



Design Advisory Group Meeting #17
Magnolia Community Church, June 1, 2005, 4:00 – 5:30 PM

DRAFT Summary Minutes

Agenda

- I. Welcome
- II. Project Updates
- III. Odds & Ends
- IV. Public Comment
- V. Adjourn

Attendees

Design Advisory Group

- ✓ Dan Burke
- ✓ Fran Calhoun
- John Coney
- ✓ Eric Fahlman
- ✓ Erin Fletcher
- ✓ Lise Kenworthy
- ✓ Doug Lorentzen
- ✓ Jose Montaña
- ✓ Mike Smith
- David Spiker
- Dan Bartlett (alternate)
- Robert Foxworthy (alternate)
- ✓ Janis Traven

Project Team

- Lesley Bain, Weinstein A|U
- ✓ Sarah Brandt, EnviroIssues
- Richard Butler, Shapiro
- Chelsea Galano, EnviroIssues
- ✓ Brad Hoff, EnviroIssues
- Katharine Hough, HNTB
- Steve Johnson, Johnson Architects
- ✓ Kirk Jones, City of Seattle
- ✓ Anthony Katsaros, Shapiro
- Don Samdahl, Mirai Associates
- Lamar Scott, KPFF
- ✓ Peter Smith, HNTB
- Marybeth Turner, City of Seattle

Meeting Handouts

- ✓ Agenda
- ✓ Project Fact Sheet, Spring 2005 Update
- ✓ Rehabilitation Alternative Facts – PowerPoint
- ✓ Project Alternatives Cost & Schedule Comparison Fact Sheet
- ✓ DAG #16 Summary Minutes

I. Welcome

Brad Hoff, EnviroIssues

Brad welcomed the group, reviewed the DAG information packet, and previewed the meeting's agenda with the group.

The minutes from the last DAG meeting, held in February 2005, were distributed to committee members for review. With no questions or comments raised, the meeting minutes were approved.

II. Project Updates

Kirk Jones, City of Seattle

Kirk walked the DAG through a summary of the activities that have occurred since the last meeting in February 2005. At the February meeting, after going through the cost exercise, SDOT was considering whether to add a "Rehabilitation Alternative" to the project. The team presented this option to SDOT leadership and the Mayor, and was told to include the alternative. The project team also went through a costing exercise to see if there were things that could be done now to reduce project costs in the future.

The first recommendation was to drop the "intersection" options and retain the "ramp" options of Alternatives A and D for three key reasons:

- 1) Cost – The intersection options were over \$10 million more than the ramp options
- 2) Traffic demand – The amount of traffic that would use an intersection option did not make sense based on cost/benefit ratios. Traffic from Magnolia wanting to connect to the marina will have another route from 21st Avenue through the Port's property.
- 3) Community comment – The project team heard many negative public comments on the intersection alternatives

The four remaining alternatives are the ramp versions of Alternatives A and D, Alternative C, and the Rehabilitation Alternative. There is also the No Build Alternative. Kirk directed the DAG to the cost/schedule comparison handout, which described each alternative (pointing out that references to "ramp" and "intersection" options had been deleted). He explained that the cost estimates show a range between 10% probability and 90% probability (for example, a cost range of \$100 – \$200 million means that the project has a 10% chance of being built for \$100 million or less, and a 90% chance of being built for \$200 million or less).

In October, the cost estimates were higher than what the fact sheet reflects. However, in February the team went through a process to identify measures that would decrease costs. For example, the presumed spacing between bridge columns was initially 150 feet, but the team decided to extend the span between columns to 200 feet and save significant costs by reducing the number of columns and foundations. Several similar decisions were made that resulted in cost estimates 6 to 8% less than initial estimates. Once the team

selects preferred alternative, they will go through this process again to see if further savings can be achieved and to make sure that cost estimates are still on target.

The team also went through a cost estimating procedure for the Rehabilitation Alternative in late March. Kirk directed the DAG to the PowerPoint copy for diagrams of the option. The Rehabilitation Alternative builds on the early work done to evaluate retrofitting the bridge. The Rehabilitation Alternative would stabilize the existing footings and columns, improve soil supporting the bridge, and replace bracing in longitudinal and lateral directions. To bring the bridge up to code, SDOT would need to completely replace the deck (roadway) on top of the refurbished columns and new bracing.

The Rehabilitation Alternative would require the longest shutdown of the bridge. Although some work could be done below deck, the bridge would need to close for 18 to 24 months. Temporary structures could potentially be used for the other alternatives (A, C, and D) so part of the existing bridge could still be used while other portions are under construction.

