Citizens’ Advisory Committee (CAC)
Thursday, May 15, 2014
PMLR East Field Office
2300 SE Beta Street, Milwaukie, OR 97222

PMLR CAC Members Present
Barbara Andersen, Oak Grove; Waldorf School
David Aschenbrenner, Hector Campbell Neighborhood
Ray Bryan, Historic Milwaukie Neighborhood
Bill Danneman, South Portland Neighborhood
David Edwards, Oak Grove (Committee Chair)
Neil Hankerson, Dark Horse Comics
Cindy Miguel, Island Station Neighborhood
Arnold Panitch, TriMet Committee on Accessible Transportation (CAT)
Susan Pearce, Hosford Abernethy Neighborhood District (HAND)
Terri Pucik, SMILE Neighborhood

PMLR CAC Members Absent
Valerie Chapman, Oak Grove Neighborhood
Catherine Goode, Ardenwald-Johnson Creek Neighborhood
Greg Hemer, Milwaukie
Fred Nelligan, Oak Grove Community Council
Valeria Ramirez, Portland Opera
Jeff Reaves, Central Eastside Industrial Council
Ian Stude, Portland State University (PSU)

David Edwards opened the meeting at 6:02 p.m.

Notes from March 2014 meeting were approved with no changes.

Public Comment
(No Public Comment)

Construction Updates

Coral Egnew and Jennifer Koozer, TriMet Community Affairs Representatives, provided general construction updates.
The new bridge across the Willamette River has a name! The bridge naming committee chose “Tilikum Crossing, Bridge of the People.” “Tilikum” is a word from the Chinook language that means “people, tribe or family” and honors the region’s indigenous peoples.

Station clearance testing is underway to ensure that stations elements and track are placed correctly.

Sedum tiles have been installed for ecoroofs on some of the systems buildings.

Tower cranes and form travelers have been removed from the Tilikum Crossing site.

Barbara Andersen asked whether nesting platforms will be built onto the bridge.

Coral answered that there are osprey nesting poles in the project areas on the west and east sides, but not on Tilikum Crossing itself.

The Greenway Path under the east side of the Tilikum Crossing will reopen on July 1 after being closed for nearly a year. Under the bridge abutment, a “sonic dish” art piece has been installed that reflects and amplifies the sound of the river for a calming effect.

Near the OMSI/Southeast Water Avenue Station, concrete transitway and track are paved. The station is taking shape, and signal lights are installed but not yet activated.

Southbound 17th Avenue is closed at Powell Boulevard for roadway construction. The first three blocks are finished, and the area between Rhine and Rhone streets is currently under construction. The southbound side of the street will be finished at the beginning of June. Remaining work on 17th Avenue includes traffic signal installation and construction of northbound 17th Avenue between McLoughlin and Holgate boulevards.

At the SE Bybee Blvd, shelter columns and elevator towers are installed. Widening of the street and sidewalk for the bus pullout is underway on the south side.

Mailwell Drive track crossing is complete, marking the project’s final track crossing installation.

Washington Street is closed for the remainder of this week with a significant detour. Work is going smoothly and will most likely be done by Saturday.

Flooring for the bottom floor of the Park Avenue Park & Ride Garage is finished.

At the intersection of Johnson Creek Boulevard and 32nd Avenue, traffic that will be generated by the Park & Ride triggered requirements for intersection improvements, including adding a turn lane and a traffic signal. Building the signal foundation will begin in June or July, followed by roadway improvements.
David Edwards called for questions.

Cindy Miguel asked why the Washington Street closure detours people to Jefferson Street instead of Monroe Street.

Claudia Steinberg answered that people can go either way.

Sue Pearce asked what is going on at Clinton Street.

Coral Egnew answered that Clinton/SE 12th Ave Station is taking shape, and systems are currently turned over to contractors. Overhead catenary line is being placed and special streetcar trackway for the bridge approach is being installed.

Jennifer Koozer added that striping is complete and the traffic signals have been turned on, making the area much more navigable for pedestrians and bikes. Navigation will be further improved when the multi-use path between 11th and 9th avenues opens this fall.

