

From: Susan Holliday [mailto:susanholliday@mac.com]
Sent: Monday, April 12, 2010 8:50 AM
To: SR 520 Bridge SDEIS
Subject: SDEIS comments

here is our response to SDEIS. If you would also like me to mail you a copy of our comments, please let me know.

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**Save Union Bay Association
Response Statement to SR 520 Project SDEIS**

SUMMARY

We have reviewed the SDEIS for the 520 bridge replacement project and appreciate the opportunity to discuss some topics within the SDEIS that we feel are missing or not described in adequate detail for WSDOT or public analysis. These topics are:

- The wetland mitigation opportunities discussed, particularly aquatic bed vegetation enhancement, do not include most of the aquatic bed areas infested by milfoil in Union Bay, many of which are closer to, and more directly affected by the proposed project.
- The wetland and shoreline mitigation opportunities do not include or discuss the damage to shoreline and wetland vegetation caused by the invasive mammal, nutria.
- The project, as described in the SDEIS, does not provide suitable refugia for the fish and wildlife species that will be displaced, or will avoid the project footprint during construction.
- The SDEIS does not discuss the risk of releasing milfoil and other invasive species from the project footprint during construction.
- In order to adequately mitigate for the impacts associated with the proposed project, we suggest that the following be considered as parts of the overall mitigation approach:
 - Enhance the aquatic bed wetlands that cover most of Union Bay by reducing the coverage of milfoil and other invasive plants. This will provide both wetland mitigation (enhancement), and, if conducted prior to construction, will offset the effects to lake habitats and wildlife by providing enhanced refugia for displaced species during and after construction. Long-term control of invasive species will also offset the permanent fish and wildlife habitat losses that will result from the project, including effects on ESA-listed fish species.
- Include restoration of shoreline areas damaged by nutria as part of the shoreline and wetland mitigation approach.

C-011-001

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C-011-004

C-011-004

- Eradicate invasive species within the project footprint (which includes boat and barge travel corridors, anchoring locations, temporary work platforms, as well as the construction footprint, PRIOR TO CONSTRUCTION. This will reduce the risk of releasing thousands of milfoil fragments and other invasive species into the surrounding areas of Union Bay and Lake Washington.

Introduction

C-011-005

Save Union Bay Association (SUBA) is a neighborhood association consisting of interested individuals and waterfront owners living on Union Bay. There are currently 120 members. Over the 35 years operating, we have dealt with issues of Union Bay including milfoil, sewage spills, Green Lake pipeline, and eutrophication. We are concerned about the disruption that construction of the new SR520 bridge will have on Union Bay and want to work with DOT to offset this impact.

The SDEIS identified effects during construction within the Elements of Nature (Chapter 6). We are concerned about the effects within the following elements during construction on the overall ecosystem of Union Bay (UB): recreation, noise, air quality, water resources, ecosystems, geology and soils, hazardous materials, and navigation.

Although the SDEIS did a good job of describing effects that will occur within the 520 work corridor along UB, there was no mention of the effects on the rest of UB. We contend that there will be multiple effects throughout the UB environment and we want the SR520 program to mitigate these impacts.

Our SDEIS Response statement begins with an overview of Union Bay, describing both the general characteristics of the bay and also the recreational and wildlife usage. We then describe the three most important problems threatening the integrity of Union Bay (UB) and its fragile ecosystem:

- infestation of invasive aquatic plants;
- shoreline habitat degradation by nutria (an invasive mammal), and
- a shallow bay made worse by ongoing sedimentation from sewage overflows, fertilizer use, and erosion.

These problems contribute to algal growth, high water temperatures, low oxygenation, high phosphorus, and wetland degradation. These elements combine to hasten eutrophication. Save Union Bay Association (SUBA) is in the process of developing an Integrative Aquatic Vegetation Management Plan (IAVMP) for Union Bay. Our priority is to preserve the health of the UB ecosystem by managing the invasive aquatic plants, enhancing the habitat, and improving the aquatic ecology.

C-011-006

It is important to understand this situation in order to gain perspective. It is our belief that bridge construction will result in increased use of the bay north of the

C-011-006

work corridor. All species will react to and cope with construction activities by moving away from the construction zone. It is most likely that they will look nearby for suitable habitat, migration routes, feeding and nesting grounds and recreation (humans). Hence, they will be drawn to the north-northwest side of Union Bay because it closely resembles the wetlands near SR520.

The current problems of UB (invasive aquatic plants, nutria denuded shoreline, shallow depth and poor water quality due to recent CSO overflows) will make it more difficult for species to use the bay. Many waterfowl and fish have deserted the wetlands of UB north of SR520 because there is not access due to overgrowth of invasive aquatic plants, and there is inadequate shoreline vegetation for protective cover from eagles and other predators. It is important to understand how all of the features of the bay interact in order to accomplish bridge construction while providing adequate resources for the species impacted by the construction. For example, although restoration of UB wetlands may partially mitigate wetland loss near SR520, if the waterfowl and fish can not access the wetlands due to milfoil and waterlily mats, then the habitat addition will be meaningless.

C-011-007

In the following statement, we respond to each of the Elements of Nature described in the SDEIS which SUBA believes will have impacts on species, wetlands, and recreation outside of the work corridor. There was no discussion in the SDEIS of impacts beyond the work corridor in UB. Our suggestions for mitigation address the three problems we believe are impacting the bay and thus, would affect movement of species from the work corridor into the rest of the bay. Because construction will impact habitat, we suggest that mitigation be performed before construction begins to eradicate the invasive aquatic plants within and near the work corridor so that construction will not spread invasive plant fragments throughout Union Bay. We are defining work corridor as that area within the project footprint which includes boat and barge travel corridors, anchoring locations, temporary work platforms, as well as the construction footprint, from the southwest end of Portage Bay to the east end of Lake Washington. Providing alternate nesting sites for protected birds/waterfowl nesting within the work corridor and improving wetlands in Union Bay (invasive species control) would enable fish and wildlife species to locate and begin to adapt to new habitat before construction displaces them.

Overview of Union Bay Environment and Ecological Concerns

C-011-008

Union Bay is at the west side of Lake Washington where Lake Washington empties into the ship canal. Union Bay (UB) is in a shallow glacially carved basin covered by a deep layer of peat. It has a surface area of 985,000 squared meters and ranges in depth from 3-12 ft except where it has been dredged to 30 ft in the navigation channel. Union Bay has the largest green belt in the city along its shoreline; its shorelands provide rich habitat and yet half of this natural area sits on top of a toxic dump site. Over 2/3 of the shoreline is state/city property. 100 residential properties also front Union Bay.

C-011-008

Union Bay is a favorite spot for recreation. Water sports enthusiasts crowd the bay. People sail, canoe and kayak in UB to explore the inlets around the Arboretum and the Union Bay Natural Area (UBNA); to observe birds and waterfowl; and for enjoyment. Often UW students will rent canoes and paddle to a shaded shoreline to picnic and swim. Hikers and bicyclists use the trails around Union Bay. The Arboretum and Foster Island as well as the UBNA host many people from birdwatchers to sports teams jogging down the paths. In the Laurelhurst neighborhood, there is public shoreline access at Belvoir Park and Waterway #1. Many people launch kayaks or canoes from these sites. Motor boats also fill the bay, whether anchored and enjoying water sports; slowly moving while fishermen cast their lines; or traveling through the bay.

Union Bay and its shorelands host a variety of ecosystems from open water to wetlands and from prairie to forest. It provides habitat for many species of mammals, amphibians, birds, reptiles, and fish. There are several species federally listed as threatened (ESA). Others are protected by the Migratory Bird Treaties. There are over 200 species of birds and waterfowl that either live here or migrate through on an annual basis.

There are three major problems in Union Bay that have affected the ecology of UB and hastened eutrophication. It is important to understand these issues to fully appreciate the impact of the SR520 construction project.

Non-native invasive aquatic plants (Eurasian watermilfoil, Brazilian elodea, fragrant waterlilies, and purple loosestrife) have changed the water quality, interfered with recreational uses, and severely affected waterfowl and fish habitat in Union Bay.

Milfoil was first introduced into Lake Washington in 1974. By 1985, 50 acres of Union Bay were infested with milfoil. By 2007, 75% of Union Bay contained well-established milfoil stands. Dense stands of milfoil interfere with all recreational uses (sailing, swimming, canoeing, motor boating) and destroy the natural ecosystem. In the summer, their density in the water as well as floating fragment mats prevent adequate water circulation, resulting in increased water temperature, decreased oxygenation, increased algal blooms and degraded habitat for fish. This makes it very difficult for juvenile salmon to survive throughout Union Bay.

Although milfoil is the primary invasive aquatic plant in Union Bay, fragrant water lilies also heavily infest the bay. By 2007, they extended out 30 feet from the western shoreline forming a thick dense mat. These plants interfere with recreational uses and ecosystem balance due to their density. The thickly matted waterlilies create a threat for waterfowl because it forces them to swim in open water, further from shore, making it more difficult for them to hide among shoreline reeds and making them easy targets for the eagles that nest along the shore. Waterlily mats also provide shelter for salmonid predators.

