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Sent: Sunday, February 21, 2010 2:21 PM  
To: SR 520 Bridge SDEIS (2)  
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sally.clark@seattle.gov; bruce.harrell@seattle.gov; tim.burgess@seattle.gov;  
mike.obrien@seattle.gov  
Subject: 520 SDEIS South Portage Bay area Comments

Please see attached comments on 520 SDEIS.

Carl and Annie Stixrood  
2510 Boyer Avenue East  
Residents adjacent to 520 Portage Bay Viaduct

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Carl and Annie Stixrood  
2510 Boyer Avenue East  
Seattle, WA 98102  
February 21, 2010

Randolph L. Everett  
Seattle Major Projects Oversight Manager  
Federal Highway Administration

Jennifer Young  
Environmental Manager  
Washington State Department of Transportation  
SR 520 Project Office  
600 Stewart Street, Suite 520  
Seattle, WA 98101

RE: SDEIS COMMENT LETTER, **NOISE WALLS; PORTAGE BAY VIADUCT**  
SR 520 Bridge Replacement and HOV Program FHWA-WA-EIS-06-02-DS

I-037-001

Carl and Annie Stixrood are submitting the following comments regarding the above referenced SDEIS. Our comments are primarily focused on our immediate neighborhood of South Portage Bay defined on the north and west by Highway 520, on the south by Delmar Drive and on the east by 15th Avenue and the newly developed south Portage Bay reclamation portion of the Montlake Park. This area forms a topographic "bowl" focused on the 2,500 foot long Viaduct. There are over 60 single family residences and approximately 100 multi family units in this area that would achieve a 7-dba reduction from noise wall mitigation. Approximately 100 of these units are "first row" properties, most of which were developed prior to Highway 520. In addition, the Queen City Yacht Club and Seattle Yacht club which border the viaduct on the northwest near the bridge ends predated viaduct construction.

My wife and I have lived next to the Portage Bay Viaduct since 1985. We are writing to express a request for noise walls on the Portage Bay Viaduct and to express concern about the vagueness in the SDEIS about the provision of noise walls on the Portage Bay Viaduct.

This letter is a formal request from first row property owners that noise walls be included in the 520 project on the Portage Bay viaduct. Noise walls should be provided for the following reasons:

- Exhibits in the SDEIS show a dramatic positive benefit from noise walls.
- My wife and I are requesting the provision of noise walls, in writing, after having reviewed the information in the SDEIS. We are "first row" property owners of three properties.

### I-037-001

FHWA and WSDOT are committed to identifying and considering reasonable and feasible noise abatement measures in accordance with 23 CFR 772. WSDOT has incorporated several noise reduction strategies into the project design that include 4-foot concrete traffic barriers with noise-absorptive coating, lowering the speed limit through the Portage Bay area from 60 mph to 45 mph, encapsulating expansion joints on the Portage Bay Bridge, and using noise-absorptive materials around the Montlake and 10th Avenue East/Delmar Drive East lid portals. These strategies would reduce traffic noise in the Portage Bay area to less than current levels. WSDOT will continue to consider other measures to reduce traffic noise as design development progresses. Future (2030) project-related noise levels were modeled near your location, and sound levels would not be expected to approach or exceed the FHWA noise abatement. Information on noise modeling results for the Preferred Alternative can be found in Section 5.7 of the Final EIS and the Noise Discipline Report Addendum (Attachment 7 to the Final EIS).