The team chose to look at the Rehabilitation Alternative because the trend on other major projects like the Alaskan Way Viaduct replacement has been to do so. Costs between the alternatives are not substantially different, and the Rehabilitation Alternative is actually the least expensive at this point. Most if the cost difference is because no right of way is purchased for the Rehabilitation Alternative. The team wanted to carry this alternative forward so they would have enough information to answer questions in the future with full documentation. SDOT has directed the design team to start look at engineering, which will require more geologic borings and modeling of the existing bridge to make sure design concepts actually work. This is to make sure that the current concepts to fix the structure would not create other problems during an earthquake. The team also needs to do additional environmental work (geology studies will need to be expanded to account for additional soil stabilization work). Kirk expects the work to be done by the end of September.

Kirk handed out a matrix summarizing environmental impact information, which was recently sent to WSDOT and FHWA. The DAG had seen some of the matrix, though a column for the Rehabilitation Alternative has been added. Impacts associated with the Rehabilitation Alternative are much like the No Build impacts (identical for traffic, noise levels, and historic building impacts).

The matrix also revealed another twist. In reviewing the information, WSDOT and FHWA reported that they did not see significant impacts for any of the alternatives. Mitigation would mean that none of the impacts would be considered “significant.” For this reason, and because all alternatives would be in the same corridor, the agencies do not think SDOT needs to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). Instead, SDOT would prepare an Environmental Assessment (EA) for a preferred alternative. A decision on the environmental process is expected in the next two weeks.

If SDOT only needs to do an EA, then the team will need to select a preferred alternative before the final document is published. The document would be prepared around a preferred alternative, so SDOT may be in the position to select a preferred alternative in October or early November. After the City selects the preferred alternative, the team will then prepare the EA, publish the document, and host a public hearing and have a public comment period. The EA would be circulated and the hearing held about a year from now. If the team must do an EIS, the draft EIS would be published in February or March, and then a preferred alternative would be selected after the public hearing and comment. In sum, only having to do an EA would accelerate the selection of a preferred alternative by about six months. Once a preferred alternative is selected, the design team will be able to get going on their work in the Type, Size, and Location study.

Discussion:

- Fletcher:** The completion date range indicates that the Rehabilitation Alternative would require a longer closure, but construction would be complete earlier. Is that true?
- Jones:** Yes. The biggest element will be acquiring rights-of-way (ROW), and the Rehabilitation Alternative would not require any purchases.
- Fahlman:** How much time would you allocate for ROW acquisition?
- Jones:** From 18 to 24 months. We must have signed titles or easements in our hand for FHWA to sign off on construction. That estimate might be conservative – we think we might be able to get it done faster. One risk factor we account for in our modeling is time. Much of the land we might need is owned by the Port, and we'll talk with the Port early on. We may be able to work with them more quickly than private landowners.
- Kenworthy:** City Ice and Trident must move materials from the pier to facilities all day, every day. How would they continue to operate if the Rehabilitation Alternative or Alternative A were selected?
- Jones:** We would build a falsework so an avenue is open for passing back and forth during construction (similar to keeping the railroad operational). We could shift the location over time as needed, which we can detail once a preferred alternative is chosen.
- Kenworthy:** Is SDOT's director liking one alternative better, or weighing any criteria more heavily?
- Jones:** No, though community input and reaction has been very important. The cost for any of the options is around \$200 million, and the difference between them is less than 10%. Even though one might be more expensive, its benefits might make paying a bit more worthwhile.

- Burke:** When staff picks a preferred alternative in the fall, how will the process work?
- Jones:** The council wouldn't be asked to approve a preferred alternative, but would adopt the EA later. It will be an executive decision approved by the Mayor, though we also keep Councilman Conlin (head of the Transportation Committee) up to speed on the project's status. We are scheduled to brief him again on July 12, 2005.
- Hoff:** One thing I wanted to make clear is that we haven't heard from any strong proponents of the Rehabilitation Alternative. Rather, we don't want it popping back up later. Unless you've been talking to folks who like the option, no one we know of has been flying the Rehabilitation Alternative flag.
- Jones:** Community support for the Rehabilitation Alternative isn't strong, but we have heard from individuals that we should take a look at it. At our next meeting in October when we've completed the technical work, we'll be ready to make a recommendation about which should be the preferred alternative and get your input.
- Smith:** It looks like, under any option, you'll try to provide access through Port property off of Thorndyke. Are you making an assumption that the Port will be able to open the entrance on 21st Avenue for public access? What's the status of that decision?
- Jones:** Yes, that's the assumption, and staff is saying that there is a high probability of opening that access point.
- Burke:** One thing I've heard, and the Port's Neighborhood Advisory Committee (NAC) seems to be in agreement, is that access may not be granted if the North Bay property remains totally industrial. That's not to say that access couldn't happen, but it would be more unlikely if land uses remain industrial.
- Jones:** If that were the case, speaking for myself and not for the City, I think the City would work with the Port to try to address the NAC's concerns and others. The City Council directed us to investigate a means for direct access to the waterfront by Magnolia residents. A surface road across Port property connecting to 21st Avenue provides that access. We've always planned to provide access to the waterfront without asking drivers to go all the way to 15th Avenue from Magnolia and then turn around. If an industrial alternative is selected, the City will be obligated to figure out how to get access at 21st Avenue.

