Citizen’s Advisory Committee (CAC)
Thursday, April 19, 2012
Former Advantis Credit Union Building
3717 SE 17th Avenue

PMLR CAC Members Present
Barbara Andersen, Oak Grove
David Aschenbrenner, Hector Campbell Neighborhood
Lina Bensel, Independent Living Resources
Ray Bryan, Historic Milwaukie Neighborhood
Paul Carlson, Oregon Museum of Science & Industry (OMSI)
David Edwards, Vice Chair, Oak Grove
Catherine Goode, Ardenwald-Johnson Creek Neighborhood
Greg Hemer, Milwaukie Lumber
Fred Nelligan, Oak Lodge Community Council
Susan Pearce, Hosford Abernethy Neighborhood (HAND)
Teri Pucik, SMILE
Valeria Ramirez, Portland Opera
Arnold Panitch, TriMet Committee on Accessible Transportation (CAT)
Dee Walsh, REACH
Rick Williams, Chair, Lloyd District Transportation Management Association

PMLR CAC Members Absent
Valerie Chapman, Oak Grove
Neil Hankerson, Milwaukie Downtown Business
Erin Kelley, Bicycle & Pedestrian Advocate
Ken Love, South Portland Neighborhood
Adam Marx, Brooklyn Action Corps
Cindy Miguel, Island Station Neighborhood
Jeff Reaves, Central Eastside Industrial Council (CEIC)
Ian Stude, Portland State University (PSU)

Rick Williams (CAC Chair) opened the meeting and welcomed attendees. There were no changes to the previous meeting’s notes. He noted that Oregonlive.com had published the committee’s letter regarding its support for the project. He thanked the committee for its input and he thanked Fred Nelligan for helping draft the letter. Other committee members noted that they’d seen the letter in other regional publications. Rick also asked committee members to think about topics they’d like to hear about from staff in future CAC meetings.
Project Finance Update, presented by Rob Barnard, TriMet Project Director

Rob Barnard updated the committee on progress of the Full Funding Grant Agreement, (FFGA) the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) funding for half of project cost. The FFGA went to Congress on March 19 for a 60-day formal review period, and should be signed any time after May 21. After FFGA signature, the FTA will deposit $85 million in the project account for the first year of funding. The second year, President Obama’s budget has allocated $100 million for the project.

Other developments:

- The region so far has provided $390 million to the project.
- To date, the project has spent $236 million.
- We have more than $404 million under contract. About 40 percent of the project is under contract. This includes such items as the bridge, advanced utilities, steel, early construction, light rail vehicles, trees and engineering.
- We have commercial pricing on about 75 percent of the work, based on the 90 percent design drawings. The remaining 25 percent would include a systems contract, Ruby Junction maintenance facility, Park Ave Park and Ride, shelters, signs, graphics, ticket machines and other things yet to be acquired.
- Two hundred and eight firms have worked on the project to date, of which 74 are disadvantaged business enterprises (DBEs).
- As of April, the project has created 491 on-site construction jobs. Twenty-two percent of those jobs are being done by people of color, and 5 percent by women. About 16 percent of the jobs are being filled by apprentice trade workers, growing the next generation of high-skilled, high-paid craft workers.
- More than 800 of the jobs have been professional-technical.

QUESTIONS:

Paul Carlson: Where are you on budget?
Rob Barnard: We are on budget and on track with FTA’s requirements for contingency levels.

Fred Nelligan: Any update on pricing of steel and commodities?
Rob Barnard: We are in the process of getting prices now. We expect to go to our board in May for a total contact price for the west segment and a portion of the east segment.

Bybee Station Peer Review

Next, Rob Barnard reported on developments surrounding a study of the Bybee Boulevard light rail station. An engineering team from the west segment was assembled to do a peer review of the station design. The team has met with neighbors and stakeholders, and separately with the station design team. The team is now in the process of analyzing the data and producing a range of concepts. We expect the process will conclude in late June.
QUESTIONS:

Rick Williams: The Bybee peer review should be on the CAC agenda.

Catherine Goode: The process seems long. If there is a decision to go back to the original (station design) plan, will there be enough time to do it?
Rob Barnard: We won't let the process run so long that the door is closed to adjusting the design.

