



Keystone Citizen Advisory Group Meeting No. 1

Fort Casey Conference Center, Auditorium B
June 7, 2004 - 5:30-8:45 p.m.

Meeting Summary

Note: This meeting summary represents notes from the Citizen Advisory Group (CAG) meeting, and is not a formal transcript or minutes. It is provided for the information of CAG members and other interested parties.

AGENDA

- I. Introductions; Opening Remarks
- II. Member Expectations
- III. CAG Scope
- IV. Process Overview
- V. Background Information
- VI. Next Steps
- VII. Public Comment
- VIII. Adjourn

ATTENDEES

CAG Members

Nancy Conard, Coupeville Mayor
 Clark Jennison, Tug Boat Captain
 Forest Shomer, Port Townsend
 Tim McGuire, WSF Ferry Captain

WSDOT Representative

Paula Hammond

Facilitator

Penny Mabie, EnviroIssues

Project Team Members

Celia Schorr, WSF
 Dana Moreland, WSF
 Kojo Fordjour, WSF
 Laurens Zuidweg, WSF
 Mike Anderson, WSF
 Mike Thorne, WSF
 Patricia Patterson, WSF
 Russ East, WSF
 Tami Neilson, WSF
 Doug Playter, CH2M Hill
 Erin Presentin, EnviroIssues
 Hadley Greene, EnviroIssues

MEETING HANDOUTS

- Agenda
- Legislative Language, Engrossed Substitute House Bill 2474
- PowerPoint Presentation handout
- WSF Strategic Plan
- Keystone-Port Townsend Terminal Improvement Project Scoping Summary

INTRODUCTION

Penny Mabie, EnviroIssues; Mike Thorne, WSF

Penny Mabie, EnviroIssues facilitator, called the meeting to order. She provided project background and introduced the Keystone Citizen Advisory Group (CAG) process.

Penny asked CAG members to introduce themselves. Members include:

- Nancy Conard, Mayor of the Town of Coupeville and regular user of the route
- Forest Shomer, resident of Port Townsend and regular user of the route
- Clark Jennison, tug boat captain and resident of Port Townsend
- Tim McGuire, Washington State Ferries (WSF) ferry captain, who has been a licensed captain for 13 years and piloted the Keystone run for six years

Paula Hammond, Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT), introduced herself and described her role as liaison between WSDOT and the CAG. Paula pointed out that WSF does not operate in isolation, but is one element of the state's highway system, carrying passengers across the water and connecting with highways and other transit systems.

Mike Thorne, Chief Executive Officer of the Washington State Ferry system, gave introductory remarks about the ferry system as a whole. He explained WSF's present financial situation and put the Keystone project into the perspective of the WSF system.

Two years ago, WSF developed a Strategic Plan to reduce costs, increase fares, and generate new revenue, in order to make capital investments and reduce dependency on public funding. Today, WSF is on track to follow the plan's guidelines, and plans to begin constructing new vessels and make terminal improvements in fall 2005.

Penny recognized State Representative Barbara Bailey, 10th District and a member of the Legislative Transportation Committee, and State Senator Mary Margaret Haugen, 10th District and a member of the Senate Transportation Committee.

WSF staff and consultant team members introduced themselves and described their individual roles and responsibilities.

MEMBER EXPECTATIONS

Penny Mabie, EnviroIssues; CAG Members

Penny asked CAG members to describe their expectations for the process and what they hope to get out of participating in the project. She also asked them to raise issues that were of particular importance to them. CAG members offered the following expectations:

- Clark Jennison said he rides the ferries often, and, having worked on boats himself, wonders how ferries can get into and out of Keystone Harbor safely. He also wondered if

there is enough capacity during the summer for the boats, and wants to explore how ferry loading and vehicle waiting can be improved.

- Tim McGuire said Keystone is the worst harbor and ferry landing in the whole WSF system. The strong current into the harbor, the recreational boat launch, children in and around the dock, and the dive park next door to the ferry terminal all present obstacles for ferry traffic. There have been a number of rescues in the harbor and near misses. Tim hopes the project's end result will be safe and reliable service. He said it is only a matter of time before someone gets hurt, and safety is his paramount concern.
- Forest Shomer described himself as a ferry rider and longtime Port Townsend resident. He is frequently a driver or foot passenger on the Keystone-Port Townsend ferry, and as a naturalist, is aware of the environment in and around Keystone Harbor. He expects to offer constructive comments to move people through Port Townsend so parking on the Port Townsend side is not too overwhelming. He also hopes to find a way in which Keystone can remain ecologically intact, as it possesses a unique shoreline. Forest is interested in the run's schedule, and would like to see the terminal remain near Camp Casey for riders who travel to soccer camps and other events.
- Nancy Conard said she is Mayor of Coupeville and a member of the Island County Transportation Committee. She complimented WSF's Strategic Plan, and said that on a state level she wants the agency to be financially responsible. Nancy also expressed interest in issues that affect Coupeville, as she has heard from members of the public who are concerned about the options. She said this creative process will be a great opportunity from a local, as well as state, perspective.

