

Community Advisory Group Meeting #4b Summary

10/1/14

Community Advisory Group Meeting #4b

Wednesday, July 9, 2014

5:30 – 8:30 p.m.

Renton Technical College, 3000 NE Fourth St, Renton

Community Advisory Group in attendance

- Andy Swayne, Puget Sound Energy
- Barbara Sauerbrey, Woodridge Community Association (residential association alternate)
- Bart Phillips, One Redmond
- Bill Taylor, Liberty Ridge Homeowners Association (residential association alternate)
- Brian Buck, Lake Washington School District
- Darius Richards, Kennydale Neighborhood Association
- David Edmonds, Olympus Neighborhood Association
- David Hoffman, Master Builders Association
- Debra Grant, Hopelink
- Deirdre Johnson, South Rose Hill/Bridle Trails Neighborhood Association
- Floyd Rogers, Mountains to Sound Greenway
- Gregg Zimmerman, City of Renton
- Jeff Fleming, Overlake Hospital Medical Center (alternate for Sam Baxter)
- Lori Peckol, City of Redmond (alternate for Pete Sullivan)
- Lynn Wallace, Renton Chamber of Commerce
- Nicholas Matz, City of Bellevue
- Norm Hansen, Bridle Trails Community Club
- Paul Lwali, Coal Creek Family YMCA (alternate for Marcia Isenberger)
- Rob Jammerman, City of Kirkland
- Robert Shay, Wilburton Community Association
- Scott Kaseburg, Lake Lanes Community Association (residential association alternate)
- Steve Hanson, Renton Technical College
- Steve O'Donnell, Somerset Community Association
- Tim McHarg, City of Newcastle

Members absent

- David Chicks, Redmond Neighborhoods
- David St. John, King County
- Jack McLeod, Bellevue School District
- Lindy Bruce, Sunset Community Association (residential association alternate)

Other attendees

- Leann Kostek, Puget Sound Energy, Senior Project Manager
- Jens Nedrud, Puget Sound Energy, Deputy Project Manager
- Gretchen Aliabadi, Puget Sound Energy, Communications
- Lindsey Walimaki, Puget Sound Energy, Communications
- Keri Pravitz, Puget Sound Energy, Community Projects Manager
- Jackson Taylor, Puget Sound Energy, Community Projects Manager
- Penny Mabie, EnviroIssues, Facilitator
- Dana Olson, EnviroIssues, Public Involvement
- Lauren Dennis, EnviroIssues, Public Involvement
- Chelsea Ongaro, EnviroIssues, Notetaker

Meeting Purpose and Overview

Puget Sound Energy (PSE) hosted the Energize Eastside Community Advisory Group Meeting #4b in Renton on July 9, 2014. The meeting agenda included:

1. Community Advisory Group business, including review and approval of the advisory group Meeting #4a summary and a statement from PSE addressing a suggestion for an undergrounding subcommittee
2. Feedback from advisory group members and residential association alternates on constituent concerns
3. Discussion of advantages and disadvantages of route options to determine a narrowed suite of route options
4. Discussion to finalize and discuss weighting evaluation factors to be used in the Multi-Objective Decision Analysis (MODA) process
5. Provide advice to PSE on how to share narrowed list of route options with the community
6. Public comment

Meeting Summary

Welcome, introductions and safety moment

Dana Olson, EnviroIssues Public Involvement, welcomed everyone and led a round of introductions of the Community Advisory Group members and residential association alternates. She also introduced PSE staff seated at the table: Leann Kostek, PSE Senior Project Manager and Gretchen Aliabadi, PSE Communications Initiatives Manager. Gretchen then provided a safety moment about hydration on warm days. Facilitator Penny Mabie conducted an overview of the agenda.

Community Advisory Group business

Community Advisory Group Meeting #4a Summary

Penny asked the advisory group if anyone had any objections to finalizing the Community Advisory Group Meeting #4a Summary. The summary was previously emailed to the group for review and there were no emailed responses. No objections were raised, and the summary draft was accepted as final.

