

**Portland Streetcar Citizens Advisory Committee Meeting**

**Wednesday, August 5, 2009, 3:30-5:00 p.m., Shiels Oblatz Johnsen**

**Members in Attendance: Chris Smith, chair; Debbie Cronk; Bill Danneman; Sorin Garber; Stan Lewis; Janet McGarrigle; Susan Pearce; Zoe Carol Presson; Bob Richardson; Vern Rifer; Scott Seibert; Dan Zalgow**

**Others: Mike Dennis, Arnold Panitch, Dustin Posner**

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

**1. Meeting to Order:**

Meeting was called to Order by Chris Smith, chair. The minutes from the July 8, 2009 meeting were adopted.

**2. Public Comments:**

No public comments were made.

**3. Review of letter regarding the Streetcar System Plan to the planning commission:**

Chris Smith presented the draft letter from the CAC to the planning commission regarding the Streetcar System Concept Plan. Smith addressed the comments he received via email stating that he is reviewing those comments and that the letter in front of them is the same letter that was delivered via email Tuesday. Vern Rifer commented that the job of the CAC does not incorporate geographic equity development. Susan Pearce commented that she believes that equity is an important part of the decision making process but that there are also other deciding factors such as topography and utilities that effect where a streetcar route can be successfully implemented. Sorin Garber seconded Rifer's concern of having geographic equity overly represented in the letter of support. Bob Richardson commented that we do need to find a way to balance different neighborhoods' needs. Dan Zalkow added that he agrees with Rifer and Garber that streetcar is a development tool and that should be our focus. Scott Seibert stated that he understood equity in this situation to mean that there could be two routes that both have the same potential for success but that one route would be easier to fund than the second route and that by lumping the two routes together streetcar could be spread to new neighborhoods. Pearce added that it is important that we don't appear elitist in our plans. The committee voted to omit the equity discussion from the letter of support.

Rifer commented that the bullet point about avoiding displacement should be changed to minimize displacement since some areas will involve some displacement for the development and success of the area. Pearce commented that the language needs to be flushed out. Seibert commented that streetcar exists to help bring the neighborhoods together that sometimes help facilitate positive change. Dustin Posner commented that the word mitigate was thrown out on the table and that it would be a good word to use in this context where we want improvements that benefit the neighborhood but don't want businesses to disappear from the area. Garber commented that the bullet point addressing residential and small business displacement as well as creating housing seems a bit repetitive. Pearce commented that the sentences could be reworded for clarity, but that both sentences address important, yet individual concerns.

Bob Richardson commented that instead of eliminating the bullet point about equity we could reword it to maintain the idea of pairing projects to spread the reach of streetcar. Smith responded that a letter to the planning commission may not be the best place to address the issue and that it

will be looked at for future suggestions. Garber also suggested a rewording for the bullet addressing in-fill development.

Smith closed the discussion with a promise to update the letter after the meeting with an immediate draft to the CAC. He requested any further comments by Thursday morning so he can submit the letter to the PDC Thursday afternoon.

#### **4. Portland Loop Project Update:**

Waterline relocation begins Monday, August 10, 2009 along Grand Ave between SE Ash and NE Davis. Kay Dannen and Julie Gustafson are preparing construction update notifications for emails and mailings.

Chris Smith reported that on the Federal funding front the FTA sent the notice to Congress stating that they plan on funding the project on July 31, 2009. We should receive our Construction Grant Agreement at the end of September.

Several City Council updates have occurred in the past month. The operations funding contract with TriMet has been extended through 2010. The City Council has approved the formation of the Pearl LID and notice will be sent soon to property owners. The rail and vehicles have been ordered.

Scott Seibert asked when the Lovejoy/Northrup couplet transition will occur stating that it will make construction easier. Vern Rifer asked if it would be cheaper and easier to adjust signal length rather than switch to the couplet. Seibert responded that it is time for a big change and that it would be worthwhile to the neighborhood. Rick Gustafson responded that we won't start rail construction until next year and that we have not gotten down to the specifics of when traffic changes will occur. It takes a couple of signals and a revision to the mast arms on Lovejoy as well as repainting the streets. The bike lane on Marshall could be completed at a later date. The construction in the Pearl will be a long process that will involve road closures for 11<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, and Lovejoy. Bob Richardson asked if it would be better to re-route the traffic for the couplet before the construction so that the traffic patterns have become habit. He also stated that it would benefit the current operations of streetcar to alleviate the traffic congestion on Lovejoy as soon as possible.

Susan Pearce asked about night time work and noise variances. Rick Merina of Stacy and Witbeck responded that the plan is to avoid night time work whenever possible due to the noise variance restrictions.

#### **5. Portland/Lake Oswego Project Update:**

The project steering committee has approved the funds for the environmental impact statement for the Lake Oswego project. The Dunthorp neighborhood remains silent on the project to this point as the project develops. The EIS should be done around the first of next year. The PSI Board met this morning in Lake Oswego to see the area and a presentation was made as to the potential development that could happen there. There is still debate between the Willamette Shore Option and the Macadam Option but the neighborhoods have spoken up stating that the Macadam Option will be better for the neighborhoods and they support it even to the extent of a potential LID. The Macadam option follows the zoning along the corridor. When the zoning on the Willamette Shore line switches from Business to Residential at Boundary the streetcar would turn and head to

Macadam to remain in a mixed use corridor and then returns to the Willamette Shore line near Willamette Park.

A breakthrough occurred in the past month when ODOT did their own traffic study that showed the same traffic congestion issues along Macadam that our studies showed. The studies show that we should look for a different route from Willamette Shore to Macadam than Boundary. Arnold Panitch commented that he lives in the area near Macadam and that as plans go forward stop locations should be located around signalized intersections. Scott Seibert asked what the future of the historic rail cars would be along the Willamette Shore once streetcar goes in. Rifer responded that those cars would no longer be run on the tracks.

Bob Richardson requested that we leave the option open in the future to run the historic cars on the Lake Oswego line if a benefactor ever offers to renovate the historic cars to allow them to run mixed in on Sunday operations. Gustafson responded that the reason the historic cars cannot run on the future Lake Oswego line with the new cars is that the historic wooden cars would be destroyed if there were ever an incident where a new car and an historic car were to run into each other.

#### **6. Prototype Update:**

Several people had the chance to ride the prototype vehicle on July 1, 2009. The car runs well and is being tested currently. It is expected to enter revenue service this fall.

#### **7. Other Business**

Vern Rifer commented that he is concerned about the change in fareless square and how that will affect Streetcar ridership. He is concerned that we will see more seats taken on streetcar by people who are just looking for a warm seat for themselves, their bags and their dogs. Chris Smith responded that the studies have shown that the majority of the bus trips taken entirely within fareless square were along the bus mall and will be taken over by the green and yellow lines. Rick Gustafson responded that we have 4-6 situations a month where we have to remove someone from a car. 60-70% of our calls are to Central City Concern rather than the police. We follow the same regulations as TriMet in regards to animals on the trains but the ADA rules allow for companion animals which is a broad term. We have done a lot to mediate this issue to date and continue to evaluate more efficient ways to improve our service. Susan Pearce commented that she hasn't experienced the situation on streetcar but has seen it on MAX.

The next meeting for the Streetcar Citizens Advisory Committee will be Wednesday, October 7, 2009, 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.