

Meeting Minutes

Meeting: PAC #7 - Harmony Road Area Transportation Improvements Project

Project No.: 13745

Meeting Date: December 3, 2007

Meeting Time: 6:00 - 8:00pm

Location: OIT, Room 178

PAC Attendees: Chuck Anderson, David Aschenbrenner, Logan Lauvray, Dolly Macken-Hambright, Suzanna Pai, Wilda Parks, Kirk Pearson, Chris Runyard, Pat Russell, Dick Shook, Alonzo Wertz, Beth Kelland

Project Team Attendees: Ken Krieger, Lynda Wannamaker, Joe Dills, Kay Van Sickel, Jason Lien, Ron Weinman, Larry Conrad, Ellen Rogalin, Dan Johnson

PAC Members Absent: Jennifer Harding, Fred Charlton, Gary Barth, Glen Kirkpatrick, Gil Millett, Debbie Patten, Ron Stewart, Dick Swanson, Del Scharffenberg, Patricia Holloway, John Trumbull, Gary Parkin, John Rupp, Nick Watt

Public Attendees: Megan Faria, Virginia Betschart, Dick Betschart, Ann Wilson, Rick Till, Mr. and Mrs. Hamel, Kurt Lambert, Matt Hector, James Cron, Stan Wax, Nathan Vox, Amer Bhopal, Ishtaq Raiput,

Minutes By: Jason Lien

Introduction

Ron Weinman opened the meeting. Tonight we will focus on recapping the open house and reviewing the screening process.

Joe Dills introduced himself as the facilitator. This is the start of a two meeting sequence. Tonight we will discuss the screening report and design team recommendations; next week will focus on having the PAC make recommendations on which alternatives to study in the impact analysis. The ideas and recommendations from the PAC will be provided to the PRC.

Logan asked to clarify when the PAC will sit down with the alternatives maps and discuss them—this will be next week at the December 10 meeting. At that time, the PAC will make their recommendations to the PRC about which alternatives to forward into the impact analysis. Chris Runyard asked if we will vote on alternatives and send something

concrete from the PAC—yes, the PAC will make a decision and it will be forwarded as the PAC’s recommendation. Recommendations from the PAC will also be given to elected officials in January along with the Technical Team and PRC recommendations.

Pat suggested some of the reports are hard to read on the web and would like to see them in hardcopy format. Ron said the County now has reports available to check out from the Harmony EIS “lending library.” Ron noted that there are numerous reports and they are kept in several large 3-ring binders. Contact Larry Conrad 503.353.4539 to use the library materials.

Pat asked when the PAC will get to endorse the project reports (Existing Conditions Reports, etc.). Ron responded the PAC will be able to comment on the reports and this will be included in the comment record. Email any comments to Ron and Ken and these can be incorporated in the reports, as appropriate.

Chris would like to have time to comment generally on the project from each interest group’s perspective. It would be an opportunity for PAC members to voice their opinion and hear each member’s perspective. Joe stated that this will be added to the agenda for next week.

Joe asked if there were any corrections to the PAC 5 meeting minutes. Logan commented that he did not get results back from the criteria questionnaire the PAC took last summer. The team will send these results out to the PAC. Also in the PAC 5 minutes Dolly had requested PMT minutes to see how decisions are made. Ron responded that there are no PMT minutes for distribution. At PAC 5, Pat had asked if his alternatives were accurately incorporated in the range of alternatives. Joe concluded this will be covered in tonight’s meeting. [Note that a discussion had previously occurred with Pat to ensure that his ideas were accurately displayed for the public at the June 25th workshop.]

The PAC had a field tour on October 6 to review study area opportunities, constraints, and key issues to be considered in the study. The PAC reviewed the field tour notes--Pat noted that the conversation included discussion of oaks and significant trees along the ridgeline (on the south side of the campus area), and this should be emphasized more in the field tour notes. Pat noted the bus drove to the east of Johnson Road, not west. Pat asked to include in the field tour notes the idea of a bike-ped bridge, and also mentioned overhead power lines and gas mainlines in the Harmony Road corridor as significant issues. [the project team will revise the field tour notes as suggested and resubmit them]

Public Comment

Joe opened the floor for comments from the public.

