

Meeting Summary

Advisory Group Meeting #7

July 18, 2012 • 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Old Redmond Schoolhouse Community Center, Redmond, WA

Organization	Representative (s) in Attendance
Aerojet	Dirk Lakin
City of Kirkland, Public Works	Rob Jammerman
City of Kirkland, Parks and Community Services	Linda Murphy
City of Redmond, Parks	Jean Rice
City of Redmond, Planning	Eric McConaghy
Evergreen Hospital	Lavon Weighall
Greater Redmond Chamber of Commerce	Danielle Lynch
Juanita Neighborhood	Ken Albinger
Lake Washington School District	Forrest Miller
North Rose Hill Neighborhood	Don Schmitz
Proctor International, Inc	Fred Proctor
Puget Sound Energy	Andy Swayne
Sustainable Redmond	Kathe Low
Willows Rose Hill Neighborhood	Tom Matthews

Other Attendees:

- Barry Lombard, Puget Sound Energy, Project Manager
- Jason Van Nort, Puget Sound Energy, Government and Community Relations Manager
- Jim Swan, Puget Sound Energy, Senior Real Estate Representative
- Carol Jaeger, Puget Sound Energy, Transmission Planning
- Kerry Kriner, Puget Sound Energy, Municipal Land Planner
- Elaine Babby, Puget Sound Energy, Senior Land Planner
- LaWana Quayle, Puget Sound Energy, Transmission Engineering
- Lindsey Walimaki, Puget Sound Energy, Communications
- Julia Hughes, Puget Sound Energy, Communications
- Terri-Ann Betancourt, Puget Sound Energy, Communications
- Lyn Keenan, GeoEngineers
- Penny Mabie, EnviroIssues, Facilitator
- Kat Ashbeck, EnviroIssues, Notetaker
- Rochelle Stowe, EnviroIssues
- Diann Strom, EnviroIssues

Meeting Purpose and Overview

The seventh stakeholder advisory group (SAG) meeting for the Puget Sound Energy (PSE) Sammamish-Juanita 115 kilovolt (kV) Transmission Line Project was convened in Redmond, Washington on July 18, 2012.

The meeting included an overview of the route alternative selection process to date, public comment, a SAG round robin about constituent feedback, and a report on key themes heard from the community via the online questionnaire, emails, phone calls and June community meeting comments. There was a quick overview of the Multi-Objective Decision Analysis (MODA) process and the SAG discussed which decision criteria they would use to analyze the route alternatives. The SAG engaged in the preferred route selection processes to determine one preferred route alternative for each segment: east of Interstate 405 (I-405) and west of I-405. The meeting concluded with next steps to plan for review of the SAG report outline.

Meeting Summary

Welcome, Introductions, Agenda and Safety Moment

Penny Mabie welcomed everyone, led a round of introductions, and reviewed the agenda. Penny explained the purpose of tonight's meeting was to finalize decision criteria for the selection of one preferred route recommendation, and conduct an analysis on the three route alternatives east of I-405 and two alternative end point segments west of I-405 in order to recommend one preferred route to the community and to PSE.

Barry Lombard, PSE Project Manager, thanked the group for attending, and asked Julia Hughes to give the safety moment. Julia introduced the safety moment and reminded attendees to wear sunscreen (SPF 50) and protective wear during these warm summer months, despite overcast and cloudy weather.

Public Comments

Penny invited the members of the public to address the SAG with their comments or concerns (for a maximum of three minutes). Their comments included:

- A recommendation that the SAG consider a route that would have the least impact by choosing a combined route using Alternatives 1 (west of I-405) and 3 (east of I-405).
- The project should impact businesses/commercial areas, and not community members; business owners may or may not live in the affected communities.
- Do not choose a route through the North Rose Hill neighborhood because homes are close to the street and the road has few sidewalks.
- Concerns regarding impacts of EMF on schools and residents.
- Do not choose a route that goes near schools or residential areas.
- Alternatives 1 and 2 require double-circuiting through the nursery; Alternative 3 that travels along Willows Road is more reliable.
- We appreciate the difficult job of the SAG and thank the SAG for their hard work.

- Choose Alternative 3 because it impacts schools and residents the least.
- Plans for a new hotel on 116th St would be impacted by Alternatives 2 and 3 (west of I-405). Choose Alternative 1.
- Choose Alternative 3 (east of I-405) ending with Alternative 1 (west of I-405). This would avoid Mark Twain Elementary School and health and safety impacts to students. A petition has been signed by the principal, teachers, and staff from the school.

SAG Constituent Feedback

Penny asked each SAG member if they had spoken with their constituents about the project.

