

Transmission Line Routing Community Sounding Board

Meeting 1 Summary

May 14, 2020

Overview

Puget Sound Energy (PSE) hosted an online meeting for Community Sounding Board (CSB) members on May 14, 2020. The meeting introduced CSB members to the Murden Cove – Winslow Transmission Line Project and the CSB charter.

The meeting was held online via Webex due to PSE and public health requirements restricting in-person gatherings at this time. Attachment 1 contains the list of meeting participants.

Opening remarks

- Safety moment and introductions.
- Renee Zimmerman, Barry Lombard, and Andy Swayne reintroduced themselves and their respective roles with PSE, this project, and the Community Sounding Board.
- Susan Hayman (EnviroIssues) explained her role as the facilitator and presented the agenda.

Project overview

Renee Zimmerman gave a [presentation](#) providing an overview of PSE's package of reliability and grid modernization projects. Renee explained that PSE recently completed a detailed assessment of Bainbridge Island's electric system needs, and that PSE and third-party experts developed a solutions report to analyze both traditional wires and non-wires alternatives to meet the electric system needs. The resulting project package includes projects that combines new technologies and grid infrastructure to ensure safe, dependable power for families and businesses for years to come.

Renee described the components of the proposed solution and the anticipated schedule for each. She explained that the CSB is focusing on the new transmission line that will help with reliability and reduce the impact of a single outage through redundancy. The new "missing link" transmission line between the Winslow and Murden Cove substations will create a transmission "loop." This means each substation will be connected to two transmission lines. If one line goes out, the other line will still feed the substation and provide power to customers. Currently, PSE anticipates having the new transmission line built by 2024.

Renee also walked through the transmission line routing community engagement process, which includes the CSB, community workshops, a comment form, as well as email and phone. It's PSE's goal to understand community values and interests around the new transmission line. PSE will use community input and feedback to inform its routing decision.

After the project overview, Renee Zimmerman, Barry Lombard, and Andy Swayne addressed questions from CSB members. Key discussion points are noted below:

- **Presentation slides:** PSE will post the presentation slides following each CSB meeting on PSE's website for Murden Cove-Winslow Transmission line community engagement (psebainbridge.participate.online).
- **Preventing information overload:** PSE plans to gradually introduce CSB members and the community to more information about the project as the engagement process continues. Agendas are sent out prior to the meeting and posted on PSE's community engagement website (pse.com/bainbridge). After each presentation to the CSB, there will be time for questions and discussion.

- **Order of construction:** There were questions about whether PSE should build the transmission loop first and rebuild Winslow Tap (pse.com/bainbridgewt) later (to ensure uninterrupted power to the south end of the island during the Winslow Tap rebuild). From a reliability standpoint, PSE believes it is critical to rebuild Winslow Tap first. The Winslow Tap's aging infrastructure is causing PSE to prioritize completion of this project to reduce the possibilities of equipment failures and power outages along this line. Building the new transmission line will take time, from the process of selecting a route to getting permits and then actually building the "missing link".
- **Battery duration:** PSE is designing the battery to be 3.3 MW with an energy duration of two hours. The battery will add capacity to Bainbridge Island's electric system by supplying electricity during peak hours.
- **Redundant transmission lines:** Currently, the Winslow and Murden Cove substations are served by individual transmission lines. If the one transmission line serving the substation goes out, then customers served by the substation experience a power outage. By adding the "missing link" transmission line between the two substations, we'll improve redundancy and reliability so if one transmission line goes out, there is an alternative transmission line for a substation to receive power.
- **Uniqueness of the Bainbridge Island battery:** PSE has pilot programs across the region aimed at testing the use of batteries. Installing a 3.3 MW utility-scale battery will be PSE's second time doing something of this caliber. This option looks very promising for Bainbridge Island. The primary use of the battery is for energy shaving during peak hours and to add additional capacity to the system. PSE is also in conversations with other energy utility companies around the United States for best practices around batteries.
- **Vegetation management:** The group discussed how tree trimming contributes to electric reliability on Bainbridge Island. PSE plans to continue implementing tree trimming as part of its vegetation management approach to reduce branches and trees hitting transmission lines during storms. PSE also uses vegetation management strategies to improve access to its infrastructure (e.g., line, poles).
- **Winslow Tap Location:** PSE confirmed that it is not planning to reroute the existing Winslow Tap transmission line—it plans to rebuild the aging Winslow Tap transmission line in the corridor it currently occupies.