Tacoma & McLoughlin Safety Improvements, presented by Joseph Auth, Oregon Department of Transportation

Joseph Auth discussed two safety improvement projects being completed by ODOT this summer. These improvements are in response to concerns about existing conditions on McLoughlin Boulevard (Highway 99E) that were raised during community meetings about the Tacoma/Johnson Creek station. The first is a restriping project on McLoughlin near the Tacoma Street overpass. ODOT will adjust the southbound lanes so the third lane begins south of the Tacoma overpass, instead of to the north, like it is now. This is intended to minimize confusion for motorists entering southbound McLoughlin. The project would include two striped crosswalks for pedestrians crossing the ramp at McLoughlin, and a raised “pork-chop” island that serves as a refuge for pedestrians and signals motorists to slow down. There will also be signs alerting motorists of the pedestrian crossing.

Catherine Goode: You might consider some additional traffic calming for motorists going south on Highway 99E from Tacoma. It's a very sharp turn.
Joseph Auth: We're hoping the raised island we install there signals to drivers that they have to slow down.

Barbara Andersen: Will there be an advance warning of these changes to motorists? Joseph Auth: Yes, signs will be posted to alert motorists that conditions are changing.

Greg Hemer: How will these changes affect the bus route? Will buses have to cross over to the right lane?
Joseph Auth: The bus stop will remain until at least 2015 when light rail opens.
Claudia Steinberg: TriMet will engage in a public process on potential bus service changes beginning in 2013.

Arnold Panitch: How will people in a wheelchair or someone with a sight impairment, get to the light rail station from the nearby low-income housing complex?
Joseph Auth: From McLoughlin & Umatilla, people can use the sidewalk on McLoughlin, up the ramp, to the Tacoma overpass. I'm not sure of the grade of the slope. People could also walk to the Tacoma overpass via 23rd Avenue.
Arnold Panitch: It’s not only our station that needs to be accessible, but also the adjacent property. This is a pretty car-centric spot. The problem is not necessarily TriMet’s. We have to rely on the city and the state, the entities that own the pavement, to get people where they need to go.

Susan Pearce: I support Arnold’s thought. Not only is that curb ramp steep, but other routes are steep.

David Aschenbrenner: What about using the Springwater Corridor trail to bypass the intersection at Tacoma? (Some committee members noted that the Springwater Corridor bridge over McLoughlin would require out of direction travel from many locations.)

David Edwards raised a concern about buses merging to and from the stop under the Tacoma overpass and suggested a flashing cross-walk signal. Joseph Auth: We’ve been discussing placing a flashing signal at the crosswalk at Tacoma Street but I believe there are some technical issues, which I can report back on. We’re looking at other pedestrian improvements at the Tacoma crosswalk, including striping and raised bumps or domes on the pavement. Another idea might be to change the radius of the curve on the ramp to encourage motorists to look both directions before entering Tacoma Street.

Greg Hemer suggested rerouting the bus to run through the neighborhood so that people with disabilities could ride the bus to the station.

Joseph Auth went on to describe the second project, intended to discourage pedestrians from crossing the median barrier on McLoughlin. ODOT will add a 24-inch safety shield to the median barrier between Nehalem and Ochoco streets.

Arnold Panitch: What if pedestrians could activate a flashing light by pushing a button? Joseph Auth: The City of Portland is looking at the possibility of installing a flashing beacon at the crosswalk.

Rick Williams: This raised a lot of issues. We would like to hear back from ODOT. Joseph Auth: We received good comments tonight. I will bring them back to our traffic section at ODOT and report back to you.

Construction Update for Milwaukie & Clackamas County, presented by Claudia Steinberg, TriMet Community Affairs Manager

We will be moving to our new field office mid-May at 2300 S.E. Beta St. in Milwaukie. After we move in, our monthly Milwaukie meetings will convene there at 5 p.m. on the third Mondays.
The discussion about the Tacoma pedestrian issues is a good example of access issues. We are starting an ad hoc subcommittee of the TriMet Committee on Accessible Transportation (CAT) to look at mobility and access to all stations. The committee will have members who are vision-impaired, elderly and those using mobility devices. The committee will meet for six months beginning in June. We'll report to you on our progress. Maybe some of these issues we’ve been discussing here will be brought up to a higher level and resolved.

Arnold Panitch: We’re dealing with the stations, the adjacent environment and the light rail cars themselves. The CAT committee is not happy with the Type 4 cars. We want to redo the cars so they’re more accessible.

