



King County

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MEETING NOTES

CEDAR RIVER COUNCIL

May 22nd, 2018 – 7:00 PM - 9:00 PM
Riverbend Club House
17410 Maple Valley Hwy., Renton, WA 98058

The meeting was called to order at 7:07 pm.

Call to Order

CRC Chair Max Prinsen spoke on the state of the CRC. He said the CRC has developed into a strong organization, and it is ready to look at the future of the chair and vice-chair positions. He voiced interest in continuing as CRC chair.

1st Public Comment Period

There was no public comment during this period.

Cedar River Flood Control Project Update: John Engel and Dan Heckendorf, DNRP

John Engel, engineer in DNRP's River and Floodplain Management Section, introduced a presentation titled "Reducing Flood Risks Along the Cedar River: Deciding Where and How." Its focus was the outcome of the Cedar River Corridor Plan, started in 2014. The projects have flood control emphasis due to Flood Control District (FCD) funding, but also include fish habitat aspects.

The Capital Investment Strategy came from the corridor plan, adopted by FCD last year. The plan is for near-, mid-, and long-term flood reduction projects on the Cedar. He said the "corridor" is basically the 500-year floodplain. Even downtown Renton, likely protected by floodwalls and levees in a 100- or 200-year flood event, would be overwhelmed in a 500-year event. Elsewhere in the corridor, there are minimal dykes and levees. Improving and having FEMA certify the Renton levees is one of three near-term projects in the plan. The levees were compliant with 1998 standards, but not current standards. Other near-term projects are the Lower Cedar River Flood Risk Reduction Feasibility Study, and the Lower Cedar River Maintenance Dredging project. Renton completed a dredging project in late 2016.

The feasibility study consists of three phases: a literature review, on-the-ground assessment, and modeling. Mr. Engel spoke in particular about the Lower Jones Road project; the project area is vulnerable to flooding, with the road sometimes going underwater. The project involves buying out several riverfront homes and raising the level of the road, or setting the road further back from the river. Most of this is a couple of years away, including talks with FCD. He added that overlapping goals from WRIA 8's salmon recovery plan have been identified for possible incorporation, and there would be some chance to enhance riparian elements and bank stabilization.

Fellow DNRP Rivers engineer Dan Heckendorf spoke on the SR 169 study project. Its focus is to evaluate ponding that occurs at moderate river flows, which has caused road closures over the years and major detours for area residents. The assumption is that the cause is high river flow combining with blocked local drainage. The study will analyze and evaluate that assumption, and develop solutions for mitigation. Analysis should be done by early next year.

Frank Urabeck asked if there is a goal to get 500-year flood reduction above I-405; Mr. Heckendorf said not really. Tom Allyn asked about a stretch of road north of the clubhouse also inundated by flood events, which he believes to be groundwater seeping upward and not neighborhood flow. Mr. Heckendorf said such an occurrence could impact how a project is built. Mr. Engel said major floods like 2009 seem to occur with a mix of high river flow and localized runoff.

The last project discussed was the Herzman Levee Setback and Trail Stabilization. Its goal is to enhance flood protection in this reach, and for neighboring homes and critical infrastructure. This is to work in concert with the Riverbend project. Preliminary design is hoped to finish by end of this year, with final design chosen by 2019 and construction to begin in 2020.

CRC 2018 Work Plan Update/Membership

Nathan Brown reviewed the proposed topics to be addressed by the CRC this year, as determined by the CRC over the



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last several months. Broad topics include flood control, fisheries, recreation, water quality/quantity, evaluating CRC membership needs, and outreach/engagement. Mr. Brown said Royal Arch Park wishes to be represented on the CRC, and the membership committee needs to review the five current vacancies to see if one is suitable for them. Mr. Allyn said continued involvement with Lakeside Industries' proposed asphalt plant should be on the list as well.

Mr. Allyn also spoke of an acquisitions survey from KC Councilmember Reagan Dunn. Mr. Allyn's reply was that it makes sense to acquire as much land as possible now, citing ever-increasing land prices. He asked if the CRC should discuss how to prioritize County budgeting, such as restoration vs. acquisition. Mr. Brown said Tom Beavers, Cedar River basin steward, and Linda Holecek of DNR's Acquisitions unit can return to the CRC to speak on this.

Updates and Announcements

- CRC Asphalt Plant Letter: Mr. Brown distributed copies of a reply letter, from Jim Chan of DPER, to the CRC's written concerns on the proposed asphalt plant. DPER is still making a determination on the permit, and believes the CRC's concerns will largely be addressed. Mr. Brown noted Mr. Chan should be very responsive to any questions the CRC has.

A citizen said KCC referred extending the asphalt plant referendum to Kathy Lambert's Planning, Rural Services, and Environment committee. He said Sunset Materials, current operator of the proposed site, is in violation of their work permit, and is being granted time to comply with grading permit standards so they can apply for an asphalt permit. He believes Councilmember Lambert should hold a public hearing on the plant proposal, to rezone the land as rural residential, and if a hearing does not occur, the topic will die.

- CRC SPU Sockeye Hatchery Request for Presentation: Mr. Urabeck spoke on the need for a lead entity for sockeye hatchery efforts. He said the CRC should continue encouraging key players, such as: WDFW, SPU, US Corps of Engineers, King County, and area tribes. Several entities have voiced willingness to participate, but not lead. Mr. Urabeck said the initiative should come from WDFW or the Corps, and as far as getting SPU involved, the Seattle mayor's office should be contacted. He noted that once WDFW has a new director, the CRC should follow up, as he believes WDFW could then be willing to lead hatchery efforts.

Mr. Allyn asked if it was time to facilitate a public outcry on the issue. Mr. Urabeck suggested getting in touch with a good journalist to tackle it. It was agreed that leadership at SPU, WDFW, and King County, via DNR and the Executive's office, should be contacted. There was also a suggestion to involve the Greater Maple Valley Community Council, and invite member Peter Rimbo to speak on fisheries and the asphalt plant issue.

Mr. Urabeck said the lowest fry counts are being reported in Lake Washington, which is a major problem. Mr. Prinsen noted some salmon runs are coming in later than usual this year, so it is difficult to know for sure how many salmon are returning. Mr. Urabeck also said City of Seattle has two committees connected to the sockeye hatchery program, whose meetings the public can attend if arrangements are made with the chair beforehand. Mr. Brown suggested it might be beneficial for the CRC to be represented at these meetings. Mr. Urabeck advised contacting Dave Beedle, Rick Scott, or others to answer that possibility.

- WRIA 8: Ron Straka attended last week's meeting of the WRIA 8 Salmon Recovery Council. A letter of support for the Riverbend/Puget Sound PSAR grant was approved, as was the cooperative watershed management plan through FCD. Funding for several projects was also approved, including: Riverbend, Cedar River Stewardship in Action, juvenile salmon measuring, and outreach through the Cedar River Salmon Journey, among others. WRIA 8 is also considering a predation study in the Ship Canal, to identify species that predators are feeding on in hopes of relieving the "bottleneck" for salmon in the canal. The annual budget work plan for next year was also approved, with about a 5.7% increase in funding.
- Fish Counts/Issues: This was addressed in other topics.
- River Conditions/Issues: This was not addressed.

2nd Public Comment Period

There was no public comment during this period.

The meeting adjourned at 8:45 pm.

Next Meeting

June 26th, 2018, 7:00 – 9:00 pm at Cedar River Education Center, North Bend