



## CITY OF SEATTLE – UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

### Final Draft Summary

Meeting #75

January 10, 2006

#### **Members Present**

Adel Sefrioui, UW Student Rep.  
Kit O'Neil, Ravenna Springs CG  
Mark Holden, Laurelhurst CC  
Brett Frosaker, Ravenna Bryant  
Matthew Fox, University District CC  
Ken Fales, Montlake CC  
Eric Lason, Roosevelt Neighborhood Alliance  
Matthew Stubbs, Eastlake Community Council  
Dan Kraus, UW  
Neil Wechsler, Montlake CC Alternate  
Chris MacKenzie, Wallingford CC  
David Eckert, Roosevelt Neighborhood Assoc.  
Mark Holden, Laurelhurst CC  
Neal Lessenger, UW at-large

#### **Staff Present**

Jan Arntz, UW Capital Projects  
Peter Dewey, UW Transportation Services  
Randy Everet, UW Capital Projects  
Theresa Doherty, UW Regional Affairs  
Ovid Thompson, substituting for Cliff Louie, City DON

#### **Others Present**

Bryan Jarr, EnviroIssues  
Julie Meredith, WSDOT  
Michael Horntvedt, Parametrix  
Anchor DeWitt Jensen, Jensen Motor Boat Co.

### **I. Welcome, Introductions**

Matthew Fox, Co-chair, convened the meeting at 7:00 PM. Members and the audience introduced themselves.



## II. Review and Approval of December 12, 2005 Meeting Notes

This item's place on the agenda was skipped until Theresa Doherty who was running late could comment. Matthew asked if the University was/is considering this committee to approve the relocation of the car-top boat launch. If so, then this matter should be taken up at the next meeting in February. Additionally, the question of whether the addition of more development sites to the Master Plan constitutes a major or minor amendment should be considered as well.

*(Discussion on this agenda item resumed at this point after the presentation on 520.)*

Theresa produced copies of the UW's edited version of the meeting notes (as it pertains to the presentation on the UW Medical Center expansion). She said the changes were based on Helen Shawcroft's recollection of what she said at the last meeting. Ovid put a question to the committee on how they would like to have their meeting notes presented---essentially a transcription or in a summary format? Matt responded that he liked the present format, which is a combination of both: a capsule summary of topics followed by a more detailed rendition of the meeting. Matt further stated that he is amenable to adopting Helen's proposed changes, but as a matter of policy he is not super comfortable with non-members offering amendments to the meeting minutes. This makes it a little to staff driven for an organization that should be member driven. Theresa stated that Helen's purpose was one of clarification. Matt said he would propose a motion accepting the UW's red lined edits. Additionally, he would offer an amendment clarifying his statement as well.

Matthew Fox's amendment to the December 12, 2005 meeting notes: The site selection process should not proceed at all until the sites are included in the Master Plan. Not only do they (the sites) have no relation to the Master Plan, which he also said, but they are not included in the Master Plan. (See December 12 meeting notes for the stated amendments.) He then yielded the floor to Anchor Dewitt Jensen, President of the Jensen Motor Boat Company.

*\* The following comments by Mr. Jensen are in response to a statement made at the December 12 meeting and reported in the December 12<sup>th</sup> meeting notes under the discussion on the car-top boat launch.* Mr. Jensen took strong exception to the statement suggesting the Jensen Motor Boat Company may be polluting the water. He stated that for the record his company is a certified boat yard. He said, "The Department of Ecology has put it in writing that we are the cleanest boat yard in the state." Mr. Jensen continued that his company is very proud of working on old-fashioned boats, wooden boats, (a company) which sustains up to 20-30 full time family wage jobs. We are not a polluter and never have been, he said. When there is pollution, a number of sources could contribute to this. Pollution could have resulted from boat washings (at other boat yards), and/or the fuel dock at the end of the university marina, which has been there for years. He continued that the statement (citing Jensen Motor Boat Company as a polluter) is libelous, technically incorrect and just flat out wrong. To support his record on safety, he cited John Drabek, the Department of Ecology. A brief discussion on how Mr. Jensen's statement should be reflected in the meeting notes ensued. The committee then entertained a motion to adopt the December meeting notes with amendments.