Smith: So this issue is still a bit up in the air?

Jones: Yes. The ramifications will be known in September when Port knows which alternative they'll likely select, and we'll have a clearer idea of which will be our preferred alternative.

Brad asked Dan Burke to provide an update about the Port's ongoing North Bay work.

Burke: Since February, we've accomplished a lot. We published the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) on April 15th, and extended our 30-day comment period to close on May 26th. We also held May 4th public hearing. Fifteen people gave testimony, and 60 to 70 people attended. The Port provided an overview of the alternatives and ongoing process. The Port has taken all comments, and is now responding to public comments and drafting a response document. The final preferred alternative can be any combination or hybrid of alternatives.

On June 9th, the Port Commission will have a public working session. Staff will introduce a draft preferred alternative, and look for guidance from the Commission on proceeding. Comments we heard most frequently were on whether to include residential development, what different types of access would be provided, building types and heights, and so on. A final decision will be made on July 12th. At that point, we hope the Commission will be ready to move forward on additional planning. The Port won't complete the final EIS until the Comprehensive Plan is done. There were quite a few amendments suggested this year, one of which would not allow consideration of residential development on North Bay property. The City will make a decision in September or October on finalizing the Comp Plan, which could continue to change in the future.

Kenworthy: My impression was that City Council was very strongly against residential development in North Bay.

Burke: There were also many action items related to Terminal 90/91 at the recent Port Commission meeting. The Commission:

- Approved \$25 million to improve berths C and D at the end of T91
- Approved \$850,000 to construct a utility spine
- Approved \$3.4 million for a 50,000 square foot development for Carnitech
- Approved \$1.5 million for the Economic Development Division to complete the planning and environmental documentation for the North Bay Master Plan.
- Approved \$100,000 to study moving the maintenance barn for the Waterfront Streetcar further north with an additional 1.2 miles of track to save it from permanent closure. Discussions with Seattle

and King County Metro are underway. For Seattle Art Museum (SAM) to proceed with the Sculpture Park, they need to move the maintenance barn out of the way. To make this happen, the Port offered to provide the funding for the track extension and overhead wire system, the land for the maintenance barn, land through Elliott Bay Park and two new stations. The participating agencies are working on the project cost and budget.

Kenworthy: Carnitch is a company with machinery to process food, anything from pineapple to fish. The company has lots of land and marine implications, and the cluster economy in North Bay has been looking for this kind of addition to expand services.

Burke: More public meetings will be coming up to discuss the Port's ongoing work.

Kenworthy: The times for upcoming Port Commission meetings are:

- 1:00 PM on June 29
- 2:00 PM on July 12

There are critical Port Commission elections coming up, and I'd be surprised if housing options in North Bay don't die quickly

Jones: As more information becomes available, please let us know and we will include that in update emails we plan to send to the DAG on a monthly basis.

III. Odds & Ends

Kirk Jones, City of Seattle, and Brad Hoff, EnviroIssues

Brad noted that the DAG has been meeting approximately quarterly (rather than monthly), and would take the summer off as technical work is being completed. The next DAG meeting will be in October. EnviroIssues will continue to do public outreach, and will be at Magnolia Summer Fest and Farmers Markets once per month through the summer.

Brad also announced that he will be moving to Minnesota with his family. Brad thanked the DAG for working so hard over the years, and noted that Sarah Brandt will continue to manage the project in his absence.

Kirk noted that the DAG's chance to provide real feedback on bridge design is coming up soon. Once the EA is published, the team will start the Type, Size, and Location study, and ask for input on things like how the bridge will look, what lights posts would be used, etc. This piece will be fun, and Kirk is looking forward to it.

Kirk explained that no draft EA will be published. SDOT will publish the final EA, hold an official public comment process, then submit the EA to WSDOT and FHWA for a “Finding of No Significant Impacts,” or FONSI. If SDOT can start on the EA with a preferred alternative selected by December, they can finish the EA in approximately 10 weeks and ship it to WSDOT and FHWA. The agencies then will likely take 3 to 4 months to review and process the document. SDOT will therefore likely hold the public hearing about one year from now. Most of the time will be in reviewing the EA. Fourteen discipline reports were submitted in October. SDOT has received approval for 11, two are still being revised (noise and cultural/historic resources), and geology has been submitted, but SDOT has yet to hear back. SDOT expects approval in the near future. [Update—WSDOT has approved the Geology and Soil discipline report.]

IV. Public Comment

No members of the public were present.

Conclusion: With no further comment, the meeting was adjourned.