



Seattle Yacht Club

Established in 1892

Mr. Paul Kruger
Environmental Manger
SR 520 Project Office
414 Olive Way, Suite 400
Seattle, WA 98101

October 23, 2006

Re: Comment on Draft 520 EIS

Dear Mr. Kruger:

This letter is to provide comment from the Seattle Yacht Club regarding the EIS recently issued pertaining to the SR 520 Bridge Replacement and HOV Project's Draft Environment Impact Statement.

The Seattle Yacht Club hereby goes on record as supporting the Pacific Interchange option of a 520 revision provided that maximum bridge clearance be at least 110 feet.

The Seattle Yacht Club has 2,500 members plus spouses. The Portage Bay Mainstation, which is now 86 years old, has moorage for 227 boats for its members. The Seattle Yacht Club holds a junior sailing program in the summer for upwards of 400 juniors for both members and non-member youngsters in the community. On the first Saturday in May, the Opening Day of Boating Season is held at the Club with hundreds of participating boats and tens of thousands of spectators lining the Montlake Cut eastward out to Webster Point in Laurelhurst. The Seattle Yacht Club is an institution in this City that counts among its past members and flag officers, many of the individuals instrumental in Seattle's growth and success. The Mainstation is on the National Register of Historic Places. It is in fact an institution that, because of its proximity to the concrete ribbons of highways, is threatened both in terms of enjoyment but also basic use of the water.

While any change in the 520 is going to significantly impact the Seattle Yacht Club its members and guests, of the presented alternatives, the Pacific Interchange offers the best hope of curing the Montlake "mess" without adding an excessive amount of lanes over Portage Bay. An important part of the Seattle Yacht Club's support for the Pacific Interchange, is that any bridge have a full 110 feet of clearance for vessels transiting out of the Montlake Cut to the East, which is what we understand is proposed.

In June, 2002, the Seattle Yacht Club provided comment to WSDOT concerning 520. For your convenience of reference, I am enclosing a copy of our letter dated June 19, 2002 to Secretary Doug MacDonald stating many of our concerns with regard to the SR 520 Bridge Replacement Project ("The Project").

1807 East Hamlin Street • Seattle, Washington 98112 • telephone 206.325.1000 • fax 206.324.8784

C-013-001

Comment Summary:

Pacific Street Interchange Option

Response:

See Section 1.2 of the 2006 Draft EIS Comment Response Report.

C-013-001

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This Project remains a grave concern to the Officers and Membership of the Seattle Yacht Club. We have conducted a review of the draft EIS ("The Report") and hereby submit the following comments on that report.

C-013-002

1. Encroachment Into Portage Bay by Roadways.

Our primary concern remains that Northerly encroachment into the Portage Bay waterway will limit the access to our dock #1 moorages. The Seattle Yacht Club expects WSDOT to make every effort to present a project alignment and design that essentially constructs the new facility in the footprint of the old facility without going further northward.

C-013-003

2. The Seattle Yacht Club is on the National Register of Historic Places.

Mention is made in several places in the draft EIS of the significance of the Federal Transportation Act of 1966 Section 4(f) regarding preservation of Historic Sites. The report does make mention of the Montlake Historic District that includes the Seattle Yacht Club but does not make specific mention of the Seattle Yacht Club as a designated Historic Site. WSDOT should be aware that the Seattle Yacht Club was listed as a Historic Site; by the Seattle Land Mark Preservation Board on February 1, 2006, by The Washington State Historic Preservation Office on January 27, 2006 and by the National Register of Historic Places on June 9, 2006.

"The designation and listing of the Seattle Yacht Club on the National Register of Historic Places does assure protective review of the property should a federal or state action have a potential adverse effect to the property's historic values" as summarized by Allyson Brooks, PhD, Washington State's Historic Preservation Office, January 27, 2006. The Seattle Yacht Club (SYC) considers Allyson's statement to include the "adverse effect to be both the construction process period and the final end product and its property." The building, its grounds, docks and moorage and waterways, all part of the culture and tradition of many Seattle activities since 1919, are all considered historic values to be considered in this process.