**The motion to adopt the December 12 meeting notes with amendments was seconded and passed unanimously.**

Matthew then asked Mr. Jensen what he thought of having the boat launch moved near him. Mr. Jensen said he thinks it would be ok. In conjunction with Aqua Verde, the launch should make it very nice.

### **III. 520 Bridge Replacement Project**

#### *Selected Highlights:*

- This was a continuation of a previous presentation on the 520 bridge replacement project. The focus of this presentation was on the traffic analysis indicating the impacts various bridge and interchange options would have on traffic flow in the Montlake area. The WSDOT staff considered traffic flow on 520 in the year 2030, a 25 year projection. They compared a “no-build”, 4-lane and a 6-lane alternative proposed for SR 520. The study showed that the 6-lane alternative provided more people crossings in fewer vehicles than the “no-build” (4-lane person trips were projected to be the same as the “no-build”) in 2030.
- In analyzing the traffic impacts in the Montlake area, staff compared the present condition or “no-build” and its potential impacts in 2030 with the 6-lane alternative and its possible impacts.
- At the Evergreen Point Floating Bridge during peak hours, the 6-lane alternative compared to the “no-build” shows a 270 vehicle increase. At Portage Bay, the increase goes up to 440 vehicles during peak hours. On the Montlake Bridge the increase is 100 vehicles per peak hour.
- The Pacific Interchange Option (expected to carry 5020 vehicles per peak hour) will not affect traffic across the Evergreen Point Floating Bridge, but it will decrease traffic (a minus 200) at the Portage Bay Bridge. It (PI) has an even more dramatic impact on vehicles on the Montlake Bridge, reducing traffic there by 2600 vehicles per peak hour.
- To handle the expected increase in traffic volumes north of the Montlake Bridge due to the PI, WSDOT will add an extra lane northbound up to the 5 corners and an added lane southbound up to 25th. Traffic on the Montlake Bridge will be further reduced because Arboretum bound drivers will use the Pacific Interchange.
- With a Second Montlake Bridge Option (a draw span at the same level as the current one) we will see approximately 600 more vehicles crossing the cut than the 6-lane alternative. However, volumes will not be high enough to require an extra lane north of the bridge.
- None of the proposed options to mitigate congestion in the Montlake area will increase traffic on the Evergreen Point Floating Bridge.
- The purpose of the electronic toll (no toll booth) is to pay off the 30-year bond issued to rebuild the bridge. A state tolling policy is under review.

Julie Merideth led off the presentation and noted that at the last presentation they were not able to answer all of the questions related to the traffic analysis. Traffic analysis will be the focus of this presentation. Julie stated the alternatives that are under evaluation, the draft EIS, the budget for the project and the schedule. She handed out a copy of the project folio, which included a description of the base alternatives under consideration, the 4-lane and the 6-lane alternative, the features that are included in each alternative. She drew the group's attention to the schedule:

- 1) late May early June 2006: publication of the draft EIS;
- 2) a 60-day comment period will follow;
- 3) final EIS in the spring of 2007,
- 4) the record of decision (the document with the decision and the mitigation proposals) comes out 6 to 8 months after the Final EIS.

The 520 corridor is a vulnerable corridor, vulnerable to earthquakes, particularly the bridges. Consequently, design work has focused on stabilizing the bridges and supports. Last summer WSDOT was probing the lake searching for a good spot to place anchors. The study would also inform them of what kind of anchors they would need. This year WSDOT will conduct a wind and wave study.

