

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
- John MacGillivray, City of Kirkland
- Nick Harbert, Waste Management
- Paula Goelzer, At-large
- Ronald Kim, At-large
- Sandy Cobb, Unincorporated King County
- Susan Vossler, At-large
- Tanushree Chowdury, At-large
- Tehmina Ali, Resident
- Tracey Dunlap, City of Kirkland
- Troy Anderson, Woodinville Chamber of Commerce
- Wendy Weiker, Republic Services
- William Louie, At-large
- William Su, Resident

Staff Members in Attendance:

- 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
- Penny Mabie, Definitely-Mabie Consulting
- Marilee Jolin, EnviroIssues
- Claire Wendle, EnviroIssues
- Jordan Sanabria, EnviroIssues
- Phil Coughlan, Herrera Environmental Consultants

Welcome

Penny Mabie (Definitely-Mabie Consulting, Facilitator) welcomed members of the Siting Advisory Group (SAG), gave members a brief refresher on the available Zoom features. Penny also introduced new SAG members Tanushree Chowdhury, Paula Goelzer, and Wendy Weiker.

Four SAG members, who were selected to give a report-out to the rest of the group in advance, shared values and concerns they'd heard from their community:

Sandy Cobb:

- Sandy reported that members of the Redmond Ridge Homeowners Association were excited for the new station and appreciated that it would not be located near the business park and school in the area.

Tehmina Ali:

- Tehmina did not hear much from her neighbors about the transfer station.

Troy Anderson:

- Troy has heard a lot from people in Woodinville about the siting; the overwhelming majority of comments have not been positive. He discussed letters he had received from Woodinville businesses and stakeholders in the area, and reported concerns about the Woodinville site's proximity to the tourist district and heavy bicycle and pedestrian traffic in the area.

Paula Goelzer:

- Paula shared slides with information and feedback collected from the Houghton community, which she described as close-knit and well-connected. Most residents have lived in the neighborhood for a long time. The slides contained results from a survey conducted by Houghton neighbors at Taylor Fields and the community park, door-to-door surveying, Zoom meetings and through text and email. Key concerns included:
 - Loss of amenities and green space, which are widely used for walking and recreation in the neighborhood, which lacks sidewalks.
 - Safety concerns with truck and self-hauler traffic and locating an industrial facility in a residential neighborhood.
 - Integrity of the site selection process.
 - Environmental concerns with potentially uncapping the closed landfill.
 - Associated noise and environmental impacts.

Penny thanked the SAG members for their reporting and reminded the full group of the agreed upon ground rules to follow before continuing on with the meeting.

NERTS Project Overview

Penny provided a brief project overview at the suggestion of SAG members in previous meetings to give context and background information for new attendees.

Siting a new transfer station:

- A transfer station serves as an interim stop to receive and prepare waste before moving to the landfill (in this case, the Cedar Hills Regional Landfill), and is also a location for self-haulers and commercial businesses.
- The County is looking to site a new transfer station because the current Houghton Transfer Station is approaching 60 years of service and lacks adequate space for queuing, recycling services, ability to compact waste, and space for waste storage in the event of a regional disaster.

Role of the Siting Advisory Group (SAG):

- Advise King County staff from a community perspective.
- Identify community criteria for the siting process and weight criteria.
- Review potential sites and provide informal and formal feedback.

- Share information and feedback from their communities.
- Provide input on community outreach.

Penny also reviewed the community criteria process and how the SAG developed them. First, the SAG identified community values based on a public survey in the fall of 2020 and created community criteria based on those values. Then, those criteria were weighted based on importance and applied to each of the four sites. The SAG reviewed the scoring results, discussed them, and adjusted weighting as needed before confirming their site rankings. The SAG also provided suggestions for the County to consider as they selected sites for environmental review.

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 15 minutes allotted and 9 audience members expressing interest in speaking for the first round of public comments, each speaker was given about one minute.