C-011-009 | A second problem area is erosion and destruction of the shoreline by nutria, a non-native invasive rodent. They have eaten roots of native plants denuding the shoreline of plants needed to hold the dirt in place. The loss of reeds, cattails and other native wetland plants has had a devastating effect on the ecology of the area. The loss of plants has meant a loss of shelter and nesting areas for waterfowl and birds. The increase of erosion into the lake has decreased water habitat for fish.

C-011-010 | The final problem is sedimentation which has resulted in the lake becoming shallower. A large portion of sedimentation has occurred secondary both to milfoil and waterlily mats binding into mud islands and also from nutria burrows and denuded shorelines collapsing into the water. Sedimentation has also occurred because there are several CSO outfalls that drain into UB and overflow during periods of heavy rain. For example, measurements of the lake bottom during high water in June, reveal that directly in front of the Belvoir outfall, there is no change in depth since 1980 but in the area where the outfall currents reduce and dissipate, the depth has been reduced from 5ft to 2.5 ft. There have been two major sewage overflows into Union Bay. One (Belvoir outfall), in 1988, released 5 million gallons of raw sewage into the bay. The second one (University Slough), in 2008 released 8 million gallons. The frequent CSO overflows and the major sewage spills have contributed to eutrophication because they have created a nutrient rich environment for aquatic plants to flourish, have been responsible for algal blooms (including cyanobacteria-toxic blue green algae), and have decreased the overall depth of the lake. Run-off from residences and other property around the lake have also increased the phosphorus load in the bay and contributed to water quality degradation and sedimentation.

C-011-011 | Save Union Bay Association is addressing the problems of invasive aquatic plants and shoreline destruction by nutria. Since 2009, we have been working with USDA Wildlife Division to eradicate nutria from UB. Over 250 nutria have been removed from the bay. The USDA is also doing research into shoreline restoration of the areas damaged by nutria. In February 2010, SUBA received a grant from the Washington State Department of Ecology to develop a plan to reduce and manage milfoil and other invasive aquatic vegetation in UB. We contracted with Herrera Environmental Consultants to perform an aquatic plant survey and to write an IAVMP (Integrative Aquatic Vegetation Management Plan). This integrative lake management plan will provide an overview of the problems of UB and their interrelationships and present an on-going solution. It will provide a template for ecological stewardship of UB. The plan should be completed by August 2010. We will then apply for an implementation grant from DOE.

SDEIS Omissions

C-011-012 | There was no mention in the SDEIS of impacts of bridge construction or lane alternatives on the ecosystem of Union Bay outside the work corridor. (We are defining work corridor as the entire project footprint which includes boat and barge travel corridors, anchoring locations, temporary work platforms, as well as the construction footprint.) Our position is that the entire bay area will be affected by many of the elements described in the SDEIS. The SDEIS described impacts from construction on species inhabiting or migrating through the work corridor but it did not discuss how the species will cope with the 7-10 year construction project. SUBA contends that, as habitat near SR520 is impacted, the species using that area will move to other areas of Union Bay where similar wetland habitat exists. These wetland areas are degraded more than the southern shore within the SR520 corridor because there is less water mixing, less boat traffic, and more invasive species. The north residential shoreline contains some shoreline habitat restoration but the salmon are unable to nest there due to the area in front of these properties being clogged with milfoil, waterlilies, and algae. In addition, not mentioned in the SDEIS is the impact simply from construction itself- the movements and voices of people and machines creating noise, waves, and air-ground movement. These activities will frighten many species and result in their distancing themselves from the source of this activity. (e.g., Currently, waterfowl on the bay may be content to swim or nest near SR520 despite the car movement on the bridge but, as people and machines line the sides of the bridge or during pile driving, these species will seek calmer waters.)

The SR 520 project FEIS should contain information about the impacts to all of Union Bay and proposed mitigation to facilitate species continued existence on UB.

Impact of Bridge Construction on SUBA's Three Priority Areas

C-011-013 | Save Union Bay Association has identified the major problems in Union Bay and is working to manage and solve them. Our top priority is to reduce the infestation of milfoil. We believe that, when the density of invasive aquatic plants is reduced, then the water will circulate better improving oxygenation, temperature, and nutrient load. Improving the aquatic ecosystem should make UB more hospitable to fish- especially to salmonids- which currently are unable to travel through most of the bay due to thick aquatic plant growth and high water temperature. The direct impacts of bridge construction on our priority areas are:

1. Invasive aquatic plants. The SR 520 work corridor is choked with milfoil. Milfoil spreads and re-roots from stem fragments. As work is undertaken in this area, these plants will be disturbed and fragments will float to other parts of UB and propagate. Barges and other boats bringing in supplies for bridge construction will probably bring in milfoil fragments from Lake Union and will probably break off stem fragments from the milfoil in Union Bay. This disruption will also create more milfoil infestation in UB.

C-011-014 | 2. Shoreline-habitat destruction. Nutria and beaver live near SR520. SUBA is currently undertaking a nutria eradication program to deal with the shoreline destruction caused by this invasive mammal. As their habitat is destroyed/impacted by SR520 construction, they will seek new habitat away from this area- most likely along the University of Washington shoreline. We have already eradicated the nutria from this area and are now focusing our efforts on the Arboretum and Portage Bay. Movement of nutria back to the UW will result in more shoreline destruction. There are three beaver dams in the work corridor. The USDA biologists believe that the beaver were impacted by human activities on Foster Island and moved their dam to a more remote location between the cattails in this same general area. Every time beaver move, they take down many more trees to build their home. Bridge construction will impact the beaver living next to SR520 such that it is likely they will move again. The closest habitat is in UB north of the work corridor.

C-011-015 | 3. Lake biochemistry and sedimentation. SUBA is concerned about the rich nutrient substrate in Union Bay. The spongy peat bottom is indirectly impacted by any nearby construction vibration and weight. Sedimentation, run off and spills impact the lake's biochemistry and contribute to algal and invasive plant growth. Because Union Bay is shallow with poor water quality in many areas, SR520 construction is likely to have a greater impact on UB than Lake Washington.

Proposed Additions to the SDEIS and Requested Mitigation

C-011-016 | Save Union Bay Association's primary concern is the environmental impact of bridge construction on Union Bay. Construction of any of the 6 lane alternative options will impact the environment, slightly more or less depending on the option eventually chosen. Our perspective is that, given the problems currently facing Union Bay, without intervention, the bay will not be able to support the changes engendered by SR520 construction. We need to improve habitat throughout UB and improve access to the area north of the work corridor before bridge construction occurs to enable species to relocate and thrive during construction. SUBA is concerned that construction of SR520 will have bay wide impacts within the following elements of the environment:

C-011-017 | 1. Recreation
Construction will impact water recreation by limiting small craft access to wetlands around SR520. Canoeists and kayakers will probably explore the wetlands north/northwest of SR520 instead. Larger boats will also be impacted because many of them anchor along the 520 corridor during UW football games or simply during warm summer days. The logical response of boaters during construction is to motor north of the construction area. Large boats as well as small craft will probably move to the N-NW side of UB to be further from the noise, dust, vibration, glare, and accidental damage from construction equipment. Construction will also impact people enjoying nature on the south shore (Arboretum, Foster Island, Montlake Park). Some of these paths will be closed during construction. People visiting the open areas along the Arboretum

c-011-017 | shoreline will be impacted by noise, dust, vibration, and reduced visual quality. Most people will visit the UBNA on the northwest shore of Union Bay instead. At UBNA, they can have a similar experience as they would have had at the Arboretum (hiking, biking, bird watching, viewing the lake and mountains). People will also utilize the other shoreline parks/access areas on the north shore (Belvoir Place Park, Waterway #1, Waterway #2). More people using UBNA and these other areas will result in more auto traffic in the neighborhood and more degradation to the land and shoreline as people utilize the area.
Mitigation: Improve boat access throughout Union Bay. Work with UW/UBNA to maintain the integrity of their restoration efforts. Work with Seattle Parks Dept and DNR to maintain integrity of the other areas and to improve boat access to them.

c-011-018 | 2. Noise
Noise and vibrations will impact all species in the area. Despite all efforts at noise reduction, noise will still be loudest at or near the construction site dissipating with distance. All species will seek habitat areas/migration routes that are further from the source of the noise and vibration
Mitigation: Improve access and habitat on the N-NW side of Union Bay. Provide gravel areas for Chinook salmon nesting and provide access to these areas (ie., decrease milfoil, waterlilies, and blue-green algae). Recommended areas for habitat enhancement are described under the "ecosystem" element. Improve N-NW areas frequented by people who are avoiding the southern shoreline.

c-011-019 | 3. Air Quality
People (boaters, trail walkers) and other species will be affected by air quality/dust close to the construction site. They will seek areas further from the site, most likely the north and NW side of Union Bay. (e.g., UBNA, Belvoir Park, Waterway #2 and Waterway #1).
Mitigation: Improve access and habitat on the N-NW side of UB.

