



**Citizen's Advisory Committee
Nov. 18, 2010
Carvlin Hall, St. Philip Neri Parish
2408 S.E. 16th Ave., Portland OR 97214**

Meeting Notes

PMLR CAC Members Present:

David Edwards, Oak Grove VICE CHAIR
Barbara Andersen, Oak Grove
David Aschenbrenner, Hector Campbell Neighborhood
Lina Bensel, Member-at-Large, Independent Living Resources Center
Ray Bryan, Historic Milwaukie Neighborhood
Paul Carlson, Oregon Museum of Science & Industry (OMSI)
Catherine Goode, Ardenwald-Johnson Creek Neighborhood
Neil Hankerson, Dark Horse Comics, Milwaukie downtown
Greg Hemer, Milwaukie Lumber
Erin Kelley, Bicycle & Pedestrian Advocate
Lance Lindahl, Brooklyn Neighborhood (BAC)
Eric Miller, Island Station Neighborhood
Fred Nelligan, Oak Lodge Community Council
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
Dee Walsh, Central Eastside Industrial Council (CEIC)
Dan Zalkow, Portland State University (PSU)

PMLR CAC Members Absent:

Valerie Chapman, Oak Grove
Debbie Cronk, South Waterfront Neighborhood
Ken Love, South Portland Neighborhood
Jeff Reaves, Central Eastside Industrial Council (CEIC)
Rick Williams, CHAIR, Lloyd District Transportation Management Association

Welcome, announcements

David Edwards, CAC Vice Chair, sitting in for Rick Williams, reminded the committee that there would be no meeting in December. There were no comments or corrections on the notes from the October CAC meeting.

Dave Unsworth, TriMet Deputy Project Director, and Rob Barnard, TriMet Project Director, updated the committee on the status of the Portland Milwaukie Light Rail Project (PMLR) and recalibration milestones.

Dave Unsworth briefly updated four developments:

1) Progress with federal partners. The Federal Transit Administration is expected to issue a Record of Decision accepting the Final Environmental Impact Statement in early December. This decision clears the way for TriMet to begin acquiring property and begin advance utility work. Also in early December the project partners expect to receive FTA permission (letter of no prejudice) to proceed with construction on the transit-pedestrian-bicycle bridge over the Willamette River. With this permission, staff will ask the TriMet board on December 8 to approve a contract for the bridge design-build contractor.

2) Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) agreement. The PMLR project has reached agreement with UPRR on a purchase and sales agreement. Dave praised the work of the negotiating team led by Leah Robbins. When the agreement is finalized December 31, it will help to reduce project risks, in turn reducing contingency levels and freeing further budget dollars.

3) Preparation for Final Design. The PMLR project team is in the process of selecting the construction management general contractors (CMGCs) for the east and west segments of the alignment, the artists for the public art component, and the design-build contractor for the Willamette River bridge.

4) Public involvement. Project staff is meeting with communities throughout the alignment about the budget recalibration that caused some project elements to be cut or deferred. We are hearing concerns about some of these items, such as the SMILE neighborhood's opposition to the cuts to future Harold station and the Bybee Bridge, and the HAND and Brooklyn neighborhoods' concerns about the pedestrian overcrossings. It's important to hear those concerns; it builds a case for bringing those items back in to the project if funds are available.

We would like to focus our discussion today on how we can potentially add back some of these elements into the project and how the CAC can be a part of that process.

In response to a request made during the October CAC meeting, Rob Barnard reviewed decision milestones and the overall project decision-making structure. Milestones include updated pricing based on engineering drawings at the 60 percent, 90 percent and 100 percent levels as well as at the 25 percent and 50 percent levels of construction completion. These milestones will serve as check-in points. Information will be reviewed first with the technical teams, then Project Team Leaders (PTL) and CAC. Many decisions will be confirmed by the Project Management Group (PMG), and the more significant issues will be forwarded on to the Steering Committee.

