

## **Minutes of the 34<sup>th</sup> District Democrats**

Meeting of 10 May 2006

53. Chair Ivan Weiss called the meeting to order at 7:03pm
54. 34<sup>th</sup> District State Representative Eileen Cody led the flag salute.
55. The agenda and minutes were approved by the members.
56. Ivan explained how the program will work tonight. It will start at 7:15pm. The subject of the program is the Alaskan Way Viaduct (State Route 99) on the Seattle waterfront. We will hear from all the speakers first and then entertain questions and answers. This is an informational meeting only. We will not entertain or take a vote to endorse any particular option tonight.
57. Report from District Chair Ivan Weiss
  - 57.1 Weiss introduced John Ehrman of the State Coordinated campaign who is recruiting volunteers to help with this year's election, including, tonight, the re-election of Senator Maria Cantwell.
  - 57.2 Weiss introduced PCO and Member Maggie Larrick. Maggie has accepted the job of coordinator for the 11th annual District garden party and auction, to be held in August or September..
  - 57.3 Weiss introduced Liz Giba and Cherisse Luxa, who have formed and are managing the Burien "Drinking Liberally" group. This is a national organization promoting discussion of current issues. Liz and Cherisse coordinate the Burien chapter, which meets the fourth Wednesday of the month, at Mick Kelly's pub in Burien.
  - 57.4 Weiss introduced Steve Karbowski, co-chair of the Outreach Committee. Steve talked about the upcoming volunteer project - neighbors helping neighbors on the 13th of May. Outreach is actively seeking members to volunteer to help with this project. Details on [www.34dems.org](http://www.34dems.org) .
  - 57.5 Steve also talked about the May 20th White Center cleanup, for which we also need volunteers. Details on [www.34dems.org](http://www.34dems.org) .
  - 57.6 Weiss announced that the District has a new logo, created by Dina Johnson. After tonight's program he will entertain a motion to fund production of 100 T-Shirts with the new logo. The Executive Board has approved this expenditure but it also must be passed by the membership.
  - 57.7 Weiss introduced elected officials who are present: Rep. Eileen Cody, Sen. Erik Poulsen, King County Councilmember Dow Constantine, and Seattle City Councilmembers Tom Rasmussen and Jean Godden. Later in the meeting, Weiss introduced other elected officials who arrived after the meeting started. These included Seattle City Councilmembers Sally Clark, David Della, Jan Drago and 11<sup>th</sup> District State Rep. Zack Hudgins.

### **Program: The Alaskan Way Viaduct**

58. Grace Crunican, Director of the Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT), introduced the topic, with assistance from Ron Paananen of the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT).
59. The viaduct and seawall were severely damaged in the 2001 earthquake. The viaduct has moved five times since then. Furthermore, marine borers - gribbles - are eating the seawall.

Weight and lane restrictions have been put in place now because of the poor shape of the roadway. The main purpose of the project is to provide a transportation facility and seawall with improved earthquake resistance. The project will maintain or improve mobility, accessibility and traffic safety for movement of people and goods along the existing Alaskan way viaduct corridor, as well as improve access to and from SR 99.

