

Alaskan Way Viaduct Replacement Program  
Stakeholder Group – Dec. 2, 2014  
Meeting Summary

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**Stakeholder Group attendees**

- Warren Aakervik, Ballard Oil / Seattle Freight Advisory Board
- Linda Anderson, Amalgamated Transit Union
- Glenn Avery, Queen Anne Community Council
- Layne Cubell (for Robert Nellams), Seattle Center
- John Coney, Uptown Alliance
- Stephen DeForest, Magnolia Community Club
- Vlad Oustimovitch, West Seattle
- Susan Ranf, Seattle Mariners
- Elaine Wine, Ballard

**Stakeholder Group members not in attendance**

- Jeff Aken, Cascade Bicycle Club
- Michael Beranbaum, Joint Council of Teamsters No. 28
- Barb Chamberlain, Bicycle Alliance of Washington
- Howard Cohen, Seattle Hotel Association
- Jerome Cohen, West Seattle Chamber of Commerce
- Alan Cornell, Nitze-Stagen
- Matt Curry, South Lake Union Chamber of Commerce
- Jan Drago, Alliance for Pioneer Square
- Kyle Ducey, South Lake Union Community Council
- Phil Fujii, Vulcan
- Tom Graff, Belltown Business Association
- Jason Handaly, Sound Produce
- Ron Hildebrandt, Trident Seafoods at Interbay
- Tim Hillis, Charlie's Produce
- John Huey, American West Bank and Duwamish Transportation Management Association
- Ron Kieswether, Oak Harbor Freight Lines
- Adam Link, CenturyLink Field and Event Center
- Bree Moore, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation
- Lee Newgent, Seattle/KC Building & Construction Trades Council
- John Odland, MacMillan-Piper
- Vince O'Halloran, Puget Sound Ports Council & Sailors Union of the Pacific
- Marty Oppenheimer, South Park
- Tom Phillips, Compass Housing Alliance
- Lisa Quinn, Feet First
- Ed Shilley, Nucor Steel
- Pete Spalding, Delridge

- Herald Ugles, International Longshore and Warehouse Union/Pacific Maritime Association
- Eugene Wasserman, North Seattle Industrial Association

### **Agencies and staff in attendance**

- Matt Preedy, Washington State Department of Transportation
- Jonathan Layzer, Seattle Department of Transportation
- Mike Merritt, Port of Seattle
- Michelle Allison, King County Department of Transportation
- Angela Brady, SDOT / Office of the Waterfront
- Eric Tweit, SDOT
- Jessica Murphy, SDOT

### **Agenda Item #1: Welcome and general updates**

Jonathan Layzer welcomed everyone and noted a new stakeholder member, Kyle Ducey, with the South Lake Union Community Council.

Layne Cubell mentioned the Oct. 15 meeting to discuss the North Surface Street Connections Project and follow-up meeting scheduled for Dec. 3.

Jonathan Layzer announced that there will be a traffic switch on the waterfront in January to facilitate the changing work zones for the Elliott Bay Seawall and Alaskan Way Viaduct Replacement projects. In January, the Seawall work zone will move to the north side of Yesler Way in front of Colman Dock. More details will be shared soon.

Warren Aakervik: Will Alaskan Way move back under the viaduct?

*Answer: Alaskan Way will remain under the viaduct until the seawall project is complete.*

### **Agenda Item #2: Elliott Bay Seawall Project**

Jessica Murphy gave an update on the Elliott Bay Seawall Project. Work accomplished during season one included seawall assembly south of Colman Dock, sheet pile removal and marine mattress installation. Similar work will be completed during season two, which began on Oct. 1 and spans from Pike to Madison Streets.

In January, a new phase of season two will begin in an extended work zone in front of Colman Dock. The Yesler Way intersection will reopen in its original configuration during this time as well.

No questions were asked.

### **Agenda Item #3 – Alaskan Way Viaduct Replacement Program**

Matt Preedy gave a construction update on the south and north portals. At the south portal, crews are working on the operations building and constructing the interior roadways inside the portion of the tunnel that is complete. At the north portal, girders are being set over portions of the receiving pit, which will create the foundation for the connection of Harrison Street over the

tunnel portal. He also described current work to build connections between the tunnel's north portal and the existing street grid.

Susan Ranf: I recently saw a document from the Department of Planning and Development on the Stadium District planning that includes recommendations to re-channelize Edgar Martinez Drive South at First Avenue South. When will we learn more about how this intersection will operate? We want to be part of those conversations to better understand the impact on the stadiums.