c-011-020 | 4. Water Resources
Construction will result in increased water turbidity at the construction site. Sediments may be removed from the bay as part of the construction activities such as dewatering. Fish and other swimming/diving species will be affected by the turbidity and will move away from the construction site in search of cleaner water and to escape predators.
Mitigation: Improve access and habitat in UB

c-011-021 | 5. Ecosystems
Construction and implementation of any option will reduce or disturb fish habitat, displace state and federally listed bird species, and affect wildlife by removing vegetation. Loss of wetlands, shading from the new bridge, removal of vegetation, and pile driving will all reduce wildlife habitat. Night lights, vibrations, and run off contaminants will affect water quality, species survival and salmon migration. In addition, these changes will cause disorientation and stress in all

c-011-021 | species and can alter their natural behavior. Species will disperse to similar habitats located in UB.

c-011-022 | Mitigation: To decrease the impact of SR520 construction on species and wetlands, it is suggested that you mitigate the ecosystem affects before bridge construction begins. In this way, species can begin to adapt to new environments under favorable conditions. Specific mitigation suggestions include:

- Preserve nesting sites of protected migratory birds and waterfowl. It is suggested that you create new, compensatory nesting sites and put these in place by 2011- before construction begins. It is suggested that you help train the species to relocate to these new sites. In this way, they will be able to learn new behaviors in a relatively stress free environment. Trying to discover a new nesting site while construction is occurring- with noise, new obstructions, dust, and humans in the 520 work corridor would be very difficult for the migratory Canada geese and cliff swallows and would probably result in death of several birds. SUBA would like SR 520 Mitigation Specialists to work with USDA (Justin Dayton and Aaron Loucks) and other knowledgeable experts to determine appropriate relocation sites and nesting areas.

c-011-023 |

- Reduce milfoil in the 520 work corridor (which includes boat and barge travel corridors, anchoring locations, temporary work platforms, as well as the construction footprint) from Portage Bay to the east end of Lake Washington. Milfoil and other invasive aquatic plants are a major problem within Union Bay. Milfoil spreads by plant fragments whereas waterlilies spread by root deposits. Construction will cause disruption/uprooting to these invasive plants located within the SR520 work corridor. Plants will be loosened by actions ranging from pile driving to water transportation of materials around the site. It is pointless for SUBA to work at reducing milfoil in the center of UB (to improve access and habitat throughout the bay) if, at the same time, SR520 construction is increasing milfoil fragments. It is recommended that SR520 program eliminate invasive aquatic plants in the 520 work corridor and adjacent environment before construction activities begin. It is recommended that SR520 continue to work with SUBA during construction to monitor milfoil and assist in removal of invasive aquatic plants.

c-011-024 |

- Preserve habitat, migration, and reproduction of federally listed migratory fish. Because of construction effects of noise, turbidity, vibration, human activity, shading, and wetland destruction, it is reasonable to assume that the fish will alter their migratory/ habitat routes through UB to the N-NW of the construction. Because construction is a 7 year endeavor, there will be long- term effects on fish if they are not enabled to survive in the N-NW waters of UB. Due to the current conditions of UB, survival would be limited. High water temperature, low oxygenation, overgrowth of milfoil, shallow water, and poor habitat make the N-NW area of UB inhospitable to salmon. To improve the viability of salmon in UB, it is recommended that SR 520 project:
 - Reduce milfoil and other invasive plants.

C-011-024

- Improve the wetlands, including the islands in the NW corner of UB. It is quite likely that, in some areas of nutria-denuded shoreline, shallow gravel areas could be created to provide spawning grounds for Chinook Salmon. This NW corner (waterway #2) used to connect to streams up which the salmon would migrate.
- Present an education program to waterfront owners describing the effects of their shoreline on fish nesting/predator protection.
- Work with homeowners to modify their shoreline to establish beach areas/shallow gravel areas for salmon spawning grounds.
- Improve access to the private property shorelines that have been restored to provide salmon spawning areas. (reduce milfoil)
- Improve access to Waterway #1 that has been restored to provide salmon nesting areas. (reduce milfoil, waterlilies, blue green algae, and other algal growth.)
- Improve access to the University Slough up which salmon migrated in the past. (reduce milfoil, waterlilies, blue green algae, and other algal growth.)
- Modify the shoreline and dock of Belvoir Place Park and naturalize it so it can provide salmon habitat.
- Improve access to Belvoir Place Park. (reduce milfoil and waterlilies)
- Improve access, wetlands, and shorelands along the south shore of Union Bay near Madison Park

C-011-025

- Compensate for wetlands lost during SR 520 construction. Most of Union Bay north of the shipping lanes is considered wetland due to the shallow depth (less than 6 feet) and vegetated cover. The entire Bay should be under consideration as a wetland mitigation site. The removal of invasive species would be similar to the wetland enhancement opportunities discussed in the SDEIS. The only change would be to extend the boundary of the wetland mitigation sites under consideration to the shipping lanes (towards the project area).
- Restore Shorelines damaged by Nutria. On the NW corner of UB is a small inlet that closely resembles the wetland area near SR520. This wetland is currently devastated due to nutria damage. It is suggested that this wetland be restored so that species can find suitable habitat located nearby during SR520 construction. Without the wetland vegetation, this area is no longer safe for nesting because it is too accessible for eagles and other predators. It is recommended that you work with USDA, DNR, and UW shoreline restoration experts to improve the shoreline vegetation and to improve aquatic access to this area.

C-011-026

6. Geology and Soils: Cofferdams, pile driving, and other construction activity will cause sediments to spread within UB. Union Bay is very shallow. An increase in sedimentation will hamper aquatic species survival.
- Mitigation: It is recommended that any sediments removed from the bay not be replaced. Improve access throughout Union Bay so aquatic species can avoid the dangers associated with shading and turbidity.

C-011-027

7. Hazardous Materials: Contaminated sediments exist in Union Bay.
Mitigation: It is recommended that any hazardous sediments encountered during construction be removed from UB.

C-011-028

8. Navigation: Construction along the shipping lanes in Union Bay will cause many motorboats to travel slightly further to the north of the construction corridor. Union Bay is very shallow and infested with milfoil. It is likely that boats will have their motors clogged with milfoil or get stuck as they attempt to distance themselves from construction effects (noise, activity, barges).
Mitigation: Reduce milfoil and improve accessibility to UB north of the construction area. Maintain navigable channels through UB.

Conclusions

C-011-029

Currently, Union Bay is facing several problems that are increasing eutrophication. The construction of the SR520 bridge will add to the degradation that the bay is experiencing by destruction of habitat on the southern shorelands and relocation of species to the north of the work corridor. In order to accomplish construction with minimal impacts, it is important first to improve the aquatic ecology of UB. All habitat in Union Bay will be impacted to some extent by noise, vibration, light, and activity within the construction zone. As species distance themselves from the noxious intrusions within the construction area, they will seek habitat nearby- north of the work corridor. Because UB is so heavily infested with milfoil, it will be difficult for aquatic species to survive in the shallow, warm waters of the center-north side of UB. The highest priority to compensate for bridge construction is to reduce the milfoil that is choking the bay. The second priority is shoreline restoration to improve wetland habitat in Union Bay and improve the natural shoreline along the north shore private residences and parks.

Save Union Bay Association wants to work with the SR520 Mitigation Specialists to find ways to minimize ecosystem impacts during bridge construction and to maintain and improve the aquatic environment once the new bridge is in place.

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From: Earl Bell [mailto:earljbell@hotmail.com]
Sent: Friday, April 09, 2010 8:02 PM
To: SR 520 Bridge SDEIS
Subject: SDEIS Distribution List

C-012-001

Our organization, the University Park Community Club, submitted comments on the original DEIS. We are concerned that we were not included on the Distribution List for the SDEIS.

Our position is quite congruent with WSDOT's but, if it were otherwise, we should not have been excluded. Please be sure to add our Club to the list.

Earl J. Bell
UPCC Treasurer

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From: Pete Delaunay [mailto:pete@delalaunay.com]
Sent: Monday, April 12, 2010 4:49 PM
To: SR 520 Bridge SDEIS
Cc: 'Anne Preston'; 'wendy delaunay'; 'trish gasparich'; 'lynn rovig'; 'Torri Canda';
'stacey hammond'; 'the jennings'
Subject: SR 520 DEIS Comment
Importance: High

**Portage Bayshore Association,
2524 Boyer Ave. E. -- Seattle, Washington 98102
www.portagebayshore.org**

April 12, 2010

TO: WSDOT – SR 520 DEIS
FR: Pete DeLaunay, President, Portage Bayshore Condominium HOA

RE: Opposition to WSDOT SR 520 DEIS and Construction Option A

C-013-001 | The Bayshore property is located in the Portage Bayshore neighborhood of Seattle -- and just south of the existing Portage Bay viaduct -- on Boyer Ave. E. The Bayshore property is a community of 24 condominium units and 30 moorage slips, 15 of which are located under the building which extends over the water. The building's foundation/marina footings were installed when the building and marina was constructed in 1958. SR 520 construction will disrupt our property for several years. I am writing on behalf of condo and moorage slip owners to raise concerns about several topics not adequately addressed in the DEIS:

C-013-002 | 1. Noise Mitigation - The Bayshore property is well within 300 feet of the construction corridor at the Portage Bay viaduct. We request construction processes for noise mitigation during construction. **And bridge deck evaluation of 'quiet pavement' on the bridge vs. I-405 test; and use of sound walls on the sides of the Portage Bay viaduct.**

C-013-003 | 2. Bayshore Property Impacts: We request digital video of our current structure and mitigation for damage for dust/air quality from bridge removal as well as vibration on the Bayshore construction footprint/ pilings and the impact on the foundation and marina moorings.

