



**Citizen's Advisory Committee  
May 20, 2010  
Carvlin Hall, St. Philip Neri Parish  
2408 SE 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue**

**Meeting Notes**

**PMLR CAC Members Present:**

Rick Williams – CHAIR, Lloyd District Transportation Management Association  
David Aschenbrenner, Hector Campbell Neighborhood  
Barbara Andersen, Oak Grove  
Lina Bensel, Member-at-Large, Independent Living Resources Center  
Ray Bryan, Historic Milwaukie Neighborhood [not sure]  
Paul Carlson, Oregon Museum of Science & Industry (OMSI)  
Valerie Chapman, Oak Grove  
Debbie Cronk, South Waterfront Neighborhood  
David Edwards, Oak Grove  
Neil Hankerson, Dark Horse Comics, Milwaukie downtown  
Greg Hemer, Milwaukie Lumber  
Michole Jensen, Ardenwald-Johnson Creek Neighborhood  
Lance Lindahl, Brooklyn Neighborhood (BAC)  
Eric Miller, Island Station Neighborhood  
Dan Packard, Eastmoreland Neighborhood  
Arnold Panitch, TriMet Committee on Accessible Transportation (CAT)  
Susan Pearce, Hosford-Abernethy Neighborhood (HAND)  
Terri Pucik, Sellwood-Moreland Neighborhood (SMILE)  
Valeria Ramirez, Portland Opera  
Henry Schmidt, Oak Lodge Community Council  
Dee Walsh, Central Eastside Industrial Council (CEIC)  
Dan Zalkow, Portland State University (PSU)

**PMLR CAC Members Absent:**

Erin Kelley, Bicycle & Pedestrian Advocate  
Ken Love, South Portland Neighborhood  
Jeff Reaves, Central Eastside Industrial Council (CEIC)

---

**Welcome, announcements**

**Rick Williams**, CAC Chair, welcomed the group and asked for input on the notes from last month's meeting. There were no comments.

Rick discussed the agenda. The group has already heard a "snapshot" presentation on the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS), as well as in-depth looks at traffic and land-use impacts. Today's presentation on noise and vibration impacts will conclude CAC presentations on the FEIS, although many of the issues in it will continue to be discussed. Next month we will move on to the list of topics we said we wanted to hear more about. The primary topic for the June meeting will be the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and universal design principles. In July, topics will include "extended preliminary engineering" issues. After an August hiatus, the CAC will reconvene in September.

Rick reminded the group members committed to stay through PE and publication of the FEIS this summer, but all are encouraged to stay on the committee for Final Design. Henry has other time commitments and has elected to step down.

---

**Dave Unsworth, TriMet Deputy Project Director**, presented a project status update.

The project completed preliminary engineering and submitted a Final Design application to the federal government on March 31, 2010. This was a major project milestone that was completed on time. During this month, our team will be meeting with the Project Management Oversight Consultants and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) staff to discuss right-of-way issues and to update the required risk assessment, which may influence the size of the budget contingency. Dave said he expected to be able to report on this at the June CAC meeting.

The project submitted a \$1.4 billion budget based on a 60/40 federal/local split with annual appropriations of \$150. However, the FTA, citing cash flow issues, requested that we present a range of financing options including a 60/40 federal/local split with annual appropriations of \$100m and a finance plan based on a 50/50 federal/local split. TriMet General Manager Fred Hansen and General Manager-elect Neil McFarlane are meeting with FTA administrator Peter Rogoff, to discuss financing options and we remain hopeful of reaching an agreement with federal partners. It is anticipated that these discussions will continue over the summer.

The Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) was scheduled to be published at the end of May, but has been delayed. This delay is a result of longer than anticipated review of the Biological Assessment by NOAA Fisheries. The NOAA consultation concludes with the issuance of a Biological Opinion (BO). The BO describes whether the project balances its impacts and generally improves the environment. Late in the process, NOAA Fisheries told us they believe the project rendered an imbalance and our proposed mitigation (for the bridge) fell short. Their concern is that hydraulic scouring effects around the bridge piers could unseat existing toxic sediments and transport them

downstream. We proposed capping the contaminated sediments with sand and rock. But NOAA Fisheries was concerned about the impact of the rock on young salmon in shallow water. As a result of our conversations with NOAA, we have revised our mitigation and are now proposing to team with the City of Portland on its Central City Greenway plan. We would contribute funding toward their efforts to excavate soil from the riverbank and create new shallow water habitat. It appears that NOAA Fisheries and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers are on board with this approach, and we should be able to finalize the BO in early June, and the FEIS in mid-June.

