

SOUND TRANSIT CAPITAL COMMITTEE MEETING
Summary Minutes
April 8, 2010

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 1:38 p.m. by Committee Chair Fred Butler, in the Ruth Fisher Boardroom, 401 South Jackson Street, Seattle, Washington.

Roll Call

Chair

(P) Fred Butler, Issaquah Deputy Council President

Vice Chair

(P) Julia Patterson, King County Councilmember

Boardmembers

(P) Claudia Balducci, Bellevue Councilmember

(P) Richard Conlin, Seattle Council President

(P) Jan Drago, King County Councilmember

(P) Jake Fey, City of Tacoma Deputy Mayor

(P) Joe Marine, City of Mukilteo Mayor

(P) Mike McGinn, City of Seattle Mayor

(P) Larry Phillips, King County Councilmember

Mr. Adam Bartz, Board Coordinator, announced that a quorum of the Committee was present at roll call.

Report of the Chair

There will be no public comment taken on the East Link discussion item.

Due to a full agenda, the UW Station Finishes Contract has been postponed.

CEO Report

The Bothell SR 522 groundbreaking event took place on April 6, 2010 and Boardmember Marine attended.

Included in Board packets is an invitation for the groundbreaking for the I-90 R8A Stage 2 project on April 14, 2010.

Staff will update the Committee on University Link, including the station finishes GC/CM contract and the Rainier Vista project, at the May 2010 Capital Committee meeting.

At the next Capital Committee meeting there will be an update on University Link, including the station finishes GC/CM contract and the Rainier Vista issue.

Reports to the Committee

Noise Mitigation

James Irish, Deputy Director Environmental Affairs, provided an update on Link noise mitigation work in the Rainier Valley and Tukwila. The Board passed an emergency motion in fall 2009 authorizing \$1 million for noise mitigation related to wheel squeal and crossover noise. To date, \$950,000 has been spent and the remaining work is not expected to exceed the authorized funding.

Lubrication applicators have been installed to reduce or eliminate the wheel squeal on curves in Tukwila and the Rainier Valley. Eight lubricators have been installed, and two that are currently not functioning correctly will be repaired. The lubricators that are functioning properly appear to be reducing the noise as expected.

Public Comment

Paul W. Locke (Comments on file with Board Administration)

It was moved by Boardmember Marine, seconded by Boardmember Drago, and carried by the unanimous vote of all members present that Motion No. M2010-46 be approved as presented.

Motion No. M2010-42 – Authorizes the chief executive officer to execute a contract with North Corridor Transit Partners, LLC to provide engineering, environmental and community development services for Phase 1 of the North Corridor High Capacity Transit – Northgate to Lynnwood project in the amount of \$4,793,122, with a 10% contingency of \$479,312, for a total authorized contract amount not to exceed \$5,272,434

Michael Williams, Light Rail Project Development Director, stated that the next Board decision on the project will be to identify the alternatives to submit in the EIS, however, there will be several updates to the Committee prior to that action.

It was moved by Boardmember Marine, seconded by Vice Chair Patterson, and carried by the unanimous vote of all members present that Motion No. M2010-42 be forwarded to the Board with a do-pass recommendation.

Non-Routine Items

Motion No. M2010-40 – Authorizes the chief executive officer to execute a contract amendment with Michael Minor Associates to provide additional noise and vibration consultant services for the Central Link Initial Segment project in the amount of \$224,948, with a 10% contingency of \$22,495 totaling \$247,443, for a new total authorized contract amount not to exceed \$447,183

Public Comment

Paul W. Locke (Comments on file with Board Administration)

It was moved by Boardmember Drago, seconded by Vice Chair Patterson, and carried by the unanimous vote of all members present that Motion No. M2010-40 be approved as presented.

Motion No. M2010-43 – Authorizes the chief executive officer to negotiate and execute four cost reimbursement agreements with the City of Tacoma to relocate utilities in connection with the D Street-to-M Street Track & Signal Project. Sound Transit will reimburse the City of Tacoma a total estimated amount of \$2,010,000 to relocate utilities located in the City's right of way and the City of Tacoma will reimburse Sound Transit a total estimated amount of \$640,000 for betterments

It was moved by Vice Chair Patterson, seconded by Boardmember Drago, and carried by the unanimous vote of all members present that Motion No. M2010-43 be forwarded to the Board with a do-pass recommendation.

