

Portland Streetcar Citizens Advisory Committee Meeting

Wednesday, May 7, 2008, 3:30-5:00 p.m., Shiels Obletz Johnsen

Members in Attendance: Chris Smith, chair; Cari Froeber; Michael Dennis; Sorin Garber; Stan Lewis; Janet McGarrigle; Ann Niles; Carol "Zoe" Presson; Bob Richardson; Dan Zalkow

Staff Attendance: Kay Dannen, Julie Gustafson, Rick Gustafson

1. Meeting to Order:

Meeting was called to Order by Chris Smith, chair. Introductions were made. The minutes from the March 5, 2008 meeting were adopted.

2. Public Comments:

Bob Richardson discussed the potential relocation of the West bound ramp off the Hawthorne Bridge. This will occur to make room for the building of a new County Courthouse. He suggested that the committee compose a letter to the development agency to not preclude any future Streetcar/Light Rail accessibility on the Hawthorne Bridge with this or future bridge alterations. Stan Lewis moved that the committee empowers Bob Richardson to research who is behind the construction so that a letter may be drafted and sent. Janet McGarrigle seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

3. Project Updates: Loop Project:

There was a meeting April 24, 2008 in Washington D.C. with the administrator of the FTA who declared his strong support for our project. Also on April 24, 2008 PSI submitted to the FTA that we are at \$23.62 towards receiving our Medium TSUB rating. Since then we have gotten the cost/benefit ratio to \$22.82. We are still waiting for the FTA's approval of our numbers and their granting of a TSUB rating of Medium. We are at a point where there is a decision to be made in regards to the funding. Metro and TriMet created a new ridership model for the Portland Loop Project that has helped to bring the numbers to what should qualify for a Medium rating.

The cost-effectiveness for the Loop has come in. Two things were high (utilities and the Maintenance facility) but everything else came in under budget. The confidence is high that we will be able to finish the project on budget.

The main purpose of the meetings April 24, 2008 was to meet with the Appropriation Committee to make sure they were aware of the project and to request their support.

The Loop Steering Committee met this past week as well. There are members of the committee who emphasized the Northrup option in the Pearl. The Committee asked for more work on the Development Strategy.

Ann Niles asked Rick Gustafson to present to the committee about the new drawings currently under design in the Pearl District. Gustafson responded that the neighborhood and Niles have been very helpful in the discussion about the two alignment options in the Pearl. The alignment is in the middle of a much larger issue which will take longer to resolve since the area North of Lovejoy is still in a state of development and we are trying to put tracks in now that will determine where Streetcar will be for the next 50 years and we are caught up in the planning process. Niles reminded Gustafson and the committee of the major development change of the Northrup/Lovejoy couplet

that is in the works. She also reminded the committee that the District is working on the bicycle network plan.

4. Streetcar Operations Report:

Rick Gustafson presented to the committee on the Operations of Streetcar. We have a major issue right now. We are down 20% on operator employment. Several of our operators are working overtime to try to accommodate the promised route coverage. We are missing runs due to the shortage. We are required to use ATU employees and are working with the Management at TriMet to insure that we have enough operators to cover the promised service and maintain Streetcar reliability.

There have been some glitches with the NextBus system which Chris Smith has been helping to fix. 23rd & Marshall and 11th & Couch were both having issues. Gustafson stated that he appreciates any notification of issues discovered with the NextBus system. The lease with NextBus was renewed last year for a five year period.

Ann Niles asked about Streetcar Operators and if they have the choice of running Streetcar. Gustafson responded that yes, the Operators choose based on seniority and sign on for 12 month period. We do have rigidities with how we can get employees. We currently have 19 of the 24 allocated Operators working.

Bob Richardson asked about the power outage in the South Waterfront last week and asked how long Streetcar was out of operation. Gustafson and Kay Dannen responded that they will look into the exact time, but that yes, Streetcar was affected by the power outage.

A big issue that has been raised is the signal interface between Streetcar and Light Rail at 11th and Morrison/Yamhill. We want to start upgrading the signals now so that we can avoid problems at 6th and Market with the Green line and also on Holladay and MLK on the Loop.

5. Art Etching Sponsorship Program:

We have seven shelters sponsored. The etching looks nice and also serves to deter graffiti. Money has been included in the sponsorship of shelter etchings for maintenance. Each etching is unique in design for each stop with a different background for each district along the alignment. The images are available on the website in high resolution on the sponsorship page. There is some minor graffiti in the South Waterfront, but no graffiti is on the etched panels.

6. Other Business:

Kay Dannen asked if the committee would like to be briefed by TriMet at the next meeting in regards to the re-integration of the busses on the mall and to lay out the new routes.

Sorin Garber asked about the Streetcar System Plan and what would happen if a community that is perfect for Streetcar decides they don't want it. Chris Smith responded that those routes will not disappear completely, but they will just be lowered on the priority list.

Garber asked about the news item in the paper today about the Lake Oswego line and the rumored controversy. Chris Smith responded that yes there is controversy, but that it is part of the process.

Stan Lewis asked if the committee should respond with a letter in response to the Editorial Article by Allan Classen of the Examiner about Streetcars or should the article be ignored. Smith responded that prolonging the discussion could highlight items of the Streetcar that we don't agree with rather than supporting the Streetcar. Bob Richardson responded that he understands how Stan feels but that he doesn't believe that this article will do us much harm. Zoe Presson commented that it is easier for the disabled population to use Streetcar than busses. Kay Dannen added that it may be interesting to see if a Streetcar supporter writes in support of Streetcar to the Examiner.

The next meeting for the Streetcar Citizens Advisory Committee will be Wednesday, September 3, 2008, 3:30pm-5:00pm at Shiels Oblatz 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.