
- Steve Pearce, SDOT, Waterfront Seattle Project Manager
- Stephanie Brown, SDOT, Elliott Bay Seawall Project Manager
- Marshall Foster, DPD
- Hannah McIntosh, SDOT
- Nathan Torgelson, Parks
- Paul Elliott, SDOT
- Jennifer Wieland, SDOT
- Erin Taylor, Enviroissues
- Tatiana Choulika, jcfo
- Ken Johnson, SOJ
- Mark Williams, TetraTech
- Ridge Robinson, TetraTech
- Chuck Purnell, TetraTech
- Jessica Winkler, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Approximately eight members of the public attended.

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Bob Powers welcomed the meeting attendees and reviewed the meeting objectives:

- To confirm the Central Waterfront Stakeholders Group purpose and relationship to Central Waterfront Committee, Waterfront Seattle, and the Elliott Bay Seawall Project,

Advising on Waterfront Seattle and the Elliott Bay Seawall Project



- To launch the Central Waterfront Stakeholders Group, including establishing group operating guidelines and a meeting schedule, and
- To establish a common understanding of the Elliott Bay Seawall Project and Waterfront Seattle.

Bob Chandler summarized the Alaskan Way Viaduct and Seawall Replacement Program's history and timeline. At the beginning of 2010, SDOT was seeking a consultant team for the seawall project. Meanwhile, the Central Waterfront Partnerships Committee was developing advice on the next steps for the waterfront as a whole. At that time, Mayor McGinn decided to advance the seawall project because seawall replacement is a critical public safety need. Following selection of the seawall engineering consultant team, stakeholders for the seawall project began to meet, and that group of stakeholders is now being expanded to include stakeholders of Waterfront Seattle.

Bob Powers initiated a round of introductions, including stakeholders' interests in participating in this group. Reasons expressed for participation included the following:

- Waterfront property ownership,
- Residential and commercial interests,
- Preservation of the transportation corridor,
- Consideration of habitat enhancements,
- Concern for waterfront-related labor industries,
- Desire for parks, open space, and water access,
- Preservation of historic attractions, and
- Enthusiasm about the civic design opportunity.

FORMATION / OPERATING GUIDELINES

Erin Taylor introduced the operating guidelines and clarified that the intention of these guidelines is to keep the group working well together over time. The Central Waterfront Stakeholders Group is not required to reach consensus on advice for the project teams, but will provide the following functions:

- Provide feedback to city staff and consultant teams,
- Function as a forum for stakeholders' issues and perspectives on construction, staging, access, and design of the projects, and
- Bridge the business and residential community to Waterfront Seattle and the Elliott Bay Seawall Project.

Operating norms and ground rules were reviewed to create an effective and positive experience for all stakeholders and project team members.

Bob Powers emphasized SDOT's desire for advice on many topics. He encouraged every stakeholder to participate and voice their opinions, including letting the project teams know if there are topics that should receive additional attention.

Steve Pearce, Waterfront Seattle Project Manager, reviewed the differences between the Central Waterfront Stakeholders Group and the Central Waterfront Committee and Subcommittees. Waterfront Seattle and the Elliott Bay Seawall Project are closely coordinated projects that both report to the Mayor and City Council. The Central Waterfront Committee (CWC) was established by the Council in early 2010 and will provide holistic oversight and ensure long-term stewardship of the waterfront, including the seawall, public spaces, and other related projects. The CWC has four subcommittees, as well as an executive committee, and is expected to reach consensus in providing recommendations to the Mayor and City Council.

In contrast, the Central Waterfront Stakeholders Group, which includes the previously formed Seawall Stakeholder Subgroup, will function as a forum for specific stakeholders' issues to be heard and for project teams to respond. There will be communication between the various groups and committees; stakeholders should feel welcome to attend CWC meetings, and committee members are likely to attend some stakeholder meetings.

Question: These projects have long timelines. What is expected of stakeholders with regard to time commitment?

Response: We invite the stakeholders to serve for the duration of the projects. However, if a member needs to leave, the facilitator will work with him/her to ensure that similar interests are represented on the group. Meetings will occur no more than once per month.