Rob referred the CAC to a Recalibration Milestones list, included in today's meeting packet. The list attempts to do three things. One, it identifies the latest point in time that a project element, deferred in recalibration, can be added back into the project in a cost-effective manner. Two, it serves as a comprehensive list of all the targeted cost reductions. Three, it helps ensure that an item is not inadvertently dropped or an opportunity missed.

The same guiding principles used to inform decisions about deferring items during the recalibration process also can help guide decisions to restore items. Any potential scope restoration decisions should:

- consider the entire alignment
- maintain overall quality, safety and security
- maintain the project schedule
- maximize savings

Questions

Dee Walsh: Price tags (on the Recalibration Milestones list) would be helpful.

Dave Unsworth: As we move through design, we'll have a better idea of costs. This kind of process is not uncommon with TriMet's light rail projects. On some, such as Westside light rail, we ended up cutting elements as the process unfolded. On others, such as Interstate MAX, we were able to restore items. Currently, we have an attractive market for construction, which we hope will allow us to add back scope.

It's also important to understand that there are other people looking over our shoulders, such as the FTA's Project Management Oversight Consultant. They review our books, require risk assessments and evaluate our contingency funding levels. Decisions about scope restoration will be made in concert with our federal partners.

Rob Barnard: As for maintaining schedule, when we get to a decision point, we want to make sure we have done the work along the way so as not to close the door on a decision. We may want to advance the design and engineering of particular element so that, if we do have dollars available by its decision point, we can maintain the construction schedule. The next round of engineering will be structured to leave the door open to these decisions.

Teri Pucik: There are some cuts on this list that were not on a list we saw previously.

Rob Barnard: The list in today's packet is a compilation of two lists: the September 2010 recalibration list (responding to 50 percent federal funding) and the February 2010 cost reduction list (responding to budget pressures identified in 25 percent plans, in preparation for the Final Design application). We combined these to make sure we didn't forget anything.

Teri Pucik: This list refers to the Tacoma parking garage at 800 spaces, whereas the last communication I saw showed it at 600 spaces.

Dave Unsworth: Tacoma was initially planned as a 1,000-space garage, and then went to 800 spaces with the application to enter Final Design in March (following budget pressures identified in the 25 percent plans). It was further reduced to a 320-space surface lot with this summer's recalibration process (in response to the lower than expected federal funding).

Similarly, the Park Avenue Park & Ride was reduced from 1,000 spaces to 600, and again to 355.

Teri Pucik: All these cuts are all centered on the east side. There are no cuts to the west side at all. Why did the east side get all the cuts? We're getting a higher percentage of cuts compared to downtown. We want our overcrossing and bus pullouts.

Rob Barnard: The team looked for cuts along entire alignment including the west segment. The west segment is just a few blocks of street alignment, and then there is a 1,700-foot-long structure and a platform. There is very little to cut. There is the Close the Loop work, worth about \$4.3 million, and the Harbor structure alignment, at about a half-million dollars, altogether about \$5 million in that segment. But it's a small segment, a little over a mile long. It took its share of reduction in bicycle facilities and art as well. But there is not a lot in that segment to cut.

Barbara Andersen: How, when and where do we prioritize these deferrals to bring them back?

Rob Barnard: There will be an ongoing conversation with the CAC and neighborhoods about the region's priorities. What does the region want to spend its money on? What has the most value to the region?

Dave Unsworth: We employ the public involvement process to get input from neighborhoods, residents and businesses. As staff understands neighbors' concerns and incorporates them into our proposals, staff will make recommendations to the Project Management Group (PMG) that we hope are balanced. We'll share the recommendations with the CAC and ask for your input.

Barbara Andersen: The value of each element on the list varies from aesthetics, to safety, to convenience.

Dave Unsworth: We will have to talk about how to balance values (e.g., spending more on getting people to a station vs. aesthetics).

David Aschenbrenner: This first category of items on the handout -- those are gone, correct? And then the rest will be the ones we're looking at adding back in?

