



**Citizen's Advisory Committee
Oct. 28, 2010
Holgate Plaza
1625 SE Holgate Avenue**

Meeting Notes

PMLR CAC Members Present:

Rick Williams – CHAIR, Lloyd District Transportation Management Association
David Aschenbrenner, Hector Campbell Neighborhood
Lina Bensel, Member at Large, Independent Living Resources Center
Paul Carlson, Oregon Museum of Science & Industry (OMSI)
Valerie Chapman, Oak Grove
David Edwards, Oak Grove
Catherine Goode, Ardenwald-Johnson Creek Neighborhood
Greg Hemer, Milwaukie Lumber
Rod Merrick, (alternate) Pedestrian and Bicycle Advocate
Fred Nelligan, Oak Lodge Community Council
Fred Nolke, (alternate) Eastmoreland Neighborhood
Arnold Panitch, TriMet Committee on Accessible Transportation (CAT)
Susan Pearce, Hosford-Abernethy Neighborhood (HAND)
Terri Pucik, Sellwood-Moreland Neighborhood (SMILE)
Ian Stude, (alternate) Portland State University (PSU)
Valeria Ramirez, Portland Opera
Dee Walsh, Member at Large, Reach Inc.

PMLR CAC Members Absent:

Barbara Andersen, Oak Grove
Ray Bryan, Historic Milwaukie Neighborhood
Debbie Cronk, South Waterfront Neighborhood
Neil Hankerson, Dark Horse Comics
Erin Kelley, Bicycle & Pedestrian Advocate
Lance Lindahl, Brooklyn Neighborhood (BAC)
Ken Love, South Portland Neighborhood
Eric Miller, Island Station Neighborhood
Jeff Reaves, Central Eastside Industrial Council (CEIC)

Welcome, announcements

Rick Williams, CAC Chair, welcomed the group and asked for comments on the notes from the September 16 CAC meeting. There were no comments, and the meeting notes were accepted.

Dave Unsworth, TriMet Deputy Project Director, updated the committee on the status of the PMLR.

First Dave briefly discussed the Rail~Volution conference, held in Portland last week, which caused the CAC meeting to be delayed one week. It was a very well attended event that underscored the Portland region's success integrating land use and transportation planning to enhance livability. In addition to planners, architects, engineers and elected officials, there were also citizen activists, many who were attending on scholarships.

Dave introduced the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS), published on October 22, 2010. The draft EIS was published in July 2008. The Final EIS reflects the updated design (30 percent engineering) and discusses mitigation for significant impacts. It contains three volumes and includes discussion of 1) purpose and needs, environmental impacts, neighborhoods, transportation benefits, and costs; 2) appendices with before and after visual simulations, a list of document producers, and discussions with federal partners; and 3) responses to comments made during the 45-day public comment period for the Draft EIS.

A hard copy of the three volumes was passed around and CAC members were provided with it on CD. The FEIS is also available online through the Metro and TriMet websites. Metro notified interested parties about its availability through postcards and email.

This is a major milestone for the project. After a 30-day waiting period, the Federal Transit Administration can issue a Record of Decision, confirming that the project has satisfied the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Reaching that point will give us permission to begin purchasing property and be ready for Final Design.

Dave encouraged CAC members to look at Appendix M, which summarizes mitigation proposed for the project.

Other next steps:

- Willamette River Bridge. At the December 8, 2010 TriMet Board meeting, we expect authorization to issue the design-build contract. We will then move quickly to acquire permits and secure property to stage for construction.
- Entry into Final Design. FTA is reviewing our documents, scope, schedule, budget and technical capacity to complete the project, and will then recommend the project to Congress. We expect to receive Final Design authority in January 2011, which allows us to issue contracts for design teams and construction management general contractors (CMGCs) for the east and west segments. Having these contractors on board offers the advantages of more efficiently managing construction contracts and

minimizing change orders, thus improving design, maximizing resources and controlling costs.

Dave next updated the effort to recalibrate the project to accommodate the 50 percent federal match.

- Portland and Multnomah County have agreed that some of the savings from lower cost estimates on the Sellwood Bridge project will be committed to PMLR.
- We are seeking additional flexible dollars from our partners, and expect to make good progress in the coming months.

