

Historic Columbia River Highway Advisory Committee

September 19, 2000

Bradford Island Visitor Center Bonneville Dam

Members Present: Julie Curtis, Jerry Igo, Janice Newton, Bill Pattison, Charlie Sciscione, Jack Wiles, and Carolyn Wood

Staff Present: Mark Beeson, June Carlson, Gary Farnsworth, Robert Hadlow, Cherie Jameison, Jeanette Kloos, Scott Liesinger, and Sam Wilkins.

Public Present: Nancy Russell and Len Swenson, Friends of Columbia Gorge; Diana Ross, USDA Forest Service-CRGNSA; and Diane McClay, OPRD.

Preceding the meeting the Historic Columbia River Highway Advisory Committee walked through the Moffett Creek to Tanner Creek Unit 2 project.

Bill Pattison called the meeting to order.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes were approved as written.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

NEW REGION 1 AREA MANAGER – JUNE CARLSON

Bill Pattison introduced June Carlson, new ODOT Area Manager who will oversee projects within Hood River and Clackamas Counties. Gary Farnsworth was also introduced as the Area Manager for projects within Wasco County. June said that ODOT has refined how projects are developed and team leaders will be reporting to area managers. This will help get projects developed and "out the door." The role of the Advisory Committee doesn't change at all with her addition; rather, ODOT has added another person to assist. Results include the following: (1) Kay Van Sichel will attend Advisory Committee meetings when she is able and will remain involved with HCRH matters. (2) Kevin Bracy will be team leader responsible for many HCRH projects that are in the capital budget and that require some level of engineering expertise.

NOXIOUS WEED PROBLEM

Len Swenson, who resides near Portland Women's Forum, reported his concerns and those of neighbors about the destruction caused by English ivy spreading on their properties. The English ivy smothers other plants,

including native plants. Bill Pattison added that other people also have expressed concerns about the problem.

Jack Wiles observed that it's not a single problem. State Parks has used various types of work crews to eradicate noxious weeds, including inmate work crews (which cost \$250 a day). At Tryon Creek Park volunteer groups, such as "Adopt a Plot," are trying to eradicate English ivy. However, after five years of effort, only one plot is officially "ivy free." Forest Park also has a volunteer group, "No Ivy League."

Jerry Igo said that it's necessary to develop a management plan to attack the problem. Someone needs to coordinate efforts at various levels (for example, with ODOT, State Parks, Bonneville Power Administration, Forest Service and with Tim Butler of the Department of Agriculture.) Tansy ragwort and English ivy are both classified as noxious weeds. It will take 10-15 years to control the problem. The Advisory Committee's role would be to focus attention on the problem in the areas for which the committee is responsible. Jerry indicated that some grant funding is available to help eradicate noxious weeds.

Jack Wiles said that the section from Bonneville to Cascade Locks is a good target area. There is a grant program from the Department of Agriculture for noxious weed removal. Sam Wilkins informed attendees that ODOT has plans to go out and attack certain weeds; however, English ivy is not a problem in the eastern end of the Gorge. Diane McClay pointed out that Scotch broom has been removed from the islands at Bonneville Dam. She observed that (1) Visitors must be educated as to *why* noxious weeds are bad and should be removed, and (2) It takes concentrated efforts to remove the noxious weeds. Diane said it's vital to get volunteers and to get help and guidance from the Department of Agriculture.

Julie Curtis said that someone needs to take a leadership role and develop a plan, but it's not the Historic Columbia River Highway Advisory Committee's role to take the lead. Nancy Russell said someone needs to bring the issue to the Chair of the Columbia River Gorge Commission. The Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area Act has a broad mandate to protect natural resources. Diana Ross said that the Forest Service has an active noxious weed program and she will investigate whether the FS could provide additional assistance or take a lead in bringing people together to discuss this issue. Counties have existing weed control efforts, but more needs to be done. Jerry Igo indicated that the issue needs to be addressed by a coalition of agencies and landowners. Jeanette Kloos observed out that all the landowners need to be working on the problem, in addition to counties and other agencies.

Bill Pattison said that the Advisory Committee would put the matter on a future agenda.

HCRH CELEBRATION AND ANTIQUE CAR PARADE

During lunch, attendees had the opportunity to look through a binder that Jeanette Kloos brought of photographs taken of the HCRH Celebration. They also viewed a video of the Celebration Antique Car Parade held on July 22 from Troutdale to The Dalles.

DRAFT PLAQUE POLICY REVIEW

Robert Hadlow distributed copies of the Plaque Policy draft (attached). Jeanette Kloos pointed out that the draft describes the process of *how* the committee could exercise control, that now it's a case-by-case process. Bob said that plaques and memorials on the highway should be of transcendental and lasting importance. Approval criteria would include the following: (1) Memorials must have "No Adverse Effect" on the Historic Columbia River Highway. (2) Memorials should be of events or persons with a strong connection with the highway. (3) We should encourage people to place memorials on non-historic resources.