Advisory group undergrounding sub-committee

Gretchen addressed the suggestion from the Community Advisory Group Meeting #4a for a sub-committee to discuss undergrounding in more detail. She explained that PSE is willing to discuss undergrounding with interested communities, but that those conversations, particularly regarding funding, should be led by the community.

Community Advisory Group round robin on constituent feedback

Penny led a round robin session during which the advisory group members and residential association alternates shared the following feedback from their constituents:

- Floyd Rogers mentioned that he had spoken with other environmental leaders in the community about the project. Those environmental leaders share his concern with the coal and carbon costs of undergrounding and are on board with overhead lines.
- Tim McHarg noted that he is hearing safety concerns related to the Olympic pipeline.
- Deirdre Johnson shared that she has received a lot of feedback from her neighborhood about the data table. She said that the data indicates the distance from the lines, but does not measure the distance between the lines and the actual structure of the homes. There are many homes where the lines will be within 30 feet of the front door.
- Gregg Zimmerman mentioned that there has not been much discussion about Segment N because it is included in all of the route options. He plans to conduct outreach to the communities along Segment N to make sure that they are aware of the project and the Community Advisory Group discussions.
- Robert Shay shared that his neighbors want to know how the process is moving along, and that he is pleased with the progress toward the final goal that was made at the last meeting.
- Darius Richards said that he is not hearing anything new from Kennydale, and that he is planning to share the blind evaluation results with his neighborhood and expects to hear feedback then.
- David Edmonds said that PSE has not proven the need for the project and that he would like to see more data.
- Steve O'Donnell noted that constituents are concerned about right-sizing the project and the lack of transparency in the process. He mentioned that CENSE is trying to unify all of the neighborhoods and that he is hearing feedback that much of the route needs to be underground. He also shared that he is concerned about the environmental impact of tall overhead towers that may disturb the ground.
- Rob Jammerman mentioned that the photo simulations along Segment B did not account for future capital improvement projects along the road and that he would like to see simulations that take this information into account.
- David Hoffman said that he is concerned about delaying the project. A route should be chosen quickly to plan for the future. A lot of residential and business growth is planned for the Eastside and there is going to be a need for more power.
- Debra Grant mentioned that she is not hearing a lot from her community. She mentioned that Hopelink has requested targeted materials from PSE and has not yet received those materials.
- Paul Lwali mentioned that he is hearing a lot of questions and concerns east of Bellevue.
- Lynn Wallace shared that there are concerns from the business community. There is a lot of growth expected in the next several years and infrastructure is needed to support that growth.

Advantages and disadvantages of route options discussion

Penny explained the next steps in the Community Advisory Group and community outreach processes.

Route options and narrowing process discussion

Penny asked for thoughts and observations about the routes, including route removal recommendations and general comments about the route narrowing process. Community Advisory Group members provided the following comments and questions, and clarifying answers were given when appropriate:

- Four advisory group members recommended that all routes, or a majority of the routes, remain in consideration moving forward. The community has not been given sufficient opportunity to share their opinions about the route options. There is also a minority of residential representatives on the Community Advisory Group, and those voices need to be heard.
 - Some members noted that the group should be careful not to remove all route options of one type. For example, the group should not eliminate all of the route options that are furthest west.
- A member noted the Community Advisory Group has been tasked with making a recommendation and the advisory group needs to move forward. The data table and blind evaluation exercise provided the necessary criteria and means to rate and evaluate the routes. The representation on the Community Advisory Group is balanced, but perhaps skewed toward representatives from Bellevue neighborhoods.
- Another member echoed the need to move forward with the process. PSE has shown a need for the project and there has been growth in the community that any observer could see. The recommendation made by the advisory group is not final, but will go out to the community for discussion.
 - A member clarified that the concern is not about whether the project is needed, but if the project is right-sized.
- Routes should not be removed from consideration until evaluation factors have been weighted and the community has had time to weigh in on those factors and weightings. The community would be very upset if route options in some neighborhoods were removed, but not in other neighborhoods. All 18 of the routes are very close to homes, so the public should be able to provide input on a majority of the routes.
 - Penny clarified that the community will have the opportunity to comment on all routes including any the advisory group does not recommend for further consideration.
 - Many of the members of the public are busy and may not have been able to learn about the project yet.
 - There was group discussion about whether the community is well-enough informed about the project.
 - Penny suggested that how well PSE has promoted the project does not affect the work before the Community Advisory Group, and that discussion should be set aside for the night.
- This project is not industrial blight; it is bringing power to homes and businesses. The advisory group has looked at these routes thoroughly and it is time to move forward.
- The routes recommended for removal and the routes that scored low on the blind evaluation are relatively comparable. In order to narrow the route options, the advisory group should look at the routes that scored the lowest on the blind evaluation and received the most recommendations for removal.

