

Portland Streetcar Citizens Advisory Committee Meeting

Wednesday, May 4, 2011, 3:30-5:00 p.m., City Hall, Pettygrove Room

Members in Attendance: Owen Ronchelli, chair; Carolyn Brock; Debbie Cronk; Bill Danneman; Peter Finley-Fry; Gerik Kransky; Peter Kilbourne; Janet McGarrigle; Susan Pearce; Cora Potter; Zoe Presson; Bob Richardson; Richard Ross (via phone); Dan Zalkow

Others: Michael Canarella; Bill Crawford; Bill Cunningham, BPS; Steve Dotterer, BPS; Lee Perlman; Barbara Spencer; Marty Stockton, BPS

Staff Attendance: Dan Bower, Kay Dannen, Julie Gustafson, Grant Moorehead, Patrick Sweeney

1. Meeting to Order:

Owen Ronchelli, chair, called the meeting to Order. The minutes were approved.

2. Public Comments:

No Public Comment.

3. Streetcar Fare Study Update

Patrick Sweeney of PBOT presented on the Fare Study. If Streetcar Loop service were to open today there would be a fare inequity issue between the Loop and the existing line. There are 3 concepts that are being reviewed in the Fare Study. Concept 1 is a Streetcar-only Fare Zone. Riders would pay a lower fare to ride the streetcar. To transfer to a bus, a rider would submit their ticket to the driver as well as the difference in fare (similar to what they would do currently to transfer from a Zone 1-2 fare to an All Zone fare. Concept 2 is a Streetcar and Bus Fare Zone. This would be a Central City fare. The zone boundary is being evaluated to allow for the best operations for the transit rider and agencies. The boundary in Concept 2a stays close to the streetcar line. The boundary in Concept 2b extends out to incorporate more of the Central City. Concept 3 is an All Modes Fare Zone, which would include Streetcar, Bus and MAX and would eliminate the Free Rail Zone. Concept 3 is also broken down into two study areas that are the same as 2a and 2b. Sweeney reminded the committee that this is a data collection study and that the decision-making will occur after this study is complete. The PSI Board, TriMet and City Council will all weigh in on the decision. In 2012 the Loop to OMSI opens and in 2015 the full Loop, Milwaukie Light Rail and the Transit Bridge open, all of which will impact the fare structure. There is also some discussion as to the future of fare collection and looking at the possibility of a distance-based fare. Both the City and TriMet are looking at this possibility.

Lee Perlman asked if there is any other way to use the distance-based fare system other than using a credit card. Sweeney responded that there are several possibilities including a smart card, a tap card, a magnetic transit card (similar to the metro cards in Washington, DC) and possibly even an application on smart phones. Cora Potter asked if there is any consideration of fixed income riders and how a fare could impact them. Sweeney responded that they have not gotten to the detail phase of the study, but that he will incorporate these concerns into the study. Bill Crawford asked if a tap card system would include turn stiles as part of the system. Sweeney responded that there are ways to avoid turnstiles by having the fare inspectors have a card reader that can tell when the last transaction on a card occurred. Bob Richardson added that Salt Lake City uses a similar system.

Dan Zalkow asked if there is discussion of Goose Hollow being included in the Central City zone. Sweeney responded that it is not included in the Concept 2 study as the Jeld-Wen Stadium stop is outside of the free rail zone. Zalkow followed up by stating that Goose Hollow should be included

in Concept 3b as the Free Rail Zone is not a consideration for this option. Bob Richardson asked why the possibility of extending the Free Rail Zone to the east side is not being considered. Sweeney responded that the funding sources to extend the Free Rail Zone do not exist, which is why it is not being considered. Carolyn Brock stated that the abolition of the Free Rail Zone could be supported by the Bureau of Equity as it helps to support riders that can not locate in the Central City. Michael Canarella asked what the expected outcome of fare revenue and service will be after this study. Sweeney responded that he expects the study will come back with a matrix that says if the fare is X, it will result in Y revenue and lead to Z service. Sweeney hopes to return to the committee with numbers to consider in June.

4. Portland Plan

Bill Cunningham with the Bureau of Planning and Sustainability presented the Portland Plan to the committee. The Portland Plan covers the next 25 years in Portland and is made up of higher overarching plans. Cunningham focused on the subcategory of equity, under which there are 3 primary strategies: 1) education; 2) economic prosperity; 3) healthy connected neighborhoods. Following the Portland Plan will be an update of the comprehensive plan. Part of what will come out of the Portland Plan is intergovernmental strategies and agreements which will set direction in budgeting. For more information on the Portland Plan visit www.pdxplan.com

The Portland Plan uses information from the 20 minute neighborhoods concept, which makes it possible for people to meet their needs locally by walking, biking or taking transit. The two main components are: vibrant neighborhood hubs across the city; and city greenways, a system of green connections (both for the habitat and for people) across the city.

The all-encompassing priority of the Portland Plan is how to organize a city with a strong health focus. The Plan looks to identify a system of neighborhoods across the city that provides equitable access to all. The Plan will lead to the City: 1) being more actively engaged in neighborhood development; 2) ensuring key services exist in each neighborhood (including healthy foods); 3) making sure people have opportunity to grow their own food (one concrete example is the plan to add 1000 new garden plots around city); 4) locate housing close to services. An example of a long term goal included in the Plan is that by 2035 90% of Portlanders will be able to access services locally.