C-013-004 | 3. Bayshore Marina Impact/ Access: The Bayshore property includes 30 moorage slips – just southwest of the existing SR 520 viaduct that accommodate recreational, non liveaboard, boats from 24ft to 40ft in length. We request mitigation of financial impacts and marina access.

C-013-005 | 4. Parking/Boyer Ave. Disruption: The Bayshore property owners and renters will be

C-013-005 | impacted by parking, congestion and potential closures of Boyer Ave. With Delmar closed for 9-12 months, increased. We request mitigation of Boyer Ave. traffic impacts from heavy equipment.

C-013-006 | 5. State Environmental Policy Act intentions: We request consideration of reclamation of the South Portage Bay environment. Original SR 520 construction affected the bay in many ways: silt build up, water quality, shoreline, native species, native plants, and salmon habitat. Reclaiming South Portage Bay with removal of silt, invasive plant life, restoration of shoreline (see www.fabnia.org) and better recreational access will provide an important dimension to Seattle's urban quality of life.

Thank you for your attention and response to the issues we have raised on behalf of 40 owners who respectfully request your vigilance to mitigate impacts of the SR 520 project fairly.

C-013-007 | We believe WSDOT is biased, as we believe local officials and agencies of government are under pressure from business interests anxious for mass cross-lake transit at any cost. Thus WSDOT has controlled the release of information only favorable to the least costly option.

C-013-008 | Option A does not have the "broad-based support from local communities" that WSDOT asserts. The legislative workgroup's recommendation to put 7 lanes across Portage Bay, ignores our neighborhoods, and the Seattle City Council's resolution that calls for no more than 6 lanes.

C-013-009 | Option A ignores our concerns to mitigate highway noise. Although WSDOT convened an expert panel on noise, there is no provision in Option A for any noise-abatement systems.

C-013-010 | Option A adds a second drawbridge across the Montlake cut, destroying homes (some of which may be historic). And it fails to improve transit speed or reliability and overloads the intersections on either side. WSDOT's own analysis predicts the volume of traffic able to cross the cut will not increase beyond what can cross it even if we do nothing at all.

C-013-011 | Option A ignores years of cooperative work with WSDOT to build a 21st century highway vs. just laying concrete at any environmental or health expense.

As a result hundreds of SR 520 adjacent neighborhood households are now unalterably opposed to the current proposals.

In conclusion, we urge you to respect Seattle's Portage Bay urban environment that integrates fragile shorelines, eagles, herons, beavers, salmon and perch with dense residential Seattle neighborhoods. Should our urban environment be

C-013-011

treated differently than old growth timber, rivers and streams, or endangered species?

We advocate 'building SR 520 right' this time. We seek a construction solution for a safer more efficient SR 520 bridge that respects our urban environment with quiet pavement, park like lids and mitigation of noise, dust, vibration, congestion and the impact of heavy equipment and traffic redirection in our urban neighborhoods. .

WSDOT A+ recommendation fails us. Noise, disruption, and a design that adds to the blight that most communities hope to reduce or eliminate. We urge you and the Seattle City Council to insist on a construction plan that genuinely mitigates noise and construction with a design that respects our urban residential environment.

From: VGunby@aol.com [mailto:VGunby@aol.com]
Sent: Monday, April 12, 2010 9:01 PM
To: SR 520 Bridge SDEIS
Subject: Fwd: Ravenna Bryant Community Association's SR 520 SDEIS
Comments

Dear SR 520 Environmental Manager Jennifer Young,
I sent this Comments package with 2 files from the Ravenna Bryant Community Association and found that the address that I used in the SDEIS which was sr520comments@wsdot.wa.gov was returned to my SPAM file.

So I am resending to you by a forward. Please confirm/reply that you have received this e-mail forwarded to you and with and the two attached files.

Thanks!

Virginia Gunby, SR 520 Representative Ravenna Bryant Community Association
vgunby@aol.com

*** eSafe1 scanned this email for malicious content ***
*** IMPORTANT: Do not open attachments from unrecognized senders ***

Jennifer Young, Environmental Manager
SR 520 Project Office
600 Stewart St., Suite 520
Seattle WA 98101

Dear SR 520 Environmental Manager Jennifer Young,

Attached are two files, one prepared in 2008, outlining constituents interests on SR 520 issues and the other signed by the President Jody Chatalas, with the RBC's Public Comments and Concerns on the SE 520 2010 SDEIS.

Thanks you for WSDOT's review and we urge that the west-side project be started as soon as the Final SEIS is completed, so that the project can move on to construction "On Time and On Budget".

Yours truly,
Jody Chatalas, President,
Virginia Gunby, RBCA's Westside SR 520 Representative

Ravenna Bryant Community Association
*** eSafe1 scanned this email for malicious content ***** IMPORTANT: Do not open attachments from unrecognized senders ***

c-014-001

Letter of Support of Virginia Gunby on 520 Issues

This note will certify that our Board of Directors heard from you a request from the SR520 mediators that it will reconsider our earlier evaluation of SR 520 alternative designs as that we received a presentation of the East Montlake Interchange Concept also known as the Six Lane Single Point Urban Interchange with Tunnel under Montlake Cut or Option J for short. The presentation was made by Mark Stoner, a designer of the concept. Our board members also asked questions to understand it fully and then we discussed it. The consensus of our board was to retain our current stance. Our current stance is reflected in the Environment and Design principles set forth in Parts 3 and 4 of the document, entitled Communities Forming Agreements of SR520, dated January 15, 2008 also presented at our board meeting.

In 2006 City Councilmember Richard Conlin, then chair of the Seattle City Council Transportation Committee, made a presentation of the Pacific Street Interchange concept to our general meeting of community residents. He was followed by a presentation by Larry Sinnott of an alternate design of SR520 within its existing corridor but adding a parallel bridge to allow transit to cross the Ship Canal in its own lanes. After hearing both presentations, our residents by a near unanimous vote designated Larry Sinnott as our representative to speak to the City Council in favor of replacing the current SR520 with a four lane structure with transit only lanes added and of authorizing a parallel bridge for transit and widening Montlake Boulevard NE up to NE Pacific Street only.

During the City's Stakeholder Advisory Committee process, we joined with the other Northeast Seattle community and environmental organizations in endorsing the green alternative. We posted advance notice on our website and received community input beforehand and approval by residents afterward. As a condition to participating in mediation, our community association had to acquiesce to a six-lane concept with HOV lanes for SR520. Our board made that concession reluctantly over objections of many of our resident members. It did so on the understanding that we would participate to keep SR 520 and all its entrances/exits south of the Lake Washington Ship Canal and to oppose any widening of Montlake Boulevard of NE Pacific St. except in the immediate vicinity of a parallel bridge.

The voting public provides a good reference point for assessing the public interest. Our community association joined with most other northeast Seattle community associations in opposing Proposition 1 of the RTID on the November 2007 ballot due to its potential for funding SR520 with the Pacific Street Interchange. This confirms that our stance reflects our constituents and the public interest as shown by the public at a recent election.

We won't repeat our many reasons for our stance since you've stated them well during the mediation process. We think you're doing a very fine job on a difficult task and we appreciate everything you've done. Consider this a strong vote of confidence from our board.

Ravenna-Bryant Community Association
3/30/10
6535 Ravenna Avenue NE,
Seattle, WA 98115

RE: SR 520 2010 SDEIS COMMENTS and CONCERNS

C-014-002

In February 2008 the **Ravenna-Bryant Comm. Association**, wrote to the 520 Mediation group listing our Community Objectives for the SR 520 West-Side Project. We used our Objectives to provide comment on the 2010 SR 520 SDEIS. The A option, without the Arboretum Ramps is our Preferred 520 Design. It would be improved with new preferential transit lanes on city arterials and traffic lights on Montlake Blvd. E and NE, and Pacific St NE, and would speed transit service, particularly during the am and pm peak hours. Moving transit on the arterials will reduce 520's destined traffic on Montlake E. and stop the rebuilding the Ramp's in our largest, Olmsted designed city park. That is the "trade-off" we support and a refinement in the plan that is needed with the city of Seattle support and involvement.