Charter

Susan Hayman presented the charter to CSB members, emphasizing the CSB's purpose, authority, and outcomes. She invited CSB members to annotate sections of the charter where they wished to have greater clarity or otherwise wished to discuss. The following sections/topics were highlighted for further discussion, with the following key discussion points captured.

- **Defining the Project Area:** PSE's transmission line routing process is focused on routing an overhead transmission line within the project area. PSE may consider underground transmission lines within the project if feasible and appropriate, noting that underground transmission lines may cost four times as much as overhead transmission lines to build—and that cost is generally borne by the local jurisdiction (City of Bainbridge Island, in this instance).
- **Safety:** PSE will consider safety and feedback from first responders in the routing process and will look at how to reflect the importance of safety in its CSB charter language. Public safety is one of PSE's priorities and always considered as projects go through the planning process.
- **Transmission line routing:** PSE is looking at the entire study area for possible transmission line routing. The CSB is being invited to provide feedback on the criteria used to evaluate potential route segments, the route segments themselves, and route options. The CSB is not being asked to develop a consensus-based route recommendation in this process. Once PSE knows which route segments are viable, it will begin building possible route options to bring to the CSB for feedback. PSE will make the final decision on the transmission line route that it submits to begin the City's permitting process.
- **Criteria:** HDR, PSE's engineering consultant, will develop possible route segments that will then be evaluated using a set of criteria. A preliminary list of criteria will be presented at CSB meeting 2 for feedback. Once criteria are established, HDR will begin evaluating route segments and bring those to the CSB for discussion.
- **Completing assignments:** CSB assignments include asking members to review the materials sent to them prior to the next CSB meeting.
- **Request for individual presentations:** CSB meetings are already structured for the discussion and interaction of members during meetings. After each PSE presentation there is an opportunity to further discuss the ideas and concepts presented. PSE will give this request further consideration and follow up with the CSB.
- **Consensus recommendation:** PSE reminded the group that the CSB is being invited to provide feedback on the criteria used to evaluate potential route segments, the route segments themselves, and route options. The CSB is not being asked to develop a consensus-based route recommendation in this process. CSB members can have their own opinion on the "best" route—PSE will be interested to know why people feel the way they do. From a process standpoint, the CSB is different from an advisory board. PSE is looking for the CSB to act as a focus group for feedback, rather than an advisory board that makes recommendations or issues advice.
- **Media:** PSE emphasized that it does not have a problem with CSB members talking to the media. If individual CSB members do speak to the media, they are asked to stipulate that they are sharing their own opinions, and that their individual views do not represent the opinions of the group as a whole. One CSB member encouraged other members to use the CSB forum for its discussion of concerns, rather than airing them on social media.

Public Comment

Susan asked those observing the meeting if they wished to make public comment. No one wished to make oral comment. The following written comment was submitted via the Webex chat function:

- *Prioritize the missing link because that increases reliability the most. Currently that is scheduled last. Perhaps things can be done simultaneously.*

Next steps: upcoming meetings

- CSB Meeting 2: Introduction to the Routing Process and Routing Criteria (May 21, 5-6:30 p.m.)
- CSB Meeting 3: Routing Criteria Feedback (June 8, 5-6:30 p.m.)

Closing remarks

Susan and Renee thanked CSB members for participating. The meeting concluded just after 6:30 p.m.

Attachment 1: Meeting Participants

Community Sounding Board

Individual Interests

Bill Lemon	Matt Kowalski
Carl Siegrist	Norm Jones
Keith Bass	Ted Jones
Elizabeth Doll	Winifred Perkins
Erik Fong	

Organizational Interests

Glen Tyrrell, Bainbridge Island School District
Hank Teran, Bainbridge Island Fire Department
Maradel Gale, Sustainable Bainbridge
Maria Metzler, Helpline House
Mark Epstein, City of Bainbridge Island
Perry Barrett, Bainbridge Island Metro Parks & Recreation District
Walt Hannon, Walt's Market

PSE Staff

Andy Swayne, PSE CSB Technical Liaison
Barry Lombard, PSE Project Manager
Renee Zimmerman, PSE Community Projects Manager

EnviroIssues Staff

Darcy Edmunds, EnviroIssues, Webex host and technical support
Faiza Hassan, EnviroIssues
Nyles Green, EnviroIssues, Notetaker
Susan Hayman, EnviroIssues, Facilitator

Observers

Charles Keating	Gretchen Aliabadi, PSE
Tom & Kathy Hansen	Kierra Phifer, PSE
Bridget Brown, HDR	Kerry Kriner, PSE
Kirk Moughamer, HDR	Shelby Naten, PSE
Diann Strom, PSE	