

Transmission Line Routing Community Sounding Board

Meeting 4 Summary

October 12, 2020

Overview

Puget Sound Energy (PSE) hosted an online meeting for Community Sounding Board (CSB) members on October 12, 2020. The meeting's purpose was for CSB members to provide feedback on route segments. Prior to the CSB Meeting 4, CSB members were provided with a list of PSE's routing criteria and were given user-unique links to an online interactive tool that provides data related to each route segment under consideration, the Segment Explorer, developed by HDR. CSB members were encouraged to explore the Segment Explorer prior to the meeting so they could be ready to provide feedback on route segments during the meeting.

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

Opening remarks

Kierra Phifer (PSE) welcomed the group, shared a safety moment, provided a brief recap of past CSB meetings and information sessions, and described where the CSB is within the community engagement timeline. Susan Hayman (EnviroIssues) explained her role as the facilitator, explained how observers can offer public comments, and presented the agenda.

PSE update on segment evaluation

Andy Swayne (PSE) shared that PSE recently learned from the City of Bainbridge Island (COBI) that existing city code prohibits new primary utilities from being built through wetlands classified as Category I or Category II. Some route segments under consideration have Category II wetlands on both sides of the road in the unimproved portion of the right-of-way, with these segments impacting potential route options for the "missing link" transmission line. PSE is working with COBI to determine if a code interpretation¹ might be possible to allow new primary utilities to be built within Category II wetlands to allow more segment options to remain under consideration. If COBI concludes a code interpretation is not possible, PSE will have to seek a code amendment, requiring review by the Planning Commission, a public hearing, and approval by the Bainbridge Island City Council. The code amendment process would likely extend the overall permitting process and timeline for the project. At this time, and for planning purposes, PSE will continue to evaluate route segments for the Murden Cove – Winslow transmission line that travel through Category II wetlands on both sides of the road.

Overview on Study area and Route Segments

Andy Swayne and Kirk Moughamer (HDR) provided a [presentation](#) on route segments and updates to the project study area. Andy explained the different elements that PSE balances when selecting a transmission line, emphasizing that safety is a cornerstone to the routing process, design, and construction of the project. Based on feedback from CSB members, PSE extended the eastern border of

¹ While PSE used the term "code variance" during the meeting, the term "code interpretation" has replaced "code variance" in this summary to better reflect the discussions PSE has underway with COBI regarding Category II Wetlands.

the study area to include Ferncliff Avenue. Andy and Kirk also reviewed key terms that CSB members should keep in mind for the routing discussion. Key terms include:

- Route segment: A discrete section of a potential future transmission line. For the new Murden Cove-Winslow transmission line, PSE is proposing route segments that follow existing road right-of-way and generally travel in the direction of the designated terminal points (e.g., Murden Cove and Winslow substations).
- Route option: A pathway between two identified terminal points that link together route segments.
- Criteria: A set of factors by which route segments and route options will be assessed and compared.
- Metrics: Criteria are evaluated through established metrics. Metrics change as the project develops.

HDR created the Segment Explorer using data available to the public and primarily sourced from GIS data provided by COBI and Kitsap County, as well as data from PSE regarding existing distribution and transmission facilities. The tool does not provide detail on potential impacts to specific properties from the project. Detailed design and fieldwork will provide insights on how the project will affect the natural and built environment. PSE plans to use the data in the Segment Explorer, community feedback and constructability and permitting considerations to narrow down the list of route segments in preparation of creating route options.

Andy and Kirk also discussed why routing along Eagle Harbor Drive was not being considered. The segment located along Eagle Harbor Drive, Segment 44, is not feasible because the existing Winslow Tap transmission line is sited there and reliability issues would result if two transmission lines were located within the same corridor--a single "event" (i.e. a tree-related outage) could affect both lines. Eagle Harbor Drive also has existing shoreline and wetland restrictions that affects new utilities. Because Segment 44 is no longer being considered, segments south of High School Road that would create a route through Eagle Harbor are also not being considered.

CSB members provided comments regarding Segment 44, including reconfiguring a portion of Winslow Tap (more discussion occurred in breakout groups) to make some segments associated with Segment 44 possible. A CSB member suggested PSE not give up the right-of-way along Eagle Harbor. Another CSB member noted concern that the routing factors excluded safety and reliability. Andy responded that safety and reliability were criteria that would need to be met for any route and were, therefore, not included as part of the routing factors list.

Facilitated breakout groups

CSB members were divided into three groups to share and discuss their feedback on segments identified in the Segment Explorer Tool. The 45-minute breakout groups were facilitated by EnviroIssues staff with PSE and HDR staff present to listen, ask clarifying questions to CSB members, and respond to CSB members' questions about specific segments. In return, CSB Members responded to the following discussion questions:

- Which segments are consistent with your priority routing factors? Why?
- Are there viable segments in your opinion that PSE hasn't considered? Why?

