

From: [Charlene Welch](#)
To: [Columbia River Crossing](#)
CC:
Subject: feedback on 6/24 task force mtg
Date: Monday, June 30, 2008 10:27:13 AM
Attachments:

Hello,

P-0531-001

I watched the task force meeting last night on CVTV. I realize this was their last official meeting, but I want to comment on the style and process evident in the meeting. As I watched the citizens give their comments at the standing microphone last night, I was surprised to see the task force remain in a closed circle leaving at least four task force members with their backs directly to the citizen commentators. That alone violates the most basic rules of respectful communication. The body language of the task force members made them appear bored. And, of course, it is unfulfilling as a citizen to give comment and then have only a "thank you, next please" in return. Even with the best of intentions on your part, it is perceived as impersonal and as if the task force is simply going through the motions. I know the comment periods are not intended to create a dialogue and potentially risk getting way off track. It just seems like the customer service could be better.

You cannot please everyone, but as you know some in the public have expressed frustration at the management of the public's involvement in the process. I have benefited from your staff attending my neighborhood association meetings and I have attended a few of your open house events. These are good strategies, but neither provides for true dialogue and exchange of ideas or questions getting answered within a larger context.

I recommend filing my observations with your lessons learned and that you apply other communication strategies with any of your work moving forward. I suggest having trained communications specialists facilitate exchanges between citizens and planners, engineers, or elected officials. And, please think of your customer when choosing when, where, and how the exchanges will take place so the opportunities are meaningful and productive.

Sincerely,
 Charlene Welch
 360) 258-1407



P-0531-001

The CRC Task Force was a large advisory body. To accommodate the group's discussions and allow for each member to have access to a microphone, it was necessary to have a closed square. This arrangement required some members of the Task Force to turn around to see a person who was giving verbal public comment or providing a CRC staff report. The commenter's recommendation related to customer service is noted for future public meetings with advisory bodies.