

Murray Basin Combined Sewer Overflow Control Facility Design Advisory Group

Meeting Summary

May 10, 2012 6:30-8:30 pm

Fauntleroy School House, 9140 California Avenue Southwest

Overview

On May 10, 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 May 10 DAG meeting included:

- Review of Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) meetings
- Discuss revised design concept
- Review the public art process
- Discuss site security and building deconstruction

Welcome and Introductions

Meeting facilitator Penny Mabie welcomed participants and community members to the meeting. Penny led a round of introductions and reviewed the meeting's agenda. The purpose of the meeting was to review April's meetings with the Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT), discuss the revised design concept and review next steps in the site's deconstruction process. Penny asked DAG members to recount if they have had any discussions on the project with other community members.

- Chas Redmond said the people he has talked to are happy with the process so far. The community's guiding principles are being met.
- Patrick Gordon said he has heard a lot of curiosity from community members and neighbors. Several want to know what will happen now that the houses on the site have been vacated. Others have asked questions about the steps of the deconstruction process and what impacts the community can expect. Patrick added that neighbors he has talked to have expressed confusion on what the dimensions of the proposed turnaround and

Beach Drive Southwest will mean to the neighborhood.

- Scott Gunderson said he has generally heard positive feedback. Those who are interested in the project are thankful for the DAG process.
- Pam Allen said most people she has talked to do not even know about the project. Some thought the facility was being constructed in the park.
- Bill Byers said he has heard more talk about bus service being reduced than talk about this project. Neighbors have asked about the project's construction impacts to the neighborhood. Bill added that his biggest question pertains to the art selection process. His concern is that the process was limited to a select list of artists and that several artists on the list have already received previous projects from King County.
- Barbara Owens said she has mostly heard questions on whether the facility will be constructed inside or outside of the park.
- Patrick Gordon said he has noticed that people don't really know about the project's website. He suggested King County provide more overt direction to the project's key information.
- Bill Byers added that there is no sign on the project site to inform the community about what the project is and what to expect.

Review of SDOT Meetings

King County project manager Erica Jacobs gave an overview of the feedback received from SDOT after two meetings in April. The department did not support a 34-foot wide street at Beach Drive Southwest between the project site and Lowman Beach Park, directing the County instead to include a 25-foot wide roadway in the design. SDOT also directed use of a hammerhead turnaround at the south side of the site due to lack of space for a cul-de-sac turnaround. SDOT supports mid-block bulbs on Beach Drive Southwest to mark the pedestrian crossing. Object marker signs would be needed to call out the curb bulbs and crossing to drivers.

SDOT determined that the house on the north side of Lowman Beach Park, at the Beach Drive Southwest, and Lincoln Park Way Southwest intersection has enough room to have vehicles turnaround behind the house, eliminating the need for driveways users to back up into the intersection to enter traffic. DAG members noted this driveway as a concern at previous meetings.



(SDOT requires object marker signs at the Beach Drive Southwest mid-block curb bulbs)

SDOT also ordered the gate securing the maintenance driveway on the Murray Avenue Southwest right-of-way not to swing towards Beach Drive Southwest to ensure sufficient space for the proposed hammerhead turnaround. Erica Jacobs explained that the project team's next step with SDOT is the 60% design milestone.

Questions and Discussion

- Neighbor Jim Coombs stated that one of the initial issues the community and King County discussed was that there would not be a maintenance driveway.
 - Erica answered that the driveway has always been part of the facility's layout. The driveway will provide necessary access to the facility for operations staff, particularly the facility's odor control unit and standby generator fuel tank which require regular periodic maintenance.
- DAG member Chas Redmond told the group that SDOT has recently announced a pedestrian crossing at 46th and Wallingford near the QFC that uses materials to distinguish the pedestrian zone. Chas asked what SDOT's rationale is for allowing that type of pedestrian crossing, but not for this project.

(Note: King County followed up with SDOT on this question and was informed that SDOT believes a new crosswalk is unwarranted since Beach Drive Southwest is a residential street on which pedestrians can legally cross anywhere.)