Jennifer Koozer, TriMet Community Affairs Representative, provided an update on bus service outreach.

TriMet is preparing for summer outreach efforts on proposed bus service changes to complement the new MAX Orange Line. Planners have been reviewing feedback gathered earlier this year and reviewing concepts with jurisdictional staff. They are hoping to have a proposal for the public in June. The next phase of outreach will place focus on working with riders. There will be an open house in July, and then the planners will consider refinements based on the feedback we receive this summer.

Coral Egnew, TriMet Community Affairs Representative, provided an update on safety outreach.

TriMet is developing a safety outreach plan to engage with the community – especially schools -- about how to behave around tracks and interact with the new environment safely. We will be meeting with school administrators in the fall, and hope to begin presentations in schools in early 2015, prior to light rail operator training in the spring of 2015.

Ray Bryan asked whether TriMet staff members or trained school staff members will present the information.

Coral answered that right now the plan is for TriMet staff to present information tailored to what the school asks for. This may be in tandem with existing curricula, and will be subject to review and approval from administration to make sure the information is as meaningful and effective as possible for all staff and students.
Ann Becklund, TriMet Community Affairs Director, gave an update on project transitions and future agenda items.

The PMLR project is in its home stretch — opening day, September 15, 2015, is fewer than 500 days away. Substantial completion on the Tilikum Crossing will be finished by the end of August, and other sections of the alignment will be completed by the end of the year. Other than the electrical systems that are yet to be installed, the project will look just like it will on opening day. We’re starting to brainstorm plans for a fantastic opening.

We have two staff transition announcements within the Community Affairs team: DeeAnn Sandberg has moved into a new position as TriMet’s manager of employee communications. And, today is Claudia Steinberg’s last day of work before retirement.

We also have two large next projects to anticipate. We are working with Metro in the early planning stages of what could be the region’s first bus rapid transit project, on Powell-Division out to Mt. Hood Community College. We are also working with Metro studying a potential mega-project in the Southwest Corridor, which is five or six years out.

This summer the community affairs team will be working intensively on bus service planning outreach, including four open houses in July.

The next CAC meeting will be in the fall. At that time, we’ll be close to substantial completion and we’ll know what closeout will look like on the final project.

Finally, we will have a PMLR Steering Committee event on the Tilikum Crossing on Friday, June 6. All the Steering Committee members will meet in the middle of the bridge to shake hands as a symbol of the way the bridge joins communities across the river. All CAC members are invited.

Sue Pearce asked if the bridge will open for pedestrian use in advance.

Ann answered that the bridge will not be open to pedestrians until the project opens next September.

Claudia Steinberg expressed her appreciation for the committee members and their commitment to the project. She will be present at the bridge-crossing event and at opening day.

Several in attendance expressed thanks to Claudia for her work over the years, and congratulated her on retirement.
Roundtable Discussion

Cindy Miguel said construction is really coming along in her neighborhood.

Ray Bryan said the Milwaukie Public Safety Advisory Committee would like to connect with the community affairs department about the upcoming safety presentations. He also brought up a safety concern with the stormwater planters along Harrison Street. The metal weirs designed to slow and clean water are a potential safety hazard — they are sharp, and someone could fall onto them.

Coral Egnew said that TriMet conducts safety walks every week, and she will take note of the concern and make sure the area is evaluated.

Bill Danneman said the pavement markings and right-of-way rules are unclear for cyclists and pedestrians coming off the multi-use path near Lincoln Street and Naito Parkway. Cyclists coming downhill from the path are moving quickly, and the signs are hard to read because they are small.

Coral Egnew said she will double-check the final design of the pavement markings.

Arnold Panitch offered the assistance of Committee on Accessible Transportation members for testing accessibility issues. He also mentioned that he has been advocating for free bus passes for high school students throughout the metro region. He was informed this week that the TriMet board of directors is considering keeping universally free bus passes for Portland Public School District students. It is also willing to reduce the price for students in the suburbs from $1.65 to $1.25.

Barbara Andersen said that she will be moving out of the Portland metro area, but will still attend committee meetings.

The meeting ended at 6:55 p.m.