- Oak and Willow should not be eliminated because they include the highest percentage of the existing route. There have been a lot of comments within the Community Advisory Group and the community about using the existing route.
- The existing route contains the Olympic pipeline, which is a big concern in the Olympus neighborhood.
- A member expressed concern that only eight advisory group members provided recommendations for routes to remove from consideration
- A member asked if businesses along Route I were represented on the Community Advisory Group or had been consulted about the project.
 - Gretchen noted they had briefed the owner of the Factoria mall and during that briefing PSE had received indication that routing the line there was fine.
 - After that clarification, an advisory group member suggested that all routes containing Segment I should be carried forward for further consideration.
- A member shared that narrowing to nine or ten routes would be ideal.
- A member indicated that any routes containing L and B are not good options because they are not in the existing corridor and the lines would be very visible along those segments. Oak is a good option because it eliminates the Segment J that goes over the top of Somerset. The other segments on that route are down in a valley and are less visible.
 - Two other members agreed with this statement, and one indicated that the towers would be obscured by the terrain if the current corridor is used, but tall towers along Segment J would be visible to the entire community.
 - Another member noted the lines are visible regardless of the route that they are on.
- A member shared that the community and the advisory group should be aware that if the existing corridor is chosen, the existing poles would be taken down and the new poles would go in their place. In some cases, this may enhance the view as the wires will be above the observation point.
- A member noted that many of the segments parallel the Olympic pipeline. Safety should be the primary concern in route narrowing and those segments along the pipeline will require two towers to be built on either side of the pipeline.
 - Leann explained that the Olympic pipeline follows the entire existing corridor. PSE has built along the line and it is safe. She explained that two poles would only be required when the easement is narrow and the pipeline runs through the center of the easement. This is not the case along the entire corridor, but PSE will work to ensure that neighborhoods have consistent pole structures as much as possible.
- A member asked if there would be an issue with permitting along Segment L.
 - Leann explained that obtaining permits along a shoreline is more difficult, but not impossible.

Penny clarified the objectives of the meeting. She explained that the evaluation factors that were developed in the Sub-Area Workshops and Committees were not intended to guide the narrowing process. The evaluation factors will be finalized and weighted, and then used in the Multi-Objective Decision Analysis (MODA) process in October. The MODA process is intended to be used with a smaller suite of options. The broader community will be able to provide feedback on the weighted evaluation factors and all of the route options (including those that were recommended for removal by the Community Advisory Group) prior to the MODA process.

Route option narrowing discussion

Penny shared the tallied route removal recommendations provided by Community Advisory Group members via email in advance of the meeting. Eight advisory group members recommended routes for

removal, three said that they would prefer not to remove any routes at this time, and one would rather discuss removal at the meeting. Penny also shared the blind evaluation results for each route. Penny mentioned that the seven routes that were most often recommended for removal (Poplar, Cherry, Dogwood, Magnolia, Spruce, Fir, and Sycamore) also scored lowest on the blind evaluation (with the exception of Sycamore). She directed the group to the route options key for information about which segments are included in each route option.