Bob Chandler described the project areas with an aerial illustration of the waterfront. The first phase of the Elliott Bay Seawall Project runs from Washington Street to Pine Street along Alaskan Way, and the second phase runs from Pine Street to Broad Street. Waterfront Seattle includes much of the same area and extends to the Battery Street Tunnel, with a new connection from the waterfront to Elliott and Western Avenues. In addition, it includes a range of other potential projects which will connect to the new waterfront such as Pier 62/63, Waterfront Park, and improved east-west connections from downtown.

The Elliott Bay Seawall Project is in preliminary design and is working with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) on a feasibility study for the entire project area. Preferred alternative(s) will be selected by April 2011 so that the project can continue with the environmental review process and final design. Seawall construction is scheduled to begin in 2013 and end in early 2015. The seawall project is a public safety priority and will be complete prior to demolition of the Alaskan Way Viaduct. Waterfront Seattle and the Elliott Bay Seawall Project are coordinating closely to ensure that the seawall alternatives maintain opportunities for the waterfront design team.

Question: What will occur in the second phase of design for the seawall?

Response: The project teams will have a better idea of Phase 2 (Pine Street to Broad Street) content once they have finished the Phase 1 process. Phase 2 construction will be completed following Phase 1, but timing is not yet finalized.

Question: Once construction is completed on the seawall, will there be consideration for required road capacity given that the wall may be pulled in toward the east?

Response: It is likely that some of the space created by the Alaskan Way Viaduct demolition will be used for the future surface Alaskan Way.

ELLIOTT BAY SEAWALL PROJECT INTRODUCTION

Stephanie Brown, Elliott Bay Seawall Project Manager, introduced the project, explaining that the area between Washington and Broad Streets is being reviewed by USACE for a feasibility study. Phase 1 includes the seawall replacement from Washington to Pine Streets, which is the most critical public safety need. The seawall's original construction—which included filling open water with poor, liquefiable soils—has led to the existing conditions. The seawall structure is quite large, extending 40-60 feet east of the wall face underneath Alaskan Way; in some locations, the timber structure reaches the footings of the Alaskan Way Viaduct. The seawall has a history of structural failure, and could fail completely in a moderate earthquake. Replacing the seawall is a public safety need and is a priority in order to protect the waterfront's critical transportation corridor, utilities, and residential, commercial, and recreational interests. Stephanie noted that the seawall need not be replaced in its exact location, as it is a fairly flexible structure.

Question: Can the seawall be extended out to the west as well as pulled back to the east? Will there be only on-shore construction?

Response: Strict regulatory rules as well as tribal fishing access rights prevent the seawall from extending into the water for a net increase in overwater coverage. In-water versus on-shore work will be explored as the team completes construction reviews.

Jennifer Wieland, Elliott Bay Seawall Project Planning Lead, described the project goals that were developed with the Seawall Stakeholder Subgroup. The primary goal is to address public safety; others include respecting cultural and historic resources, considering the long-term vision for the Central Waterfront, providing enhanced habitat and environmental quality, providing enhanced public gathering and recreational opportunities, supporting the waterfront's economic vitality, minimizing construction impacts, and supporting fiscal responsibility.

Jennifer also described the project's planning and conceptual design process. The Seawall Stakeholder Subgroup began meeting in July 2010; at the first meeting, the stakeholders were introduced to six different waterfront zones. Opportunities for each zone were identified; those common to all six zones include enhancement of aquatic habitat, creation of touch points, opportunities for interpretive and educational nodes, and sustainable design elements. Jennifer described the location of each zone, including significant characteristics related to design and potential seawall location.

Jennifer noted that two to five designs were created for each zone, depending on the zone's opportunities and constraints. The designs were then strung together into concepts for the length of the project area, which facilitated conversations about the strengths and weaknesses of the designs. Currently, the project team is establishing a range of alternatives in collaboration with USACE, Waterfront Seattle, and the public. When preferred alternatives are selected in April 2011, the team will begin the environmental review process, including the preparation of discipline reports. In terms of recent public involvement, the project team has provided numerous briefings and hosted a public open house on January 19, 2011, including a public comment period. Jennifer suggested that an additional meeting could be offered for stakeholders who would like more information about the work of the Elliott Bay Seawall Project.