To ensure the security of these assets, the Club Board Members request that FHWA and WSDOT submit as a part of this final EIS statement a more detailed description of the construction process, mentioned in Chapter 8: Construction Effects, page 15, Would Project Construction Affect Navigation Channels? and include a map/diagram illustrating access and egress for materials, equipment and labor force on Portage Bay between the west end of the Seattle Yacht Club Moorage and the east end of the Queen City Yacht Club Moorage. It is expected that this access route will only be used during days and time of days approved by SYC, this under the provisions of Section 4(F) from 23 CFR 771.135 Paragraph (3)(ii). The SYC does not consider the Pacific Interchange option to have a negative impact on the community, but does consider the process of construction as potentially negative in terms of impact.

C-013-002

Comment Summary:

Recreational Boating

Response:

See Section 9.2 of the 2006 Draft EIS Comment Response Report.

C-013-003

Comment Summary:

Section 106 Process

Response:

See Section 11.1 of the 2006 Draft EIS Comment Response Report.

C-013-004

3. Roadway Filth
Our review of The Report found that Air Quality related to The Project was well defined as to the types of pollutants, content of pollutants and source of pollutants but show that little or no effort has been made to include into the design of The Project any mitigation to relieve the adjacent neighborhoods of the particulate pollutants generated by the automobiles and trucks from tires and engine discharge. The Seattle Yacht Club is subjected to continual traffic filth raining down onto the boats, buildings and parking lots. This is a costly and cumbersome maintenance project for the Club and for the boat owners who are faced daily with the need to clean their boats from road grime and tire dust. The existing roadways are extremely imposing and there is no reason to expect the new facility to be any improvement without some collecting equipment being included into the design. The Seattle Yacht Club requests that the result of this road filth be somehow mitigated.

C-013-005

4. The "Montlake Mess"- Too Much Congestion
The Seattle Yacht Club's membership only access to their Clubhouse and moorage facilities is from Montlake Boulevard via Hamlin street. Today our membership experiences long waits in an insufficient storage lane to make left turns from northbound Montlake Boulevard onto westbound Hamlin Street. Likewise, members leaving from Shelby Street either northbound or southbound onto Montlake Boulevard face long waits. Careful examination of this Draft EIS shows no relief for our problem *with the exception of the Pacific Street Interchange option*. It appears that the other designs offered are aimed at a greater through-put on both SR 520 and Montlake Boulevard giving little or no relief to congestion. This is an important reason to the Seattle Yacht Club why the Pacific Interchange option should be chosen.

C-013-006

5. Opening Day of Boating Season- Largest Free Event in Seattle
It appears that reconstruction of the western end of SR 520 is inevitable. Seattle Yacht Club urges the WSDOT to go to extreme measures in planning the demolition and reconstruction methods so that their impacts on the Montlake and Portage Bay communities will be minimized. A 7 to 8 year construction period will adversely impact individual boaters and the yacht club itself.

As you may know, the Seattle Yacht Club in conjunction with the University of Washington, on the first Saturday in May each year stages Opening Day of Boating Season, the world's largest Rowing Regatta and Boat Parade as a free event for the general public in Union Bay, the Montlake Cut and Portage Bay. Thousands of hours of volunteer effort are put forth in order to stage this event. Over 100 visiting yacht clubs from the Puget Sound and Canada participated in Opening Day this past year.

The Seattle Yacht Club would like to work with WSDOT in order to minimize the conflicts in presenting Opening Day of Boating Season during the SR 520 construction period.

C-013-004

Comment Summary:

Water Resource Effects During Operation

Response:

See Section 15.2 of the 2006 Draft EIS Comment Response Report.

C-013-005

Comment Summary:

Local Street Network

Response:

See Section 5.3 of the 2006 Draft EIS Comment Response Report.

C-013-006

Comment Summary:

Recreational Boating

Response:

See Section 9.2 of the 2006 Draft EIS Comment Response Report.