Dave Unsworth: Correct, the first category items have been eliminated from the project.

Erin Kelly: So the mid-span belvederes on the Willamette River Bridge are gone and will not be considered again?

Rob Barnard: Yes. They presented a structural issue. The loading from pedestrians on a long-span structure in the middle of the river was actually heavier loading than a light-rail vehicle. The cables were already almost at capacity. So the belvederes didn't pan out for those and other reasons.

Susan Pearce: Explain the two deferred items regarding Streetcar "Close the Loop" work under the mid-2011 60 percent design milestone.

Rob Barnard: There were two rounds of cuts, and so they're listed twice here. But you could look at the two items on the list as one item. When we made the application to enter Final Design, we deferred some of the Close the Loop work. Then, with the recalibration, we deferred the rest of the Close the Loop work. To be clear, the Close the Loop project is a much bigger project. For our purposes, we are only referring to the rail elements that come within the rail operating envelope of the PMLR project. If the region identifies funding for Close the Loop after PMLR construction is complete, we wouldn't want to tear out work we've already completed to accommodate the new work.

Susan Pearce: Some items could be added after the whole project is completed?

Rob Barnard: Yes, some items could be added after PMLR is complete, but it's a matter of what's cost-effective. It's preferable to get it done while we have a contractor mobilized. Some items could be added back later, but it would cost the region more.

Dave Unsworth: Also, adding something back later may require different dollars. We are trying to manage what we can afford with the local match and federal New Starts funds. After we're done, you could add something back, but it would likely be more expensive and require another source of funding.

Paul Carlson: I'm interested in the Close the Loop option. I don't see on the guiding principles anything looking at the optimization of the public transit system. I would like to see that as a part of the consideration. I appreciate the difficulty of managing this list of deferrals, but I suggest you consider the entire alignment is the broader public transportation network.

Dave Unsworth: You could say the same about other items on the list. There are a number of places where access to a light rail station by car, bus, streetcar, bicycle or foot is a way of integrating the whole system.

Catherine Goode: There does seem to be a lack of integration of buses into light rail.

Dave Unsworth: We see the integration of buses and their activation of stations as very important. We may not talk about buses as much because we are often focused on the bricks and mortar of the project. But we do understand that it is important to show the feeder bus network and how riders access both bus and light rail stops – we should provide a briefing on our assumptions.

David Aschenbrenner: When you are talking to contractors about the project, are you making them aware of these deferrals that may be added back and the need to price them anyway?

Rob Barnard: Yes. We want contractor pricing so we can make a good decision.

Dave Unsworth: There is the Locally Preferred Alternative and the LPA phasing option, which talks about the project with these deferrals. We're trying to be flexible in understanding where there are opportunities to bring scope back in. We've heard it strongly from the community, from you and from our partners.

Rob Barnard: Currently we have a favorable bidding climate. So we are working hard to get out there and get bids. We also want to bring our contractors on board at the start of Final Design. They can be creative developing cost-effective designs, which may help us get back the things that are valuable to the region.

Fred Nelligan: How far in advance will you be getting final costs from contractors?

Rob Barnard: In May, 60 percent drawings will be done, followed by prices. In November, we get 90 percent drawings and prices. In January, we get 100 percent drawings and a final price.

The contractor provides a total contract price for the work. But there are check-ins with the contractor along way to make sure the scope is matching the budget. That's why we're using a CMGC approach rather than low bid. The contractor can be at the design table and influence how things can be most efficiently built. In our model, the contractor is more of a partner and is brought on in the design phase to help us before we get to the final price.

Dee Walsh: Does the pricing based on 100 percent design typically stay consistent with the pricing from 60 percent design?

Rob Barnard: It varies project to project. Also, we're aiming for early bid packages on significant structures. For example, the Harbor structure is 1,700 feet long. The Willamette River bridge is 1,720 feet long. There are significant structures in the Milwaukie area. We want to get those big ticket items out to bid early and take advantage of the current market.