Questions

Dee Walsh: Remind us of what the gap was and current status?

Dave Unsworth: The difference between 60 percent and 50 percent federal funding was about \$137 million. We were looking for about \$90 million of in-kind and additional dollars, in addition to budget cuts. So far, we've had commitments of \$10 million from ODOT, \$27.4 from MTIP funds controlled by Metro, \$25 million from the City of Portland, and about \$10 million of in-kind property.

We – and the financial management oversight consultant – are feeling comfortable as we move into Final Design. One thing our federal partners look at is how much of the local match we need to have in pocket. We're about 88 percent committed so far. We're still looking for more dollars, but we're optimistic.

Dee Walsh: So some of the cuts from last meeting could still be at play?

Dave Unsworth: Absolutely. The \$62 million in cuts we identified are still there. We've been out in the community speaking with neighbors. People have made it clear they liked the original scope of the project. So staff will look at how to engage this committee when the time is right to discuss the possibility of returning scope. We'll be working on how to re-sort scope as we get in to Final Design and get more information on costs.

We expect by June 2011 we'll have 60 percent engineering done. We'll have a much better idea then of the bid scope.

Susan Pearce: Regarding deferrals, when is the cutoff time beyond which a scope element cannot be returned to the project?

Dave Unsworth: We expect the next point at which we'll know significantly more about the project cost is when we have 60 percent design with a cost estimate. This will allow us to see where we are with the budget and contingencies, and whether it allows us to bring elements back into the project.

Some things play out later than others. For example, you could decide a Rhine Street overpass one, two or three years down the road. It needn't be done today. Staff has

identified the latest point at which each element can be brought back in. We will bring that information to you as we have more discussions about the recalibration and scope.

Valeria Ramirez: If the timetable stays true, when might we see some physical presence of construction?

Dave Unsworth: The first visible signs of work could come in February 2011. The bridge contractors are eager to get on-site, particularly on the west side of the river. Specifically, you will expect to see a temporary work bridge and cofferdams being installed in July 2011. They want to be ready to go to work when the July 1 in-water window opens. On the east side, they are going to have to work closely with the eastside contractor to figure out how to mobilize. We've been having on-going meetings with the property owners to determine that.

Dave continued with his presentation.

Our application for a federal TIGER II grant from the U.S. Department of Transportation was not successful. That application included: Water Avenue relocation and OPRR yard configuration, Clinton to River Multi-Use Path, Rhine Street pedestrian overcrossing and pedestrian elements on the Kellogg Lake bridge. We also applied for Transportation Enhancement grants from Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) the Clinton to River and Kellogg Lake bridge elements. We have not heard back yet from ODOT. We will continue to seek other grant opportunities as they become available.

Susan Pearce: Are we going to see more grant opportunities or applications?

Dave Unsworth: Probably both. It's clear the current administration likes grants. We're trying to learn, what makes a very competitive project. We were approved for the TIGER I, but were not successful for TIGER II.

Susan Pearce: Does it make sense for the community to spend time now thinking about the design of Clinton to River (which I'm calling Clinton to Caruthers)? I know TriMet staff is busy, but we don't want to leave you out of the loop.

Dave Unsworth: Yes, keep us in the loop. As we get into Final Design, we'll be re-engaging the community in helping make a better project. Timely and helpful input about how we can improve things is always valued.

Ian Stude: You mentioned applications to ODOT for transportation enhancements. Is that the same as ODOT's flexible funds application? If not, will there be an application for flexible funds?

Dave Unsworth: It's separate. They use the same pot of money, but they are different applications. The application for flexible funds will be out soon, and TriMet will be seeking flexible funds from ODOT.

Greg Hemer: Does the contractor buy the material? And when do they decide?

Dave Unsworth: Yes. How this works: We'll hire a designer to complete the Final Design. They will take the drawings from 30 percent now, to 60 percent, 90 percent and then all the way through to issued-for-construction. During that period, we will have a construction management general contractor (CM/GC) alongside, helping, informing and producing cost estimates. In the end, they'll develop a "guaranteed maximum price." They get subcontractors, and that's how we procure the work.

Greg Hemer: The reason I ask is that the price of iron and eventually steel is climbing. Is it possible to pre-buy at lower prices?