Policy Items

East Link Project - Preferred Alternative for the Final EIS

Chair Butler noted that at the March Board meeting, the Board requested that the Capital Committee review East Link's outstanding issues that need to be addressed in order to keep the project moving forward.

Chair Butler stated two goals for the discussion; an update provided by staff on the current status of East Link and which items require additional direction from the Board, and a Committee discussion to advise the Board on how best to proceed. The Board is scheduled to consider an update to the preferred alternative based on studies conducted since May 2009 at the April Board meeting. The Board needs to give clear direction to staff and the public on what is included in the EIS and how best to focus preliminary design efforts.

At the start of the environmental process, the Board directed staff on what to study in the EIS. The Board identified preferred routes and stations for East Link and authorized staff to advance preliminary design of the preferred alternative and complete the EIS. Staff has reached the point where additional direction from the Board is needed on next steps.

Chair Butler reviewed the design options and alternatives under consideration. In Segment B of south Bellevue, the City of Bellevue has requested that the Board change the preferred alternative; the Committee

needs to consider whether updating the preferred alternative in Segment B has merit. In Segment C, the staff has studied multiple alternatives for serving downtown Bellevue; staff needs additional direction from the Board on updating the preferred alternative. The Board directed staff to investigate certain issues in Segment D; and information will be provided on those issues.

Mike Williams, Director of Light Rail Project Development, Don Billen, East Link Program Manager, and James Irish, Deputy Director Environmental Planning, updated the Committee on the environmental process, time line, and various alignment and design option alternatives for East Link, and which issues require additional direction from the Board in the near term.

The final EIS informs the Board's selection of the East Link project to be built. Sound Transit is approximately halfway through the environmental process and preliminary engineering. The process began in fall 2006; a draft EIS was released in 2008, followed by a 75-day comment period; all public comments have been conveyed to the Board; the Board identified a preferred alternative in May 2009; and now the Board is considering a single downtown Bellevue preferred alternative.

Once the final EIS is completed, the Board will select the East Link project to be constructed and the project would move into the final design and construction phases.

The preferred alternative is an identification of the Board's current intent for the project based on the information in the draft EIS, input from the public, stakeholders, and cities and any other information developed by Sound Transit up to this point. Identification of the preferred alternative is required by the EIS process; and it gives the public a sense of the project. Identification of the preferred alternative is not a final project decision of the Board, and all the alternatives included in the final EIS remain under consideration until the Board makes the final decision after completion of the final EIS. The preferred alternative and all of the alternatives in the draft EIS and any alternatives the Board chooses to include in the EIS process will be included in the final EIS. When the Board selects the East Link project to be built after the final EIS is completed, the Board may choose any of the alternatives included in the final EIS.

All of the alternatives in the draft EIS are up to a conceptual engineering level of design. This is a standard design level Sound Transit has used in the past, allowing detailed comparative evaluation of the alternatives. The preferred alternative, consistent with Federal Transit Administration (FTA) practice, is developed to the 30% design level.

The analysis of impacts in the final EIS is updated from the draft EIS. All draft EIS comments, any updated technical information, and any changes in existing background conditions are considered. Examples include the City of Bellevue's updated land-use projections for the Bel-Red corridor and the Rainier Valley noise-related issues.

Mr. Irish responded to a question from Boardmember McGinn noting that the four alternatives contained in the Downtown Bellevue Concept Design Report were not included in the draft EIS, but the Board could elect to include those alternatives in the final EIS.

Boardmember Balducci sought clarification on the purpose of the preliminary preferred alternative. Mr. Irish responded that identifying a preliminary preferred alternative is a NEPA requirement and the purpose is to provide the public and stakeholders with feedback on the Board's intent with the project. Ms. Earl added that none of the alignments are eliminated at this point.

Mr. Billen provided cost estimates for East Link. The project is still trending within the ST2 estimates; however, Sound Transit revenues are down and the current estimate exceeds the financial plan by \$30 million and there is no project reserve. Project scope must be managed tightly. Where scope is added to the project, additional funding should be sought.

In Segment B, the preferred alternative, as identified by the Board in May 2009, exits I-90 at Bellevue Way, serves the South Bellevue park-and-ride, runs along the eastside of Bellevue Way and 112th, and swings east at SE 8th toward I-405.