C-014-003

In the SR 520 SDEIS some of our original objectives have been met, some haven't or their status is unknown. *With over 14,000 pages, including the Appendixes, it is a difficult document to comprehensively review.*

1. Our adopted objective of no more than four general-purpose lanes and two lanes for high occupancy vehicles for Transit has been met by both A and A+ designs. (The one difference between A and A+ is that A+ keeps the Arboretum Ramps.) The eight lane option was eliminated by the Governor. All of the SDEIS design options meet the six lane objective. RBCA supports the A option's west side design because it is more transit and environmentally friendly and within the \$4.65B Project Budget.
2. We oppose expanding the SR 520 on the west-side footprint to 8 lanes, due to the sensitive 1st class wetlands, endangered species-salmon run, protected tribal fishing treaties on Lake Washington, and public need to protect our adjacent large, unique, public park, the Washington State Arboretum and the Boulevard. (Section 2 (4) (b) (v) of the 2010 ESSB 6392 SR 502 bill passed and too be signed on 3/10/10, requires WSDOT to prepare an Arboretum mitigation plan, including wetland mitigation by 12/31/10 for the SR 520 FEIS.)

C-014-004

3. We have great concerns about the K Tunnel and L diagonal Bascule Bridge designs that impact the sensitive environment and have 520 entrances and exits located in park lands, and to and from SR 520 north of the Ship Canal. Both result in a significant increase in vehicle traffic on the north and north-east Seattle arterials and neighborhoods, which would be detrimental to the quality of communities and livability north of the Ship Canal.
4. We are pleased to learn in the SDEIS that proposed K, L & M designs are not financially or environmentally feasible. The unstudied new M proposal would require another year or more of design and study before a new SDEIS could be prepared and circulated. RBSA does not support any more delay or added public funds spent to study any west side designs that could relocate the existing 520 interchange further to the east in park lands, far from the crossroads.

C-014-005

5. Minimizing traffic impacts in the north and northeast neighborhoods is important for keep our communities livable and less congested. Our concerns includes: 25th and 35th NE, NE 45th, NE 55th, NE 65th, NE 75th, Montlake Blvd E. and NE Ravenna Blvd, Sand Point Way, and the entire group of streets surrounding the University of Washington, University Village

- C-014-005 | and Children's Hospital. *Not enough DEIS analysis is available on 520's impacts on local arterials.*
- C-014-006 | 6. RBCA and A design supporters in the SR 520 Mediation Group focused on Transit/HOV-related solutions for the new HOV lanes, staying within the budget and "doing the least harm". The result is our A west side design with HOV lanes.
- C-014-007 | 7. RBCA supports the city of Seattle SDOT's UW Area 2009 Project 32 Traffic Action Strategy that recommends installing variable Message Transportation Information sign(s) on Montlake Blvd.NE near NE 45th for north-end transportation users to learn about current 520-related traffic. Issues such as Montlake bridge openings, the LRT/BRT schedules for service east and south, or optional alternate non-congested modes/routes, HOV lane/riders pick-up area info, traffic back-ups on the SR 520 Portage Bay ramps to I-5, and other relevant Travel Information. If installed early and available on the web, the new information could replace the SDEIS suggested need for a new southbound HOV lane addition on Montlake Blvd.NE. from NE 45th to Pacific St NE.
- C-014-008 | 8. RBCA opposes a proposal in the SDEIS to add a HOV lane on southbound Montlake Blvd NE. This project should be postponed until there is improved Traffic Information and signs operating. to help reduce SOV trips through this congested area. **If ever built**, the arterial HOV lane should only use right-of-way on the east side of Montlake Blvd.NE, from Pacific St.NE to NE 45th. Large trees, adjacent to the Burke Gilman Bike/Ped trail, should not be removed on the west side of Montlake Blvd.NE.
- C-014-009 | 9. The adjacent city arterial streets and SR 520 should fully embrace new pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicle safety, enhanced aesthetics, and a "**Complete Streets Plan**" with trip reduction Demand Management programs to promote transit, reduce and channelize traffic destined for E/W-SR 520, encourage walking, reduce street noise and CO2.
- C-014-010 | 10. We support the initiation of Pre-Construction-Tolling on 520 in 2011 as a way part to close the \$2.65 B gap in project funds, by having the users pay for the project. We urge a proactive SR 520 Transportation Demand Management (TDM) program that could to help to reduce the daily city arterial traffic jams and SOV trips and to use a part of the SR 520 Tolls to help subsidize the costs of increased and improved, sustainable Transit Operations on the SR 520 Corridor.
- C-014-011 | 11. The Puget Sound Regional Council's new adopted 2040 Regional Transportation Plan includes a new TDM program called (12) SMART Corridors for the 4-county Region. The new SMART Cross-Lake Corridor includes both SR 520 and I-90. Joint performance is monitored as part of the Corridor Management Program. The PSRC's program staff will review the multi-mode performance and efficiency for moving people, cars and freight on SR 520. The PSRC will prepare a long-term, integrated SR 520 Corridor Performance Plan, with performance objectives for all modes. Staff will, track and report on the overall performance, also reflecting the actual experiences of 520 users. Long and short term goals for SR 520's overall and modal performance objectives will be adopted. PSRC staff will report on whether the 520 goals/objectives were met annually, and recommend changes, if needed to improve performance for all users and modes. An annual SR 520 Performance Report would be made available to the adjacent communities, large employers, transportation Agencies and users of the 520 Corridor. The SMART Corridor Report would recommend changes, if needed, to improve the overall performance and to keep SR 520 performance sustainable over time.

C-014-012 | 12. RBCA supports an A design for 520 that works for transit, is environmentally sound, that reduces the impacts on the Arboretum by removing the Arboretum ramps permanently, protects our waterways, wetlands, fish, and wildlife habitat, and reduces Green House Gas global pollution. We learned recently from the Seattle Parks Department staff that McCurdy Park land will be entirely taken for SR 520 Right-of-Way. This is a major concern. We urge mitigation for the loss of McCurdy Park and on the landscaped McCurdy Lid, planned for over SR 520. The final design should not include any **Arboretum Ramps.** The new Trails planned for Lid should have user informational signage that indicates the history of McCurdy park, Mohai, the Monflake Cut and the historic Native cultural areas nearby and unique wetlands.

C-014-013 | 13. The RBCA's representative has been involved with 520 since 1997, first with the Translake Study and now with the recent west-side SR 520 studies. Our organization adopted a process objective of promoting a transparent 520 process to obtain all relevant information, including traffic studies, feasibility studies and details about how all major elements, including transit would be incorporated within the west-side design and plans. We find in that the SR 520 A design meets most of our objectives, after many hours of Mediation informational meetings and group discussions.
But the SR 520 SDEIS it is lengthy, encyclopedic, and does not focus on some major public issues such as Transit
Connectivity and reducing traffic on arterial streets near 520. We urge that the SR 520 FEIS be more succinct, and provide more details, answers and solutions for the major substantive and recent controversial SR 520 related issues.

C-014-014 | 14. Final Recommendations: We regret groups opposed to the A and A+ options have circulated misinformation about the SR 520 designs. SR 520 is a complex project with many details. The misinformation have seldom been corrected by the Press or at Public WSDOT Meetings. We also support more emphasis by WSDOT on plans with SR 520 to support increased transit use on SR 520 and I-90 state corridors. This includes:
A) New Plans for connecting **a multi-modal, west-side design between SR 520 and nearby local Seattle city arterials. For example-** Public Information on the new 520 related METRO local Bus routes/service, the Sound Transit's Bus Rapid Transit/Cross-lake routes/services, and the North Link LRT south routes, and how SR **520's impacts on land-uses and city arterial traffic congestion could be mitigated and reduced.** and
B) Preparing Public Information on the evolution of SR 520 from BusRT to Light Rail Transit. How will the SR 520's BRT use the center SR 520-HOV lanes, and what is the conversion Plan for moving BRT/HOVs out of the HOV lanes for the future LRT system. Is there a design for an LRT connection at Montlake Blvd., or to a less sensitive Corridor? and
C) **I-5 Express Lane Plan Revision** is needed to change the current connection and planned operations of the 520 HOV Lane into I-5 and from I-5 to SR 520 EXPRESS lanes to move more people all-day-on two-way HOV/Transit service on

the underutilized I-5 EXPRESS lanes.

C-014-015

RBCA reaffirms that **we are adamantly opposed to SR 520 ever widening SR 520.** We urge progress in the preparation of a long-term inter-local SR 520/I-90 HCT Cross-Lake Agreement. The Agreement is needed now on the new SR 520's 6-lanes, and the future Phases for LRT modes and vehicle operations. It should include the maximum width needed for LRT operations and must include no future widening of SR 520. The SR 520 LRT NOW! supporter's questions must be answered today, and for the next generation. Long range SR 520 Agreement policies should address the existing long-range LRT Plan, financing and protecting future adjacent communities including residents, the Arboretum, the historic Washington Park Arboretum and Blvd., the University of Washington Campus and the Medical School, and the city of Seattle's livability.

C-014-016

RBCA continues to be open to new ideas and to working positively with relevant organizations, entities and WSDOT representatives to achieve a consensus on the final SR 520 west side plan, so that it will be constructed soon, and be available for all involved communities, before a windstorm of earthquake damages the existing bridge and corridor.

Thanks for WSDOT's SR 520 staffing and for the opportunity to offer Public Comment on the 2010 SR 520 SDEIS issues and our related concerns.

