

SWNI Transportation Committee Meeting: December 19, 2011 Minutes

Chair: Roger Averbeck

Arnold Creek: Michael Dexter

Ashcreek: Marianne Fitzgerald

Bridlemile:

Collins View:

Crestwood: Linda Niles

Far SW:

Hayhurst:

Hillsdale: Glenn Bridger

Homestead

Maplewood: Karen Williams

Markham:

Marshall Park:

Multnomah: Kay Durtschi

S Burlingame: Sandy Morgan

S Portland:

SWHRL: Andrew Holtz

WPP:

Visitors

Staff: Leonard Gard

Guests: Rich Watanabe, Jim Nelson, and Jeff Moss of ODOT; Ed Gorman and Pam Sodja of PGE; Matt Crisciane, PGE contractor; and Pam Kambur of Home Forward

Introductions, agenda and minutes

November minutes are approved with one change, page 3: delete statement attributed to Kay regarding a subcommittee in the matter of Hillsdale Terrace. December agenda is approved.

Barbur Blvd tree removal project, I-5 Iowa update, rapid flash beacon, and Gibbs St Bridge

Rich Watanabe reports that the I-5 Iowa bridge replacement requires the relocation of power lines near Barbur Blvd. ODOT contacted PGE, which will do the relocation. Rich introduces Ed Gorman who further reports: PGE has a power line that crosses I-5 from the east near the Ralston ROW and continues west along Capitol Hwy. New freeway retaining walls make it impossible to have and maintain power poles in the current power line alignment. PGE does have another circuit north of the Hillsdale commercial district that leads to 45th and B-H Hwy, but that cannot be used to supply power that has been coming from east of the freeway—it would have to cross residential land. PGE decided to bring a power line south along Barbur from Hamilton St, hop scotching back and forth across Barbur. They will replace five existing poles on Barbur with new poles and add three more poles. All the new poles will be 55 feet high; existing poles on Barbur are 45 feet high. Trees obstructing the new alignment have to be removed. PGE now has all the permits it needs. Some of the trees to be removed are hazard trees that soon could fall into the street. 80 to 90 percent of the trees flagged for removal are decayed, all are covered with ivy. Most are alder or big leaf maple.

Glenn asks whether the new alignment will interfere with future bike and pedestrian paths. PGE thinks not because the new poles will be six feet behind the jersey barriers. If the poles were further back, more trees would have to be removed. There is a big gas line between the current jersey barriers and the location of the new poles. Glenn calls for mitigation in the form of ivy removal. Pam Sodja agrees and says they plan to do girdling at the bottom of trees. They will also plant native shrubs to replace the removed trees; they will be plants that will not grow high

into the power lines. Pam says PGE plans to maintain the new planting for two years as the city has asked, and they will look at them at the end of two years and will provide further maintenance as needed. Conductors will be installed in the lines that are resistant to falling trees. Regarding installation of underground lines, Ed says that ratepayers are unwilling to pay the higher cost of underground lines (\$1.5 million per mile), 15 to 20 times more expensive than aerial lines. Also, tree roots may damage underground utility lines.

A total of 18 trees will be removed to make room for the power poles, and there will be a one-to-one replacement. Five to seven additional hazard trees will also be cut. The city also requires replacement for them.

Regarding views from Terwilliger Parkway, Ed thinks that views will not be harmed because the poles will be below the tree line. The tree cutting will take about three days. During tree removal, the northbound curb lane will be closed between 9 am – 3 pm. When the NB bike lane is closed, cones will be used to delineate a temporary bike lane through the closure area.

Matt will be on the project to remove ivy, mainly by girdling. He will not use pesticides. Pam says that ten-grain vinegar works well to kill ivy. Roger urges PGE to contact and notify the South Portland and Homestead NAs of this project.

In an advisory vote, the committee unanimously approves the PGE plan.

Rich reports on progress on the I-5 Iowa bridge replacement: The big retaining walls are up. Lanes have been shifted to the west, and they are working on the east (northbound) side. In January they will start the bridge foundations, and bridge structure work will start in April. Then they will move both sides out and work in the middle. They still expect to finish in 2013 although some paving may be delayed for better weather in spring/summer 2014.