Peter Finley-Fry asked why employment is not being considered in the discussion of Neighborhood Hubs. Cunningham responded that employment is not as high on the list in surveys of where people would be willing to walk. People often find jobs across the region rather than in their own neighborhood. If jobs can be located near a Neighborhood Hub that would be a component of what would increase the efficiency of that hub. This leads to the greenways concept which could help connect the hubs by transit. Civic Greenways are Portland's highest-profile streets such as Sandy, Powell, 82nd, and Barbur. The goal is to transform them into streets that incorporate livability, reflect community pride, reduce environmental impacts and turn them into safe places for people to live work and commute. This will launch a process that will not be completed in 5 years but will be in progress for the next 25 years. Owen Ronchelli asked for an example of what would be seen in an Urban Greenway. Cunningham responded that the approaches will vary based on the situation, but will include being more distinct with street tree planting and bioswales as well as taking some of the existing distinctive streets such as Ainsworth and knitting them into a broader system that renders them more distinctive. This is not a brand new idea but the intention is to be more distinctive. Part

of the thinking is to take the scattered pieces and turn them into an interconnected, intuitive, distinctive system. Zoe Presson brought up the issue of tree plantings on the sides of streets stating that they need to have an arborist come in and check on the root systems of trees as the root systems often push up the sidewalks which can cause problems for people who are walking, biking and wheeling. Cunningham responded that the urban forester will be involved. Sorin Garber asked about the variation in goals in the Portland Plan as some of the statements are concrete, some are definitive actions and some are vaguer. Cunningham responded that there are, by nature, things that are more feasible and ready to go now, while some things involve creating new regulations with partners. Richardson added that some of the hubs are not coming together with what exists. Using the NE 60th MAX station as an example, he pointed out that the area around the MAX station is considered the neighborhood hub but is under utilized. Cunningham responded that the details will come in the comprehensive plan. Richard Ross commented that he does not see the connection between the Portland Plan and the adopted Streetcar System Concept Plan. The focus on pedestrian and bike transit is on target, but their needs to be high quality transit to connect the hubs. Ross suggested that the CAC form a sub-committee that can work with the Portland Plan and PBOT to strengthen the role of transit in the strategy. Cunningham responded that the plan would love to have comments during the month of May to help refine the plan and to better knit transit throughout the strategy. Gerik Kransky asked about the specificity of the plan, specifically in relation to details that are called out for the next year with less information for the 24 years after. Kransky asked where the opportunity exists to incorporate the other plans that have been formulated into the Portland Plan (bike plan, streetcar plan, etc). Cunningham agreed that the incorporation of the other plans could be made more explicit in the Portland Plan. He added that the Portland Plan focuses on a subset of the greenways called out in the bike plan as well as a subset of the streetcar system concept plan routes. The goal as we move to the comprehensive plan is to incorporate all of the plans and merge them into one larger plan. Peter Finley-Fry stated that the streetcar benefits from intensification. Fry has seen disasters where zoning and planning do not match up and cause for vacant, underused areas and has also seen successes like the Pearl District. His hope is for us to learn from the past and incorporate lessons learned into the plan. Ronchelli added that the hubs work better than corridors for the intensification and clustering of services. Ronchelli asked the committee to submit comments to either him or Cunningham.

5. Loop Service Allocation

Barbara Spencer reported to the committee on the latest plan for the operations of the Loop in 2012. The current plan is to maintain the existing level of service on the existing line at 12-13-minute headways with six trains during the day and an extra train in the PM peak. This will maintain the service levels that exist today. Travel times on the Loop are expected to be 85 – 91 minutes round trip from OMSI to SW 10th & Market and back at peak hours with 14-16-minute headways. The two lines would overlap on 10th and 11th. Sorin Garber and Barbara Spencer added that the communication process is very important to this issue. Garber suggested removing the headway times and instead replace with information on how many trains per hour riders could expect (4-7 trains per hour throughout the system). Owen Ronchelli responded that the numbers are on the map now to reassure major stakeholders that the service they have now will continue. Susan Pearce added that part of the message could be to inform people that service will improve. Bob Richardson asked about the travel times remaining the same when the complete Loop opens in 2015. Owen Ronchelli responded that the answer will rely upon the fare study results. Kay Dannen added that this is the bare minimum with the 17 cars that Streetcar will have when the Loop opens. The hope is that more vehicles will be available after “Close the Loop”. Dannen added that the

timeline for the opening of the Loop will allow streetcar to train the operators and work out the bugs before the system opens for revenue service.

6. Project Updates

a. Lake Oswego Update

No report was given.

b. Loop Construction Update

No report was given.

7. Other Business

Gerik Kransky gave a list of potential conflict points along the streetcar line being discussed by PBOT and AROW and requested that it be on the agenda for the June CAC meeting.

The next meeting for the Streetcar Citizens Advisory Committee will be Wednesday, June 1, 2011, 3:30pm-5:00pm at City Hall, Pettygrove Room.

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.