

HISTORIC COLUMBIA RIVER HIGHWAY
CITIZENS' ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MINUTES
AUGUST 25, 1989

Attendance: Lewis L. McArthur, Don Adams, John Lundell, Ken Lucas, Dave Powers, Lorna Stickel, Carolyn Woods. Staff: Jeanette Kloos, Chet Anderson.

Guests: Don Canard and Ed Robinson, Chinook Trail Association; Ted Davenport; Dan Durow, Wasco County Planning; Mike Ash, Terry Skorheim and Mike Abbate, Forest Service; Jurgen Hess, Forest Service National Scenic Area; Dick Benner, Columbia River Gorge Commission staff; Gayle Rothrock and Barbara Bailey, Columbia River Gorge Commissioners; Nancy Russell, Friends of the Columbia Gorge; three representatives from the Port of Cascade Locks and others.

No changes to the minutes were proposed.

Don Canard described the Chinook Trail and its goal of a trail along both sides of the river through most of the Gorge. A meeting to compare locations with the Chinook Trail, Low Elevation Trail, Trail 400 and Historic Columbia River Highway (HCRH) connection projects will be held this fall.

Ted Davenport described his proposed guided bike tour business, which includes a shuttle to the top of Larch Mountain and special bicycles for the escorted ride down to Multnomah Falls. Mr. Davenport stated his preference for a licenced system such as the National Park Service administers in Hawaii. However, none of the agencies involved here appears to have authority to licence such a business. Lorna Stickel suggested that Mr. Davenport check with Multnomah County to see if a permit would be required for use of Larch Mountain Road.

West The Dalles Interchange Proposal

Dan Durow described the West The Dalles Interchange proposal as developed by the Regional Development Council. He distributed the attached Transportation Priorities and project description also developed by the Council. The primary purpose of the project is to serve the industrial area north of I-84. Secondary purposes are to serve the Interpretive Center and to provide river access. Mr. Durow requested CAC support for the project; the Council is trying to gain funding in the updated 6-Year Highway Improvement Program.

Lewis L. McArthur expressed concerns about increased traffic on the HCRH. MR. Durow thought that perhaps 2000 of the 7000 vehicles using the interchange might be using the HCRH. If this number is accurate, that would essentially double the current

volume of 1820 peak summer month ADT, as reported in the Traffic Management Study.

Dave Powers expressed concern about the details of the proposal that are not yet available, such as signs and traffic control. Carolyn Wood thought that a traffic signal might not be needed at the intersection of the new overcrossing and the HCRH. Chet Anderson mentioned that exceptions to design standards may be needed, since current standards would probably require a wider roadway.

Barbara Bailey asked if there was a potential for zoning changes that would allow commercial development in the interchange area.

Mr. Durow said that the area was expected to remain zoned for industrial development. Jurgen Hess stated that the Forest Service also did not want commercial development at the intersection.

Gayle Rothrock stated that the Commission would strive to respect the HCRH in the interchange project.

The CAC unanimously approved the project as presented, provided that the CAC is given the opportunity to review the intersection with the HCRH when details are developed.

Don Adams warned the CAC that they may need to face the need to improve (widen or make changes for safety) the HCRH in the future as traffic increases. The CAC may need to compromise. Mr. McArthur asked if ODOT could prohibit large vehicles. Adams answered that if a structure was inadequate, ODOT could restrict vehicles based on weight. Vehicles could also be restricted based on their ability to maneuver. ODOT is required, however, to provide access from the freeway to facilities.

Funding and Project Priorities

Don Adams reported the good news that special "heavy" maintenance funds had been restored to the previous level of \$300,000 per biennium.

The lists of priority projects and possible funding sources were discussed (copies attached). The CAC basically agreed with the lists and voted to recommend projects to 6-Year Highway Improvement Program, the 6-Year Parks Improvement Program and to reserve most of the \$2.8 million National Scenic Area funds for the Mosier Tunnel area. Jurgen Hess said that the CAC should keep in mind the \$10 million in the Scenic Area Act designated for recreation projects. Dick Benner indicated that the proposals for the HCRH need to be coordinated with the Gorge Commission before implementation.

John Lundell expressed concern about liability on the Toothrock Viaduct Slide Repair. Don Adams agreed that Highway Division will inspect the area to determine that it will remain stable in

its current condition, while waiting for a repair option study to be financed and completed.

Don Adams asked what was included in the Traffic Management Study Phase II. Jeanette Kloos explained that it would include problem definition, development of alternative solutions and implementation. Adams stated that only the implementation (Phase III) would be appropriate for the 6-Year HIP.