Sincerely,

Jody Chatalas, President

520DEIS RavennaBryant32010.doc

File: SR

Ravenna/Bryant SR 520 Constituent Issues

DRAFT1/20/08

Background: Since last September, 35 SR 520 Mediation Stakeholders have been meeting in Seattle to study and agree on a design for the west-side of the rebuilt SR 520. The eastside of 520 has been designed by WSDOT to that community's satisfaction. It has precluded the west options for SR 520.

(520 is the longest floating bridge in the world, completed in 1963, 60' wide, (4 lanes with minimal shoulders) was structurally strengthened in the 1990s and has a life of less than 20 years, due to now obsolete construction standards, and does not meet earthquake and maximum wind standards. With leaking pontoons it is lower in the lake. The bridge and transition segment, plus the replacement of the Portage Bay Bridge to meet new standards is required. A straighter corridor with 4/2 new HOV lanes, wider shoulders, adds capacity for SOVs, in the new 4 mainline lanes, that HOVs used on old bridge.)

Range of Costs

Total Replacement Cost: Estimated to \$3.8-\$4.3B (Separate Budget Attach. 1)

The Current Ravenna/Bryant Community Association's constituent's interests:-

1. Oppose the Pacific Interchange (North of the Cut) design alternative, or any new incarnations that are located North of the Montlake "Cut"- (See "J" below) Mediators say Pac.Int is out.)

2. Actions to oppose any SR 520 design options that would increase traffic through the R/B communities, 25thNE and 35NE, NE 50th, NE65th and NE 75th .north end Communities.

--- a.) A related issue is opposing the proposed widening of Montlake Blvd., with at least 2 lanes, between Montlake/Pacific Place intersection and the University Village/NE 50th area..

Current Design Alternatives: The biggest problem so far has been that the Mediation process has been weak providing information promised last September, at our first meeting. (The Jan. 08 Meeting Summary removed the Retrofit option from the table. Maurice Cooper, sponsor, from the Madison Park Community, has withdrawn his support for this option.)

1. The "G" option is a proposed short tunnel or green lidded above water section, adjacent to Foster Island and the 1st ClassWetlands. One option removes the existing Arboretum ramps, and revises any new on/off ramps to the west. The "short tunnel, "G" would be used with either a 4-lane Retrofit option and a future 2-lane transit bridge if needed, or a new 4/2HOV-lane cross lake bridge. (Graphic of "G" option Attach 2)

+ Plus-Decreases noise, visual impacts, storm water pollution, least harm to Arboretum, improves habitat, adds significant green space from Montlake to Lake Washington, Berm reduces costs

-Minus- Permitting constraints, impact on fish of permanent fill, construction impacts, sensitive Seismic area, coffer dam dewatering and pilings down to 100' bedrock, Tribal concerns, costs, impact on Arboretum

2. The "J" option graphics was available at our last Board meeting. The designer of the extensive Montlake green lid, with a 7% grade tunnel under and up the other side of the ship-canal with a curves option was at the last R/B Board meeting with graphics of the proposal. It is on the Feb. Agenda as a new east 6-lane Bascule bridge (about

travelling east of west on SR 520 would enter on a new 6 lane south Stadium (parking lot) highway and it is not known how the bridge would interchange to move users to east and westbound SR 520 lanes from the Bascule bridge without creating another generation the Pacific Interchange,

+ Plus-Removes SR 520 traffic from the Montlake area to the south Uof W stadium.

Uof W doesn't support any portion of the SR 520 on the campus.

-Minus 7% grades are of tunnel, sharp curve to/from are difficult for buses, trucks and slows traffic

Bascule bridge is subject to openings for large vessels and sailboats, except at peak hours.

Transit service reliability is impacted. by bridge openings.

2. SR 520 V.Gunby DRAFT

3 Base-6 Options—WSDOT and Seattle's A-1, 2,3 with 4' narrower width design, 6 not 9 lanes across Portage Bay—Approx. width narrowest 138,' with 15'bike/ped lanes, w/o ramps, merge lanes etc the width would be wider. A WSDOT Montlake Design Workshop is to be held in March to discuss these options and any revisions to the area, to reduce noise, community and environmental impacts. Suggested additions have been:

*-East Transit ramps in/out the HOV lanes, Transit controlled traffic lights, reserved AM/PM

city arterial lanes for buses in the north end near the new ST Campus Transit Station

*-Stacked lanes to narrow corridor, lower profile,

*-Green lids over interchange,

*-Remove flyer stop/replace under over pass, Keep flyer stop

*-Emphasize transit/moving people to the new ST/LRT Campus station and into the new I-5 express lanes to and from the CBD,

*-A parallel Montlake Bridge with new access and egress ramps to sort out the east and west traffic at Montlake.

*-Eliminate "U" turn at Hamlin and Shelby

*-Noise walls good to reduce impacts, bad for visual impacts-

*-Storm-water collection and protection of the adjacent wetlands, parks and open space

*-Tolls, on SR 520/I-90 before, during or after construction

*-Managing construction to reduce impact on the surrounding community

*-GHG emissions reduction

Discussion Questions:

1. What are the Ravenna/Bryant community's priorities for the westside SR 520 Design?

2. What are your views on the process, or the options described?

3. What messages do you want to send back from this community to the Mediation members?

Other-

4. In light of the proposed construction of SR 520, the LRT Station and Tunneling, the Childrens Hospital expansion, the U of W stadium reconstruction and major development in the U village area Should Ravenna/Bryant request that the city initiate an Northeast Area Transportation Study ASAP?

FYI-Legal/EIS Issues

A.) A **2006 DEIS** was issued on the project with 4 options, e two 4-lane and two 6-lane options. "Base-6 and the Pacific Interchange appear to be WSDOT's options. The 2007 Legislature and the Governor in ESHB 6099, authorized *the Mediation of a 6-lane design option* on the west side. All prospective members of the Mediation were pledged to study only alternatives for the 6-lane option. This was after the 2006 DEIS, but before the SEIS and FEIS were completed or a "Preferred Alternative" was declared in Record of Decision ROD process.

(Note: The SR 520 "de facto" Preferred Alternative was decided prior to the completion of the DEIS/SEIS/FEIS or the finding of a Preferred Alternative.

B.) The University President was asked by the Gov. for the University stay "neutral" on SR 520 project, and not involve the staff or faculty in any study of the design that could have less impact on the campus facilities.

C.) A Pontoon DEIS Hearing was held on 1/17/09 in Gray Harbor WA on sites, technique and options for the construction of a "graving" dock to use for new pontoons, in case of the bridge sinking from a catastrophic storm. The description of the process states that starting this process will not preclude design decisions made by the Mediation. (Planning, Designing and Building early is estimated to save \$400 M.)

File:RavBryantSR520Constitissues12908.doc

From: Judith Thornton [mailto:thornj0@comcast.net]
Sent: Tuesday, April 13, 2010 10:46 AM
To: SR 520 Bridge SDEIS
Cc: billandlin@aol.com
Subject: Cultural Resources on Union Bay

TO: Jenifer Young
SR520 Environmental Manager
SR520 Project Office, Suite 520
600 Stewart Street
Seattle, WA 98101
or e-mail
SR520Bridge_SDEIS@wsdot.wa.gov.

Dear Ms. Young:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the need to protect valuable archeological sites during the re-building of Highway 520. I am a neighbor on Union Bay who happened to discover an archeological artifact, a mahogany red chert biface, in my garden above Waterway 1 on Union Bay. From this discovery, the Friends of Waterway 1 learned that Waterway 1 and many other locations on Union Bay are important sites of pre-contact historical resources. We are working with archeologists at the University of Washington and Burke Museum, with the Muckleshoot Tribe archeologist, Laura Murphy, and with Washington Department of Natural Resources aquatics archeologist Maurice Murphy to identify and preserve valuable cultural resources. We ask that WSDOT assure similar protection to cultural resources in its plans for Highway 520.

Thank you for your efforts on behalf of the historical and cultural resources of the city.

Judith Thornton
Friends of Waterway 1
and volunteer for Laurelhurst Community Club

cc. Colleen McAlleer,
Laurelhurst Community Club

C-015-001



Queen City Yacht Club

2608 BOYER AVE EAST SEATTLE, WASHINGTON 98102 (206) 709-2000

April 15, 2010

Jenifer Young
SR 520, I-5 to Medina: Bridge Replacement and HOV Project
Environmental Manager
SR 520 Project Office
600 Stewart Street, Suite 520
Seattle, WA 98101

RECEIVED
APR 14 REC'D
WSDOT - SR 520
PROJECT OFFICE

Dear Ms. Young:

We thank the Washington State Department of Transportation for the opportunity to comment on Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement (SDEIS) dated January 22, 2010 for the SR 520, Interstate 5 (I-5) to Medina: Bridge Replacement and High-Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) Project (also referred to as the SR 520, I-5 to Medina project)

Unfortunately in the absence of more construction detail the omissions and lack of specificity in the SDEIS have made it difficult to understand all the potential effects of the project.

Despite the vagueness of the present information about your project, we know enough to have significant concerns. Your project will impact each of our activities for numerous years of construction, and negatively impact our ability to attract and retain members. We will expect WSDOT to mitigate those impacts. We have grave concerns about the permanent impact of the project on our facility and business and we call on WSDOT to work with us to identify ways that such impacts may be avoided.