Penny began a process to select routes for removal using the results of the tallied route removal recommendations, the blind evaluation and members' knowledge gleaned throughout the process. Community Advisory Group members provided comments.

Cherry

Penny asked if anyone had any objections to removing Cherry from consideration and asked for rationale from those members who recommended Cherry for removal.

- Cherry contains Segment I and should be left in because the owner of the Factoria mall indicated to PSE that routing the line there was fine.
- Cherry has the lowest percentage of the route on the existing corridor, the second highest number of residences, and the highest cost.
- Penny shared that Cherry scored low on the blind evaluation and high on the tallied route removal recommendations.
- Cherry and Magnolia are identical south of Segment F. Both were recommended for removal from further evaluation, but other route options that are recommended for further evaluation contain the same segment combinations south of Segment F.
- There is value in using the existing corridors. There are many options, so eliminating Cherry is not as much of an issue.

No further objections were raised and Cherry was removed as a route option for further consideration

Dogwood

Penny asked if anyone had any objections to removing Dogwood from consideration. No objections were raised and Dogwood was removed as a route option for further consideration.

Fir

A Community Advisory Group member suggested removing Fir from consideration because it scored low on the on the blind evaluation and high on the tallied route removal recommendations. One advisory group member suggested that removing routes that scored in the middle of the tallied route removal recommendations may not be advisable, but did not object. Fir was removed as a route option for further consideration.

Laurel

A Community Advisory Group member suggested removing Laurel from consideration.

- Laurel got the fourth lowest score on the blind evaluation, has one of the lowest scores on future flexibility, does not contain a high percentage of the existing corridor, has a high cost, and will have permitability issues because of Segment L. The group also agreed to remove other routes that got higher scores on the blind evaluation.
- Laurel scored higher than Sycamore on the blind evaluation, yet the group did not agree to remove Sycamore.

The Community Advisory Group agreed not to remove Laurel from consideration.

Magnolia

Penny asked if anyone had any objections to removing Magnolia from consideration. One member raised concern that that route included Segment I, but raised no further objection. No further objections were raised and Magnolia was removed as a route option for further consideration.

Maple

A Community Advisory Group member suggested Maple as an option for removal from consideration.

- Maple scored the lowest on future flexibility and will be difficult to permit.

No objections were raised and Maple was removed as a route option for further consideration.

Poplar

Penny asked if anyone had any objections to removing Poplar from consideration. No objections were raised and Poplar was removed as a route option for further consideration.

Spruce

Penny asked if anyone had any objections to removing Spruce from consideration and asked for rationale from those members who recommended Spruce for removal.

- Spruce has the second highest number of schools, and one of the higher costs.
- Penny shared that Spruce scored low on the blind evaluation and high on the tallied route removal recommendations.
- Spruce and Redwood are the same after Segment K1, and the beginning of the routes are similar to routes that have already been removed.
- Spruce costs \$100 million more than Redwood.
- Spruce and Redwood contain Segment H, which is very visible to Mercer Island. It is also a short route.

No further objections were raised and Spruce was removed as a route option for further consideration.

Sycamore

Penny suggested Sycamore as an option for removal from consideration. Sycamore scored high in the tallied route removal recommendations, but high in the blind evaluation.

- Sycamore should remain as an option for consideration because it scored well in the blind evaluation, and the advisory group should not remove too many options from consideration.
- Several other advisory group members expressed concerns about removing too many routes from consideration.
- Sycamore is the second longest route and among the most expensive.
- It contains the highest number of schools within 25 feet and 600 feet, as well as the second-highest number of residential parcels within 25 feet.

The Community Advisory Group members could not agree to remove Sycamore from consideration, therefore Sycamore was not removed.

