

# Columbia River CROSSING DRAFT Meeting Agenda

**MEETING TITLE:** Community and Environmental Justice Group  
**DATE:** 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m., August 20, 2009  
**LOCATION:** Community Room at Jantzen Beach Supercenter (directly across from the carousel and food court)

Meeting Objectives:

- Confirm Washington co-chair position
- Continue discussion of CEJG purpose, accomplishments and goals; set specific priorities
- Discuss goals for EJ training
- Review tolling outreach plan

TIME	AGENDA ITEM
6:00 p.m.	Welcome, introductions, and review meeting materials
6:05 p.m.	Confirm Washington co-chair nominee
6:20 p.m.	Discuss CEJG purpose, accomplishments and goals and identify group priorities
7:20 p.m.	Goals for EJ training
7:40 p.m.	Review tolling outreach plan
7:55 p.m.	Public comment
8:00 p.m.	Close meeting

# Columbia River **Draft Meeting Summary**

**MEETING TITLE:** Community and Environmental Justice Group (CEJG)

**DATE:** June 18, 2009, 6:00 – 8:00 pm

**LOCATION:** Jantzen Beach Super Center Community Room

**ATTENDEES:**

<b>Group Members</b>	
John Benson	
Connie Sherrard	
Steve Kayfes	
Michelle Tworoger	
Marcia Ward	
Ralph Welch	
Matt Whitney	
<b>Project Staff</b>	
KC Cooper	
Carley Francis	
Jeff Heilman	
Casey Liles	
Peter Markgraf	

*Participants are identified by full name in the first instance and by first name thereafter.*

Michelle Tworoger outlined the meeting objectives.

Michelle expressed the opinion that the group has lost a sense of purpose, and they should have a better sense of what they are going to do moving forward. Michelle said that the group often feels like they do not often make decisions or come to conclusions. John Benson agreed.

Matt Whitney said that with monthly meetings the natural life span would have high periods and low periods. He is not concerned about achieving something at every meeting, and he suggested that they might be meeting too often, and perhaps every two months would be more appropriate.

Ralph Welch generally agreed with Michelle. He said that CEJG is like a beetle wandering through the grass at a microscopic level, and he does not think it is the best use of the group's time. The group would be more effective if they worked to empower the neighborhood associations to advocate on their own behalf and become involved. Ralph said that having many neighborhood associations involved would be more effective than just the CEJG group.

Connie Sherrard said that it seems more important to oversee who the information is getting to. The neighborhood associations are already involved in the issues, and that is not about what Environmental Justice is about. It is about empowering people who do not have a voice. Michelle asked what the CRC wants out of the CEJG, and she requested clarification from the CRC.

Marcia said that she agrees with just about everything. She asked what CEJGs relationship to the rest of the project is in terms of timing.

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Connie said that she spoke to someone who decided not to come back to the CEJG because it felt like the group was just rubber stamping things. Ralph said that his perception is that CRC sets the agenda. He suggests that they are within their rights to set their own agenda. Michelle said that she would like the group to give more input on the agenda.

Steve Kayfes said that many of the other groups might be doing the same things because there are a lot of issues that cross over, and he does not know who is coordinating all the different issues.

Michelle asked the group for purposes and roles:

- Ralph suggested making sure that the neighborhood associations are well informed and have ample opportunity for input
- Advocate for communities who cannot do it themselves
- Matt suggested adding community groups to neighborhood associations
- Connie suggested that they could be technical assistance to the CRC in being more effective in doing outreach to communities so they reach the communities they want to reach and make their outreach more effective
- Matt suggested that CRC has done a good job in outreach, but the CEJG group can help tweak the messages and delivery

Matt said that HINOON has formed a sub group and asked Michelle what that group was going to do. Michelle said that the group was just forming, but they will ask the CRC to appoint a liaison to HINOON.

Michelle said that the CRC invited all the residents of the floating home community to a property effects meeting, but everyone came back with poor feedback, and there were no answers given, and someone said that floating homes are not worth as much as they think they are.

Ralph asked if the presentation is a canned meeting. Carley answered that they were making a presentation to JBMI as part of gathering data for the Final EIS. One of the frustrations for JBMI is that they want the CRC to build a new moorage and staff cannot say that it is going to happen. Carley said that for a staff member to say it is an easy option would be irresponsible. Michelle said that the community wants to hear that you have explored the option.