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C-013-007

6. Traffic Noise Reduction with Sound Walls

The Report addresses the impacts of traffic generated noise and the potential mitigation provided by sound deflecting or absorbing walls. In addition, The Report explains the extent that the various alternatives will present visual impacts. The Seattle Yacht Club expects WSDOT to optimize the design of the Portage Bay Viaduct to achieve the greatest reduction of noise impacts while minimizing the visual impacts of that structure.

C-013-008

7. Seattle Yacht Club Endorses the Pacific Interchange Option

The Seattle Yacht Club upon review of the Draft EIS finds the Six Lane Alternative with the Pacific Street Interchange Option to have the least impact and the greatest benefit to the surrounding neighborhoods while still providing an optimum increase in traffic volume and reducing traffic on Montlake. It appears without question to be the best solution.

C-013-009

8. 110 Foot Clearance Height of Bridge Handling Boat Traffic From Montlake Cut
Consideration of the other Alternatives and Option presents WSDOT with a dilemma of construction of a high level or a low level Union Bay Bridge in the Pacific Street Interchange Option. The Union Bay Bridge will have a visual impact for Yachtsmen especially for the Opening Day Rowing Races and boat parade. Functionally, the low level minimum clearance of about 110 feet would be adequate to satisfy the needs the recreational boating community and commercial vessels. 110 feet is the clearance that must be maintained for any new bridge structure and implementation of the Pacific Interchange Option must include this bridge height.

9. The Construction Process Will Be A Substantial Adverse Impact
The construction process will no doubt take many years. The construction process of a project of this magnitude will unquestionably have a huge impact on the greater Montlake area which includes the Seattle Yacht Club. In light of this, we believe that the citizens in the greater Montlake area, specifically and most centrally including the residents of Shelby and Hamlin Streets, along with the Seattle Yacht Club, must have input and be given a final authority for approval of the construction process.

We ask for this under the auspices of the section 4(F) which obligates the State to not interfere with the cultural aspects of historic places. For instance, we might object to having any activity after 5 PM and on weekends because of clubhouse and waterborne activities. In the alternative and in addition, a complete review of accelerated construction should be undertaken such as was carried out for the Santa Monica Freeway following the Northridge earthquake. An accelerated program of construction, with proper mitigation and economic incentives to the contractor, could result in cutting the construction time by half or possibly more, which in an overview, might have less impact on the Montlake neighborhood and the Seattle Yacht Club.

During the summer, our junior sailing courses, which take place in Portage Bay, will be jeopardized during construction. The weeklong celebration of Opening Day in early May brings thousands of people to the Montlake Cut and Portage Bay. There are many other

C-013-007

Comment Summary:

Noise Walls

Response:

See Section 12.2 of the 2006 Draft EIS Comment Response Report.

C-013-008

Comment Summary:

Pacific Street Interchange Option

Response:

See Section 1.2 of the 2006 Draft EIS Comment Response Report.

C-013-009

Comment Summary:

Section 4(f)

Response:

See Section 21 of the 2006 Draft EIS Comment Response Report.

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C-013-009

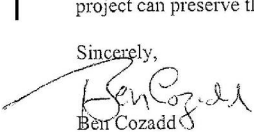
conflicts, not to mention the incredible daily burden of noise and inconvenience that will be placed on the immediate residents of Hamlin and Shelby streets. This underscores the need for the Seattle Yacht Club and the Montlake neighborhood to be integrally involved in the construction process.

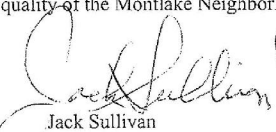
The Seattle Yacht Club looks forward to the SR 520 Bridge Replacement and HOV project to be a safe, quickly built facility that is successful in reducing traffic congestion for the motoring public yet preserving all boating alternatives and employing mitigation measures for dust, noise and avoiding any northward encroachment into Portage Bay.


C-013-010

The Seattle Yacht Club wishes to fully participate in the mitigation planning of this most significant project that has many significant adverse impacts. We are available to meet with you at any time to discuss our concerns and to offer suggestions as to how this project can preserve the quality of the Montlake Neighborhood.

