

**Portland Streetcar Citizens Advisory Committee Meeting**

**Wednesday, September 3, 2008, 3:30-5:00 p.m., Shiels Obletz Johnsen**

**Members in Attendance: Chris Smith, chair; Bill Danneman; Sorin Garber; Ann Niles; Susan Pearce; Carol "Zoe" Presson; Bob Richardson; Vern Rifer; Scott Seibert; Dan Zalkow**

**Others: Tom Mills, TriMet; Claudia Steinberg, TriMet**

**Staff Attendance: Kay Dannen, Julie Gustafson**

**1. Meeting to Order:**

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

**2. Public Comments:**

There were no comments from the public at large.

**3. Streetcar System Plan Update: Patrick Sweeney, PDOT:**

Patrick Sweeney presented to the CAC an update on the Streetcar System Plan that PDOT has been conducting over the summer. He reminded the committee that this survey is not scientific and that the online surveys have been handled by surveymonkey.com. The red-hot corridors that are emerging from the survey are: NE MLK vs Vancouver/Williams north of Broadway; and SE Belmont. Sweeney briefed the committee on upcoming Public Involvement meetings. He invited CAC members to attend the meetings in support of streetcar.

Vern Rifer asked if Sweeney is in communication with the Sellwood Bridge Project so that he will be up-to-date when he enters the Southeast Uplift meeting. Sweeney responded that he has not been in communication with the committee as of yet, but that he saw the benefits of such communication. Bob Richardson added that he is on the Southeast Uplift working group and that the options and possibilities of connecting potential streetcar alignments in the SE with the updated Sellwood Bridge project has been discussed.

Bob Richardson asked if there has been any further development on the lane width problem on SE Hawthorne. Sweeney responded that there is not a current update and that SE Belmont appears to be more ready for the change of adding a streetcar. He also stated that he may have a different answer after reading the public response surveys.

Kay Dannen asked Sweeney when the report will be finalized and released. Sweeney responded that technical work will begin in November with drafts in January and February. The plan is to have the report completed before summer 2009. Dannen asked if there will be a prioritized list of potential alignments and how will they be prioritized. Sweeney responded that there will be a prioritized list and that the ranking will come from all aspects (political, public, street potential). Rifer asked about zoning and the bureau of planning and their involvement. Sweeney responded that he has kept the Bureau of Planning involved in all aspects of this System Plan and that they are currently buying into the plan. Chris Smith added that when the System Plan is up for approval we will be getting the plan approved, not individual alignments. Sweeney added that the CAC will be helpful in the process by vetting the ideas and the drafts of the report and bringing up any concerns that we can see.

Richardson asked about the zoning changes and how much that will change with the System Plan. Sweeney responded that they are tying in the potential development and other possible issues with any single alignment and that they will try to fit as much as possible into the current zoning. Bill Danneman commented that he is confident that Sweeney and PDOT have worked well with the Bureau of Planning and that they are well prepared for the meeting any concerns that may be voiced.

#### **4. Project Update:**

Kay Dannen presented an update on the Lake Oswego Streetcar Project. The alternatives analysis phase of the project was completed in December 2007 when the Metro Council considered which alternatives should advance into a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). The LOAA CAC completed its work in August 2007 with the adoption of recommendations to the Steering Committee. The Steering Committee adopted a recommendation on September 10, 2007 that included No-Build, Enhanced Bus and Streetcar alternatives. On December 13, 2007 the Metro Council approved options to advance for further study in an environmental analysis. The options include bus, streetcar and no-build alternatives as well as recommendations on actions to advance a bicycle and pedestrian trail in the corridor; work tasks related to refining streetcar alignments through Johns Landing; and steps to secure funding for the environmental analysis.

Metro held a public scoping meeting on April 21, 2008 to kick-off the start of the DEIS phase of the project as well as the 90-day comment period with the anticipation that the DEIS would begin later in this calendar year. The scoping comment period closed July 18, 2008. During the comment period, Metro obtained more than 60 comments. A considerable number of comments were explicitly supportive of the project saying it would help alleviate traffic congestion, reduce dependence on automobiles and decrease air pollution while also encouraging new development in downtown Lake Oswego. Other comments were mixed including concern about the proposed alignment's proximity to homes.

Metro is preparing a work scope, budget, schedule and finance plan for the DEIS. As part of the finance plan, Metro has requested \$4 million from the FTA to complete the DEIS.

Vern asked about the DEIS and if the staff would be mainly consultants. Chris Smith responded that a fair number of Metro and TriMet employees work on the DEIS but that they have been tied up with the Milwaukee Light Rail Project. Smith also added that when a project leadership team has been identified he would like to invite them to a meeting to discuss the project.