Comments:

- **Kristin:** Represents Friends of Taylor Field, a citizen-led group of over 100 people that are actively involved in preserving the quality of life in the Houghton Neighborhood, specifically as it pertains to the Houghton Transfer Station and its related negative impacts on the community. King County has been promising to close the existing Houghton Transfer Station for decades. Public communications calling for its closure have been issued as far back as 1992. That is almost 30 years of documentation, postcards, web content, and even official plans as recent as the 2019 King County Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Plan. Neighbors have purchased their homes in the area and started their families based on the promise of closing this unsightly and unhealthy nuisance. Understands there is a loophole in the official closure plans that technically allows King County to build a new transfer station on the same area as the closed landfill, and it is disappointing that the County is reversing their promise. There is a petition with 2,000 signatures circulating that opposes the expansion of the Houghton Transfer Station. The transfer station is not wanted in the area, nor is it needed given there is a modern transfer station located 5.5 miles away. There is no reason the Houghton Transfer Station and surrounding area should be considered.
- **Emily Brown:** Resident of Houghton and speaking in opposition of using the current Houghton Transfer Station site or expanding into the adjacent 17 acres, which includes Taylor Field. Those 17 acres are a capped landfill that was used extensively from around 1940 until it was capped in 1967. In the '30s, '40s and '50s, there were no regulations that determined what could be dumped in the landfill. Based on the knowledge of longtime residents, the landfill was used for toxic shipyard waste. Recent tests reveal that the landfill is safe for passive uses like walking and baseball, but there are serious concerns about building on top of or uncapping the landfill. Last summer, new gas monitoring wells were installed as a response to an increase in gas that was detected, which does not indicate a settled landfill. Lastly, the County has not been a good neighbor over the years. They have been lying to us for decades about closing the current station, and at one point, residents protested and called for necessary upgrades

and changes. It is loud, a nuisance and unsafe for a residential neighborhood. It should be moved to an industrial location.

- **Stacy Duffy:** Resident near Houghton, and calling to ask that members of the SAG recommend that King County include appropriately zoned sites in the siting process. Transfer stations do not belong in residential areas, and although there is currently a station in a residential area, it does not mean that there should be one there. Neighbors have been subject to noise, odor, and other environmental issues. Promises to close the site go back for decades and residents have been working to close the site for decades.
- **Papp:** Represents Winsome Trading, a three-generation family business that was founded by Papp's grandfather. They have endured unforeseen mitigation costs and have undergone this process by not one but two separate government agencies. Papp is asking that the SAG consider intangible assets and family values in addition to tangible assets in the siting process.
- **April Hamilton:** Member of the Kensington community, and unaware that the siting process was underway until recently. Brickyard Rd is off 160th Ave NE and has become a thoroughfare for trucks. Kensington is a close-knit community, and in recent years there have been concerns about an increase in truck traffic, especially at high speeds, and associated safety issues. There is also a park across the street that is widely used, and residents must cross the busy street to access it. April will send a follow up email that details the list of safety and noise concerns in the neighborhood.
- **Phil A:** Acknowledged the challenge in finding a site for the new transfer station that will please everyone. In reviewing the original 127 sites, the Houghton Park and Ride is not listed as a site. Phil raised a question about the integrity of the siting process and wondered if the site was being considered the entire time without being explicitly listed.
- **Pamela Mullen:** Pamela asked about the integrity of the siting process and recounted the previous agreements between City of Kirkland, King County and the Houghton neighborhood calling for the closure of the current station. Pamela questioned the costs needed to guarantee that excavating the landfill would not pose environmental or health concerns, and whether King County would be willing to incur those costs. Pamela was also not confident in the excavation process.
- **Rose Merle Spunder:** Woodinville resident in the neighborhood up the hill from the proposed Woodinville site. The neighborhood feels it would be a poor decision to site the landfill there due to the proximity of neighborhoods, the nearby school, and the local businesses and wineries that would be adversely impacted. The road leading to the site is only one lane, and not very close to I-405.
- **Deirdre Johnson:** Expressed discontent at the lack of representation for the Houghton neighborhood at the previous SAG meetings and the lack of public notice for earlier meetings, which may have resulted in fewer public comments.

Penny thanked the speakers for their comments and closed the public comment period.

Presentation of Sites for Environmental Review

Margaret Bay (King County Solid Waste) presented on the three sites selected for environmental review. She began by acknowledging that while there is no one perfect site for the new station, the County evaluated a wide area to find optimal sites and are seeking a site where the benefits outweigh costs.

The three sites selected to environmental review, from north to south, are:

Site 1 (16111 Woodinville-Redmond Rd NE, Woodinville 98072)

- This site is comprised of two properties (Winsome Trading and NW Utilities). It is a suitable size and shape for the transfer station and the slope of the site allows for ease of building. There is a longstanding family business with deep roots in the community at this site, and the current warehouse has been renovated to suit the specific needs of the business.