Dave Unsworth: We can buy some things, such as property and vehicles once we have a Record of Decision. But we are precluded from buying other things. It depends on the item. We don't have permission to buy all the track yet. There are very prescribed rules about what can be purchased when.

Rod Merrick: Can you clarify how savings from the Sellwood Bridge can be applied toward this project?

Dave Unsworth: The closure of the Staff Jennings boat business eliminated the need for a significant ramp from the bridge to get down to that property. That itself was a significant savings. Additionally, it minimized the need to re-engineer an 80-foot cliff west of the bridge, again resulting in large savings. Some of those savings will come to the project, along with some in-kind properties. The city pledged an added \$25 million to PMLR. Some of that will be in-kind city property, and some will be cash saved from the bridge project.

Catherine Goode: How was the FEIS published in light of the need for recalibration?

Dave Unsworth: On July 23, 2010, the FTA announced the federal share would stand at 50 percent, not 60 percent as requested. What you'll see in the FEIS is the "Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) to Park," which is the whole project as we defined it last March without the \$62 million in cuts, and the "LPA Phasing Option" which contains the environmental impacts associated with those \$62 million in cuts. We believe that gives us the flexibility, under the NEPA process, to add elements back if we find funding and/or savings. We analyzed the 27 items on that list of cuts. In Chapter 2, we identify the list of scope deferral items. Our federal partner is satisfied that we've identified the impacts under both options. That's how we were able to publish the FEIS in October.

CAC Evaluation

Rick Williams reviewed results of the CAC survey evaluating the performance of TriMet staff. The survey evaluated staff through the end of preliminary engineering.

Overall, the results indicate that CAC members are pleased with staff. However, staff asked for feedback on areas where they can improve. For example, the measure, “value of CAC to your organization or group,” rated a 3.5 out of 5. Are there are opportunities to make our meetings, information or process better?

Paul Carlson: I really appreciate the opportunity to be a part of this. TriMet folks have been extremely helpful in bringing this out to the community. It’s a wonderful aspect of their process that they actually try to listen to the wishes of the community.

Jennifer Koozer: Asked for feedback on the length of meetings, 90 minutes vs. 120 minutes.

Susan Pearce: I think it’s best to schedule the meetings for two hours. I would rather have the meeting last two hours than to cut people off. If we don’t need all the time, we can leave early.

Valerie Chapman: Ninety minutes is best. But perhaps staff could stay for another half hour to answer any additional questions.

David Aschenbrenner: I’m in favor of blocking two hours but not fully scheduling the two hours. I don’t like to rush discussion. But don’t schedule the full two hours if there really aren’t that many agenda items.

Valeria Ramirez: Meetings are held at night when most of us don’t have the freshest energy. We should apply some discipline and make sure people hold their comments to the shortest time possible. Having said that, if it’s two hours, I’m here.

Arnold Panitch: As a matter of decorum, I’m frustrated we can’t ask members of the public to clarify their comments during the public comment portion of the meeting. It would be nice to be able to ask for clarification.

Dee Walsh: In favor of 90 minutes.

Paul Carlson: In favor of 90 minutes with flexibility to extend the meeting for further public discussion.

David Aschenbrenner: Perhaps schedule the meeting for 90 minutes. If you have to leave, that would be fine. I just don’t want to be cutting people off.

Susan Pearce: That’s an argument for calendaring for two hours but cutting it to 90 minutes if we can.

Greg Hemer: Meetings can be scheduled for either 90 or 120 minutes, depending on the agenda.

Rick Williams: What I'm hearing is that we need to be disciplined when we put the agenda together. If we need two hours, we should get the word out to you that it's going to be a heavy agenda. If we schedule a 90-minute meeting and it seems we fall off topic, then it's up to me to take time out and ask the will of the group. I like Greg's idea, that we do both. On those 90-minute meetings, we try to hold to the agenda. If we get off in a new direction, and the group wants to go in that direction, the group should be allowed to do that.

Dee Walsh: I'm also open to reading things ahead of time and coming prepared so that you don't have to take as much time to explain things.

Paul Carlson: What is the future of the CAC? Do we continue to meet monthly? Will the schedule slow when we get into construction?

