

SWNI Transportation Committee Meeting January 20, 2016

Chair: Roger Averbek

Arnold Creek:

Ashcreek: Marianne Fitzgerald

Bridlemile: David Martin

Collins View: Prakash Joshi

Crestwood:

Far SW: Wes McMullen

Hayhurst:

Hillsdale: Eric Wilhelm

Hillsdale B&P Assoc.: Don Baack

Homestead: Ed Fischer

Maplewood: Stephan Lewis

Markham: Jeff Monaghan

Marshall Park:

Multnomah: Kay Durtschi

S Burlingame: Scott Richman

S Portland:

SWHRL:

WPP: Britta Herwig

Guests: Jeb Doran of TriMet, Chris Ford and Matt Binn of Metro, John Gillam of BPS.

Visitors: Michael Kisor from Ashcreek; Marcia Leslie, Shea and Michael Conover from Far SW.

Staff: Leonard Gard

Note: Look to next month's minutes for any corrections or changes to these minutes.

Introductions, minutes, agenda

Introductions are done. December 14 minutes are approved with one correction: page 5, fourth paragraph—replace Hillsdale with Multnomah and replace Eric Wilhelm with Chris Lyons. There is one abstention. Agenda is approved.

SW Corridor Plan: Metro, TriMet and PBOT staff

Chris, Jeb, and Matt report: Two documents were released on December 31. A handout compiles information regarding mode comparisons. Choice of mode of transport and whether a tunnel should go from Barbur to PCC Sylvania are big issues now. A staff recommendation will be released soon regarding the mode options and a tunnel. On February 29, the Steering Committee will review the recommendations and make a decision on a draft-preferred package. On May 9, they will decide on a final preferred package that will include a shared investment strategy and a land use investment strategy. This will close the refinement phase. Then work on the draft environmental impact statement will start in 2016. That review will take about a year and a half. Technical and environmental analyses will be done—that includes the issue of whether the HCT alignment should be along

Barbur or I-5. There will be a community planning process. Station planning will identify the location and the improvements that are needed. Current station locations are conceptual. Planning will be done to assure freight mobility.

Roger refers to page 20 of the mode comparison and asks whether BRT is feasible for an alignment adjacent to I-5. He also asks about the impact of an I-5 alignment on pedestrian and bicycle modes. Chris answers that with an I-5 alignment there would still be improvements on Barbur like aspects of the Barbur Streetscape Plan. But it might mean fewer improvements. A centerline alignment along Barber would do a lot more reconstruction of the street than what would be done in an I-5 alignment. But work would still be done on Barbur to fill in gaps. One goal is to have unbroken bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure all along Barbur.

There's good news/bad news about financing of this project. The bad news is that the federal government does only a 50% match. A regional general obligation bond might be issued to cover the other 50%. Shared investment projects could get funded that way. An issue is how much the region can pay to support the projects. Committees like ours can help to keep the heat up. With an I-5 alignment of either BRT or LRT, it's possible projects on or near Barbur would not get matching federal money because the local projects have to be within a half mile of the federal HCT project. Marianne has heard that BRT (because it's cheaper than LRT) might leave more money available for local projects. Staffers are unsure whether that's true. It's unclear what projects local voters might approve. If it were to happen, a general obligation bond would probably be issued in 2018. It would follow the DEIS, which takes about 18 months.

Ed asks whether the DEIS will consider infrastructure to help OHSU employees utilize HCT. Answer is yes, the DEIS will have to study options like escalators, bridges, tunnels, etc. Not having a connection there is not an option. A couple from Far SW favors a long bore tunnel for direct access to PCC Sylvania.

Roger asks about pros and cons of a short bore vs. a long bore tunnel. Is there a difference in costs? Staff reports that cut and cover construction has a big impact on the ground surface. So they asked consultants to consider boring. The short bore has the same alignment as the cut and cover. Short bore and long bore costs are similar. Don asks about a bridge to connect to the Ashcreek neighborhood. That connection is important. It's on the shared investment list. The location needs to be studied to make it as good a connection as possible. It's in the DEIS process that we need to push for the projects we want.

An alternative to tunnels is a bus hub at PCC Sylvania and shuttle service from Barbur to PCC Sylvania. The City of Portland said no to a bus route on 53rd because it's designated as a local residential street. Chris says our lobbying for a connection to PCC Sylvania would be useful. Roger asks if a SW Corridor line could "interline" with the new Powell line. The answer is no because both lines come from the south. Interlining is done with lines coming from opposite directions so HCT vehicles can

travel the entire distance of the two lines, in effect cutting the number vehicles in half. Connecting lines from opposite directions would put more vehicles on the lines. Would it then make sense to have BRT in SW Portland? Would there be efficiencies? Staff answers that the SW line will connect, or “interline,” with the green line, which is light rail. There is no BRT coming from the north. A large issue is whether the downtown mall will remain sufficient. Capacity is an issue. BRT is discussed. A weakness of BRT is its lower passenger capacity. But there are some advantages—BRT can run in mixed traffic and could do that in the Barbur “woods,” where traffic is lighter.

Low cost is the one advantage of BRT. Other issues favor LRT. 40,000 riders a day from SW Portland to downtown is the projection. Don asks about impact on auto drivers of HCT. There may not be enough room for cars.

