

**South County Recycling and Transfer Station Siting
Siting Advisory Committee Meeting Notes
William C. Warren Building, Veteran's Memorial Park, Auburn
September 13, 2012**

Attendees:

Marc Davis, Waste Management
Councilmember Dini Duclos, City of Federal Way
Mayor Dave Hill, City of Algona
Karen Meador, Neely Mansion Association
Gladys Paulus, White River Valley Citizens Corps Council
Diana Quinn, City of Algona
Jodi Riker, White River Valley Citizen Corps Council
Mike Sears, Interested Citizen
Jody Snyder, Waste Connections, Inc.
Rob Van Orsow, City of Federal Way
Gary Venn, Auburn Area Chamber of Commerce
Scott Weide, Auburn School District
Nancy Wyatt, Auburn Area Chamber of Commerce
Dennis Manes, Republic Services

Agency Staff:

Lisa Williams, Project Manager, King County Solid Waste Division
Eric Richardt, Project Manager, King County Solid Waste Division
Polly Young, Planning and Communications, King County Solid Waste Division
Kathy Hashagen, Planning and Communications, King County Solid Waste Division

Consultants:

Marcia Wagoner, Read Wagoner (facilitator)
Michael Read, Read Wagoner
Julie Blakeslee, URS
Marissa Gifford, URS
Cynthia Berne, Long Bay Enterprises

A. Welcome and Introductions

Polly Young welcomed Siting Advisory Committee (SAC) members and thanked those in attendance for their participation.

Marcia Wagoner described her neutral facilitation role, reviewed the evening's agenda and roles and responsibilities, then invited members to introduce themselves.

Response to Questions from August 15, 2012 SAC Meeting

There were several questions/issues raised at the August 15 meeting that were not able to be answered at that time. Responses to those issues are noted below.

1. Siting Studies for the Shoreline and Bow Lake facility

The King County Solid Waste Division did not do a siting study for the Shoreline or Bow Lake stations because they were/are being rebuilt at their existing locations. The last time the Solid Waste Division did a siting study was in 1991 for the Factoria Transfer Station.

As part of the Factoria Transfer Station replacement project, the Solid Waste Division bought an adjacent property to preserve it as an option on which to build a new station – just like the division purchased property adjacent to the Algona station. The division ended up not using the adjacent Factoria property for the transfer station redevelopment. It's possible that could happen with the Algona property that was purchased.

2. Is it possible that two criteria are at odds with one another – the criterion that states we will not site a facility in a flood plain and the criterion that states a site has potential access to a rail line?

It is not always the case that rail lines are located in floodplains in the south county service area; sometimes they are, sometimes they are not.

3. What is the economic impact of a transfer station on surrounding properties?

The economic impact has to do with the existing zoning in the area where a facility would be located. A transfer station would need to be in an area where the zoning allows for such a facility as an allowable or conditional use and would comply with local, state and federal environmental requirements which ensure minimal impacts on the surrounding areas. New facilities are also designed to mitigate environmental and operational impacts on the community. For example, a modern transfer station is an enclosed facility and resembles a warehouse where materials are being reassembled and made ready for shipments to other places. So to the extent that a warehouse in an appropriately zoned area has an impact on surrounding property values, the same could be said for a new transfer station.

A comment was made that there would be more traffic associated with a transfer station than with a warehouse.

4. Where will the population centroid be in 50 years in relation to the current population centroid?

The current population centroid is at the west-central edge of the City of Auburn. The centroid of population growth is expected to shift slightly to the east-northeast into Auburn by 2040, based on data provided by the Puget Sound Regional Council that was analyzed by the Solid Waste Division's Economist.

SAC members were asked to provide a critique of tonight's meeting since much of the same information would also be presented at the Open House on Sept. 27. The intent is to provide the information as clearly as possible to the public.

B. Bow Lake Recycling & Transfer Station Tour Recap

On August 29, 2012, seven members of the Siting Advisory Committee toured the new transfer building at the Bow Lake Station in Tukwila. Members were asked to share their impressions of the new facility with the other members. Their observations included:

- The new Bow Lake transfer station is very impressive. It's a beautiful building and very efficient. There was no odor until you get inside the building close to where the garbage was being pushed. Plus it has a very clean and nice conference room. It's not your grandfather's dump!
- There is very little smell and it's more efficiently staffed.
- The recycling materials and capturing of rainwater are notable improvements.
- The building is beautiful and impressive. Self-haulers were unloading by standing on their tailgates. Question: why did King County opt for a tipping floor rather than a flat floor? Answer: Different types of station designs offer different benefits. King County is exploring both options for the new Algona station.
- The efficiency and compaction were most impressive. Its location is favorable – with I-5 on the west, a cliff on the east and no development to the north or south.