Megan Faria: Not in support of this project. She likes the option of No-Build. Widening Harmony Road is problematic in terms of paving, vegetation loss, wetland impacts, increase in runoff, and loss of species. She has observed wildlife in her restoration work in the 3-creeks natural area. We need to look beyond roads here.

Mr. Hamel: Long time resident of Cedar Crest. Cedar Crest is a very nice and amicable neighborhood. There have been times when traffic cuts through and you could not even back out of your driveway while pot holes were being fixed. Would like to keep the area as it is. Mr. Hamel brought up the concept of WIIFM—what's in it for me? He says stop this project and not build.

Kurt Lambert: Kurt works for 7-11. He would like to know how the project will affect the businesses at the Harmony/Linwood intersection and has concern regarding the construction of this project with respect to preserving the businesses. He also expressed concern about notifying the business owners and noted that the owners of the 7-11 did not receive any notices.

Rick Till: Rick works on the Tsunami Crew. He had a question about NEPA compliance—when is the last time for public comments to have any legal standing? Lynda responded it will be late 2008 or early 2009. Ron indicated that the last action of the EIS will be issuance of a Record of Decision (ROD). The ROD will come out in early 2009. Rick added that FHWA is obligated to look at indirect and cumulative effects and the study should be cognizant of this in terms of water quality and effect to the lowlands and habitat.

Ann Wilson: Also works on Tsunami Crew. She moved to this area because of its natural beauty and appreciates the 3-creeks natural area. She is concerned with jeopardizing the area with road construction. To build a road project is antiquated thinking and a waste of money and that alternative modes of transportation should be considered.

Stan Wax: Stan read a prepared speech raising multiple issues. The overpass will be 30 feet tall which, as a frame of reference, is about 5-6 transients tall. It will be an ugly monster. He has renderings and maps of what he feels the bridge may look like. The project will bring transients into the adjacent neighborhood along with garbage, drugs, and alcohol. There are children in the neighborhood. He felt that the project team did not appreciate these concerns because when he raised the issue of transients at the open house someone from the project team responded that there are already transients in the area. Kids cross Linwood Avenue to get to the school—increasing traffic here is dangerous to kids—first through fifth graders. Development on the uplands will destroy the lowlands and the wetlands area—this is a shame. This is not for small businesses and will negatively affect small businesses, which the County should be paying attention to. He suspects the traffic numbers are inflated and there is not a need for expanding roads. Stan expressed concern with alternatives that show a raised center median along Harmony from 82nd to Fuller Road. This is problematic for campus access since it would not allow any left hand turns to the campus for westbound traffic. Stan suggested the best alternative would be to enhance traffic flow from Sunnyside Road to Highway 224. Doing so would involve modifying westbound Sunnyside Road at 82nd to have two left turn lanes, one through lane to Harmony, and one right turn lane. For traffic moving south on 82nd to 224, he suggested two right turning lanes to offload traffic from 82nd to westbound 224. The alternative would also include expanding 82nd by one lane in each direction from Sunnyside to Highway 224.

Recap of November 28th Open House

Kay Van Sickel talked about the open house and provided a summary of public comments. Some of the themes were concerns about the natural area, the specifics of the recommended alternatives, transients, flooding, drainage, and impacts of the Sunrise Project. A total of 148 comments were received. This list of comments will be provided to the PAC at the December 10 meeting.

Joe asked the PAC if they had questions about the open house.

Dolly asked how we would address the comments from the open house. Ron explained that the comments are recorded verbatim and responded to. Logan and Dolly asked that they receive copies of the comment database. The comment database is attached to the Scoping Report on a CD. This will be included in the lending library at Clackamas County. Ken also noted that the comment database was currently available on the project web site; it is an appendix to the Scoping Report.

Chris asked if it was true that people could lose their homes and if so what is the process was to compensate them for losing their homes. Ron explained the process under the Federal Relocation Act and that property owners would be compensated at fair market value.

Chuck asked if all the property owners were aware that they might lose their homes. Kay and Ron noted that we saw greater attendance from property owners and businesses at the last open house. Beth asked how property owners at risk were being notified. Kay responded that we had gone to door to door to reach the Hispanic community and sent out the newsletter and posted fliers.

