

**Portland Streetcar Citizens Advisory Committee Meeting**

**Wednesday, October 2, 2013, 3:30-5:00 p.m., City Hall, Pettygrove Room**

**Members in Attendance: Owen Ronchelli, Chair; David Brandt; Carolyn Brock; Bill Danneman; Arlene Kimura; Janet McGarrigle; Sue Pearce; Zoe Presson; Cora Potter; Bob Richardson; Richard Ross; Ian Stude**

**Staff Attendance: Chris Armes, Julie Gustafson, Rick Gustafson, Kathryn Levine, Ross Swanson, Lewis Wardrup**

**Guests: Reza Farhoodi, Brad Schmidt**

**1. Meeting to Order:**

Owen Ronchelli, chair, called the meeting to Order. The minutes from the September 4, 2013 meeting were approved.

**2. Public Comment**

No public comment was made.

**3. Jasmine Block Update**

Chris Armes, Ross Swanson and Lewis Wardrup of PBOT updated the committee on the plans for the Jasmine Block work. The Jasmine Block is located between 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> just south of Montgomery. This section is currently a single track section where the NS travels in both directions. This section needs to be converted to double track prior to opening "Close the Loop" in 2015. The design is to keep the current track for the southbound travel and add a new segment of track heading northbound on 4<sup>th</sup>, left onto Montgomery north of the existing track and then crossing the southbound track at 5<sup>th</sup>. The work is currently planned to occur in the summer of 2014. Bob Richardson raised a concern about westbound auto traffic trying to pass a waiting streetcar on Montgomery and meeting a southbound/eastbound streetcar head on. Wardrup responded that there will be a clear separation of the southbound/eastbound streetcar as it is heading contraflow. Reza Farhoodi asked why the design is not a full double track section but rather has a short segment of single track. Julie Gustafson responded that they need to cross to continue along the route at this point. David Brandt asked if the switch at 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue will be maintained or removed. Armes responded that the plan is to remove it, refurbish it and then reinstall it at an adjusted location. Farhoodi asked if this is the permanent solution for this area or if there is a chance to return to older plans. Armes responded that there is a small chance of changing the alignment depending on who purchases and develops the block, but it would be costly and is highly unlikely to occur.

**4. Service Efficiencies Discussion**

Owen Ronchelli summarized the discussion from the September meeting and the subcommittee meetings on service efficiencies and travel times. The rule for the schedule once we "Close the Loop" is to have equal headways on both lines to match up the trains from the Pearl to the bridge where both the NS and CL Lines would run. In order to maintain the 14 minute frequency on the NS Line, the route time on the CL Line counter clockwise would need to be reduced by 4 minutes. Rick Gustafson added that we are starting the conversation early to help structure the public conversation and to better understand the issues. Gustafson asked for the CAC's advice on the issues presented and for their help in structuring the arguments and language used. The Loop will be scheduled as two individual lines, the clockwise or right turns and the counter clockwise or left turns. The counter clockwise direction is projected to take 4 minutes more than the clockwise direction. Gustafson added that another rule for the scheduling is that the Loop trains need to keep moving. With a Loop operation there is no end point to the line to have operator breaks in the

vehicle as customers will pick any two points on the line to ride between. Adjustments will need to be made within operations to create a fall back schedule where operator breaks are all taken outside of the streetcar vehicle. Some recovery and hold times will be incorporated to allow trains to stay on schedule.

Gustafson shared a map with the CAC of ideas that, if implemented, could improve the travel time of the CL Line counter clockwise direction. The ideas include the following possibilities: further signal improvements in the signal interlock system on 11<sup>th</sup> at Northrup and Lovejoy; reconfiguration of the stop signs at Hoyt on 11<sup>th</sup> from all direction to just cross traffic; elimination of the stop at 11<sup>th</sup> & Everett; addition of signal at 11<sup>th</sup> & Couch; elimination of the stop at SW Market & 5<sup>th</sup>; elimination of the stop on SW Harrison between Naito and Harbor. Bob Richardson suggested adding the stop at 11<sup>th</sup> & Marshall to the list of stops to consolidate. Richardson also suggested altering the language to consolidate or reconfigure rather than eliminate due to the negative connotation of removing service rather than adjusting where people board the streetcar. Sue Pearce asked for clarification on the Hoyt stop sign reconfiguration, confirming that the east/west traffic would continue to have a stop sign at that location. Gustafson responded it is the proposal. Richardson asked if the cost of a signal would be entirely out of the question. Gustafson responded that the expense is noticeable but that this is part of our ability to accomplish an agreed upon program to get the travel times down. We need to accomplish the goal and the more options on the list, the more possibilities available to help reach the goal of reduced travel times. Richard Ross stated that the locations suggested will also reduce the travel times on the NS Line and asked if that would continue to keep the frequency out of balance. Gustafson responded that reduction of travel times on the NS Line could be made up with recovery at the layover location and dwell times.