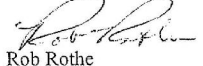
Sincerely,


Ben Cozadd
Commodore


Jack Sullivan
Vice Commodore


Fred Roed
Rear Commodore


Chris Orlowski
Staff Commodore


Rob Rothe
Chair, Mainstation Committee
Seattle Yacht Club

Cc: Douglas B. MacDonald, Secretary WSDOT
Governor Christine Gregoire
Senator Patty Murray
Senator Maria Cantwell
Congressman Jay Inslee
Congressman Rick Larsen
Congressman Brian Baird
Congressman Doc Hastings
Congresswoman Cathy McMorris
Congressman Norm Dicks
Congressman Jim McDermott
Congressman Dave Reichert
Congressman Adam Smith
Mayor Greg Nickels
Councilman Richard Conlin
Councilwoman Sally Clark
Councilman Nick Licata
Councilman David Della

C-013-010

Comment Summary:

Recreational Boating

Response:

See Section 9.2 of the 2006 Draft EIS Comment Response Report.

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Councilman Jan Drago
Councilwoman Jean Godden
Councilman Richard McIvor
Councilman Tom Rasmussen
Councilman Peter Steinbrueck
Richard Ford, Chair, Washington State Transportation Department
Ed Barnes, Member, Washington State Transportation Department
Robert Distler, Member, Washington State Transportation Department
A. Daniel O'Neal, Member, Washington State Transportation Department
Elmira Forner, Member, Washington State Transportation Department
Dale Stedman, Member, Washington State Transportation Department
Carol Moser, Member, Washington State Transportation Department
Mark Emmert, President, University of Washington
Kate Battuello, Montlake Community Club
Rob Wilkinson, Montlake Community Club



Dwight G. Shaw
Commodore

Seattle Yacht Club

Established in 1892

SYC

June 19, 2002

Douglas B. Mac Donald, Secretary
Washington State Department of Transportation
Post Office Box 47300
Olympia, Washington 98504

Dear Mr. Mac Donald,

I am writing to you to express my concerns regarding the Translake Washington Project. I am the current Commodore of the Seattle Yacht Club. We have more than 2000 members in this region. Our club will celebrate its 110 birthday this year. We have resided more than 80 years at our Portage Bay Station. Many of our traditions are rooted in our Historic Clubhouse and its associated facilities.

The Translake Washington Project, as proposed, will severely impact the Seattle Yacht Club's Portage Bay Station. I fear that the Project's impacts will permanently degrade this Club and its associated facilities. It is for these impacts that I must notify you that Seattle Yacht Club is joining with our neighbors in the Montlake Community and other citizens of the City of Seattle in support of the "Do No Harm" theme. We fully support the positions of Representative Frank Chopp and Representative Edward B. Murray as stated in their letter to you dated March 8, 2002.

March 27, 2002 the Seattle Yacht Club Board of Trustees met to review and consider the Translake Washington Project plans. My Board of Trustees adopted the following statement of concerns that I wish to bring to your attention:

1. Depending on the final configuration and location of the roadway, the new facility will certainly further encroach into the waterways surrounding our club and its moorages.
2. The Seattle Yacht Club currently gets significant amounts of dust, dirt, noise, tire and exhaust fume pollution created by the traffic on the present viaduct roadway. The waters around the club contain contaminants from the Freeway that kill fish and other marine life. A larger facility with more traffic is certain to exacerbate these problems.

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3. Montlake Boulevard is the only ingress and egress for SYC members and their guests. Access to the club is currently congested. Left turns by northbound traffic on Montlake Blvd to Hamlin Street and left turns onto Montlake Blvd from Shelby Street are currently extremely difficult. We understand that the City of Seattle will not allow the Montlake Bridge to be modified nor can Montlake Boulevard be widened in the area of Hamlin and Shelby Street by prior agreement. We encourage the City to maintain this position.
4. The present Portage Bay viaduct and the upgraded facility will continue to create a visual impairment, not only for the club but also to the entire neighborhood.
5. The Shelby-Hamlin Street district dates back prior to the 1920's and the opening of the Montlake cut. This district has been well maintained and represents a significant Historical place in the development of this city. We object to this area being inundated with additional freeways, arterials, bridges and/or tunnels.
6. We think that trying to solve all of our present cross-lake transportation problems with an expanded SR-520 is unrealistic.