John Lundell asked who should be contacted about organizing volunteers to place the mileposts. McArthur said that Harry Woodward and Chet Anderson were the appropriate people. Lundell is concerned that the buried cable be located before any holes are dug. McArthur agreed that all the volunteer work would need to be under the supervision of the maintenance personnel. He asked that Woodward have the survey work completed and then try to place a few mileposts with a volunteer crew.

Nancy Russell mentioned that the CAC needs to coordinate the possible solutions of the Traffic Management Plan with the Land Use Designations proposed for the Gorge Management Plan. She was particularly concerned that additional residential development in the Latourell area may make options that would restrict traffic politically impossible.

United Telephone has not made a decision on the location of their proposed buried fiber optic cable. Their preferred option is still to use I-84 right-of-way. If they cannot get approval, their second choice would be the more expensive railroad right-of-way. Jurgen Hess mentioned that United Telephone has an existing easement in the HCRH right-of-way.

The CAC discussed the Hodges' Oak Ranch RV Park Development Review. John Lundell expressed concern that the old access road be removed and that the new roadway be gradual. Chet Anderson said that the ODOT access permit already requires removal of the old roadway. Carolyn Wood said that there is a lot of community support for the proposal, since it is close to urban services. Dave Powers said he was concerned about starting a process of cluttering the HCRH with signs. Ken Lucas said that it seems like some people assume that the Rowena to The Dalles section of the HCRH will become like the Troutdale to Women's Forum section. Rather than having that assumption, the CAC should discuss and determine what its "vision" for the highway is and should be. (This will be addressed at a later meeting.) The CAC passed a motion to endorse the concept of the RV Park as presented.

Traffic Management Study - Phase II

Jeanette Kloos opened the discussion with a list of perceived problems developed mostly from the origin and destination portion of the Traffic Management Study (attached). Ken Lucas suggested that a separate committee needs to study the possibility of making a portion of the HCRH one-way. While John Lundell thought

that the study could wait until the problem was more intense, Lorna Stickel disagreed. She proposed that we need some intense evaluation of the problem, including a better definition (are there problems only on peak summer weekends or all summer? what will it be like in the future?) and an evaluation of potential solutions. Don Adams agreed that a better definition of the problem and solution is needed before funding of the solution can be developed. Lewis McArthur mentioned that it would be very difficult to change the width of the HCRH, especially since the problem is usually with the historic structures. He feels that should be rejected as a possible option. Lorna Stickel and Nancy Russell agreed. Gayle Rothrock suggested that the Traffic Management Study could have an organization that combined the affected agencies, in a manner similar to the proposed Scenic Corridor Study. Dick Benner and Lorna Stickel discussed the interaction of land use designations and future traffic volumes. Ken Lucas said that the land use planning may force the HCRH to change. The CAC may need to act to accomplish the opposite.

Lewis McArthur requested that all **CAC members complete a list of what they feel needs to be completed before Phase II can begin** and send it before the work session October 4. Next a subcommittee of Don Adams, Jeanette Kloos, Forest Service and Gorge Commission could develop a work plan and an estimated cost for the study. After the cost is developed, financing could be requested from ODOT and the Oregon Transportation Commission. Don Adams will try to get additional information from traffic people for the next meeting. He stressed that the CAC needs to decide on a vision for the HCRH, which may include different classes for different segments. Nancy Russell also agreed that a vision is needed for all parts of the HCRH, including Dodson to Warrendale, Troutdale to Corbett, and Rowena to The Dalles. She stressed that development should be in urban areas, not along the HCRH and not as strip development.

Activity Status Reports

Highway

Don Adams explained that we did not get Federal Highway Administration approval of the wooden guardrail concept, even with the reduced speed limit. ODOT now proposes to do the project without federal funds. This may mean that no additional federal funding would be available on Crown Point Highway.

The Multnomah Falls Sign Bridge proposal was determined not to be consistent with the Scenic Area Act. A compromise proposal has been developed that would place one diagrammatic sign in the median of I-84 near Benson Park.

Chet Anderson said that there now seem to be no objections to the Mill Creek Bridge proposal, as discussed at the last CAC meeting. McArthur said he would appreciate the opportunity to review

plans when they are developed.

Chet Anderson said that other alternatives are being considered for the West The Dalles interchange, such as a Franz Taylor location. These alternatives will be discussed with local officials in September.

Parks

Ken Lucas described a long list of small rehabilitation projects that have received funding during the next biennium and totalling \$150,000. He also mentioned that East Mayer sail park is about 50% complete. It was designed for 90 cars and has already drawn 280 cars at one time.