Due to limitations of the online platform technology, non-CSB members of the public were unable to observe the breakout group sessions. The text below summarizes the key discussion points

noted during the breakout groups, as well as the report-outs to the rest of the CSB (and observable by the general public) once the CSB members returned from the breakout groups.

Breakout group discussions

While each breakout group discussed segments and how they aligned with those CSB members priority routing factors, each group had an organic discussion on route segments and the different values they bring to the project. As a result, the outcomes and report-outs vary somewhat between groups.

The narrative below is organized with the summary points provided to the large group following the breakout group discussion first, followed by the more detailed notes from the breakout group discussion.

Group 1: Elizabeth, Mark, Ted, Keith, Glen (CSB); Kirk (HDR); Barry, Kierra (PSE); Darcy (Facilitator)

Report out: Group 1 themes, highlights, and key points of discussion

- Shorter, more direct route segments may be most consistent with values.
- Putting lines in front of schools can be a challenge due to traffic impacts during construction.
- Interest in co-location with existing PSE facilities.
- Interest in segments that require less tree trimming.
- Interest in segments that have fewer impacts to traffic congestion during construction.
- Interest in utilizing opportunities for mitigation, such as improvements for people walking and biking (e.g., trails and connection to future trails).
- Potential to cross SR305 at Moran Road (Sakai Park).
- Potential to reroute Winslow Tap and create other segment opportunities.
- Potential to add a segment along Westerly Lane.

Group 1 Break Out Session:

Additional discussion points noted by the facilitator during the Group 1 discussion:

- **Consistency with priority routing factors.** CSB members gravitated towards route segments that provided shorter, more direct routes between Murden Cove and Winslow substations. Members in this group were also interested in segments that they believed would reduce the amount of tree trimming needed, and where there may be opportunities to leverage previous distribution work. Specific notes on the “why a segment is consistent” includes the following (not all segments contain notes).
 - **Segment 1: Generally consistent.** This segment avoids State Route 305 (a scenic highway). Segment 1 is on a road that is already developed, and work has already been done to prepare it for a potential transmission line (i.e., tree trimming, etc. for a previously completed underground distribution project). The segment could create traffic congestion along Sportsman Club Road during construction.
 - **Segment 2: Generally consistent, but less favorable.** From a process standpoint, CSB members want to minimize delays to the project and see Segment 2 as a segment that might be easier to permit than Segment 6. Along Segment 2/ Brooklyn Hill Road, PSE recently finished overhead distribution line improvements, which included tree trimming; this might be an opportunity since some of the prep work has

been done. CSB members wondered if there is an opportunity to make shoulder improvements for bike options if Segment 2 was selected as part of the route option. CSB members think PSE should consider mitigation options for people walking and biking.

- **Segment 3: Generally consistent.** Currently, this is the only route segment option that reaches Winslow Substation. CSB members liked the idea of re-doing the path along Fletcher Bay Road and seeking opportunities to co-locate with distribution lines.
- **Segment 4: Generally consistent.**
- **Segment 5: Generally consistent.**
- **Segment 6: Generally consistent.** Provides a shortcut to Fletcher Bay Road and is shorter than Segment 2.
- **Segment 19: Less favorable,** though members noted that utilizing 19 would allow PSE to avoid Sportsman Club Road, which might help avoid traffic congestion during construction.
- **Potential impacts.** CSB members noted segments located in front of schools could pose a challenge for the project. CSB members were more interested in segments that have fewer impacts to traffic congestion during construction.
- **Look for routes with less vegetation management.** CSB members were interested in segments that required less tree trimming.
- **Routing opportunities.** CSB members were interested in segments that had opportunities for collocating with existing PSE facilities. Also interested in ways for project to make improvements for people walking and biking.
- **Other potential segments for PSE to consider?** Could potentially follow Westerly Lane NE as a shortcut to avoid wetlands and the Fletcher Bay- High School Road intersection. If travelling along State Route 305 (SR305), could potentially cut through Sakai Park to connect to segments along High School Road faster, but could face other challenges. CSB members also suggested exploring Sands Avenue and were interested in possibly reconfiguring a southern portion of the Winslow Tap corridor to allow additional route segments to be considered for the “missing link” transmission line.

Group 2: Winifred, Erik, Carl, Maria (CSB); Vanessa (HDR); Andy, Shelby (PSE); Nyles (Facilitator)

Report out: Group 2’s themes, highlights, and key points of discussion

- Preference for segments that offered direct routing from Murden Cove to Winslow substations.
- See more potential impacts in high-density areas versus low density areas.
- Mindful that the segments around schools would impact residents and first responders (i.e., the Fire Department).
- Interest in vegetation management along Fletcher Bay Road.

