

Transmission Line Routing Community Sounding Board

Meeting 3 Summary

June 8, 2020

Overview

Puget Sound Energy (PSE) hosted an online meeting for Community Sounding Board (CSB) members on June 8, 2020. The meeting's purpose was for CSB members to provide feedback on the routing criteria that was presented in CSB Meeting 2.

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

- Brief recap of what was discussed at CSB Meeting 1 and Meeting 2.
- Safety moment
- Susan Hayman (EnviroIssues) explained her role as the facilitator and presented the agenda.

Follow-up items from previous meetings

Susan Hayman and Andy Swayne gave updates on follow-up items from CSB Meeting 1 and Meeting 2.

- **CSB Charter:** PSE added language to the Charter that focuses PSE's commitment to safety in its design and construction of the Murden Cove – Winslow transmission line. PSE also clarified in the Charter that CSB meetings are structured to provide opportunities for input and feedback from members. Additional presentation opportunities do not seem necessary at this time. The routing process is also structured to engage both the CSB and the broader Bainbridge Island community over time as route segments and route options are developed.
- **Past community feedback on transmission lines and substations:** Between 2008 and 2010, PSE had a conversation with the Bainbridge Island community about building an additional substation and new transmission line. Themes from these discussions included: potential loss of rural feel from development, concerns about transmission lines near homes and schools, interests in developing a trail with the transmission line, and interest in cross-country transmission line options. The relevant feedback gained from the 2008 – 2010 discussion will be considered as PSE begins the planning and design of the Murden Cove – Winslow transmission line.

Feedback on routing criteria

During this portion of the meeting, CSB members provided feedback on routing criteria presented during CSB Meeting 2. Discussion was prompted by a Missing Values Chart (Attachment 2) where CSB members could say which values they thought were not reflected in the routing criteria. CSB members could also suggest possible methods to measure the values they thought were not reflected in the routing criteria. CSB members provided the following points and observations:

- **Criterion: Developed/Undeveloped Land:** Recommend PSE focus the transmission line routing in areas that are already developed. Measurable by determining the amount of developed area affected versus undeveloped area.

- **Criterion: Trails:** Suggest PSE coordinate with the City to identify possible corridors that could be developed with new trails or existing trails and be open to the potential for adding connectivity of trails between parks and schools. Some trails and recreation properties have provisions that prevent transmission line development while others don't. Channeling trail development into areas that are already developed or planned to be developed could achieve additional objectives beyond building a transmission line.
- **Criterion: Collocating with other utilities:** Suggest PSE coordinate with the City on identifying locations where utility infrastructure could be collocated. By collocating utilities, PSE could reduce their need for additional vegetation management.
- **Criterion: Shoreline:** Recommend PSE look into the City's Nearshore Assessment Report and Shoreline Access Guidebook prior to determining the possibility of building in shoreline areas.
- **Criterion: Climate change:** Acknowledge that no matter where PSE decides to build the transmission line, PSE should consider the impact climate change would have on the project. Rising sea levels and other impacts from climate change may impact where PSE decides to route the transmission line as well as its design.
- **Criterion: Tree canopy:** Trees and tree canopy help contribute to the rural feel of Bainbridge Island. PSE was encouraged to avoid routing in areas with a high-density of trees. PSE was also encouraged to increase vegetation management strategies along corridors to minimize impacts to existing lines from trees and limbs falling onto them.
- **General observations**
 - **Resolving conflicts between values:** CSB members saw the potential for routing criteria and values to conflict with each other in the development of route segments and route options. In spaces where values are in conflict, PSE will look for solutions that will resolve conflicts, or seek further input on potential tradeoffs. PSE is also mindful of county, state, and federal policies and will follow guidelines for designing a transmission line that meets county, state, and federal standards.
 - **Challenges with “Change”:** There may be a potential issue with the new transmission line simply because its construction and presence signal a change on the island. Some members observed that people most object to change when it occurs “in their backyard”.
 - **Safety:** PSE should work to address community safety concerns as soon as they are known. Bainbridge Island residents would want to know what protocols and measures PSE is taking to address the electromagnetic fields (EMF) produced from transmission lines and their effect on community health and safety. Some CSB members also suggested PSE discuss the transmission line routing with first responders to find key evacuation routes and other locations where undergrounding may help prevent impasses from downed lines.
 - **Creating blind spots:** CSB members discussed the possibility that blind spots could be unknowingly created when defining the criteria for the transmission line. PSE reassured that CSB members that there is no intent to weight criteria. By developing routing criteria, PSE is framing the larger discussion of the transmission line routing to prepare for the challenges and opportunities (and potential tradeoffs) that each route option will present.

