

## 43<sup>rd</sup> District Democrats Meeting February 20, 2007

- I. Meeting opens 7:35 pm
- II. Welcome by Chair Hillary Madsen
- III. Moderated discussion
  - a. Introduction by moderator C.R. Douglas
  - b. Opening statements
    - i. Todd Vogel, Allied Arts of Seattle, speaking for the tunnel alternative
    - ii. Gene Hogle, co-founder of the No Tunnel Alliance and Chair of the No Tunnel and Yes Elevated Seattle Campaign, speaking for the rebuild elevated alternative
    - iii. Cary Moon, Director of the People's Waterfront Coalition, speaking for the surface alternative
    - iv. Peter Sherman, sponsor of the Repair and Prepare Campaign, speaking for the retrofit elevated alternative
  - c. Discussion, with questions by C.R. Douglas to panelists
    - i. To Cary: your plan puts us back to the start. If people vote how you want, isn't it just a lot more delay?
      1. We have a plan that could start immediately, there is no reason to delay.
      2. We could start dismantling the viaduct in a year.
    - ii. To Peter: the retrofit is estimated to cost \$2.3 billion, what do you say about this?
      1. This includes everything
      2. I am not disagreeing with \$2.3 billion figure, Victor Grey says less.
    - iii. To Peter: How long will retrofitted viaduct last?
      1. Victor Grey suggest 500-year standard
      2. But I won't claim that; this is a transition
    - iv. To Gene: What do you say for those who have an aesthetic interest in a waterfront?
      1. <Secretary missed the response>
    - v. To Todd: Is this like Boston's Big dig?
      1. Going back to previous question, this is not about aesthetics, this is about creating a dense, livable sustainable downtown
      2. This is different from the Big Dig - different types of tunnels
      3. This is not as revolutionary as the Big Dig tried to be, this is tried and true
    - vi. To Cary: with your plan, the streets would absorb all of the capacity, and it does not allow for growth
      1. Your statement is an example of empirical evidence vs. real-world examples
      2. This has worked in San Fran, Vancouver
      3. People will want to drive less
    - vii. To Peter: why are no public officials on your side?
      1. There are! Peter Steinbreuck for example
      2. Wash DOT doesn't do cost estimates; the consultant who does that has a history of underbudgeting estimates, so it always goes over budget
      3. Todd says that this statement is not true, the consultants are enacting a tried and true process
    - viii. To Gene: we have heard how wide and ugly it will be. Is this true?
      1. No, they are showing the worst case scenario.
      2. When we vote yes, they will present the scenario as even worse

3. There are technologies around so that the new viaduct will be really nice and quiet
- ix. To Cary: every estimate for surface options says it will be huge
  1. We aren't advocating anything larger than 4 lanes
  2. Wash DOT is good at making things they don't like seem awful
  3. None of the capacity will affect I-5
  4. When you remove a highway facility and give people more choices and create a grid system
- x. To Todd: the governor says tunnel light is unsafe. Why do you support this?
  1. It's not unsafe
  2. There have been other tunnels that work well like in Melbourne
- xi. To Gene: what do you think of the sculpture garden?
  1. I think it's wonderful
  2. It is nice that there are not condos there instead
  3. Todd says the city resolution says that, should there be a tunnel, that space must be used for public space; the threat of a condo explosion is a red herring
- xii. To Cary: why are you obsessed with this one mile stretch of highway? Why do you call it the people's waterfront coalition?
  1. Well, why is that money being used for just that stretch of highway?
  2. This is a catalyst and turning point for this region
- xiii. To Peter: \$2.3 billion is a lot of money. How will it look different, what will we get?
  1. We can do a lot with less money
  2. Everybody says that the thing they don't like is awful
- d. Question time, 43<sup>rd</sup> District member Neal Travern takes questions from the audience and each panelist answers
  - i. To Todd: will the cost of this come from utilitys and City Light customers?
    1. Todd: Utilities run underneath the tunnel and will be better.
    2. Gene: for elevated, state is absorbing cost, not citizens
    3. Todd: utility costs are going down so the tunnel just means that it is going a little less down
    4. Gene: that means that rates are artificially high
    5. Cary: The surface option will make the utilities better.
    6. Peter: <secretary missed response>
  - ii. To Gene: Seawall must be replaced, how does your funding estimate speak to that?
    1. Gene: City of Seattle will fund that w/o cost to Seattle residents
    2. Cary: Wash DOT should not be designing seawalls, if we put in tunnel, then it will build this awful structure
    3. Peter: Wash DOT is better. A retrofit does include the seawall.
    4. Todd: Tunnel does not mean a sheer cliff, it is a gradual incline
  - iii. To Cary: what are your transit proposals?
    1. Cary: We are not going to invent a transit system, we want to work with the county to do that
    2. Peter: We need rapid transit and real transit
    3. Gene: Transit plan could be started now with the viaduct in place
    4. Todd: It is common misunderstanding that if we don't build the tunnel, that it will be invested in transportation. With tunnel, we can build transportation on the surface.
  - iv. To Peter: do you agree that there is no earthquake protection with rebuilt viaduct?
    1. Peter: <secretary missed response>
    2. Todd: What kind of city do we want?
    3. Gene: It would be scary driving in a tunnel

