Oil terminal draws crowd

By BROOKS JOHNSON
Columbian staff writer

A chorus of hundreds on Tues-
day sang familiar but very differ-
ent refrains on the oil terminal
proposed for the Port of Vancou-
ver.

It’s an economic bounty. It’s an environmental disaster. We can do this safely.

Hundreds speak at hearing on controversial project

We can’t do this safely.

Their discordant voices echoed throughout the Queen Ann Hall at the Clark County Event Cen-
ter at the Fairgrounds, State and
local representatives who will play a large role in determining the fate of what would be the na-
tion’s largest oil transfer terminal
listened on as the voices contin-
ued through the afternoon and
late into the evening. More than
two years after Port of Vancouver commissioners unanimously ap-
pproved the project, the rhetoric be-
came heated on the project remained as heated as ever.

“The likelihood of a catastrophe becomes not a probability but an eventuality,” Russell Freeman told
members of the state’s Energy Facility Site Evaluation Council, which is doing an environmental
review of the rail-to-marine oil
terminal slated to handle 360,000 barrels of oil per day.

“If it can’t be done safely, then it won’t be built. We live by the same
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Maureen Hildreth, center, voices her opposition to the proposed rail-to-marine oil terminal at a rally during a break in Tuesday’s hearing at the Clark County Event Center at the Fairgrounds. Hundreds gathered throughout the day to offer formal testimony on the proposed terminal at the Port of Vancouver, which would be the nation’s largest, receiving an average of 60,000 barrels of oil per day.

Environmental groups rally against project

By DAMIANO PERANI
Columbian staff writer

Inside the hospitality room set up by all terminal advo-
cates, a small crowd quietly
dined on pastas and salads. People munched on Oreos and
cheered when a man on stage held up a big dead fish.

“This fish right here swam down the Clackamas River out the
Willamette River possibly out to Japan . . . We caught it
today in the Clackamas River and it is something to behold,”
Northwest Steelhead Asso-
ciation executive director Bob
Kees said, pointing to the steel-
head in his colleague’s hands.

Kees was one of several speakers from a number of en-
vironmentally focused groups
at dinner-hour demonstration
during the Energy Facility Site
Evaluation Council hearing on the
proposed Port of Vancouver oil
transfer terminal.

During the hearing at the Clark County Event Center at the Fairgrounds, the adminis-
trative law judge for EFSEC,

PROTEST, Page A2

‘Start over’

In her first decision on the Clark County council, Olson emphasized the importance of adopting and considering policies that guide decision making as a full five-
member council.

“This discussion we’re having tonight about the implementation of these poli-
cies is why we need to start over with them so we can have this discussion as a group, as a board,” Olson
said. She added that she’d
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Oil terminal

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standards. This project will provide "good jobs and good pay," Mark Holtz said, in support of the project that would be built by Vancon-"er Energy, a joint venture between Tesoro Corp. and Savage Cos. "Now people signed up to testify at the first of two Vancouver hearings. Terminal- owners battling from throughout the Northwest vassal, some of the major sup- porters at Tuesday's hearing's ear- ing of the terminal, first proposed in 2013, reached a major milestone. Once the evaluation council finishes its environmental review, the agency could later move forward with the project. It's a war in which some groups are on the side, the industry has to fight against project backers who are fighting an uphill battle to win broader community support. Tuesday's hearing drew comments of every stripe, though it was meant to focus on the project's draft Environ-mental Impact State- ment, released in November. That massive document was opposed by opponents and supporters alike to benefit end in legal requirements or for- against the terminal. The risks to life, ecology, and property as evidenced by the environmental re-views, and the project's oppos- sers say. An average of 120-car unit trains of oil per day would travel through the Columbia River Gorge and through Oregon, destined for West Coast mar- kets. That has stoked fears of derailments, spills, and ex- posures. Port of Vancouver Com- missioner Eric Jalbert, a terminal opponent, who took office this spring, joined the chorus of derision. "Resident" questions have "never been answered reliably for concern control have been ignored," said Jalbert, speaking as president of the Fraser Valley Neighborhood Neigh- borhood Association. "We oppose the terminal for these future problems that would likely also be ignored." But supporters say the $230 million terminal can be built and operate safely with key environmental re- sponsibly. "I urge everyone not to be distracted by miscon-ceptions," said Ann Don- nelson of Vancouver. "No re- source has been identified that cannot be mitigated by the well- tested techs and good plan- ning that Vancouver Energy is proposing." The hearing went on for more than eight hours, with hundreds speaking as individ- uals or on behalf of or- ganizations to influence the decision-making council. Another hearing will be held Tues- day starting at 5 p.m. at the Event Center. Those in favor of the termi- nal, visibly outnumbered, were green thumbs-up cards and held signs championing Tesoro and Savage for their safety re-cord and the project's economic potential — about $2 billion to labor, taxes, and salaries during construction and 15 years of operation, accord- ing to Vancouver Energy. "We see this as an opportun- ity for the environmental community to partner with Vancouver Energy to create a showcase of stewardship," said Bob Rich, who identified as the terminal's opponent. Those opposed wore red, and signs, then their fingers, in response to anti-terminal speakers, showing their evident supermajority at the hearing. "Our safety is in your hands. We urge you to tell the Gov. Inslee to deny the project," said Jared Smith, president of the Inland Inte- gral and the assembled. "We have been arrested," said a sign-holding activist. "We are not insane, but yearning to save our salmon populations."

Protest

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Camas' Noble, had repeatedly ridden both supporters and oppo- nents out of the project by late at night. But demonstrations continued and rallied outside the terminal, with a sign of solidarity against the terminal. Large yellow and red signs, and black tankers cars with the words "no" and "not controlled" plastered over them in red letters. The environmental-ist organizations signed from across the country, to promote the project's opponents turn out. "We are not insane, but yearning to save our salmon populations."

1,000 people attended the hearing during the day and 2,000 people came to the terminal. "The project is dead. The oil terminal is dead. The oil tank is dead," said Noble. When the hearing finished, Noble and other supporters celebrated by holding signs for the project. Noble said that the project was dead and that the oil terminal was dead. Noble said that the project was not going to happen again. Noble said that the project was dead and that the oil terminal was dead. Noble said that the project was not going to happen again. Noble said that the project was dead and that the oil terminal was dead. Noble said that the project was not going to happen again.