



# SAG Meeting #9 Summary

Siting Advisory Group

Northeast Recycling and Transfer Station

## SAG Members in Attendance:

- Aaron Moldver, City of Redmond
- Diana Hart, City of Woodinville
- James Randolph, At-large
- John MacGillivray, City of Kirkland
- Julie Underwood, City of Kirkland
- Nick Harbert, Waste Management
- Paula Goelzer, At-large
- Rachel Best-Campbell, City of Woodinville (Councilmember)
- Sandy Cobb, Unincorporated King County
- Susan Vossler, At-large
- William Louie, Resident
- William Su, Resident

## Staff Members in Attendance:

- Mary O'Hara, King County Solid Waste
- Annie Kolb-Nelson, King County Solid Waste
- Kalyn Brady, King County Solid Waste
- Isabelle Trujillo, King County Solid Waste
- Jimmy Mota, King County Solid Waste
- Penny Mabie, Definitely Mabie Consulting
- Phil Coughlan, Herrera Environmental Consultants
- Melissa Wu, Jacobs Engineering
- Jordan Sanabria, EnviroIssues
- Tay Stone, EnviroIssues

Approximate number of audience attendees: 44

## Welcome

**Penny Mabie** (Definitely Mabie Consulting, Facilitator) welcomed members of the Siting Advisory Group (SAG) and gave members a brief refresher on the available Zoom features. Penny reminded the group of the agreed upon ground rules and provided an overview of the meeting's agenda.

## Project update

**Mary O'Hara** (King County Solid Waste, NERTS Project Manager) provided an overview of project activity the County has completed to date, including the top three sites that will be moving forward into environmental review. Mary also went over the environmental review schedule.

## State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) environmental review

**Phil Coughlan** (Herrera Environmental Consultants) presented an overview of the environmental review process, including an overview of the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) and how the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) process will proceed. Phil explained that the purpose of

environmental review is to provide information and identify potential impacts and mitigation for the alternatives being studied. Phil noted that there will be multiple opportunities for community input, which is an important and helpful part of the review process. Phil also explained that the findings from the environmental review help inform the decision-making process; an EIS is not a decision document.

**Q:** Will this study look at any sites other than the top three?

**A:** Part of the EIS study includes a summary of the process the County went through to narrow down to the top three sites. Currently the plan is that just the top three sites as well as the no-action alternative will be studied, but that is subject to further consideration based on information received as scoping comments are submitted.

**Q:** Because this is siting for an industrial facility, will sites be evaluated differently if they are zoned residential?

**A:** They won't be evaluated differently, but each site will be evaluated against multiple factors such as what it's zoned for, what's included in the Comprehensive Plan, how neighbors may be affected, etc. Information will be gathered based on where sites are and how they relate to land uses in the area, but the method of study itself will not differ for each alternative.

**Q:** Does "environmental review" only consider natural environment?

**A:** No, both the natural environment and built environment are studied.

## Community Involvement in EIS

**Kalyn Brady** (King County Solid Waste) provided an overview of past, current, and future community outreach efforts, such as utilizing GovDelivery email updates, community briefings, tabling at community events, mailers, social media, and local media. Kalyn then reviewed multiple opportunities for the public to provide public comment during the scoping period for both verbal and written comments, including submitting comments during the in-person and virtual open houses.

Kalyn then asked SAG members if they had any additional recommendations on how to reach their communities.

### Comments:

- Community events hosted by community organizations that provide tabling opportunities are helpful in getting information out.
- Direct mail seems to be the best and most equitable way to share information, and I've seen direct mail result in higher response rate compared to other methods. I would also recommend using recycled paper whenever possible.
  - The County does use recycled paper as well as a union print shop for the mailers.
- Connecting with neighborhood associations within the cities would help bring outreach to a more micro level.
- Providing translated materials available in culturally specific spaces, such as an Asian market, where people can take them as they go.

**Q:** It'd be helpful to understand the structure of the open houses so we can better explain the process to community members who reach out to us with questions. Will it be mostly boards up for people to walk around and read? Will it be more interactive? What will these meetings look like both for the in-person options as well as virtual?

**A:** For the virtual meeting, we're still exploring multiple formats to replicate an in-person experience. For the in-person meetings, we'll have a room set up with stations for varying topics with subject matter experts at each station. We'll also have a court reporter to take verbal comments. Attendees will also have an opportunity to provide written comment, in lieu of connecting with the court reporter if that's preferable. Snacks and refreshments will also be provided and there will be an area with an activity station for children as well.

**Q:** Is it King County's intent to provide Cities with a communications toolkit?

**A:** Yes, we are putting together toolkits. We are also working on animated videos that walk through the scoping process, which will be available in multiple languages.