Group 2 Break Out Session:

Additional discussion points noted by the facilitator during the Group 2 discussion:

- **Getting from Murden Cove substation to Winslow substation.** CSB members were looking for segments that could create a direct route between the two substations to complete the transmission line loop. Segments 1, 2, and 3 were favored by CSB members to create a route

option with Segments 1,4,5,6 as an alternative pathway. The segment combination of 18-19-7-8 was seen an alternative option to Segment 1.

- **Consistency with priority routing factors.** The segments that were generally consistent with priority factors for the CSB members in Group 2 were segments that traveled south quickly from Murden Cove to Winslow substations in a direct fashion. CSB members were able to examine individual segments for their values but could also pair them with an alternative segment as a second choice. Specific notes on the “why a segment is consistent” includes the following (not all segments contain notes).
 - **Segment 1: Generally consistent.** This segment is part of the most direct route connecting Murden Cove and Winslow substations. There is some worry about the construction of a transmission line impacting the traffic related to Woodward Middle School on Sportsman Club Road and first responder access. CSB members asked if Segment 1 was selected for the route option that construction happen in the summer to avoid impacting Woodward Middle School.
 - **Segment 2: Generally consistent.** Avoids impacting high density areas since it goes through a rural area.
 - **Segment 3: Generally consistent.** This segment is in a low-density residential area. Only concerns are the Category II wetlands and tree mitigation that would happen on Fletcher Bay Road.
 - **Segment 4: Generally consistent.** This segment is in a low-density residential area. Only concern is the traffic impact on Sportsman Club Road.
 - **Segment 5 and 6: Generally consistent.** These segments are in low-density residential areas. CSB members noted that they do not work without each other. Segment 6 has the concern of Category II wetlands.
 - **Segment 7, 8, 18, 19: Generally consistent, but less favorable.** CSB members picked these segments because they create an alternative option to Segment 1. Avoids traffic impact on Sportsman Club Road and Woodward Middle School. A CSB member noted that Segment 7 and 8 are located near a helipad that is used by the Kitsap County Fire Department and medical services.
- **Other potential segments for PSE to consider?** Members of this group did not offer any other potential segments for PSE to consider.

Group 3: Stephen, Perry, Norm, Maradel (CSB); Bridget (HDR); Gretchen, Kerry (PSE); Susan (Facilitator)

Report out: Group 3 themes, highlights, and key points of discussion

- Preference for segments that do not cross in front of schools.
- Preference for segments crossing areas of lower population density.
- Preference for segments crossing areas with more/moderate levels of existing traffic/business development.
- Reroute a portion of Winslow Tap to reduce potential Category II Wetland conflicts and enable the Eagle Harbor segment to be back in the mix.

Group 3 Break Out Session:

Additional discussion points noted by the facilitator during the Group 3 discussion:

- **Consistency with priority routing factors.** Most segments seemed generally consistent with priority factors for the CSB members in this group, except for Segments 1, 14-15 (proximity to schools) and Segments 20-22 (not efficient in terms of overall route length). Specific notes on the “why a segment is consistent” includes the following (not all segments contain notes).
 - **Segment 2: Generally consistent.** This segment includes a recently “redeveloped” PSE distribution line that included vegetation management within the corridor, replacement of poles and addition of tree-wire; so, some of the investment in this corridor has already been made. It is less of a scenic corridor, has relatively low population density, and is generally away from community gathering places.
 - **Segments 3-5: Generally consistent.** This segment follows a highly used/heavy traffic “utilitarian” road with relatively low population density. Tree cover can be managed along these segments.
 - **Segments 7-8: Generally consistent.** Avoids schools. Segments currently contain intermediate development in terms of density. Some opportunity on these segments to overbuild existing distribution lines.
 - **Segment 9: Generally consistent, but less favorable** due to proximity to schools. Currently contains intermediate development in terms of density. Some opportunity on these segments to overbuild existing distribution lines.
 - **Segments 10-12: Generally consistent, but less favorable** due to potential tree-line impacts adjacent to SR305 (Scenic Byway)
 - **Segments 17-19: Generally consistent.** Avoids schools.
- **Other potential segments for PSE to consider?** Members of this group discussed the merits of repurposing the southern portion of the Winslow Tap transmission line corridor (starting at New Brooklyn and/or High School Road) to accommodate the new transmission line, while moving the existing Winslow Tap transmission line to the west along Fletcher Bay Road.