Queen City Yacht Club (Queen City) understands that the 520 bridge needs attention and is willing to work diligently and in good faith with WSDOT to create a safe and efficient solution to its many problems. If our concerns are considered in moving forward during the design phase we believe that many of the impacts to Queen City can be materially reduced or mitigated. If our concerns are not addressed at the design phase, on the other hand, the

C-016-001

C-016-001 | impacts to Queen City could be extremely severe, and could place us in a position of having to defend our ability to survive, to both our detriment and the detriment of the project.

C-016-002 | BACKGROUND:

We are enclosing our October 25, 2006 SR 520 DEIS Comment Letter, which will provide you with background on Queen City and its concerns with this project.

C-016-003 | Queen City is a nonprofit organization founded in 1916 making it one of the oldest civic organizations in the City of Seattle. It purchased its property on Portage Bay in 1934. Our facility consists of our clubhouse building, landscaped grounds, paved parking lot and a marina consisting of three docks containing 230 moorage slips. It is located in part of the Boyer and East Roanoke neighborhoods and currently has 480 members.

Our business model requires that we derive income from membership initiation fees, annual dues and moorage rents. The moorage facility is not only a critical generator of rental income in itself, but is a significant recruiting incentive for attracting new members, which generates new initiation fees. Similarly, our clubhouse generates important revenue from facility rentals. Our parking lot is important to serve both the moorages and clubhouse activities. In short, each part of our facility works with the other parts and depends on the other parts to keep the club viable as a whole. Physical impacts that disrupt the functioning of one part of our facilities may end up having a disproportionate impact on the viability of Queen City, because what may seem like a relatively minor physical impact, in fact damages the ability of the remainder of the property to function as it should.

OUR PRESENT CONCERNS

Because each of the elements of our property must work in concert with one another, even the temporary loss of any portion of our facilities caused by your project will have a materially detrimental effect on the functioning and potentially the survival of Queen City.

C-016-004 | 1. ENCROACHMENT ON QUEEN CITY FAILITIES

The State has openly stated, in advance of the comment period for the SDEIS, that it has selected Option A+ as the option it will build. The elements of this option are not described or discussed in sufficient detail in

C-016-004

the SDEIS and precise information about its elements has been difficult to ascertain. Without the information about the specifics of Option A+ we are hampered in our ability to comment on the draft SDEIS, and may not be able to determine what impacts Option A+ will have on the Queen City property until it is too late to provide meaningful comments. We believe this to be a violation of both NEPA and SEPA requirements.

Option A+ adds an additional 7th lane to the Portage Bay Bridge which places the new roadway outside of your current right of way and encroaches on our Dock 3 and possibly our parking lot. This is in contradiction of assurances given by WSDOT during the mediation process that the Portage Bay Bridge will remain within the existing right-of-way. While Queen City can accept proportionate expansion of the physical roadway beyond its current physical footprint, the bridge must remain within the WSDOT current right of way. Expansion beyond that footprint will encroach on our vital moorage property and thus result in a loss of critical scale in our moorage.

During the Mediation process and in several discussions WSDOT agreed to expand the Portage Bay Viaduct proportionately out from the center line of the current right of way in each direction. The SDEIS document is silent on this agreement. The SDEIS must either acknowledge that WSDOT continues to honor that commitment, or disclose the extent to which WSDOT now intends to violate it. Page 3-14 of the SDEIS describes the construction process for the Portage Bay Bridge as the building of a new bridge just north of the existing bridge then tearing down the existing bridge to build the remaining new portion south of the first portion. This construction method appears to be contrary to our agreements. We are further confused by the description on page 42 of the Construction Techniques and Activities Discipline Report which describes a completely different approach to the Portage Bay Bridge construction process. We request that WSDOT provide specifics on how the construction process can keep the new bridge center line on the existing center line and how it fits within the existing right-of-way. We request that this description be included in the final EIS and that WSDOT make a firm public commitment to this issue.

C-016-005

2. LOSS OF MOORAGE:

The Project Effects and Mitigation, During Construction, Land Use and Economic Activity Section (Executive Summary, Page 54) of the SDEIS acknowledges a temporary loss of boat slips at Queen City and states that

C-016-005

this loss would be mitigated through relocation or other options to be identified. In order for Queen City to survive, it is critical that specific information be provided at your earliest convenience to allow Queen City to identify just how much boat moorage will be lost, over what period, and what specific mitigation will be provided in order to identify future impacts to the functioning of the entire facility and to assist you in meeting our mitigation needs. "Other options to be identified" are of course part of what the EIS process is expected to accomplish. But to be adequate, the EIS must in fact identify the mitigation that will be provided. Identification of those "other options" cannot be put off until some later time.

As stated above, the loss of moorage has implications beyond the direct and immediate loss of moorage revenue and the displacement of existing members who currently utilize the slips to be taken. It can have a ripple effect impacting our ability to attract and retain membership and the viability of our facility as a whole. The impacts felt from this will last beyond the completion of the project and impact our viability for years to come.

C-016-006

3. QUEEN CITY ACCESS - BOYER AND EAST ROANOKE AND VICINITY

Road closures and detours are described in a general manner in your report. Your report states the conclusion that these are "not expected to have a substantial affect on SR 520 operations". (Executive Summary Page 39) This comment causes us concern. The purpose of the EIS process is to identify and deal with impacts not just to your highway, but also to the community surrounding it. Your conclusion that 520 operations will not be substantially affected by road closures and detours ignores the impacts of the project on the neighborhoods. For the SDEIS to be adequate it must disclose not only the impacts of the construction on the operation of SR 520, but also the impact on the operation of local streets that are affected by the construction and the ultimate reconfiguration of access to SR 520.

Your document does acknowledge that local street operations will be affected but provides only general statements on those affects. Access to our facilities is critical for our continued public and member operations. Your report does not provide sufficient detail to permit an intelligent analysis of these effects. For the SDEIS to be adequate, it must provide that information, and must describe the mitigation that will be provided to insure that our property remains accessible to our members throughout the construction process and after completion of the project. To the extent that

C-016-006

there will be periods when our facility is not accessible, or access is restricted, we need to know when those periods will be, and what mitigation will be provided as soon as possible so that we can make plans to protect our viability

C-016-007

4. TRANSPORTATION:

Queen City members and the public rely on reliable transit and lack of congestion to access our facilities. It is also possible that during construction Queen City members will need to rely on remote parking to access our facilities it appears that Boyer Ave. E. is a potential haul route, which may substantially change the accessibility of our facility during the construction period. The SDEIS notes that construction staging and schedules have not been determined and that WSDOT will continue to coordinate with local and regional transit authorities to determine haul routes and traffic detours. (See exhibit 6.1-3, page 6-6). To insure the continued viability of Queen City we request that WSDOT include us in those discussions and that the final decisions become a part of the construction bid documents issued by WSDOT to bidders.

C-016-008

5. NOISE:

During construction: Mitigation is required for residential areas if exterior noise levels are greater than 67dBA based on federal Noise Abatement Criteria. Pile driving and demolition of the Portage Bay Bridge will exceed 90 dBA within 200 feet of our club. (See exhibit 67.3 - page 6-70) Pounding will occur between 7AM and 7PM except Sundays and holidays from between 3 and 6 months.

After Construction: The City of Seattle maximum sound level between 7:00am and 10:00pm is 55 dBA.

The SDEIS states that because of these excessive levels noise measures must be considered. However, the SDEIS is vague on specific requirements or mitigation measures to be taken either during or after construction. We request that those options found in the "Noise Reduction Strategies Expert Review Panel Report Sept. 2008" become a part of the final EIS and included in the construction bid documents issued by WSDOT to bidders of this project.

6. VIBRATION:

All of the options call for the construction of temporary bridges using vibrating hammer pile driving equipment. The discussion of the affects of these operations and the mitigation procedures associated with them are incomplete. With all the pile driving and cofferdam dewatering so near to Queen City docks there is likely to be movement and settlement of our pile support structures

Insofar as we are aware, WSDOT has done nothing to ascertain whether the Queen City docks and pilings could be damaged or collapse as a result of the impact.

We request that procedures for mitigating the affects of vibration be addressed in the final EIS and become a part of the construction bid documents issued by WSDOT to bidders of this project.

C-016-010

7. PORTAGE BAY

The SDEIS is deficient in its analysis of the impact of your project on the historic and recreational use of Portage Bay, Union Bay and the Lake Washington Ship Canal by the boating public. It fails to recognize their role in maritime history and their status as premier recreational resources for swimming, boating, University crew training, sailing lessons, private canoes and kayaks as well as power boats, bird watching, nature walks, and access to the several marinas. The proposed expansion of 520 will take property from Portage Bay, and will also degrade the public's ability to enjoy the remaining property, because of the added height and doubling of bulk, threatening shadows, and noise. We request that WSDOT include analysis of the impacts of the project and mitigate the impact of construction to insure the continued use of these recreational resources.