*Answer: The restoration of First Avenue South from Railroad Way South to South Royal Brougham Way will be part of WSDOT's South Access Project after tunneling is complete. The South Access Project has not been fully designed yet. When we begin designing and sequencing construction, we will share more information with you and seek input.*

*The City will follow up with you about this document. (See action item at the end of this summary.) The Port has been working with SDOT and DPD on elements of these plans as well.*

Matt Preedy gave an update on the work at the access pit to repair the tunneling machine. The concrete piles that make up the underground walls of the access pit have been completed and the contractor installed a dewatering system that is now fully operational. The access pit has been excavated about 70 feet, about halfway down. After completing excavation of the access pit, crews will install a concrete cradle at the bottom and start the machine, which will mine through the southern wall of the shaft. The modular lift tower is under construction and will lift the machine parts to the surface where the new seal system and bearing will be installed.

Elaine Wine: What are the impacts of the work to repair the tunneling machine on the final tunnel completion date? Can Seattle Tunnel Partners make up the time they have lost on repairing the machine?

*Answer: Because there is still a significant amount of work that STP must complete to repair the machine, it is too early for us to say with any certainty when the tunnel will open.*

*The City is working to make sure that other aspects of the project, such as the closure of Broad Street, proceed while the machine is being repaired. The state has also been coordinating with the Seawall Project during their construction on the waterfront.*

John Coney: After tunneling is complete, how long will it take for the tunnel to open to traffic?

*Answer: When tunneling is complete, the commissioning of the tunnel, which includes testing electrical systems and completing the interior structures, will take less than a year. However, this schedule is still under development.*

Warren Aakervik: When tunneling is complete, how do they plan to remove the machine from the tunnel's receiving pit in the north end?

*Answer: The plans for how the machine will be extracted from the receiving pit are still under development. The pieces will have to be hauled off-site on trucks via city streets.*

Vlad Oustimovitch: What design changes were made to the machine? Are there any changes in addition to the new seal system?

*Answer: The bearing will be replaced with the spare bearing. The contract required STP to have a spare bearing of the same design. STP is taking this opportunity to enhance the machine with minor modifications to help it operate more efficiently, based on what they learned while tunneling the first 1,000 feet. The new seal system and other modifications are being designed and implemented by Hitachi Zosen, the tunneling machine manufacturer.*

Vlad Oustimovitch: Did WSDOT review the redesigned plans for the machine? How confident is WSDOT that the machine will be able to finish the tunnel?

*Answer: This machine was designed by Hitachi Zosen and is owned by STP. We have asked STP to provide information regarding the modifications to the machine and how it will operate to successfully complete the tunnel. Nobody has more at stake than STP and Hitachi to ensure that the machine finishes the work correctly. As the project owner, we share that goal and continue to oversee STP to ensure they fulfill their contract.*

Susan Ranf: Is there a warranty on the machine?

*Answer: There was a warranty period between STP and Hitachi, and as a condition of the restart of the tunneling machine, that warranty is being reassessed.*

Vlad Oustimovitch: Can the machine be repaired if it breaks down under the buildings downtown?

*Answer: Yes, the machine can be fixed by taking the machine apart from within the tunnel. However, this is more difficult than the current repair method from above ground.*

#### **Agenda Item #4 - Mercer Corridor Project**

Eric Tweit gave an update on the Mercer Corridor Project including the recently completed third eastbound lane on Mercer Street between Fifth and Ninth Avenue North and the completed intersection of Fifth Avenue North and Mercer Street. Ongoing work includes replacing the sidewalk between Harrison and Thomas streets on Fifth Avenue North and replacing the driveway into Seattle Center. In February, the Mercer shoo-fly will be removed, and the Dexter shoo-fly will be removed in late March.

John Coney: The Uptown Alliance would like more relief on Mercer Street and Denny Way. The congestion is throttling Seattle Center and the performing arts because there are traffic jams at peak hours. Facing the continual delay of the SR 99 tunnel opening, we would like to reintroduce the concept that a signal be installed on Harrison Street across SR 99. The Uptown and South Lake Union communities are very unhappy with the way traffic is now.

Layne Cubell: We at Seattle Center have started to discuss the possibility of improvements to congestion with SDOT and WSDOT. When will the Mercer Corridor Project be complete?

*Answer: Substantial completion of the Mercer Corridor is scheduled for fall of 2015.*

Warren Aakervik: Adding a signal at Harrison Street would cause traffic to back up in the Battery Street Tunnel. The signal would make conditions very unsafe.

