

SWNI TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

February 23, 2010 Minutes

Chairs: Marianne Fitzgerald

Arnold Creek:

Ashcreek: Roger Averbeck

Bridlemile:

Collins View:

Crestwood:

Far SW:

Hayhurst: Ben Stabler

Hillsdale: Glenn Bridger, Don Baack

Homestead:

Maplewood: Vern Krist

Markham:

Marshall Park:

Multnomah: Kay Durtschi

S Burlingame:

S Portland:

SWHRL:

WPP: Jim McLaughlin

Guests: April Bertelson

Staff: Leonard Gard

Minutes, agenda and committee housekeeping, announcements

January minutes and February agenda are approved. April Bertelson's presentation will touch on the current federal stimulus sidewalk infill project but mainly cover House Bill 2001, a federal earmark for sidewalk construction on Portland arterials.

Marianne reports that this is our last meeting on the fourth Tuesday of the month. There will be no business meeting in March because of the Barbur Crossroads Forum. There will be a social meeting at the Lucky Lab on March 23. The committee then meets jointly with the Land Use Committee on Tuesday, April 20. Then the committee begins meeting regularly on the third Monday of the month starting on May 17.

At the SWNI Board meeting on February 24, guests from Portland Parks & Recreation will speak about a proposed PP&R bond measure. Short discussion takes place regarding the city's next fiscal year budget. Bureaus are being told to prepare budgets with 4% cuts.

Conversation with April Bertelson

Construction of bus stop pads (without shelters) will be part of the current federal stimulus sidewalk infill project, and they will put back poles.

House bill 2002 is a federal funding bill that allocates \$16 million for sidewalk infill on City of Portland arterials. If the bill passes, the money will be spent over two fiscal years, 2010/11 and 2011/12. Efforts are underway to defeat HB 2001. It's fate will not be know

until June. Portland expects to spend about \$8 million on the east side, and \$8 million on the west side.

April has a map that shows in red Portland arterials that are without sidewalks. SW Portland shows a lot of red. Glenn notes that the city for a long time had authority to impose sidewalk construction, and never did.

April wants to get a sense of priorities in different districts and hopes to have candidate projects identified by June. It cost about \$1 million a mile (single side of road) to do sidewalk design and construction that meets stormwater management requirements. Cost go up for ROW acquisition and in difficult terrain that require more engineering (retaining walls, etc.). So creative efforts are needed to pick up some more money from other pots of money: such as stormwater management, bicycles, and LIDs.

Marianne notes that sidewalk construction is much more than \$1 per mile in SW Portland. April notes that the city policy is build sidewalks on both side of streets but that constraints are a factor. Several committee members note they would be satisfied with sidewalk construction on just one side.

April shows draft list of prioritization criteria and asks for input. Marianne notes that one criterion could be amount of reduction in VMT. Don recommends adding the Urban Trails Plan. Kay recommends favoring projects that fill in gaps in sidewalk infrastructure.

Glenn asks whether the project will address pinch points, i.e., places where the ROW is too narrow. April answers: yes, pinch points will be considered. Also, projects can proceed even if far in the future there might be conflicting plans. But a current path like a trail parallel to a proposed sidewalk would lower that sidewalk's priority.

Marianne notes SW Portland does not have any high capacity bus service but does have frequent service on some routes. The committee urges April to add existence of frequent bus service as a criterion lifting the priority of a street.

Don notes that only Rieke and Capitol Hill schools have SR2S programs. Don proposes that sidewalks that help get kids get to school should have lifted priority.

Regarding the criterion re disadvantaged populations, Roger notes these are people who historically do not have access to transportation, and do not have alternatives to the bus.

April reports the TriMet is planning to do a pedestrian/transit network analysis, and based on the analysis will pick ten places to do improvements. As noted above, PBOT is looking for ways to leverage money, and wants to hear our thoughts about trying LIDs. Glenn notes that for the 19th/early 20th century streetcar, LID charges were assessed to cover 20% of costs. LID use might work if it was limited to some share of the cost. LID discussion pro and con takes place. Don notes that an LID proposal would have to come from the community, and he would be willing to help with a task force or other method.

Jim asks if a street's street classification can be changed if it has evolved and the use is no longer conforming to the classification. April: It does happen that streets will have a certain polity designation when they in fact function at a higher level. But it could backfire to up the designation to match the use because that would justify the more intense use.

TriMet service cuts

Copies of SWNI's March 09 letter to TriMet are distributed. Roger announces he did attend tonight's TriMet open house and he reports: TriMet produced statistics: 55% of revenue is from payroll taxes, only 21% is from fares. But they could not answer some questions, such as the operating expenses for light rail versus bus. They did offer to send representatives to one of our meetings.

The services cuts are based on low ridership, but they had no answer to the question of what they're doing to lift ridership.

Jim recommends specific proposals to cut costs: 1) shut down west line, and 2) cut compensation packages for both management and the union.

Don and Marianne think it is probably not worthwhile to invite a TriMet staffer to one of our meetings. Don says that, instead, we should organize, get numbers, study TriMet, and issue a paper.

Vern: Small, more efficient services are needed. Marianne notes that subscription service has been proposed.

Ideas for a letter include: a call to build ridership, analysis of TriMet's operations, and a search for ways to raise revenues.

Capitol Hwy: funding for construction, viaduct to Taylors Ferry Road

Marianne proposes that SWNI send a letter to Representative Wu and Senators Merkley and Wyden supporting a federal earmark for construction money for Capitol Hwy from the Multnomah viaduct to Taylors Ferry Rd. **Motion to send the letter is approved.** Marianne reports that a CAC may be formed in June.

Updates

Roger reports on the Bike Plan. City Council did approve the plan on February 11. They heard our concerns and made some changes. They added language calling for legislative changes to resolve ambiguities in the law regarding rights of pedestrians and bicyclists when sharing the same space. But they did not adopt our action plan.

Jim reports that after the safety summit, some looked at information on a cluster of accidents between Markham School and Barbur.

Vern: Work on Multnomah Blvd is starting with some test borings. He has seen some unsafe conditions on the bike path as a result of work being done. Also, he saw reader board signs on Maplewood for a while, but they're gone now.

Kay: Multnomah is keeping an eye on Capitol Hwy. and a future construction project (see above) Randy Bonella, Multnomah NA president, want to form a committee to advise their representative to the future CAC. Multnomah is also looking at seeking a Main Street project for the village commercial area.

Other:

- HB 2001 has a congestion pricing component. Some argue that charging for parking could be considered a form of congestion pricing.
- The annual Railvolution event will be held this October in Portland.
- In the RTP timeline there is language about creating greenhouse gas scenarios.
- The Crossroads Forum is on March 15. Resolutions NW will facilitate. There will roughly be one hour of presentations and one hour for discussion.

End of meeting