Constituent feedback included:

- In the Redmond area, there are only four territorial view areas and Willows Road is the largest. Many business owners and workers enjoy traveling along this road en route to the Willows business corridor. Redmond's high tech view corridor is important for the tax base; it is a high tech jewel.
- Many people are interested in a combination of routes.
- Kirkland residents have expressed support for a Alternative 3/Alternative 1 hybrid route. The Kirkland City Council considered expressing a preference but decided to let the SAG selection process play out before choosing a route to support. The Council supports the Kirkland residents.
- Sustainable Redmond members respect the decision to keep environmental issues in mind throughout the decision-making process.
- Property owners (approximately nine) are specifically concerned about route alternatives that travel along 124th Avenue Northeast and 132nd Avenue Northeast.
- The right of ways and easements along Northeast 90th Street would have considerable transmission line activity. One SAG member has been contacted by a number of community members. Some feel that Willows Road is the best option between the Sammamish Substation and NE 124th Street going north-south.
- Aerojet continues to support the project and offered to let the new line cross the property.
- Many residents in the communities as well as board members at the Juanita Neighborhood Association support Alternative 3 (east of I-405) and Alternative 1 (west of I-405).
- The City of Redmond's view corridor code talks about view obstructing objects. Transmission lines do not obstruct views.
- The Lake Washington School District and surrounding community members do not want the transmission line by schools because of both health and other hazards. The central office prefers Alternative 3.
- The Greater Redmond Chamber of Commerce's government affairs committee will make a decision on their preferred route after the SAG meeting (tonight).
- A SAG member stated they represent residents east of 132nd Avenue NE. These residents prefer Alternative 3 on Willows Road. The view corridor code does not provide specifics about power poles.

- The City of Kirkland Parks Board feels that the route selection process is in depth and is interested in the outcome.
- Many agree the route selection process has been transparent and is defensible.

Key Themes from the Community

Penny explained that Envirolssues and PSE are keeping track of all of the comments, phone calls, emails, and online questionnaires. Since May 2012, more than 400 comments were received. Overall, several themes emerged:

- Avoid residential areas, playgrounds, parks, wetlands and schools.
- Use commercial and industrial areas to reduce impacts to residential areas.
- Combine alternatives and consider new route paths.
- Residential impacts are greater than impacts to City of Redmond's designated view corridor.
- Concerns about health, property values, aesthetics and safety.

Preferred Route Selection Process

Penny reviewed the preferred route selection process, the Multi-Objective Decision Analysis (MODA). MODA was identified at the last SAG meeting as the best method for selecting the preferred route.

Penny explained that the SAG will select decision criteria to use in the MODA. Discussions have already begun via email. Next, the SAG will rank the importance of each criterion in order to develop weighting for each. The SAG will then score each alternative against each criterion and then the weighting factors will be applied to develop final scores. Finally, the SAG will discuss and select a recommended route alternative based on the scores and the discussions.

To support the decision-making process, PSE provided the SAG with [data tables](#) based on the proposed decision criteria, as well as flowcharts describing the cities of Kirkland's and Redmond's [permitting processes](#), and copies of the City of Redmond zoning code on [view corridors and gateways](#) and the comprehensive plan's [Willows/Rose Hill neighborhood policies](#).

MODA: Validating criteria

Prior to the meeting, PSE recommended possible decision criteria for the SAG's consideration and individual SAG members made additional recommendations. The SAG discussed and adapted those criteria and decided on the following:

1. **Least proximity to community land use areas:** The location of the transmission line in relation to schools, parks, homes, etc.
2. **Least impact to mature vegetation:** The amount of mature vegetation that must be removed or trimmed for construction and operation of the transmission line.
3. **Least proximity to critical and designated areas:** The location of the transmission line in relation to critical areas such as wetland, streams, and steep slopes; and designated view corridors, Native Growth Protection Areas and Transfer of Development Rights, etc.

4. **Public support:** Public support for the transmission line route balanced against established Comprehensive and Functional Plans adopted by both cities.
5. **Opportunity areas:** The location of the transmission line in relation to the Kirkland railroad corridor, arterial streets (by classification or traffic counts), and existing utility lines/corridors
6. **Least proximity to commercial uses:** The location of the transmission line in relation to places of employment, businesses, stores, etc.