Robert also described suggestions for the approval process, such as setting up a monument design review subcommittee made up from members of the Advisory Committee. The donor would be responsible for maintenance. The idea here is that we will not incur state expense. Jerry Igo said that the process should address *cumulative* effects. Discussion followed. Diane McClay said that she has received requests for putting benches along the State Trail to commemorate individuals. This leads to another criterion, "Is this an appropriate place to put a bench?" Julie Curtis commented that the committee should be careful about private citizens/groups wanting to place monuments on the highway. Major awards should be in a building, not outside on the highway. Charlie Sciscione agreed, and said that the highway could get cluttered very quickly. Jack Wiles said OPRD has a bench donation policy through the Parks Trust. Jack Wiles said that the Scenic Area policy promotes planting commemorative trees. Robert Hadlow will provide the plaque inventory to the HCRH AC before the next meeting, so that they can see the types of plaques that are already along the HCRH. Janice Newton suggested that the policy should have some consistency with what already exists. Jack Wiles said that, after future discussion and revision, when the HCRH AC recommends approval of the policy, then it would need to go to the Oregon Transportation Commission and Oregon Parks and Recreation Commission for adoption.

Jeanette requested that comments be returned as soon as possible, so that Robert can review them, make revisions, and send a revised draft out before the next meeting. Robert asked Advisory Committee members to e-mail or phone him with comments after they have read the draft.

HISTORIC LANDMARK DESIGNATION PLAQUES

Robert Hadlow held up one of the three Historic Landmark designation plaques that ODOT has received from the National Park Service for portions of the HCRH. Jeanette Kloos said that committee members need to decide where to put the three landmark plaques, so ODOT can proceed with planning a commemoration ceremony. Three potential locations are the Twin Tunnels Visitors Station, the Portland Women's Forum, and Rowena Crest (where a plaque is missing). Bill Pattison said that the plaque could be imbedded in a rock, rather than an existing rock wall. Nancy Russell suggested Mayer Park. Diane McClay raised the issue of vandalism. She suggested trying to choose areas of low vandalism. Discussion ensued as to varieties of mounting (such as expansion bolts). Jeanette observed that the decision should be in the spirit of the draft policy.

Robert suggested that the committee could locate a site for one plaque and have a ceremony. Committee members decided to locate the first plaque at the Twin Tunnels Visitors Station, and that Jeanette, Jack, Diane and Robert will choose a site there and decide whether it will be permanent or not.

HCRH TRAIL ACCESSIBILITY

Jeanette Kloos referenced Sen. Hatfield's speech at the dedication stating that HCRH sites and the trail to tunnels should be accessible to all. Jack Wiles said that the previously approved Access Policy included the criterion that anything you could use in your home or at a mall can be used on the trail. It is accessible by wheelchair, electric cart, etc. Jack discussed a variety of shuttles to events as part of the access policy. One option looked at in the policy was that they could try by providing a shuttle to the tunnels during a special event. Instead of a service that runs on a regular schedule (for example, 10 am, 2 pm, 4 pm), we could run a shuttle as part of a certain event held once a year. Jack said it becomes an honor system as to who could use the shuttle. It's a tough policy to draft to have a "level playing field."

Jerry Igo said he would not like to see an automotive "shuttle" run again because repeated use could damage the asphalt surface. Bill Pattison also discussed increasing traffic congestion. Jack Wiles commented that the Access Policy includes antique cars two to five times a year. At one of these events, we could accommodate seniors and ADA issues. They would consider an electric-enhanced assist for the elderly and handicapped. There could be the situation where an elderly person would be given access in an electric-enhanced assist, or would ride in a vintage automobile, and other members of the family might wish to accompany them. Nancy Russell said that she would hate to see any change in policy, particularly one that would increase conflicts between users. She asked if

anyone had discussed the existing policy and the reasons behind it with Senator Hatfield. Jack Wiles says the Advisory Committee should respond to Senator Hatfield. He will bring back suggestions to the committee at the next meeting.

HCRH CELEBRATION

Jeanette Kloos distributed a summary of the HCRH Celebration (attached). Media coverage of the HCRH created over 33 million "impressions" during the Celebration. The \$200,000 from Safeway resulted in media valued at over \$1 million. Additional articles are in preparation, including a fall *Parade* article on America's most beautiful drives and an article in a RV magazine.

PROJECT UPDATES

HOOD RIVER – MOSIER

Mark Beeson reported on the projects and distributed the attached photographs to the Advisory Committee. He said that Kevin Bracy would provide a slide show at the next meeting; some of the slides were not yet available.

HOOD RIVER TO MOSIER (ROADS)

This project is completed. Kevin Bracy will put together a bigger photographic narrative. He tried to get the concrete cap on the restored rock walls very smooth. There is still some corrective "punch-list" work to do. There were not enough funds available to complete the final paving from Highway 35 to the West Trailhead; finding funds for this work will be a challenge.