## Public Comment

Penny opened the call for public comments. Audience members were asked to electronically raise their hand to indicate they would like to speak. Each speaker was given approximately two minutes.

### Comments:

- **Phil Allen**, a Houghton resident, thanked SAG members for their patience in listening to varying arguments and assessing multiple data sources over the past two years since the group's convening. Phil, having reviewed the Broad Area Site Screening (BASS) report, claimed to have found various methodological errors and inconsistencies, such as finding four unique sets of criteria that the County used to evaluate the top four sites moving forward. Phil invited the SAG to look at the BASS report for signs of a lack of due diligence in the process.
- **Kendra Han**, a Bridle Trails resident, spoke against having an industrial facility in a residential area surrounded by schools and community spaces. Kendra expressed concern for safety hazards, traffic hazards, and environmental impacts to families living nearby.
- **Kristin Lovelady Dickson** thanked the SAG for their advocacy and thoughtfulness. Kristin spoke to a lack of transparency throughout the siting process and expressed low confidence in the consistency of the EIS process. Kristin referenced the two Houghton sites as examples of inconsistency, believing that they should have been disqualified earlier on in the process. Kristin shared that for years residents of Houghton have asked the County to move the transfer station elsewhere and believes that the voices of the public are not being heard. Kristin hopes that the concerns of Houghton residents will be considered in the scoping process.
- **Alex**, a Houghton resident, shared concerns relating to safety, odor, and property value if the Park & Ride site is selected for the new station. Alex expressed concern about the application of criteria as the Park & Ride site does not fit the minimum acre criteria. Alex hopes that zoning will be considered in the EIS, noting the nearby elementary school.
- **Deepa Garg** asked the County to provide clarity going forward into the EIS process about whether there will be a copy and paste function for the statement and mitigation

suggestions to leave the same comments for all three sites. Deepa also wondered if solid waste truck drivers have provided their feedback, noting concern regarding difficult turns near the existing Houghton station, and whether that will be considered in the study.

- **Jennifer Ohayon**, a Houghton resident and commercial developer, shared that having looked at the Park & Ride site multiple times, it doesn't appear to offer ingress and egress without impeding traffic. Jennifer also noted that multiple developments and traffic configurations in the area may add to the challenge and suggested that siting a transfer station in a residential area does not make sense.
- **Ozlem**, a Bridle Trails resident, expressed concern about the siting process, claiming that it hasn't been fair. Ozlem noted that the streets don't feel safe for children to walk to school and thus does not believe that a transfer station should be sited in a residential area. Ozlem stated that because the Park & Ride site is so small, it also does not seem to be a good option for a new station. Ozlem also expressed concern over losing access to Taylor Field, siting a lack of nearby recreational areas.
- **Karthik N**, a Houghton resident, has seen high traffic near the existing Houghton transfer station and is concerned about the safety of pedestrians and children crossing the street to catch their school bus. Karthik also wondered about how the new station could be more eco-friendly and if it is possible to limit hazardous materials going into the station. Karthik echoed a previous speaker's comment advocating for an increase in recreational areas for children and suggested adding an educational component to the transfer station.
- **Genn Zentz**, a Houghton resident, echoed a previous speaker's comment that turning at the intersection of NE 60<sup>th</sup> Street and 116<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE is challenging for waste trucks to navigate. Genn expressed concerns over noise, odor, pedestrian safety, and quality of life for residents who live near the existing Houghton station. Genn also asked that the County consider what is equitable for the residents near the existing station and to listen to their feedback.

Penny thanked the speakers for their comments and closed the public comment period.

## Next Steps

Mary invited the SAG and community members to provide input for the scoping period via an online open house available through the project website from November 3, 2022 to January 17, 2023. Mary also provided an overview of the timeline for the EIS process, with the Final EIS anticipated spring 2024 and the final site selection summer 2024. Mary also shared there will be another SAG meeting fall 2023 just before opening the comment period for the draft EIS.

**Q:** We've heard a lot from Houghton residents tonight, and from those representing other areas in the past. What are the follow-up actions that the County has taken or will take to address these concerns? Does the County plan to share the criteria and scoring data with the public to provide that transparency of why certain sites moved forward and why others did not?

**A:** A lot of that information is already on the website, including in a frequently asked questions document and videos. The scoring is published in the BASS and Focused Site

Screening (FSS) reports. Once finalized we'll publish a final siting report. Comments that we receive during scoping and their responses will be documented in the EIS.

**Q:** I wasn't finding information on how the top 15 sites were narrowed to the top 4, is that on the website as well?

**A:** Yes, it's in the BASS and FSS reports. We can resend you that link.

- **Action item:** *Follow up with requested siting process information to SAG member.*

Penny thanked SAG members, audience members, and those who made public comment for attending and concluded the meeting.