

Portland Streetcar Citizen Advisory Committee
July 9, 2003, 3:30PM, Lloyd Center Tower, 825 NE Multnomah, 2nd floor
Members in Attendance: Steve Foster, Mary Kennedy, Stan Lewis, Janice McGarrigle, Carol Presson, Vern Rifer, Chris Smith
Other Attendees: Art Lewellan, Rick Seifert, Lynne Coward, Melanie Adrian, Dwayne Oylear, Marsha Weinstein
Staff Attendance: Kay Dannen

The meeting was called to order by our acting chair, Chris Smith.

1. Fare policy report.

Chris Smith presented the report compiled by the fare subcommittee.

Background:

In light of the possibility the NWDA will withdraw its objection to fareless Streetcar service after the NW Parking Plan is implemented, the subcommittee was asked by the CAC to re-examine the policy and practical considerations for fareless operation on existing or future segments of the Portland Streetcar.

Committee Deliberation:

Chris Smith, Lynne Coward, Janet McGarrigle, Rick Gustafson and Kay Dannen met on June 10th, 2003.

Discussion:

After reviewing the background history and context, the committee discussed the original intent of a fareless Streetcar system (primarily motivated by the desire to avoid having a fare collection system). Now that we have a functional fare box (and fare evasion is down to about 10%), this is no longer an issue. The committee discussed the idea of making the Streetcar fareless system-wide, and found several challenges:

- 1) Could preclude bringing Streetcar into districts that do not have controlled parking (same condition that created NWDA's original objection).
- 2) Could preclude sources of operating funding needed for future expansions.

It was noted that asking NW Portland to fund fare box replacement would be consistent with the use of about \$200K annually of Pearl District parking meter revenues for Streetcar operations.

Conclusion:

It would be premature to recommend converting Streetcar to a system-wide fareless policy. However, it may be fruitful to pursue an extension of fareless operation into NW Portland, possibly in conjunction with a narrow expansion of TriMet's fareless square along the Streetcar alignment.

Recommendation:

Enter discussion with NWDA, NHBA and TriMet about a fareless pilot project in NW Portland in conjunction with the implementation of the NW parking plan.

Some discussion was held on this report. Marsha suggested that if we offer transit for free, we might encourage more undesirables riding our system. Chris made the motion and Stan seconded that we see if a pilot project for a fareless system in Northwest is feasible and ensure that a discussion of fare revenue replacement is part of that plan. This was agreed to by the committee.

2. RiverPlace groundbreaking event and 2nd Streetcar anniversary festival.

Kay invited all CAC members to the Streetcar RiverPlace groundbreaking event to be held on Monday, August 4 at 2:00pm at the Marriott Residence Inn, 2115 SW River Parkway. Janice will post these invitations at the RiverPlace condominiums. Also being held this summer is the second anniversary for the Streetcar celebration to be held at Jamison Park on Saturday, August 16 from 12 noon to 8:00pm. This will be a family-based event with live music, several restaurants and activities for kids. Several minutes were taken to brainstorm on events that could be included. It was suggested to contact Finnegan's or Child's Play to ask if they would like to coordinate a children's area. Possibility of kids building cars and tracks or other items. Also, investigate music on the trains, streetcar cookies, and balloons at designated stops. Find out if Farmer's Market would promote the event. Kay encouraged all CAC members to call her with ideas for this fun event. Beneficiaries of this event will be the SMART Reading Program and the Oregon Food Bank.

3. Update on the RiverPlace construction schedule.

Currently Copenhagen has been using the "vac-exc" method to pothole and find the depth and locations of some of their lines so they can design the modifications to their facilities. They won't be back for another month or two. The big work is by Moe and Sons for PP&L. They are installing a new large underground raceway from River Parkway and Harbor to Harrison and 2nd. The work includes 3 vaults. One is done (east of Naito) one is under construction (at Harbor) and one is about to start (in the north sidewalk at 2nd Avenue pedestrian walkway). The raceway construction is in progress and work along Harbor is 90% complete. Some of their work will require a daytime closure of through eastbound traffic from 4th to Naito. Signs are being prepared that provide for local access to the driveways between 4th and 1st. One lane will be restored during non-work hours. This work will be done by the end of July.

Track construction will begin in late October on the extension and be complete by the end of 2004. We expect to start operations in March of 2005, but this date may be moved forward. The sequencing of trackwork has not been formulated as yet and will be made available to all affected parties as soon as possible. Melanie the general manager at Portland Center Apartments asked what kind of construction would be happening on Harrison by the apartments the month of October 2003? Kay indicated that, if there is any work, it would be minimal. Melanie has the opportunity to lease 40 apartments to Circus Solique and wanted to make sure they would not be impacted by noise and traffic impacts on Harrison.

4. Update on Eastside Steering Committee.

Rick was unable to attend this meeting and give an update on the Eastside Streetcar project. Therefore, Kay will request that Rick prepare a summary that can be forwarded to each CAC member.

5. Other Business.

Marsha stated that because she is in a wheelchair, she does not like the vintage trolley service on the weekends. She also mentioned that the Nextbus system does not designate between the vintage trolley and streetcar when listing the times of the next arrivals. Kay mentioned she would bring this up at our next operations meeting.

Chris presented a letter to the CAC, requesting that because of high ridership at the stop location at 23rd and Marshall that a second shelter be installed as soon as capital budget allows.

Rick Siefert, read a letter, which he had prepared to the CAC. In essence, he stated that we are all stewards of the common spaces and should be encouraged to not clog up our rider's ears and eyes with commercial messages, which treat the riders as a captive audience. He indicated we should be congratulated for keeping advertising discreet on our cars and shelters. But, there is one area we seem to be blind, or to be more exact, deaf. A trip on a Portland Streetcar consists of a series of audio commercials for stop sponsors. If the streetcar were a radio station, it would be guilty of "commercial clutter." The messages, because they are spoken, are unavoidable. They intrude on your patrons. He suggests eliminating the announcements, changing the wording; possibly "home of Hanna Andersson" for example, provide leaflets of the businesses in the cars, list all the sponsors on a panel in the car, etc. Some time was spent discussing these announcements. Kay did announce that former radio announcer, Cheryl Hanson, has volunteered to be the voice for our announcements. Kay indicated that she would share this letter with operations and report back to the CAC at the next meeting. Melanie from Portland Center Apartments said she would still be a sponsor even if an audible announcement were not offered. Kay indicated that BridgePort has insisted on the audible announcements. Rick started the SW Community Connection and is a neighborhood activist from the Hillsdale area of Portland.

Lynne reported that the Broadway District has received a TGM grant from LCDC, which encompasses planning for Broadway to 33rd and Hollywood District. She would like to include Streetcar future planning in this mix. Steve suggested evaluating streetcar in the future to look at all possibilities for expansion, including financing work, etc. Lynne would like to evaluate Streetcar and MAX for integration with mix-use developments and transit-oriented development. She would like to see the plan for transit support when developing plans for these neighborhoods.

Carol reported that the bridge plate on car 3b is too steep for a manual wheelchair at the Park and Mill stop. Kay will inform operations.

4. Location of next CAC meeting.

The next meeting of the Portland Streetcar Citizens Advisory Committee will be held on Wednesday, September 10, 3:30pm, at Lloyd 700 Building, 700 NE Multnomah, 3rd floor conference room. Please call Kay Dannen at 503/478-6404 if you have any questions regarding this committee or have items for the agenda.