*Answer: SDOT completed a detailed analysis on a signal at Roy Street on SR 99 / Aurora Avenue North. We found that it would likely cause back-ups in the Battery Street Tunnel and the presence of a signal in the middle of a highway would be a concern for the city and the state,*

*primarily because of the increased risk of collisions. The signal at Harrison Street will be the first signal to be active when the tunnel opens.*

John Coney: The new east-west surface street connections will not be complete until 2016. WSDOT engineers do not seem to be aware that as projects are delayed, Northwest culture is being destroyed.

*Answer: WSDOT and SDOT are working together to keep projects on track. We will go back and look at the strategy and sequencing of work to complete these projects. I take Warren's concerns very seriously and there is no easy remedy, but we can work together to improve congestion in the interim. (See action item at the end of this summary for more information.)*

John Coney: The Uptown Alliance believes there are technological advances and ways to significantly reroute traffic to lower traffic density during this interim period.

#### **Agenda Item #5 - Stakeholder group feedback**

Angela Brady gave a brief update on Waterfront Seattle and announced that Jared Smith has stepped down as director, and his replacement is Marshall Foster. Angela will give a full update on Waterfront Seattle progress at the next meeting.

Susan Ranf: Will you focus on the structural component of the waterfront, or the local improvement district?

*Answer: I will give an update at the next meeting that will include more information, including budget revisions and updates on Waterfront Seattle progress.*

Stephen DeForest: What is the current timeline for tolling the SR 99 tunnel?

*Answer: I will have an update at the next meeting. The toll rate structure and timing of implementation are still in development.*

Warren: I want to remind everyone that this is an entire city, and there are many people who need to get through it every day. It used to take 20 minutes to get from Ballard to the south end of town; now it takes 45 minutes. Whatever the solutions are, make sure it works for everyone.

Elaine Wine: What has WSDOT done to limit the risks of another machine failure moving forward?

*Answer: A mega project like this requires proactive risk management. The state has a group of independent experts, the strategic technical advisory team, that consist of four tunneling industry experts. They provide feedback to the state and also help assist with risk management.*

## Agenda Item #6: Action items and adjourn

- ✓ Follow-up regarding proposed re-channelization on Edgar Martinez Drive South at First Avenue South as noted on page 17 of DPD's [Stadium District Study](#). *(Agency staff have discussed this issue with Susan Ranf. The restoration of First Avenue South from Railroad Way South to South Royal Brougham Way will be part of WSDOT's South Access Project after tunneling is complete. We are not currently planning any construction at the First Avenue South and South Atlantic Street intersection. The South Access Project has not been fully designed yet, but we will ensure that the design is coordinated with other private, State and City construction projects including designs for the Central Waterfront Program and the Stadium District Concept Plan. Thank you for bringing this to our attention. If we hear of any additional discussions or updates related to the Stadium District planning efforts, we will pass that along to the AWW stakeholder group.)*
  
- ✓ Re-evaluate adding a signal on SR 99 at Harrison Street or other east-west connection. If not possible, explore other ways to minimize construction impacts and improve east-west travel in the north portal area. *(The primary concern with a signal at this location is the increased risk of collisions. In September 2014, the Seattle Department of Transportation had an independent analysis completed to investigate the benefits and impacts of installing a new signal at the SR 99 and Roy Street intersection. The study found that afternoon congestion would cause back-ups extending into the Battery Street Tunnel. Since there are no other signals on SR 99 for three to five miles in either direction, drivers would not expect to suddenly stop in the tunnel. This, along with the limited sight distances in the Battery Street Tunnel, caused too many concerns about safety. In addition, the congestion would have caused northbound SR 99 to back up onto Denny Way and would increase many of the problems we are experiencing today. Moving this signal 1,600 feet farther to the south (to Harrison Street) would only increase the negative impacts that were found by the earlier report. We were also concerned about the safety of pedestrians crossing SR 99.*

*To try to improve traffic operations, the City continues to move forward with implementing adaptive signal control in the Mercer and Denny corridors. This work is not dependent on the schedule of the SR 99 Tunnel Project. At this point, the City has enough funds to fully design, build and implement adaptive signal control in the Mercer Street corridor. For the Denny Way corridor, we have enough money to complete the design, but we do not yet have the funds to build and implement it. The third phase of this project, implementing adaptive signal control on the major north-south connector streets, does not have any funding at this time.*

*WSDOT and SDOT are continuing to look for additional ways to reduce congestion in this area.)*

- ✓ Discuss the local improvement district as part of the Waterfront Seattle. *(Angela Brady will provide an update at the next meeting.)*
  
- ✓ Provide a tolling update. *(WSDOT will provide an update at the next meeting.)*