- DAG member Patrick Gordon said that he had the opportunity to chat with Peter Hahn, SDOT director, who explained that SDOT has different standards for arterial and residential streets. The proposed street width of Beach Drive Southwest is consistent with the width of a typical non-arterial street that can accommodate emergency vehicle access and parking on both sides. SDOT is not against widening the street, but they want it to fit within the standard of a non-arterial street.
- Chas Redmond asked if SDOT is aware of the number of bicycles that regularly use Beach Drive Southwest. Chas said he is not against narrowing the street, but noted that bikes could be constricted for space with vehicles.

Revised Design Concept

Project consultant landscape architect Matt Gurrad presented a revised design concept of the facility to the group. The project team is also starting to refine how maintenance crews will access certain aspects of the facility, which could affect the landscaping opportunities at the top of the building. Matt pointed out that the western sidewalk will remain at the same location. An expanded pedestrian zone at midblock will serve as the gateway to the park. Mid-block car pullouts will prevent parking near the pedestrian crossing. Erica Jacobs clarified that the design increases the amount of green space along the right-of-way without increasing the right-of-way's size. The community expressed its interest in enhancing the continuous space between the facility and Lowman Beach Park at the October 2011 design workshop.

Other design highlights include:

- The overall stair shape preferred by the DAG remains the same.
- The design at the top of the roof has been slightly enlarged, but will retain its original feel of intimacy.
- A second green roof closer to the stair step has been added. The team is considering ways to incorporate a small tree with the facility.
- Another feature under consideration is a potential rain garden on the north side of the site. The project is introducing new pavement to the site, so stormwater management must be a priority. Project consultant lead Dan Pecha added that the team discussed putting green infrastructure, such as turf, on any introduced pavement, but concluded that there would be no way to drain the remaining stormwater. The team will look into the use of a colored pigment for portions of the concrete features as a compromise.

Erica Jacobs referred to the facility's final design calendar handout which shows future public involvement opportunities and how they coincide with agency reviews and project milestones. The project team will submit project materials to SDOT for the 60% design milestone in June with likely approval in August. King County will meet with SDOT at least twice between May and September.

Another major part of the permitting process is with the Department of Planning and Development (DPD). The project team anticipates receiving the master use permit in August. This permit is required before deconstruction of the onsite buildings can begin. The project will also need to apply for a building permit. This process will begin once the 60% design milestone is submitted. Erica also used the calendar to explain where the community will have opportunities to meet the project's selected artist in July and talk with him about his ideas for the site.

Erica noted that because public safety and site security are of the utmost concern to King County, community members will notice increased activity on the site in the coming months. Second Use, a local re-use organization, has already salvaged most of the site's appliances and reusable materials. A detailed inventory of the materials taken is available for those interested.

The next step of the project is to prepare the site for asbestos abatement. Erica explained that the buildings all require abatement of some kind. The site will likely be fenced in early summer. Temporary artwork for the fence will be displayed. Erica asked the group to let the project team know of any suggested artwork ideas, especially because the fence is expected to be up for at least a year. Doug Marsano, WTD community relations lead, noted that it was King County's plan to post project information and signage on the fence along with the artwork.

Questions and Discussion

- Patrick Gordon approved of the design concept, saying that it addresses the issues of adding more greenery to the landscape.
- DAG member Bill Byers said the design concept doesn't show the large maple trees in the east corner of the site. He asked if an inventory has been done of the trees around the project area.
 - Matt Gurrad answered that an inventory has been conducted and that many of the trees, including the aforementioned maples, will be retained.
- DAG member Cheryl Eastberg asked about the potential rain garden. She suggested it be made into a demonstration rain garden to show the benefits of green stormwater practices.
 - Matt Gurrad explained that the rain garden would be designed to drain water quickly, so it is not a standing pool of water. The design concept only shows the footprint of the rain garden, not any of the details of its design. Installing a rain garden would come with the tradeoff of eliminating part of the lawn on the site's north side.
- Cheryl Eastberg asked if the project team considered pervious pavement for the Murray Avenue maintenance driveway.
 - Erica Jacobs answered that the team asked, but was told it is against SDOT regulations due to drainage concerns.
- DAG member Scott Gunderson said it seems that there will be less impervious surface due to the road being removed.
 - Dan Pecha responded that city stormwater policy applies only to the anticipated total amount of the project's impervious surface, not the net amount.
- Scott Gunderson asked if there will be dyed pavement at the pedestrian crossing.
 - Erica Jacobs responded that SDOT would not approve any difference, either by materials or by paint, in the pavement at mid-block crossings.
- Bill Byers asked who will be responsible for the long-term maintenance of the site.
 - Erica Jacobs answered that maintenance is an issue that is typically addressed later in the design process. The revised design concept is intended to summarize the previous design phase. Erica noted that maintenance will be at the forefront of the rest of the process. The team has already had discussions with relevant King County staff on this issue. Additionally, Matt Gurrad was asked to use King County's low-maintenance guidelines as part of the facility's landscape design.
 - Bill Byers said he would like to know how maintenance agreements for similar facilities are laid out and how maintenance is conducted for long-term agreements between cities and parks departments.

