



PORTLAND-MILWAUKIE
LIGHT RAIL PROJECT

**Citizen's Advisory Committee
Thursday, October 15, 2009
Carvlin Hall, St. Philip Neri Parish
2408 SE 16th Avenue**

Meeting Notes

PMLR CAC Members Present:

Rick Williams – Chair, Lloyd District Transportation Management Association
David Aschenbrenner, Hector Campbell Neighborhood
Lina Bensel, TriMet Committee on Accessible Transportation (CAT)
Paul Carlson, Oregon Museum of Science & Industry (OMSI)
Valerie Chapman, Oak Grove
Debbie Cronk, South Waterfront Neighborhood
Barbara Dimick, Oak Grove
David Edwards, Oak Grove
Neil Hankerson, Dark Horse Comics
Greg Hemer, Milwaukie Lumber
Michole Jensen, Ardenwald-Johnson Creek Neighborhood
Reid Kells, Sellwood-Moreland Neighborhood (SMILE)
Lance Lindahl, Brooklyn Neighborhood (BAC)
Ken Love, South Portland Neighborhood
Dan Packard, Eastmoreland Neighborhood
Susan Pearce, Hosford-Abernethy Neighborhood (HAND)
Valeria Ramirez, Portland Opera
Dee Walsh, Central Eastside Industrial Council (CEIC)
Dan Zalkow, Portland - Portland State University (PSU)
Ed Zumwalt (for Ray Bryan), Historic Milwaukie Neighborhood

PMLR CAC Members Absent:

Heather Andrews, Bicycle Transportation Alliance (BTA)
Ray Bryan, Historic Milwaukie Neighborhood
Eric Miller, Island Station Neighborhood
Henry Schmidt, Oak Lodge Community Council

Rick Williams (CAC Chair) welcomes everyone and opens the meeting. Rick announces that Paul Carlson will replace Rod McDowell as the OMSI representative. He introduces Ed Zumwalt sitting in for Ray Bryan of the Historic Milwaukie Neighborhood.

Milwaukie Station presentation by **Leah Robbins** (TriMet East Segment Director).

Leah presents slides of two different station design options coming out of discussions with the community. Option A has side platforms – one adjacent to a potential future plaza area and one between LRT and freight tracks. Option B has a center platform. She discussed the goals and challenges of fitting the station into its environment, such as the safety advantages of having pedestrians cross only one set of tracks with center platform, and the urban design advantages of having a side platform integrated with adjacent uses. They also have been looking at how to get pedestrians from the station down to Lake Road. The design team has been working with the City of Milwaukie to ensure the best design to fit with the South Downtown Plan Update and future development.

Leah took questions from the committee about the station design options. Some questions are for clarification of facts.

David Edwards asked why there is an access point on the south end; it seems unnecessary. Leah explained the Milwaukie community and City staff support this access as close to the trestle as possible as a key feature in how the site develops. It is also TriMet design criteria to have access at both ends of station platforms.

There are other questions and some discussion about buses and bus stops. Another discussion ensues about the nature of future development. Leah says TriMet and the City of Milwaukie have entered into a Memorandum of Understanding to work together identifying opportunities for the site and perhaps enter into a future development agreement. **David Aschenbrenner** explains that the City of Milwaukie is looking at re-developing the whole South Downtown area to be more pedestrian-focused, and thus the south access point on the platform integrates with future development ideas. He gives some idea of development plans that, he says, are being formulated in a unique process that is not a market- or developer-driven project.

In answer to a question from Rick Williams, Leah confirms that the City of Milwaukie Council and staff prefers station platform Option A, which has the side platforms. TriMet received a formal recommendation from Milwaukie staff and council for this option.