Regarding installation of the rapid flash beacons on Barbur near the Rasmussen apartments, this past November; ODOT's contractor finally received parts they were waiting for. They are working to finish installation of all hardware and hope to have the beacon installed and operational in mid-January.

Regarding the Gibbs St Bridge, the big girder across the freeway has been installed. The next piece will be across Macadam.

Action plan

Discussion takes place on latest revision of the action plan. Linda notes that action item 9 needs some comment. Also there items are mis-numbered—there is no number for the action item immediately following item 9. Discussion takes place about the definition of an action item: some are specific projects with a beginning and end; some are just place makers for issues or programs. The committee purpose statement at the top does broadly set out the scope of the issues the committee addresses.

With the proviso that the numbering is corrected and a verb be added to item 9, Glenn moves that the action plan be approved. Michael seconds and the motion is unanimously approved.

PBOT Budget

Marianne reports. The PBOT BAC has met twice and will meet three more times before January 30, the day bureaus submit their budgets to the mayor. PBOT has a major shortfall for lots of reasons. Labor is at the BAC table; there could be 100 layoffs at PBOT. So lots of people are

trying to get HB 2001 money. Both SW and east Portland were orally promised sidewalks—we need to remind Mayor Adams and PBOT Director Tom Miller that this is a unique opportunity to get some sidewalks built. We should thank Mayor Adams for allocating funds intended for the Sellwood Bridge money to sidewalk infill, and ask him to keep his promise. Multnomah Blvd bike/sidewalk improvements are not at risk, as those funds are committed. The Gibbs St sidewalks are leveraged by OHSU parking fees and are not at risk. But other Tier 2 sidewalk infill projects might be at risk. Director Miller wants to reinvent the TSP, using bus service as a surrogate for pedestrian facilities and bike greenways as surrogates for bike facilities. PBOT will be giving “streets of city-wide significance” high priority for operations and maintenance, but Barbur will not be on that list because it’s an ODOT jurisdiction state highway. If COP doesn’t lobby for Barbur, ODOT won’t do anything to improve it. SWNI should request inclusion of Barbur on the list of streets of city-wide significance. Glenn calls for also getting Macadam on that list.

Marianne reports the Willamette Shoreline Trolley scored the lowest in the city’s prioritizing. The mayor has four top priorities: the Portland/Milwaukie light rail, the east side streetcar, bike share, and HB 2001 projects. Roger reports that he met with Katja Dillman, Transportation Policy Advisor for Mayor Adams. Roger doesn’t expect HB 2001 funding for sidewalks to survive the upcoming mayoral election. Deferring the sidewalk infill projects to FY 13-14 puts the projects at risk because they are not a regular budget line item. This is a political decision—will City Council follow BAC recommendations or honor the Mayor’s promise? Roger’s suggestion to Ms Dillman: As a bargaining chip, get a promise that if the sidewalks projects are deferred, PBOT should make them the top priority for future grant funding opportunities. Marianne says the longer we defer, the less chance we we’ll get the funding we want.

Kay moves that we recommend to the Board that SWNI send a letter to COP that we support COP funding for infill sidewalk construction in SW and east Portland. Sandy seconds and the motion is approved unanimously. The letter should be addressed to the auditor, the mayor, Tom Miller, and city council. The letter should list the current proposed HB 2001 projects, should mention that much city staff and volunteer time has already been spent in this process, that Barbur and Macadam provide access to lots of destinations like schools and transit stops, that there has been a lot of neighborhood involvement, and that the whole process was predicated on a promise that the HB 2001 money was an identified pot of money that would be used for sidewalk infill projects.