- Patrick Gordon responded that he would like to move forward with caution on the maintenance issue. If the community places such a high priority on maintenance, the easiest solution would be to eliminate many of the site's plantings, which is not in the community's best interest.
- Erica Jacobs directed the group's attention to the final design calendar. At the next DAG meeting, the group will address operations and maintenance issues in depth.
- Chas Redmond asked if the rain garden will incorporate the amount of stormwater runoff the site currently produces as the facility looks to have more non-absorbent surface area than what is on the site now.
 - Dan Pecha answered that the team is in the process of quantifying that amount and will consider the entire runoff intake in the combined sewer flow.
- Chas Redmond also noted the green roof at City Hall. He asked if the green roofs in the design concept will have a barrier to prevent people from walking on it.
 - Matt Gurrad responded that there will be fence around the green roof to keep people from trampling roof plantings.
- Patrick Gordon said he was pleasantly surprised to see the drawing of landscape elements. The green roof cleverly disguises the fact that a significant building resides below. Patrick also noted that the use of trees to screen the building is much more preferable than a retaining wall.
- Bill Byers stated that it looks like a railing on Lincoln Park Way Southwest would prevent people from cutting down the slope.
 - Patrick Gordon noted that the project team could probably get away with eliminating a railing on the downward sloping side.
 - Matt Gurrad explained that the project team is trying to eliminate as many physical barriers on the site as possible to reduce the industrial look of the facility, as the community has requested.
- Chas Redmond suggested clearly stating the goals of the facility in any signage along the fencing or otherwise. He stressed that the project is being done to create a cleaner Puget Sound for everybody. The group discussed posting fliers on the community meeting boards; Doug Marsano noted that fliers placed in flier boxes disappear almost as quickly as they are posted.
 - Cheryl Eastberg added that the Parks Department has stopped posting meeting notice flyers as they tend to become garbage.
- Chas Redmond asked if there is any chance of an archaeological finding on the site.
 - Erica Jacobs answered that it is possible, and that King County will have a cultural resources representative on site to review any found artifacts.

Public Art Process

Erica Jacobs explained to the group the developments of the art selection process. Cath Brunner and 4Culture's advisory board decided on the solicitation and selection process for the artists. The art selection committee included DAG members Pam Allen, Barbara Owens, and Patrick Gordon and reviewed a number of artists' submissions. Overall, the selection group arrived at a consensus on one artist for the Murray CSO project.

Barbara Owens said the process was an exciting one for all involved and that she was thankful that 4Culture prescreened the artists. The committee made many tough decisions along the way, narrowing the 24-artist pool down to one unanimous choice. Pam Allen added that the committee is very excited about the selected artist, Robert Horner. Although he has less experience than some of the other candidates, Robert holds a background in architecture as well as in art and incorporates the reuse of materials and green building techniques into his work.

Patrick Gordon explained that the selection committee's priority was to find an artist who would work well with the community and the site's surroundings. The committee quickly narrowed down the field by eliminating many of the artists who have already had opportunities to do public art. Robert stood out to the committee because his work is a product of experiencing a place and telling the story of one component about that place. One example of his previous work is a structure, meant to replicate the human ear drum, which amplifies the sound of a nearby river. Another example of his work is his Lunar Rhythmic Revolution at Harborview Medical Center. Robert focused on the rhythm of life and in particular the healing qualities of the lunar cycle while reusing a variety of different stonework.