Site 2 (7024 116th Ave NE, Kirkland 98033)

- While the Park-and-Ride site does not fit within the Geographic Information System (GIS) criteria, King County has knowledge of local and regional experience demonstrating that a site of this size can be developed, as shown by the North Transfer Station built by the City of Seattle. The Park-and-Ride is underutilized, minimally developed, and close to the transfer station corridor and freeway. Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT), the owner of the property, may be considering selling the site. The site is small, which increases the cost of construction and may limit the potential scope of services.

Site 3 (11724 NE 60th St, Kirkland 98033)

- King County updated the site map to differentiate between the extent of the property and the maximum extent of the footprint that may be considered for the new site. King County heard the local support for Taylor Fields and requested the conceptual designs work around the fields and parking to accommodate for the existing greenspace. The site is close to the transfer station corridor and freeway. The County will need to conduct more analysis to understand the impacts of building on a closed landfill, and the proximity to residential neighborhoods is also a concern.

Information Updates

Margaret provided informational updates to address questions and concerns recently submitted to the County.

Houghton Closed Landfill

- The closed Houghton Landfill is a Model Toxic Control Act (MTCA) site, managed by the Washington State Department of Ecology. MTCA identifies and provides funding to monitor sites and provide clean up. MTCA considers different contaminants than Superfund, which is a federal law. The Houghton Landfill has been on the MTCA list since 1988, after Ecology reviewed all sites with potential contaminants. Ecology began an investigation on the site after public request in 2020, which is required criteria to take action on any MTCA site.
- Ecology will perform a site hazard assessment in 2022 in response to the public request. Ecology also investigated benchmark exceedances of the Clean Water Act and stormwater runoff contaminants. Ecology has not followed up on the investigations, but the reports are available from the King County Solid Waste Division (KCSWD).

History of Houghton Transfer Station

- The KCSWD is working with the City of Kirkland to review and compare information and documents regarding closure of the Houghton Transfer Station. A Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) and a White Paper on the document information and history between KCSWD and the City of Kirkland will be available on the project website.

Refined Houghton Transfer Station Map

- KCSWD understands the importance of Taylor Fields and park space to the Houghton community and has refined the site map for the transfer station to avoid and/or minimize impacts to Taylor Fields.

Comments:

- If the closed landfill at the site with the existing Houghton station is already posing problems, it doesn't seem like a good idea to excavate there.
 - I recall a 2020 work order that was issued due to a higher concentration of landfill gases and am concerned about potential gas leaks and groundwater contamination.
- The County should use Houghton Community Council documents as a resource for the history of the transfer station.
- If the Park-and-Ride site is ultimately selected, it will be important to mitigate the loss of that facility so those who rely on public transportation do not lose that resource.

Q: Can we have clarification on the status of the Houghton Landfill as a Superfund site versus a MTCA site?

A: The Houghton Landfill is a MTCA site, not a federal Superfund site. The Department of Ecology will conduct a site assessment due to public interest.

- **Action item:** Obtain historical documents on the Houghton Landfill from Houghton Community Council.

Q: Was the Park-and-Ride site included on the original list of 127 sites?

A: The original list of parcels was generated by a list of pass/fail criteria and then passed through Geographic Information System filters and optimal characteristics to narrow the number of sites. While a site may not pass all criteria, it can still be considered. King County is willing to look at sites that do not meet all criteria, including the Park-and-Ride, which has been on the siting radar for a while. Earlier in the siting process, the Park-and-Ride was combined with the site where the current transfer station is located as a proposed siting option, but this was later updated to just include the Park-and-Ride site. The site was subject to the same evaluation of functional criteria and passed ahead of other sites despite the smaller site size.

Q: Will another Park-and-Ride replace the current Park-and-Ride if that site is chosen?

A: King County Metro will be responsible for making that decision. The site is currently leased from WSDOT, and King County Metro is evaluating regional system service.

Q: There is an empty lot south of the Winsome Trading/NW Utilities site in Woodinville. Could that unoccupied space be considered as a potential site for the new transfer station instead of the location of the Winsome Trading building?

A: We will look into the site selection process and follow up as to why that site was not on the list of potential sites.