CAG SCOPE: Scope of Work, Goals, Roles & Responsibilities

Penny Mabie, EnviroIssues

Penny explained that her role in the process is to be a neutral facilitator and make sure everyone has the opportunity to participate. By the end, she hopes participants feel like the process was worth their time and effort. As part of that facilitation effort, a record of what happened at each meeting will be prepared for the CAG's review. These summaries will provide a benchmark to document what progress is made over the coming weeks and months.

The purpose of this introductory meeting, Penny explained, was to establish guidelines for how the CAG will function as a group, what rules will govern the group, and allow it to progress effectively.

Scope of Work

The legislation that established the CAG's role and its scope of work was given to the group and posted on a display board. The legislation will be used to guide the group to ensure it meets the legislative intent. The legislation also outlines a general scope of work, and is a direct charge both for WSF and the CAG. The legislation:

- Appropriated \$1 million to conduct an analysis of Keystone Harbor

- Designated a Citizen Advisory Group (CAG) and Washington Department of Transportation (WSDOT) Secretary's designee to help guide the analysis
- Directed the membership of the CAG to be:
 - ✓ One Washington State Ferry pilot
 - ✓ Two members of the traveling public that use the route on the regular basis
 - ✓ One tug boat pilot
- Required the CAG and WSDOT Secretary designee to meet at least three times, with the first meeting occurring prior to any technical analysis.
- Set a deadline of December 1, 2004 to report back to the Legislative Transportation Committee.
- Directed the technical analysis at a minimum to include:
 - ✓ Costs and benefits associated with preserving and maintaining the terminal including enlarging the harbor and dredging
 - ✓ Ridership projections associated with preserving and maintaining the terminal
 - ✓ Maintaining and retrofitting existing vessels so they can serve the terminal
 - ✓ Coordinating the impact of vehicles using the ferry run with highway capacity
 - ✓ How many, if any, new vessels should be constructed
 - ✓ The impact on the environment
- Directed the report to the Legislative Transportation Committee (LTC) to include alternatives to relocating the Keystone Terminal

Goals

Penny presented draft goals prepared by WSF for the CAG. She asked CAG members to review the list and to offer comments or suggestions for how it might be added to or modified. The draft CAG goals included:

- Agreed upon scope of study
- Agreed upon topics and organization of report
- Technical report developed in consultation with CAG
- Written and/or verbal participation by CAG in the presentation to the LTC at the conclusion of the Study

Members discussed the goals and offered suggestions or changes.

Discussion:

- When will the next meeting be held?
The next meeting will be Thursday, June 24, 2004.
- Will the CAG be able to get information before the next meeting, especially regarding the scope of study?
WSF will send CAG members a broad overview of WSF's proposed studies, which will be discussed at the next meeting.
- The goal of the CAG offering their consent, approval or reservations about the outcome and process to the Legislative Committee is a good one.

- How will the technical studies come about?

WSF will conduct all technical studies with help from CH2M Hill. WSF intends to remain unbiased during this process, and Paula Hammond, as WSDOT representative and an engineer herself, will be able to help in affirming WSF's objectivity.

- The final report to the LTC should be done in a way that is appropriate and easy to understand for both the CAG and the public at large.
- This is a tight schedule to get all of this done.
- Will the CAG get the data prior to meetings to be able to spend time with the materials and make sure sound answers and contributions can be made? We should take as much time as necessary and possible to do a good job.
- We have two seasons here. Right now, in summer, we are at the height of ferry traffic with two boats running. We should have data for both seasons and schedules, to account for when there is less traffic.
- It seems that there is a great potential disaster here in that bigger boats equals more people riding, so there are more people who could get hurt if there is an accident.
- How will safety be analyzed and presented?

WSF will address this indicator and follow up with a way to present it.

Conclusion:

Penny confirmed with the group that they accepted the list of goals. The following list of goals was agreed upon:

- **Agreed upon scope of study**
- **Agreed upon topics and organization of report (This goal will be clarified at the next meeting)**
- **Technical report will be developed in consultation with CAG**
- **Written and/or verbal participation by CAG in the presentation to the Legislative Transportation Committee at conclusion of the Study**
- **Ensure reports are understandable by all (CAG, agencies, and public)**
- **CAG members will have adequate time to review data ahead of meetings**
- **Take enough time to get the job done**
- **Include data for all seasons**

These goals will be posted at future meetings so they can be referred to and used to keep the group on track.

