Portland Streetcar
Citizen Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes
March 10, 1999

Members in attendance: John Carroll, chair; Catherine Lawson; Kay Dannen; Vicky Diede; Rick Gustafson; Mary Kennedy; Stan Lewis; Ken McFarling; Vern Rifer; Steve Shain; Chris Smith; Ingrid Stevens.

Others in attendance: Otto Condon; Teresa Culp; Rich Davidson; Ann Gardner; Lloyd Lindley; Carter MacNichol; Karen Rabiner; Rick Saito.

1. Introductions

John Carroll introduced Chris Smith, who joined the committee representing the Northwest District Association. Chris co-chairs the NWDA Transportation Committee.

2. Minutes

Ingrid Stevens said that the minutes did not reflect that she was in attendance at the February meeting.

3. Workshop

Kay Dannen reported on the February construction workshop. She estimated that 200 people attended, and she heard very positive responses. Most of the questions had to do with specifics of the construction schedule, although some people came who were new to the project and wanted general information about the streetcar.

Ingrid said her impression of the workshop was very positive. Vern Rifer said he received specific information about the construction schedule affecting a building he owns.

4. Construction Schedule

Bill Bruce of Stacy & Whitbeck distributed a schedule of construction work. He said that the public utilities were very responsive in completing work before track construction begins, and they estimate they are on time for the first track installation scheduled for May 11.

John asked the contractor to create a more easily readable calendar with construction information. Carter MacNichol, the construction project manager, said they are creating a simplified schedule that will be superimposed on a map. He said the schedule will be placed on the streetcar web site. Catherine Lawson suggested publicizing that people who don’t have computers can visit the public library to gain access to the web site.
Chris asked if construction on Lovejoy could be postponed until after the Lovejoy Ramp is closed. Bill said that this is not possible because of the need to coordinate sewer and water activities.

Vern asked if City Council had approved car acquisition. Vicky Diede said it had been on the Council agenda that day, but a snow storm had prevented Commissioner Hales from flying back from Washington, D.C., so the item had been postponed.

John suggested adding the car delivery schedule to the construction schedule.

5. Resolution for City Council

Vicky distributed a resolution to Council for a revised finance plan. It includes the following expenses:

The amount of the total cost of water and sewer work for which the streetcar project will be responsible;

The match requirements for a funding trade with Tri-Met that allowed the streetcar project to proceed more quickly;

$200,000 for modifications to the Hawthorne Bridge to make it rail ready;

The cost of an extension from the original alignment through the Urban Center.

The finance plan includes revised revenue figures.

The bond sale will be larger than anticipated, with the proceeds paying for city utility work.

The city received a $500,000 grant from HUD.

The streetcar will benefit from about $7.5 million in urban renewal funds.

Committee members told staff that this information should be presented in a way that it is clear that these are not cost overruns. Rather, additional expenses are a result of an increased scope of work and that revenue has been identified for all new expenses.

Vern moved that John Carroll send a letter to council in support of the resolution. Ingrid seconded the motion. The members all agreed.

6. North Macadam Alignment
A group of staff people and volunteers who are working on the N. Macadam planning effort came to the CAC to present the proposed alignment for a streetcar through the district.

Vern said that he has been sitting on the North Macadam Transportation Work Group, serving as the liaison between the CAC and the work group.

Lloyd Lindley presented a brief history of the streetcar planning effort in North Macadam. He said that the work group had focused on two alignments:

Harrison to the Willamette Shoreline Trolley Line, extending through the district along Moody and Bond; and

An alignment closer to the river along what would become River Parkway, a route that came out of a 1996 street planning process.

Otto Condon of ZGF presented an overview of the North Macadam planning process to date. He showed three different maps of the district that illustrated different clusterings of housing, offices, retail and open space. He said that a separate group is planning for an urban renewal district and is debating where the first infrastructure investment should go – at the west end, then moving toward the river, or starting at River Parkway.

Ken McFarling asked if River Parkway is a dedicated city right-of-way. Karen Rabiner of PDOT said it is dedicated to the Marquam Bridge and will soon be for the length of the district.

Otto said that the committee is looking at the role of buses and the streetcar throughout the district. Lloyd said that the streetcar will offer access to downtown and Northwest Portland and perhaps Lake Oswego. Buses, meeting at the transit hub, will provide east/west and south access, serving a larger geographic area. Transportation demand in the district may require additional and unique types of service.