- **Action item:** Review site selection process to understand if empty lot south of NW Utilities was on the list of potential sites and if not, why not.

Margaret shared a recent update regarding a KCSWD proposal to leave loaded transfer trailers at the Houghton site overnight on weekends (currently, loaded trailers are hauled from the station at the end of every day). Margaret stated KCSWD heard the concerns from the community and the proposal has been postponed indefinitely.

Overview of Environmental Review Process and Next Steps

Phil Coughlan (Herrera Environmental Consulting) presented an overview of the environmental review process, including an overview of the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) and how the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) process will proceed. Phil noted there are multiple opportunities for community input within the process. Phil also explained that the findings from the environmental review help inform the decision-making process; an EIS is not itself a decision document.

Comments:

- This seems like a very detailed and costly process; I can understand why this was not applied in previous stages of site selection when there were more sites being considered.

Q: How is this environmental review process different from what was done to study the other sites earlier in the site selection process?

A: For those early sites, we took a broader look using information that was publicly available. The EIS will be a much more detailed evaluation of the sites. More information is available in the Broad Area Site Screening (BASS) report that is on the project website.

Q: How are communities notified when scoping comment periods are open?

A: The King County communications team will be issuing notifications for scoping, Draft EIS, and Final EIS. Polly and Annie, who are in attendance tonight, lead those communications efforts. As was done during the earlier siting process, the County will likely use direct mail, email, and social media strategies.

Q: Was there a previous SEPA or EIS process done in the past for permits at the existing Houghton station that we can look at for information?

A: I don't know if there are permits similar to what you're asking for, but generally speaking most permits require some SEPA environmental review. That was likely provided by completing a SEPA checklist. A lead agency looks at the checklist and if there is determination of non-significance, then that checklist is what provides SEPA coverage. We are not aware of any permit that would have required an EIS at the Houghton Landfill.

Community Involvement in EIS

Marilee Jolin (EnviroIssues) reminded the SAG of the County's goals of community involvement and presented an overview of the community outreach activities the team has provided to date to achieve those goals. These activities included stakeholder interviews, two direct mailers, press releases, two community surveys, email updates, community briefings, website updates and more. After the review of what was done, Marilee asked the SAG if they could identify any areas they felt the County could improve upon going forward, also noting that thoughts could be shared after the meeting over email as well.

Comments:

- Increase the effort to engage with neighbors of the existing facility.
 - Even if the 11724 NE 60th St, Kirkland site wasn't one of the top sites being considered for a new transfer station, it's still beneficial to hear from the community in which an existing facility is located, especially when a "no-action" option is a possibility – those neighbors will be impacted as well.
- Include people from the communities near the potential sites in the interview process.
- Support the continued use of mailers. They are a great way to reach people, especially for those who don't have access to social media.
- Utilize neighboring cities to share updates with city newsletters.
- Staff community events in-person once that's safe and possible again.
 - Not being able to do in-person outreach was a challenge.
- Connect with city and community groups to amplify the message and cover groups of people that may have been missed in earlier efforts.
- Paid social media boosts are typically very helpful in further sharing social media posts.
- Share updates on multiple social media platforms to avoid missing demographic differences between platforms.
- More focused communication to underserved and underrepresented groups.
- Translation and transcreation of materials so information is accessible at the same time to people across multiple languages.
 - There were some responses to the community surveys that came back in one of the languages that had translations offered. Increase effort to ensure more people who are not fluent English speakers are kept informed.
- Work with a public relations firm that specializes in equity work and targeted outreach.
- Post information about the project at the existing station so people who currently use it are informed of this project.

Next Steps

Penny thanked SAG members for their feedback and noted that communication with the public will continue leading into the scoping process, scheduled to begin late August/early September. The next SAG meeting will take place prior to that start date – though the meeting date has not yet been determined – and will provide opportunity for the SAG to have discussion about what should be included in the scope of the review, what should be analyzed, potential mitigations, and more. In addition to the discussion at the next meeting, Penny noted that SAG members will not be asked to

reach consensus on scoping comments, rather, they may make their own comments as individuals during the scoping and EIS phases if they desire to do so.

- **Action item:** *Obtain historical documents on the Houghton Landfill from Houghton Community Council.*
- **Action item:** *Review site selection process to understand whether empty lot south of NW Utilities was considered in the list of potential sites.*