C-016-011

8. OPENING DAY OF BOATING SEASON

We ask that the final EIS pay particular attention to eliminate interference with Opening Day of Boating Season activities in Portage Bay, Union Bay and the Montlake Cut. Queen City welcomes the opportunity to work with WSDOT to mitigate conflicts with this International event. In addition, boating activities by Queen City members and public participants occur

c-016-012 parks, or recreation areas or wildlife areas, can be approved only if there is no feasible and prudent alternative to using that land and if the project is planned to minimize harm to the property. The SDEIS has acknowledged Montlake Playfield Park as having 4f status but has failed to acknowledge 4f status and review of the substantial taking of other parklands, interfering with their use for wildlife and recreational purposes both on water and on land. The SDEIS also fails to prove that all reasonable alternatives have been evaluated. The SDEIS also fails to recognize additional protection provided under Section 6f for certain areas where federal funds have been used to create an amenity (such as the Arboretum Waterfront Trail) regardless of the land on which it resides.

c-016-013

11. INADAQUATE ANALYSIS OF ALL REASONABLE ALTERNATIVES

As noted elsewhere, the elements of Option A+ are not described or discussed in sufficient detail. In addition, Option M (a submerged tunnel concept) was presented at the same time as Option A+. WSDOT declined to conduct its analysis stating their concern for safety issues that could arise during the additional six months required to do the analysis. The SDEIS is also delinquent in providing analysis for a repair/retrofit option to address these safety issues now. Retrofitting could be done immediately, without waiting years for the funding to become available for the construction of the rest of SR 520. WSDOT has a proven and admirable record for seismic retrofitting bridges along the entire I-5 corridor and there is no reason that cannot be done here. Retrofitting will substantially reduce costs and limit environmental damage to little more than what exists today. We believe the failure to study these options is contrary to the purpose of an EIS and not in the best interests of the public or the environment. The public has the right to know and understand the design and its implications at the point when the public has a right to comment. In addition, we believe that the law requires that WSDOT disclose the actual A+ design in its entirety to identify its impacts and to identify mitigation. This has not been done and we believe that the SDEIS process and report are fatally flawed.

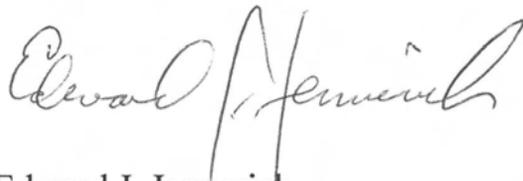
SUMMARY

In summary, Queen City recognizes that the SR 520 bridge replacement is necessary. It will also have potentially profound impacts on the Montlake area and Portage Bay both during construction and after it is completed. Without careful planning, it threatens the continued viability of Queen City Yacht Club. NEPA and SEPA require that before beginning a project with

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significant adverse environmental impacts, the agency in charge must disclose those impacts and describe the mitigation to be proposed. We recognize the challenge that presents for WSDOT, but the fact that the project has so many significant adverse environmental impacts is not a reason why the environmental disclosure can be less than what NEPA and SEPA require; to the contrary, it is a reason why the disclosures must be all that NEPA and SEPA require. We appreciate the opportunity to review and comment on the SDEIS and have a continuing interest in working with WSDOT to resolve the issues.

Sincerely,



Edward J. Jennerich
Commodore, Queen City Yacht Club

ENCLOSURES:

Queen City Yacht Club October 25, 2006 SR 520 DEIS Response Letter



Queen City Yacht Club

2808 BOYER AVE. EAST SEATTLE, WASHINGTON 98102 (206) 709-2000

October 25, 2006

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OCT 23 2006

SR 520
PROJECT OFFICE

C-016-014

Mr. Paul Krueger
Environmental Manager
Washington State Department of Transportation
SR 520 Project Office
414 Olive Way, Suite 400
Seattle, WA 98101

RE: Queen City Yacht Club Response to SR 520 DEIS

Dear Mr. Krueger:

We thank the Department of Transportation for the opportunity to comment on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the 520 Bridge Replacement Project.

We would like to comment on a number of items in this report that we perceive as impacting our property and comment further on impacts to the environment of Portage Bay. We understand that you have not yet designed this project to any great extent and we hope that you will take these comments into consideration in your design in order to minimize impacts caused by the project.

As discussed in this letter, the Project may have very serious impacts on the Queen City Yacht Club. If our concerns are considered in moving forward with the design however, we believe that many of those impacts could be materially reduced, if not eliminated, without adverse impact on either the cost or the functionality of the Project. Ignoring our concerns may have its own cost implications on the Project. We strongly encourage the Project team to work with us as the design progresses so that the Project can move forward in a manner that is maximally satisfactory to all.

1. Background. Queen City Yacht Club was founded more than 90 years ago, in 1916, making it one of the oldest civic organizations in the City of Seattle. The founding premise was that it was a club for boaters of moderate means, who wanted the sport of boating without unnecessary frills. That attitude has prevailed to date.

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Our Club is actively involved in numerous civic activities of importance to the community, as well as providing boating opportunities, social events and recreation for our members and their families. Today we have more than one thousand members.

In 1934, Queen City Yacht Club was able to purchase the property on Portage Bay at 2608 Boyer Avenue East. This unique property has been integral to the growth and development of the Club. The Club's property is irreplaceable, because in addition to owning the uplands, we own the submerged lands on which our moorage is built. These conditions would be difficult if not impossible to recreate anywhere in the Seattle area.

Our Portage Bay facility consists of our main clubhouse, landscaped grounds, paved parking lot and three docks containing 230 mooring slips. The clubhouse is a three story building containing approximately 9800 square feet of improved interior space. It was constructed by our members in the 1930's. In 1999, our members raised more than two million dollars in pledges from our membership to fully renovate the Clubhouse.

Our 230 slip moorage facility was largely built by our members. Our members perform almost all of the maintenance on the moorage. The moorage facility is one of the Club's most significant assets. It not only generates annual moorage rental revenue, but is a significant recruiting incentive for new members to join our club. The moorage at Queen City is known area-wide, as one of the best deals in boating.

Queen City Yacht Club is a non-profit organization which devotes its resources to serving the needs of its members, and providing boating education to the young people in our community. In order to meet its annual expenses, the Club depends upon the revenue obtained from dues from current members, revenue generated by moorage, and the revenue derived from attracting new members. The loss of any portion of our facilities caused by your project will have a severe and material impact on the survival of our organization. The impact from loss of use during the construction of your project could similarly hurt us. Thus we are most concerned about the amount of our property that the Project will require, and particularly its impact on Dock 3, our parking, and the clubhouse.

What we can see in your plans is that in each scenario you have moved your bridge any where from sixty to ninety feet north of its present alignment, which moves it directly onto and over our property. This portends the potential loss of our southernmost dock (Dock 3), a portion of our parking lot at least during construction, and a permanent impact on our facility by having the bridge nearer, if not over, our facility. A permanent loss of Dock 3 and significant portions of our parking lot will wreak havoc on both our immediate and long-term finances, and will permanently cripple our ability to regenerate membership which is vital to our long term survival.

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2. Consideration of Other Alignments and Properties. It appears to us that significant vacant or less-developed property lies to the south of your proposed alignment all the way from the west shore of Portage Bay to Interstate 5. However, the DEIS does not appear to give any consideration to an alternative alignment to the south, which could use that vacant or less-developed property and spare the Club's property, particularly Dock 3. If a more southern alignment has been considered, the DEIS does not disclose what specific consideration was given and why it is not presented as an alternative in this report.

The DEIS does comment on a desire to "straighten" the portion of the roadway that crosses Portage Bay. However, the diagrams on page ES1-14, suggest that the roadway jogs north at the Queen City Yacht Club, and would be straighter if the roadway were moved to the south, instead of to the north. In any event, the absence of assessing the impacts caused by the decision to move the roadway northward seems to ignore the weighing and balancing process that should be occurring at the DEIS stage.

We ask the State to remember, that you are building the Project in an urban environment where curves and alignments are frequently impacted by the need to deal constructively with project impacts. If there are benefits to the road alignment from it being pushed further north as you propose, those benefits should be compared to the cost and impact, including the impact that by potentially taking Dock 3, the Project may imperil the continued survival of the Club. The public and decision makers should be the ones to decide which impacts are most significant and which impacts should be avoided. But without the information, they can't do so.

The report also does not discuss what alternatives may exist to narrow the bridge at Portage Bay to avoid or lessen the impacts to our Club and to the environment. Is it essential to have full ten-foot shoulders at this location? It appears from the diagram on page ES1-14 that the east and west roadways are separated by some number of feet at the point of the Queen City Yacht Club. Is that truly necessary? Why? Because moving the Project even a few feet to the south could have the effect of preserving Dock 3, it is critical to the Queen City Yacht Club that there be a full consideration of all the alternatives that could move the alignment further south.

The assumed bridge alignment described in your report does not consider whether the existing alignment and right of way of the bridge could be utilized as the permanent alignment for the new bridge by the creative use of traffic detours and construction staging during the construction of the Portage Bay portion. Again, if that would be possible it could result in the maintenance of Dock 3, with significantly lower adverse impacts on Queen City Yacht Club.