

**SR 520 West Approach Bridge North Project  
Monthly Public Meeting #1 – Summary**

Wednesday, Nov. 5, 2014, 4:30 - 5:30 p.m.

Graham Visitors Center  
2300 Arboretum Drive East, Seattle, WA 98112**Attendees****Flatiron West, Inc.**

- Justin Allington, Project Manager
- Jacob Zacharda, Marine Construction Manager
- Tom McMillan, Project Engineer
- Dan Jordan, Environmental Compliance Lead

**WSDOT**

- Brian Dobbins, Construction Engineering Manager
- James VanSteenburg, Deputy Construction Manager
- Kristin Sandstrom, Communications Manager

**City of Seattle**

- Bernard Van de Kamp, Seattle Department of Transportation

**Meeting overview**

On Nov. 5, WSDOT and the contractor, Flatiron West, Inc., co-hosted the first monthly public meeting and invited the local community to learn more about the [SR 520 West Approach Bridge North Project](#) (WABN). Over 20 members of the public attended. The monthly meeting is a forum to invite the local community to learn the latest on upcoming construction activities and ask questions to the contractor and project staff about construction progress.

Brian Dobbins, Justin Allington, and Kristin Sandstrom began the meeting with a brief presentation of the WABN project:

**Project overview**

- WSDOT is constructing the WABN which will connect three westbound lanes of the new floating bridge to the Montlake area. Other [key design features](#), changes and improvements of the project include:

- A new off-ramp at 24th Avenue East that will replace the westbound Arboretum off-ramp which will be removed after the new off-ramp is in place.
- Extension of transit/HOV lanes across the floating bridge and into Montlake.
- A new regional shared-use bicycle/pedestrian path that extends from the new floating bridge to the Montlake interchange and connects to existing city of Seattle paths.
- Additional landscaped park area and new walking trails at the former Museum of History and Industry (MOHAI) site and new wetlands in the Union Bay Natural Area (UBNA).

### **Construction overview - work completed to date**

- Flatiron has begun construction of the [temporary work bridge](#) on Foster Island. For the safety of trail users, the Arboretum Waterfront trail will be closed during pile installation activities. Flatiron will continue to construct the temporary work bridge on Foster Island during the Nov. 14 – 17 weekend closure and reopen the trail on Monday, Nov. 17.
  - **UPDATE:** The [closure](#) of the Arboretum Waterfront Trail has been extended into December. Due to the dynamic nature of construction activities, this schedule is subject to change.
- R.H. Thomson “Ramps to Nowhere” demolition began during the Oct. 17 – 20 weekend closure and will continue to remove the spans over SR 520 during the Nov. 14 – 17 weekend closure.
- Kayakers, boats, and other water users should use caution due to water restrictions on the lake around construction equipment.
- The contractor has marked trees for protection with orange fencing and has begun to remove the necessary trees in the way of construction activities within project staging areas.
- Flatiron continues to secure the project site and remove illegal encampments. Notices to vacate were posted in the Old Canal Reserve area notifying individuals to clear the area within 72 hours. The contractor will secure the area, remove necessary trees, and install permanent fencing along the East Hamlin Street alleyway. Project fencing has been installed around the WSDOT Peninsula.
- Asbestos abatement at the former MOHAI building is ongoing prior to demolition.
- The WSDOT Peninsula is a construction staging area and closed to public access. Project office trailers have been installed on-site.
- Vibration monitors have been installed on the existing bridge and on-land near the project site. The on-land monitors installed by the Montlake neighborhoods will measure ground vibration during construction to ensure vibration levels are within the allowable limits.

### **Construction overview – upcoming work**

- The contractor will continue the following work over the next month:
  - Building the temporary work bridge on Foster Island and extend east towards the floating bridge and west toward Montlake.
  - Demolishing the R.H. Thomson “Ramps to Nowhere.”
  - Removing trees as necessary within project limits.

- Continuing asbestos abatement and prepare for demolition of MOHAI through early next year.
- Preparing for the Nov. 14 – 17 weekend closure to remove the section of the “Ramps to Nowhere” over the SR 520 mainline highway.
- Continuing to install project fencing around MOHAI.

### **Public involvement opportunities and resources**

- Project staff informed meeting attendees of the opportunities and resources to stay informed during construction, including:
  - [WABN construction email updates](#)
  - [SR 520 Orange Page](#)
  - SR 520 hotline: 206-708-4657
  - [SR 520 inbox](#)
  - Monthly meetings

### **Key comments and questions**

The summary below highlights key comments, questions and answers captured during the discussion. The summary is not verbatim but represents the themes of the comments and responses.

#### **Meeting time**

- **Comment:** Multiple comments were made to move the meeting time later to better accommodate the work-day schedule.
- **Response (WSDOT):** WSDOT will look into this.
- **UPDATE:** The meeting time has been moved back one hour to 5:30 – 6:30 p.m. to better accommodate neighbors.