In response to a question, Solid Waste Division staff provided the following information:

- A small portion of the property that King County purchased for redevelopment of the Factoria facility may be used for staging during the construction phase of that project. When the property is no longer needed, the County would surplus the unneeded property.

Polly reminded members that Solid Waste Division staff would provide another tour of the Bow Lake facility if anyone was interested; just let us know. Or, if members don't have time to take a tour, Rob van Orsow made the suggestion that people can view videos of the facility that feature the layout and sustainable features of the station on the Bow Lake website, <http://your.kingcounty.gov/solidwaste/facilities/bowlake/index.asp>

C. Process Overview: Siting Process Recap

Polly Young provided an overview of the first Siting Advisory Committee (SAC) meeting on August 15, 2012 for those who were new to the committee as follows:

- The group reviewed the roles and responsibilities of SAC members, the Facilitator, and King County Solid Waste Division staff

- The County’s project team will gather and consider advice from a number of sources in making a final recommendation of a preferred site to the King County Executive, who make the final site decision.
- The group received background information on the purpose of a transfer station, why a new transfer station is needed, the deficiencies of the existing Algona Transfer Station, and the features that a site would need to have to accommodate a modern facility.
- The service area for the new station is in or near the cities of Algona, Auburn, Federal Way or Pacific.
- The County is following a six-step site selection process. The first step of that process began in August.
- The County developed “Pass/Fail” and “Functional” criteria to evaluate potential sites.
- SAC members identified “Community” criteria to evaluate potential sites. Additionally, SAC members indicated their most important criteria by using a “dot” exercise where they put red dots next to important criteria.

D. What has been done with the Criteria?

Eric Richardt presented information on the Pass/Fail and Functional criteria. Polly Young presented information on the Community criteria.

Pass/Fail Criteria

- At the August 15, 2012 SAC meeting, the County presented five Pass/Fail criteria which must be met for a site to undergo further consideration.
- All of the sites presented at tonight’s meeting have passed these criteria.

Functional Criteria

- At the August 15, 2012 SAC meeting, the County presented a list of functional criteria. Since then, one additional criterion was added, “the site cost must be within the budget.”
- The County’s project team also undertook a “dot” exercise with the functional criteria, similar to the exercise done by the SAC. Dots were placed next to the criteria they thought most important. The functional criteria were then ranked based on the number of dots they received as being “highest,” “medium,” and “lower” priority.
- Finally, the functional criteria were categorized by topic – such as “transportation,” “city economic impact/zoning,” “equitable distribution of facilities,” etc.

Community Criteria

- The County’s project team reviewed the community criteria developed at the August 15, 2012 SAC meeting. The criteria were then ranked by priority - based on the number of dots they received by SAC members - as being “highest” (12-5 dots), “medium” (4-2 dots), and “lower” (1-0 dots).
- Finally, as with the functional criteria, the community criteria were categorized by topic – such as “transportation,” “city economic impact/zoning,” home/property owner economic impact,” etc.

The following is a summary of the points raised during the discussion of how the functional and community criteria were prioritized and categorized.

- Although some community criteria didn't score well, i.e. were ranked as a "lower" priority, SAC members affirmed that all community criteria will be considered because they reflect the diverse opinions of SAC members which intentionally represent a cross-section of the community.
- If SAC members had known that by placing their dots next to their highest priority criterion would lead to a ranking of the criteria (highest, medium, lower), they may have chosen to put all of three of their dots next to one criterion in order to elevate its importance.
- Community criteria were given a "highest" priority ranking if they received 6 to 12 "dots," but this seems too broad. Note: SAC members did not opt to change the "highest," "medium," and "lower" rankings.
- Most of the functional criteria came from the Solid Waste Transfer and Waste Management Plan that was developed in collaboration with the cities and approved by the King County Council.
- Mayor Hill from Algona indicated that West Valley Highway through Algona is designated a heavy retail corridor.
- A city oversees the permitting for facilities built within their city boundaries.
- Several questions were raised about what mitigation is available from King County to a host city – both one-time and ongoing – to offset the cost of road improvements or maintenance needed as a result of impacts from a recycling and solid waste transfer facility. These issues will be addressed at the next SAC meeting on October 10.

E. Site Identification Process

Julie Blakeslee described the process and rationale used to conduct the broad area screening and the steps taken to narrow down the number of sites for consideration.

The project team cast a wide net to try to capture all potential sites. The primary tools used to do the search were the abundant data available from the King County Geographic Information System (GIS), and real estate professionals who are on the consulting team. In addition to GIS data, the search for sites also included using the Multiple Listing Service, reviewing County and City surplus properties, talking with brokers in the area, and conducting follow-up "windshield" tours of properties.

The search for sites started by applying several key criteria to sites:

- All sites that were approximately 15-20 acres in size
- Sites whose zoning allows for transfer station use
- Sites that are within approximately ½ mile of a major arterial/highway
- Property cost is within the budget
- Critical areas (e.g. not in a floodplain)

As those key criteria were applied to sites, the number of sites quickly diminished. At that point, the subset of sites was reviewed more closely and in more detail about how they met the functional and community criteria.