**Henry Schmidt:** Is the concern about sediment around the bridge piers during or after construction? What keeps material in place over time? Is it an ongoing maintenance issue? What is the issue with fish?

Dave Unsworth: The concern is about sediment being disturbed both during and after construction. We're confident that capping these contaminated materials will keep them in place— we're proposing 1-2 feet of sand, 3 feet of 700 pound rock, and gravel on top of that, for a total of 5 to 6 feet of fill. NOAA is worried about creating habitat for predators of juvenile salmon. We looked at a number of other options, including dredging. But we came back to this as the appropriate mitigation to balance the impacts caused by the placement of rock in shallow water habitat.

The Project was required to do a “no-net-rise” analysis of how the bridge piers in the Willamette River could cause the river level to rise. This potential for rise is measured using a hydraulic model from river mile 13.2, at the site of the new bridge, to the Willamette Falls. This analysis indicates that the bridge piers and scour protection would result in a 6/10-inch rise in the 100-year flood plain and flood way. It's miniscule. But we are required to seek an ordinance from the City of Portland, and possibly other jurisdictions, to allow us to do that. We must also go through a FEMA process. One outstanding question is whether we need to notify all property owners.

Other good news: The Conceptual Design Report (CDR) went to Milwaukie City Council and Portland City Council. Both city councils adopted resolutions supporting the CDR and listing concerns and priorities for Final Design. Portland City Council was impressed by the outreach we've done.

For the Willamette River bridge design-build contract, we narrowed down to three contractors from seven proposals. These are very experienced bridge engineering firms with extensive experience building cable-stay bridges and working in design-build teams. They will come back to us in September with proposals we'll evaluate for best value. We will then select a contractor but will wait to sign the contract until we get Final Design approval from FTA.

**Henry Schmidt:** What do you mean by best value?

Dave Unsworth: In this design-build contracting method, the three teams will be evaluated for price as well as other categories like DBE certification (involvement of minority-owned businesses).

**Henry Schmidt:** Conceivably, there could be some additional savings?

Dave Unsworth: It's conceivable. The bidding market is good compared to a couple of years ago.

**Michole Jensen:** Is there any risk with losing federal funding?

Dave Unsworth: There's always risk, but FTA likes the project, which was rated medium high— the Project addresses many of their interests around livability. FTA does have cash flow concerns, and it may be several weeks or a few months before we resolve those questions.

**Paul Carlson:** Can you address the critical timing issues?

Dave Unsworth: The Willamette River bridge is a critical path issue; that's both scary and a driver for our schedule. It helps our effort to get a decision. We made clear the steps we need to take to be in the water on July 1, 2011 through Oct 31. If we don't do that in time, we could lose a year. The cost of delay would be substantial. We made the FTA administrator aware of those issues.

---

**Dave Unsworth, TriMet Deputy Project Director,** presented an update on noise and vibration impacts identified in the FEIS using a PowerPoint slideshow. These slides described the methodology, impacts and proposed mitigation along the corridor.

- Quiet zones. We proposed two quiet zones, one in southeast Portland and one in Milwaukie. Because we'll be sharing right-of-way with freight trains, we are subject to the federal train horn rule. This would require us to sound horns when approaching intersections. However, we are pursuing supplemental safety measures that permit quieter alternatives to horn blowing. Given the discussions and coordination we've had with partners, we're confident we can secure these quiet zones, so trains would not have to blow their horns. There would be bells on the crossing gates.

### **Questions**

**Henry Schmidt:** Since you have double sets of gates, can you eliminate the horn? Are the bells quieter than the horns?

Dave Unsworth: You may eliminate the horn, but not the bells. Crossing gate bells are much quieter than horns and can be oriented toward traffic instead of blasting in all directions.

**Susan Pearce:** The Willamette Pedestrian Coalition recommended placing the same protection— some kind of gate—on bike and pedestrian walkways as for roadways. For example, at Southeast Clinton Street and 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> avenues.