Julie referred to the handout titled 6-lane Alternative: Seattle & Eastside Options. For Seattle those options include (1) adding a second Montlake Bridge, (2) removing the Montlake Freeway Transit Stop, and (3) building a new Pacific Interchange. She stated the Pacific Interchange was discussed at the last presentation. Today's discussion will focus more on the traffic analysis.

On the subject of funding: In 2003 the state legislature allocated \$52 million from the "nickel" program. This funding was used to conduct the environmental work. In 2005, the Transportation Partnership package approved by the legislature set aside \$500 million for the 520 Bridge project. Washington State voters approved the package and now WSDOT can proceed with designing and building a new bridge. Other resources will augment this amount to approximately \$700 million. More information about the project can be found on the WSDOT's web site:

[www.wsdot.wa.gov/projects/SR520Bridge](http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/projects/SR520Bridge)

Traffic Analysis: Michael Horntvedt who has been working on the project since 1998 discussed the traffic analysis. Michael began with the handout for this presentation: the SR 520 Bridge Replacement and HOV Project. He directed attention to the chart detailing congestion on 520 between 124 NE and I-5 under 4 circumstances: existing conditions, a "no-build" alternative as traffic would look in 2030, a 4-lane alternative, and a 6-lane alternative. The blue bar represents the hours of congestion during the day and white box inside the blue bar shows the number of vehicle trips in the corridor and how many daily person trips along the corridor. The "no-build" bar is significantly higher than the existing bar: there will be more vehicle trips and more person trips. In a 4-lane alternative there is no additional capacity to the corridor in 2030. Compared to the existing bar, the 4-lane bar in 2030 shows a vehicle decrease but a significant people increase. More people will use the corridor but they will use it with fewer vehicles. The analysis predicts more people will use busses and carpools.

Q: How do you get this in a 4-lane alternative without HOV lanes?

A: There is still the HOV lane on the eastside. There is an incentive to carpool in a westbound direction between 405 and Evergreen Point. WSDOT has not seen an increase in congestion (eastbound?) in the 4-lane alternative. Also, the design for the on-ramps will be more of a standard design that would extend the ramps out (more than they are now).

Q: Isn't one of the advantages of the 4-lane alternative the fact that they have wider shoulders, which would decrease the amount of stalling incidents?

A: It is good that we have the shoulders for reliability and safety but it doesn't factor into our analysis. The study is predicated on an incident-free corridor in 2030.

Under the 6-lane alternative the level of congestion goes down. Congestion still exists; the 6-lane alternative wouldn't cure that. There are other constraints on the freeway system that contribute to congestion. Compared to the 4-lane alternative, the vehicle trips go up, but still compared to "no-build" the trips are down—that's because of the completion of the HOV lane system. The person trips go up about 14% compared to the "no-build".

Q: Is there some pricing advantage figured into this?

A: No. Each of the options uses the same standard toll rate. Also, they didn't want to bias their study by factoring in a tolling rate. Busses in the HOV lanes are free in this analysis.

Q: Does this explain why you have more people but fewer vehicles because the HOV lanes are free?

A: Yes.

Q: How long are tolls schedule to go and how much will it generate?

A: The main purpose of the toll is to pay for the project. The fee will pay for building the bridge. It is used to essentially to pay off the 30-year bond that is used to pay for the improvements. What happens after the bonds are paid off has not been determined. The state has commissioned a study of toll policy through out the state, not just in the Puget Sound region. The study is expected to inform us what will happen after tolls have gone away.

Michael moved on to the next slide. To answer the question as to why there is so much focus on the Montlake area, he noted that 40% of the Evergreen Point Bridge traffic use the Lake Washington Boulevard and the Montlake Boulevard ramps. This number (40%) draws attention to this area. Additionally, there is the potential to improve 520 safety, improve transit connectivity to the UW area, and the potential to alleviate congestion on Montlake Blvd south of Pacific St.

Q: Why the focus only south of Pacific?

A: That's where the congestion is most but there will be attention given to how this will affect congestion to the north of Pacific.