Comparing the Segment B alternatives from I-90 to Main Street provides clarity on the costs, benefits, and drawbacks of each alternative. The preferred alternative of B3S was used as the baseline for the comparisons. B2A, a result of the Value Analysis review, reduces cost by \$50 to \$100 million, reduces system-wide ridership by 500 to 1,000, reduces wetland and stream impacts, and requires additional noise mitigation. The new preferred alternative of the City of Bellevue, B7, reduces costs by \$10 million, reduces system-wide ridership by 1,000 to 2,000 by skipping the South Bellevue park-and-ride, reduces park impacts, and increases wetland impacts, business displacements and noise mitigation.

Serving the South Bellevue park-and-ride has a large affect on East Link ridership. Removing the park-and-ride from the alignment reduces accessibility for park-and-ride users who come from several communities on the eastside. In B7, the 118th Station, includes a park-and-ride that replaces the South Bellevue park-and-ride, however that stretch of I-405 is congested and 118th is less accessible. The B7 alignment would also increase usage of the Mercer Island park-and-ride, which is already over capacity. Ms. Earl stated that a letter from the Mercer Island City Council addressing this topic was included in Board packets.

Bellevue Way is a key route for local and regional bus service and access to this service is a significant factor for ridership. The bus service along Bellevue Way needs to continue, even with the introduction of Link light rail. With a station at the South Bellevue park-and-ride, light rail would integrate well with bus service. If the station is located on 118th, King County Metro would not likely divert routes off of Bellevue Way to 118th due to the increase in travel times and operating costs, which would force riders to travel downtown to transfer to light rail.

There are several options for the design of B2M along 112th. In the draft EIS, B2M begins as a center roadway grade alignment and transitions to an elevated alignment. Options include side running at-grade, more at-grade with less elevated on the north end, and retained cut. The options could reduce costs and impacts.

If the Board selects the 112th alternative, there will be an intense collaboration with the City and neighborhoods to refine the options within the 112th alternative.

At the February 2010 Sound Transit Board and Bellevue City Council Joint Workshop, Boardmembers directed staff to prepare trade-offs for the alignment alternatives. Staff prepared the trade-offs for various Segment B-Segment C combinations; B3S-C4A, B2M-C9A, B7-C9T, B7-C11A, B2M-C9T, and B2M-C11A. B3S-C4A is the current preferred alternative, and is used as the baseline for the other alternatives. The other proposed alternatives have fewer displacements, traffic impacts, and park impacts, but increases in noise impacts.

B2M-C9A, the Value Analysis recommendation, reduces travel time by one minute, increases ridership by 500, reduces costs by \$105 million, and has fewer wetland and stream impacts. B7-C9T, the City of Bellevue preferred alternative, reduces travel time, decreases Segment B-C boardings, increases system-wide ridership, costs \$310 million more, and increases stream and wetland impacts. B7-C11A, City Segment B preference with at-grade Segment C, reduces travel time, decreases B-C boardings, maintains the cost and system-wide ridership, and increases stream and wetland impacts. B2M-C9T, the tunnel alternative with the Value Analysis recommendation, has the highest ridership of the alternatives, reduces travel times, increases boardings, increases costs by \$245 million, and decreases wetland and stream impacts. B2M-C11A, the modified Value Analysis with the most cost effective at-grade Segment C option, reduces travel time, increases boardings and ridership, maintains cost, and decreases wetland and stream impacts.

There is a funding gap if the Board identifies a tunnel as the preferred alternative. Options to address the funding gap include contributions from the City of Bellevue, scope reductions, project phasing tools, and other financial planning tools.

In May 2009, the Board directed staff to examine options in Segment D at the 120th Station; at-grade and retained cut. The Spring District developer has proposed a public-private partnership for retained cut alternative through this segment, and a letter from the developer is included in Board packets. Board direction would be needed to further develop this option and pursue the public-private partnership.

The City of Redmond is proposing an alignment modification in the Overlake area. The proposal moves the alignment next to SR 520 and includes a city-sponsored pedestrian bridge across SR 520 connecting the station to residential and employment areas. The modification lowers costs, displaces fewer businesses, is less convenient to Overlake Transit Center and park-and-ride, but offers faster light rail travel times. With a pedestrian bridge, ridership would increase, and with no bridge, ridership will be unchanged.

