

Murray Basin Combined Sewer Overflow Control Facility Design Advisory Group

Meeting Summary

March 20, 2012 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Fauntleroy School House, 9140 California Avenue Southwest

Overview

On March 20, 2012, the King County Wastewater Treatment Division (WTD) hosted a Design Advisory Group (DAG) meeting for the Murray Basin Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) Control Facility. The DAG is providing input and advice regarding proposed site layout, facility layout, post-construction site use, and landscaping and aesthetics to share with the broader public and WTD. The group is reviewing technical analyses in order to understand proposed layouts and provide input about design options to inform the County's decision-making. The DAG is acting as a sounding board for the project technical team, and a project liaison to the public, helping ensure the County project team receives a broad community perspective.

Topics for the March 20 DAG meeting included:

- Review the public art process
- Update on SDOT street improvement meeting
- Design update and next steps
- Discuss green building opportunities

Welcome and Introductions

Meeting facilitator Penny Mabie introduced herself and welcomed participants and community members to the meeting. After a round of introductions, Penny reviewed the agenda and reminded group members to speak up as it can be difficult to hear one another in such a large room. The purpose of the meeting was to learn about the potential for public art, review next steps for the facility's design and permitting processes, and discuss green building opportunities.

Public Art Process

4Culture's Cath Brunner gave a presentation on public art and the artist selection process for public projects. 4Culture is a public agency chartered by King County as its cultural services provider. Cath explained that she works with an eight-member board named the Public Art Advisory Council (PAAC).

A selected artist works with the design team to create a piece of art that coalesces with the facility's operation and community principles. An example is the North Creek Pump Station in Bothell. The artist convinced the design team to create a butterfly-style roof that captures

rainwater and creates a waterfall feature when it rains. Another example is the plaza in Myrtle Edwards Park. Tides from the neighboring Elliott Bay push air into sound pipes under the plaza, creating sounds when the air is expelled. Waterworks Gardens, a series of outdoor garden rooms with mosaic floors and native plantings, are commonly used as a venue for weddings, underlining the project's importance to the community. Cath explained that public art is increasingly about creating a shared place for the public rather than simply making a piece of art.

The Murray CSO project is expected to have about \$125,000 budgeted for public art. An artist will be chosen after a selection process that ensures the artist is the right fit for the project and understands the community's context and expectations. King County will clearly outline to the artist the responsibilities and requirements of the project, yet allow the artist to operate within the broadest constraints possible. The art selection process for the Murray CSO project has already begun with an invitational-only call for artists. The invite was limited to Washington and Oregon artists experienced with integrated art, industrial infrastructure, and environmental restoration as well as landscaping. Inviting regional artists ensures they will be able to attend community meetings.

Artists have until the end of March to reply to the invite. An art selection panel, composed of three art and design professionals and two DAG representatives, Barbara Owens and Patrick Gordon, will meet in mid-April to narrow down the field. The remaining artists will attend an on-site orientation on April 24; the art selection panel will conduct final interviews on May 3.

Questions and Discussion

- Seattle Parks DAG representative Cheryl Eastberg asked what exactly the \$125,000 public art budget pays for.
 - Cath Brunner answered that it represents everything related to the public art, including creating the infrastructure.
 - Bill Byers commented that the \$125,000 is less than 1% of the project's total budget.
 - Cath said that, by ordinance, art budgets for wastewater facilities are calculated based only on above ground facilities. WTD project manager Erica Jacobs explained that the calculation for art funds includes all eligible portions of the project, which are the above grade structures and features.
- DAG member Patrick Gordon asked how the project team mediates the finer points of what constitutes the facility and what constitutes art.
 - Cath Brunner responded that it depends on the artist and how they choose to express themselves creatively once they learn more about the project and its purpose.
 - Patrick commented that the community has been clear throughout the process about its vision for the site and said he is grateful that these principles are recognized by 4Culture and will be implemented by the artist.

- Neighbor Ron Sterling asked if there is a mechanism to submit ideas to the artist from the community. He said he would like to see public art that is controversial or provides social commentary on the homes that will be deconstructed for the project.
 - Cath Brunner answered that the artist will receive feedback and commentary from community meetings, including DAG meetings. Overall, however, King County and 4Culture will respect the artist's process and allow them to express themselves creatively before placing limitations or restrictions on their work.
- DAG member Bill Byers said he is disappointed that 4Culture is not holding an open call to all artists. This eliminates the chance that an unknown artist can provide a breakthrough design.
 - Cath Brunner responded that while previous 4Culture projects have used an open call, the current project timeline does not allow enough time.

Street Improvement Permitting

Erica updated the group on the Street Improvement Permitting process (SIP) with the Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT). Originally, King County anticipated meeting with SDOT on March 20th, ahead of the DAG meeting, but this was postponed to two meetings in April. SDOT asked for more time to review the number of detailed materials that were submitted as part of the 30% design milestone. All City departments will be represented at the SIP meetings, allowing the project team to receive feedback on all aspects of the project thus far. Once the meetings occur, the 30% design phase review will be concluded.