Comments about the criteria

- Eric McConaghy noted that many public comments have been related to electromagnetic fields (EMF) and asked if EMF is included in the first criterion, “least proximity to community land use areas.” He noted that if it was, that would be a change from earlier discussions about criteria. The group discussed the issue, and Ken Albinger noted that property values, clearing of trees and other issues related to residential areas are not listed in the definition of the first criteria. Penny asked the group if they were considering health concerns in the criteria and some responded that it was a broad criterion and encompassed many issues, while others did not consider health concerns as an issue at all.
- The SAG agreed to move sensitive land uses, including schools and parks, to proximity to residences (first criterion).
- The SAG decided to individually consider health concerns when scoring the route alternatives.
- The SAG discussed the need for having commercial criteria. Linda Murphy noted that people may change jobs easier than homes. Dirk Lakin stated that he has spoken with workers at Aerojet (approximately 120) and they have expressed no concern if the transmission line is in their general work area, but if it was placed in their neighborhood they would care a great deal more.

Questions

What is the definition of mature vegetation?

Elaine Babby, PSE Land Planner, introduced herself and explained that PSE manages the vegetation growing in their right of way. When considering maintenance around a transmission line, PSE suggests removal of plants and trees that reach 25 feet or are predicted to reach 25 feet in their lifetime. Usually, the zone is approximately 25 feet on either side of the lines.

Elaine commented that PSE’s [Energy Landscaping](#) brochure has more information on vegetation management specifics.

Is there data we can refer to regarding numbers of residences and commercial businesses?

Kerry Kriner, PSE Land Planner, shared [additional data](#) outlining the number of businesses that are closest to each route alternative. The SAG decided to create a criterion that took the commercial sector into account (sixth criterion).

MODA: Ranking and developing weighting for criteria

The SAG ranked the criteria in order of importance with one being the lowest and six as the highest. The scores were averaged as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Ranked Criteria Results and Final Weighting Values

Criteria List	Total Value of Importance Score (all stakeholders)	Weighting Percentage (Starting Point)	Final Weighting Value
Least proximity to community land use areas	70	23.81%	23.81%
Least impact to mature vegetation	39	13.27%	13.27%
Least proximity to critical and designated areas	48	16.33%	16.33%
Public support	56	19.05%	19.05%
Opportunity areas	42	14.29%	14.29%
Least proximity to commercial uses	39	13.27%	13.27%
TOTAL	294	100.00%	100.00%
<i>Individually, the SAG ranked the criteria from 1 through 6 where 6 was the most important criteria and 1 was the least important criteria. The first numbered column represents the sum total value from all stakeholders, upon which the Prioritized List was based. The second numbered column (Weighting Percentage) provided a starting point for determining the Weighting Value to assign the criteria in the last column (Final Weighting Value).</i>			

The SAG then discussed the weightings assigned through their ranking (see Table 1. Ranked Criteria Results and Final Weighting Values, Final Weighting Value column), in which Penny noted that this qualitative part of the process is called “sensitivity assessment” and is used in order to double-check everyone’s consideration of the criteria. Initially, the group discussed increasing opportunity areas to 15 percent and decreasing least proximity to critical and designated areas. A SAG member noted that if any changes were to be made, they should be significant. Don Schmitz suggested adjusting the weighting so that the critical areas and opportunity areas would be equal. The adjusted numbers, due to a rounding glitch with the spreadsheet, did not calculate to 100 percent, and the group decided to keep the originally generated numbers as their weighting.

MODA: Scoring route alternatives

Penny asked the SAG to individually [score the criteria](#) for each route alternative. She reminded the group that the community had concerns about the different end points, so the alternatives east of I-405 were scored separately from routes west of I-405.

The group scored each alternative on a scale of one to five. Five points meant the route exceeded the criteria, while one point meant the route failed to meet the criteria. The individual scores were combined and weighted as shown below for the route alternatives [east of I-405](#) and [west of I-405](#).

Table 2. Weighted Score Results for Route Alternatives East of I-405

Weighted Score Results							
		Route Alternative 1		Route Alternative 2		Route Alternative 3	
Criteria List	Weight	Score	Weighted Score	Score	Weighted Score	Score	Weighted Score
Least proximity to community land uses	23.81	1.6	39.1	1.9	44.2	4.4	105.4
Least impact to mature vegetation	13.27	2.9	38.8	2.6	34.1	2.2	29.4
Least proximity to critical areas	16.33	2.7	44.3	2.9	47.8	2.5	40.8
Public support	19.05	1.7	32.7	1.8	34.0	4.1	78.9
Opportunity areas	14.29	2.7	38.8	2.9	40.8	3.4	48.0
Least proximity to commercial uses	13.27	3.1	40.7	3.0	39.8	2.4	32.2
Total	100	14.8	234.5	15.0	240.8	19.1	334.7

Penny asked the group if there was any need to rearrange the numbers or if any member believed that Alternative 3 (highest scoring) did not meet the needs of their respective constituents. The SAG agreed that Alternative 3 is the preferred route to recommend to PSE for the segment east of I-405.