Roles and Responsibilities

Penny reviewed suggested roles and responsibilities for both the CAG and WSF. The following list was posted for CAG consideration:

CAG Roles and Responsibilities:

- Guide
- Listen and learn
- Provide input
- Keep abreast of technical analyses
- Identify issues technical team should incorporate or discuss
- Ask questions
- Help provide a solid foundation in order to approach path forward

WSF Roles and Responsibilities:

- Conduct the required studies
- Provide information to the CAG in an understandable fashion
- Listen to the CAG
- Solicit feedback

WSDOT Roles and Responsibilities:

- Liaison

Discussion:

- Will we need to come to consensus?

WSF may come up with many alternatives, and the CAG will act as advisors.

- Will the CAG members' names and contact information be made readily available to the public?

The project team will discuss preferred contact methods with CAG members.

- How can the public offer input?

WSF has a website and email address for the Keystone project, and each meeting will have a 15-minute public comment period. CAG members' names will be posted on the project website.

- Will the study look at other sites outside of Keystone Harbor?

The environmental process, originally started by WSF in the fall of 2003, is currently on hold while this process proceeds. This process is confined to alternatives within Keystone Harbor.

- Will there be minutes for each meeting?

A summary of each meeting will be prepared and posted on the web and distributed to CAG members after it has been reviewed by the CAG and WSF.

Conclusion:

The following roles and responsibilities were added to the list above:

- **CAG community visibility (possibly with phone numbers)**
- **Incorporate public comment into this process for CAG/WSF consideration**

PROCESS OVERVIEW: Meeting Structure, Ground Rules

Penny Mabie, Envirolssues

Meeting Structure

The CAG is currently slated to meet five times between June and September 2004. The next meeting will focus on scoping the work itself, with WSF presenting proposed scope and timing of technical studies. Scheduling of future meetings will also be done at the next meeting.

Discussion:

- Would it be possible to have a meeting in Port Townsend to make sure the “other side” is involved?

A Port Townsend meeting can be discussed at the next meeting. A date could be set in conjunction with applicable technical studies.

Ground Rules

Suggested ground rules for all succeeding meetings were presented on a flipchart. They included:

- Listen Respectfully
- No “Speech-y-fying”
- Come Prepared
- Stay Focused

Penny asked the CAG if they had any other ground rules to suggest. No comments were offered. The ground rules will be amended as necessary during the course of the meetings.

Penny explained that the legislative language, CAG roles and responsibilities, goals, and ground rules will function as a foundation upon which meetings will be run.

BACKGROUND PRESENTATION: Project History, Schedule

Russ East, WSF; Mike Anderson, WSF; Dana Moreland, WSF

Russ East, WSF Terminal Engineering, reiterated some of what Mike Thorne had said earlier regarding the WSF Strategic Plan. He said the plan included moving to interchangeable vessels, or Issaquah Class ferries. The retirement of steel electric vessels will mean approximately \$80 million dollars in funds saved by WSF. When WSF was adopting the plan, the goal was to bring larger vessels to Keystone and to retire the steel electrics. The Keystone Feasibility Study helped establish whether it was possible to move the terminal outside of the harbor. The Feasibility study was followed by an environmental review, which looked at several options for the Keystone terminal, including both alternate locations and a modified terminal and harbor.

Russ also discussed the need for a physical model of the harbor, in order to fully explore the effects of possible changes. In order to have the model constructed and useful for the Harbor study, work needs to begin on it right away.

Mike Anderson, WSF, Director of Operations, presented the operational constraints of Keystone Harbor. There are inherent problems with the configuration of the harbor, including severe currents that run across the mouth of the harbor, preventing the ferry from slowing down as it enters.

The Steel Electric class vessels on the Keystone route are old and operationally obsolete. They hold about 65 vehicles, but with today's larger trucks and SUV's, the small lanes of the 1927-era vessels hold fewer vehicles than they are designed to hold. It is a significant investment for WSF to keep these 77-year old vessels running. In addition to size constraints, there are no elevators on the vessels, so they do not meet ADA requirements.

Sailings on the Keystone-Port Townsend route are often cancelled due to weather, tides, and currents. With the exception of occasional weather-related cancellation, this is not the case on any other route in the WSF system.

Mike Anderson also addressed the current operational constraints of the terminal itself. WSF wants passengers to have a pleasurable experience when they ride the ferry. If a car does not fit in the holding area and has to be staged away from the terminal, those passengers cannot fully enjoy the community and do not get maximum value out of their experience.

Dana Moreland, WSF Terminal Engineering and Project Manager for the Keystone-Port Townsend Terminal Improvement Project, said the core project needs are to accommodate new vessels due to the retirement of the aging steel electrics, improve public safety and, operationally, to maintain schedule and improve operational reliability.