**I-037-001**

- This is a Type 1 project for which noise walls appear to meet the “reasonable and feasible” criteria consistent with WSDOT policy, implemented in accordance with 23 CFR part 772.
- Noise modeling in the SDEIS shows that noise walls meet all FHWA and WSDOT requirements for avoidance and minimization of negative effects of the 520 viaduct.
- **Noise will exceed threshold criteria without walls and will be reduced by walls to a level that meets WSDOT criteria for a decision to provide walls.** Modeling done by WSDOT shows a greater than 10 decibel reduction from walls on all three of the properties my wife and I own and a greater than 7-dba reduction in the noise levels for the 160 residences in the South Portage Bay area described above. **Under these conditions the WSDOT is required by its policies to make every reasonable effort to achieve these reductions.**
- Review of the noise discipline report page 115-117 and modeling results (SDEIS page 5-106) indicates that **the following criteria for noise walls are met in the South Portage Bay area:**
  - Many receivers achieve a 10 DBA reduction
  - A 7-dba reduction appears to be achieved for over 160 single and multifamily residences north and west of Delmar Drive
  - Most of first row properties were developed prior to 520 construction
- As indicated on page 1-26 of the SDEIS “regardless of the preferences of mediation participants, they do not affect FHWA’s and WSDOT’s responsibility to identify and consider effective noise abatement measures under existing laws.” **My wife and I agree with this statement that the mediation process does not affect WSDOT obligation to provide noise walls along the Portage Bay viaduct.**

**I-037-002**

- The recently designed and constructed South Portage Bay reclamation/interpretive area fronting the Viaduct and adjacent to Montlake Park is not discussed in the SDEIS. This passive park area was recently designed and constructed under the supervision of a noted Seattle/Bellevue area Landscape Architect in partnership with Seattle Parks and Seattle Green Partnership to provide public access and interpretation and reclaim shoreline wildlife habitat. The park development was funded by a grant from the Seattle Department of Neighborhoods, with contributions from Microsoft, Starbucks, King County Council, Seattle Department of Planning and Development (mitigation funds), Washington Native Plant Society, Montlake Community Council, Montlake Advisory Council, and private cash donations totaling over \$15,000. Matching labor hours exceed 3,250

**I-037-002**

The City of Seattle has not identified the “South Portage Bay Park” as a separate facility from Montlake Playfield, and therefore this area has not been addressed as a distinct resource. Regardless of what the aquatic area to the north of the Montlake Playfield and south of SR 520 is called, the Recreation and Ecosystems Discipline Report Addenda (Attachment 7 of the Final EIS) discuss the effects of the project on the Montlake Playfield, and the adjacent aquatic environment.

As discussed in the response to Comment I-037-001, a number of noise reduction strategies have been designed into the Preferred Alternative. As a result, the noise models of the Preferred Alternative show that overall traffic noise from the SR 520 corridor would decrease compared to the No Build Alternative. The Noise Discipline Report Addendum demonstrates that fewer residential receivers around the Montlake Playfield would exceed the NAC, compared to the No Build noise levels.

Noise walls are not recommended for the Preferred Alternative except in the Eastside Transition Area, and potentially along I-5 in the North Capitol Hill area where the reasonableness and feasibility of a noise wall is still be evaluated. Please see Section 5.7 of the Final EIS and the Noise Discipline Report Addendum (Attachment 7 of the Final EIS) for more detailed information.

Jennifer Young  
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**I-037-003**

Please see the response to Comment I-037-001.

**I-037-002**

to date. Interpretive signing is being designed, installed and constructed under a grant from the Bullitt Foundation. The South Portage Bay wildlife reclamation project would benefit from a greater than 7 decibel reduction from noise walls. This area should be included in the cost analysis for noise walls on a residential equivalency basis.

**I-037-003**

**Conclusion.**

My wife and I agree that this project is needed to increase mobility and access and will bring increased growth, and thus a better economy, to our region. However, consider that roads have impacts and can destroy the goals we are trying to achieve as a region and a nation. By mitigating noise impacts of the Portage Bay viaduct portion of this project, WSDOT can contribute to strengthening a high density neighborhood that provides exceptional owned and rental housing, walk to work, education, recreation and shopping opportunities.

In summary, the viaduct portion of the 520 project, with proper noise mitigation can support a showcase neighborhood that achieves regional and national land use planning "smart growth" goals. Without noise walls on the Viaduct the 520 project will destroy an opportunity in the South Portage Bay neighborhood to achieve national security and health objectives.