60. Consideration of the need for Viaduct repair or replacement started about five years ago. Over 70 options were identified and researched. Thousands of public comments have been received. As a result of the research, five options were included in the draft environmental impact statement (EIS). After further study, two decent alternatives, a tunnel and replacement of the existing viaduct with another viaduct, were identified to move forward. These two options met the purpose and needs statement developed under the national environmental protection act. The Mayor, the Seattle City Council and others have selected the tunnel alternative as the preferred option. The 2006 State Legislature authorized the Seattle City Council to either recommend a specific option, or put an advisory ballot into the 2006 November general election for a citizen vote. The Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) is now working on a supplemental draft EIS.
61. Sally Bagshaw of Allied Arts presented information and a number of drawings depicting the waterfront after construction of a tunnel.
62. Cary Moon of the Peoples' Waterfront Coalition and Lawrence Winnerman, Communications Chair of the 36<sup>th</sup> District, presented information about the surface option.
63. Seattle City Councilmember Jan Drago spoke. Drago chairs the Council transportation committee. The Council has had (or will have) presentations on all the options. The Legislature has approved \$2 billion in funding, contingent upon the corridor carrying 110,000 vehicles a day. The Council either puts the measure on the ballot by Sept. 18th (for a public vote in November) or makes its own vote on the preferred option.
64. Members then asked a number of questions. Here are some highlights:
  - 64.1 Victor Gray, a retired structural engineer, has proposed a re-build option. Ron Paananen stated that this is a "new" option and will be extensively reviewed by a panel of outside engineers and then considered for feasibility as an alternative.
  - 64.2 Several members expressed concern about the potential of escalating costs. Grace Crunican stated the project is continually re-evaluating costs, and that costs are always estimated for the "year to build".
  - 64.3 Will a tunnel be another "big dig" fiasco, similar to what occurred in Boston? No - this project is one-eighth the size of the Boston project, and has a number of different factors (it does not run under a body of water, for example).
  - 64.4 Will a tunnel option allow building a whole series of high-rise waterfront condos and apartments? No, zoning of the waterfront is controlled by the Seattle City Council, and present zoning does not allow these kinds of use.
  - 64.5 Can hazardous material and flammable material be transported on the viaduct and through the proposed tunnel? Grace Crunican and Warren Aakervick gave conflicting answers to this. Seattle City Councilmember (and 34th District member) Tom Rasmussen supplied the answer: Council ordinance prohibits the transport of both through tunnels, including the existing Battery Street Tunnel and the proposed Alaskan Way tunnel. The ordinance number is 121923 (Council Bill #: 115365, Amended ordinance # is: 121524). The full text of the ordinance can be found using those numbers on this website: <http://clerk.ci.seattle.wa.us/~public/CBOR1.htm>.

65. For more information about the Alaskan Way Viaduct replacement:
- 65.1 Washington State Department of Transportation web page:  
<http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/projects/Viaduct/>
  - 65.2 City of Seattle Viaduct web page: <http://www.cityofseattle.net/mayor/issues/viaduct/>
  - 65.3 Allied Arts of Seattle: <http://www.alliedarts-seattle.org/>
  - 65.4 Public focus groups results: <http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/accountability/publicopinion/>
  - 65.5 The Seattle Channel news about the viaduct:  
<http://www.seattlechannel.org/issues/viaduct.asp>
  - 65.6 Peoples Waterfront Coalition: <http://www.peopleswaterfront.org/index.html>

### New Business

66. Chair Weiss recognized Nigel Herbig, a field organizer for the Washington State Democrats. He spoke about Initiative 933. This measure would require government agencies to consider the effects of and alternatives to regulating private property. Compensation would be required when regulations are enforced that damage private property use or value, including regulations prohibiting or restricting property uses that were allowed as of January 1, 1996. Exceptions would exist for regulations applying equally to all property subject to the agency's jurisdiction. Development regulations that would prohibit existing legal property uses would not be permitted. This is a developers' initiative. It will either force communities to waive zoning laws or else communities will pay developers to follow the current laws. This is a dangerous measure and he urges the membership to learn about it and oppose it.

67. Chair Weiss asked for membership approval of three PCO appointments - Victoria Martinez in Seattle precinct 1251, Tim Nuse in Seattle precinct 1436, and Keith Weir in Burien 1192 (Keith has been acting PCO in 0699 but resides in 1192). The membership unanimously approved these appointments. The photo shows Weir, Nuse and Martinez, left to right.



68. Dina Johnson spoke about her new design for 34<sup>th</sup> District T-Shirts. The same design motif could be used for letterhead, buttons, and so forth. She moved the District spend \$700 plus tax for an initial production run of about 100 T-Shirts which would be sold for \$15 each. The E-Board recommends this expenditure and the membership approved it.



69. Good of the order:
- 69.1 Beth Grieser announced the May 25<sup>th</sup> meeting of the West Seattle Democratic Women at Daystar. Rep. Joe McDermott will attend and speak. All are welcome. See details at [www.34dems.org](http://www.34dems.org).
  - 69.2 Ann Martin spoke in support of the *Transit Now* initiative. This is a King County measure which will be on the ballot in the fall. It will be financed by a one-tenth of a cent per dollar increase in the sales tax in the County, and will increase overall Metro transit service by about 20%. See <http://www.metrokc.gov/kcdot/transitnow/> for details.

70. The meeting adjourned at 9:25 PM.

Respectfully submitted,  
*Bill Schrier, Secretary*