Michael Kisor prefers LRT to BRT. The initial cost of BRT is lower but other factors favor LRT. Marianne is concerned about loss of transit service. She hasn’t seen good connections. TriMet has removed connections from the Barbur Transit Center. We need to look at these station areas and think of how people can get to Washington Square, etc. It needs to go into the station design.

Staff recommendations are expected to come out on January 29. We can expect shorter reports, mode recommendations, recommendations whether a PCC LRT tunnel should be studied further or dropped, conditions on those recommendations, facts & narratives of projects, and implication of decisions. They are willing to come back to our committee on February 17.

Chair report and vice-chair reports:

Roger reports: SWNI has an opportunity to hold a 30-minute meeting with Commissioner Novick before the February 29 steering committee meeting. February 16 is one possible date. February 23 is another possible date. It’s only a 30-minute meeting. Should we meet with him before or after our next committee meeting? Roger prefers to meet on the 16th with Novick. Informal poll of committee is done. The 16th is favored.

There is a current Metro survey on Regional Flexible Funds. Roger thinks it lacks context. The policy to date has been to have a flex fund allocation split of 75% for active transportation and 25% for freight. Freight has more funding sources than active transportation. Roger distributes graphs and suggests that committee members consider doing the Metro survey.

The PBOT gas tax is moving ahead to a City Council vote on January 27. If it’s approved there, it next goes to a public vote. Marianne names some projects that might get funded if the gas tax is approved. The issue has not gone to the SWNI Board. Roger refers to the recent presentation we had on the Barbur road safety audit. ODOT is still promising additional feasibility, cost estimates and operational analysis, especially regarding the Newbury and Vermont bridges. Now a letter is

going to ODOT from various organizations including the BTA and Oregon Walks calling for several things, including a lane reduction on those bridges. Roger wants to see the results of additional operational analysis.

Marianne: She talked to Bill Hoffman RE LTIC. He said that PBOT would collect money only from local streets and not collector streets in the **Local Transportation Improvement Charge** program. But collector streets could get funding from that program. She says she conditionally supports the program depending on how the money is spent.

Don: The December minutes report that he called for citizen input on local streets and town centers. Minutes should say that since local streets are out of the discussion, if developers are given waivers or if their work is in town centers, the community should get notice and have a say in the project.

Discussion takes place regarding waivers. No action is needed now, but next month we may want to take action.

Marianne: The PBOT proposed budget was revealed at the last BAC meeting. There are two projects for the gravel street program. One is 19th and Taylors Ferry Rd and the other is in Errol Heights in Brentwood-Darlington. Because of a 5% budget cut, the "Out of the Mud" project might get cut. Money for street lighting and leaf removal might also get cut.

Neighborhood Reports

Eric: In Hillsdale, there was a discussion with the family of a woman who was hit by a car at B-H Hwy and 30th. She survived. The car came south from Dosch and turned left onto B-H Hwy. The pedestrian had the signal. It was dark and rainy. Hillsdale will ask for a safety study and for crosswalk enforcement. It's not well lit. There is a grant request for improvements at the intersection. Illumination should be done. A developer is about to build near there and will do improvements at the corner. Ed says the intersection qualifies for some ODOT money for improvements. Don notes there is a grant application. But illumination may not be included in the application.

Ed has heard that the permitted left turns at the intersection are the problem (cars coming from the north and turning left to go eastbound). Part of the above mentioned project is to add a left turn lane on the south side and alter the cycle so pedestrians are not crossing when cars are turning left. Another idea is to have a "leading" pedestrian signal that allows pedestrians to walk out first before cars can proceed. Two bus lines stop there. Marianne reminds all of the 823-SAFE number. There is an eight month wait list before anyone addresses it but at least in gets in the queue. Roger recommends an email to Eileen Dent with a cc to Peter Koonce, PBOT Signals Manager.

Jeff: Markham had Kyle Chisek of PBOT and a BES representative at a meeting regarding the 19th Ave paving project and stormwater improvements. They are

expecting a response but have none yet. Jeff talked to Dave Manville regarding a trail connection between 26th and Marigold.

Wes: The idea of a tunnel under the 53rd ROW is still an issue. In Far SW, most popular is BRT on Capitol Hwy to the PCC Sylvania campus. They were asked by the committee to come up with three projects the neighborhood wants from the TSP. Answer is 1) WPTC pedestrian improvements (90068 and 90069), 2) Capitol Hwy/Multnomah Blvd/TFR improvements (90026), and 3) Barbur/Terwilliger city limits: complete the boulevard design including sidewalks and streets (90017). They also voted on three other projects.

Marcia: She questions whether the SWCP is skewed to favoring LRT. There's also a focus on 53rd. At 53rd and Pomona, the improvements they're recommending do not help that intersection. Two designs cut off that intersection. The options are not good. Regarding the January 16 survey, the answer options are skewed to favor LRT.

Kay: She is a member of the Metro Transportation Equity Committee. They held a meeting in January. Information on population is on the website.

Don: There will be a Red Electric open house in February.

Marianne: No issues now. They need to review the big TSP document.

End