Large group discussion on route segments

After the individual breakout group reports, CSB members continued the discussion of segments as a large group and asked questions or continued conversations from other groups. PSE and HDR staff were available to answer technical questions and provide clarifications when needed. The large group discussion was also a place where CSB voiced their opinion why a route segment was not consistent with their priority routing factors. Key points of discussion from the large group discussion included these topics:

- **Segments in low-population density areas.**
CSB members considered segments that traveled through both high-density areas and low-density areas. While some focused on the lasting visual impacts and characteristic changes a transmission line would have on an area, others were mindful of the construction and maintenance impacts associated with a transmission line. CSB members realized no matter how you build a route from Murden Cove substation to Winslow substation some people are going to be happy and other upset about the route and impacts.
- **Opportunities for trails.**
CSB members recognized segments built in a low-population density area might impact the rural feel of the area sought by the residents who live there. Some felt that development of a path or

trail under the transmission line might help mitigate this potential impact. PSE is willing to consider partnering with the Bainbridge Island Parks and Recreation District where needs align.

- **Traffic congestion on High School Road and Madison Avenue.**

The Bainbridge Island School District is anticipating 50-70% of parents driving their children to school once in-person schooling is allowed. CSB members asked PSE to be mindful of how the transmission line construction timeline could affect morning and afternoon school commutes.

- **Helipad in proximity to Segments 7 and 8.**

The helipad managed by the Kitsap County Fire Department is a key point for emergency medical evacuations and distribution of medical supplies. The location of the helipad and its importance was not evident to PSE prior to Meeting 4. PSE will consult with the FAA to make sure a transmission line along segments travelling adjacent to the helipad could be designed to meet clearance requirements.

- **Vegetation management on New Brooklyn Road.**

PSE recently completed vegetation management and tree wire installation within the New Brooklyn Road distribution line corridor. This would be a good foundation for transmission routing along the New Brooklyn Road segment. Compared to New Brooklyn Road, CSB members acknowledged that tree trimming and removal on Fletcher Bay could receive community push back.

- **Additional segments for PSE to Consider:**

- **Reroute Winslow Tap to enable use of the Eagle Harbor corridor for the new transmission line.** Additional discussion occurred around this suggestion from some CSB members, including a CSB-member screen-share of sketched-in options to clarify the suggestions. PSE technical staff discussed a scenario where part of the existing Winslow Tap corridor could be used for the Murden Cove – Winslow transmission line (including potentially adding a segment on Finch Road); however, the projects are on two different timelines, so the Winslow Tap rebuild work will have to continue ahead of the new transmission line construction schedule. PSE will consider the option presented.
- **Add a Westerly Lane Segment:** This suggestion by a CSB member was offered as an option to get from High School Road to Fletcher Bay Road while avoiding the wetland areas on Segment 6. PSE and some other CSB members noted that Westerly Lane is a narrow, heavily treed, private lane, and may not be a practical segment to add. PSE will review this further.
- **Transect Sakai Park to enable crossing SR305:** CSB members discussed the potential of using Sakai Park as a crossing point to connect SR305 to Madison Avenue (rather than at High School Road). PSE and HDR noted the presence of Category II wetlands in Sakai Park - COBI code currently prohibits new primary utilities from being built in Category II wetlands. Such a segment may also conflict with plans by Bainbridge Island Metro Park and Recreation District's new recreation facilities planned at Sakai Park.

Feedback to HDR on Segment Explorer Tool: Include a measuring tape tool (note: Susan said additional feedback from CSB members on the use of the Segment Explorer Tool would be solicited via email following the meeting).

Public Comment

No public comments were submitted via an email to info@psebainbridge.com or through the project phone line (1-888-878-8632) during the duration of the meeting.

Next steps: upcoming meetings

- Virtual community workshop: November 16, 2020 (tentative)
- CSB Meeting 5: early 2021

Closing remarks

Susan and Kierra thanked CSB members for participating. The meeting concluded just after 7:30 p.m.

Attachment 1: Meeting Participants

Community Sounding Board

Individual Interests

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

Organizational Interests

Glen Tyrrell, Bainbridge Island School District
Maradel Gale, Sustainable Bainbridge
Maria Metzler, Helpline House
Mark Epstein, City of Bainbridge Island
Perry Barrett, Bainbridge Island Metro Parks & Recreation District
Stephen Hellriegel, Net253 LLC

PSE Staff

Andy Swayne, PSE Municipal Liaison Manager and CSB Technical Liaison
Barry Lombard, PSE Project Manager
Gretchen Aliabadi, PSE Communications
Kerry Kriner, PSE Land Planner
Kierra Phifer, PSE Local Government Affairs and Community Outreach
Shelby Naten, PSE Communications

HDR Staff

Bridget Brown, HDR
Kirk Moughamer, HDR
Vanessa Bauman, HDR

EnviroIssues Staff

Darcy Edmunds, EnviroIssues, Breakout group facilitator
Faiza Hassan, EnviroIssues, Zoom host and technical support
Nyles Green, EnviroIssues, Notetaker, Breakout group facilitator
Susan Hayman, EnviroIssues, Plenary facilitator, Breakout group facilitator

Observers

No members of the public identified themselves watching the livestream over email or voice message.