- **Planning with the Bainbridge Island comprehensive growth plan:** PSE was encouraged to build the transmission line consistent with the City's comprehensive plan. CSB members thought by planning the transmission line with the City's comprehensive plan in mind, PSE could extend their need for a new substation or additional transmission and work towards long-term sustainability and reliability goals. This could be measurable by evaluating how the transmission line contributes to sustainable infrastructure or by the number of years it adds capacity until a new substation is needed.

Polling CSB members

After the break, CSB members were asked to complete a brief poll by selecting the three criteria of greatest importance to them from the PSE's list, with additional criteria suggested by members of the CSB. The poll was an exercise to gain insight into how tradeoffs might be considered if two criteria conflicted with each other.

Polling results are a snapshot in time and may change as CSB members continue engaging with PSE. Public health and safety, collocation with distribution line/other utility corridors, and presence of existing and future trails polled high for importance. Wetlands, land ownership, and gathering places were also identified as criteria of importance. Several CSB members noted that other criteria were important but expected PSE to address those through existing codes and regulations and, therefore, did not select them in this polling activity. PSE will consider this feedback as part of future tradeoff discussions.

Public Comment

There were no members of the public in attendance at this meeting.

Next steps: upcoming meetings

CSB Meeting 4: Routing Segments (September 2020, 5-7:00 p.m.)

Closing remarks

Susan and Renee thanked CSB members for participating. The meeting concluded just after 7:00 p.m.

Attachment 1: Meeting Participants

Community Sounding Board

Individual Interests

Bill Lemon	Norm Jones
Carl Siegrist	Stephen Hellriegel
Elizabeth Doll	Ted Jones
Erik Fong	Winifred Perkins
Keith Bass	

Organizational Interests

Glen Tyrrell, Bainbridge Island School District
Hank Teran, Bainbridge Island Fire Department
Jerri Lane, Bainbridge Island Downtown Association
Maradel Gale, Sustainable Bainbridge
Maria Metzler, Helpline House
Mark Epstein, City of Bainbridge Island
Mark Fisher, Suquamish Tribe
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

HDR Staff

Kirk Moughamer, HDR

EnviroIssues Staff

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

Observers

Aaron Drake, PSE	Rachit Arora, PSE
Bridget Brown, HDR	Richard Perlot, PSE
Diann Strom, PSE	Shelby Naten, PSE
Gretchen Aliabadi, PSE	Vanessa Bauman, HDR
Kierra Phifer, PSE	
Kerry Kriner, PSE	

Attachment 2: Feedback: Transmission Line Routing Criteria

Community values not reflected in the current list of criteria? How would they be measured?

Value not reflected?	Ideas for how it would be measured?
[Meta: How to manage conflicting values...rock and hard place]	
Change: Seeing a new pole with wires...may be fine for some people but not fine for others (not in my backyard, to some extent). Aesthetic value may be missing.	May be captured in collocation with other utilities.
Safety issues related to power lines in proximity to schools	Community concerns—addressed up front
Access to people/key locations/places to evacuate - along key sections of the power line	---
Use of criteria...does it create blind spots? Evaluate how transmission line affects each criterion—don't immediately dismiss if it impacts any particular criterion. Don't want to preclude creativity in placement of this line.	---
Tree canopy is important even in areas not specifically addressed by City Council	---
EMF: Safety issues related specifically to this. Health and safety	---
Making less developed areas more protected...i.e., favor areas that already have development	Amount of development already there, versus adding development to an area fairly undeveloped (e.g., the head of Eagle Harbor—area to the West, along Cooper Creek) (unless opportunity to co-locate with a trail)—protect wildlife corridors
Trails...other public trails, proposed trails	Island-wide transportation plan; guide to walking, etc., Winslow waterfront trail; May be two criteria...1) existing trail corridor in a natural state; 2) new corridors developed with new trails—need to make a distinction [note that some park properties have grant provisions that prevent transmission line development; e.g., land & water grants]; may be difference in parks & rec properties and other potential trails areas; opportunity to achieve other objectives within the corridor.

Sewer and water infrastructure (other utilities)	City maps
Shoreline	BI nearshore assessment (eco functions, shoreline); shoreline access guidebook
Sea-level rise	Climate Action Plan RCP 8.5 GHG Scenario (50% probability)
Integration with comprehensive growth plan	Years till capacity hits at substations—how does transmission line contribute to sustainability of a reliable infrastructure.
Limiting the need for additional vegetation clearing (e.g., trees)	Collocation opportunities...using existing water/sewer corridors (already cleared areas—KPUD, other Class A/B water systems); reducing opportunities for trees to fall on lines -utilize existing paths (e.g., Miller Road)
Climate change	Locating the line in consideration of where climate change may affect location (e.g., sea-level rise)—Be forward thinking in location
Opportunities to use mitigation along transmission line corridor (e.g., sidewalks)	---