Kay asked Ken to explain the level of engineering conducted for the property impact screening. Ken explained how the engineers estimated potential property impacts at this stage of the analysis. He further explained the potential impacts from widening Harmony to 3 lanes and 5 lanes. He noted that the engineers looked at various alignment options and the ways the engineers tried to minimize impacts to property owners and natural areas. Ken explained that the engineering will become more detailed for the impact analysis.

Pat noted that he spoke with an out-of-area property owner (apartment complex) and the owner was unaware of the planning going on in the area and that the study is not adequately communicating the project to the community. Pat would like to see 100-scale aerial photo studies of alignments, especially with the bridge structures because they are so difficult to understand for the general public. Pat feels very strongly about the bridge engineering issues and that the team should conduct better study sketch exercises to better understand the potential impacts. Ken noted that this will occur during the next stage of the analysis.

Beth asked if property owners on Harmony will be allowed to have driveways exiting directly onto Harmony. Ron replied that it depended on the alternative, but that driveways could be allowed. He noted that there are a number of factors that need to be considered. The County will also try to determine if driveways can be consolidated.

Logan asked if cost was being considered. Ken and Ron replied that cost could not be considered at this stage of the project but would be considered in the next stage of the project.

Screening Process Overview

Jason Lien presented an overview of the screening process with a PowerPoint presentation. Jason discussed where we are in the process. He then gave an overview of the steps of the screening process. He asked that the PAC review the Screening Evaluation Report before next week's meeting. Jason described the reasons that alternatives were eliminated. He described the contents of the screening report and discussed the step by step multi-level screening process. He noted how the 45 alternatives were narrowed to 10 alternatives in the level 1 screening and how TSM/TDM was added as an alternative for screening in level 2. Ken explained that there were good components of the 45 alternatives that were incorporated while creating the 10 alternatives for the level 2 screening. During the level 2 screening, the 11 alternatives were narrowed to 2 build alternatives with a variety of design options. Jason described the two build alternatives. Ken noted that TSM/TDM components will be studied in the EIS with the build alternatives. Jason described the No-Build alternative and explained that it will be considered in the impact analysis.

Pat asked if the No-Build scenario included the Sunrise Corridor—yes.

Dick said that he did not have a copy of the No-Build map, can he get a copy. Kay noted that we brought 6 hard copies of the Screening Report tonight and we could get more copies out if needed. The No-Build map is shown in the Screening Report.

Dolly explained that when she reviewed the Screening Report she could not find anything about neighborhood livability issues. Larry explained that neighborhood livability is part of the social-econ report. Dolly asked if the neighborhood came down to dollars.

Wilda noted that she is very interested in TDM and asked for more explanation about how those measures would be funded. Joe and Ron explained the components of TDM and how it might be funded. Ron clarified that TDM will not be a separate alternative but instead TDM/TSM components will be incorporated into the build alternatives as they are studied further.

Beth asked who the screeners were. Joe asked the screeners to raise their hands. This included staff at the meeting and also discipline leads that are involved with the project but not at the meeting.

Logan stated that he was surprised that the design team narrowed the alternatives to 2 before receiving input from the PAC. Ken clarified there are multiple steps in the process—the design team completed their review and have made their recommendations. Now the PAC will work through the information and make their recommendations at next week’s meeting. All of the public comments from the open house and the recommendations from both the design team and the PAC will be presented to the PRC.

Logan also noted that using the term “improvement” was a misnomer because paving or losing your home is not an improvement. He requested that the team consider using a different term when sending information to the public such as road “expansion.”

Chris asked if the consultants would financially benefit by selecting a build decision. Ron explained that the County selected the consultant team based on which team was most experienced and appropriate for the job. There is no financial benefit related to the decision. Logan asked if Otak would be bidding on the final design. Ron said they could but that the County seeks to hire the best team for the job. He gave examples of how consultants have changed between different stages of projects in Clackamas County.

Pat asked when the environmental assessment for Sunnyside Road was prepared. Ron responded it was about 10 years ago. Pat also noted that some of the issues being raised about the screening may have been addressed if the team had sent out the questionnaire results information to the PAC as requested. Ken apologized for the oversight and stated that the team would email the questionnaire results. Pat also asked how the projects were determined for the No-Build—they came from adopted plans for the City of Milwaukie and Clackamas County.