Jennifer Koozer: We want to meet monthly through Final Design. We've discussed taking December and August off. But even through construction, we'd like to keep the group active.

Rick Williams: One of the great things about this group is that you really are the eyes and ears of your community. Even during construction, it's good you're out there and can pass information on to the project team.

Susan Pearce: Could we meet in the south end of the line?

Rick Williams: Point well taken.

Jennifer Koozer: Some new members and others haven't toured the alignment. If anyone wants a tour, please contact me.

Valeria Ramirez: Speaking about representation, we don't talk much about the west side of the river at all. That is a weakness.

Rick Williams: In summary, my sense of the group is that we believe the staff is doing a great job. I appreciate staff for their attitude that they're not satisfied and want to do better. Keep doing a good job, and keep supporting they way you have been.

Arnold Panitch held a fun pop quiz about transit and passed around Rail~Volution goodies as prizes.

Roundtable

Rick Williams: We've been through recalibration. The FEIS has been published. We're now moving to a new phase. What are you hearing from the community about the recalibration and what's going forward?

Catherine Goode: I haven't gotten a lot of feedback. In general, the neighborhood seems fairly pleased with developments.

Susan Pearce: The concern I hear the most is that if the pedestrian bridge at SE 16th and Brooklyn doesn't get built now, it will never get built.

David Aschenbrenner: I'm hearing real concern about the parking structures and getting those added back as soon as possible. Where are people going to park? There's concern about parking in downtown Milwaukie and neighborhoods. There's concern about what will happen to development plans without a structure at Tacoma. Safety and security are always coming up in Milwaukie. Correct me if I'm wrong, but the assumption is they're not planning to add new TriMet security. That's a big concern for people in the south end. People are just starting to look at the FEIS, and so I'm not hearing a whole lot yet about that.

Rick Williams: At some point we will look at bringing TriMet safety and security people back on the agenda.

Valeria Ramirez: What I hear most is that many people think the project is dead, or an "I'll believe it when I see it" skepticism. As far as the changes that have made in the recalibration, at Portland Opera, we're concerned about the aesthetic changes (with the Willamette River Bridge).

Rod Merrick: A major pedestrian concern is removing amenities from the bridge, such as the belvederes. The second issue is concern about the loss of the parking lot at Tacoma. There are ongoing concerns about safety of pedestrian access from both sides of McLoughlin Boulevard at the Tacoma site.

Teri Pucik: We're very concerned about the dollar value of the cuts in our section. We lost not only the infrastructure for the Harold Street station, but also one side of the bus pullout on Bybee. Also concerned about how that will affect fire department access. While we don't want a monolithic structure at Tacoma, we want something to replace the parking that will be lost from the Milwaukie Park & Ride. We feel people will park in the neighborhoods at Bybee and Tacoma if there are not enough Park & Ride spaces. The pedestrian crossing issues have always been there, especially now. We're not happy with the cuts. We think they've been concentrated in our neighborhood.

Greg Hemer: People are excited about the November 15 design workshop in Milwaukie. There has been a lot of talk about aesthetics in Milwaukie. Everyone is excited to see what the design is going to start to look like. I'm also hearing about traffic concerns. I'm not sure if I'm settled on whether the Johnson Creek/Tacoma area is designed well for traffic. I think parking will spread out, not into the SMILE neighborhood, but into the north Milwaukie industrial district.

Fred Nelligan: During the TriMet workshop in late September in Oak Grove, the biggest concern was that while people are generally pleased that the foundation of the parking

structure will be built to expand in the future, many people feel that the one-story structure won't be enough to make it a functional, long-term, viable Park & Ride. There were comments about the impacts of the Tacoma Street structure going away, the current Milwaukie Park & Ride being subsumed into the Tacoma site and what that means for Park Avenue. That could throw more commuters into the Park Avenue area. We're very interested to see the results of the upcoming Park & Ride study, looking at the efficiency of existing Park & Rides. We'll also be interested in the process for prioritizing elements that have been cut and bringing them back in.

Ian Stude: I want to thank Arnold Panitch for his generous comments about commuter behavior at Portland State (during "quiz"). We're proud of the commuter numbers we've generated there.

