

SEATTLE TIMES

June 5, 2013 at 12:31 PM

## Appeals court to hear challenge to Sodo arena

Posted by [Lynn Thompson](#)

The Washington State Court of Appeals has agreed to hear a challenge to the Sodo location for a new sports arena brought by the local Longshore Workers Union. The hearing is set for July 15 in Seattle, an unusually speedy turnaround for a civil matter, said attorney Peter Goldman, who represents Local 19 of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union.

“They went through some internal process and decided it was important and that time was of the essence,” Goldman said today. Oral arguments will be held in Seattle.

The union had asked the court for an expedited review of the agreement among Seattle, King County and investor Chris Hansen to make Sodo the preferred location for a new \$490 million sports and entertainment venue.

The union argues that the agreement reached with Hansen in October 2012 violates state environmental laws by naming a preferred site rather than first conducting environmental assessments of alternate locations. The agreement has set in motion a quest for an NBA team, design of an arena at the Sodo location and city permits for the new complex, creating unstoppable momentum for Hansen’s preferred location, the union argues.

A King County Superior Court judge ruled in February that the final agreements to go forward with the arena project had not been approved by the city and county councils and that the agreement with Hansen specifically reserved the final decision until after environmental reviews had been completed.

Some of the urgency to build the new arena was removed by the NBA decision in May to not relocate the Sacramento Kings to Seattle.