David Edwards: Besides the cost of building things, there is an interruption-to-service cost. How is that factored?

Rob Barnard: This will be part of our discussion. For example, on Close the Loop, if you don't build it initially but decide to add it back later, you may have to shut down light rail, bus and streetcar service. What is the most cost-effective way to add things back? A free-standing pedestrian overpass structure is easier to add back later than a parking structure.

Michelle Traver, TriMet Public Art Coordinator, presented an update on the Public Art Program, noting the role of public art in helping station areas feel safe, welcoming, and reflective of their surrounding communities.

Michelle recapped the year's activities in the public art program. In January, she attended the CAC meeting to request recommendations from CAC members for community-based art professionals to serve on the Public Art Advisory Committee. In March, the committee was formed and began an extensive orientation to the project. By July, the Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for artists was posted nationally. The RFQ received a lot of interest from the region and from around the country. Some of the most well-respected, professional artists in the field replied. Two hundred seventy six applications were received, including 50 from regional emerging artists.

From the 50 regional emerging artists, we established a short list of 25. They will be considered for projects that come up during the course of the project. From the 226 applications from established artists, the committee narrowed the field to 46 in a first cut, and to 16 in a second cut. Eleven of those artists were interviewed as semi-finalists; eight were selected as finalists.

The public art advisory committee showed incredible dedication to the process and met every Wednesday afternoon for an entire month to conduct interviews. The committee is very committed and passionate about bringing the best art to your neighborhoods and to the project.

An orientation for the selected artists will be held on December 15. The orientation includes a community resource session; CAC members are welcome to attend or to recommend other community members who would have interesting information to share with the artists.

Questions

David Aschenbrenner: Are the art locations selected?

Michelle Traver: We first selected a general pool of artists, then we considered each of those with regard to the specific station areas, and subsequently assigning them to sites.

David Aschenbrenner: At this meeting, would we know which artist would be working on which site?

Michelle Traver: Yes, once contracts are signed we will create a fact sheet about the artists and the sites they'll be working on.

Arnold Panitch: I haven't heard about art on the smaller bridges. I would like you to consider art on the basic structures. I'm thinking of the Art Deco masterpieces on U.S. Highway 101. They are functional first but their value as art is incredible. Please communicate the whole idea of the Art Deco bridges. We don't have to be like the Banfield freeway or the functionalism of the 1950s when we're building something brand new.

Secondly, I recently took a tour with Valerie Otani, the Japanese-American who designed the Expo Center station. She showed us a bench she designed to look like a Japanese trunk. I would like to see artistic elements in the furnishings such as lamp poles, benches and sidewalks.

Michelle Traver: We have heard concerns from our safety and security committee about using public art as seating and about having solid objects on the platforms. The design for furnishings is generally a part of our architecture program, not public art, although the two programs work together closely.

Valeria Ramirez: How many pieces of art are actually going to be commissioned?

Michelle Traver: We won't know until artists will bring forth their concept proposals. We want them (the artists) to understand more about the communities first and then develop concepts. We anticipate that there will be an amazing number of individual works.

Valeria Ramirez: How do the 25 emerging regional artists relate to the final cut? What were the criteria for selecting artists?

Michelle Traver: The list of 25 emerging regional artists means that we have artists who are approved by the committee for opportunities we may identify as the project moves forward. For example, if an opportunity to create a mural comes up, we don't have to go through that rigorous process again to select an artist, we have a list to draw from. The selected artists are for specific station areas, where a general scope of work has already been identified.

We selected artists based on a portfolio review based on their qualifications. For established artists who will be doing the major commissions, we were looking for artists who had already successfully completed significant public art projects.

Susan Pearce: Please describe the purpose of the artists' orientation on December 15.

Michelle Traver: During the RFQ process, artists were directed to the Conceptual Design Report and the project web site for background information. The orientation is our first chance to bring all the artists together, and give them a deeper look at the project and neighborhoods, including a tour. The community resource session is also an opportunity for the artists to learn more about your communities from community members themselves.