Ric Ilgenfritz, PEPD Executive Director, reported that the Bellevue City Council has sent Sound Transit a letter highlighting a potential financial commitment, and staff has worked with Bellevue staff on a possible term sheet agreement. Scope reductions in the B and D Segments would decrease costs. The construction of a tunnel would cause a delay in opening the project one year, saving \$64 million in operating costs.

Brian McCartan, CFO, added that during Sound Move, the East King County subarea had the most financial capacity. ST2 uses most of the subarea resources to build out light rail, and the economic recession has reduced Sound Transit revenues by \$3 billion, \$900 million from East King County. The ST2 budget for East

King County is \$8 billion, so there will be opportunities to close the gap. Within the East King County budget, there is only \$120 million of non-light rail investments. Decisions on East Link operations, such as headways, operating hours, or system configurations could save costs. The East King County Sound Move Regional Express reserve has approximately \$9 million remaining; which should be kept until Sound Move is completely met. Grants are a promising area for addressing the funding gap; the financial plan has a conservative grant estimate. The issue with grants is that the Board will not know the availability or amount of federal grants before key East Link scope decisions need to be made.

Boardmember Balducci stated that an affordable alignment option must be included in the final EIS if the tunnel alternative becomes unaffordable. Downtown Bellevue is the second largest job center that Sound Transit serves and has more employees than residents; grade separation would maximize the transportation benefit in this economic hub. She expressed support for C9T, stating that it promotes connectivity with the Bellevue Transit Center without requiring rebuilding the transit center; the tunnel is supported by the City Council, Bellevue business community, and numerous citizens. Boardmember Balducci raised an issue in Segment C, the location of the Hospital Station, and asked whether the station location was still moveable. The Board has received comments from Overlake Hospital, Children's Hospital, Group Health, and property owners seeking consideration of shifting the station north to create better access to the hospitals, increase TOD potential, and avoid traffic impacts. Mr. Billen responded that the Hospital Station is still moveable.

Boardmember Balducci stated that the Bellevue City Council is split on a preferred Segment B alternative; every alignment alternative impacts residents, businesses, traffic, and wetlands. The majority of the City Council supported B7, because it minimizes Bellevue Way traffic impacts, might pose some environmental advantages, and lessens neighborhood impacts. She requested that a letter from the Surrey Downs neighborhood received by the Board be addressed in the EIS. She noted that Bellevue has a dense downtown core that is immediately bordered by three neighborhoods with single-family homes and Bellevue has zoned carefully to protect those neighborhoods.

Chair Butler summarized the Committee discussion.

In D Segment, Committee members are interested in performing preliminary engineering on the retained cut option while exploring a public-private partnership with the Spring District, provided that the cost remain the same or lower as at-grade.

Committee members are interested in moving the Overlake Village Station further north to reduce costs and travel times. Committee members support a city-sponsored pedestrian connection across 520.

In Segment C, Committee members support C9T contingent on a sizeable contribution by the City of Bellevue, with significant progress on that contribution made by the April Board meeting. Additionally, Committee members support moving forward the C11A, at-grade alternative, as an affordable option that provides excellent service to and from downtown Bellevue. One of the key differences between C11A and C9T is that C11A is affordable while C9T is not.

In Segment B, Committee members support serving the South Bellevue park-and-ride. Committee members also support serving downtown Bellevue via 112th Ave due to its direct routing and fewer habitat-related impacts, subject to additional analysis of design options and related mitigation for the route along 112th into downtown.

Chair Butler clarified that the Segment C alternatives C11A and C9T would be advanced for preliminary engineering and alternatives C14E and C9A would be included in the EIS, but not at advanced for preliminary engineering.

Chair Butler directed staff to prepare a letter to the City of Bellevue with his signature based on the Committee's discussion that also responds to the City's recent correspondence about Segments B and C. Chair Butler requested that the letter be shared with the full Board as a report of the Committee's views on East Link project. Chair Butler stated he would summarize the Committee's discussion at the April Board meeting.

Executive Session

None.

Other Business

None.

Next Meeting

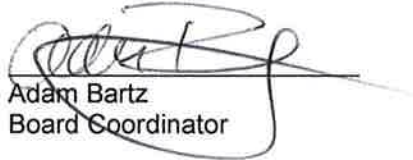
Thursday May 13, 2010
1:30 to 4:00 p.m.
Ruth Fisher Boardroom

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 3:40 p.m.

APPROVED on May 13, 2010.

ATTEST:



Adam Bartz
Board Coordinator



Fred Butler
Capital Committee Chair