Matt Whitney said that he sees the role of CEJG to be bringing information to the neighborhood groups. He would like to see the neighborhoods coming to CEJG for help informing the neighborhood, and the community groups should take up issues with the CRC so that CEJG can champion their points.

Ralph disagreed, saying that he wonders what is going to be most effective. Should they ensure that all the neighborhoods have access and are engaged in the project? He is not sure what role they would play in that process. Matt said that they definitely are not a referee.

Michelle asked if the CRC takes the recommendations of the CEJG or the neighborhood groups more seriously. Carley said that if the neighborhood groups are saying something different than CEJG, they would probably listen to the neighborhoods, but it is unlikely that they would not be in concert.

Ralph said that it depends on the nature of a complaint from the neighborhood. If the problem is with participation, then CEJG has an obligation to say something to the CRC.

Marcia said that she is concerned about the people with no voice – that is not the neighborhood associations. She said that the project knows who they are not reaching, and you have the resources to find out who they are and reach them. The people in the neighborhood associations already know what is going on.

Ralph agreed, saying that if they have identified portions of the community that cannot advocate on their own behalf, we have an obligation to advocate on their behalf.

Connie said that her population is not engaged but there will be impacts.

Ralph said that the east/west alignment in downtown Vancouver was directed through a pocket where most of the residents were renters, and that is a group example that needs representation.

Michelle said that she would be willing to go door to door handing out information – if there were a specific neighborhood identified, she would be willing to go door to door. She has done outreach to the businesses on Hayden Island, and there were positive outcomes.

Matt said that it is hard to determine who is involved and who is not involved.

Connie asked if there is any information about where comments to the CRC are coming from. Carley answered that the comment forms include a request for zip code. Matt said that those data might be useful.

There was a general discussion of providing incentives for getting involved and providing comments.

Michelle said that they need to educate the community about the potential impacts and that might get their interest.

Matt said that there is a danger of raising a straw man of doom and gloom to try to get participation. To get a lot of comments you might have to get people alarmed, but it will not elicit reasoned comments from individuals. Connie said that she was thinking about education, and she thinks there is a happy medium that does not involve creating straw men to alarm people, and there is value in making sure people understand there are specific impacts. There may be ways of doing productive outreach that way.

Michelle asked the group if they had read the article about Environmental Justice distributed at the last meeting. Matt answered affirmatively, and said that he thought CRC had done a wonderful job reaching out to the communities identified in the handout.

Ralph said that if they are to adopt the aforementioned objectives, they should have a check in with staff to determine what materials they had received and how they have responded to it. Carley suggested that they could periodically bring in the communications summary. Ralph suggested that he is more concerned about the group comments rather than the individual comments.

Connie said that the groups already have a voice – individuals are not necessarily as involved as the groups. John said that, for example, at a meeting about tolling, they will get a lot of comments about tolling, but there might also be some good ideas for mitigation that come from a single individual.

### **Co-Chair Position**

Matt suggested that Ralph be co-chair. Ralph said that he would be willing if no one else has a burning desire.

Ralph said that he is happy to serve as the co-chair. Carley suggested that it would be wise to check with the people who are not at the meeting.

### **Charter Discussion**

Marcia asked if they were revising the charter. Carley said that she feels like the things they talked about fit inside the charter, so maybe the group should identify operational goals or objectives about what people want to address. Part of the map exercise was to try to respond to the interest in discussing impacts and providing information to respond to. Getting to the level where people have the information is challenging. Ralph said that it was not a complete waste of time, but it helped him to think strategically about the purpose and how they are accomplishing that.

Steve suggested looking point by point on the charter to look for gaps. Matt agreed, and he said that he liked the memo that Michelle sent with a point by point analysis and recommendations.

Carley suggested that they send the charter to people, and people could write down their thoughts on each item, and they could give people time to think about it on their own and then bring together ideas. Carley said that she will email the charter to the group.

Ralph said that he would like to create a list of objectives and recommendations – the charter is broad and all encompassing, and there are few specific strategies and objectives. Carley said that it highlights the fact that this group is important to the project, and that is one of the reasons why the charter is so broad – this group has a longer charge than some of the other groups. Marcia asked for a specific length of time the group would last.

Michelle said that the group has some homework – looking at the charter and coming up with recommendations.

There was general discussion about skipping the meeting in July.