4. Cary: There are 40 bridges and tunnels that would fail in Washington if there was a slightly bigger earthquake than Nisqually. Why are we investing in this?
  - v. To Todd: Impact on environment?
    1. Todd: Restore environment on waterfront, there are other transportation options on surface. Surface options will increase greenhouse gases.
    2. Cary: our plans are based on meeting environmental standards
    3. Peter: twice as much energy to do tunnel than rebuild
  - vi. To all: How do you interpret No-No vote or Yes-Yes vote, and what will the governor and Wash DOT do next?
    1. Gene: Not sure what a No-No vote means. Yes vote for elevated means that citizens want an elevated structure. No vote means that they want a retrofit.
    2. Cary: Yes-yes vote is impossible, No-No vote is opening door toward finding multimodal solution
    3. Peter: No on viaduct means retrofit. Yes on viaduct means retrofit. Tunnel will go down, the vote is a waste of time. The vote means nothing.
    4. Todd: If you are tempted with surface option, then you should vote no on elevated and yes on tunnel
  - vii. Close
    1. Cary: goal is about how Seattle is going to not repeat 1973 decision
    2. Peter: we need to realize that there is no consensus. We will turn state from blue to red if we can't get moving on this.
    3. Todd: vote is about telling the governor that she can't cram the viaduct down our throats. A tunnel means a hybrid solution, the tunnel supports only essential capacity, we can make the city what we want it to be.
    4. Gene: elevated structure has helped create thousands of jobs, it's kept our city moving, it's protected our maritime economy. The cost of elevated is paid by state.
- IV. Acknowledgement by Chair Hillary Madsen of elected officials: Sally Clark, David Della, Frank Chopp, Peter Steinbreuck are all here
- V. Speaker Frank Chopp
- a. In Olympia there is not political gridlock
  - b. In a few days we will pass universal healthcare for every child in the state
  - c. Viaduct:
    - i. How do you handle transportation capacity?
    - ii. It has to be affordable!
    - iii. It's gotta be good urban design
    - iv. The problem with tunnel is that we don't have the federal government giving us money
    - v. We have to do a lot with transit because the city will grow by 200,000
    - vi. The governor thinks we need better design for elevated
    - vii. If we build viaduct, he is working on getting more parks
- VI. Chair's report
- a. We're moving our meeting location
  - b. Next month is Marriage Equality Month
  - c. I am going to Chair's Meeting in Ellensburg
  - d. Sunday April 1<sup>st</sup> is PCO recognition event
  - e. May 19<sup>th</sup> will be spring party
- VII. Voting
- a. Explanation of voting

- b. Motion introduced to have two pro and two con speakers, instead of three pro and three con
    - i. Seconded
    - ii. Passed
  - c. Tunnel
    - i. Speaker for tunnel, Winnie Sperrie: Embarcadero is beautiful. Tunnel will be expensive but we have to look 100 years ahead
    - ii. Speaker against tunnel, Barbara Zapeta: we aren't holding up our end of the bargain for creating transit. We should have underground electric rail
    - iii. Speaker for tunnel, David Kunselman: it is hybrid option and creates a vision
    - iv. Speaker against tunnel, Vince O'Halloran: their waterfront commerce disappeared in San Francisco
  - d. Elevated structure
    - i. Speaker for elevated, Will Affleck-Asch: 1. less tax dollars, 2. we won't use energy required by project
    - ii. Speaker against elevated, Bill Sherman: when we vote for this, we are voting for giant wall, we must consider impact on waterfront
    - iii. Speaker for elevated, John Fox: my organization was created to just oppose tunnel, but then we started to support viaduct. Why did we do this? City council will say if tunnel passes, then they will fight state government. If we want serious consideration of other options, then we have to vote against the tunnel.
    - iv. Speaker against elevated, Stephanie Pure: the viaduct has negative impact on our district. As our city becomes more dense, then we have to start investing in transit. Transit is a class issue and that is why we have to have good transit.
- VIII. Executive Board reports
- IX. Good of the order
- a. Lisa Steubing: I'm running for school board position 2
  - b. Barbara Zapeta: Support Amtrak
  - c. Rich Berkowitz: Al Franken is speaking, come to March 1<sup>st</sup> event at Westin
- X. Result of vote
- a. Measure #1, tunnel: 29 no, 15 yes, 6 absention, 65.9% no
  - b. Measure #2, elevated: 36 no, 11 yes, 3 abstention, 76.6% no