Susan Pearce: Can you elaborate on Arnold's question? I'm not quite sure what the safety and security issues are of ensuring that structures and furnishings are not only functional but artistic.

Michelle Traver: There are architectural features, such as retaining walls, which could receive artistic treatments. Some of the mentioned features tend to come under the umbrella of the TriMet architecture program. Artists could propose ideas that blend function and art. [All of these elements are reviewed by our safety and security committee to confirm they maximize lighting, clear sight lines, etc.]. However, we don't want one-of-a-kind amenities such as, light fixtures, which would create extra maintenance expenses.

Fred Nelligan: During the tour of the alignment today, I noticed the area underneath the Highway 99E viaduct. It was amazingly elegant, the piers, the forms, the structure. It looked great. One of the things emphasized on the tour was how many elevated structures there are on the alignment. If there are ways to incorporate unique designs into these functional elevated sections, it would add so much more to the appearance of the project.

Roundtable

Arnold Panitch: Arnold acknowledged Metro Councilor Robert Liberty in the audience. I thought about regional town centers and this project when I saw you. I attended the alignment tour today. Some of those stops don't look like regional town centers, such as Bybee or Tacoma.

What is the potential for those stations to become regional town centers as opposed to just a wide spot in road? Did the engineers who designed this think town centers would just appear as they did when the transcontinental railroads were built? Right now these places are distant from anyone who is going to use a wheelchair, walker, or is blind, or who needs to walk to these stations. What is the potential for a high-rise for seniors or a hospital to be built near one of these stations? I'm bothered by these not being close enough to existing institutions or potential ones. For example, we're just flying by the existing Milwaukie Providence Hospital, which needs good public access. That concerns me.

In terms of economic development, we have some good examples of bad design already, with failed investment or no investment near the station. For example: the

Beaverton Round; Parkrose, which is in the middle of a freeway; or on the Interstate line, where development hasn't materialized much. This contrasts with more successful places like Gateway, Hollywood, Lloyd Center or downtown.

Susan Pearce: I want to thank TriMet and the Portland Bureau of Transportation for the open house they hosted about the Water Avenue alignment and the Clinton to the River/Caruthers pathway. I had a conversation with someone from the Portland Spirit, who indicated he thought things were coming closer together. He described their concern about the effect that construction may have on their business. I know they have been concerned about the height of the bridge. I got the impression that issue remains unresolved. It sounded like, from your end, things are pretty resolved.

Dave Unsworth: We are engaged in conversations with people from the Portland Spirit on a weekly basis.

Dan Packard: I also attended the tour. It was interesting to see some of the alignment challenges, such as locating close to Highway 99 and the UPRR. One concern of mine: The new transit hub in Milwaukie appears to be a four-to-five block walk from the Milwaukie station.

Erin Kelley: I'm happy to see the list of milestones. It would be great to have dollar amounts attached to the deferrals. I'm very disappointed from the pedestrian-bike perspective that the belvederes have been removed from the bridge. I'm sad they're gone. When it comes time to add things back in, the stair connection from the Springwater Trail to the Tacoma station will be critical.

David Aschenbrenner: At the Milwaukie meeting Monday, there were slides and maps of downtown. A lot of the discussion was about the kinds of amenities we want in Milwaukie. One of the things that came up was what they can do with concrete now. There are pattern forms for concrete that simulate river rocks, lumber, and many custom designs. It doesn't have to be an ugly retaining wall. It can have character. I also have ideas for murals on walls.

Lance Lindahl: I want to echo what I've heard about the bus system integrating with light rail. I'm not sure how the bus system will evolve. I have heard a lot of angst from riders over the deterioration of bus service. They are part of the overall picture of the unified transit system. Any more information would be great.

Fred Nelligan: I was on the tour this morning. I also took a tour of the whole system yesterday. It was a unique opportunity to spend two hours at the control center at Ruby Junction learning how the system functions. Then I spent about seven hours riding in the cab all over the MAX system. I spoke with five different train operators, who were all originally bus operators. They offered tremendous perspective on safety and operational issues. There was a lot of discussion about the new alignment.