Dave Unsworth: We will look into that. Lights and bells are focused on automobiles but would be expected to be seen and heard by bikers and walkers.

**David Aschenbrenner:** That is a concern in Milwaukie, too.

**Teri Pucik:** What is the decibel level of the bells?

Dave Unsworth: The closer the noise maker, the louder it is. The bells are about 85 decibels at 10 feet away.

- Noise impacts. We follow Federal Transit Administration Transit Noise and Vibration Guidelines, which specifies what noise levels constitute impacts requiring mitigation, depending on the land use at each "receiver" site. Dave explained how, where and when staff measured noise levels, different standards for indoors and outdoors, different standards for schools and homes. They arrive at an LDN, a day-night 24-hour average, with a 10-decibel penalty for nighttime noise. They looked at the differences between light rail noise and traffic noise.

**Dee Walsh:** Can you explain how you mitigate?

Dave Unsworth: There are many tools to mitigate noise; it depends on the context. Examples include sound walls, replacement windows and doors, or sound insulation.

- Outreach. Our team does a great job of involving everybody. All those places we've identified as impacted, we've knocked on doors and made phone calls. We've tried to contact all the impacted property owners before the FEIS is published. Conversations have gone well.
- Assessing noise impacts. Dave explained how staff assesses noise impacts. They assess existing noise levels and determine project-generated noise. You combine the two, compare to the guidelines and determine if the project creates a noise level that rises to the levels of impact defined by FTA.
- Noise mitigation strategies:
  - sound barriers where appropriate
  - track lubrication at curves

- building sound insulation
  - adjustable crossing bells
  - directional bells and bell shrouds
- Specific noise impacts: Dave showed maps identifying properties where noise impacts are predicted.
  - Vibration Impacts: Dave explained what causes vibration, such as the friction of steel wheels on rails. He noted that the soils in Milwaukie are particularly suited to conduct low-frequency vibration waves.
  - Vibration mitigation strategies: Dave discussed different tools used to dampen and absorb vibration. These include ballast mats, resilient fasteners, tire-derived aggregates, ballasted track beds vs. paved track beds, special trackwork at crossovers and turnouts, rail grinding and wheel truing.
  - Specific vibration impact strategies: Dave showed maps identifying properties where vibration impacts are predicted.

## **Questions**

**Greg Hemer:** Asked a question about light rail conflicts with freight trains at crossings.

Dave Unsworth: If the gates are down for a freight train, light rail cars can pass through.

**Teri Pucik:** What if quiet zones are not approved?

Dave Unsworth: We have worked closely with Union Pacific and expert engineers to look at each intersection and how we can meet the Federal Railroad Administration's standards for quiet zones. We are confident we'll be successful. But if we don't secure quiet zones, there are other options. We can apply for a train horn waiver, which would allow us to sound a bell instead of a horn. There is also an option for wayside train horns. These are placed on poles directed specifically at traffic. This reduces the spew of noise.

**Michole Jensen:** Have you ever missed an impact?

Dave Unsworth: There have been cases when, after the project was built, we discover additional impacts try to provide additional mitigation.

**Dan Packard:** When will you apply for the quiet zone?

Dave Unsworth: When we complete the 60 percent design, we'll apply.

## **CAC Letter to Steering Committee**

**Rick Williams:** The CAC will send a letter to the PMLR Steering Committee highlighting refinements to project design resulting from the committee's advocacy during preliminary engineering. The letter will also note outstanding issues the CAC would like to see resolved during final engineering. CAC members were provided with a draft about a week ago.

**David Aschenbrenner:** I want to see stronger emphasis on the Tacoma station greening enhancement, similar to that for the Park Avenue station.

**Barbara Andersen:** The Waldorf School still has significant concerns about visual, safety and noise impacts. Noise, even if it doesn't exceed federal criteria, still impacts the program and school. The visual impacts are significant. These could hurt our school's ability to provide the proper environment for learning and attract families as a business.

**Rick Williams:** Would you suggest specific language?

**Barbara Andersen:** We'd like the project to develop a strategy for minimizing the safety, visual and noise impacts on the Portland Waldorf School.