We formally request that noise walls be included on the Portage Bay Viaduct.

Sincerely,



Carl and Annie Stixrood

Cc  
Mayor Mike McGinn  
Seattle City Councilmembers  
Representatives Frank Chopp, Jamie Petersen  
Governor Chris Gregoire  
Madison Park Community Council  
Montlake Community Council  
Portage Bay Roanoke Park Community Council  
Washington Secretary of Transportation Paula Hammond  
Queen City Yacht Club  
Seattle Yacht Club  
Seattle Preparatory Academy

Carl and Annie Stixrood  
2510 Boyer Avenue East  
Seattle, WA 98102  
February 15, 2010

Randolph L. Everett  
Seattle Major Projects Oversight Manager  
Federal Highway Administration

Jennifer Young  
Environmental Manager  
Washington State Department of Transportation  
SR 520 Project Office  
600 Stewart Street, Suite 520  
Seattle, WA 98101

RE: SDEIS COMMENT LETTER, **PEDESTRIAN CONNECTIVITY**  
SR 520 Bridge Replacement and HOV Program FHWA-WA-EIS-06-02-DS

**I-037-004**

Carl and Annie Stixrood are submitting the following comments regarding the above referenced SDEIS. Our comments are primarily focused on our immediate neighborhood of South Portage Bay defined on the north and west by Highway 520, on the south by Delmar Drive and on the east by 15th Avenue and the newly developed south Portage Bay reclamation portion of the Montlake Park. There are over 60 single family residences and approximately 100 multi family units in this area. Walking destinations include the bus stop on Tenth and Roanoke, employment and shopping on Capitol Hill, University Village, and University District; the Canal, Hopin and Mont's Markets, Montlake Elementary School, Montlake Library, Montlake Park and Community Center and many others.

My wife and I have lived in the Portage Bay neighborhood since 1985. We are writing to express concern over the lack of discussion of the pedestrian network that will be affected by the project. The analysis of the pedestrian environment in the SDEIS is inadequate. There is no discussion of the existing sidewalk/stair system in the South Portage Bay neighborhood in Chapter 4 or the impacts to it in Chapter 5. Discussion is provided in relation to regional movement, but it is the impact to the fine grain of local movement opportunities that has such a effect on the liveability and walkability of neighborhoods. The WSDOT record with respect to pedestrian facilities in the South Portage Bay neighborhood is one of destruction. The sidewalks and stairways that knitted this neighborhood together and to transit were destroyed by the construction of Highway 520 and were not replaced after construction. Working over many, many years a dedicated group of residents has been able to dig out or rebuild many of the sidewalks, stairs and other facilities destroyed by the construction of 520. In the current era, a national goal of the present administration is for planners and engineers to work together to create walkable communities. The importance of this concept is confirmed by the strong attendance at the recent Smart Growth conference in Seattle which attracted 1700 attendees from 46 states and 7 foreign countries with keynote speakers including US Secretaries of Transportation and Housing and Urban Development. Walkable communities are an important national security issue to reduce our country's reliance on foreign oil. It is also an important national health issue. It is questionable

### **I-037-004**

For the Draft EIS, SDEIS, and Final EIS, the focus of the nonmotorized effects evaluation has been on areas directly affected by changes proposed by the project. The Preferred Alternative includes a new regional path along the north side of the SR 520 floating bridge. It also includes improved connections between the regional trail and existing and planned pedestrian and bicycle facilities maintained and proposed by the City of Seattle. The focus of the nonmotorized study in this EIS has, therefore, been on facilities in and near the Montlake interchange area, and near the I-5/SR 520/Roanoke Street area.

Refer to Chapter 7 of the Final Transportation Discipline Report for additional description of the project's affected environment, project design elements, and project effects on nonmotorized travel in and around the project area, including the Portage Bay community.

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I-037-004

whether federal dollars should be spent in the current climate on a project that could have such a negative effect on walkability in a neighborhood that exemplifies the goals we are trying to achieve as a nation. Please don't destroy our neighborhood's sidewalk and stairway system again.

