Portland Streetcar Citizen Advisory Committee  
December 12, 3PM, Portland Streetcar Office  

Members in attendance: Steve Fosler; Steve Karilyi; Stan Lewis; Ken McFarling; Janet McGarrigle; Vern Rifer  
Staff attendance: Rick Gustafson; Kay Dannen, Vicky Diede  
Others: Carol Presson; Josh Alpert; Art Liewellan  

The meeting was called to order and the minutes were approved.  

1. RiverPlace Extension  

A financial commitment to fund the Streetcar RiverPlace extension is near to completion. Streetcar is currently one million dollars short. $6 million will be coming from the Portland Development Commission. PDOT and ODOT will do a parcel exchange to expedite the project. A local improvement district assessment area is to be formed for partial payment of capital costs. As part of the project, the Harrison connector will be built which will connect with Lincoln. With the approval of City Council, Stacy and Witbeck, the general contractor for the original Streetcar alignment, will continue to be the general contractor for the extension. Momentum is currently building to extend the Streetcar into the North Macadam District. OHSU has a strong interest in linking Streetcar to their proposed tramway. Metro and Tri-Met are doing preliminary work to extend Streetcar to Lake Oswego using the Willamette Shore Trolley right-of-way. The extension to RiverPlace is .6 of a mile with the route following SW Harrison to RiverPlace just short of the Marquam Bridge. Streetcar will be included on the agenda for the RiverPlace Homeowners Association meeting scheduled for Thursday, January 31. We may have the Portland Development Commission give an update on the Harrison connector.  

It is estimated that we are about 6 months to utility construction on the RiverPlace extension. Total trackwork construction will take about 12-18 months.  

2. State Accessibility Committee and results from Streetcar application.  

Streetcar applied for state grant money in the amount of about $48,000 to support relocation of our fare machines and to perform a measurement audit on all ramp slopes on all cars, both sides.  

This request for state grant accessibility money was denied. It is important that Streetcar applied for this grant to provide project recognition. This should ease applications applied for in the future. Regardless of the denial of this grant application, Streetcar is moving forward to relocate the fare machines and retrofits to accept $1 & $5 dollar bills. Cost is $27,000 for 8 fare machines; this includes one spare. The seat directly in back of the fare machine will be removed and the fare machine will be moved toward the window. This will leave more room for wheelchair mobility in the low floor section of the Streetcar.  

Carol asked whether the bridgeplates will be modified to fit the size of the doors. Currently, there is about a 6” gape on each side of the bridgeplate. Rick said they are not going to be redone, but he will get
them marked to indicate edge of bridgeplate with yellow markings. Rick will investigate the reason these bridgeplates don’t reach the edge of the doors.


A meeting was held with the Oddball Shoe Company, located at NW 17th and Marshall. They requested that Marshall Street be reopened during the holidays. Marshall Street has been opened since the end of November, but will close again to automobile traffic in January. Having Marshall Street open does compromise safety of operations when trains are moved around the yard. When the two additional cars arrive in July of next year, the yard is going to become crowded and movement will be challenging. It was suggested by the Lovejoy task force to evaluate the usage of Marshall when the Lovejoy Ramp is reopened. This group, as well local interested retailers, will reconvene early next year to make recommendations regarding the usage of Marshall Street. Streetcar would like to see Marshall Street permanently closed between 15th and 16th to all traffic including autos, pedestrians and bicycles. The Lovejoy task force committee suggested studying the following options:

- Open to all traffic
- Closed to automobile traffic and open for pedestrian and bikes
- Closed to all traffic

It is expected that the Lovejoy Ramp will not be opened until March of 2002. A number of changes in the surrounding neighborhood, such as a grocery store, theater, etc., could change the focus and reliance on Marshall Street.

4. Update on restaurant guide and general brochure.

10,000 copies of the restaurant guide have been printed and distributed. The guide included 25 restaurants along the alignment. This “Ride and Dine” brochure will be reprinted next spring with the possibility of securing more restaurant sponsors. The general Streetcar brochure is being drafted and will be completed by the first of January 2002.

5. Update on NextBus installation.

The NextBus global positioning system has been installed in two of the streetcars and at the shelter at NW 18th and Lovejoy. 24 of the 32 stops have been wired for installation of this NextBus reader board. This reader board will indicate the arrival time of the next streetcar or vintage trolley. The remainder of the stops are cost prohibitive for installation of the reader board and other locations where the reader board can be displayed are being sought. The reader board has 2 lines of text so we will be able to program in the arrival time of the Vintage Trolley as well as a separate line for the Streetcar. Steve stated that we should not forget to program into the reader board “No smoking at the shelter or platform”. Streetcar superintendents will have the ability, with the use of a code word, to reprogram the reader board to indicate alternative messages, such as a service disorder. This system will be completely installed and functional by the end of January 2002.

6. Other business.
Vintage Trolley has experienced high ridership on both Saturdays and Sundays. Most of our operators don’t like to operate the vintage trolley because they get no breaks and they have to stand all the time. The pull-out seat is not comfortable. Rick is working on splitting the Vintage Trolley to 4 hour shifts to accommodate operator’s complaints.

Flat spots on the wheels continue to be an issue. With the steeper slopes and the oil and leaves on the track, the Streetcars sometimes slip up to 10 feet and this can cause a flat. A car is out of service for at least 4 days to get the flat spots ground out. Skoda cars have been very reliable.

Rick is considering the idea of printing a schedule for the 20 and 25 minutes headways. For the 15-minute headways we will list the train operates every 15 minutes. This has had some resistance from riders. Many want schedules in hand and times located at the stops. The schedule changed on December 2 and we are currently in the process of printing new schedules. The next schedule change is March 2. Streetcar is striving for 50-minute roundtrips, which will produce more frequent service. Adding the 5th car adds about $200,000 in annual cost for operations.

The two new Skoda cars are due to arrive July 1, 2002 and will be shipped on May 10, 2002.

Steve requested that when the repair work is done on the Broadway Bridge, that it be rail ready. The new Lovejoy Ramp is rail ready.

Chris Smith was unable to attend the CAC meeting, but requested that any interested CAC member attend the public conversation on parking in the Northwest at the next NWDA meeting at 5:30pm, Monday, December 17 at the NW Neighborhood Cultural Center, lower level.

Monthly CAC meetings to be held at selected locations on the second Wednesday of each month at 3PM. The next meeting is scheduled Wednesday, January 9, 3:00PM at the offices of Shiels Obletz Johnson, 115 NW 1st Avenue, Suite #200.