F. Review of Identified Sites

Julie Blakeslee discussed that after the process described above was completed, five sites remained under consideration. However, one of those sites, Site C, located at 3308 South 320th Street in Federal Way was removed from consideration because it was recently purchased by the local Fire District, which has plans for the site.

The remaining four sites are:

Site A: 1250 C Street NW, Auburn

Site B: South 320th Street and I-5 in unincorporated King County east of Federal Way

Site D: 901 C Street SW, Auburn

Site E: 35101 West Valley Highway South, Algona

The following is a summary of the comments made during the discussion of the four sites under consideration.

Review of Site A: 1250 C Street NW, Auburn

1. Site A is zoned retail.
2. There is a lot of traffic on 15th.
3. A new road has been built along the railroad tracks adjacent to the west side of the site.
4. With wetlands to the west you can expect the water table to be close to the surface.
5. Double check the floodplain map.

Review of Site B: South 320th Street and I-5 in unincorporated King County east of Federal Way

1. There is one house adjacent to the site on the northeast corner of the site and it appears to be occupied.
2. 320th is heavily trafficked by commuters.
3. The site is within the Federal Way potential annexation area.

Review of Site D: 901 C Street SW, Auburn

1. This site has a hotel nearby as well as the Auburn School District bus barn.
2. C Street is in terrible disrepair, plus it's narrow and has lots of traffic.
3. Safeway, Boeing and the mall generate lots of traffic along 15th in this area.
4. The on- and off-ramps to SR 18 are short with sharp turns and are not suitable for truck traffic.
5. The on-ramp from C Street often backs up half a mile.
6. There is insufficient turning radius for long trucks maneuvering from 15th onto C Street.

Review of Site E: 35101 West Valley Highway South, Algona

1. The Algona comprehensive plan calls for retail along this stretch of West Valley Highway and it is zoned heavy commercial.
2. There is no manufacturing to the north. There is a car lot and a transmission shop.
3. There is not much benefit to the host city. The facility would eliminate property tax revenues and while as big as a Costco will not generate much by way of sales tax revenue.
4. No restaurant or clothing shop is going to open up on a site near a transfer station. It was noted that a bakery, The Essential Bakery, is located right next to the north Seattle transfer station. It's quite nice to smell the baked goods as one approaches the station.
5. On the bluff to the west of the site, 121 lots are being developed with housing that will look directly down onto this site.

G. Discussion of Additional Site Options

(Note: this was done in lieu of discussing the application of community criteria to each site)

The following is a summary of the comments made in response to the unveiling of the four remaining sites under consideration.

1. The County's project team did a comprehensive search and did not come up with any sites in the area around 277th Street.
2. The County's project team looked in warehousing areas but was not able to find 15 - 20 acre sites within the Urban Growth Area that weren't already occupied with a viable business.
3. The County's project team expects that a viable site will be found for a new facility.
4. The Bow Lake facility is not sufficient to serve South King County. It is not within 30 minutes' drive for all south county users. It was recently rebuilt and was not designed to handle the additional 17% of system tonnage that Algona currently serves.
5. Commercial haulers could not rely on using Bow Lake only. The extra distance would reduce efficiency enormously.
6. If you move the new facility away from Pierce County, demand may drop dramatically.
7. The location for the new facility must be within the Urban Growth Area, which precludes siting it east of Auburn. The rural roads east of Auburn probably do not have the capacity, and the racetrack generates a lot of traffic.
8. King County is the agency that conducts the Environmental Impact Statement.
9. Solid waste customers finance the cost of the new facility through their rates.
10. The functional and community criteria will be used to facilitate further narrowing of the number of sites under consideration.
11. SAC members suggested sending press releases to the local newspapers cities and chambers of commerce to announce the public open house scheduled for Sept. 27.

H. Next Steps

Polly Young described the next steps:

Thurs., Sept. 27: Open House: the purpose is to inform wider community of the project, present site selection criteria and the potential sites and obtain feedback. Public notice will include fliers and posters distributed in the community and at the Algona Transfer Station, notice on the King County Solid Waste Division's website, requests to cities to post information on their websites, and newspaper notices.

Wed., Oct. 10: SAC Meeting #4: At that meeting, we will review feedback from the Open House, evaluate the remaining four sites further, with the goal of selecting a preferred site.

I. Closing Thoughts

SAC members suggested providing information about the siting process in a format that is easy to digest; avoid too much information.

J. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

Handouts Distributed:

- Meeting agenda
- Functional Criteria and Community Criteria ranked in priority of importance, "highest," "medium," and "lower."
- PowerPoint Presentation to Siting Advisory Committee