The Community Advisory Group agreed that the routes had been sufficiently narrowed and agreed to remove the following seven routes from consideration:

- Cherry
- Dogwood
- Fir
- Magnolia
- Maple
- Poplar
- Spruce

Evaluation Factors Discussion

Penny shared the confirmed evaluation factors and the outstanding evaluation factors to be discussed. Penny asked the advisory group members to discuss the outstanding evaluation factors: “avoids effects on property values” and “avoids impacts on construction.” Community Advisory Group members provided comments and questions, and clarifying answers were given when appropriate.

Avoids effects on property values

Gretchen reiterated PSE’s stance on the exclusion of property values as an evaluation factor. Gretchen explained that property values are not an element that PSE uses to site infrastructure because of social justice issues. Penny also referred the advisory group to the King County Assessor letter, which states that the King County Assessor cannot make any determination of impacts to property values until the infrastructure has been put in place and some time has passed.

- Some members felt that property value data could be obtained from the King County Assessor and should be considered in evaluating routes. A member suggested that a different type of data could be obtained from the Assessor. Another advisory group member suggested that property value data could be obtained from the real estate industry.
- The Assessor would have to provide data on the specific areas that are requested, and the Assessor cannot predict the effects on those specific areas.
- Three advisory group members noted that using property values as an evaluation factor would target poor neighborhoods and is a social justice issue.
- Penny reminded the advisory group that in order to use property values as an evaluation factor, data would need to be provided, and PSE has said that it does not have those data.
- A member followed up with the King County Assessor’s office and shared that while the specific data on this project area could not be predicted, there is a similar project in North Bend. Property values in North Bend were affected, but recovered. PSE does not use these criteria, there are no data, and property values should not be an evaluation factor.
- Some of the community are not homeowners and are still affected by the project.
- A member expressed concern that a decrease in property values would result in a decrease in city revenue from property taxes.
 - Another member shared that the cities would not lose revenue. Property tax is collected differently in Washington than in other states.

Penny conducted a voice poll of the Community Advisory Group to determine whether “avoids effects on property values” should be included as an evaluation factor. The Community Advisory Group agreed not to include “avoids effects on property values” as an evaluation factor with a minority disagreeing. The

members who disagreed with excluding property values as an evaluation factor were: David Edmonds, Norm Hanson and Steve O'Donnell.

Avoids impacts from construction

Penny clarified that “avoids impacts on construction” refers to the impacts to the community during construction and should really be stated as “avoids impacts from construction.” Leann noted that the only real discriminator between construction impacts from route to route have to do with whether construction is along public streets or not. If not along public streets, only the property owner and possibly nearby neighbors would be affected. If along public streets, the property owners and the traveling public would be affected.

- A member noted there are already transportation and traffic issues in the area. The advisory group should consider how long a route would take to construct, and whether traffic jams would be an issues.
- The time of construction and the potential for damage during construction are important.
- Impacts from construction could have an effect on the quality of life of the community.
- Impacts from construction are covered by the other evaluation factors and there are no measurable data.
- Another member noted the route has not yet been designed and a design is needed in order to evaluate the impacts from construction. When the route is selected, each city will go through a process to discuss impacts and mitigation.
- Leann confirmed that there is no good measurement of the impacts from construction.

Penny conducted a voice poll of the Community Advisory Group to determine whether “avoids impacts from construction” should be included as an evaluation factor. The Community Advisory Group agreed not to include “avoids impacts from construction” as an evaluation factor with a minority disagreeing. The members who disagreed with excluding construction impacts as an evaluation factor were: Darius Richards, Norm Hanson and Steve O'Donnell.

Weighting of evaluation factors

Penny explained that using fewer factors has a greater impact of weighting during the MODA process. She also explained how each Community Advisory Group member will assign weights to the evaluation factors, and then the results will be averaged. Penny asked the advisory group if they wanted to remove any of the evaluation factors.