I fear that the approach that you and those who you have assigned to provide solutions for our transportation problems are taking a myopic patchwork approach. As a result, they have promulgated a series of projects at various pinch points that tends to just move our traffic congestion from one point to another.

I see that most metropolitan areas around the country have constructed a system of beltways that allows traffic to flow around their down town areas. Where are our beltways? Why not build an Interstate 605 beltway to relieve the North/South traffic currently on I-5 and I-405? A truck traveling from Vancouver BC to Portland has absolutely no interest in driving under the convention center through downtown Seattle.

The most important project to our region is the reconstruction of the Alaskan Way Viaduct. This must be done immediately, for failure of that facility will further strangle North South transportation

I ask you, Why not build an east-west connector from I-5 to SR-522 along the King County-Snohomish County line. I am sure that your traffic studies will show reductions in volumes on both I-405 and SR-520 from construction of a northern bypass.

Public transportation alone cannot solve our traffic congestion. Rail constrains travel to narrow corridors. Buses add to congestion and overhead wires are visual pollution. Having to make one or more transfers on a public conveyance places that mode of travel at a psychological disadvantage because of the fear of missing a connection and having to

wait a half hour or more for the next bus. In general buses serve only a few who happen to live in one place and work in another place that a bus happens to connect. I feel that you must de-emphasize your reliance on Public Transportation for a solution to the traffic congestion in the Puget Sound region.

Finally, I believe that it is time to revisit the potential gains that can be derived from a third Lake Washington crossing at the Jaunita to Sand Point location. This would certainly help our University of Washington, Laurelhurst and Sand Point neighborhoods and pull their traffic out of the Montlake community.

Thank you for letting me make comments on the Translake Washington Project and its associated traffic concerns.

Sincerely,



Dwight G. Shaw
Commodore

Distribution:

The Honorable Greg Nichols
Councilman Richard Conlin
Councilman Richard McIver
Councilperson Heidi Wills
Councilman Paul DeMitriades
Mayor Alan Merkle
Senator Pat Thibaudeau
Representative Frank Chopp
Representative Edward Murray
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Terry Baker
Phil Butler
Bill Munday
Jean Amick
Chris Leman
Jim Reckers
Red Lane
Maurice Cooper
Cornelius & Gloria Peck
Jorgen Bader
Alan Jones

Tran slake Project
Impacts on
Seattle Yacht Club

Air Quality

Increased exhaust gases in atmosphere will degrade the air quality within the club facilities.
Increased exhaust gases in the atmosphere will affect the frequency for cleaning repainting facilities
Increased airborne particulate raining down onto SYC boats in moorage and facilities

Water Quality

Airborne exhaust gases and particulates degrading waterways
Project storm runoff degrades waterways.
Floating scum collects on boat hauls and causes increased maintenance.

Visual Pollution

Portage Bay viaduct creates a manmade visual barrier to the adjacent panorama views and sky.
Signs and barriers walls creates visual impairment of panoramic view from club

Noise Pollution

Increased traffic closer to SYC adds to the ambient roar at clubs facilities.

Increased Traffic Congestion

Project revisions restricts and encumbers access to club facilities.

Reduced Waterway and Navigational Space

Reconstruction Portage Bay viaduct reduces the space available for navigation in the areas adjacent to the club facilities.

Wildlife Impacts (Raccoons, beaver, ducks and geese etc)

Fish Impacts (degradation of fish habitat)

Endangered Species (Portage Bay crayfish)

Seismic Risks (collapse of Portage Bay viaduct could cause a tsunami effect to boats and Club facilities)

Wetland (Does the club have any land classified as wetlands?)

Parking (Reduction of available parking)

Portage Bay Habitat (Has the UofW done any studies on Portage Bay with regard to their Fish hatchery?)