Claudia next showed slides and photos and presented an update on construction in the Clackamas County area, including:
- Staging areas at Lake Road and Kronberg Park
- Prep work for Kellogg/Trolley Trail structure (e.g., tree pruning and removal, sewer line construction, utilities installation)
- Downtown Milwaukie – future utility work
- Milwaukie North industrial area – future utility work

QUESTIONS:

David Edwards: Why is there a paved driveway in Kronberg Park?
Claudia Steinberg: They are building a temporary driveway into the construction staging area. The road must accommodate trucks as well as two cranes. The cranes will move steel tubs and do pile driving in the lake bed during the July-September window for construction activity that doesn’t harm fish. Crews will build a temporary work bridge. The work bridge will be removed after two years. We hope that, in those two years, money will be identified to build a pedestrian bridge below the Kellogg Creek bridge. That work bridge will be essential to make that happen. We’re being very diligent in looking for funds to build that pedestrian bridge. We know this is important for everyone.

Construction update, Southeast Portland, presented by Jennifer Koozer, TriMet Community Affairs Representative

Jennifer Koozer discussed the following areas of construction activity:

- Southeast 17th Avenue and Holgate Boulevard. This will be our first big traffic impact in southeast Portland. We are widening Holgate to accommodate traffic around a sewer project. Traffic on Holgate will narrow to one eastbound lane for several months, with two westbound lanes.
- 17th Avenue & Powell Boulevard structure. This summer, crews will remove the structure linking northbound 17th Avenue to westbound Powell Boulevard. That will close northbound 17th Avenue at Powell for about a year. Traffic will continue to access 17th Avenue heading south from eastbound Powell. The main detour for
northbound 17th Avenue traffic will be Holgate to McLoughlin. However, bus lines 17 and 70 will continue north on 17th Avenue to Center Street, and from there on to Milwaukie Boulevard and Powell.

- Powell Boulevard will close to traffic for a couple of weekends during demolition of the overpass and setting of girders for the new structures. During those weekends, east-west traffic from Powell will be detoured to Holgate via McLoughlin and Cesar Chavez.
- Construction on SE Water Avenue will continue for about a year, with traffic remaining open on "Old Water Avenue."
- We mailed a postcard about a noise variance application and public hearing to 5,000-plus residents and property owners. The postcard lists the places where we’re requesting to do nighttime construction work in order to minimize extended traffic conflicts. We will notify residents again before starting work.
- The former Advantis building where we are meeting today will be demolished this summer to facilitate utility work. Next month will be our last meeting here. (Post-meeting update: no more CAC meetings will be held at the Advantis building.)

QUESTIONS:

Susan Pearce: In our last meeting I brought up a concern about access from the Hosford-Abernethy neighborhood to the Clinton Street station when Union Pacific trains are running slow or are at a complete stop. I want to talk more about ideas to address this issue. Without a pedestrian overcrossing, there will be no access to the station when a train blocks the crossing at 12th Avenue. I’ve been hearing from a lot of people in the neighborhood about this.

Lina Bensel: What will happen with number 9 bus during those times when Powell is closed for construction?

Jennifer Koozer: The westbound Line 9-Powell will detour at 26th Street, travel south to Holgate and then head west to Milwaukie Boulevard. It will then head north to return to Powell.

Claudia Steinberg reminded the CAC about Orange Lining, a two-phase public art installation to span the length of the light rail line. The public is encouraged to submit short, original lines of text, which will be printed on the orange erosion control fencing used during construction and later stamped into new concrete sidewalks along the alignment. Deadline for submissions is April 29 but may be extended.

Construction update, Bridge and West segment, presented by DeeAnn Sandberg, TriMet Community Affairs Representative

DeeAnn Sandberg highlighted construction activities on the PMLR Willamette River bridge and west segment.
On the bridge, workers:
• Completed the west landside drilled shafts
• Plan to begin the drilled shafts on the east tower
• Poured base three feet of concrete on the pile cap
• Formed and placed first two rebar cages for the pylons of the west tower
• Will pour the pile cap concrete over the next two days
• Tower crane for west tower to be erected in May

We conducted a river signage and safety meeting. Our signage and safety plan for the river upstream and downstream of the bridge was well-received.