- **Action:** Check in with stakeholders to assess the need for a "catch up" meeting regarding the past work of the Elliott Bay Seawall Project.

Question: In the Seawall Stakeholders Subgroup, the appropriateness of breaking the waterfront into zones was questioned. Going forward with the Central Waterfront Stakeholders Group, will the project area continue to be conceptualized in zones?

Response: The Waterfront Seattle team is currently taking a broad look at the project area. The team's early work breaks the project area into "character areas," which are similar to the seawall zones but have a slightly different perspective.

Question: Who makes the final decision about these projects?

Response: The Mayor and City Council are responsible for the final decision about both projects. USACE will have its own preferred alternative, and the city project team will produce locally preferred alternatives. USACE cost sharing and funding is limited to what the Corps' preferred alternative prescribes; however, a local sponsor such as the City of Seattle can choose to construct an alternative that is different than the Corps' and fund the cost difference.

Question: Is the expectation of this group in the near-term to provide input into preferred alternatives by April?

Response: Yes, that is correct.

Question: If the project team supports a local design that is different than USACE's, would the project receive less funding? The team should be working within parameters that are approved by USACE.

Response: USACE will establish National Ecosystem Restoration (NER) and National Economic Development (NED) plans, as well as a federally preferred plan. USACE does not require that the City build the alternative that comes out of that plan, but it does represent a plan that meets federal requirements and sets the federal cost share.

Question: Does the seawall have a full funding plan for design and construction?

Response: The design of the seawall is fully funded through 2012. Beginning in 2013, there is no secured construction funding.

Question: Is one zone more vulnerable than the others? Will one require more construction than the others?

Response: The oldest section of the seawall is near the Ferry Terminal, dating back to 1915.

Question: If there were historically different seawalls built along the length of the waterfront, do any inland seawalls exist currently?

Response: It is feasible that there could be unknown inland seawalls that have been buried into the existing waterfront.

WATERFRONT SEATTLE PROJECT INTRODUCTION

Steve Pearce introduced Waterfront Seattle (which includes the Central Waterfront Project) as a 100-year opportunity for urban public space, an enhanced civic heart of the city, and an important transportation project. He noted that Waterfront Seattle is at a different phase than the Elliott Bay Seawall Project, and the issues being tackled by the project team are very broad in scale. The team, with lead design firm James Corner Field Operations, is to develop a Framework Plan for the entire waterfront, including identifying connections between downtown and the waterfront.

Steve mentioned that the name "Waterfront Seattle" represents an effort to capture the broad initiative of building a new waterfront. The team has developed a website, which is live at <http://waterfrontseattle.org>. He invited the stakeholders to a public meeting on February 17 at the Seattle Aquarium.

The project area for Waterfront Seattle can be conceptualized in different ways. The "budgeted project" runs from King to Pine Streets along Alaskan Way and includes the entirety of the public rights-of-way, with connections to Belltown and the Battery Street Tunnel along the alignment of the existing Viaduct. In addition to the roadway improvements, the budgeted project will include utility and combined sewer overflow improvements. Other elements of Waterfront Seattle include Pier 48 (currently owned by Washington State Department of Transportation), Waterfront Park and Pier 62/63 (owned by the Seattle Parks Department), and the waterfront north of Pine Street to Broad Street. As the project progresses, the project definition may change as additional elements are identified and incorporated.

Steve explained the project schedule, noting that once the Alaskan Way Viaduct is demolished, Waterfront Seattle construction can begin. The Waterfront Seattle team is closely coordinated with the Elliott Bay Seawall Project team due to implications of various seawall alignments and their potential effect on available public space. The first phase of the waterfront design process will last through mid-2012; the team will then move into preliminary engineering and design and begin the environmental process. Steve pointed out that, while there may be interest in the

details of the surface Alaskan Way, the transportation in the corridor is fairly well understood; the team's work in the next six months will be focused on the project site as a whole rather than analyzing the potential roadway any further.

Question: How are the seawall and waterfront projects differentiated?

Response: They are two separate projects; however, the projects will ultimately be seamless, and there are various ways to achieve that result. For instance, the Elliott Bay Seawall Project will have to create restored roadway during their construction and Waterfront Seattle will be responsible for creating the final roadway. Both project teams are always thinking about long-term visions and sensible investments.