My wife and I agree that this project is needed to increase mobility and access and will bring increased growth, and thus a better economy, to our region. However, consider that roads have impacts and can destroy the goals we are trying to achieve as a region and a nation. By mitigating pedestrian movement impacts of the Portage Bay viaduct portion of this project, WSDOT can contribute to strengthening a high density neighborhood that provides exceptional owned and rental housing, walk to work, education, recreation and shopping opportunities.

In summary, the viaduct portion of the 520 project, with proper pedestrian mitigation can support a showcase neighborhood that achieves regional and national land use planning "smart growth" goals. Without pedestrian access mitigation the viaduct portion of the 520 project will destroy an opportunity in the south portage bay area to achieve national security and health objectives.

**We request that the analysis in the FEIS include a map of all existing pedestrian facilities in the South Portage Bay neighborhood, a discussion of project effects on them and proposed mitigating measures.**

Sincerely,



Carl and Annie Stixrod

Cc  
Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood  
Seattle King County Department of Health  
Mayor Mike McGinn  
Seattle City Councilmembers  
Representatives Frank Chopp, Jamie Petersen  
Governor Chris Gregoire  
Montlake Community Council  
Portage Bay Roanoke Park Community Council  
Washington Secretary of Transportation Paula Hammond  
Queen City Yacht Club  
Seattle Yacht Club  
Seattle Preparatory Academy

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2510 Boyer Avenue East  
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Seattle Major Projects Oversight Manager  
Federal Highway Administration

Jennifer Young  
Environmental Manager  
Washington State Department of Transportation  
SR 520 Project Office  
600 Stewart Street, Suite 520  
Seattle, WA 98101

RE: SDEIS COMMENT, **SILT IN PORTAGE BAY**  
SR 520 Bridge Replacement and HOV Program FHWA-WA-EIS-06-02-DS

**I-037-005**

Carl and Annie Stixrood are submitting the following comments regarding the above referenced SDEIS. Our comments are primarily focused on our immediate neighborhood of South Portage Bay defined on the north and west by Highway 520, on the south by Delmar Drive and on the east by 15th Avenue and the newly developed south Portage Bay reclamation portion of the Montlake Park. There are over 60 single family residences and approximately 100 multi family units in this area.

My wife and I have lived next to the Portage Bay Viaduct since 1985. We are writing to express concern about the lack of discussion of sediment issues in Portage Bay. Discussion with long time residents of the area indicates that the water depth in the Bay appears to have decreased since construction of Highway 520. Our investigation suggests two possibilities for this: 1) Fill placed in Montlake Park as a disposal site for 520 construction may be pushing soft underlying peat into the Bay and 2) sediment laden stormwater collected in storm drains on the viaduct is discharged directly to the Bay.

Discussion in the SDEIS of the sediment effects of the project appears inadequate. We cannot find any discussion of the change in Portage Bay depths, siltation and silt pollution from the construction and operation of the current viaduct. Page 4-77 indicates that additional sediment quality information will be available at the time of the FEIS. This approach will not meet required environmental procedures as there will not be adequate opportunity for public comment on this important project affect as a basis for formulating a Record of Decision.

**We request that a supplemental DEIS address sediment issues in Portage Bay to allow public comment prior to issuing a record of decision for this project.**

Sincerely,

  
Carl and Annie Stixrood

### **I-037-005**

The Affected Environment section of the Geology and Soils Discipline Report (pages 15 through 39) describes the existing conditions of the Portage Bay area consistent with the level of detail required for an environmental impact statement. Past construction effects from the existing Portage Bay bridge are not evaluated for this project as part of the Affected Environment discussion.

The existing documentation on stormwater quality discloses pollutant loads being discharged to Portage Bay, and does not discuss siltation and sedimentation affecting water depth to the degree described in the comment.

Jennifer Young  
February 13, 2010  
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