



SAG Meeting #7 Summary

Siting Advisory Group

Northeast Recycling and Transfer Station

SAG Members in Attendance:

- Aaron Moldver, City of Redmond
- Amrit Bhuie, AR Environmental Consulting
- Andreas Kolshorn, At-large
- Dave Juarez, City of Redmond
- Diana Hart, City of Woodinville
- James Randolph, At-large
- Jed Reynolds, Lake Washington School District
- Nick Harbert, Waste Management
- Paula Goelzer, At-large
- Rachel Best-Campbell, City of Woodinville (Councilmember)
- Ronald Kim, At-large
- Susan Vossler, At-large
- Tehmina Ali, Resident
- Tracey Dunlap, City of Kirkland
- Troy Anderson, Woodinville Chamber of Commerce
- Wendy Weiker, Republic Services
- William Su, Resident

Staff Members in Attendance:

- Pat McLaughlin, King County Solid Waste
- Margaret Bay, King County Solid Waste
- Mary O'Hara, King County Solid Waste
- Polly Young, King County Solid Waste
- Annie Kolb-Nelson, King County Solid Waste
- Isabelle Trujillo, King County Solid Waste
- Joy Carpine-Cazzanti, King County Solid Waste
- Penny Mabie, Definitely Mabie Consulting
- Dan Pitzler, Jacobs Engineering
- Marilee Jolin, EnviroIssues
- Jordan Sanabria, EnviroIssues
- Sarah Omlor, EnviroIssues

Approximate number of audience attendees: 74

Welcome

Penny Mabie (Definitely Mabie Consulting, Facilitator) welcomed members of the Siting Advisory Group (SAG) and gave members a brief refresher on the available Zoom features. Penny also introduced new SAG member Woodinville City Councilmember Rachel Best-Campbell.

Penny reminded the group of the agreed upon ground rules and reviewed the community criteria. She also gave a brief overview of the process to date.

Introducing new Woodinville Site

Margaret Bay (King County Solid Waste) introduced the new site being recommended for study in Woodinville. She thanked SAG member William Su for highlighting this site as a possibility. Margaret explained why the site is now a candidate and why it wasn't identified originally. She also assured the group that after William's suggestion the project team completed multiple screenings to ensure that other possible sites weren't missed in the initial study. Margaret reviewed the site's location, zoning, current businesses occupied there and potential issues with the site such as possible wetlands.

Present Winter Community Survey Results

Margaret noted that the survey conducted in early 2021 does not include the newest site, however the team is focusing on other forms of feedback like tabling events.

Penny presented results of the survey and noted that much of the feedback will still apply to the new site since it is right next to the other Woodinville site. She said the top concerns were for the Chrysalis High School, the river trail, noise and traffic, and the nearby wine district.

Q: How many businesses would be impacted on the new site?

A: The site is comprised of the NW Utilities training lot, 3 small businesses, and an undeveloped parcel. There are 5 owners in total.

Q: The Chrysalis School says that it's closed online. Is it confirmed that this school is still located there? Is it a private school?

A: It may be temporarily closed for COVID-19, but yes it will be in session the fall. Yes, it is a private school.

Comments:

- Some of the survey responses will apply to the new site but hopefully the impact to the family-owned business will be mitigated.
- According to the King County information provided, more businesses would be impacted on the new site.

Public Comment

Penny opened the call for public comments. Audience members were asked to electronically raise their hand to indicate they would like to speak. With 40 minutes allotted and 20 audience members expressing interest in speaking for the first round of public comments, each speaker was given about two minutes.

Comments:

- **Gennifer Zentz**, who lives less than 50 feet from the current Houghton site, shared their family's frustration with living next to a transfer station saying the smell prevents them from using their backyard or opening their windows. Gennifer also expressed frustration at the possibility of a new Transfer Station to be built on the existing Houghton site because they have been under the impression that the site would be closing for many years. Gennifer also felt that uncovering an old landfill would be dangerous to nearby

residents and would be a worse option compared to mitigating wetlands on a different site.