Question: How will the City work with private enterprises?

Response: Those details will be addressed in the Framework Plan. There may be investments and regulatory changes that the City will want to encourage. The project is focused on publicly-owned space, but in order to be successful the project team realizes that they need to understand how private buildings interface with those public spaces. For instance, some buildings currently turn their backs on the waterfront due to proximity to the Alaskan Way Viaduct. From a regulatory standpoint, the project team may work to encourage those buildings to open up onto the waterfront.

Question: How will communities such as Pioneer Square and the International District connect to the waterfront?

Response: The public meeting on February 17 will be a great opportunity to discuss those questions and hear the team's early analysis.

Question: Is the future street design and configuration already determined?

Response: At this level of analysis, the project team generally understands the future footprint of the street as well as traffic, access to downtown, and freight movement. However, the team does continue to explore different opportunities.

Marshall Foster reviewed the Guiding Principles for the waterfront, which were developed by the Central Waterfront Committee and approved by the City Council. The Guiding Principles encourage the project team to engage the entire city by creating a "waterfront for all," connect people to the water, embrace the working nature of Seattle's active waterfront, consider and balance all modes of transportation along the corridor, and ensure an adaptable vision for the project.

Question: What information, such as designs or goals, is the team using from other cities' waterfronts?

Response: There is a lot of information available about the resources the project team may use, and it can be distributed to the stakeholders.

- **Action:** Distribute information about other cities' waterfront efforts to stakeholders.

Tatiana Choulika, James Corner Field Operations, described the team's site analysis. She explained that from her team's perspective, Seattle is a fantastic destination with many land and water routes converging at the waterfront. With Puget Sound, Elliott Bay, rivers, salmon runs, Native American history, urbanization, and industry, it is clear that Seattle has a waterfront that is different from others around the world. The demolition of the Alaskan Way Viaduct will open up opportunities for communication between the water, the piers, and the city.

The design team's approach focuses on a strong sense of public space—as soon as a person steps into the public realm, they should be engaged and become part of the larger civic community. The team is currently building a model to understand the complicated, 3-D landscape and to start a conversation about the possibilities.

Question: How much of the Central Waterfront Project is funded?

Response: The design is funded through 2012.

Question: Has the James Corner Field Operations team received information, such as anthropological or marine biological assessments, from the Elliott Bay Seawall Project team and incorporated this information into your work? Do you feel like you are getting the right amount of information and depth from the seawall team?

Response: The team has studied an enormous amount of information from the seawall team, and we will all continue to work collaboratively. These interactions are going very well; when we ask a question, we get much more thought and background than we expect.

Question: From which cities is the team drawing inspiration for Seattle's design?

Response: The field operations team is from New York City, which has its own waterfront and industrial port. Those ideas inherently come with us, as do ideas from the team's extremely diverse, international offices.

Question: Seattle has many different waterfronts to learn from as well. Are any members of the consultant team living in Seattle during this time?

Response: The design consultants are teamed with local partners such as Mithun, Berger Partnership, University of Washington, CH2M HILL, SOJ, and more. There is a great deal of local knowledge here, and many ideas will be exchanged.

NEXT STEPS AND ACTION ITEMS

Bob Powers requested input on convenient days and times for upcoming meetings and said the stakeholders will have an opportunity to communicate their preferred meeting day and time before the next meeting.

The action items were reviewed:

- Check in with stakeholders to assess the need for a "catch up" meeting regarding the past work of the Elliott Bay Seawall Project.
- Distribute information about other cities' waterfront efforts to stakeholders.
- Check in with stakeholders to assess their preferred meeting day and time.

NEXT MEETING

To ensure a common understanding of the Elliott Bay Seawall Project prior to reviewing proposed alternatives in late March, an interim meeting has been scheduled for March 3, 2011. The following meeting (as discussed with stakeholders in January) will be March 22, 2011.

Meeting #2

Thursday, March 3, 2011, 5:15 – 7:15 p.m.
Seattle Central Library, 1000 Fourth Avenue
Washington Mutual Foundation Room, Level 4