#### **Arboretum Waterfront Trail closure on Foster Island**

- **Comment:** A neighbor commented that the trail closure of the north end of Foster Island was ineffective. During the weekend it was closed, a group of individuals broke through the barrier and gathered at the north end of the trail. She also felt that the orange trail closure signs were not effective and did not provide forewarning.
- **Response (Flatiron):** The initial closure plan was to use a high visibility fence as a barrier across the western part of Foster Island as a less imposing barrier, but was easily overrun. The trail was then closed across Foster Island with a chain link fence. The closure of the entire trail was necessary to protect trail users from the pile installation activities taking place near SR 520 on Foster Island. Once the temporary work bridge is complete in that area, the trail will be reopened.

#### **Tree removal**

- **Question:** Will the trees along Lake Washington Boulevard on the east end of Louisa Street near the staging area be removed?
- **Response (Flatiron):** No, these trees will not be removed.

- **Question (Arboretum):** The Arboretum and Botanical Garden Committee (ABGC) had discussions with WSDOT about receiving the cut down bald cypress trees because of their value. Has that been considered?
- **Response (WSDOT):** WSDOT will follow up with the ABGC on the request.

#### Ramp removal

- **Question:** Will the westbound off-ramp in the Arboretum be removed?
- **Response (WSDOT):** Yes, the westbound off-ramp in the Arboretum will be removed in this project after we build a new off-ramp at 24th Avenue East.
- **Question:** Will the eastbound on-ramp in the Arboretum stay in place during the WABN phase of construction?
- **Response (WSDOT):** The eastbound on-ramp in the Arboretum will remain in place during the WABN project. The eastbound on-ramp in the Arboretum will be removed in future SR 520 phases, which are currently unfunded.

#### Nighttime construction noise

- **Question:** A neighbor commented that there have been frequent loud truck deliveries after 10 p.m. at the MOHAI site. She said that typically, the MOHAI area is quiet during the day before trucks begin making deliveries at night. She said that the deliveries are louder than the construction activities and asked why the contractor can't consolidate the deliveries or have deliveries in the evenings.
- **Response (Flatiron):** Flatiron explained the truck deliveries occur at night to transport materials and equipment to construct the temporary work bridge. The contractor stores materials at the MOHAI site because they are not permitted to store extra equipment on Foster Island due to environmental restrictions. The contractor must close one westbound SR 520 lane at night over Foster Island beginning at 9 p.m. to deliver materials in time for the next day of work. Contractor agreed to meet with MOHAI neighbors to discuss further.
- **Question:** What is the noise ordinance? We were told you have clearance from the city of Seattle to do construction 24 hours a day.
- **Response (WSDOT):** We are currently operating under the city of Seattle noise ordinance. Under the noise ordinance, WSDOT applied for and was granted noise variances by the city of Seattle to complete noisy work for a limited number of nights. The noise variance does not allow pile driving activity at night. If the contractor decides to invoke a noise variance, they are required to provide advance notice to residents within a certain distance who will be impacted by the work. Nighttime construction work is necessary to complete the project as efficiently as possible and to help keep daytime traffic flowing.
- **Question:** Does the noise at MOHAI comply with the noise ordinance in Seattle?
- **Response (Flatiron):** Deliveries are permitted after 10 p.m. as long as the noise level is in compliance with the noise ordinance. Flatiron will continue to communicate noise ordinance requirements to their sub-contractors. **Comment:** A neighbor commented that they heard back-up beepers at 5:45 a.m.
- **Response (Flatiron):** Back-up beepers should not be used between the hours of 10 p.m. and 7 a.m. on weekdays and 10 p.m. and 9 a.m. on weekends.

- **Question:** How long will you use 24th Avenue East for deliveries for the project?
- **Response (Flatiron):** Once the MOHAI building is demolished, the contractor will construct a new road as an access point into the MOHAI area for deliveries. Flatiron anticipates demolition of MOHAI early next year.

#### **Homeless encampments**

- **Comment:** The ABGC commented that they had noticed increased illegal homeless encampments in the Arboretum. It has become a problem for park users who want to enjoy and use the area. They have tried to call the police, but no action has been taken yet. The ABGC requested to work with WSDOT or Flatiron to find a solution.
- **Response (WSDOT):** The SPD has a dedicated unit for community issues. WSDOT has been working with Officer Casey Sundin on this issue to support the removal of illegal encampments. WSDOT will forward the appropriate contact information along.

#### **East Miller Parking Lot**

- **Comment/Question:** A few neighbors commented that the East Miller parking lot had been used as a turnaround on East Lake Washington Boulevard. They asked if WSDOT could leave the gate in the fence open so the neighbors could continue to use it as a turnaround.
- **Response (Flatiron):** The contractor explained they need to close public access to the parking lot for the community's safety and security purposes.
- **Response (city of Seattle):** The city pointed out concerns using the parking lot as a turnaround, including rear end collisions and the lack of site distance around the turn. The city will follow up with this request.

#### **WSDOT Peninsula**

- **Question:** What is going to happen to WSDOT Peninsula in the future?
- **Response (Arboretum):** Arboretum has plans to incorporate the peninsula into the Arboretum after the completion of the unfunded west side elements of the SR 520 project.