

Portland Streetcar Citizen Advisory Committee

February 7, 2007, 3:30PM-5:30PM, Shiels Oblatz Johnsen, 1140 SW 11th Avenue, Suite 500, Portland, OR 97205

Members in Attendance: Chris Smith, chair; Scott Bricker, Bill Danneman, Peter Finley Fry, Steve Fosler, Sorin Garber, Stan Lewis, Janet McGarrigle, Ann Niles, Susan Pearce, Carol "Zoe" Presson, Bob Richardson, Scott Seibert, Vern Rifer, Dan Zalkow

Other Attendees: Dick Barnard, Patrick Sweeney, Subhuti Lichtman, Sean Moran

Staff Attendance: Kay Dannen

The meeting was called to order by our chair Chris Smith. The minutes from December 6, 2006 were approved as presented.

1. Public Comment Period.

Subhuti is a member of St. Mary's Cathedral located at NW 17th/Couch and a northwest business owner. Members of this parish have raised objections to the proposed Burnside/Couch couplet which includes a streetcar component. Members cite the main entrance to the school is on Couch where they have over 200 students currently enrolled. 1400 families are registered at this parish. This parish is recommending that the couplet ends at NW 15th including the streetcar. Safety and noise is cited as their main concerns. Chris explained that this CAC to date had not discussed this proposed streetcar addition to the Burnside/Couch couplet as this was just recently recommended by Commissioner Adams. Stan and Dan responded to the concern of parish members regarding their services and noise issues. Streetcar currently runs very near to Lincoln Hall where many performances are held. To date, there has not been any noise issues registered with the PSU's School of Fine and Performing Arts. Subhuti indicated that the parish is more concerned about the added car traffic on Couch than streetcar operations.

2. City-wide Rail Plan.

Patrick Sweeney, newly hired transportation planner at Portland Office of Transportation provided some information on his efforts to develop a city-wide regional planning process. Currently, there is lots of competition for funding projects around the Portland metropolitan region. The City has recognized a need to organize and prioritize these projects. It is important to develop clear criteria on what makes a transit corridor. An Urban Forum Planning Study is underway to formulate how the City will grow in the future. Land use and transportation certainly works hand-in-hand. Members of the CAC have requested a draft of the work plan when completed by Patrick. Patrick indicated that the South Corridor Phase II: Portland-Milwaukie Light Rail is being studied with the landings of a new bridge crossing the river under discussion. Patrick indicated at the end of the day, ideally we will have a much clearer idea of what corridors in the Metro region should be included for funding.

3. Presentation on Fare Box Signage.

Sean Moran has graciously volunteered to assist the streetcar in redesigning the fronts of our fare box machines to make them more user friendly. Style, color and number system will help direct the user to pay their fare. The CAC was given the opportunity to comment and provided the following comments:

- Move the cancel button to the bottom of the machine. Kay to check to see if possible.
- Remove the TripTik circle – not needed.
- Value in mirroring TriMet's design of fare machines.
- CAC majority support the color similar to the channel route maps in the cars.
- Think about visual impairment / color blindness / Braille.
- Remove text and/or streamline text.
- Advise text should be at the platform stops, not on the fare machines.

4. Project Updates:

Lowell Extension construction.

Kay indicated the trackwork, roadwork and platform stop finishes to be complete the end of February, with Moody, Bond and Lowell roads open for auto traffic. Approximately April 1, overhead electrical poles and wires will be installed with testing of vehicles in mid-summer of 2007. Opening of the Lowell extension will be August or September 2007.

Lake Oswego Transit Alternative Analysis.

Vern reported that the Lake Oswego project advisory group expects to choose a Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) by this summer which would include alignment, mode and terminus. Vern feels the chances are good in taking the streetcar to the Sellwood Bridge and odds are not as good to make the connection south from the Sellwood Bridge to Lake Oswego. The Sellwood Bridge segment could become a minimal operating segment (MOS). Johns Landing is not interested in the Willamette Shoreline Trolley ROW becoming a streetcar line. Lake Oswego has identified some potential redevelopment sites that could anchor a streetcar line at the south end.

Streetcar Loop.

Chris indicated that the project is on a fast track with a much more positive outlook at the federal level to secure the \$75 million in small starts money. The change in Washington, DC in electeds as well as a new administrator, James Simpson, who has a transit background and wants to fund a streetcar project, has ensured that the Streetcar Loop project has taken a much more positive turn. Staff prepared & submitted the project development application to FTA by January 31. Currently there are 4 rapid bus projects applying but, to date, no streetcar projects. It was recommended from FTA, that we get our Project Development Application in ASAP. Current budget to build the Streetcar Loop to OMSI is \$151 million with \$75 million coming from FTA and the rest local funds. All funding commitments should be in place (capital & operating) by August 15, 2007 with the potential of starting construction in late 2008. Operations could start in 2011. The critical date to meet the FTA process and appropriations is August 15, 2007 when the capital and operating financial commitments must be secured, cost estimates must be certain, and engineering 50% complete. Chris indicated that streetcar was not recommended to advance in the \$1million MTIP process.

5. Affordability Perception of Streetcar Loop Development Strategy.

Sorin discussed with the group his perception that some neighborhoods may have a fear of streetcar because they feel gentrification will follow. Sorin would like to see measurable criteria for social aspects of streetcar expansion. Peter indicated the Central Eastside has an 80% occupancy rate with the selected streetcar LPA on MLK/Grand having opportunities for development. Chris suggested maybe the housing plan needs to be updated with the affordability component out in front.

6. Streetcar Policy for the Regional Transportation Plan.

Chris is working through TPAC on a Regional Transportation Plan Vision. He is recommending that the hierarchy of transit types should include an additional category: high density transit. Included in the agenda packet was an explanation of high density transit as well as a glossary of terms. Chris would appreciate any feedback or thoughts from this committee.

7. Other business.

Kay reported that our three new streetcars have arrived which increases our total fleet to 10. Two additional colors have been added: golden yellow & apple green. The three new color combinations of our new cars are: apple green/golden yellow, apple green/blue and golden yellow/orange. These new cars are being tested and certified and will be put into operation at the end of Feb. All three new cars are sponsored. Ann wondered why a Nextbus sign was not included in the free standing board at the PSU Urban Plaza. Kay indicated that installation was cost prohibitive and that Nextbus was installed in the Pizzicato window. Signage at the free-standing board will be installed to direct riders to the Nextbus sign at Pizzicato. Scott indicated that the platform stop location and curbside at NW 23rd/Marshall is a safety issue. Kay indicated operations will review.

8. Next CAC Meeting:

The next meeting for the Streetcar Citizens Advisory Committee will be Wednesday, April 4, 2006, 3:30pm-5:00pm at Shiels Obletz Johnsen, 1140 SW 11th Avenue, Suite #500, Portland, Oregon.

Please call Kay Dannen at 503/478-6404 or email at dannen@portlandstreetcar.org if you have any questions regarding this committee or have items for the agenda. The CAC meetings are open to the public.