Hillsdale Terrace

Pam Kambur of Home Forward is our guest. Home Forward is the new name for the Housing Authority of Portland. HAP served people outside of Portland, and for that reason some people objected to the name. Home Forward serves about 15,000 households and it owns and manages the Hillsdale Terrace facility. They now have HOPE 6 federal money to level the site and build a new Hillsdale Terrace, to be renamed Stephens Creek Crossing. The site is almost vacated; only two units are now occupied. The current cinder block construction was bad—lots of mildew—and the facility was costly to operate. They have a goal to connect the new Hillsdale Terrace with the surrounding community. They will have an on-site childhood center operated by Neighborhood House. They are also partnering with Habitat for Humanity.

They will have 122 mixed-income units, a relatively low density for the size of the site, but the topography is difficult and they need open space for children’s play. They are negotiating with Kesser Israel to keep access to the neighborhood through the Kesser Israel parking lot; there is an issue regarding the location of the property line between Kesser Israel and the neighboring restaurant at hoot owl corner.

The whole site will be graded; some of the graded material will be used as fill on site. They will have a two-way loop road around the buildings. Pam shows a conceptual drawing of a future condition of SW California St. from Capitol Hwy to about 27th. It shows a bike and pedestrian way with access for emergency vehicles. Now it starts at Capitol Hwy as a lane at the church but it turns very rough farther east. BES has a triangular piece of property that is a wetland; it is at the dead end of California St. near the SW 26th ROW. BES does not want a trail on this property, but an unmaintained and poorly designed trail already exists in the adjacent 26th ROW. Pedestrian access along 26th is limited by the terrain; a retaining wall and steps would be necessary. Roger questions whether a stairway connection between California and 26th would be allowed without also providing ADA access. Discussion takes place about city rules on requiring half street improvements to streets that front a new development and pervious streets. Glenn reports that Hillsdale has given comment. He thinks Home Forward appears to understand the issues. We may see a land use review this summer. Kay reports that neighbors want low lighting; they'll be looking out at the second floor of the new building.

Chair's report:

- The Barbur Concept Plan (BCP) open house was on December 6. Comment can still be given on the online comment form.
- The SW Corridor Plan (SWCP) steering committee met on December 12. Roger attended. Mayor Adams is Portland's representative. Roger learned that as part of the SWCP, a SW Transportation Plan will be written. It will include a high capacity transit alternative analysis. Roger's concern is that the BCP is mainly about land use. Metro & ODOT will take the lead in writing the SW Transportation Plan, and Metro is not planning to use a CAC. Open houses are not adequate to get community input from engaged citizens in SW Portland. For more information go to the Metro website. Kay says she was told by someone in Tigard that Portlanders need to start acting now to have an influence on what happens in the West Portland Crossroads area.

Neighborhood Reports:

Linda: She has learned that the community will have only limited leverage in the matter of the Walgreen's development. It's a building permit process that limits public involvement. ODOT has a concern about changes that would cause a backup of cars on the freeway taking the freeway exit to TFR just off the TFR/Capitol Hwy intersection. Linda thinks that two lanes at the end of the exit (for right and left turns) will alleviate that problem. It also appears that signaling the intersection TFR/Capitol Hwy intersection would worsen congestion because it would be so close to the signalized Barbur/Capitol Hwy intersection. Also, there will not be a southbound bike lane in front of Walgreen's.

Glenn reports that he talked to Walgreen's architect who said that Walgreen's is already doing more adjustments than usual for this location; he confirmed that Walgreen's is not amenable to do more. For Hillsdale NA, Glenn reports that they are moving forward with the Sunset sidewalk issue. One way or another, sidewalks will go in if the city provides money.

Karen: On January 23, Maplewood and Hayhurst will hold a joint meeting—PBOT will come to talk about proposed greenways in those two neighborhoods. There is a small development in Maplewood at 63rd. They're not sure whether a sidewalk will be installed. Committee members recommend calling Kurt Kruger.

Marianne: No report for Ashcreek. Michael Dexter left the meeting earlier but provided a written report: For Arnold Creek, no meeting has been scheduled with PBOT regarding the BFR/Stephenson intersection. Two cars were recently stopped at the same time on BFR. Officer Kaspar attempted to control traffic. Many drivers ignored his "Christmas tree" of flares.