In the west segment, workers:
• Completed all 10 drill shafts on the Harbor structure
• Poured seven of the 8 columns
• Formed and poured three caps for the columns
• Continued work on Southwest Lincoln Street

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Roundtable

Rick Williams: Please let us know about topics you would like staff to address in upcoming meetings.

Arnold Panitch: The April 12 Portland Tribune ran an op-ed from Rick Williams in response to and alongside an op-ed by Ed Zumwalt of Milwaukie. It would be useful to insert this letter in our packet next month. Zumwalt’s letter calls for high-capacity buses as opposed to this light rail project.

Barbara Andersen: It is irritating that that there are two letters here, but the headline focuses on the negative one.

Catherine Goode: I still feel the CAC letter was not as impartial as we should remain.

Valerie Ramirez: I want to hear more about project lessons learned and surprises so far. It’s not all about money. It’s also about the human side. Also, I would like to hear more about displaced businesses.

Paul Carlson: The discussions tonight about travel disruptions were helpful. That would be helpful to keep hearing as construction moves into full swing.

Rick Williams: I commend staff for assembling an ad hoc committee focused on accessibility at all stations. We would like to hear more about it.

Susan Pearce: Many of my neighbors, and others, are concerned about funding for projects that seem to be central city-centric and forget about the edges of Portland. We
may at some point want to write a letter asking the city to direct more attention to the outer edges of the city.

David Edwards: If Kellogg Lake is restored to a creek, couldn’t you just take the trail down to the creek, build a small pedestrian bridge over the creek, and link to the trail on the other side of the creek?

David Aschenbrenner explained that there had been discussion about putting a pedestrian bridge in at creek level but that issues with the floodplain and wetland areas proved problematic.

Teri Pucik: I would like to hear updates on where we stand on budget for add-backs. On safety and security, I would like to hear more about plans for isolated stations such as at Bybee. I’d like more information on what TriMet or Metro is doing about changing zoning around stations. I realize transit is not bringing crime, but sometimes it’s the low-income housing built around stations. I agree that I’d like to see more information on displaced businesses – not just the positive cases but also the other side of the coin.

Lina Bensel: I am interested in the fixed-route bus route changes during construction, especially the recourses for people affected by detours.

Ray Bryan: I’d like to hear more about the deferred parts of the project. How many of those already have engineering to make them easy to add back? I’d like a follow-up on the train headlight glare study and what will happen with that on McLoughlin Boulevard.

David Aschenbrenner: I’d like to hear more about noise impact concerns and parking concerns in Milwaukie.

Greg Hemer: I’d also like to hear more about business displacements. I’d like more specific details about property acquisition handling. How does it work from start to finish? Another topic of interest is the recycling of wood being used in construction. What happens to the wood after it’s removed? Maybe Stacy-Witbeck could talk about their sustainability plan, not only concerning the permanent features of the project, but also during construction.

Dee Walsh: To clear up some misconceptions in Teri Pucik’s comments about crime and low-income housing, nationally, two-thirds of the residents of Section 8 housing are elderly or disabled – generally not people who are criminals. That’s true in our portfolio as well. As far as I know, there is no subsidized affordable housing in East County that was built in conjunction with light rail. There’s a lot of low-cost housing out there, but it’s not specifically built as Section 8 housing. On the Interstate light rail line, our Section 8 housing replaced a hotel that was a big problem for the neighborhood. Neighbors are much more pleased with our apartment building than with the prostitution and drug-dealing associated with the hotel.
Teri Pucik: When light rail came to the east side, there were tons of tax abatements given to those apartment buildings. They may not be Section 8, but they had tax abatements. They may not be in your portfolio of affordable housing, but they are low-cost buildings, and there are a lot of crime problems out in that area, such as Rockwood, because of that low-income housing.

Fred Nelligan: TriMet recently held round two of the Park Avenue artist selection process. It was amazing. Also, today Clackamas County commissioners approved an intergovernmental agreement between TriMet and North Clackamas Parks & Recreation District. The agreement affirms that regardless of what else may occur, TriMet will build out the Trolley Trail. It was a big step in my opinion.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

Rick Williams adjourned the meeting at 7:45 p.m.
Next PMLR CAC meeting: Thursday, May 17, 6–7:30 p.m.
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3717 S.E. 17th Ave., Portland, OR 97202