Tacoma Station presentation by **Leah Robbins** (TriMet East Segment Director)

A workshop was held in August to gather feedback on development potential for the station site and the Pendleton site to the south. With this information, the design team explored options for the how the station and parking structure sit on the site. The team considered comments on neighborhood “viewsheds,” safety and security, pedestrian connections and integration with future development. Options explored included moving the station closer to McLoughlin Boulevard to heighten “passive security” and moving the station between the parking structure and the Pendleton site. However, each option

presented downsides in safety, security and operations that outweighed whatever benefits they may have brought. As a result, the team returned to the station location identified in the LPA design, with some updates and adjustments, (e.g., the 50-foot offset to the Union Pacific tracks, and potential stairs east of the ramp from Springwater Corridor). A key design constraint is that half of the entire site must remain pervious surface to allow the ground to absorb rainwater.

Leah also discussed the design of the garage at five stories (for 1,000 spaces). Discussion follows and generally focuses on issues related to bus, bike and pedestrian access. There are also some questions about zoning and land use, and Leah says there may be potential to reserve some of the garage's ground floor for future retail use, as at Gateway and Clackamas Town Center.

Lance Lindahl says he has strong reservations that the station may encourage pedestrians to cross the road illegally and sees the need either for a better barrier to crossing or building a legalized crossing. Rick Williams notes that this topic has a long history. **David Aschenbrenner** encourages members to the October 26 meeting about the Tacoma station, where ODOT will be present to hear concerns.

Leah moves on in her presentation with slides and discussion about the traffic impact analysis. The projected Park & Ride traffic would come from three directions:

- 50% via McLoughlin (25% from Highway 224, 25% from the south)
- 30% via Johnson Creek Boulevard
- 20% via Tacoma Street

Based on the projected traffic, the traffic analysis identified specific changes that the cities of Portland may require of the Project, including new traffic signals on Johnson Creek Boulevard at 32nd and 42nd and removal of the east-west stop signs at 36th. The Project does not trigger any required changes on McLoughlin. She notes that the full presentation on traffic issues is available on the Project website and traffic will be discussed in more detail at the October 26 meeting.

Park Avenue – Nature in Neighborhoods presentation by **Leah Robbins** (TriMet East Segment Director)

Leah explains the background for the Nature in the Neighborhoods (NIN) grant proposal. Before concepts for the Park & Ride structure were developed, community members strongly recommended that the site design express green values and “not be a monolith of concrete.” Community members asked that TriMet consider creating a proposal under Metro’s Nature in the Neighborhoods capital grant program.

This site provides a unique opportunity for a grant project, as it meets many of Metro’s NIN capital grant criteria, including the physical structure on public property, and a partnership of community and agency groups. Urban Green and TriMet convened a meeting of community groups to discuss a grant proposal for creating a NIN project that would go “above and beyond” what would be required of the Project for visual

mitigation, stormwater treatment, etc. Although daylighting an underground creek, as suggested, is not feasible, three promising concepts arose: extending a riparian area (including bringing stormwater from McLoughlin onto the site to naturally filter it), providing green screening of the garage, and planting the retaining wall that goes along the trolley trail. Leah shows images to illustrate these concepts.

In answer to a question of whether other stations, such as Tacoma, could qualify for similar grants, Leah agrees and encourages other neighborhood groups to get involved at those sites.

The grant application is due Nov. 2.

Public Involvement Update and CAC Topics of Interest

Claudia Steinberg (TriMet Community Affairs Manager) provides a brief presentation on public involvement. On the heels of the previous item, Claudia notes that the key to such grants is that they start at the grassroots level, not with TriMet. For more information, she encourages people to visit the Metro website for Nature in the Neighborhoods.

Claudia calls attention to three upcoming meetings that are follow-ups to tonight's meeting. These include meetings regarding Park Avenue, Tacoma and Bybee stations. She encourages people to consult the Project website for more information and thanks people for participating in stakeholder meetings.

Rick Williams reminds CAC members of a brainstorming session held several meetings ago to identify future topics of interest. The group reviewed the list and suggested additional topics:

- Update on pedestrian overcrossings of railroad tracks at Rhine and Clinton stations
 - Ramps, elevators, lighting, etc. (invite an ADA expert)
 - ODOT highways, signals, pedestrian crossings, etc. (invite ODOT staff)
 - Freight access and truck routes in Central Eastside
 - Budget
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CAC Member Roundtable

Michole Jensen (CAC Member): Michole distributes copies of a letter from the Ardenwald-Johnson Creek Neighborhood Association related to traffic issues on Johnson Creek Boulevard. We are hoping for good solutions to these issues at the meeting on October 26.