Forest Service National Scenic Area

Jurgen Hess discussed a flow chart of process and products expected from the Signing Committee (attached). The draft overview is completed and the CAC will receive a copy in the near future. The process will now split in to three parts: 1) development of sign ordinances; 2) enhancement, which will include additional interpretive signs; and 3) a contract for a graphic artist to develop a graphic theme, to be used for entrances to recreation areas. McArthur asked how the theme would tie into other places in Oregon. Hess said that had not been determined, but that he expected to work with state tourism and others that are working on byway signing. McArthur mentioned that any theme should keep in mind the requirements of the Historic and Scenic Highway Act.

Columbia River Gorge Commission

Dick Benner briefly described the Recreation Intensity Zone Overlay, which will be discussed at the workshop meeting October 4. The people developing the overlay attempted to limit the intensity of recreation along the HCRH to decrease the potential visual and traffic impacts. The overlay and land use designations are in draft form and will be discussed at public workshops and adopted in about one year.

Dick Benner then described the Scenic Corridor Study. This grew out of the State Route 14 Corridor Study. The Transportation Committee decided that some portions of the study (recreational linkages and vegetation management and view enhancement) should treat all three highways in the scenic area. The Commission has request ODOT participation in the study. McArthur asked if a volunteer from the Landscape Architect professional association would be useful. Benner said that a volunteer would not be ideal, since ODOT would need to be willing to implement the results of the study. Adams said that there is a person in the Highway Division that is willing to do the work, but his supervisor is not willing to let him go for 21 days. Is it possible that less time would be needed? Benner agreed that

there will probably not be 21 days of field work, but that some time would be needed to develop the work program. The work would not need to be completed in consecutive days. ODOT will continue to look for a landscape architect to participate in the study.

Ken Lucas asked why only the highways were being considered in this study. Why are the railroads and the river not included? Benner said that the railroad and the river are being considered in different portions of the work proposed by the Transportation Committee.

Unearthing HCRH at Ruckel Creek

Mike Abbate, Columbia Gorge Ranger District, Forest Service, discussed a letter from District Ranger Hardman to Lewis McArthur, requesting assistance with the project to unearth the HCRH at Ruckel Creek (attached). The Forest Service would like assistance from ODOT or others to accurately survey the HCRH location, examine the geology of the area, develop and analyze alternatives and prepare environmental documentation. Lorna Stickel said that this part of the Ruckel Creek trailhead project was a lower priority than the other parts. Ken Lucas disagreed, stressing the need for handicap accessible trails in the Gorge. Lorna Stickel asked if any funds for the handicapped would be available. Abbate said it was possible that other sources could be found or that volunteers could perform a substantial portion of the construction work. Don Adams said that ownership needs to be determined, since highway funds can only be used on highway right-of-way. Dave Powers said that some state preservation funds may be available. Also, this may be a project that should have a request for funding to the 1991 Legislature.

The location of the western parking lot for the Hood River to Mosier section was discussed. Nancy Russell said that the current gate location was the original proposal by Friends of the Columbia Gorge and that SOAR (handicapped recreation organization) was quite enthusiastic about the project. The CAC agreed that there should be only non-motorized uses east of the existing gate, except on special occasions. Ken Lucas asked Dick Benner what intensity zone was proposed for this area, that use should not be underestimated. Jurgen Hess noted that this property is in private ownership and ODOT may need to deal with ownership.

Lewis McArthur briefly discussed the response received from the Rose Festival Association. He will contact friends in the organization to see if he can get some assistance from them. Nancy Russell noted that the Friends of the Columbia Gorge was able to get the fee waived for their hiking weekend.

The CAC agreed that a letter should be written to Multnomah County concerning the communication failure about the Stark Street Bridge repair and painting.

Carolyn Wood said that Wasco County is willing to return the portion of the HCRH from Mosier to the east. They need a written request from ODOT, however.

Dave Powers mentioned that an advisory committee for historic trails and roads is forming and will meet in 2-3 months.

The next meeting will be a workshop session on October 4, at the National Scenic Area office. The CAC will review the Recreation Intensity Zones, Land Use Designations and other maps recently prepared by the NSA and the Gorge Commission. The next CAC meeting will be November 1, at a location to be decided later.

Attachments

Transportation Priorities - The Dalles

West The Dalles Interchange description

Project Priority

Possible Funding

Traffic Management Study - Where do we go from here?

Signing Committee flow chart

Hardman letter