Michael moved on to the packet with a lot of numbers. The first sheet compares the base 6-lane alternative to the "no-build" alternative in the year 2030. (Michael was working under the assumption that most members know the base 6-lane alternative from their previous meeting.) At various points on the map, he indicated the traffic volumes between a 6-lane and a "no-build" with the bottom box indicating the difference between the two. The green boxes indicate the directional difference at that point. This is figured by adding the two bottom boxes in each direction.

When the two alternatives are compared---the "no-build" and the 6-lane---at the Evergreen Point floating bridge for example, we see an addition of 270 vehicle trips. At the Portage Bay Bridge point we see traffic increase to 440 trips. This tells us that more vehicles will be entering the corridor after the Montlake interchange. Going across the Montlake Bridge, we (predict) an increase of about 100 vehicles an hour. Again this is in the year 2030. His reading of the chart indicates that the "no-build" and the 6-lane alternative are about the same (in terms of vehicle increase).

In the Pacific Interchange Option, again as we cross the Evergreen Point Floating Bridge, compared to "no-build" we saw the difference in volume as we did with the 6-lane alternative. The message is that the Pacific Interchange will not generate more people coming across the bridge, about the same as the 6-lane alternative. However, when we move to the Portage Bay Bridge where we saw an increase of about 400 vehicles, (with the Pacific Interchange) we see a decrease of about 200 vehicles. Over the Montlake Bridge there is a reduction of about 2600 vehicles per hour. This number itself shows you the relationship between the 520 corridor and the Pacific Interchange areas to the north on Pacific. The number of vehicles that would use the new Pacific Interchange Bridge would be about 5,000. On Montlake Blvd you would get about 1000 more trips and on NE Pacific St. you would get about the same number---a 1000 more vehicles

Q: You have the numbers for current traffic?

A: He didn't have those numbers with him, but the "no-build" alternative is slightly higher than existing.

South of the 520 corridor on 24<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE, we see an increase of about 500 (470) vehicles an hour. Also, (we see) 560 vehicles on the Lake Washington Blvd ramp. The increase of 470 vehicles on 24<sup>th</sup> NE is a result of the new bridge across the Montlake cut, the Pacific Interchange. The additional bridge says more vehicles can now make the north-south trip across the Montlake Bridge.

Q: More vehicles can use the Montlake Bridge, but what happens when they go north above the Montlake cut where a 1000 more vehicles are on the road?

A: To make the interchange alternative better than a "no-build" alternative, the intersection became a real focal point. Because we have an increase in traffic to the north, the question became, how can we serve those trips to the north? Pointing to the intersection (the point where the new Pacific Interchange crosses Montlake Blvd), he said there would be 2 left turn lanes, 2 thru lanes and 2 right turn lanes, as well as 2 receiving lanes to go in the other direction. The 2 right-turn lanes feed onto Montlake Blvd where they added another lane to the north. That extra lane would go all the way to 45<sup>th</sup> St. This accommodates the additional vehicles to the north.

Q: Would this mean you have to move the Husky statue over 20 feet?

A: Well, we haven't made out the final design yet.

There is also (another) lane in the other direction, south bound. So Montlake will be a 6-lane road from 25<sup>th</sup>. The study area will be expanded to consider the effects on 25<sup>th</sup> north and to other areas to the north and east out to Mary Gates Drive.

One of the major advantages of this alternative (PI) is the grade separation of pedestrians from the traffic. Because they don't have to cross with the traffic, this serves safety and smoothes traffic flow. This proposal is being tied with Sound Transit's proposals.

Q: What effect does this have on the park system and the Arboretum due to increase traffic?

A: Pointing to the next sheet, Michael said at the LWB ramp the increase is 560 trips for the combined total in both directions. There's a decrease of 180 cars on LWB and 26<sup>th</sup> NE north of the ramps from LWB. This means that southbound drivers would use the Pacific Interchange above the cut to go to the Arboretum rather than cross the present Montlake Bridge turn left then go through the present residential section to get to the Arboretum. Additionally, we see 240 more vehicles thru the Arboretum from Boyer.

