

Portland Streetcar Citizens Advisory Committee Meeting

Wednesday, February 4, 2009, 3:30-5:00 p.m., Shiels Oblatz Johnsen

Members in Attendance: Chris Smith, chair; Debbie Cronk; Bill Danneman; Sorin Garber; Peter Kilborn; Stan Lewis; Janet McGarrigle; Michelle Poyourow; Zoe Presson; Bob Richardson; Vern Rifer;

Others: David Brandt; Spencer Burton; Julie Graham; Steve Pinger; Patrick Sweeney, PBOT; Carolyn Young, TriMet;

Staff Attendance: Julie Gustafson, Rick Gustafson

1. Meeting to Order:

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

2. Public Comments:

No public comments.

3. System Plan Update:

Patrick Sweeney from PDOT presented the current draft of the Portland Streetcar System Plan map as well as previous iterations of the plan. The current map is of alignments that scored well technically but were also supported through public input. The final system plan will look similar to the draft presented to the committee. PBOT is currently evaluating the best routes to run that would best serve the desired service areas. For example, on the east side there is a potential of two radial circulators originating at the Gateway transit center, the first heading north to Parkrose transit center and the second heading south to Foster.

Chris Smith commented that currently the east side is increasing its density in a random manner based upon land prices. Setting up the streetcar plan will allow for more organized density. Bob Richardson asked if the possibility of an east/west connector along the Stark/Washington couplet to 122nd was off the table since the Gateway loop cut through the middle of it. Sweeney responded that the route can still be considered. Richardson also voiced the concern that there are no north/south routes between the Loop project and 82nd. There were several comments during the public input period that requested 39th be considered for improvements in transportation. Michelle Poyourow added that she heard a lot of people clamoring for improvements in landscaping and layout on 39th to make it a friendlier street. Sweeney responded that there are several locations along 39th that make it difficult for a streetcar alignment to be built there.

PDOT is currently talking to Metro and TriMet about how the plan will impact bus service to make sure the two systems work well together. Modeling begins in the next couple of weeks which would lead to the next iteration of the plan in late March or early April 2009. Vern Rifer asked about Sweeney's comment about 30,000 daily trips along 82nd. He did not know that auto trips were a consideration for a streetcar alignment. Sweeney responded that the 30,000 trips included all modes of transportation (walking, biking, driving, and bus). Also, the criteria include not only the number of daily trips but also the development potential and community desire.

4. TriMet Fareless Square Update:

Carolyn Young from TriMet presented a status report and update on Fareless Square. TriMet conducted public meetings where people were allowed to voice their opinions on Fareless Square as well as make suggestions for the future of Fareless Square. Several groups around Portland have

very strong opinions about Fareless Square including the Convention Center which uses Fareless Square as part of their sales pitch to bring conventions to Portland since there is not a Convention Center Hotel. A committee of stakeholders was formed including business owners, citizens, organizations, and political leaders both from Portland and the surrounding areas to discuss the future of Fareless Square.

The majority of Fareless Square free trips are either on MAX or along the transit mall (which will soon be serviced by the Green and Yellow lines). Michelle Poyourow asked how much money would be gained by TriMet if Fareless Square was eliminated. Young responded that the lost revenue is about \$3 million once the short, walkable trips are eliminated. There is the possibility of switching to a rail only Fareless Square that could save TriMet between \$800,000 and \$1 million in fare revenue. Vern Rifer asked if this would help address the issue of the hoodlums and pan handlers that populate the Lloyd Center stop. Young responded that there is also talk of ending Fareless Square at either the Convention Center or 7th Avenue stops which would still allow for free access to the downtown area from the Convention Center and Lloyd District hotels. Stan Lewis commented that he doesn't believe that MAX being free for tourists to the Convention Center is a valid argument since the \$2 fare is small in comparison to other costs they incur on a trip.

The third issue that is being discussed is the issue of the fare differences once the Streetcar crosses the river (\$2 on the east side vs. free on the west side is a big difference). Chris Smith asked if a swipe card system had been considered that could be more of a distance based fare or even a time based fare. The technology is expensive, but a new version has been released that is more reasonable; however, the technology is not being considered at this time.

TriMet will be holding Open Houses starting February 25, 2009. They will be discussing service changes, Fareless Square, the return of the busses to the Transit Mall, as well as \$8 million in service cuts. Most of the hits are in Sunday service, evenings and low performing routes. Bob Richardson asked if the contribution to Streetcar Operations was on the list of potential cuts. Young responded that no, the current agreement is not on the table but that no agreement has yet been made for the contribution to east side operations. There will be a decision by the TriMet Board at either the April or May 2009 board meeting.

Stan Lewis asked if there is a change in Fareless Square would Streetcar's fare system need to change to match. Smith responded that Streetcar has followed TriMet's system and that there will be discussions leading up to the Loop opening. Both Young and Smith expressed a desire to keep the fares comparable to allow for transfers in the system.

5. Portland Loop Project Update:

Chris Smith presented that we are currently waiting to hear from the federal government as to the status of our application for federal funds. The design team is working towards final design with more detail on stops.

6. Project Updates:

- **Burnside/Couch Couplet (Eastside)**
Nothing to report.

- **Burnside/Couch Couplet (Westside)**

Nothing to report.

- **Future Conway Project in NW Portland with inclusion of streetcar**

Nothing to report.

- **Portland/Lake Oswego Streetcar Project**

We are allowed to use the right-of-way that the consortium owns as part of the local match which could lead towards a much less expensive project. Vern Rifer added that there is talk of extending the Streetcar in phases from South Waterfront to Carolina Street and then on to Lake Oswego allowing for more opportunities for federal funding as well as the potential for extra time needed for public outreach in the Dunthorp area and downtown Lake Oswego. Chris Smith reminded the committee that originally PSU was a second phase in Portland but was built as part of the first phase.

7. Other Business

No other business was discussed.

The next meeting for the Streetcar Citizens Advisory Committee will be Wednesday, April 1, 2009, 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.