Using the same criteria weighting, the SAG members then scored the two route alternatives west of I-405.

Table 3. Weighted Score Results for Route Alternatives West of I-405

Weighted Score Results					
		Route Alternative 1		Route Alternatives 2 and 3	
Criteria List	Weight	Score	Weighted Score	Score	Weighted Score
Least proximity to community land use areas	23.81	3.9	91.8	2.2	52.7
Least impact to mature vegetation	13.27	3.1	41.7	2.7	36.0
Least proximity to critical and designated areas	16.33	3.4	54.8	2.8	45.5
Public support	19.05	3.2	61.2	2.6	49.0
Opportunity areas	14.29	2.7	38.8	2.7	38.8
Least proximity to commercial uses	13.27	2.8	37.0	2.8	37.0
Total	100	19.1	325.3	15.8	258.9

Penny asked the group if there was any need to reassess the numbers or if any member believed that Alternative 1 (highest scoring) did not meet the needs of their respective constituents. The SAG agreed that Alternative 1 is the preferred route (west of I-405) to recommend to PSE.

Comments about alternatives east/west of I-405

- The SAG recognized that both Alternative 1 and 2 (east of I-405) had similar scores, and that the scores looked respectful of the SAG discussions.
- Eric noted that Redmond supports a route that stays as far away from the view corridor as possible. Jean stated that the City of Redmond's expectation is that PSE will continue discussions with the City regarding keeping the route off of Willows Road within the view corridor.

Questions

Is Alternative 3 only the route that goes between the buildings or will the "fall-back" route automatically be used if the route behind the buildings can't be accomplished?

Barry replied that since the SAG has chosen Alternative 3, PSE will do its best to stay off of Willows Road and the view corridor. However, if that cannot be achieved, then the fallback route will be the next choice.

The criteria ranking was based on a scale of one through six. Is this scoring based on how much each member of the SAG believes the route alternatives meet the criteria?

Yes, the scoring is based on how each member of the advisory group feels and members can give each route up to 30 total points (a maximum of five points for each criterion).

Is this method maximizing the use of the criteria?

Yes, and it is an essential step in the MODA process.

Why are there only two alternatives for routes west of I-405?

Penny explained that Alternative 1 (east of I-405) has an end point at 124th Avenue Northeast, while Alternatives 2 and 3 both end on 132nd Avenue Northeast.

Will the SAG be sent copies of this preferred route selection process?

Yes. The SAG will be an integral part of a report that explains the recommendation of route alternatives and the decision-making process.

Will PSE announce the final route before the report is sent out?

Barry explained that PSE will take the recommendation, get public feedback through community meetings and other ways of commenting, and make a final decision. There will likely be slight changes along the line during the permitting process and there will likely be more opportunities for public comment during the permitting process, depending upon which processes are required.

Is the cost data an estimate of what transmission lines of this nature usually cost or a specific estimate of these routes?

Barry noted that the cost estimate is based on the cost per mile for this type of transmission line. Until PSE investigates the soil quality, easements, landscaping and vegetation, it is difficult to get an exact cost estimate. PSE provided the \$6-8 million figure as a rough estimate.

Can the community be certain that Alternatives 1 and 2 (east of I-405) will not be chosen?

Until Barry and the PSE team make their decision, the route will not be finalized.

If Alternatives 1 and 2 become cheaper, will PSE build either of them instead?

Barry explained that the cost is comparable for each route. There are other issues that need to be resolved that are unique to Alternative 3.

While the MODA scoring was being conducted, additional comments from the audience were sought. Comments included:

- A concern that the weighting methodology artificially narrowed the amount of points any one criteria could be allocated.
- A question regarding whether PSE would abide by the SAG's recommendation, or make a different choice.

Wrap-Up and Next Steps

Penny thanked everyone for their focused efforts in their participation in the SAG process. The SAG felt another meeting to discuss the preferred route was not necessary.

Penny explained that the SAG and PSE will work together on developing a report of the entire process and discussions about the recommendation. EnviroIssues will send an outline and draft of this report to the SAG, and the report will be developed for the SAG's review.

Next steps include:

1. EnviroIssues and PSE will send a draft report outline to the SAG that summarizes the recommendations and community involvement.
2. PSE will look at the recommendations and further analyze the feasibility of each route.
3. PSE will prepare for future community meetings and use the SAG recommendations.