I sit on the City of Portland Bike Advisory Committee and wanted to point out concerns about the cuts, which were discussed at last month's meeting. There are concerns around eliminating bike parking, but this was seen as somewhat of a minor issue because bike parking can be added later if funding can be found. People are more comfortable riding in their neighborhoods than in riding into downtown. The ability to park a bike safely and securely at a light rail station and then make the trip to downtown is important for folks who are making a bike part of their commute. We realize capacity to bring bikes on light rail is limited.

Also there was some conversation about removing the belvederes from the bridge. Looking at the mix of pedestrians and bicyclists on the bridge, the belvederes provided a relief point. In some ways, that's even more of a safety concern. The committee has reviewed the allocation of space for bikes and pedestrians on the bridge. It is comfortable thus far. But with every project we've seen in the region, when you build to a certain width and assume that will be enough, we quickly find it's not. So having the belvederes as a relief valve certainly was a good plan. We would like to see those come back into the project, if possible.

David Edwards: Most of what I hear is about parking concerns in the neighborhoods.

Valerie Chapman: I am sad about some comments from the south end. When we recalibrated, we heard a wave of voices of people not happy with transit. It felt like some of that came out in force. I live close to Park Avenue. Some folks say they'll do anything to keep riders out of our neighborhoods. There was a lot of anger.

It was interesting to attend the TriMet Board meeting yesterday. A lot of drama. It's not that people don't have real concerns. It seems like there is an open door for some of the fears and angers to come out strong with the recalibration. I appreciate people in the middle who have to make hard decisions for our region. In the future of our region, transportation is really important. We must reduce our carbon footprint. There's a lot of tension and fear around it. For those who weren't at the TriMet Board meeting, the union took over the first part of the meeting. It was an intense meeting. Making decisions in hard times and hoping to hang on to the future is tough.

Arnold Panitch: I represent the Committee for Accessible Transportation. It is all about civil rights and integration of people with less mobility. Recalibration is affecting accessibility, like the elimination of the second elevator at Bybee, pedestrian overcrossings, belvederes). Extra money should go to making it more accessible. In terms of parking: what we need is more feeder buses. We need buses that are reliable and more frequent. That would enhance the accessibility of the alignment. Lastly: why doesn't someone go to Reed College and get support for adding a station at Harold?

Fred Nelligan: What was the drama at the TriMet Board meeting relating to our CAC?

Ann Becklund: TriMet is in labor negotiations with union employees. They protested outside the City of Portland building and in the Board meeting, taking about half an hour to talk to the Board. Then we moved through our regular agenda and took public input. Public input is always important for us, good or bad. It's so valuable for them to hear voices of those working with us. Otherwise, often all they'd hear are the angry voices. It's very reinforcing for Board members – especially new Board members – to hear that you're giving your time to something that people do appreciate. You may not always agree with all the decisions that TriMet makes, but you are included in the process, and you have a voice to affect what we do. We'll be asking others to help us to bring a breadth of perspective to our Board meetings about all the lives we do touch.

David Aschenbrenner: I heard Portland Parks is working on another access from McLoughlin Boulevard to the Springwater Corridor bridge and across to the proposed Park & Ride at Tacoma.

Susan Pearce: Regarding the recalibration, one source of concern from the pedestrian community that has been resolved is designs for sidewalks on the east side of Water Avenue. Regarding the Park & Rides, from our end, the issue will affect Central Eastside Industrial District parking. I'm also concerned about removal of the switch in the Close the Loop street car project.

Public Comment

Dustin Poser: What is the update on the selection of contractors for the Willamette River Bridge? Where are they in the process of getting the pricing for the bridge?

Dave Unsworth: There are procurement rules that don't allow us to discuss this much. The bids have been received. We have evaluated them. We have selected a design builder but we can't talk publicly until the Board considers the contract on December 8.

Mike Monahan: Does the website or other source list estimated travel times from OMSI to various places?

Dave Unsworth: That information is found in Chapter 4 of the FEIS, which can be through the TriMet website.

Rick Williams adjourned the meeting at 7:29 p.m.

The next meeting is at 6 p.m., Thursday, November 18 at St. Philip Neri parish, Carvlin Hall.