Erica turned the group's attention to the handout showing the community's feedback on the refined preliminary design concepts discussed at the last meeting. King County has agreed to discuss with SDOT all potential options for a turnaround on Beach Drive SW. WTD permitting lead Hien Dung noted that King County will need to submit the next materials packet to SDOT for the 60% design phase review up to 3 or 4 weeks ahead of any meeting. DAG feedback will continue to be an important part of this process, but the DAG will need to be aware of the time constraints the project faces as the design process continues.

Questions and Discussion

- Bill Beyers said it would be helpful to understand what the 30% and 60% design milestones signify and have those milestones be illustrated on a calendar.
 - WTD community relations lead Doug Marsano answered that a timeline was given out at the last DAG meeting but King County will produce a milestone calendar so everyone can see the timing of each development.
 - Penny Mabie added that the timeline provides a brief outline of what is due for each milestone.

- Patrick Gordon said that as long as the milestones and the topics covered during the SDOT meetings are the same as what is discussed during the DAG meetings, he is comfortable with the process and the fact that the DAG can provide feedback on decisions within the regulatory timeframe.
- Community member Deb Reinhart asked if King County will marry the 30-60% design phases with specific dates.
 - Doug Marsano answered that King County will produce a calendar with specific dates.

Facility Design Update and Next Steps

Doug Marsano showed the group the 30% preliminary design plan that was submitted to SDOT, noting that King County will continue to document input from this group and other community stakeholders throughout the design process. Erica Jacobs explained that the 30-60% design phase will be where the DAG and community members will be able to break down the details of the design concepts and discuss specifics, such as the facility's landscaping and maintenance plans. The DAG will review these features in the next few months.

Questions and Discussion

- Bill Beyers commented that maintenance was not covered on the community feedback handout.
 - Erica Jacobs responded that the initial design drawings have been shown to King County's operations and maintenance staff who see no problems at this early stage. Much will depend on what kind of specific plants will be used and determining how much time and resources staff can provide towards the facility's maintenance.
- DAG member Chas Redmond asked if the Parks Department will be able to take on any of the facility's maintenance.
 - Cheryl Eastberg answered that the Parks Department and King County's maintenance practices are likely similar.
 - Erica Jacobs added that the project team will talk with the Parks Department soon. Now is the time to hold conversations on specific issues like plantings.
- Patrick Gordon stated that the project team should not discount the idea of the neighborhood taking on a portion of the maintenance responsibility, such as a "Friends of _" club.
 - Chas Redmond noted that the Morgan Community Association (MoCA) often participates in and offers support for these kinds of activities.

- Ron Sterling handed out to the group a sketched design concept. The concept eliminates on-street parking and positions it on King County property in the triangle between Lincoln Park Way Southwest and Beach Drive Southwest. The parking lot also incorporates his earlier turnaround design. Ron explained that this design concept integrates the comments of park users and neighbors.
 - Bill Beyers stated that he is a neighbor but wasn't asked to participate in the drawing.
 - Cheryl Eastberg asked what the parking spots at the south end of Beach Drive Southwest represent.
 - Ron Sterling answered that the parking spots would be permitted parking for residents.
- Patrick Gordon stated that over the last five months, the community, the DAG and the Project Team have made considerable progress in incorporating the Guiding Principles from the CAG, the Common Themes from the Community workshops, and feedback throughout the recent series of DAG and community meetings. He noted there has been a remarkable consistency in the stated desires of the groups, and the general direction of the early solutions. He expressed concern about diverting attention and focus on issues that are not consistent with community input - especially without consensus of the community. The overriding message has been to embrace the CSO facility location and to work with the project team to realize an outcome that is a real asset to the community - not a parking lot or an industrial site. One that feels natural and in keeping with its significant location.
 - Chas Redmond stated that he was unhappy with the industrial look of the proposed design concept as it eliminates valuable green space. He also counted 16 parking spots for the public in the parking lot, which may be less than the original design with parallel on-street parking. The DAG has repeatedly made preserving parking for the public a priority. Chas said retaining door-to-door access to the park is not a main concern for him.
- Bill Beyers asked whether there is any chance the project could incorporate a sustainable feature such as a compostable toilet facility. There is an enormous amount of traffic along the walkway between Lowman Beach Park and Lincoln Park with no public bathroom.
 - Pamela Allen commented that the lack of restrooms is one of the only disadvantages of Lowman Beach Park, making it difficult for parents to bring their kids to the park.
 - Several DAG and community members expressed agreement; others noted their reluctance given the problems associated with public restrooms discussed at previous DAG meetings.
 - Penny Mabie added that this issue will be brought up at the SDOT meetings.
- Community member John Bernhard said he is happy to see the direction the design process is going, particularly from where it started. Progress needs to continue to be made by focusing on the common themes that represent the majority of the community rather than introducing brand new ideas to the process.

John Bernhard also stated that the compostable toilet could potentially be a mess.