Dana summarized the project's progress to date and identified important milestones that lie ahead. A feasibility study completed last summer asked the question, "Is it feasible to consider relocation or redeveloping a terminal outside the existing harbor?" The study was performed to identify any potential operational, constructability, or environmental "fatal flaws" to considering operating the route from other locations outside of Keystone harbor and maintain a reasonable schedule. Washington State Ferries (WSF) wanted to study this before deciding to move forward with a full-fledged environmental review process. The feasibility study did not evaluate staying in the harbor and it did not preclude modifying the harbor for continued service because WSF had intended to study alternatives in the harbor when going forward into the environmental review process. Therefore, the study did not say if the terminal "would move" or "not move," but only examined whether it was possible to move the terminal. It was determined that it was technically possible to land an Issaquah Class vessel outside the harbor.

Once the Feasibility Study was completed, WSF began an environmental review process in fall of 2003. A first level screening of sites ranging from Ebey's Landing to Lagoon Point yielded three possible alternatives: (1) Keystone Harbor (with modification); (2) A central site near the ponds on Keystone Spit; and (3) an eastern site in the farm area east of the Keystone Spit ponds.

The environmental review process was put on hold by the legislature before second level screening of the alternatives began. The second level screening is a more detailed quantitative assessment based on environmental screening criteria.

In response to public concern over relocation options for Keystone Terminal, in March of 2004 the Legislature halted work on the environmental review process and appropriated \$1 million for WSF to conduct an analysis focused on Keystone Harbor. This is the point where we are today.

Dana finished by providing an update on the Port Townsend terminal. Originally, the Port Townsend and Keystone projects were moving forward under the same environmental and design process. However, given a minimum one year delay in the original timeline and the current poor condition of the landing structures at Port Townsend, WSF is currently planning how to best advance the Port Townsend Terminal work on it's own schedule and ensure reliable service pending the outcome of this study at Keystone. WSF is beginning a separate project to perform much-needed repairs and maintenance of the Port Townsend terminal. This type of project is called a "preservation" project – aimed at preservation of the asset. The "preservation" work is needed regardless of the outcome in the Keystone harbor study.

Discussion

- Is the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) on hold?
Yes, technical studies were being developed for the EIS, but the legislation put them on hold.
- Can the physical model be constructed so it can be changed to reflect different currents?
A model can be constructed based on the known conditions by inserting and removing pieces, adding different breakwaters, submerging them, and so on, and simulating wave generation based on the modelings, which are more reliable than computer modeling.
- Why not build special vessels for Keystone Harbor?
From a cost standpoint, it was too expensive. This project will examine that question further.
- Port Townsend and Keystone are fairly co-dependent on some of these issues. What is on the table now, and being developed, that will affect Port Townsend?
- Right now WSF is beginning to plan how to best move forward at Port Townsend given the minimum one- year delay to the original schedule and uncertainty of the Keystone project. Top priority is to address the poor condition of the vessel landing structures. The Port Townsend terminal needs maintenance right now, or there could soon not be any service for either Keystone or Port Townsend. Additionally, WSF is planning to prepare a traffic study and evaluate potential alternatives that move the slips further offshore to address environmental and traffic issues. WSF recognizes existing traffic management / operational issues, and therefore will begin to look at more long-term potential alternatives to expand the dock holding capacity.
- Has WSF looked at traffic numbers in Port Townsend?

The consultant team has started evaluating traffic at both the Keystone side and Port Townsend as part of the original environmental review process.

- Does WSF have the money to retrofit the Port Townsend terminal now?

Yes, WSF has the resources to begin that work.

- The model should be built if it's needed.

The model is a significant investment, and while we are beginning the paperwork, it can be stopped if the CAG thinks that is necessary.

Conclusion:

Penny thanked the CAG for coming and said that at the next meeting (scheduled for June 24th) the group will begin to go over the structure of the final report as well as the scope of the studies. In addition, the group will begin to assess the schedule for the technical analyses.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Public Comment #1: Marianne Edain, WEAN

WSF is part of WSDOT, which is the department of moving people and goods in the most expeditious way possible. Alternative ways of moving people and goods, especially in the context of creating a larger WSDOT, should be done with minimal resources. I would like to see clearly stated what the underlying assumptions driving this entire process are. I feel like the assumptions are already in place and we are waltzing forward before they are fully disclosed to the public. I have a feeling they are in WSF's Strategic Plan, but those assumptions need to be looked at and evaluated.

I also believe two members of the public is not sufficient public representation on the CAG.

Public Comment #2: Ken Dickey, San de Fuca

It would be nice to see frequently asked questions about the project. In terms of cost and alternatives, it is good to be creative. Perhaps a timed ticket strategy would be effective. Think about creative solutions, rather than just moving people past a ticket booth. Perhaps move the ticket booth past people. If people knew their boarding time and place in line to be, that might help them feel comfortable leaving their cars while they wait for the boat.

Also, look at different price adjustments or management techniques, like charging more to go on the boat with a recreational vehicle.

ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 7:52 p.m.