- **Scott Chow**, who works for Winsome Trading, thanked William Su for suggesting the alternative Woodinville site that would not force his company to relocate. Scott shared that the company has looked into other properties and found no other warehouses that could accommodate their company in the area, not to mention their warehouse worth \$70-80 million would be torn down. Scott shared that over 150 families of employees will be disrupted if the County chooses their site.
- **Larry Kilbride**, a long time Houghton resident, said the current transfer station works fine and a new facility should not be built in Houghton. Larry questioned whether any SAG members live on the same street as the current facility.
- **Emily Brown** offered some history of the Houghton Transfer Station, noting a plan from the 1990's and stating it called for the station's relocation away from residential areas. Emily also said there were articles published about a redevelopment plan to build a park around the site, which was approved by the Houghton City Council. The plan said the County would retain a small area for transfer station needs but the remaining acres would be a County park.
- **David Ormerod**, a nearby resident of the proposed Woodinville sites, shared concerns about the potential sites' access to transportation because of the busy intersections and entrance to Highway 202. David felt these sites shouldn't be considered because of this.
- **Jennifer Ohayon**, a Houghton resident, agreed with others' concerns of odor for nearby residents. Jennifer shared personal experience with the Chrysalis School saying it is a very small school with no more than 50 students. Jennifer sympathized with business owners' worry of being displaced but said as a business owner herself it has happened to her and is the nature of things when you don't own your building, and possibly even if you do.
- **Papp**, speaking on behalf of Winsome Trading, shared the company started in Woodinville over 30 years ago and being forced to relocate would have a tremendous impact. Papp also said both Woodinville sites seem unsuitable because of their proximity to the school and nearby wineries and for the traffic impact they would create.
- **Stacy Duffy**, provided some history of the Houghton Transfer Station, saying plans called for its closure in 1990-2000 and specifically said it was to be relocated elsewhere. Stacy said this plan was voted on and approved and the location was already listed as *closed* on maps. Stacy said no improvements made to the site will allow for increased capacity.
- **Sarah Arndt**, a nearby resident of the proposed Woodinville sites, argued that these potential locations won't be beneficial to anyone because of King County's plans for the nearby Eastrail Trail project, the Chrysalis School, and the additional traffic that will be routed through Woodinville's city center.
- **Phil Allen** questioned whether the proposed Houghton Park and Ride site was suitable for the transfer station and said it was not a listed site on the list being studied throughout the process but added later by a King County insider. Phil argued if the site was suitable, it would have shown up in the initial searches.
- **Kristin Dixon** was glad to see a second Woodinville site is being considered because the proposed locations are zoned industrial and better than other potential locations. Kristin agreed there would be some noise and odor to nearby residents, but argued other

locations are close to early childhood education centers which is a more serious impact than wineries and concert venues.

- **Janna Harla**, a resident of Woodinville, said if these locations are chosen there will be an immediate impact to 144 families who own townhomes nearby. Janna also noted these locations would impact the summer concert series and the wineries and other family businesses.
- **Dale Fonk** shared concerns for popular bike routes near the proposed Woodinville locations and felt this would be dangerous with the addition of garbage trucks. Dale also felt the transfer station should remain in Houghton because it will save money from acquiring a new location, the new technology of the modern facility will mitigate odors, and traffic will remain the same rather than increasing traffic in a new location.
- **Lauren Owen**, a nearby Woodinville resident, said her neighborhood would also be impacted and consists of 107 homes on top of the previously mentioned 144. Lauren also questioned why the County would consider locations close to the centroid of a city rather than large available land in the county.
- **Xiaoling** noted that the original Woodinville site scored very low in the community criteria and the same impacts would apply in the site next to it. Xiaoling said both sites are in a landslide zone, and both would displace small businesses. Xiaoling also feared not being able to open her window and does not have AC.
- **Betsy Lewis**, a resident of Houghton, expressed frustration for the public comment process in the SAG meetings. Betsy said at the last meeting she had waited 2 hours to speak and was then cut off by the moderator for asking a question, acknowledging that the SAG could not answer questions during the public comment period. Betsy also mentioned having submitted written questions that have not received answers.
- **Angie West** empathized with Houghton residents about traffic and odors but argued the same will be true if a new site is chosen. Angie also noted a resort is planned to be built soon in Woodinville which would be impacted by a new transfer station. Angie also supported the idea of putting the station in the country.
- **Alyssa Chow**, the granddaughter of Winsome Trading's founder, shared the family's history and pride in the company. Alyssa said her grandfather started the business from nothing after immigrating from Thailand. Alyssa noted the 2 elephant statues outside the warehouse's entrance represent their family's pride in their heritage and pride in being a part of the Woodinville business community. Alyssa said choosing this location would remove the livelihood of their family and employees.
- **Far Ghoddoussi** empathized with adjacent Houghton residents but argued that they would have known that they were moving next to a transfer station when they bought their homes and presumably the prices of their homes were discounted because of this. Far said relocating the transfer station would cause others' homes to lose value and they would not be compensated for this. Far also noted that the size of a school doesn't matter because if even one student is put in danger because of increased traffic it will be problematic.