Next Steps and Action Items

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

- Community member Linda Cox asked what kind of art the project will display and where it will go.
 - Erica answered that the artist will have free reign to create his artwork. The location of the art will be determined in collaboration with the artist and the project team. Robert Horner, the selected artist, has previous experience with "rammed earth" sculptures, but he could use a variety of art media.
- Linda Cox reiterated Chas Redmond's comments on a pedestrian crossing between the site and Lowman Beach Park that is marked by differentiated pavement. She supported Chas's request to ask SDOT for its rationale on the issue
 - Erica agreed to bring the issue up with SDOT.
- Linda Cox asked how tall the trees for the facility's screen will be initially.
 - Matt Gurrad answered that the trees will vary in size from 5-25 feet in height. The current concept plans for around 20 years of growth until maturation. The community will be able to see the facility at first, but the screen will grow over time.

- Neighbor Ron Sterling asked why SDOT has classified the street as a residential since there is a park for public access.
 - Dan Pecha responded that SDOT rates its streets as residential or arterial.
 - Ron asked if the project team will widen the sidewalks.
 - Matt Gurrad answered that sidewalks are currently planned to be six feet wide, but the team can continue to discuss the issue with SDOT.
 - Ron asked why the project is taking away the Murray right-of-way from the public which can presently be used for parking.
 - Bill Byers responded that the DAG and King County previously discussed taking over the right-of-way, but SDOT will not relinquish its ownership rights, particularly due to the large sewer line that resides beneath the right-of-way.

- Jim Coombs said he does not support narrowing Beach Drive Southwest. King County's maintenance crews have been known to block the road completely. He added that narrowing the street to 25 feet will be a hassle, especially on nice days when the road is busy.
 - Bill Byers asked if maintenance issues in Lowman Beach Park will be reduced by the project. Will there still be impacts to traffic and parking from the County's maintenance trucks?
 - Doug Marsano answered that the emergency generator will be moved across the street.
 - Erica Jacobs added that the pump station has required urgent work recently due to an accident in the station's electrical component.
 - Chas Redmond stated that the community should receive some kind of notice when there will be impacts to the street and parking.
 - Penny clarified that this is an issue for the County's maintenance team, not the facility's design team. From the beginning of the process, the community has been told that this project is not a modernization of the pump station.
 - Erica Jacobs added that the project team is involved with understanding how the facility will interact with the pump station, but does not deal with the day-to-day activities of the pump station's maintenance.

- Scott Gunderson noted that maintenance on the pump station will continue in the future and crews will continue to park next to the pump station. The DAG and King County needs to figure out if two lanes of traffic on Beach Drive Southwest are the best way to mitigate that traffic concern.
 - Cheryl Eastberg agreed with Scott, saying the Parks Department has learned that where parking is reduced near a park, drivers often park elsewhere in the neighborhood.
 - Patrick Gordon said there is ample parking for the park on most days, except busy weekends. Some neighbors on Beach Drive Southwest have coped with traffic on even narrower widths for over twenty years.

Doug Marsano thanked the DAG and community members for their time and input. He informed the group that there will be a major maintenance activity on the pump station in Lowman Beach Park to replace a wet well grade. This activity is anticipated to last a few weeks in the summer.

The next DAG meeting is scheduled to be sometime in July. A Doodle poll for scheduling will be sent out to all DAG members. The meeting will serve as an opportunity to meet the selected artist, discuss plant selection, and review the exterior architecture plan.

Action Items:

- DAG members will talk with the community about ideas for temporary artwork on the fence surrounding the site.
- King County will ask SDOT for their rationale on the differentiated pavement for the proposed pedestrian zone between the site and Lowman Beach Park.
- King County will provide signage on the site informing the community of the facility and its anticipated elements and schedule.

Attendance

DAG Members

- ☐ Pamela Allen
- ☐ Bill Beyers
- ☐ Cheryl Eastberg
- ☐ Patrick Gordon
- ☐ Scott Gunderson
- ☐ Barbara Owens
- ☐ Chas Redmond
- ☐ Steve Utaski

Community Members

- ☐ Jim Coombs
- ☐ Linda Cox
- ☐ Ron Sterling

WTD Staff and Consultants Project Team

- ☐ Erica Jacobs, King County Project Manager
- ☐ Doug Marsano, King County Community Relations Lead
- ☐ Dan Pecha, HDR Project Manager
- ☐ Matt Gurrad, HDR Landscape Architect

Facilitation Team

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