This indicates that the trips that are being made are coming from the Capitol Hill area. Other intersections under consideration are Madison and LWB and 24<sup>th</sup> and Boyer. The vehicle figures given are per hour and during the peak hour. Presently, there is no 520 eastbound access going south on 26<sup>th</sup>, that prohibition has been retained.

The next option is a Second Montlake Bridge. At the Evergreen Point Bridge, the volume is the same as the 6-lane and the Pacific Interchange (PI). At the Portage Bay Bridge, we see similar volumes as the 6-lane alternative, perhaps a little more. Crossing the Montlake cut are approximately 600 more vehicles than in the 6-lane alternative. North of the cut we see the same patterns occurring as with the Pacific Interchange but with less volume. With a second Montlake Bridge we get about 150 new trips through the Arboretum from Boyer. By providing more capacity across the cut through the Arboretum and we see more people using the available roadways north and south. The Second Montlake Bridge would not require additional lanes north of the cut. Because increase volumes do not approach the 1000 vehicle rate, we are able to serve the additional volumes without adding additional lanes.

A member noted that with the 6-lane alternative, WSDOT is improving the ramps which would decrease the cueing onto 520.

Referring to the last sheet in the handout, Michael noted that the information blocks at each point shows the congestion level during the AM and PM periods for the “no-build” (NB), the 6-lane (6-I), the 6-lane with the Pacific Interchange (PI), and the 6-lane with the 2<sup>nd</sup> Montlake Bridge (2M). At intersection number 25 (on the map), the eastbound off-ramp from 520 at Montlake Blvd, under the NB, 6-I, and 2M, the level of congestion is E or F= severe congestion, over capacity. This same intersection under the PI alternative operates at a level C, a very reasonable operation. This represents an improvement in the level of service at this interchange. North at intersection number 29, where Montlake NE and NE Pacific meet and the proposed junction of the new PI, you get the same level of service across the board---moderate to heavy congestion. At intersection #38, just south of the intersection of Pacific PI. and Pacific St. in the PI alternative, a left-turn pocket was added. So Pacific would have to be widened west of the intersection. One change in the blocks at intersection # 34, the PM bar should read NB = F; 6-I = E; PI = E; and 2M = F.

As part of the 6-lane base alternative, one modification is to add another lane on the loop ramp that will serve more vehicles per hour at the ramp entrance. This would be a 3-lane ramp: 2 general purpose and one HOV. In the 6-lane alternative there is an HOV by-pass lane. There would be 6 lanes to a certain point, the HOV lane would pull over then come into the center so the HOV traffic is then fed directly into transit. What the chart doesn't show is the ramp meter cueing. In the base 6-lane alternative the ramp cueing goes away—a benefit of the 6-I. A signal on the off ramp westbound from 520 allows for a left-turn. This removes the present approach of turning right then making a U-turn to go south.

Q: Will the Second Montlake Bridge be high enough so it won't have to open for boats and also do the traffic counts take into account the opening of the bridge?

A: The second bridge will be the same level as the current model—a draw bridge that would open similarly to the present one. The traffic counts were done without considering the impacts of the bridge openings. The bridge doesn't open during peak hour. WSDOT is collecting more data that will allow them to evaluate traffic during off-peak hours.

Q: Who has control over when the bridge opens?

A: Bridge openings are regulated by the Coast Guard with an agreement with WSDOT. It depends on the tonnage. If there is a large enough tonnage the bridge can open at any time.

Q: Define the "peak-hour"?

A: For PM, it's 5 to 6 and in the AM, it's 7 to 8.

A second bridge would provide 3 lanes in one direction and the existing bridge would provide 3 lanes in the other direction. This bridge is one of the choke points, people slow down when they approach the bridge.