Penny thanked the speakers for their comments and closed the public comment period, noting that additional time will be given at the end of the meeting for remaining comments.

Review weighting and scoring

Penny reviewed the purpose and role of the SAG in evaluating sites, and that the group is one of multiple sources of input King County Solid Waste Division Director Pat McLaughlin considers in making the final decision of where to site the new transfer station. Penny reminded everyone that the same criteria and weights used to score the previous sites were applied to the new site.

Dan Pitzler (Jacobs Engineering) gave a brief review of the scoring process and shared the scores of the two Woodinville sites from the SAG scoring small group. Dan then shared the weights submitted by the full SAG, noting that reviewing this data is just one way to get insight in considering the two Woodinville sites.

Q: Why is there a significant difference in the scores for limiting community impacts (such as traffic, noise, and odor) between the two sites if they are adjacent to one another?

A: There is a nearby residential area to the southwest of the two Woodinville sites, therefore the northernmost of the two sites scored better in that criterion than the southernmost site that is closer to those homes.

Q: Someone who made a public comment earlier in the meeting mentioned a new housing development near the Woodinville sites. Was that information considered during scoring?

A: No, that information was not factored into the scoring.

Q: How did the criteria change when identifying this new site as viable?

A: The criteria was not changed or amended. The County and project team used the same criteria and the same processes as before to narrow down to the Top 4 sites. The change was the expansion in the scope of how far from the centroid we looked for small parcel cluster sites. That search identified 78 small parcel cluster sites that had not been identified, but only this site passed the criteria to make it into further stages of review that eventually led us to considering it as a site to move into the environmental review stage.

Comments:

- The scores of these two sites are very close, it's essentially a toss-up between which can be considered the better site.
- We should go back and look at the larger list. If this cluster of parcels located right next to the first-identified Woodinville was missed initially, it seems there may be other viable options out there for us to look into.
- The site selection process seems flawed if only this one additional site from Woodinville was identified, I believe something in the criteria is faulty and made the data faulty, so I don't feel comfortable recommending sites to move forward to environmental review and want us to go back to the drawing board.
 - These are valid concerns, and the County has been working closely with City representatives since early 2020 to develop the criteria as a coordinated effort. The County also listened to City feedback when the list was narrowed to the Top 15 and were in continued coordination as the County brought forth the Top 4 sites. We also take SAG input seriously and when the question of this second Woodinville site was brought up, we wanted to do our due diligence and

followed up on that request. In doing so we discovered, yes, there was a flaw in the first evaluation that caused us to overlook the site. We then went back and looked at the list of 109 sites and both the County and our technical consultants combed through the list of 78 cluster sites and evaluated them to ensure no other site that fit the criteria was missed. The hope was to find more viable sites than what was previously found and analyzed, but only this second Woodinville site met the criteria, and no others came close. We shared this data with the City representatives we've been working with, but we can share that data with others as well.

- It seems that overwhelmingly people believe the siting process was flawed and could have been more transparent.
- I don't think any of these four sites are great and want to look at other areas.
- Scott Chow from Winsome Trading sent a letter to the SAG and noted that having to tear down and rebuild a building that large with so much concrete is not environmentally or economically sound. About 10% of carbon emissions are created by concrete, and based on my estimations, the Winsome Trading building is made of about 80,000 tons of concrete. I will also note the Park and Ride site does not share this issue.
- I was disheartened after hearing community concerns about the sites, so I was hopeful with this new site. Listening to further comments made tonight, I agree that we should consider the other cluster sites and explore available alternatives.
- I'm hearing concern from the community about the process and how the criteria were determined. Seems we need to revisit the criteria to ensure they align with project goals and community needs.
- More clarity on the site selection process is needed, including how the Top 15 went down to the Top 4, and why the Redmond site that was initially in the Top 4 is no longer an option.
- This lack of transparency in the process as well as introducing a new site that was at first missed seems to have led to a lack in trust.
- The fact that this site came out of looking into a question asked in a SAG meeting is great to hear. I understand oversights can happen – we're all human – and I'm glad the County is listening. I don't see this as a loss in confidence.
- I appreciate hearing public comments from the community who is affected by this project and seeing how the current station is disrupting family life.
- It would be worth it to show the community what modern transfer stations look like, how they operate, and the possible amenities having a modern facility can offer.
- A lot of information is coming in later in the process through community input, this seems like the time to pause. No site will ever be perfect, but I don't want to rush through this decision.
- This can be an opportunity to explore alternatives and other mitigation options.
- I would like some clarity regarding the Houghton site, particularly in the cost of building on a site with a closed landfill and what property owners were told. I don't believe there was anything legally binding.
- I think having access to the data and seeing more details of the process will increase faith and trust in the process. We should trust the data.
- King County should consider available sites in south Snohomish County where there are fewer residential areas.