Lloyd said that the work group unanimously supports a streetcar alignment along Moody. The work group has representatives of the neighborhoods, city bureaus and owners of property in and outside the district. He said that the Moody alignment offers the potential to serve the Corbett/Terwilliger/Lair Hill neighborhood, and the work group is looking at the possibility of pedestrian crossings over the freeway into the neighborhood. Consultants also are studying the potential of building a tram line from the district to OHSU.

Rich Davidson said that the Homestead Neighborhood is looking at the idea of the tram as a way to potentially alleviate traffic conditions on the hill.

Vicky asked if land use changes would be proposed to coincide with the alignment. Karen said that there are no zoning changes planned. It is likely these issues will be addressed through development agreements and
the committee’s judgment about where investments should be made to catalyze new development.

She said the North Macadam Framework Plan will be available April 8, followed by 10 weeks of public input. An urban renewal plan is being prepared simultaneously. The Transportation Work Group wants to incorporate its preferred alignment into the framework plan.

John said that once the North Macadam group has determined its alignment, the Streetcar CAC would be available to offer support. Vern said that the history of the CAC was to monitor work after the initial alignment was selected, to make sure that the planning effort was consistent with the community’s original goals for the streetcar. He would like to see how the CAC can help create a consistent system.

Vern said the CAC needs to advise the North Macadam planners on how to connect the two systems, with an emphasis on RiverPlace.

Rick Saito said the work group deliberately avoided making recommendations that fell outside the North Macadam district boundary. He said they know there is work to be done north of the district, but those issues are outside their charge.

Steve Shain said he hoped that Vicky and Karen would pursue the technical aspects of connecting the first alignment with North Macadam. John asked who would pay for that work. Vicky said that some PDC funds are available and some may be available from Tri-Met. She said that the connection should be built to standards so that it ultimately can be used for light rail.

John suggested that the CAC should encourage the North Macadam planning team to move ahead in a way that draws the attention of potential funders. Vern asked the staff to advise the CAC on outstanding technical issues.

Rick Saito said the work group would like to move ahead with one recommended alignment. John said that the CAC wasn’t familiar enough with the issues to comment on the particular alignment. However, he did feel that the CAC could encourage the work group to explore connections and the possibility of sharing the line with light rail. After the alignment is approved, the CAC can serve the same function it did for the first phase of the streetcar line.

Karen said that the proposed urban renewal district will cover some of the area between the current alignment and North Macadam. She said they are looking at constructing a bridge over Harbor Drive and staying on grade to reduce costs and maximize potential use by South/North light rail.

John asked staff to identify financing and other technical issues that need to be addressed to make the connection between the two alignments. Vicky said a lot of work has been done already and they have a good sense of the construction costs. She said the CAC can raise the visibility of the potential connection.
She noted that the Moody/Bond alignment will keep the streetcar farther away from the housing anticipated to be built along the river. Karen said there is a lot of interest in serving the jobs corridor, which will be on the west side of the district.

Steve Shain said that much of the original planning was done when Moody was the only street. The adopted street plan offers the potential to link more people to the streetcar line. Vicky said it will be important that the design seriously consider pedestrian movement. Lloyd said that the transportation work group addressed the streetcar first because it affects so many other decisions.

The CAC members agreed to make a statement of support for the proposed North Macadam alignment (Moody/Bond) and ask staff to identify the steps required to make the connection between the two alignments.

Stan said he would like to express that the CAC is happy with the way the North Macadam district is integrating transportation planning and urban development.

John said he wondered if this wasn’t more appropriately an issue for PSI, rather than the CAC.

7. Lovejoy Street Operations

Rick Gustafson discussed the issue of managing traffic flows during streetcar construction in Northwest Portland between April and November.

He said that NWDA agreed to make more of Lovejoy one way during construction, but leave Northrup as is, with Marshall acting as the other half of the couplet. Meanwhile, the city will explore the long-range options for traffic management.

Because the CAC was committed to providing 10 minute headways, there is a need to explore better traffic management to keep the 10 minute schedule. One alternative may be to dedicate one lane to the streetcar on a portion of the streets in Northwest. PSI and the city will pursue this study.