Dan Packard (CAC Member): I am concerned about the size of the Park & Ride structure at the Tacoma station. It would be the tallest building in the area. I wonder about projections for filling it up and the need for its size. It's important that pedestrians

have access to the station from the Springwater Corridor and across McLoughlin Boulevard. It is very inconvenient for pedestrian access from Sellwood. It's also important to integrate retail and residential use in this area, and to have access from the station to the creek. It's a beautiful area, and I don't think we should ignore that.

Adding on to Dan's comments about the size of the park and ride, **Dee Walsh** says it does seem big. But **Susan Pearce** says that, speaking for the HAND neighborhood and other close-in neighborhoods, it's good to have plenty of spaces farther out, so people won't use neighborhood streets for park and ride.

David Aschenbrenner (CAC Member): Concerned about illegal pedestrian crossing of McLoughlin to access Tacoma station. Encouraged members to visit the City of Milwaukie's web site for pattern language about the South Downtown development. Also, a reminder about the Milwaukie meeting on Monday, where they will go into greater detail on the station.

Reid Kells (CAC Member): Can the northwest corner of Tacoma overpass become a new cloverleaf onto McLoughlin Boulevard, allowing for right turn onto southbound McLoughlin instead of having to wait to make the left turn? Is the Tacoma overpass strong enough to integrate Streetcar? How can you integrate Streetcar at the station?

Debbie Cronk (CAC Member): That's a great idea for the Tacoma Bridge and future Streetcar. I agree with Dan about parking structures at Tacoma Street and Park Avenue. They are isolated and bake in the sun. I favor more retail and greenery.

Ed Zumwalt (for Ray Bryan): I have concerns about money. My fear: Are we going to go for the go-cheap between the bridge and trying to get to Park Avenue? We don't want to see all the stations cut security and other amenities. We can't have it stop at Lake Road. Or go to Park if it goes on the cheap. We don't want our stations all along the line without cameras, without security.

Ken Love (CAC Member): Regarding a six-story park and ride structure, it won't be long before it fills up, based on experience on the west side. We're looking at today but you've got to look at the future.

Greg Hemer (CAC Member): I would like someone's point of view if the proposed speed train would affect light rail. Leah answers that high-speed rail does not affect the light rail project.

Barbara Dimick (CAC Member): I add to the statement about the Tacoma cloverleaf. Something must be done for traffic there. The pedestrian overcrossing at Park Avenue seems too bulky.

Valerie Chapman (CAC Member): I second that.

Lance Lindhal (CAC Member): The Line 41 bus has been eliminated, and since then, there has been a noticeable increase in bus riders transferring at Milwaukie and Powell and at 17th and McLoughlin. I echo Sue's comments about the Park & Ride lots; they are really key to keeping traffic from driving in and parking on-street. Regarding the Brooklyn railyard, Union Pacific has consolidated its operations there. It has totally changed traffic flow on Southeast 17th Avenue, especially at peak hours. Neighbors have expressed concern about the design for 17th Avenue between Holgate and McLoughlin. We noticed some changes to the most recent engineering plans, showing the right of way south of Holgate now is a minimum of 100 feet wide. While I do support having dual left turn lanes at 17th and McLoughlin, having the dual travel lanes seems counterproductive for a project that was supposed to be transit-oriented with a bike and pedestrian focus. With increased truck traffic, there are a lot more trucks going alternate routes through the neighborhood.

Valeria Ramirez (CAC Member): Just a general request for staff to frame where we're at in the timeline of project to provide context.

Public Comment

There is no public comment.

Rick Williams (CAC Chair) adjourns the meeting.

Next Meeting: 6-8 p.m., Thursday, Nov. 19, Carvlin Hall, St. Philip Neri Parish, 2408 S.E. 16th Ave.