- **Action item:** *Share data of the 78 identified cluster sites*

Next Steps

Penny thanked SAG members for their feedback. In response to what was discussed, the County would like to offer a way to share and discuss the details of the site selection process. This may be in the form of another meeting. The County will further discuss and follow up what the next steps of this will be. Margaret thanked the SAG for their input and shared her appreciation for the level of dedication and commitment to the process. Margaret also reminded everyone that a lot of relevant and detailed information is available on the website to help give a better understanding of the full picture, and the County will be in touch with plans to further discuss the details of the site selection process.

- **Action item:** *Follow up with plan to offer more detailed information about site selection process*

Public Comment

Penny opened the call for a second round of public comments. Audience members were asked to electronically raise their hand to indicate they would like to speak. With about 20 minutes remaining and 10 audience members expressing interest in speaking for the second round of public comments, each speaker was given about two minutes.

Comments:

- **Stacey V.** wanted the SAG to revisit the criteria and ensure that businesses with over 100 employees be excluded from consideration. Stacey also noted high traffic congestion in Woodinville. Lastly, Stacey asked the SAG to validate the scoring numbers since not every criterion had the same possible range.
- **Cheryl Tyson** thanked the SAG for their work and ask that members reconsider recommending the Woodinville sites as they are near one of the biggest wine regions in the country. Cheryl also noted that the Woodinville sites are near 140 townhomes as well as wineries and a new station on either of those sites would disrupt the local community as well as the local tourism industry.
- **Matthew Goelzer**, Houghton resident, expressed that the community hasn't heard much from the County in terms of how to mitigate impacts to residents of the new site and that falling back on the message of a modern station serving as a community amenity is not enough. Matthew also shared that legally binding or not, commitments were made by the County regarding the current Houghton station and that the County is not a good neighbor. Matthew expressed concern with the County wanting to provide a "defensible process" as that should not be the goal. Matthew then said King County Solid Waste Division Director Pat McLaughlin had expressed that the County was not looking to pursue eminent domain, which makes it seem like selecting Houghton as the site for the new station is predetermined. Matthew concluded by asking the County to listen to the SAG and start the process over.

- **Pete Becker**, Bothell resident, noted the great challenges transfer trucks will face in the already-congested area by the Woodinville sites. Pete expressed concern about trucks rerouting through Bothell to avoid the traffic and drive near residential areas and schools.
- **T. Newberry** asked the County to look at siting in a different way for what will be available in the future, such as potential alternatives to landfilling.
- **Deirdre D. Johnson**, South Rose Hill/Bridle Trails Association, believed the Park and Ride and two Woodinville sites were proposed intentionally because they are not viable sites. Deirdre asked that a Redmond site should be reviewed for the sake of a fair, legal process.
- **Sam Roy** thanked the SAG for their discussion earlier in the meeting. Sam asked that the County look closer to the centroid in consideration of individual cost to travel further away from the centroid, and asked the County to share that data if it was available.
- **Cindy Spangler**, resident near the Park and Ride, thanked the SAG for voicing their concerns. Cindy didn't believe any of the Top 4 sites were viable and asked for clarification on why the previously proposed Redmond site was no longer an option. Cindy recommended the County start the siting process over again and to look further away from residential and business areas.
- **Dave**, Houghton resident, supported the idea of the County holding a follow up meeting to not only go over the details of what has already been done in the siting process but to also use that meeting to respond to concerns people have voiced.
- **Deanna Matzen**, Houghton resident, thanked the SAG for their work and asked that consequences of siting a transfer station to nearby residents also be considered for the neighbors of the Houghton site, as developments in Houghton are also causing increased traffic. Deanna encouraged the County to go back and evaluate all possible options.
 - **Action item:** *Share data of the 78 identified cluster sites*
 - **Action item:** *Follow up with plan to offer more detailed information about site selection process*