- Ron Sterling mentioned that he often gets park users knocking on his door and asking if they can use his restroom.
- Cheryl Eastberg asked John whether he opposes the compostable toilet idea or just having a bathroom in the vicinity of the park.
- John Bernhard answered that any bathroom or enclosed building open to the public could be a safety concern for the neighborhood.
- Cheryl Eastberg noted that the Parks Department has a variety of strategies to discourage people from “hanging out” in the bathroom.
- John Bernhard said he views Lowman Beach Park as a small neighborhood park that should not necessarily have the same facilities as a large park like Lincoln Park.

Green Building Opportunities

Erica explained that King County is committed to incorporating green building techniques into their buildings and facilities. The project team conducted an eco-charrette and received a series of common sustainability themes. The green building strategies handout reflects these themes and identifies viable ways of increasing the sustainability of the Murray CSO facility.

The CSO facility is not eligible to receive a Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification. King County, however, requires its projects to calculate how many green building techniques can be included by using a county-specific scorecard. If the Murray project's scorecard was analogous to the LEED standard, the project would likely achieve Gold status.

Questions and Discussion

- Patrick Gordon noted that there are several sustainable strategies that could potentially be pushed a little farther, such as odor control and the reduction of heat island effect. He suggested the project use pervious surfaces when possible instead of using asphalt or concrete. Overall, though, the green building strategies seem to be in line with the community's common themes.
- Bill Beyers asked if the sustainable strategy categories follow a template
 - Erica Jacobs answered that the strategies are taken from King County's green building scorecard, which is a checklist similar to LEED. All King County projects are expected to use the scorecard.
 - Doug Marsano clarified that the green-highlighted strategies do not necessarily have a higher priority, but are strategies that align with the community's identified priorities.

- Chas Redmond asked if the backup generator or any other mechanical equipment could use biodiesel or other “green” fuel.
 - Project consultant engineer Eric Bergstrom said the generator would not likely be able to use biodiesel.
 - Project consultant project manager Dan Pecha added that previous facilities have not used anything but regular diesel since the generator is inactive for long periods of time in between power outages.
- Community member Diane Vincent asked if King County will “demolish” or “deconstruct” the houses where the facility will be built.
 - Erica Jacobs clarified that the contractor will deconstruct the houses, separating out materials for reuse or recycling to the maximum extent feasible.
 - Hien Dung added that after the families left the houses, many of the materials left inside were donated to refugee homes.

Next Steps and Action Items

Penny asked the attending members of the community if they had any comments or questions.

- John Bernhard asked if King County will redraw the design concept for the 30% milestone.
 - Erica Jacobs answered that the 30% drawing will remain unaltered but the project team will continue to refine the drawings as the 60% milestone approaches based on DAG and community feedback as well as comments from the SDOT meetings. There will be much more time for discussion regarding the concept drawings and different design options before the 60% milestone.
- Chas Redmond asked if the intersection of Beach Drive SW and 48th Ave SW will be discussed at the SDOT meetings. The intersection is dangerous as there are no clear markings for bicyclists. Chas asked if SDOT could recommend something that the project team could implement.
 - Erica Jacobs agreed to bring the issue up with SDOT.

The next DAG meeting will likely be sometime in late April or early May. A Doodle poll for scheduling will be sent out to all DAG members. The meeting will focus on King County’s deconstruction plan for the project area with the DAG and the community. Cath Bruner added that she can report back to the group on the progress of the art selection process, although artists will not be officially chosen until May. Patrick Gordon asked the project team to somehow create a visual of the fencing that will be used during deconstruction. The DAG could also discuss ideas of how to soften the construction fences.

Doug Marsano thanked the group for their time and hard work as members of the DAG. When this process started in October, the 30% milestone seemed like it was a far away achievement. The 30% milestone is a positive sign of the project’s progress and King County will continue to seek feedback from the DAG and the community on important design issues to make the facility a real asset to the community.

Action Items:

- King County will create a timeline of actions and milestones for the design process, including design percentage phases.
- King County will talk about access, safety, bicycling traffic, and parking options during the SIP meeting with SDOT.

Attendance

DAG Members

- ☐ Pamela Allen
- ☐ Bill Beyers
- ☐ Cheryl Eastberg
- ☐ Patrick Gordon
- ☐ Sue Kaufman-Una
- ☐ Chas Redmond

Community Members

- ☐ John Bernhard
- ☐ Linda Cox
- ☐ Deb Reinhart
- ☐ Ron Sterling
- ☐ Diane Vincent

WTD Staff and Consultants Facilitation Team

- ☐ Erica Jacobs, WTD Project Manager
- ☐ Doug Marsano, WTD Community Relations Lead
- ☐ Hien Dung, WTD Permitting Lead
- ☐ Dan Pecha, Consultant Project Manager
- ☐ Eric Bergstrom, HDR Project Engineer

Facilitation Team

- ☐ Penny Mabie, EnviroIssues
- ☐ Landon Bosisio, EnviroIssues

Attachment: Beach Drive Southwest revision proposed by Ron Sterling