Dave Aschenbrenner noted that the design team has had a long time to develop their recommendations and that the PAC only gets one night to sit down and come up with their recommendations. Joe reviewed the process again and noted that the PAC could recommend a wide range of alternatives. Dave did not feel like this was enough time. Joe reiterated that it is not the intent that the PAC conduct their own analysis but instead review the information before them and make their own recommendations.

Dolly requested that the PAC not be broken into small groups for the next meeting and that everyone gets to hear what the other PAC members are saying. Joe explained that they will not be broken into small groups and went on to further explain the process for the next meeting.

December 10th PAC Procedures

Joe will give the PAC a written ballot so each member can vote for the alternatives they feel should be studied in the impact analysis. At least a majority is needed to have an alternative recommended to the PRC for further study in the impact analysis. We will look at hybrids. Only PAC members will vote. Each affiliated group will have one vote – either the primary member or their alternate. Wilda has concerns that everyone may not be present. Will we emphasize to PAC members how important this is? We will send an email and call PAC members to explain the importance of the December 10th meeting

and encourage attendance. Dolly asked to make certain that members know voting is involved. Joe pointed out that three alternatives will move forward to the PRC from the screening analysis: the No-Build alternative and the two build alternatives recommended by the design team. TSM/TDM may be a modifier of any build alternative.

Wilda asked if the PAC will have an opportunity to voice what types of strategies will be included in the TSM/TDM option? Ron asked the PAC members to bring their ideas.

Dick asked if we will have particular ground rules for the next session. Joe will revisit the PAC procedures established several months ago and clarify with members the process for group decision making. The two staff recommendations have hybrid elements--will the PAC be voting yes/no on the hybrids? Joe replied that the PAC's recommendations about the design team's recommendations will be recorded and sent to the PRC. He added that the PAC will have the chance to comment on specific elements of each alternative as well as create their own hybrids to recommend to the PRC.

Since it is a critical meeting and decision point, the group decided to lengthen the December 10 meeting from 6 to 9 pm (instead of 6 to 8pm). The PAC decided that consensus means majority plus 1, which means the PAC recommends to the PRC that an alternative move forward to the impact analysis for further study. The reporting to the PRC will include the PAC recommendations in addition to the design team recommendations and the comments from the public open house. Chris thinks another voting ratio would be better, such as two-thirds majority. The PAC thought that because so few members were in attendance this question should be asked again at the December 10th meeting. Joe will ask this question at the beginning of the December 10th meeting and let the group decide what constitutes a recommendation by the PAC. Joe will also establish the meeting guidelines.

Public Comment

Joe opened the floor again for comments from the public.

Mr. Hamel: Thanks the open house staff. He is concerned about the lack of specificity tonight. The environmental impact of this project will be very negative. Ken had said he went into the wetland area with a police escort. Won't building the project make things less safe?

Kurt Lambert: If this project goes forward it will affect people that have built a business on their own investments. He never has a problem with traffic in the area and getting in and out of the 7-11 site. Notification for this project is not great—he first heard about the project 2 days ago. He does not live in the area, but recognizes this could greatly impact the small businesses, so he elected to participate in the process.

Matt Hector: He lives on 60th Court. A proposed 3-lane road is shown that connects Linwood and Railroad Avenue and passes near 60th Court. He would like to know how this affects 60th court and would like to see more detail in the plans.

Stan Wax: The 82nd alternative, as recommended by the design team, shows a bridge on Harmony over the UP Railroad. Ron responded yes it does, however the PAC may recommend something different. Stan also restated that he has a rendering of what the bridge might look like.

Megan Faria: Can Otak be forbidden to bid on the construction engineering for the project due to conflict of interest? Ron responded that he does not know if this is possible and that this may be a policy decision by the elected officials.

Rick Till: Seems like the design team recommendations are artificially small. Aren't more alternatives usually studied in an EIS? What is the normal number? According to Lynda, generally, for a project like this, 3 or 4 alternatives including the No-Build is typical.

Wrap Up

The meeting adjourned at 8pm. Joe stressed that it is important to come next week's meeting. It begins at 6pm on December 10th.

This information has been recorded in accordance with our applicable standard of professional care. If we do not receive any comments within five days of receipt, we will finalize these minutes as drafted for the project file.