#### **5. Green Line Service Plan: Tom Mills:**

TriMet has will remove the busses on 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> avenue and move them back to the mall on NW/SW 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> avenues on May 24, 2009. A couple of changes would be: Line 6 – keeping it on the East side with further access to Lloyd Center and Benson High School. Line 10 NE 33rd they are proposing to terminate the route at Lloyd Center near the Max station but then increasing the service to 10-15 minutes. The will also be moving the busses off of NW/SW Broadway to the transit mall. Chris Smith asked about line 14 on the mall and if it would run up to Union Station. Mills responded that right now most busses are running empty north of Burnside and that there is a potential of attaching it to another line. Claudia Steinberg added that there will also be a Light Rail circulator downtown on top of the green and yellow lines.

Ann Niles asked about the changes to 10 NE 33<sup>rd</sup> and how TriMet felt that they could handle the extra load on Max trains that are already crowded between Lloyd Center and Downtown. Mills added with the addition of the green line there will be Max service every 5 minutes to help with the added load. Bob Richardson asked about the potential for increased frequent service and how that would be determined. Mills responded that the next service adjustment will be December 2, 2008 and that they look at peak times and bus loads to determine which routes need added service.

Vern Rifer stated that placing all of the busses back on 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> avenues downtown may be counter-intuitive to the goal of increasing the pedestrian walkability of 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup>. Steinberg commented that through community outreach for the mall project she heard from several business owners that they miss the bus service and are suffering from the lack of “face time” with commuters. Bob Richardson asked about the number of busses running on the mall in peak times now compared to before the mall project. Mills responded that though he doesn’t have the exact numbers on hand, the number post mall will be less than pre-mall.

Susan Pearce asked about the possibility of leaving the busses on 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> to increase business potential on those two streets as well. Mills responded that leaving the busses on 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> makes transfers more difficult. Rifer voiced his concerns over the number of busses on the mall and that he fears this will make the mall uninviting for pedestrians.

Mills also presented on the proposed bus service on Harrison Street in conjunction with the Streetcar. During the peak hour there would be a maximum of nine busses inbound and 12 busses outbound along Harrison. There would be a bus stop at approximately 2<sup>nd</sup> avenue. The bus would also run in the right hand lane whereas Streetcar runs in the left lane. Kay Dannen asked them to look at their potential crosswalk to insure that it is placed in the safest location possible. Bob Richardson asked about the lane widths on Harrison and suggested that TriMet look into those widths. Vern Rifer commented that he is concerned about placing so many lines on Harrison street will take away from it’s residential character. Bill Danneman added that the South Waterfront was told that line 35 would be diverted into the South Waterfront. Mills responded that yes, the Outbound route of line 35 will be diverted into the South Waterfront before heading out of town, inbound will use Macadam. Kay Dannen added that Streetcar Operations sees no problems with the proposed new bus alignments on Harrison.

Chris Smith asked about the promised discussion about Fareless Square and any potential changes. Steinberg responded that she will get Smith the information. Vern Rifer suggested that the community outreach for the potential Harrison alignment include meeting with the condo associations in the area.

#### **6. Project Update: Loop Construction Outreach:**

Both the City Council and PDC have approved the Loop project and Final Design started September 2, 2008 with URS.

Kay Dannen presented that there has been a database built of approximately 350 blocks along the new alignment and that we have created a newsletter that will be mailed out to each of those addresses. Dannen, Julie Gustafson and consultants from JLA will be doing “tabling” events in the community that will provide basic information including alignment and proposed stop locations to the community-at-large.

Dannen reviewed the draft of the newsletter with the committee. We are hoping to have future newsletters sent out as e-notifications rather than printed mailers. Scott Seibert suggested that having a few facts about ridership and cost would be beneficial for the workers and residents of the East Side.

Sorin Garber asked about the construction timeline stating that he feels it is longer than needed and is worried that the construction will be longer. Dannen responded that the construction timeline includes utility work time as well as construction across the Broadway Bridge. Also, this is the longest route that we have built to date as one project.

Rifer suggested that Streetcar should look into using wind energy so we can advertise that we are carbon neutral on our energy usage. Dannen responded that she knows that Streetcar is looking into a way of using renewable energy.

Garber suggested that we consider creating a video that can be played at various events to help educate the community. Dannen agreed that looking into the creation of a video would be beneficial to the project.

The next meeting for the Streetcar Citizens Advisory Committee will be Wednesday, November 5, 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](mailto: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.