**Rick Williams:** And other businesses in the surrounding area?

**Barbara Anderson:** I'm open to that. However, that said, there is a uniqueness to our situation.

**Arnold Panitch:** There's an educational value enhanced by being close to rail, irrespective of some noise or visual issues.

**Barbara Andersen:** We totally support light rail. But the safety, visual and noise impacts are in conflict with what we're trying to do.

**Teri Pucik:** Made suggestion for elevating the importance of the bullet point about minimizing potential safety and security issues.

**Susan Pearce:** There are some potential safety and security issues that have a direct relationship with light rail. Other issues have more to do with the stations and surrounding areas.

**Rick Williams:** Can you provide examples?

**Teri Pucik:** The Bybee station being built below-grade.

**Rick Williams:** Are there other areas where the CAC feels there are elevated or heightened security issues?

**Susan Pearce:** We're concerned with overpass safety issues at 14<sup>th</sup> or 16<sup>th</sup> avenues, and the 17<sup>th</sup> and Powell undercrossing.

**Valerie Chapman:** Noted security concerns at parking garages.

**Rick Williams:** We'll make these changes, get the letter out to you for a final look, and then send to the Steering Committee.

---

## Roundtable

**Dee Walsh:** Suggested placing the sound noise and vibration analysis online.

**Susan Pearce:** We have found a potential source of funding for a segment of the ped/bike path across the northern edge of the Northwest Natural property.

**Henry Schmidt:** The community is concerned about what the Park Avenue facility will look like. How it will be landscaped, what occurs between River Road and the station. We're not far enough along to do anything specific about that. The community wants to see more than just aerial views. In particular, there is a lot of concern about where the Trolley Trail, McLoughlin Boulevard and the train run up the hill. For the most part, people are taking a wait-and-see attitude.

**Dave Edwards:** Asked if there could be any design synergy between the project and ideas for developing the Kellogg Creek water treatment information center.

**Lance Lindahl:** Is there a way to use green space along the project to create a community garden in the Brooklyn neighborhood?

**Valerie Chapman:** Will the FEIS be accessible on line?

Dave Unsworth: Yes, after it is finalized. We will send postcards when it's published asking people if they want copies, either hard copies or on CD. The draft EIS finished in 2008 is online. The Conceptual Design Report is online.

**Dave Aschenbrenner:** Asked Ralph Drewfs of ODOT if there was an update on the drop-add lane concept for McLoughlin Boulevard at Tacoma and on the right-in, right-out access for the Tacoma Park & Ride. Ralph agreed to provide an update on the drop-add lane at next month's meeting, and confirmed ODOT would like the Tacoma Park & Ride access on McLoughlin to be right-in only, with right-out only for emergencies.

**Greg Hemer:** If anyone ever needs a slogan for this line, I'd suggest: From education to recreation, linking schools and parks.

**Michole Jensen:** Milwaukie City Council rejected the traffic signal at 42<sup>nd</sup> and Johnson Creek Boulevard. The meeting was good, well-attended, interesting.

**Arnold Panitch:** As the representative of the Committee on Accessible Transportation, our community is different. It's a community of interest rather than a geographical community. I'm looking forward to providing additional insight into the civil rights matters of mobility to you in our next meeting.

---

## **Public Comment**

**Linda Hatelid, Milwaukie resident:** Has anyone studied noise impacts on outdoor events at the Waldorf School?

Dave Unsworth: No, but we have studied indoors, where required.

**Peter Stark, Portland Central Eastside Industrial Council:** Encouraged CAC to support multimodal connections at OMSI via the Streetcar Close the Loop project.

**Kristin Williams, Portland resident:** Noted graffiti along the railroad corridor. Asked whether there is a policy and budget to prevent and remove graffiti.

Dave Unsworth: Our approach is first to use materials that discourage or prevent graffiti, and to remove graffiti on our facilities as quickly as possible.

**David Goldstein, Portland business owner:** I strongly feel having stairs leading up to a skybridge provides a place for loitering. I would like to say that if a bridge at 16<sup>th</sup> and Brooklyn is to be constructed, a curlicue ramp and elevator would be great assets for the neighborhood.

---

**Rick Williams** adjourned the meeting.

Next meeting: 6-8 p.m., Thursday, June 17