- Is it possible to combine “avoids sensitive environmental areas” and “protects mature vegetation?”
 - These factors refer to two different things: wetlands and mature growth trees.
 - Mature growth has a different ecosystem than wetlands and must be protected in different ways.
 - Renton does not have a definition of mature vegetation so these factors should be kept separate.
- Is “least cost to the rate payer” important? The data table indicates that the cost to the rate payer ranges from a low of \$.90 to a high of \$1.69 monthly increase to the ratepayer.
 - For a residential user, this is a small amount, but for a business user, that is a lot of money.
 - The cost to the rate payer is valuable and should remain as an evaluation factor.

The Community Advisory Group decided not to remove any of the confirmed evaluation factors. The nine evaluation factors that the Community Advisory Group agreed to use were:

- Avoids impacts to aesthetics
- Avoids residential areas
- Avoids sensitive community land uses
- Avoids sensitive environmental areas
- Least cost to the rate payer
- Maximizes longevity
- Maximizes opportunity areas
- Protects health and safety
- Protects mature vegetation

Penny explained the MODA process and how the weights will be used. She explained that the weights would be determined through a survey that Community Advisory Group members will complete. A sensitivity analysis will be conducted after the Community Advisory Group has completed the survey and the community has provided input on weighting the evaluation factors. The evaluation factors can then be adjusted based on the sensitivity analysis and community feedback.

A member suggested a different method for establishing the weights for the evaluation factors. Penny agreed to discuss this new method before the survey is shared with the group, and adjust the survey as needed.

Discussion of how to communicate narrowed route options to the community

In order to solicit feedback about how the narrowed route options should be shared with the community, Penny shared some examples of display boards. Penny explained that the boards would be shared with the community meetings in September and through the project website. A Community Advisory Group member asked how the community meetings would be advertised. Gretchen explained that a mailing would go out to the mailing list of approximately 65,000¹ individuals. This mailing list includes people who live within 600 feet of any of the segments and anyone who signed up for the mailing list. Additional outreach to the community to advertise the community meetings will include emails to the email list and print advertisements in local papers.

The Community Advisory Group agreed that these were appropriate methods for sharing the route options.

Public question and comment period

Members of the public were in the audience and shared their comments for the advisory group. Below is a summary, but not a transcript of these comments:

- All of the discussion tonight was based on the recommendations of eight people. There was not enough input. The process is flawed. You should be looking at comparing the segments. You are overcomplicating this by making segments into routes.

¹ The Energize Eastside mailing list goes out to approximately 54,500 individuals.

- I'm concerned that the Community Advisory Group is making a recommendation and PSE is making the final decision. The pictures are unrepresentative of Segment B. I'm disappointed that PSE has not yet talked with the Department of Transportation about specific pole locations. PSE says they will follow the Community Advisory Group recommendation, so the advisory group needs to walk out and see what the landscape would look like.
- I want to thank the Community Advisory Group for the job they are doing, but there are much better options that could be considered. PSE needs to go out and look at what else could be used.
- There were some questions previously about underwater options. We received a response about the high price, yet there was some evidence from another project that submerging the line did not have a high cost. The cost was less expensive than undergrounding, so submerging should be considered.
- There is not a large enough sample of people making these recommendations for removal of routes. The Community Advisory Group is doing a great job, but eight responses is not enough. The Community Advisory Group will weight the evaluation factors and then go back to the community, so they are unlikely to change their opinions. PSE has a way it wants to go, and everything available has not been presented. I have not received any information about the project; PSE should reach out to me. I do not think the sampling has been wide enough and the research is not complete.
- I appreciate the hard work of the Community Advisory Group. To conduct the route narrowing, the advisory group looked at the blind evaluation and the tallied route removal recommendations. All of the Community Advisory Group members had the same opportunity to respond. The cost to ratepayers is an important evaluation factor; there is a \$100 million difference in cost.

Wrap-up and next steps

Penny thanked everyone for coming. A Community Advisory Group member requested that all meetings be conducted in Bellevue and Penny said that PSE would take that into consideration.

EnviroIssues agreed to discuss and modify the evaluation factor weighting survey as appropriate and send the survey to the Community Advisory Group.