Catherine Goode: I attended the tour also. It was enlightening. I second Arnold and Dan's point. I still feel there is not enough bus integration. I agree with Erin's point about integrating the bike path at Springwater Corridor. In my neighborhood, our concern is the Tacoma Street station. It seems to be mostly a car-oriented station. It seems everything is car-oriented. Bicycle access needs to be a priority. Drop parking spots and provide bike parking. I still feel buses don't integrate quite enough. Another concern is that Johnson Creek Boulevard and Tacoma Street offer limited arterial access.

Dan Zalkow: The Close the Loop project is important to Portland State University. We're hopeful that by the fall of 2015, there will be streetcars using the bridge. On the tour today, I was interested in redevelopment opportunities. I'd be interested in having Milwaukie and Portland do a presentation on how their plans and zoning are responding to the project. I would like to see some active work going on. So we're not just waiting for development to occur after light rail opens. At Park Avenue, I know there's not a lot of pedestrian activity now. But I notice the project is taking out a couple of restaurants and a bar. It looks like there could be potential for the Park & Ride to host a restaurant as a co-tenant. If not, it will be a dead zone in the evenings.

Valeria Ramirez: As to aesthetics, I'm concerned about the terminating points of the bridge. I'm concerned it might look a little like freeway exits and entrances. I'm hoping the final design will help people know when they're on the bridge. I'd like to see some sense of destination.

Dave Unsworth: For the December 16 City of Portland Design Commission hearing, we're producing a 3D model of how the west station and the area underneath it and on bridge will look. We'll share that with you. It's another thing we'll want to bring to you in January.

Teri Pucik: I'd like to reiterate the SMILE resolution not to accept the cuts to the future Harold station and south side of the Bybee Bridge. The board is sending a strongly worded letter to TriMet and others, explaining that we feel inner Southeast neighborhoods were the ones that got light rail back on track. Now we don't accept these cuts. We've gotten mixed information about bus transfers at Bybee. The grade of the bridge does not meet ADA requirements. Without the bus pullout, it won't meet the design report's goals. Also, we want to know what the city thinks about these cuts. Have they been advised?

Dave Unsworth: The City of Portland was involved with the decisions about cuts and would be happy to bring many of them back.

Dee Walsh: It would be helpful to have information on redevelopment potential. It would be great to have conversations about that so that light rail is an accessible development.

Public Comment

Robert Liberty: Thank you for your continued service to the region. It confirms what a great asset you are to the project. This is not the standard way of doing business in other regions. Our community involvement makes for not only better-accepted projects but better projects.

On public art, I am interested to tour the recently-built light rail line in Seattle, which has some interesting public art.

On bus integration, the Metro Council has asked for TriMet to brief us on long-range plans on bus service. My understanding is that frequent bus services carries almost as many people as MAX does. I have heard this message from you. It echoes similar concerns on the Metro Council.

On regional town centers, only one of the stations is located in a regional town center: Milwaukie. All the others are designated as station community areas. On Metro's web site, you'll find some planning around station community areas for the purpose of making decisions about where we'd spend the public's money on transit-oriented development projects. It's a modest program but it has leveraged development in some light rail stations and bus-served areas. Not all station areas will have development around them, while others do. A successful example is Hollywood. And there are elements of that in Milwaukie and Gresham now.

I also want to mention that Metro Council awarded a grant to the City of Portland to look at employment potential at light rail stations for this new line. It was a substantial grant but is being held up on in litigation now. The aim of that grant is to explore how to recruit employers around stations. We expect it to move forward eventually.

David Edwards adjourned the meeting at 7:40 p.m.

The will be no meeting in December. The next meeting is 6-7:30 p.m., Thursday, Jan. 20 at Carvlin Hall, St. Philip Neri parish, 2408 S.E. 16th Ave.