None of the options increase the traffic across the 520 bridge. One of the items reviewed was the transit reliability. How much do the busses save by not having to wait in congested traffic? The belief is there will be pretty good savings (time) through the use of transit as well as the general purpose traffic.

Q: Why are you just looking at one hour as your peak time? We are more accustomed to peak hours being say 4 to 6, 7 to 9 and you're just looking at one hour as your peak time?

A: On the freeway we're looking at peak period of about a 4½ hour operation. But typically on local roadways we look at a peak hour to assess the worst traffic conditions and extrapolate from... (Your argument falls apart when the bridge opens?) When the bridge opens with its impacts on the local system that's when we will see some of the major benefits from the reliability of the traffic (alternatives? Pacific Interchange?).

Q: Where will the tolls be placed?

A: We're looking at an electronic toll system so when you cross the (Evergreen Point Floating) bridge, that's when you will pay (be assessed) the toll. There will be no stoppage of traffic. (But how will that work with trucks, busses, tourists?) This is a new system, but we won't be the first to institute it. SR 157 link will be first out to institute this system. (Granted the Kitsap Peninsular is different than a bridge to the eastside), but the operating scenarios are similar. There would be no toll for traffic going from Montlake down through the Arboretum.

Q: Has a tolling policy been established?

A: As for our analysis, the toll would be on the floating portion of the bridge. Toll policy could change. The Transportation Commission is looking at the entire state of Washington including the 405, I-90, I-5, and 520. However the policy is not flushed out completely. The commission has hired a consultant to come up with a tolling study to come up with a recommendation. The study is due out this summer.

Q: Would it be correct to say that this study shows the tolling effect on vehicle demand but will not have an effect on traffic flow since this will be 100% electronic?

A: that's true---there will be no tolling booths anywhere.

The commission has a number of measures it can institute to catch scofflaws who make trips across the bridge but refuse to pay.

Q: Back to the Arboretum, the 3 dots above intersection #23, who owns the land shown on this portion of the map?

A: The land is state-owned. It is a wetlands area that the state is responsible for. The state is discussing this (the impacts of construction on the area) with the Arboretum and the Seattle Parks Department.

The Pacific Interchange span has 110 foot clearance so that vessels can pass underneath. There is a 7% grade difference from the height of the span to the Montlake intersection. This compares to a 4% grade on 520 from I-5.

This concluded the presentation.

#### **IV. The Alumni House**

Theresa reporting for Steve Tatge said the Alumni House is looking for a space on campus to build a facility. They would be looking to selling their current facility on 15<sup>th</sup> and 45<sup>th</sup> and then rebuilding on campus. They are looking at 4 sites: site 63E, next to the waterfront activity center; 64E, Husky stadium, which would be incorporated into the proposed office building on site; 13C, the University Club, which would be an addition on a very small foot print; 23C, south of the Henry Art Gallery. Once he has some massing ideas, Steve will come to this group for your comments and ideas.

Q: Why do they want to sell (move from) their building?

A: They say it's too small. The Alumni Association owns the building not the university.

Q: Would there be a problem with a private owner leasing state-owned land?

A: This is one of the issues the University is reviewing.

#### **V. General Announcements**

- Theresa read a statement from the project manager for Steven's Way. The statement stated that paving will begin this summer, the demolition and utilities installation will begin at night on June 12<sup>th</sup> running through July 24<sup>th</sup>. A section on Steven's Way north of Pend O'reille Rd will be paved beginning on August 8<sup>th</sup> closing the street until September 1<sup>st</sup>. The project manager is available to come to CUCAC if requested.
- The DNS on the Boat St Marina was distributed by mail. Comments are due 19<sup>th</sup>. You can email, fax, or in some way send them to Jan Arntz before 1/19/06.
- The UW Medical Center staff is evaluating the information the committee provided in preparation for another presentation to the committee.

The meeting was adjourned.