Marcia said, looking at the calendar, when they come back in August, she asks how they are going to be effective and what they are going to be doing, and she said that she is willing to come to a meeting in July.

KC said that there might be a way, through July, for group members to communicate their comments on the charter.

Marcia commented that she wants to do something at the meetings. Ralph asked what she would like to do, and she answered that she does not know because she is unsure about what their charge is. Ralph suggested that they can make their own charge.

KC said that the group's charge will change with the ebb and flow of the project, and CRC can help the group determine what is important at what time.

### **Tolling Outreach**

KC introduced the handout with the Tolling Communication Outreach Plan and the outreach schedule. This is on a fast track – a tolling study and report. They have a plan and a tolling study committee. They will have listening sessions and they will probably get additional scenarios to study. There will be another set of listening sessions in the fall with additional presentations and solicitations for comments. The charge is to have the study completed in December and a report to the Washington legislature in January.

The CRC does not set the tolls – that is done by the legislature. The goal of the tolling study is to listen to what everyone says and report back. It is not about making conclusions. In addition to the listening sessions, they have the Project Sponsor's Council. There will be presentations to elected officials. They will be talking to the major freight groups, among other stakeholder groups. They are launching a tolling website with information, and it will eventually include a web survey. Later in the fall, they will do a scientific survey on tolling. KC asked the group what kind of community concerns should CRC be prepared to address.

Connie suggested coming to the resident advisory board at the Vancouver Housing Authority.

Ralph said that many of the ethnic groups have strong faith communities. Church bulletins and newsletters are a good way to reach populations. Connie said that the VHA has a newsletter, and she suggested several other newsletters, including DHS, Clark College, and CSO.

Michelle suggested advertising. KC said that they have advertised the listening sessions, but whether people will come or not is a matter of interest and time. She is looking for ways to disseminate information.

Connie said that advertising aimed specifically at people who would not normally respond is good. Maybe in busses.

Michelle suggested targeting large employers, such as Safeway.

KC said that she worked at TriMet, and they have an employer pass program, and they are able to get things in employer newsletters that reach everyone.

There were fliers passed around the table, and there was a general discussion of distributing fliers in neighborhoods.

Ralph suggested partnering with C-Tran for an info session, and he said that C-Tran might be able to bus people to meetings. KC said that she would look into the legality.

Michelle suggested outreach to the labor unions.

Marcia suggested the VA employees and residents. The center for community health on Fourth Plain has a lot of residents.

Steve asked what would be the answer to someone who asks what impact they would have at the meeting if the tolling decision should be made. KC answered that it is a listening session, and so the idea is to get ideas and information from the audience. There are a number of issues which are swirling around, including I-205, pre construction tolling, and one way tolling.

KC asked how the group wanted to engage in the tolling process. Ralph asked what kind of information they would be given. KC said that there would be scenario information there. Ralph said that he would like to know about the outreach plan. Ralph would like to know where the respondents are. He suggested a map on the wall where people could put dots, or some other

kind of mapping. KC said that the survey would have all sorts of demographic information. Marcia said that she would like to have information on which people they did not receive information from.

There was general discussion about survey methodology.

Carley observed from the Draft EIS that some topics were not of interest and some were of great interest. If there are specific areas of interest, they could bring in extra information related to that topic. Ralph said that anything they do should be consistent with what they agree to be their goal and strategy. Michelle said that they have made good progress on the impacts and effects, so it was not in vain.

Michelle said that in Danielle Cogan's closing remarks, she said that the group would be empowered to look at mitigation. Michelle asked for an outline on the mitigation issues – guidance would help the CEJG's mitigation process.

Ralph asked if it is too early to talk about mitigation issues. Jeff Heilman answered that for some of the issues they have definite plans, but some others, they will revise mitigation based on more study. That is a good topic for this group. The project effect and design solution tables help explain the regulations. Some mitigation measures can be influenced a lot and some considerably less. Some of the mitigation is about where the community would find value in the mitigation.

Michelle encouraged everyone to become better informed about mitigation.

Michelle asked what people felt we accomplished tonight. Answers included:

- Matt answered that he felt emotionally revitalized
- John said that they have a start towards giving themselves a defined purpose
- Ralph agreed and said they stayed on the agenda
- Michelle said that CRC listened to our concerns
- Michelle said that they discussed a new co-chair from Vancouver

KC said that one of the things this group can do is to make the CRC more effective, and that is important.

*The meeting was adjourned.*