The next phase is to begin to rank the time saving proposals in priority order for the most benefit with the least impact. For consolidating stops the top two priorities could be the 11<sup>th</sup> & Marshall stop as it benefits from the 10<sup>th</sup> & Northrup stop being one block away. The second priority could be the stop at NW Everett. This stop in particular is an example of early Streetcar planning in Portland before any operational experience. What you see on the east side and with the new transit mall is an increased spacing of rail stops which has helped to reduce travel times while maintaining access for riders. The stops at NW Everett are in the middle of 3 stops on a 4 block stretch; this is the closest spacing on the entire system and was based on the old system of stopping every 2 blocks for the buses. Gustafson stated that he would like to see the conversation begin with the public to help clarify the intent of this list as well as to help others understand the impact as the largest impact to travel times is not the exclusivity of the travel lane but rather how frequently the streetcar stops. Pearce asked if both of the stops at NW Everett would be eliminated. Gustafson responded that both are featured on the map and that traditionally stops are matched up so that in a couplet you have stops in the same area where you got off. One example of a stop without a matching pair is the stop at SW 10<sup>th</sup> & Stark that the CAC subcommittee had previously recommended for consolidation, that stop is not included on the map as it will not help the counter clockwise direction streetcars and is actually a high use platform.

Richardson commented that to date he has been a proponent of consolidating some stops but wanted to point out a couple of things about the Everett stop. Everett and Glisan are a couplet with bus routes and transfers. Also, Flanders is a bike route which may someday be extended over I-405 and continue east west. People making transfers to or from the Streetcar at this point may be inconvenienced. Reza Farhoodi asked if Richardson is suggesting that the stops be consolidated at Flanders which would be between the couplet. Richardson responded that that would not be a bad

idea to add to the list but that his point was to emphasize the importance of Everett and Glisan in the regional transit system. Zoe Presson reminded the committee that streetcar stops are subject to ADA requirements and that moving a streetcar stop will involve significant costs and planning unlike moving a bus stop. Gustafson suggested creating a priority list and moving down the list until the travel time is reduced the four minutes needed to allow for 14 minute frequency on all lines.

Farhoodi added that in his experience there are too many stops as the Streetcar isn't able to skip stops during the day as there are people at every stop. There are too many stops which in turn cause the travel times to be longer than other modes. Gustafson wrapped up the conversation by asking the committee to evaluate the options presented to them and to begin to create a priority list for work to begin and for the conversations with the public to begin. Ross asked if travel time data is available for bus travel times before and after the reconfiguration of the transit mall as that information would help in our argument for stop consolidation. David Brandt asked that signal synchronization be maintained on the list as that is a big part of the travel time problem. Ian Stude asked if there will be analysis of economic impact or development impact with the removal of a stop. Gustafson responded that we are still early in the process and that the goal now is to create the list and start the dialogue so that a list of needed information created and the analysis can begin. Gustafson reminded the CAC that improving the efficiency of the system results in huge payoffs long term as you can run a more frequent service with less trains and running trains is the most expensive part of running the system. Farhoodi added that the signal at 11<sup>th</sup> & Couch is already planned. Ian Stude added that there may be concerns from PSU about removing the stop at SW Harrison as there will be a high number of students travelling between the heart of campus and the new Collaborative Life Sciences building right through that area which is already a low activity area and removing another node of activity would reduce that further and could adversely impact the sense of safety for those walking and biking through the area.

Richardson voiced a new possibility of searching for a technology that can tell the operators know what speed they should travel at to maintain even spacing with the streetcar in front of them as the main goal in all of this is to be able to have even spacing between streetcars. Gustafson responded that he is interested in the idea, but that with frequencies greater than 10 minutes, people are still reliant on a schedule and that the larger issue is being able to schedule the trains accurately to allow for reliable service. He added that the device Richardson suggested would be highly helpful to the operators to help them know if they are running hot or cold. Julie Gustafson responded that there would also need to be re-education of the public as there was a large push back when streetcar transitioned from having a printed schedule for every stop to having a schedule for each line with time points rather than every stop. Carolyn Brock added that with high frequency a schedule becomes far less important. Gustafson asked the committee to come back to the next meeting with their thoughts and what issues need to be refined and researched before taking this out to the public in 2014.

## **5. Fare Discussion**

Owen Ronchelli asked to table this discussion for the November meeting due to time. He asked the committee to evaluate the information provided in their packets and through the previous conversations and to be prepared to make their recommendation at the November meeting. Julie Gustafson added that the Public Meeting on the fare discussion will be October 30 in the Portland Building at 4:00pm. Notifications will be both on the website and in the streetcars.

**6. Construction Update**

Julie Gustafson reported that SW Moody is open again. There is a time lapse video of that construction on the Portland Streetcar website. The “Close the Loop” work at OMSI is progressing. There is a change in the bus bridges at the end of the work with a one week full CL Line bus bridge to allow for all of the necessary overhead wire work that needs to occur. Streetcar service to the OMSI platform is scheduled to resume October 24.

**7. Operations & Vehicle Update**

No update was given.

**8. Other Business**

Julie Gustafson reminded the CAC that the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Streetcar Mobile Music Fest will be October 12, 2013 from 6-9:30pm on the east side of the river on the CL Line. Bands are scheduled to be on every CL streetcar during the event.

Richard Ross reported that November 14 is the passenger rail study open house at the PCC east side center at SE Clay and Water. Ross will get further information on the open house for the group.

The next meeting for the Streetcar Citizens Advisory Committee will be Wednesday, November 6, 2013, 3:30pm-5:00pm at City Hall, Pettygrove Room.

Please call Julie Gustafson at 503/242-0084 or email at [julie@sojpdx.com](mailto:julie@sojpdx.com) if you have any questions regarding this committee.

The CAC meetings are open to the public.