HOOD RIVER TO MOSIER (PARKS)

The Overlook east of the Mosier Twin Tunnels was constructed with a concrete wall and cap, with the stone fascia added later. It is a really nice showpiece. The rockwork on the floor and sides are done. The pathway from highway to overlook will be wheelchair accessible, but only one of the proposed two trails will be paved. It will be a concrete path with color added. Jack Wiles asked why the original macadam asphalt design was not being used. He considered the two changes to be a major design change that should have been discussed before proceeding. The second path was designed to accommodate those who will take the "short cut"; without it people will walk all over the area, damaging the sensitive plants. He also did not think concrete was appropriate in a non-urban area. Jack agreed that the concrete would probably stand up to heavy use better than the asphalt. Charlie Sciscione suggested that the concrete have an exposed aggregate finish to blend in with the surrounding soil better. Jack will call the designer (Bibi Gaston) to discuss the changes. Mark Beeson will work with Jack, Carolyn and Julie to resolve these issues. October 6th is the target date for completion.

PHASE 2 (CATCHMENT STRUCTURE)

This project is done, and Mark distributed pictures.

OTHER PROJECTS

Jeanette Kloos discussed the projects in the attached chart. She noted that the Interpretive Plan for the Visitor Station was reviewed and Sea Reach will continue with the design previously brought to the HCRH AC. An additional meeting will discuss materials to be used, with examples compared with the interior of the building. Kevin Bracy will be the Project Leader for the Warrendale to Moffett Creek section of the Historic Columbia River Highway State Trail. The HCRH Interpretive Sites and Signs project is still in the contract negotiation phase with the consultant. The final plans for Starvation Creek to Viento were delivered to ODOT on September 1. Plans, Specifications and Estimates have been sent to Federal Highway Administration for obligation of the construction funds. The rockfall mitigation changed to meet both cultural and visual quality concerns. Angel's Rest Trailhead is complete, with the final inspection scheduled for September 22.

ACTIVITY STATUS REPORTS

ODOT

Scott Liesinger said that installation of fiber-polymer wrap on the deck beams on the Shepperd's Dell work has been completed. He and Charlie Sciscione looked at it earlier this morning. The bridge weight limit has been lifted. The 1915 Oneonta Bridge is closed, which satisfies the needs for load restrictions. Charlie said that the bollards placed in the roadway to prevent vehicles from driving onto the bridge have a square cross-section rather than round because they are much less expensive. In addition, the area receives some vandalism and he expects to replace the bollards more often here than he might at other locations.

Charlie Sciscione told the committee that there have been changes to the striping on WaNaPa in downtown Cascade Locks. A business group wants to attract bike groups into Cascade Locks. Within the existing curb-to-curb width, ODOT added a bike lane strip. ODOT will be adding some signage ("Bicycles on Roadway") where bike lane ends short of Forest Lane to show bikes can still go there.

Sam Wilkins introduced Gary Farnsworth, Area Manager for Region 4. Gary is June Carlson's counterpart. His office is in Bend. Gary covers seven counties in central/north central Oregon, including all of Wasco County. He oversees construction and design on behalf of The Dalles. He said that the Area Manager can make a better connection among projects, background and delivery, and groups such as the Advisory Committee.

Sam Wilkins said that an illegal, off-premise advertising sign has been noted. It advertises the ice cream store at Mosier. It is located 30.5 feet

from centerline, which makes the process to remove it more difficult and time consuming, but he is pursuing the process that will result in removal of the sign. Depending on the location of the sign, (whether it is outside of the Urban Area) it may be helpful to contact Wasco County Planning and/or the CRGNSA Forest Service.

OPRD

Jack Wiles reported that OPRD has renovated the sewage treatment facility and completed the ADA accessibility improvements to the rest rooms at the Starvation Creek Trailhead for the Historic Columbia River Highway State Trail. The rest rooms are now open. Additional work will continue on the recirculating filter system, to be located in the former truck parking area. Water usage is 200 gallons per day. The grand re-opening ceremony will be on Thursday.

Diane McClay read special comments written on sign-in sheets collected at the Visitors Station and Twin Tunnels since the State Trail segment opened late last spring. Remarks included, "Awesome," "Great job," and "Thanks to the people who made this possible." The trail log inside the tunnels has significantly decreased the vandalism – people are putting their graffiti on the paper rather than carving it into the timber lining. She said that 90% of the people are not local residents, including people from multiple states and countries. There were 3000 cars in the Visitor Station parking lot, with an average of 3 people per car.

USDA FOREST SERVICE

No report.

MEMBERS ISSUES:

Bill Pattison asked if there was a water line to the Mosier Trailhead. Sam Wilkins replied that the waterline was extended from Mosier to the fire hydrant; it was not extended to the Trailhead, because a pump would have been required to go up the hill

Bill asked if the HCRH would be paved from the West Trailhead to Highway 35. Jeanette Kloos said that the paving was in the original contract, but that there are not enough funds to complete this. An additional \$100,000 is needed. There is no known potential funding source to complete this paving in the near future.

NEXT MEETING DATE AND LOCATION

Thursday, November 9, 2000

NOTE MEETING TIME: 10:00 -- 3:00

Cascade Locks